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MARRIAGE AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION AMONG PASTORALISTS OF THE DHAULA DHAR (WESTERN HIMALAYA).

by Peter R. Phillimore

ABSTRACT.

Fieldwork was carried out among the Hindu Gaddis and their associated castes, chiefly in Kangra and to a lesser extent in Chamba (Himachal Pradesh, India). Two main topics are examined.

The place of transhumant pastoralism in the Gaddis' economy and in relation to their social organisation is described at length for the first time. Though the Gaddis are renowned as shepherds in Himachal Pradesh, the proportion who hold flocks of sheep and goats fluctuates greatly from village to village. My data stem from living in the Gaddi shepherding village par excellence. I explore the relationship between pastoralism, agriculture and wage labour, and I conclude that numbers of Gaddi-owned migratory livestock have fallen in recent decades.

The primary topic, however, is marriage and the internal structure of the caste. I start by looking at an unusual case of women who never marry, and then move on to analyse the complex relationship between isogamy and hypergamy in the region, with particular reference to the structure of the caste. The working out of egalitarian principles in marriage in the northern half of the Indian subcontinent has not received the attention devoted to the more dominant tendency towards hierarchy. But while this study of the Gaddis' isogamy is a contribution to a neglected field, it does not foster any simple dichotomy between Himalayan Hindus and north India generally. On the contrary, the perspective chosen helps towards the better incorporation of Himalayan Hindu societies within models of marriage and kinship in north India generally.

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Peter R. Phillimore

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PREFACE.

The thesis following is based upon eighteen months of fieldwork among the Gaddis and their associated castes in Himachal Pradesh, north India. My wife and I arrived in India at the end of August 1976, but it was a full two months before I was in a position to know where the Indian Government would permit me to work, and only in November did we settle in Kangra District. I was then in the field for fifteen months. I later returned for three months in the autumn of 1980 to continue my research.

Originally I did not go to India to study the Gaddis. My plan had been to work in Kulu, slightly to the east, but initial difficulties over permission for Kulu led me to switch my attention to mountain villages on the Mandi-Kangra border. It was only as I began to explore this area that I decided to focus on the Gaddis, who were concentrated in a thin strip along the southern slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, the massive range of the Outer Himalaya which dominates the Kangra valley. One possibility I considered was to reapply for permission to work in Chamba District, across the Dhaula Dhar to the north, for its eastern portion - Brahmaur - is home to the largest concentration of Gaddis, as well as their ancestral heartland. I decided against that, however, for at least two ~~main~~ reasons. In the first place there was the purely pragmatic consideration that by November I had no desire to undertake further bureaucratic dealings, and wished

simply to put the initial delays behind me and start working. In the second place, my interest in studying among the Gaddis developed as I visited a series of villages at the eastern end of the Dhaula Dhar in Palampur tehsīl, and I soon decided that I wanted to work in one particular village rather than anywhere else. Consequently, this meant that I chose to focus primarily on Gaddis living in Kangra, where they had a long association dating back over almost two centuries; and I decided to make a point of visiting the Brahmaur area to collect comparative data at some time during fieldwork. An added factor in leading me to this choice was that while an ethnographer had worked in Brahmaur in recent decades (W.H.Newell), no work had been done on Gaddis in Kangra.

The village that attracted me was Karnāthu, and the criteria that led to choosing this rather than another village were a combination of the theoretical, the practical and the personal.

On theoretical grounds, I sought a large village, with a population of over 400 or so, in which as large a proportion as possible were Gaddis or castes associated with them. Moreover, I hoped to find a village that was surrounded by other similarly Gaddi-dominated villages. I also looked for a relatively remote location, as my initial interest in traditional religious cults led me to seek a village where intercourse with the wider Kangra society was likely to be comparatively slight. Finally, I wished to work in a village where there was a strong shepherding bias, as by then I had already decided that I would devote attention to the transhumant pastoralism for which the Gaddis were primarily known

in Himachal Pradesh.

Karnāthu fulfilled these criteria better than any other village we visited, and was notable in being effectively entirely populated by Gaddis and their associated castes. It had the added advantage also, in my eyes, of a reputation in the locality as a distinctive, inward-looking, rather strange place, quite unlike other villages around - and its nucleated layout, so unusual for a village of well over 500 in Kangra, reinforced this sense of distinctiveness. It was also relatively remote: unconnected by road, and perched some 700 feet up a dauntingly steep slope after a six mile walk from the bazaar towns of Paprola and Baijnath.

The degree of Karnāthu's inaccessibility was in fact the main practical consideration. Quite apart from any theoretical considerations, I wanted to settle in a place which required some physical effort to reach, in order to minimise the prospect of encounters with local government officials of one kind or another. Doubtless I would have felt aware of not wishing to be identified in any way with 'the authorities' whatever the period. But in 1976 the State of Emergency was still in force, and I remember feeling acutely aware that I might have to overcome suspicion that I was in some way reporting back to the government: especially when collecting household census data, which might readily be construed as a check on family sizes. Rightly or wrongly, I assumed that if I got into conversation in English with visiting officials it would hamper my chances of building rapport with people; and I also assumed that a village which could not be reached by jeep, and where there was no alternative to a steep climb,

was likely to be less visited than one more accessibly located. Looking back over six years, and in the light of the subsequent easy relations we developed with most people in Karnāthu, which inevitably tends to overlay earlier anxieties, it is hard to invest these considerations with the force that they had for me then. But I think that is inevitable, and I suspect that the same considerations would weigh with me again if I were in a comparable position.

Yet counteracting the desire for remoteness was our judgement that, initially at least, we could not cope with the prospect of working in a setting that was more than a day away from a few primary facilities. Again, it is hard in retrospect to recall anxieties about the limits of tolerable isolation which were in due course dispelled by familiarity and adaptation. Nonetheless, this seemed a real enough factor at the time of choosing a village in which to settle. In fact, from this point of view, all the villages where Gaddis lived in Kangra were suitable, and in selecting Karnāthu I picked just about the most isolated.

The final consideration that weighed in Karnāthu's favour was that on both our initial visits, prior to reaching any decision about where to live, we were greeted with great friendliness. When all other factors were taken into account also, the prospect of working in a village where people seemed likely to be well disposed towards us was a considerable bonus.

Indeed, the choice of Karnāthu was a decision I have never regretted, either from an anthropological or a personal point of view.

Having decided on Karnāthu, the next move was to arrange accomodation there. To that end, we approached the headmaster of the Government High School at Deol, just a mile from Karnāthu in the valley floor. Having no interpreter or assistant I needed to be able to explain my purpose to people in Karnāthu with spare accomodation through someone else. This meant that I needed to find an intermediary with whom I could discuss my plans in English, and who commanded a measure of respect with local people without arousing any great suspicion. Teachers, who live locally even if they are often from elsewhere, seemed the most suitable people in this particular locality. I also needed advice as to whether it would be more realistic to seek to rent a house of our own or to live with a family.

The headmaster and a couple of other teachers from a locally notable Rajput family heard my plans, and advised me that it was almost certainly unrealistic to expect a family to accomodate us as a part of their own household. The headmaster said, however, that he would initiate enquiries about renting a house in Karnāthu, and when we returned a few days later we were directed to the teacher at the Primary School in Karnāthu itself. He led us to a couple of houses whose owners were prepared to rent them out. We chose one in a Brahman courtyard, for the alternative was a building, owned by a Gaddi, which was set some slight distance apart from any other houses, and we feared that this might hinder our incorporation in the life of the village. Our neighbours-to-be in the Brahman courtyard in fact had little say in the decision to rent the house to us, for our landlord, who had

moved away to settle near Deol school a few years previously, took the decision on his own, so far as I could ascertain. In retrospect, we were extremely lucky that they nonetheless quickly became extremely hospitable towards us.

As well as arranging accomodation in Karnāthu, we also took steps to rent a flat near Palampur town itself. This served a double role. We initially planned it as a place where we could rest and above all obtain privacy for a few days between stretches of fieldwork in Karnāthu. But I also found it a useful base from which to make regular visits to Gaddi-dominated villages on the mountainside above Palampur. Here I had the assistance of a Palampur friend who acted as interpreter for me. Two such Gaddi villages became an important supplement to my work in Karnāthu (where I relied for the most part on my own rudimentary mixture of Hindi and the Gādi dialect of Pahāri) for they enabled me to cross-check many aspects of my Karnāthu material, at the same time as they generated new themes to explore back in Karnāthu.

Such limited linguistic competence as I obtained was initiated by a taped course of 'Hindi for V.S.O.', kindly supplied by S.O.A.S. (University of London), and then fostered by irregular lessons during fieldwork from a schoolteacher friend near Palampur and one near Deol. But though I could hold question-and-answer conversations with reasonable adequacy by mid-1977, I was always lost when it came to understanding conversations others were holding. Whilst I was in the field between 1976 and 1978 there were three occasions when I had interpreting assistance in Karnāthu, but these occasions were only of a few days each. Accordingly,

on my return to India in 1980, I worked exclusively with a full-time interpreter, which speeded up and deepened my enquiries immeasurably.

In addition to my fieldwork in Karnāthu and to a lesser extent in a couple of villages above Palampur, I also made four field trips to Brahmaur and the part of the Rāvi valley immediately adjoining it to the west, two in 1977 and two in 1980, in order to obtain comparative data on the Gaddis living in that part of Chamba, their ancestral homeland. These trips proved extremely fruitful. I also pursued certain enquiries in the town of Chamba on three occasions. There were of course other trips also, particularly within Palampur tehsīl (whose northern half, including the separate, interior region of Chota Bangāhal, I came to know quite well), but further afield as well: to the area around Dharmsala in Kangra tehsīl, to Churāh tehsīl in Chamba, and to Triloknāth in Lahaul (see Map 1).

This study is intended as a contribution to the ethnography of north India and the Himalayas (two overlapping but distinct spheres of anthropological interest) in two main theoretical areas. First, the place of transhumant pastoralism in the Gaddis' economy and in relation to their social organisation is described at length for the first time (Chapter 4). The primary topic, however, which is introduced in Chapters 1 and 2, and which culminates in Chapters 7 and 8, is marriage and the internal structure of the caste. Here, the complex relationship between isogamy and hypergamy, an egalitarian and a hierarchical marriage system, is analysed; and the implications for the structure of the caste explored,

combining the use of sources from up to a hundred years ago with my own fieldwork material. The working out of egalitarian principles in marriage in the northern half of the Indian subcontinent has not received the attention devoted to the more dominant tendency towards hierarchy. But while this study is a contribution to an under-investigated field within Indian sociology, it does not set out to erect or perpetuate any over-simple dichotomy between the Hindu societies of the southern Himalayan valleys and the north of India more generally. On the contrary, the perspective that I adopt relates my material directly to the wider field of north Indian studies of kinship and marriage, and, I hope, helps towards the better incorporation of Himalayan Hindu societies within general models of marriage in north India.

Chapters 7 and 8 are preceded by an unusual example of women who never marry, and who as a result, in order to avoid the dire implications of spinsterhood, have a special and in some ways unique status carved out for them (Chapter 6). This chapter is more self-contained than any other, but because Karnāthu was the centre of this practice it would have been unsatisfactory to omit discussion of it, and furthermore it leads logically to the chapters on marriage which follow.

Throughout this study I have tried to convey something of the individuality and distinctiveness of Karnāthu, as the village I lived in, whilst at the same time situating it in the context of the Gaddi social system as a whole. At a higher level of generality, I have likewise sought to portray the Gaddis' distinctiveness, whilst at the same time locating

this society within the context of the wider regional society. In either case, the relationship between the particular and the general is identified as a perennial problem of anthropological methodology. Here I draw attention to it simply to stress the flexibility and scope for variation which may exist within a given customary framework, and which I hope comes through in the following study.

I have followed more or less standard anthropological conventions in the use of a shorthand for specifying kinship relations:

B brother
C child
D daughter
F father
H husband
M mother
S son
W wife
Z sister
e elder
y younger

FeB denotes a father's elder brother; eB, an elder brother. Referring to individuals, I have occasionally used pseudonyms.

Fieldwork was made possible by an S.S.R.C. studentship at Durham from 1975-78. I should like to thank both institutions for their support. At Durham, I owe particular thanks to Dr. Nick Allen, who supervised me in the academic year prior to fieldwork, and to Dr. Milada Kalab, who supervised me subsequently. I should also like to thank Dr. Norman Long for his help in dealings on my behalf with the S.S.R.C. and the Department of Sociology, University of Delhi, Prof. Eric Sunderland has also helped in numerous ways, and taken an

interest in this work. Earlier drafts of Chapter 6 and part of Chapter 7 were read at seminars in the Durham Department of Anthropology, and I am grateful for critical comments I received on those occasions: especially to David Brooks, Judith Okeley, Jennifer Hockey, Allison James, Marie Johnson, Bob Simpson and Malcolm Young. I also owe special thanks to Dr. Tony Good, my fieldwork contemporary in India, for his comments on drafts of Chapter 6 in particular, and other aspects of my research more generally.

An earlier draft of part of Chapter 4 was given at the 7th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies in London in 1981; whilst a draft of Chapter 6 was presented at a meeting of South Asian anthropologists at the London School of Economics in 1982. I am grateful for helpful comments I received on both occasions.

In India, I am extremely grateful to Prof. M.S.A. Rao, then Head of the Department of Sociology, University of Delhi, for agreeing to register me as a temporary postgraduate student for the duration of fieldwork. Even more, I owe a debt to Prof. André Béteille, of the same department, who agreed to supervise me during this period. Although inevitably I saw little of him, the few discussions we had were of enormous value to me, and he made me ask questions of my fieldwork which no-one else could have raised at that time, questions which were absolutely central to the research.

But most especially I should like to thank Drs. Jonathan Parry and Brendan Quayle for their intellectual help. Jonathan Parry has discussed my research with me on several occasions, and at early stages commented on drafts

of different parts. More recently, he read the bulk of the thesis in virtually its final form. I am immensely grateful for this help, and my debt to his analysis of Kangra, and especially its Rajput society, will be apparent throughout this study. Brendan Quayle, who was another fieldwork contemporary in India, has also read large chunks of my work at different stages. In addition to his always helpful criticisms of my work, I have drawn heavily on his encouragement and support, and wish to acknowledge both forms of assistance here.

In Himachal Pradesh, I owe thanks to a vast number of people, whom it would be impossible to list in full. I must, however, mention Shri P.S. Negi in Simla, and Col. G.S. Ghuman and Shri G.S. Marh in Chamba. In Palampur I owe an enormous debt to several close friends. Shri Sakhdev Sharma not only taught me Hindi, but accomodated me for a spell in 1980 and was a constant source of information on matters Brahmanical and philosophical. His son, Subhash, gave me valuable help as an interpreter on one occasion, and became an extremely close and valued friend. Their home was always a welcoming and relaxing place to be. My interpreter in 1980 was Surender Vats, and I could not have hoped for someone with more stamina, nor more sensitive and conscientious. Working with him speeded up the research beyond all my expectations. And then there is Dr. Gurmukh Singh Bedi. I little expected as I approached an out-of-the-way jhol-bhathi (rice-beer hut) near a Gaddi village above Palampur, shortly after arriving in Kangra in 1976, that I would get into conversation with someone who had a doctorate from Durham. Our friendship took

off from the unlikely circumstances of our first meeting, and what I owe him for his help with my work, and his family for their hospitality, is something I can never hope to return.

My ultimate fieldwork debt is to the people on whom I imposed myself in Karnāthu. It seems invidious to mention a few names when so many people gave us warmth and hospitality beyond our wildest expectations, and when I received such widely spread patience and tolerant amusement (or amazement) about the curious work of an anthropologist. The extent to which people in Karnāthu grasped what my aims were varied enormously. But I tried to explain that I had come to learn and write about Gaddi customs and their way of life, and many understood this. A few times I heard it mentioned that I was writing a history of the Gaddis; some thought we were just living there to photograph, and in my wife's case paint, people and events; and once I was referred to as a 'thesis-wallah'. Whatever academic value this thesis may have, I would like to record that living in Karnāthu was quite the most absorbing experience of my life. There is one particular time of day I recall with special affection: the late afternoon and the hour leading to dusk. As people returned to their courtyards, and as the animals grazed locally were brought back to the village, the atmosphere had a quality of relaxed conviviality which was for me unique. For this whole experience my thanks go collectively to the people of Karnāthu.

Nevertheless, I cannot leave Karnāthu without mentioning by name the three families who put up with us most closely, those whose courtyard we shared. To all members of the families of Shri Achar Ram, Smt Tilko Devi and Halo Devi,

Shri Bemra Ram and Smt Tulsi Devi, and Shri Nokar Ram and Smt Bero Devi I am immeasurably grateful.

There is finally just one person who has lived with this study from its tentative beginnings to its overdue end. I wish to thank Rachel for all her support and the demands I made on her throughout fieldwork and the period of turning that experience into a thesis - and while I know that fieldwork was for her as absorbing an experience as it was for me, I now know full well that there is nothing remotely absorbing about living with someone who is writing a thesis.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLITERATION OF INDIAN WORDS.

In this thesis, Indian words are transliterated on the following basis (I employ the conventional format for the presentation of the Devanāgari alphabet):

Vowels.

a ā i ī u ū e ai o au ri

Consonants.

(1) stopped consonants & nasals.

(velar)	k	kh	g	gh	ṅ
(palatal)	c	ch	j	jh	ñ
(retroflex)	ṭ	ṭh	ḍ/ṛ	ḍh/ṛh	ṇ
(dental)	t	th	d	dh	n
(labial)	p	ph	b	bh	m

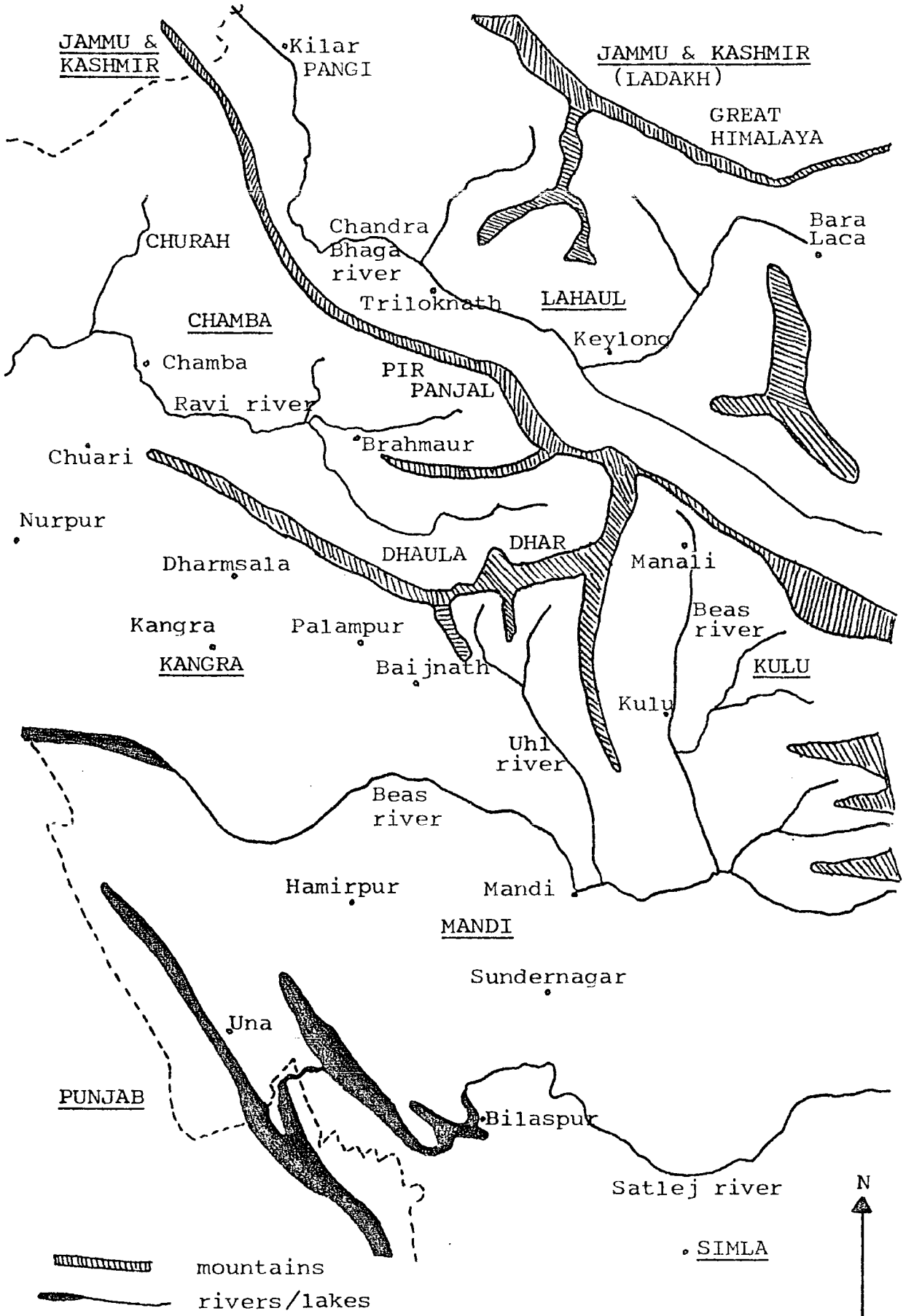
(2) others.

y r l v ś ṣ s h

ṃ

I have observed all diacritics and marked long vowels, but with certain exceptions which I now note. I have ignored all such marks on well known names and place names, where it would have seemed pedantic: Brahman, Rajput, Punjab and Kangra are all examples. Likewise, where it is common to transliterate place names with 'ch' rather than 'c' I have done so, even though this introduces an element of inconsistency. In this context consistency seemed to me less important than the use of the familiar form: examples here would include Himachal (rather than Himacal) Pradesh, and Chamba (rather than Camba).

But there are inevitably plenty of borderline cases where there are no conventional Romanised forms: I have chosen to write Churah (rather than Curah), Chandra-Bhaga (rather than Candra), Chuari (rather than Cuari); but I have transliterated the Chamba dialect as Cameāli. Lastly, I have not marked final vowels which are long, on the grounds that this is not an important guide to pronunciation.



MAP 1. Western Himachal Pradesh.

CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

1.1 The Setting: Physical Geography.

This is a study of the Gaddis and their associated castes, a Hindu population of some 70-80,000 who live in certain parts of Chamba and Kangra Districts in Himachal Pradesh, and in the main combine agriculture with transhumant pastoralism. Chamba and Kangra are located in western Himachal Pradesh: both border Punjab, while Chamba also shares a boundary with Jammu and Kashmir. These two districts are separated by the impressive mountain range known as the Dhaula Dhar, which is variously classed as a range of the Outer Himalayas, and as a spur of the Pir Panjal, or Pāngi range, a massive section of the Mid-Himalayas. The Dhaula Dhar dominates the Kangra valley and the numerous ridges of the Siwaliks to the south, for the mountains rise with an abruptness unmatched anywhere else in the region, from the northern edge of the Kangra valley at an altitude of 4,500 feet, to an average height of 15,000 feet, with a few peaks of 17,000 feet. At the eastern end of the Kangra valley, the Dhaula Dhar veers north-east, making a formidable barrier between the two remotest parts of Kangra District, known as Bara and Chota Bangāhal, and joining the Pir Panjal on the north-western boundary of Kulu District. Here, in the mountainous interior where the districts of Chamba, Kangra, Kulu and Mandi all meet, the Dhaula Dhar attains its greatest altitude.

While Kangra extends southwards from the Dhaula Dhar and the fertile valley at its base, through a series of progressively lower ridges to the edge of the Punjab plains, Chamba is hemmed in by mountains on all sides except to the south-west (where its territory also includes an area on the south side of the Dhaula Dhar, at this point a chain of high hills rather than a mountain range). The main part of Chamba District is bounded to the north by the Pir Panjal, which reaches an altitude of 20,000 feet in a few places. But the remotest part of the district, Pāngi, lies beyond the Pir Panjal (as also does the adjoining area of Chamba-Lahaul, which was only transferred to the district of Lahaul and Spiti in the 1970s), in a zone that can be classed geographically with the Tibetan plateau (see Map 1).

Within this sizeable area (the districts of Chamba and Kangra each cover more than 3,000 square miles [1]), I am chiefly concerned with a much more circumscribed region immediately to the north and south of the Dhaula Dhar. Climatically, these mountains are high enough for the rainfall on either side to be markedly different. Kangra is an area of extremely heavy rainfall, three-quarters of it or more falling during the summer monsoon, from July to mid-September (Kayastha 1964: 42-4; Gaston, Hunter & Garson 1981: 9-10). But within the district the rainfall becomes steadily heavier towards the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar: so much so that the rainfall at 4,000 feet is more than twice the amount at 1,500 feet. Around Dharmsala and Palampur, both close to the Dhaula Dhar, rainfall is habitually over 100 inches annually. But the variation from year to year can be considerable: for the fifteen years from

1868 to 1883 the lowest annual rainfall at Palampur was 76 inches, the highest 152 inches, with an average of 103 inches (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: iii). Although the summer monsoon accounts for this high level of rainfall, significant quantities fall during winter, from late December through to the end of February, while the months of March, April, May and June are punctuated with storms, often of quite ferocious intensity. The winter rain produces a heavy snowfall on the Dhaula Dhar, but it rarely settles for long below 7,000 feet, and is unlikely even to fall as snow below 4,500 feet. To all intents and purposes, then, precipitation in the Kangra valley is entirely in the form of rain, although melt-water from the snow on the Dhaula Dhar guarantees a supply of water for the population of the valley during even the driest of pre-monsoon months.

All this is in contrast to the Chamba side of the Dhaula Dhar, where winter precipitation is much likelier to take the form of snow, and where the summer monsoon is far weaker. From the area around the town of Chamba up the Rāvi river to the east, precipitation amounts to between 40 and 60 inches annually, of which less than half falls in the summer monsoon (Gaston, Hunter & Garson 1981: 9-11; Newell 1967: 26 [2]). In those parts of Chamba beyond the Pir Panjal or Pāngi range the climate is arid, with 80% of the precipitation in the form of snow and a negligible summer rainfall.

People recognise three seasons to the year, whichever side of the Dhaula Dhar they live. The hot season (taundi) starts with Śivrātri, Śiva's birthday, in mid-February, and runs until the summer monsoon starts in July. The following

months are known simply as 'the rains' (barkha or barsa), and the transition to the third season, winter (syāl or yuhūnd, yuhū being a local term for snow) takes place with the festival of Ser, in mid-September (cf. Berreman 1972: 10; Parry 1979: 10). In Kangra, the winter rain is referred to as syāl ka barkha/barsa. By comparison with the arid interior regions beyond the Pāngi range, or the plains of Punjab, most of Chamba and Kangra enjoy a fairly moderate range of temperatures. Thus, while Ambala, in Haryana, and Keylong, in Lahaul, have a difference of over 20°C between mean minimum temperatures in January and July, the corresponding gap in Chamba and Simla is significantly lower, at 16.8° and 13.8° respectively (Gaston, Hunter & Garson 1981: 12).

1.2 The Setting: Administrative.

Himachal Pradesh, as constituted today, is divided into twelve districts. Two of these - Lahaul & Spiti and Kinnaur - are largely beyond the Mid-Himalayas; five fall entirely in the Śiwalik ranges - Una, Hamirpur, Bilaspur, Solan and Sirmaur; and the remaining five - Chamba, Kangra, Kulu, Mandi and Simla - lie in between, including the outer ranges of the Himalayas as well as large portions of territory in the Śiwaliks. Although Himachal Pradesh came into existence in 1951, unifying the collection of former princely states known loosely as the Punjab hill states, and with its capital at Simla, it was 1966 before Himachal Pradesh attained its present size. In its early form the new state was a geographical and administrative anomaly, for the enormous district of Kangra - which in British

times included the now separate districts of Kulu and Lahaul & Spiti - remained under Punjab administration after Indian independence, thereby splitting Himachal Pradesh into two parts, Chamba being separated from the eastern districts by the wedge of Kangra and Kulu. After an animated political debate in the early 1960s, well summarised by Parry (1979: 13-14), Kangra was separated from Punjab and included within an enlarged Himachal Pradesh. At the same time tehsīl Una was taken from Hoshiarpur District (Punjab) and added to Kangra, while Kulu became a new district. Since 1966 further internal modifications have taken place: some, such as the upgrading of Hamirpur and Una to district status, reflecting a concern that the size and importance of Kangra in state politics should be kept in check.

The administrative unit beneath district level is the tehsīl, or subdivision, of which there are today four in Kangra and five in Chamba. A tehsīl, in turn, contains a number of Community Development Blocks. Moving now to an altogether more localised level, there are certain differences to note between Kangra and at least that part of Chamba with which I am concerned. In Kangra, the smallest administrative unit is the tīka, which I shall translate as 'village' even though many tīkas are very small, often closer to the notion of a hamlet. A cluster of tīkas are grouped into a mauza, a revenue village or revenue circle. Although these revenue units predated the British annexation of Kangra in 1846, they have never had any significance for social relations, as Parry has noted (1979: 21), and boundaries between mauzas can appear arbitrary to all concerned. But their significance today - as in the British

period - derives from rights in and management of land within their boundaries. All mauzas, and most of their component tīkas, contain tracts of uncultivated wasteland (śāmlāt), often forested, in addition to the area of private cultivation. Particularly in mauzas leading up to the Dhaula Dhar, the proportion of cultivated land is small in relation to the total area, and substantial tracts may be largely forested wasteland. The rights in this land, and its management, are complex matters. Corporate rights in the waste, which were granted to landowners after the first land revenue settlement conducted by the British (1849), and which in modified form survive to the present, were and are hedged about with qualifications, for the State, through the agency of the Forest Department, has for many decades retained substantial rights in timber [3] (Kangra District Gazetteer 1906: 201, 205). These State rights in forest have increased rather than decreased as pressure on timber resources and awareness of the dangers of deforestation have grown, and by the time of the 1961 Census no less than six classes of forest, each with different implications for use and access, were recognised (1961 Census Kangra District Handbook 1970: 34). Simplifying somewhat, however, we may say that while the Forest Department's rights in forested waste within tīka and mauza boundaries override those of the population who hold corporate rights in the soil of the wasteland, the rights of the latter remain intact nonetheless; and where the Forest Department does not exercise a management function of one kind or another, the grām pancāyat does so on behalf of its constituents. This is the 'village council', consisting of elected representatives from every

tīka within an area that is usually somewhat smaller than a mauza, so that typically there are a handful of grām pancāyats within each mauza. Control over wasteland is just one of the responsibilities they exercise.

By contrast, there is no administrative classification in terms of tīka and mauza in Brahmaur tehsil, the part of Chamba with which I am most concerned. Single villages are discrete revenue estates (mohal), equivalent in a sense to mauzas of one tīka, and there is no larger revenue unit of a cluster of villages. Villages are simply known as grāon. During princely times, however, which it must be remembered lasted in Chamba until Indian independence, revenue circles comparable to the Kangra mauza were in existence - a fact that is only to be expected, given the uniformity of fiscal and tenurial regimes in all the princely states of this region. People in Brahmaur still use the term pargana: but this is no longer a functional administrative entity, and in any case used to denote an area larger than the revenue circle, for in Brahmaur several such circles were grouped under one pargana (Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 269-70). As in Kangra, the land management responsibilities relating to the control and allocation of wasteland are today administered by the grām pancāyats, subject of course to the overriding interest of the Forest Department.

1.3 Settlement Patterns.

Parry's description of the settlement pattern typical of the Kangra valley (1979: 18-21) is not wholly applicable to

the Gaddi villages which are found along its northern edge, on the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar. He states that there are no nucleated villages around Palampur, and that tīkas are dispersed haphazardly or laid out 'chain-wise' along a ridge. The nucleated unit tends to be the house-cluster, several of which comprise a tīka. These house-clusters may be named, and although they may consist of more than one caste, a single lineage tends to be dominant. Consistent with such a description, Parry plays down the significance of the tīka for social relations, and stresses instead the importance of the house-cluster. Along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, however, there is a tendency - and it is no more than a tendency - towards nucleated tīkas. Parry suggests that the boundary between tīkas is seldom obvious, but along the slopes of the mountains there are rarely such difficulties, for though few villages are completely compact and nucleated they tend to have a core residential area with a few outlying clusters which visibly 'belong' to the core. This tendency towards nucleated villages along the Dhaula Dhar is not only associated with the Gaddis and their associated castes, but also with a caste known as Seoks. The most notable example, nevertheless, is a village dominated by the Gaddis and called Karnāthu, where we lived and where the bulk of my fieldwork was done. With its large size (over 100 households) and its prominent position on a steep slope, its nucleated and congested layout was visible for miles around. In this characteristic it simply mirrors more closely than any other village in the Kangra valley the settlement pattern typical of the interior mountain valleys of Brahmaur, Bangāhal, Kulu and Mandi, where villages are

invariably nucleated.

The pattern reported from Garhwal by Berreman (1972, 1978), in which dwellings (chan) rather simpler than the main family home have been constructed where new land has been opened up for cultivation, often at some distance from the village, has no real parallel in Brahmaur and those parts of Kangra with which I am familiar, at the present time. A mere handful of houses and huts, a minute proportion compared to the numbers Berreman discusses (1972: 34-5), are scattered high up on the mountain slopes where families have taken land into cultivation, but since these are invariably above 6,000 feet in Kangra, at the margins of cultivability, these are little more than isolated cases and are hardly indicative of a general pattern.

On the other hand, it seems to me likely that the process observed by Berreman did indeed occur along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar in Kangra, and possibly in Brahmaur also, in the 19th and early part of the 20th Centuries. Berreman's data show that from 1958-72 Sirkanda's population increase tended to be absorbed in chans rather than in Sirkanda itself (1978: 352-3), and he sums up the cycle of population growth in these words:

> "excess population is allocated to chans; chans metamorphose into villages; expanding villages establish chans; and so on. But it is not an endless cycle. As cultivable land becomes fully utilized, and as forests and wild lands become depleted, this mechanism for accomodating population growth becomes impossible. Chans and new villages cannot be established because there is no place left to put them. This has not happened in the vicinity of Sirkanda; it is not even immediately imminent" (1978: 355).

But this has happened in Palampur and Brahmaur tehsīls. Comparing Berreman's statistics on the ratio of population to cultivated land (1978: 334-37) with my own from Brahmaur and Palampur reveals clearly that far more critical densities have been reached in this part of Himachal Pradesh. These are topics I shall take up in detail elsewhere (see Chapter 4 especially), but the evidence encourages me to suggest that a process analogous to the one Berreman describes used to occur on either side of the Dhaula Dhar, but is more or less ruled out now, unless marginal agricultural land were to be gained at the expense of massive deforestation. On political, environmental and social grounds this is today most unlikely.

Regardless of whether the villages inhabited by the Gaddis and their associated castes are nucleated (as in Brahmaur) or relatively less nucleated (as in Kangra), they are composed of groups of houses built around a series of courtyards. Houses which front on to the same courtyard invariably belong to a single lineage of an extremely low level of segmentation (in which household heads are likely to be descendants of a common grandfather or, at the most, great-grandfather). Neighbouring courtyards are also likely to contain fellow agnates, probably slightly more distantly related. This is no different from the pattern Parry describes lower down in Kangra, except that the clusters of agnates living at some distance from other similar clusters tend to be increasingly bunched together as one approaches the mountains. Low caste courtyards have a tendency to be placed on the edge of villages: at least, where villages have an obvious core, one would not expect to find low caste houses anywhere but on the periphery. But where outlying

groups of houses have been constructed a short distance from the village core, such a clearcut pattern is less discernible, and Brahman or Rajput courtyards may easily be placed alongside low caste ones.

Parallel with the transition from the nucleated settlement pattern of the mountain interior to the dispersed pattern found generally in Kangra, with many Gaddi villages in Kangra falling somewhere between the two, is the transformation in house design itself. Indeed, perhaps the most visible difference between most Gaddi villages in Kangra and those in Brahmaur is the style of house construction. Brahmaur has its own style, similar but not identical to that found in Kulu and Bangāhal. What all these interior regions have in common is a reliance on timber to bind and support sections of dry stone, and much more than in the lower hills timber is used in the house structure and in more decorative features. Newell states (1967: 33-4) that neither mortar nor nails are used for the main structure, and that walls are between three and four feet in thickness. Houses are commonly three storeys high, and occasionally four, although in the part of Brahmaur known as Trehta two storey houses seem to be more common than elsewhere in the tehsīl. Each storey has its verandah, some completely open and others half closed in with a decorated wooden partition. Livestock are kept on the ground floor, and in winter when snow lies it may be necessary to keep them indoors for weeks on end. All houses are slated, although poorer households sometimes patch damaged roofs with rough pieces of timber. Newell, who enthuses about the virtues of this type of house design, stresses its strength and durability, and it is worth noting

that the similar Kulu design is said to be particularly safe in the face of earthquakes - something that has never been said of the Kangra design.

Gaddi houses in Kangra conform overwhelmingly to the style found among the Kangra population in general. However, here again Karnāthu is something of an exception, with a significant number of houses which are perhaps best described as hybrids: notably in the amount of timber decoration of the older houses (Forest Department restrictions on the provision of cheap timber as much as any changes in taste mean that this style has died out now), and in the number of three storey buildings. For as Parry observes (1979: 19) the typical Kangra house is of two storeys only. The ground storey is usually built of stone and flint held together by a mud mortar; while the upper storey is made of mud-bricks secured with the same mud mortar. Roofs are also of slate, which is quarried at several places along the Dhaula Dhar. The tendency for the wealthier families to have concrete floors or verandahs on the ground storey, which Parry reports, is found, a decade later, among the Gaddis also. But since it is only a small proportion of households which have separate cattle sheds, most families continuing the Brahmaur practice of keeping resident livestock indoors on the ground floor at night, concrete floors are scarcely appropriate for most, quite apart from the question of cost. As in Brahmaur, Gaddi houses in Kangra have shutters for their windows, but no glass. Indeed, even more than a concrete floor and verandah, glass in windows among the rural population in Kangra is a sign of urban tastes and the wealth to support them.

In both Brahmaur and Kangra, houses often contain more than one household (tol), defining a household by the criterion of a shared hearth (cūlāh) for cooking. The hearth is always situated on one of the upper floors of a house, and is the main focus of domestic life indoors. All informal socialising, either with relatives or close neighbours of the same caste, takes place in this upstairs room, and most - sometimes all - of the family sleep there, on the floor close to the hearth. The ground floor has different connotations. In Brahmaur it is preeminently a cattle-shelter, but for Gaddis in Kangra it combines the functions of cattle-shelter (for many) with the need for a space where more formal or public entertaining goes on. Families who have at least two ground floor rooms can keep these functions separate, but for many households with only two rooms altogether - one upstairs and one downstairs - this is impossible, although animals can always remain tethered outside when the ground floor is needed for a social purpose. The ground floor is scarcely a living room in the sense that Parry describes (1979: 19), and for Gaddis it would be truer to say that the upstairs room is closer to fulfilling such a function, albeit with certain restrictions. Most families have a string-cot, which the senior man of the house may use. These cots are kept on the ground floor, and consequently anyone using them will sleep downstairs, with the tethered livestock if necessary. Newly married couples may also retreat downstairs for privacy if there is only a single room available upstairs.

1.4 Definition of the Gaddis: the Caste Structure of Brahmauri Society.

I have used the term Gaddi loosely so far, mentioning occasionally the existence of castes associated with them, whilst neither naming them nor saying anything about their relation to the Gaddis. In this section I shall provide an initial description of the caste structure of this society, and its relation to the wider caste hierarchy of Chamba and Kangra, addressing first the question of who is a Gaddi. It is worth pointing out at the outset that other sections of the population in Himachal Pradesh, as well as government officials, habitually use the term Gaddi in a sense that is at variance with the Gaddis' own usage.

Strictly speaking, and to follow indigenous usage, the name Gaddi is a caste name. Today, Gaddis all claim Rajput status, and as a provisional orientation to the data we may say that they would rank at the lower end of the fairly elastic Rajput category, as it has been analysed in Kangra by Parry (1979: 201-3, 227-34). As we shall see later, there are grounds for arguing that formerly at least certain sections of the caste may have ranked somewhat higher. In this regard, it is significant that as recently as the 1950s, when Newell first undertook fieldwork in Brahmaur, the term Gaddi subsumed a number of groups which to some extent maintained separate identities - as Rajputs, Khatris, Thākurs and Rānas (Rāthis in earlier accounts) - whilst marrying isogamously: what Newell called an isogamous union (1967: 1; also 1955). At the present time, in Kangra particularly but also among most

people in Brahmaur, these former distinctions are scarcely remembered, let alone functional, and the Gaddis are internally undifferentiated, referring to themselves simply as Gaddis, while at the same time claiming that Gaddis are Rajputs.

In a secondary sense, Gaddis are also defined by reference to territory. Their centre is Brahmaur (in some texts Bharmaur), today a tehsīl [4], which incorporates the upper part of the Rāvi valley with its main tributary, the Budhal nalla, although it has always excluded the actual headwaters of the Rāvi (the area known as Bara Bangāhal, in Kangra) (see Map 1). Brahmaur is known familiarly as Gadderan, or Gaddiland, and as Śivbhūmi, Śiva's land or earth, and identification with this territory is extremely strong. Gaddis are also found outside Brahmaur, notably in adjacent parts of the Rāvi valley towards Chamba, and also across the Dhaula Dhar, where they are concentrated along the southern slopes of the mountains between Chuāri (within Chamba) and Bir (on the Kangra-Mandi border). In both these areas people are Gaddis by virtue of ancestral links with Gadderan, but the basis of these links is different in the two cases. In the latter, seasonal migration has led to permanent emigration, and settlement in Kangra or around Chuāri. Yet even where all links with Brahmaur have gone, the identity as Gaddis survives, and in Kangra they remain a highly distinctive group.

My knowledge of Gaddis lower down the Rāvi towards Chamba is more sketchy [5]. The relation of Gaddis there to Gadderan is, however, quite complex. Basically, a Gaddi identity has in this century been a mixed blessing for those living in the Rāvi valley closer to Chamba itself, and it would be a mistake to define any precise boundary to this system. If Newell is right - and

here I am in agreement with his argument - the area known loosely as Gadderan once covered more territory than it does today (1970. 49). That is, it used not to be coterminous with the long-established boundaries of Brahmaur subdivision [6], as it is today, but also extended down the Rāvi towards Chamba. Brahmaur may always have been the heart of Gadderan, but Gadderan was formerly not confined to Brahmaur.

Its contraction is attributable to the political consequences of the Pax Britannica for the Chamba state, and the resultant dislocation of what had been a kind of 'special relationship' between the Gaddis and the Chamba ruling house (discussed in Chapter 2); for the position of the Gaddis in relation to the wider Chamba caste hierarchy seems to have declined during the last one hundred years, corresponding to the aftermath of the loss of their prestigious connection with the State. Newell reports a tendency for Gaddi identity either to be shed, through the assertion of a broader Rajput or Rāna identity, or for it to denote a significantly lower status than before, in certain villages between Chamba and the boundary of Brahmaur subdivision (1970: 48-50). Moreover, I found myself that in and around the important village of Chatrārhi, just five miles below the boundary of Brahmaur, people by preference usually avoided the identity of Gaddi, even though they acknowledged their links and affinities with Brahmaur. There are ramifications to this interpretation which will be discussed elsewhere (see particularly Chapters 2 & 7). In the present context, for the definition of who are Gaddis, it will suffice to suggest that as the status of Gaddis began to slump in Chamba generally, Gadderan contracted. Outside Brahmaur, a Gaddi iden-

tity became more of a liability than an asset; within Brahmaur, Gaddis endeavoured to protect themselves against the threat of a decline in status by closing boundaries (for instance, by modifying marriage patterns). Nevertheless, regardless of undoubted attempts to shed Gaddi identities in the middle section of the Rāvi valley, census figures indicate that there are almost as many Gaddis in Chamba living outside Brahmaur as within it (see Chapter 1.7). The bulk of these are not migrants from Gadderan, like those in Kangra or around Chuāri. They are Gaddis living outside Gadderan because Gadderan has in effect shrunk, not because they have emigrated.

Alongside the Gaddis, accounting for a much smaller proportion of the population, are Brahmans, and three low castes, Sipis, Rihāras and Hālis. Moving down the Rāvi valley, away from Brahmaur subdivision, the caste picture gradually becomes more complex with the presence of additional castes, but I am not competent to discuss the caste structure of this area, and my comments concern Brahmaur and Palampur in Kangra. My data from six tīkas in Palampur tehsīl, of which five are inhabited almost entirely by people of Brahmaur origin, shows proportions as follows: 74% Gaddi, 14% Brahman, 10% Sipi and 2% Rihāra, with no Hālis in these villages. These figures are compatible with Newell's from Brahmaur, other than the rather higher proportion of Sipis I found: "the rough proportion of caste members was 80 per cent Gaddi, 10 per cent Brahman, 3 per cent Sipi, and 2 per cent low castes" (1970: 46), Rihāras and Hālis being included in the last category, although Sipis also count as low caste. Brahmans and Gaddis together form the upper castes (unci jāt or ande in Kangra, swaran in Brahmaur

and Chatrārhi), a numerically as well as economically and ritually dominant 90% of the total population. The remaining castes are collectively nīcī jāt or bāhare, in Kangra if not in Brahmaur. The Sipis, however, rank over the other two and are far more numerous. This synthesis of several castes in an upper and a lower bloc is commonly reported by anthropologists from many parts of India, although the terms of the division are by no means always equivalent (within Himachal Pradesh, cf. Brar 1971; Nitzberg 1970; Parry 1979; Rosser 1956; Sharma 1969). As Parry shows (1979: 109-11), the Kangra division into 'inside' and 'outside' castes (replicated in the Gaddis' ande and bāhare) does not parallel exactly the distinction between touchable and strictly untouchable castes (as viewed from a high caste perspective). Nor is it possible to view the division precisely in terms of the fourfold varna scheme, with 'outside' castes ranking below even Sūdra status, for commonly even the lowest castes are considered Sūdras in Kangra. Likewise, the Sipis and Rihāras are not strictly untouchable (that is, polluting by touch), and both are more likely to be classed as Sūdras than as outside the varna classification. Yet however elusive any criteria on which the distinction is based may be, it marks a major pollution barrier nonetheless.

Each caste is endogamous, in the sense that Brahmans and Gaddis do not intermarry (with one past exception, discussed in Chapter 7), and neither do the low castes. Where the concept of endogamy becomes far more problematic is in relation to Brahman intermarriage with other Brahmans or Gaddi intermarriage with other Rajputs (or those claiming Rajput status). This is a complex question reviewed at length in Chapter 7, and I will

only note provisionally that in Brahmaur and those Gaddi villages along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar in Palampur with which I am most familiar, endogamy is almost total. This is not to suggest that on the geographical margins of Gaddi society, in the mid-Rāvi valley between Brahmaur and Chamba, or in Kangra where Gaddis have moved away from the villages along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, the situation is necessarily the same. This issue also will be touched on later.

These, then, are the castes associated with the Gaddis, and what I have written about the Gaddis' identification with Gadderan applies by extension to these castes also. Within this society these castes are today known by their caste names alone. Gaddi is not used as a generic identity for the society as a whole, and it would be quite mistaken to speak of 'low caste Gaddis' or 'Brahman Gaddis' from the point of view of a member of this society (cf. Newell 1967: 20). However, other sections of the population in Himachal Pradesh habitually use the term Gaddi in just such an all-inclusive sense.

In this context, the early British administrative literature presents something of a puzzle. For authors oscillate between using Gaddi as an all-inclusive identity, embracing the low castes as well as the high, which one source admits has no foundation in indigenous usage; and a narrower usage which excludes the low castes but does nevertheless embrace the Brahmans. Lyall, for example, writes thus:

> "The Gaddis are of course Hindus though I have shown them apart from the Jandre or cotton clad Hindus for

> they form as it were a distinct nationality. The first class Gaddis are divided into Brahmans, Bhāts, Rajputs, Khatris, Thākars, Rāthis and Tarkhāns, and the second class into Sepis, Bādies, Hālis, Dhaugirs (Dogris) and Lohārs...The Rāthis are the most numerous" (1876: 86).

Another definition is given in Rose (1911, vol II: 256):

> "The Gaddis are divided into four classes: (i) Brahmans, (ii) Khatris and Rajputs..., (iii) Thākurs and Rāthis ...and (iv) a menial or dependant class, comprising Kolis, Rihāras, Lohārs, Bādhis, Sipis and Hālis, to whom the title of Gaddi is incorrectly applied by outsiders as inhabitants of the Gaderan, though the true Gaddis do not acknowledge them as Gaddis at all ...The majority are Khatris".

Despite the element of ambiguity in these passages, they contain important evidence for the anthropologist. It is interesting, first of all, that both authors include a far larger range of low castes than are found in Brahmaur or along the Dhaula Dhar in Kangra. This is an indication, in my view, that Gadderan indeed extended well down the Rāvi towards Chamba in the last part of the 19th Century, for the additional castes do occur in the mid-Rāvi in Chamba tehsīl. Second, these passages define the internal distinctions which existed within what is today simply the undifferentiated Gaddi caste: Rajputs, Khatris, Thākurs and Rāthis.

To return to the question of exactly which groups formerly counted as Gaddis, I think we can discount the low castes: although obviously associated with the Gaddis, they have almost certainly never been Gaddis as such, other than in the mistaken usage of outsiders. The position of the Brahmans, on the other hand, is much more problematic. Were they at this earlier period considered to be Gaddis, or is this another case of ambiguity

as to whether the term Gaddi could be used in a generic sense? Newell speculates (1967: 21) that when Lyall wrote Brahmans may have rated as Gaddis through incorporation in the latter's isogamous marriage system in certain areas. I reject this entirely, for there is no evidence of Brahman-Gaddi inter-marriage from anywhere but a single remote village (see Chapter 7). Moreover, it begs the key question of whether at that time marriage was as isogamous as Newell assumes, or whether on the contrary there were tendencies to hypergamy.

A more promising alternative is that the identity of Gaddi used to be a segmentary concept, in a way that has parallels with the terms Brahman or Rajput even now. Thus, at the most inclusive level, over and above the level of the caste itself, the title Gaddi applied to Brahmans as well as Rajputs, Khatris, Thākurs and Rāthis. At a more exclusive level, corresponding to the most common usage, Gaddi was a caste name, and thus Brahmans were differentiated from Gaddis. And at an even more exclusive level there is some slight evidence that in various contexts the Rajput or the Rāthi section of the caste may have been opposed to the remaining three sections [7]. Today Gaddi is no longer a segmentary concept: the Gaddi caste is homogeneous; and Brahmans would not themselves use that title.

Certain factors do, nevertheless, encourage the prevalent perception outside that Gaddi is a generic title for all castes, high and low. First, their traditional clothing, still widely worn, sets them apart. The adult woman's luāncari is unique. A full length dress worn over Punjabi salwār and kamīz, it consists of a bodice stitched to a heavily pleated skirt which, if made of cotton, contains between twelve and eighteen metres of cloth.

In winter, the older women especially wear a woollen version of the same design. Although cotton luāncaris are far more commonly worn than the woollen equivalents, the latter were without doubt the originals, and the cotton dress only became popular towards the end of the last century (Rose 1911, vol II: 259), presumably in the wake of the expansion of the market economy [8].

Perhaps the most vital part of the costume from the Gaddis' own viewpoint is the extremely long waist-band of woollen rope, dyed black, and known as dora, which is tied around repeatedly creating a very bulky effect. The dora is worn by both sexes: by women with their luāncaris; and by men wearing the traditional shepherding garment, a woollen coat (cola) reaching down to the knees and loose enough to hold several lambs, but held in place by a dora [9]. Newell has written indeed that the dora is the main symbol of a distinctively Gaddi style of dress, and by implication that it is one of the defining symbols of Gaddi identity (1967: 20). It is certainly an item of clothing with auspicious associations. I learned that Siva is thought to have given it to the Gaddis, while Rose refers to a Gaddi belief that they adopted the dress of Śiva and Pārvati when they settled in Brahmaur (1911, vol II: 259). Confirming the symbolic centrality and auspiciousness of the dora, a woman who is widowed has to remove her dora at the time she removes her jewellery, although she puts it on once more after the first year of mourning. During this year widows wear another kind of long rope around the waist, made out of undyed goat's hair and called rassa, a word simply meaning 'rope' and lacking any auspicious connotations. Men never wear the rassa.

These crucial features of distinctive and traditional clothing are correctly identified with the Gaddis; but all their associated castes have adopted them too. Brahman, Sipi and Rihāra women commonly wear the luāncari, and with it the dora, and consequently may be taken to be Gaddis. If one virtually never sees a Sipi or Rihāra man wearing the dora this is because Sipis rarely and Rihāras never hold flocks, and hence do not wear the shepherding garment, the cola, which is never worn other than with the flocks.

In dress style, therefore, a unique appearance common to the women of all castes [10], and to shepherding men, whether they are Brahmans or Gaddis, fosters the outsider's view that they are all Gaddis. In addition, visible evidence of a way of life which is assumed to be the same for all castes produces a similar perception. The general Kangra population, for example, know that they live in the higher villages along or close to the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar; associate them with the flocks which traverse Kangra twice a year en route to summer or winter grazing grounds; know that they have roots in Brahmaur; and know that a seasonal migration of people between there and Kangra is as much a feature of their way of life as the seasonal movement of sheep and goats. In addition, assumptions are commonly made about the distinctiveness of 'Gaddi' customs: 'Gaddi marriages', for example, are typically thought of as quite distinct from their own, regardless of the fact that there are few variations in ritual detail. Thus, their observations and assumptions incline the wider Kangra population to lump together the Gaddis and their associated castes as one group: whatever their caste - and it is known

that they have castes - they are all Gaddis.

The third factor which unites Gaddis and their associated castes, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of outsiders, is their language. Gāḍi, or sometimes Brahmauri, is classed in the Linguistic Survey of India as a Western Pahāri language. It is closely related to Cameāli, the language spoken around the town of Chamba, of which it is indeed one form (Grierson 1916, vol IX, pt. IV). It is rather more distantly related to Kulūi, the language of Kulu, and is related more distantly still to Kāngṛi, spoken in the Kangra valley. Although Kāngṛi speakers describe themselves and their language as Pahāri, Grierson's linguistic classification places Kāngṛi as a dialect of Dogra, which is intermediate between standard Punjabi and the Pahāri of adjacent areas (1916, vol IX, pt. IV). I know that many Kāngṛi speakers have considerable difficulty in understanding Gāḍi, unless the speakers of the latter make concessions of grammar and vocabulary or switch completely to Kāngṛi, as - to varying degrees - nearly all of them can.

A fourth factor, of a very different order, which strengthens the notion that the Brahmans, though not the low castes, are Gaddis, is the administrative status of the two high castes in Chamba. For in that district the Gaddis are classed as a scheduled tribe [11]; and Brahmans living in Brahmaur, plus those in other parts of Chamba who claim to be 'Gaddi Brahmans', also have scheduled tribe status and are classed with Gaddis. Since the inception of Himachal Pradesh, then, the term 'Gaddi Brahman' has been politically and administratively meaningful, even though in a strictly ethnographic sense it is today something of a contradiction in terms. Compounding the administrative

complexities, Gaddis resident in Kangra do not have scheduled tribe status. This discrepancy derives from the fact that until 1966 Chamba and Kangra were in different states, the respective state governments taking different stands on the position of the Gaddis. Before the merger of Kangra with Himachal Pradesh a fresh look was taken at the list of scheduled tribes, and it was decided to deschedule the Chamba Gaddis. But the Bill was allowed to lapse and has never been revived (T.Negi 1976). To balance in some measure the advantages of scheduled tribe status for the Chamba Gaddis, Gaddis in Kangra have since 1966 created for themselves two new institutions, to give them, as they see it, a stronger voice in dealings with the state government. Both these bodies have tended to consolidate the view that the term Gaddi is generic. At least, Brahmans are definitely counted as Gaddis; Sipis, Rihāras and the very few Hālis present more of a problem, for while explicitly they would not be counted as Gaddis, implicitly they are treated by these organisations in a way that evokes Lyall's notion of second-class Gaddis.

These two organisations are the 'Himachal Gaddi Union', a registered Trade Union, and the 'Himachal United Gaddi Association'. The former is overwhelmingly concentrated in Palampur tehsīl, and is best described as a shepherds' union. In theory membership is open to Gaddis (using the term in a sense that is not clarified, but would definitely include Brahmans), whether or not they hold flocks, and other pastoralists in Himachal Pradesh. Thus, it is claimed that shepherds from Kinnaur, Kulu and Lahaul are members. In practice, membership from other regions is negligible. In its first year (1967)

there was only one token office-holder from elsewhere (Lahaul), all the others coming from a few villages at the eastern end of the Dhaula Dhar in Palampur. Ten years later there was not even a token outsider, and even within the area where its strength lay it had the reputation for serving the interests solely of the larger shepherds. To all intents and purposes, therefore, it is of no relevance to Sipis, Rihāras and Hālis, and even within Palampur there are many Gaddis who do not belong to it. The 'Himachal United Gaddi Association' is less familiar to me, as it is based around Dharmsala, at the western end of the Dhaula Dhar, and is inactive in Palampur. Unlike the Gaddi Union, this organisation is much less of a shepherds' body, and is in principle concerned with representing all 'Gaddis' in Kangra. In other words, it aims to serve the low castes also, who in this sense are counted as Gaddis. Thus, administratively and politically, the years since Indian independence have brought fresh life to the assumption that Gaddi is a generic term, both in the wider society and on the part of 'Gaddis' dealing with the wider society; even though within the framework of social intercourse with one another the term Gaddi is emphatically not extended to any other caste.

Turning now to the low castes, it must be stressed that even in Brahmaur they do not share the scheduled tribe status of the two high castes. All three low castes are classed as scheduled castes, in whichever district they live: a distinction that was undoubtedly crucial for the two high castes, for were the former to have been given 'tribe' status the latter would have felt contaminated by association, instead of protected. Yet even if Sipis and the other low castes cannot officially

lay claim to the Gaddi identity that scheduled tribe status would afford them, and have only the doubtful benefit of being scheduled caste, the widespread - if vague - tendency for the title Gaddi to be used generically for all castes does work in their favour on occasions. Certainly I know that Sipis endeavour to pass themselves off as Gaddis whenever they think the attempt will be successful (i.e. recruitment to the army, I have heard). I would say that for the low castes the element of ambiguity surrounding the frame of reference of the title Gaddi is a godsend, for outside their own society it gives them some scope to manipulate their own identity.

I have identified four factors which encourage the usage of the title Gaddi in an all-embracing sense in the wider society. Yet these same features also help to foster a sense of shared distinctiveness in relation to the wider Chamba and Kangra population among all castes linked with the Gaddis. Dress, language, and broader but vaguer notions about the distinctive customs and way of life they all have in common, are each seen as being 'Gaddi'. A Brahman's or a Sipi's identity can therefore only be understood by reference to the Gaddis. In the isolation of Brahmaur this is probably academic; but in Kangra, where they live close to other castes of the wider population it is an important point to appreciate. Only today is this sense of distinctiveness starting to break down, partly due to the impact of mass education, for boys if not for girls.

I hope to have shown that the question of exactly whom the title Gaddi should be reserved for has been complicated by probable subtle historical shifts in meaning, and also by the continuing discrepancy between indigenous usage and a

usage which has currency in the wider regional society. The latter might have been disregarded as insignificant, were it not for two factors. First, it is prevalent in western Himachal Pradesh. And second, a certain amount of authority derives both from the government's definition of which castes are to count as Gaddis (i.e. through the scheduled tribe classification), and from the definition implicitly adopted by the two organisations which represent the 'Gaddis' in Kangra. Having explored the ramifications of the term Gaddi, however, I intend to follow the strictly indigenous usage, on the grounds that this is the more ethnographically appropriate. In other words, I use the term Gaddi solely of the Gaddi caste, that is, the caste which claims Rajput status and is numerically overwhelmingly predominant. Nevertheless, there is a need for a generic term to use in reference to this social system as a whole, and to continue with a long-winded phrase such as 'Gaddis and their associated castes' on each occasion would be absurd. I shall, therefore, adopt the word 'Brahmauri' when speaking of this society as a whole: as I mentioned earlier, this is an alternative term for the Gāḍi language, but more particularly it is a term of identity used by members of these castes from time to time to refer to themselves collectively. It is, therefore, sanctioned by indigenous use. I shall of course specify where I am differentiating between Brahmauris in Brahmaur and those in Kangra [12].

I want now to look in more detail at the caste structure of Brahmauri society and how it may be related to the wider regional caste hierarchy. In terms of ranking the Brahmauri castes in relation to one another there are no problems or

ambiguities: axiomatically, Brahmans are placed over Gaddis, and among the low castes the Sipis rank the highest, with the Hālis well below Rihāras. However, it would take some thought on the part of any Brahmauri, and probably a great deal more thought on the part of the wider Kangra population, to fit their castes into the wider Kangra schema. An approximate 'fit' is easy enough; but as Parry's study clearly demonstrates (1979), for the highest castes it is the subtle distinctions which differentiate status within the vast Brahman and Rajput categories that are so important in Kangra (or in Chamba). Knowing that someone describes himself as Brahman or Rajput reveals little on its own. The Brahmauri and the wider Kangra caste hierarchies are, then, commonly seen as parallel schemes, and the former is not convertible into the categories of the latter without some reflection. Parry makes this point also, at the same time as he reproduces the typical Kangra view of Gaddi as a generic term (1979: 103):

> "The villagers know that there are different castes of Gaddi and have a fairly clear picture of the Gaddi hierarchy. But again it does not occur to them to rank these castes in relation to village castes."

In discussing the various Brahmauri castes in relation to the wider regional hierarchy, I am not intending to atomise one system in order to fit its elements, the component castes, into slots within a larger system, which would be a quite meaningless exercise, and probably impossible. But Brahmauris, however much as a matter of empirical fact their interaction may be focused inwards among themselves, cannot be analysed just as a self-contained system in isolation.

Rather, they form a kind of sub-system within the larger system, and to treat this sub-system as if it were unique and discrete would be to atomise in a different way. If at one level Brahmauri Brahmans are a distinct category of Brahmans, at another level they emerge as a small segment of a much larger category; and even if they have no interactional relations with other Kangra or Chamba Brahmans they nonetheless bear a structural relationship to other classes of Brahmans in the region. The same applies to the Gaddis, who are both a unique caste and located structurally within the broad Rajput category. In what follows I am not intending to embark on an analysis of inter-caste relations (see Chapter 3); my aim is simply to provide a clearer definition of the structural position of the Brahmauri castes in a regional sense - a definition which in the case of the two high castes is merely provisional, and is subject to considerable amplification in the course of the study.

As I mentioned at the start of this section, Gaddis today would be ranked at the lower end of the regional Rajput hierarchy. Neither they nor anyone else would be so precise as to place them in either one of the two lower birādaris [13] of the Rajputs of this region (cf. Parry 1979: 202-3), given that they are to such a strong degree endogamous and therefore form a parallel system rather than being fully integrated into the biradari scheme. But this would place the Gaddis on a par with Rāthis, whom the Rajputs of the higher birādaris tend to dismiss as halke, or lightweight, Rajputs, to use the phrase Parry reports (1979: 231). Now Gaddis would strongly resent being ranked on a par with Rāthis, but this is largely because the

term itself has derogatory connotations and no Rāṭhi would wish to be referred to as such, preferring to have himself described as Rajput. Significantly, in my enquiries in Brahmaur and Kangra I met complete refusal to admit that Rāṭhis could ever have been a component of the Gaddi caste, as was indicated in the early British administrative literature. This fits in with Newell's report of Rānas but not Rāṭhis, suggesting that by the 1950s the latter name and its associated stigma had been supplanted by the respectability of the former.

It may be asked, however, on what grounds I place the Gaddis on a par with the lower Rajput birādaris, given that, as Parry has observed (1979: 201), the acid test of relative status within the Rajput hierarchy is through marriage alliances: if the Gaddis are so strongly endogamous, both ideologically and as a matter of statistical fact, there will be no marriage alliances with the birādari hierarchy in terms of which to evaluate their position, it may be argued. This objection is valid enough if I were attempting any precise placement of the Gaddis in the wider hierarchy, but that is something I am expressly avoiding. My assessment of their general position rests instead on a number of considerations which individually are scarcely conclusive but which taken together provide a reliable indication of how the Gaddis stand in relation to other Rajputs in their region.

In the first place, the Gaddis are strongly associated with two marriage practices considered demeaning by the higher birādari Rajputs: batta-satta, or 'exchange marriage', in which a brother and sister are exchanged with another pair of siblings, and rakhewa, in which a younger brother inherits

his elder brother's widow, the latter being apparently a key characteristic of the two lower Rajput birādaris (Parry 1979: 209). Even though these particular practices are less common among the Gaddis than they used to be, they exemplify attributes which are associated with a definable level of the Rajput hierarchy. A second consideration is that higher status Rajputs themselves tend to suggest that Gaddis are comparable to lower status members of their caste, i.e. Rāthis. On numerous occasions Gaddis were described to me by high caste individuals of the wider Kangra population as 'inferior Rajputs' or in phrases such as 'they call themselves Rajputs but they are not true Rajputs'.

And thirdly, Gaddis, in Palampur at least, generally place themselves on a par with a caste known as Seoks. Like the Brahmauris, Seoks inhabit the higher villages along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar in Kangra (usually, but not invariably, Seoks and Brahmauris are congregated in different villages). Many Seoks also have ancestral roots in interior regions of the mountains, in their case mainly Bangāhal and Kulu. The significance of this profession of status equality between Gaddis and Seoks is that the Seoks can be ranked without any question at the base of the Rajput hierarchy. Rose, For example, equates Seoks with Rāthis (1911, vol III: 397). Yet just as common, I found, is an equation between Seoks and Kanets; and the inhabitants of Bangāhal, plus those living on the outer slopes of the mountains who maintain active links with Bangāhal, all tend to use Seok and Kanet interchangeably as synonymous caste names. Historically, Kanets may have ranked slightly lower even than Rāthis (see below),

but this is immaterial here. What matters is that the position of the Seoks at the bottom of the Rajput hierarchy would be unquestioned in Kangra, and for Gaddis to profess equality with them is a significant clue to their own position. This is, moreover, slightly more than just a matter of verbal statement. For, of the extremely small number of marriages I recorded between Gaddis and non-Gaddis, Seoks were the usual partners. Admittedly these were second marriages or elopements; but they were nevertheless seen as tolerable, and - so far as I can judge - involved the two-way movement of women.

While the above remarks define the Gaddis' approximate location in relation to the regional caste hierarchy at the present time, there is evidence that it was once altogether less homogeneous. Most important is the very fact that the Gaddis were once divided into Rajputs, Khātris, Thākurs and Rāthis (later Rānas), as already noted. Newell seems to have encountered this arrangement just prior to its virtual disappearance, with all these component sections [14] exchanging women on a symmetrical basis. The early literature of the British authorities, on the other hand, indicates a definite measure of asymmetry in their interrelations, although it has to be admitted that many statements contradict each other. Thus, while Rajputs and Khatris wore the sacred thread at that time, the Thākurs and Rānas or Rāthis as a rule did not (Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 137). Yet in Rose it is reported that

> "the janeo-wearing families do not object to intermarriage with those which do not wear it, and are even said to give them daughters...It is indeed stated that no distinction is now made between families which do, and those which do not, wear the janeo" (1911, vol II: 256).

Lyall's statement that "in Gaddi villages Khatris, Rajputs, Rāthis and Thākars all intermarry" (1876: 99) seems added confirmation of the equality of the component Gaddi sections, regardless of the janeo, although he does not explicitly state that the exchange of brides is reciprocal. Yet the tone of Rose's passage distinctly implies a period of former asymmetry in relations between these different sections of Gaddis, even if at the time of writing the tendency was towards a convergence of status. His concluding remark unambiguously reports just such asymmetry - "In brief, Gaddi society is organised on the Rajput hypergamous system" (1911, vol II: 256) - though in view of remarks suggesting egalitarian marriage in the caste this is less authoritative than it might have been. The evidence nevertheless points towards the Gaddi caste having been formerly a microcosm of the wider Rajput hierarchy, with its own internal gradations of status, even if the data allow no certain conclusion. Some of the factors behind the change towards an internally undifferentiated Gaddi caste ranked simply at the lower end of the Rajput hierarchy will be examined in Chapter 2, but one curious detail is worth mentioning in this context.

A proverb known throughout Chamba, Kangra, Kulu and Mandi describes how many generations it takes for the direct female descendant of a person of various caste statuses to become a royal bride through a series of unimpeachable marriages. Thus, "in the fourth generation a Rāṭhi woman becomes a Rāni" (quoted in Rose 1911, vol III: 326). Similarly, five generations of such ideal marriages, to a husband of significantly higher status each time, are necessary before the

descendant of a Kanet can become a Rāni; while in the case of a Ghirth seven generations are required. No other local saying encapsulates so transparently the gradations (albeit idealised) of the Rajput hypergamous system of this region, and under the Rājas and in the early British period it undoubtedly reflected real differences of caste status. Yet the Gaddis are a striking omission from this proverb, on the face of it. I know of no local rationale for this omission, but in my view an explanation is not hard to find. At the period this saying had its widest currency the Gaddis were not a homogeneous caste, but were, as we have seen, internally differentiated. There could consequently be no single number of generations it would take for a descendant of a Gaddi girl to become a Rāni: a Gaddi Rāṭhi would take four, and the others, logically, progressively fewer. The Gaddis' omission from this proverb indicates, then, that not only were their component sections differentiated (as we know from several sources) but that they were ranked in line with the wider Rajput schema.

Furthermore, reports of Rāṭhis within the Gaddi caste at the turn of the century, and the disappearance of this term by the 1950s, makes sense when interpreted in the light of a transition from an essentially hypergamous to an essentially isogamous system of marriage. For Rāṭhis are by definition both inferior Rajputs and inferior to Rajputs; and their very name alongside Gaddis classed as Rajputs, Khatris and Ṭhākurs is indicative of relative inferiority [15]. As internal distinctions disappeared, therefore, it would be entirely predictable for the title Rāṭhi to disappear also; for the existence of Rajputs and Rāṭhis within the same caste implies

the superiority of the one and the inferiority of the other.

I shall move on now to discuss the Brahmans, who are known both by themselves and by others in the region as Bhāṭ Brahmans. Their designation refers to their status as traditional cultivating or, specifically, ploughing Brahmans; and like the Gaddis they too are internally undifferentiated at the present time. In fact, other ploughing Brahmans also may be referred to as Bhāṭ Brahmans, at least in Kangra, but those within the Brahmauri system are distinguished by the wider population as Gaddi Brahmans or Gaddi Bhāṭs. As cultivators, Brahmauri Brahmans may be equated with the lowest category or birādari of Brahmans (funeral priests excepted), known traditionally as halbāh in Chamba and Kangra, although as I stressed before they form a parallel subsystem, at least at the present time, rather than being directly incorporated into the greater system (cf. Rose 1911, vol II: 127-30). Parry states that halbāh is a derogatory title to use of anyone (1979: 258) (hal means a plough), and it is one that I never heard used in Brahmauri circles; Bhāṭ, however, was regarded as a perfectly respectable title by the Brahmans concerned.

If their association with the plough is one attribute which, in theory, consigns them to a relatively low status in the Brahman hierarchy of the region, other practices (such as indulging in batṭa-satṭa, exchange marriage, and rakhewa, widow inheritance, already mentioned in connection with the Gaddis) help to confirm this lowly position. Nothing, however, could be more emblematic of the compromised status of the Brahmauri Brahmans, in the eyes of higher birādari Brahmans or Rajputs, than their priests' performance of all mortuary

rites, including those at which elsewhere in the region it would be obligatory to obtain the services of the Cāraj or Sanyāsi (separate castes of highly polluted and inferior funeral priests). There is a trend among some Brahmauris in Kangra, chiefly in villages where they live alongside the wider Kangra population, to put an end to a practice with such demeaning connotations. But in Brahmaur and those villages in Kangra where Brahmauris are to some degree separate from the wider population, the purohit (domestic priest) continues to perform all priestly functions after a death, without any local feeling that this is undesirable.

There are nowadays no named subdivisions of Brahmauri Brahmans, nor any status distinctions among them; a distinct tendency to value more highly purohits who are residents of Brahmaur is a matter of individual prestige, having nothing to do with the status of different descent categories. But again as in the case of the Gaddis, there is some evidence that there may once have been gradations of status among Brahmauri Brahmans. Thus, Lyall distinguishes between Brahmans and Bhāts (1876: 86); while Newell reports from Brahmaur:

> "Within the Brahmin community there are distinct differences of status with State pujaris at the top...and Bari semi-educated Brahmins next; then come parohits of various sorts with ordinary agricultural Brahmins at the bottom" (1967: 85).

I am not convinced that these differences of status are of quite the same order as the birādari distinctions found in lower Chamba and Kangra. Nor am I certain that Brahmauris in Kangra would have drawn such distinctions at that time. But it seems clear that hierarchical differences within the caste did

exist formerly. Newell himself gives evidence that in Kugti, at the remotest corner of Brahmaur, the clan providing the pujāris at an important temple, a former state shrine [16], followed significantly different patterns of marriage to those of other Brahmans in the same village, and he describes them as a group apart in terms of ritual distinctions (1967: 86-7). Additionally, under the Chamba Rājas Brahmans were obliged to provide ritual services of some kind to the State (Newell 1967: 6,9), and it is reasonable to suppose that the kinds of service provided and the remuneration received in the course of time helped to set up and maintain gradations of rank within the caste. However, the evidence is suggestive rather than conclusive.

In summary, then, both Brahmauri high castes today are internally homogeneous but rank relatively low in relation to the wider regional Brahman and Rajput hierarchies; whereas the indications are that formerly, until some time during this century, they both incorporated distinctions of rank, reflecting and perhaps linking up with the hypergamy of the surrounding region. Defining the position of the Brahmauri low castes in relation to others in the surrounding area is a quite different matter, for although members of these castes may equate themselves, or may be equated, with others of different name living in the same locality, there are not the gradations of rank found within the Brahman and Rajput caste categories to take into account, as is necessary with the Brahmauri Brahmans and Gaddis. This is not to suggest, however, that ranking the low castes is entirely unproblematic, for where Brahmans and Rajputs dispute precedence within the caste, the

corollary is that disputes about precedence tend to be fought out between castes at the bottom of the hierarchy. Moreover, low castes of the same name do not necessarily occupy exactly the same position within their local hierarchy in adjacent areas.

Of the Brahmauri low castes, the Rihāras are the easiest to rank in relation to castes of the wider Kangra system, for being the Brahmauris' musicians they are directly equated with Sanhāis, and periodically are even referred to as Sanhāis. This places them, in Kangra at least, in the middle range of low castes, below the Kolis but above the castes whose touch alone was once considered to pollute the high castes (cf. Parry 1979: 110-12). In Brahmaur, Rihāras used to be (and perhaps still are) associated as much with brass-work as with music, and Rose reports that their name is said to derive from brass anklets called rihāra worn by Brahmauri women (1911, vol III: 333). They are also said to have been basket-makers on occasions. In Kangra, it is their role as musicians which has survived, for the brass objects formerly provided by them are now purchased from the nearest bazaar (hookahs, anklets), while basket-making is left to the Kangra caste of basket-makers, Dūmnas. In the latter case, this arises from the fact that Rihāras' equivalence with Sahāis would be placed in jeopardy if they made baskets, for the Sanhāi ranks slightly but unambiguously above the Dūmna.

My information on the Hālis is entirely indirect, as they are extremely scarce in Kangra and none were known in the villages where I worked. So far as the Brahmans, Gaddis and Sipis are concerned, Hālis are on a par with Camārs, leather-

workers, which places them at the very foot of the hierarchy, equivalent to those who in more fastidious areas of the lower hills are considered to pollute by touch alone. Hālis are spread throughout Chamba, in many parts being the most numerous among the low castes (Rose 1911, vol II: 324; Nitzberg 1970), and they provide an instance of a caste whose position in the local hierarchy fluctuates slightly from one locality to another. In north Churāh, for instance, Nitzberg specifically distinguishes Hālis from the lower ranking Camārs.

Sipis are the hardest of the low castes to rank in relation to the wider hierarchy. All that may be said with certainty is that they are a scheduled caste but rank higher than the other Brahmauri low castes. Sipis usually think of themselves on a par with Lohārs, blacksmiths. But Lohārs are a 'clean' caste, considered to be andarke, or 'of the inside', in Kangra (Parry 1979: 110); consequently, the Sipis' status as bāhare, an 'outside' caste in Brahmauri terminology, and as a scheduled caste, is hard to square with the manifestly superior position of the Lohārs. At the other extreme, members of the wider Kangra population who are familiar with Brahmauris generally rank Sipis a great deal lower, roughly on a par with Jullāhas, formerly weavers, or Sanhāis, musicians. One difficulty with this view, however, is that Sipis are ranked significantly higher than musicians (Rihāras or Sanhāis) by the Brahmauri high castes (as well as by Sipis themselves of course). This points to a position on a par with the Kolis of Kangra, a view which finds some support in Rose (1911, vol II: 553). Yet here too there are problems, for Sipis do not have the kind of ambiguous status, disputably on the 'inside'

or 'outside', which Kolis have gained for themselves (Parry 1979: 113-28).

My conclusion is that the Sipis cannot be located unambiguously within the wider hierarchy, that each of the three positions I have mentioned has something to be said for it, but that on balance they are comparable with the Kolis and Jullāhas rather than any other castes. Despite the overwhelming implications of scheduled caste status, the Sipis' own case for being thought of on a par with the 'respectable' artisan castes rests on a double foundation. First, Sipis from one particular village in Brahmaur have always provided the celas (mediums) in the most important of all Brahmauri cults, that to Śiva in the form of Manimaheś (see next section). This function is undoubtedly prestigious, and Sipis on both sides of the Dhaula Dhar often refer to it as evidence of the special repute of the whole caste, as if they have a 'chosen' status in Śiva's regard.

Second, the Sipis' specific identification with Lohārs derives from the fact that in Brahmaur, where there is no Lohār caste as such, Sipis are the one caste to provide blacksmiths, and those who perform such work are known as lohārs (cf. Newell 1967: 37, who also reports a tendency for lohār Sipis to marry among themselves). Yet if the performance of the work of Lohārs is the basis of the Sipis' claim to Lohār status, it has to be emphasised that the two by no means go together. Parry, for example, found several blacksmiths in Chadhiar who were not Lohārs by caste (1979: 69), and even though this work is specifically associated with Sipis in Brahmaur they have not as a caste made the essential transition from doing black-

smiths' work to being considered a blacksmiths' caste [17]. Moreover, I knew of no Sipis who were blacksmiths in Kangra, where the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans call on the services of Lohārs. Instead, the Sipis' other activities received most emphasis, both by themselves and by the two high castes: as shearers of the sheep, and as blanket-makers and tailors of woollen garments (the probable basis for the status equivalence with Jullāhas).

1.5 Gadderan and Śivbhūmi: Brahmaur and Kailāś-Manimaheś as Sacred Foci.

Brahmaur town - a large village with an administrative complex added - is much more than simply a subdivisional headquarters. It is also the social and ritual heart of Gadderan, and in a loose sense a capital. Indeed, it is on the site of a much earlier capital, the essentially pre-Gaddi Brahmapura of the mid-7th to mid-8th Centuries A.D.; and one of the several major temples, that to Laksana Devi, standing in the area known as the caurāsi (literally, eighty-four, a reference to the supposed number of temples there) dates from that period of former eminence. Throughout its history, the inhabitants of Gadderan have looked to Brahmaur, with its caurāsi, and the peak of Kailās (18,650 feet) at Manimaheś, further east atop the ridge dividing the Budhal valley from the highest part of the Ravi, as twin ritual foci of the highest order. For Śiva is thought to live for half the year upon Kailāś, returning to his summer abode

there at Śivrātri with Pārvati, and leaving after the yātra beneath the peak is completed. These two dates have traditionally served as symbolic markers for the Brahmauris' own annual migration between Brahmaur and lower regions (cf. Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 181). Gadderan may be the land of the Gaddis, but it is in the first place Siva's land in their eyes, Śivbhūmi, and Brahmauris regard themselves not just as devotees of Śiva but as his subjects in a territorial sense [18].

The ritual calendar of Gadderan in fact culminates in a trio of interrelated festivals to Śiva, all known as jātra [19] or yātra, which express the sacred centrality of Brahmaur and Manimaheś. These take place in the months of Bhādron and early in Asoj (between mid-August and late September [20]). The first is in Brahmaur itself, and although the main deities in the caurāsi each have one of the six days of the festival devoted to them it is primarily held in honour of Śiva as Manimaheś. It includes the prestigious Sipi celas (mediums) from the village of Sacuin, mentioned earlier, advising those who plan to make the pilgrimage to Manimaheś, below Kailāś peak, on the likely outcome of their endeavours (Newell 1967: 92). The pilgrimage to Kailāś then follows, with the ceremonies taking place by Manimaheś Dāl (Lake) at over 13,000 feet. Although the core of the participants have always been Brahmauris, many come from beyond the boundaries of Brahmaur, in lower Chamba or Kangra. In the case of those who come from villages along the middle stretch of the Rāvi between Brahmaur and Chamba, we have here possible further evidence that Gadderan once extended below the boundaries of Brahmaur subdivision. The

location of the third of these festivals strengthens this view, for two days after the main day of the yātra at Manimaheś, one to Śakti, or specifically Śiv-Śakti, starts at Chatrārhi, an ancient village with a shrine of great importance a few miles outside Brahmaur subdivision. The two-day gap is to enable pilgrims from Manimaheś to bring water from the sacred lake for Śakti's bath, which symbolises her union with Śiva and initiates the yātra (cf. Census of India 1961, vol.V, pt. VII-B: 82). Thus, while on a day-to-day level people in villages around Chatrārhi prefer to stress their separation from Brahmaur nowadays, their primary annual religious ceremony seems to confirm a historical orientation in just that direction, towards Brahmaur and Manimaheś.

1.6 From Brahmaur to Kangra: from Winter Migration to Permanent Settlement.

Loosely, some Brahmauris include the higher villages in Kangra, along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, within the boundaries of Gadderan even today, seemingly on the basis that Gadderan is where Gaddis are. Such a usage is definitely not general, but it is one expression of the importance, or even sacredness, of the notion of Gadderan for many Brahmauris, an affirmation that ancestral loyalties are not broken by the move across the Dhaula Dhar. The Brahmauri castes' association with the strip of country along the southern side of these mountains is immensely strong, for the winter migration from Brahmaur to Kangra, with flocks or without, has been a part

of the cycle of their lives for as long as we can speak with any certainty. For shepherds, the necessity to obtain winter grazing for the flocks at low altitude brought them down from the mountains; but for others also the rigours of the Brahmaur climate in winter, combined with the economic necessity to supplement the comparatively meagre yield from land in Gadderan, drove all but a skeleton population down to lower regions. At some point, this annual migration led to Brahmauris settling in Kangra, starting probably towards the end of the 18th Century, and picking up fast after the British annexed Kangra in 1846. The decisive factor was almost certainly the change in land tenure and property rights, and particularly the creation of a market in land, consequent on the first land revenue settlement conducted by the British (see Chapter 4). Many of those who shifted to Kangra continued to hold property in Brahmaur, but over several generations the links with ancestral villages habitually died out.

Today, the strength of association with Brahmaur among Brahmauris in Kangra covers a spectrum from regarding Kangra as a mere winter halting-point, at one extreme, to complete ignorance about ancestral roots in Brahmaur, at the other, for the pattern of migration across the Dhaula Dhar has continued down to the present. This pattern has been common to all Brahmauri castes, but with one difference. For the high castes, the transition from primary residence in Brahmaur to complete settlement in Kangra is usually gradual, often taking two or three generations to accomplish. My evidence concerning Sipis and Rihāras is sketchy, but all the indications are that for them the move to permanent settlement in

Kangra has usually been far swifter [21]. I can only guess at the reasons for this: but the likeliest explanation would seem to be the inadequate land-holdings or even landlessness of the low castes, making it pointless to maintain links with the former village. It is Rihāras and Hālis, rather than Sipis, who would have suffered from complete landlessness, for Newell has reported that in the Brahmaur (Budhal) valley Sipis have some of the best land - indicative, he conjectures, of their probable indigenous origins - while the poorer land is generally held by Brahmans and the other two low castes (1967: 4; 1970: 45). But this does not, of course, rule out the possibility that throughout Brahmaur the amount of land held by Sipis has for long been inadequate in relation to Gaddi holdings. I would note that it is the perceived value of maintaining land-holdings in the ancestral village which more than anything helps to make the residential transition from Brahmaur to Kangra a gradual one for the two high castes. It is therefore tempting to interpret the low castes' briefer transition as a comment on the land (if any) that they held in Brahmaur.

Certain stages in the gradual transition from residence in Brahmaur to permanent settlement in Kangra may be identified for analytic purposes. Each of these hypothetical stages may be observed today. Some residents of Brahmaur cross to Kangra in winter, and lodge with relatives or wherever they can arrange accomodation, but they clearly regard their sole home as in Brahmaur. Others also look on their home as Brahmaur, but cross to a second home, and perhaps land also, for the duration of the winter. Here the seeds of a permanent trans-

ition have been sown. For quite often their children or grand-children will take a further step: the winter home in Kangra becomes the primary home, perhaps first for an elder son upon his marriage, and the home in Brahmaur is progressively visited by fewer members of the family for shorter periods, for instance at peak agricultural times only. Soon the land may be rented to someone else, usually an agnate, and finally it may be sold, cutting the final economic tie. As these links with Brahmaur die out, new generations grow up who only know their Kangra home, and may never visit their forbears' village. In many cases, people become uncertain even where it is or what it is called. Finally, and outside the scope of this study, there are the direct descendants of Brahmauri Brahmans or Gaddis who have either deliberately sought to drop or else have gradually and unselfconsciously lost their former identities as Brahmauris.

I have virtually no information on such a process at the margins of Brahmauri society, and it is almost by definition hard to know how widespread it is. I had hoped that my fieldwork might provide some clues, but almost certainly I should have needed to concentrate on villages at some distance from the core Brahmauri settlements along the foot of the Dhaula Dhar, where Brahmauris would comprise a smaller proportion of the total population; instead, all my work in Kangra was concentrated on the mauzas leading up to the mountains. Newell's reports of the shedding of Gaddi identity in villages between Chamba and Brahmaur (1967, 1970), which I discussed earlier, may have its parallels in Kangra (Ilahi

(1940) covers a village on the outskirts of Palampur town where a part of the population seems to have been Gaddi at one time), but details are very scanty. I shall return to this topic in the light of data I present in Chapter 7.

1.7 Population Statistics.

The current population of the Brahmauri castes, in Chamba and Kangra, is hard to enumerate, and the figure of 70-80,000 given at the beginning of this study can be no more than an approximation. Only for Brahmaur tehsīl are there precise statistics, simply by virtue of the fact that all who live there (other than a few outsiders) are Brahmauris in the sense relevant here. Elsewhere in Chamba, 'Gaddis' (i.e. including 'Gaddi Brahmans') are recorded as a distinct category in census statistics, on account of their scheduled tribe status. But it is hard to know how accurate these figures are, given the tendency for many in the middle sections of the Rāvi valley to return themselves as Brahmans, Rajputs or even Rāṭhis rather than as Gaddis. Newell reported this at the time of the 1961 Census, contrasting those within Brahmaur, who identified themselves as Gaddis, with those in the upper part of Chamba tehsīl, who preferred to style themselves as Rajputs or Rāṭhis (1967: 2). But as far back as the turn of the century this had been recognised as a difficulty with the census statistics for Gaddis, although the disparity between those classing themselves as Gaddis and those who preferred not to took a somewhat different form:

> "As the custom of the Brahman and Rajput sections is to return themselves under their caste names, it is improbable that any of these have been classed as Gaddis. The Census Return may therefore be regarded as including, chiefly, the Khatri, Thakur and Rathi sections of the clan" (Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 60).

There are here, of course, echoes of the internal differentiation and gradations of status discussed earlier; but this passage and Newell's remarks simply illustrate how impossible it is to define a Gaddi population through census operations. In Kangra, such problems do not arise, for, given that Gaddis and 'Gaddi Brahmans' are not classed as a scheduled tribe there, they do not figure as a separate category in the census statistics, and are merged with Brahmans and Rajputs generally.

My total of 70-80,000 Brahmauris at the present time is based on 1971 Census figures which indicate that almost exactly 50,000 had returned themselves as 'Gaddis' in Chamba (1971 Census Chamba District Handbook). This total will exclude low castes, unless they persuaded enumerators that they were Gaddis, but their number is small and does not materially modify the total; it also excludes others in Chamba tehsīl whose cultural and historical orientation has been towards Brahmaur, but who prefer to style themselves other than as Gaddis. Nevertheless, around half of the total number of 'Gaddis' returned at the 1971 Census lived outside Brahmaur subdivision - chiefly in the upper part of Chamba tehsīl, and to a lesser extent in Bhattiyāt, on the south side of the Dhaula Dhar adjoining Kangra. Among other things, this seems to indicate that in many villages along the Rāvi below the boundaries of Brahmaur the advantages of scheduled tribe

status are rated higher than the denial of Gaddi identity, and it shows emphatically just how numerous Brahmauris are in Chamba outside Brahmaur subdivision. Despite its inherent shortcomings, then, I shall take this as a reasonably accurate guide to their total population in Chamba. It means that collectively Brahmauris account for around 20% of the total Chamba population, which stood at 255,000 in 1971 (1971 Census Chamba District Handbook).

Any figure for Brahmauris resident in Kangra is much more approximate than this, for no official statistics of any kind exist. The total of 30,000, an estimate of the Himachal United Gaddi Association (quoted in Bormann 1980: 3.1.1), appears to be as likely a figure as it is possible to obtain, although my own view is that it may be somewhat too high. This is a far smaller proportion of the total Kangra population, barely 2% of the 1,327,000 in 1971 (1971 Census Kangra District Handbook). Taking Chamba and Kangra together, then, a current Brahmauri population of 70-80,000 appears to be the likely total.

Attempts to assess the growth of the Brahmauri population during this century are bedevilled by all the factors I have just discussed. The figures for Brahmaur subdivision can be compared, however, with those from other regions, and in Table 1 population totals from three censuses are reproduced. Figures prior to 1931 are too unreliable to be of much use [22]. These figures show a growth in numbers of 73% over the 30 years from 1931 to 1961, or 82% over the period to 1971. This is substantially higher than other regions within Himachal Pradesh for which I have statistics. Taking Chamba State/

TABLE 1.

Population of Brahmaur tehsīl.

Year	Males	Females	Total	Households
1931	7,589	7,258	14,847	n.a.
1961	14,105	11,520	25,625	4,525
1971	14,367	12,700	27,067	5,155

Notes. These figures exclude people outside tehsil at enumeration, notably shepherds. Newell adds a total of 442 males shepherds, and 132 female shepherds who were outside tehsil boundaries in 1961 (1967: 14). Equivalent figures for 1931 & 1971 are not available.

1931 & 1961 figures from Newell (1967); 1971 figures from 1971 Census Chamba District Handbook.

District as a whole, which had one of the faster growth rates in Himachal Pradesh, there was an increase of 38% over the 30 years to 1961, although this had shot up to 67% for the 40 years to 1971 (1961 Census Chamba District Handbook; 1971 Census Himachal Pradesh General Population Tables). Over a longer period, the area constituted as Kangra District in 1961 had grown by 40.5% over the 60 years since 1901 (1961 Census Kangra District Handbook 1970); and within Kangra District, Palampur tehsīl increased in numbers by 35% between 1931 and 1961, or by 55% over the 40 years to 1971 (Kangra District Gazetteer Statistical Tables 1935; 1961 & 1971 Censuses Kangra District Handbooks). All of this indicates a much more dramatic rise in population in Brahmaur in the middle years of this century than occurred elsewhere in Chamba or Kangra. By the same token, the notable fall in the rate of growth indicated between 1961 and 1971 is equally out of step with trends in Chamba as a whole and in Kangra. Figures

a mere decade apart provide no sort of basis on which to draw firm conclusions, and with such an emphasis in Brahmaur on seasonal migration population statistics are more than usually subject to inconsistencies in enumeration from one decade to the next. It may be that Brahmaur's resources of cultivable land cannot support a population significantly higher than that now attained, necessitating even greater permanent emigration to counteract natural increase; but such forecasts have been made of other areas for many years (it was being said of Kangra at the end of the last century), only to be invalidated at later censuses, suggesting that it would be premature to draw such inferences about Brahmaur until further statistics are available.

The whole issue of population density and land resources will be examined in detail in Chapter 4. Here I wish simply to set Brahmaur's pattern of growth alongside comparable data from Chamba as a whole and Kangra. No official statistics provide any clues to indicate whether or not the pattern in Brahmaur is typical of Brahmauris elsewhere; but figures from my fieldwork in Karnāthu will provide some idea of the rate of natural population increase among Brahmauris in Kangra since the end of the last century. It is to the particular villages where my fieldwork was concentrated that I now turn.

1.8 Karnāthu and mauza Deol.

The ethnographic material on which this thesis is based comes predominantly from among Brahmauris resident in Palampur tehsīl, and above all from the village of Karnāthu, in mauza Deol, where my wife and I lived (with breaks) for fourteen months between 1976 and 1978, and where I based myself again for just three months in autumn 1980. My experience of living among Brahmauris, as opposed to visits made to places for data-gathering purposes, was gained solely in Karnāthu, and all the personal relationships which I developed during fieldwork were with Karnāthu people or with those in neighbouring villages whom I got to know as a result of living in Karnāthu. I chose Karnāthu as my base for fieldwork for it answered my initial desire to find as 'traditional' and isolated a 'Gaddi' village in Kangra as I could, in order to concentrate on the study of various aspects of ritual practice. This interest remained, but Karnāthu revealed itself as an absorbing place to live for many reasons, and the areas that I have chosen to concentrate on in this study reflect the directions in which my research interests developed from their initial form.

If my encounter with Karnāthu shaped my research interests, I also pursued enquiries and extended my fieldwork into other villages also. Inevitably, I grew to know well several villages in mauza Deol and the adjoining mauza Lanod where there were sizeable concentrations of Brahmauris. I also grew to know three tīkas in mauza Kandi, above Palampur town. In order to give my study greater generality and to facilitate

comparisons of various kinds I conducted household censuses in 1980 in three villages besides Karnāthu. Two of these were closely connected tīkas I already knew in mauza Kandi - Thala Parla and Thala Uārla. Although administratively they form separate units, their inhabitants scarcely bother to draw a distinction, and the two together are simply known as Thala. The final village I chose was in Brahmaur, in the area known as Trehta, along the upper reaches of the Rāvi immediately across the Dhaula Dhar from mauza Deol. Brief though my visit was to Nayagrāon (four days) it supplemented a certain amount of data I had acquired during a three week stay in the vicinity of Brahmaur itself in 1977. Above all, I felt it was essential to have comparable data from Brahmaur to that I had from Palampur, and preferable to choose a village in a different part of the subdivision to Brahmaur itself, where Newell had worked. Little had been written about Trehta, even in the gazetteers, and its proximity to mauza Deol, across one of the easiest of the passes over the Dhaula Dhar, made me decide to choose a village in that locality. For reasons which will be discussed in Chapter 7 I wanted to select a village high up the Rāvi, close to the geographical limits of the Brahmauri system in Trehta: Nayagrāon was chosen rather than any other simply because it had a Forest Rest House (albeit neglected and rarely used), which solved the problem of accomodation.

Mauza Deol covers an area of 31.37 square miles, and extends northwards from near Baijnath at 3,000 feet to the ridge of the Dhaula Dhar and the Chamba boundary. Its size is far greater than is typical in Kangra as a whole, but it is not unusually large when compared with the other mauzas along the

southern slopes of these mountains. It contains 22 tīkas, but over 60% of its population live in just four, of which Karnāthu is one. In 1971 mauza Deol had a total population of 3,719, but this figure (which derives from one of the patwāris), includes people who are considered residents of Deol but are working away, unlike the census statistics. This total thus includes shepherds away with their flocks. Karnāthu has the largest concentration of Brahmauris in the mauza, with over 550, but the other three main villages all have sizeable contingents of Brahmauris also, and the mauza as a whole is widely considered in Palampur as one of the Brahmauri strongholds in the subdivision [23]. Brahmauris are resident in eight of the 22 tīkas, and number around 1,200 - 1,300, a third of the total population. In Karnāthu and two small tīkas, Surājara and Sokhru (the latter now destroyed - see below), Brahmauris constitute virtually the entire population; in the remaining five they live alongside the wider Kangra population, forming variously between one-sixth and two-thirds of the total [24]. In the four large villages - Karnāthu, Deol itself, Phaṭhāhar and Dharer - the reported population grew by 25% between 1961 and 1971 (1961 & 1971 Censuses Kangra District Handbooks), but this grossly overstates the real picture, and suggests that enumeration was conducted at different points in the pastoral cycle, with a far larger proportion of shepherds at home in 1971. A clearer guide to population growth over that decade is that households in these four villages increased by 9%.

Most of the villages of mauza Deol lie along the perimeter of a fairly wide and level valley which rises gradually

for about five miles as one moves away from Baijnath and the main Kangra valley. At this point, the ground steepens dramatically as the mountains begin. The western boundary of the mauza is formed by a river, the Banu or Binwa khad, while on the east a spur of hills marks the boundary, dropping down from the ridge which separates Chota Bangāhal from this north-east corner of the Kangra valley. Phathāhar, Deol and Dharer are situated around the edge of this comparatively flat and irrigated valley floor. Their settlement pattern is broadly typical of Kangra, with clusters of houses dispersed over a wider area, but even in these villages there is a tendency for the core to be more compact than is common in the main part of Kangra. Above these tīkas, a number are dotted over the steep hillsides to the north and east of the valley. Invariably, these are either inhabited by Seoks, and in a few cases also by their associated low caste, Dāgis, or else by Brahmauris. These hillside tīkas tend to be more compact in layout than those around the valley floor, and village lands are entirely unirrigated. They also tend to be small, and only two hillside tīkas contain more than 20 houses. One of these is inhabited entirely by Seoks and Dagis; the other is Karnāthu.

No village along the outer side of the Dhaula Dhar is as nucleated as Karnāthu, and its reputation throughout the area for being like a Brahmaur village clearly owes much to its appearance. Reached up a steep track from Phathāhar, or a gentler one from Deol, and likely to remain inaccessible by road for the foreseeable future, Karnāthu lies at an altitude of between 4,900 and 5,100 feet and faces south, over-

looking the main valley in the mauza some 700 feet below. Within the village, about three-quarters of houses have had electricity since the early 1970s, but a significant minority still remain without it. For slightly longer, water has been piped to the village, and today there are five taps for common use, regardless of caste. The bazaars of Baijnath and Paprola are six or seven miles from Karnāthu on foot. Since the mid-1970s an erratic, once daily bus service has linked Deol and latterly Phathāhar with Baijnath; but in 1979 a much more reliable service was introduced the other side of the valley in mauza Lanod, with three buses a day between Baijnath and Utrāla, a village immediately west of Karnāthu across the Binwa river. The reason for this service was the construction of a major hydro-electric scheme, known as the Binwa Hydel Project, which started in 1977, and necessitated damming the Binwa high up in the narrow valley leading into the mountains, behind Karnāthu and nearby villages. Although the bus to Utrāla is primarily to serve the personnel of the project, it has for the first time provided the inhabitants of Karnāthu with a practicable alternative to walking every time they wish to visit the bazaar. A major casualty of the project, however, has been the small, solely Gaddi village of Sokhru, further into the mountains behind Karnāthu, whose inhabitants had their property compulsorily purchased by the government in 1979, so that the village could be demolished to make way for the new development. These people have had to relocate themselves in Phathāhar or Utrāla.

So far, this project has had little direct impact on the lives of people in Karnāthu, other than in providing a

bus service and two or three employment opportunities, and in eliminating one former source of firewood. Indirect effects are hard to assess at such an early stage. Nothing about the project is as widely commented on, however, as the devastation of a nearby hillside, where a zig-zagging road, still under construction, has totally destabilised an already precarious and landslip-prone terrain. Comment is ironic and disparaging.

Throughout the mauza and well beyond, Karnāthu has a reputation - notoriety indeed - that is unusual for individual tīkas in Kangra, where they generally do not have a strong identity (cf. Parry 1979: 18). In the eyes of people in the subdivision who know of it, and in the eyes of its own inhabitants too, Karnāthu is strongly associated with jādu (sorcery), to a degree unmatched elsewhere in the vicinity. It is also felt by outsiders to be an extremely inward-looking village, a view which finds its counterpart in the references made by people in Karnāthu to the claustrophobic quality of life there. Outsiders - other Brahmauris and the local Kangra population alike - also hark on its wealth, which is attributed to the size of the flocks kept by its inhabitants. The prevailing view in Palampur, then, is that Karnāthu is backward and dangerous or uncanny (depending on how one is affected by the idea of jādu), but at the same time rich. It is an axiom of the Dumontian line of thought in Indian sociology (cf. Dumont 1970: chapter 6) that the village as an isolate is a figment of the imagination and an entirely inappropriate unit of analysis. Certainly it is not my intention to produce a 'village study' here. Nevertheless, this should not obscure the fact that, in relation to various criteria, some villages or vill-

ages in some areas are imbued with stronger identities than others. In the Palampur context Karnāthu is just such a strongly defined village. A nucleated settlement pattern is almost certainly a precondition, though not a sufficient condition, for the emergence of such a village identity, in my view.

Ṭīkas in Palampur inhabited exclusively by Brahmauris are usually small or medium-sized (with a population of less than about 300). In this respect too, therefore, Karnāthu is unusual, for it is both large and almost exclusively inhabited by Brahmauris. The Gaddis are the numerically dominant caste in Karnāthu, and the original settlers from Brahmaur. In 1980, there were 87 Gaddi households (ṭolṣ), with 7 permanently resident Brahman households, 1 household of Brahmans who lived in Karnathu only in the winter, and 8 Sipi households. Occasionally a single household of Hālis spent a few months in winter in Karnāthu, but this was irregular and they did not appear whilst I was living there. The only non-Brahmauris are a single family of Seoks (3 households), whose ancestral home was in Kothi Kohṛ (Choṭa Bangāhal), and who provide the hereditary pujārā (temple priest) of the main village shrine. Details of the present population of Karnāthu are presented in Table 2.

It is not known exactly when Karnāthu was settled, but the original Gaddis appear to have arrived at the end of the 18th or early in the 19th Century, probably initially to spend the winters there while Brahmaur remained the primary home. One man, then Senior Vice-President of the Gaddi Union, and an extremely wealthy and influential Gaddi, told me that

TABLE 2.

Census Details of Karnāthu, 1980.

Caste clan (al)	Gotra	no. of h-holds	population M	F	T	avg. h-h size
BRAHMAN						
Dundu	Bhardwāj	1	2	2	4	
Phākas	Basist	6	19	14	33	
		7	21	16	37	5.3
GADDI						
Buketa	Uttam	16	46	42	88	
Gharāti	Uttam	25	75	61	136	
Jhunnu	Bhardwāj	4	11	10	21	
Sāhnu	Uttam	19	49	41	90	
Singrān	Basist	23	76	67	143	
		87	257	221	478	5.5
SEOK						
Calenu	Bhardwāj	3	5	3	8	2.7
SIPI						
Cacaretu	-	4	6	12	18	
Marenu	-	4	10	15	25	
		8	16	27	43	5.4
Totals.		105	299	267	566	5.4

Notes. This Table excludes 1 Dundu household of 5 people, winter residents, whose primary home is still in Brahmaur.

The totals above include all who count as residents of Karnathu, even if they are working away, and regardless of whether the work is shepherding or wage labour. 15 adult men were employed away from Karnathu on a long-term basis in work other than shepherding at my census.

The ratio of 893 females to 1000 males in Karnathu compares with 884:1000 in Brahmaur tehsil at 1971 Census and 987:1000 in Kangra District at 1961 Census.

Karnāthu and his own village, Phathāhar, had first been settled by Gaddis at the time of Lord Cornwallis! Such a historical reference point surprised me, but the evidence of the Karnāthu genealogies suggests that it is fairly accurate. The earliest recorded information I have dates from 1892 (the patwāri's register of land-holdings within the boundaries of tīka Karnāthu). This shows that all five of the Gaddi clans present in Karnāthu today were established there by that date, as were the Seoks, and the land-holders of that time were variously the second, third and fourth generation descendants of the original Gaddi arrivals. Many plots of land had even then been divided at several partitions. Thus, it appears realistic to date the first settlement of Karnāthu by Gaddis around the last decade of the 18th Century or the early years of the next: in other words, well before the British annexation of Kangra (see Table 3).

Whether the first Gaddis occupied the site of an earlier hamlet is not known, nor is it possible to be sure whether the Seoks preceded the Gaddis or not. I am inclined to think that the large land-holding of the Calenu Seoks in 1892 is an indication that they were the original settlers, but no folk traditions survive among any section of the village to corroborate or refute this view. That their ancestral roots lie elsewhere is clear, for they have a tradition of migrating from Barāgarān or Rājgundha in Kothi Kohr, and of having been hereditary pujāras to the god Ajiapāl [25] before leaving Chota Bangāhal.

Like the Seoks in Karnāthu today, all the Brahmauri clans represented there remember details of their ancestral villages,

in the Gaddis' case despite the lengthy period since they left Brahmaur. All direct links with fellow clan members in these villages have disappeared long ago so far as the Gaddi clans are concerned, and none of the Karnāthu families any longer retains land rights in Brahmaur. The Brahmans and Sipis are, by contrast, more recent arrivals. There is no record of either caste in the 1892 land register, although this does not necessarily preclude the possibility of Sipis being resident but landless, and the genealogies of these castes are much shallower. By 1915, however, there are records of a few Brahmans and Sipis owning property in Karnāthu (Tika Assessment Notes 1915).

Although the Phākas Brahmans owned property by that date it is only during the last 30 years that they have settled permanently in Karnāthu, for prior to that time they continued to regard Bāri, not by Brahmaur itself, as their main home. It is this which explains their continuing links with Bāri: an empty house there belongs to them, agnatic ties are kept up, and one family in Karnāthu continues to cultivate land there, requiring two or three visits to Brahmaur each summer. The Dundu Brahmans, who include for the sole purohits (domestic priests) in Karnāthu, have an even shorter association with the village. Despite their common origins in the same village, the two Dundu households trace no direct link with each other, came to Karnāthu at different times, and maintain fairly cool relations with each other. The crux of the problem is that the purohit who only winters in Karnāthu enjoys higher esteem than the other, permanently resident purohit, and the latter feels embittered that, as he sees it, demand for his services

TABLE 3.

Historical Data on Karnāthu's Population.

Caste clan (al)	Ancestral Origins	approx. date of settlement	no. of property owners recorded 1892	1915
BRAHMAN				
Dundu	Bāri	1930-40		
Phākas	Bäri	pre-1915		3
				3
GADDI				
Buketa	Gosen	1820-40	11	
Gharāti	Brahmaur	1790-1820	21	
Jhunnu	Kugti	1820-40	1	
Sāhnu	Brahmaur	1790-1820	10	
Singrān	Malkota	1790-1820	22	
			65	75
SEOK				
Calenu	Kothi Kohr	1750-1820	1	
Phatkhet	?	?	3	
			4	4
SIPI				
Cacaretu	Tuh, Trehta	1910-20		
Marenu	Deol, Trehta	pre-1915		2
				2
			69	84

Notes. The number of property owners may be taken as a close guide to the number of households in 1892. Even where land is cultivated jointly all owners are named. All owners were in 1892 Karnathu residents.

Brahman & Gaddi ancestral villages are all in the Brahmaur (Budhal) valley.

1892 data from tehsil office, Palampur. 1915 data from Tika Assessment Notes (1915), D.C.'s office, Dharmsala.

has fallen as patrons have been lured away. Of the two Sipi clans represented, one seems to have settled in Karnāthu around the turn of the century, the other by about 1920. Both came from Trehta, the only inhabitants of Karnāthu to have done so, demonstrating that the Gaddis did not reestablish links with Sipis to whom they had formerly been connected in Brahmaur.

If we take the total number of property owners in 1892 as a good guide to total household numbers, which seems reasonable (except for the possibility of one or two landless Brahmans or Sipis) for there were no property owners living outside Karnāthu at that date, we can say that Karnāthu has expanded in size by 52% since 1892, from 69 to 105 households. Part of this growth is made up of incoming Brahmans and Sipis, however, while one Seok descent group disappears from the scene completely after 1915. If we look at the expansion in Gaddi households since 1892, on the other hand, a period in which there has been no fresh immigration by that caste [26], we find a growth from 65 to 87. Now even allowing for a possible shift in the average size of households over this period, this 34% growth in household numbers is well below the population growth in Palampur tehsīl as a whole, where numbers increased by 73% between 1891 and 1971 (Anderson 1897; 1971 Census Kangra District Handbook).

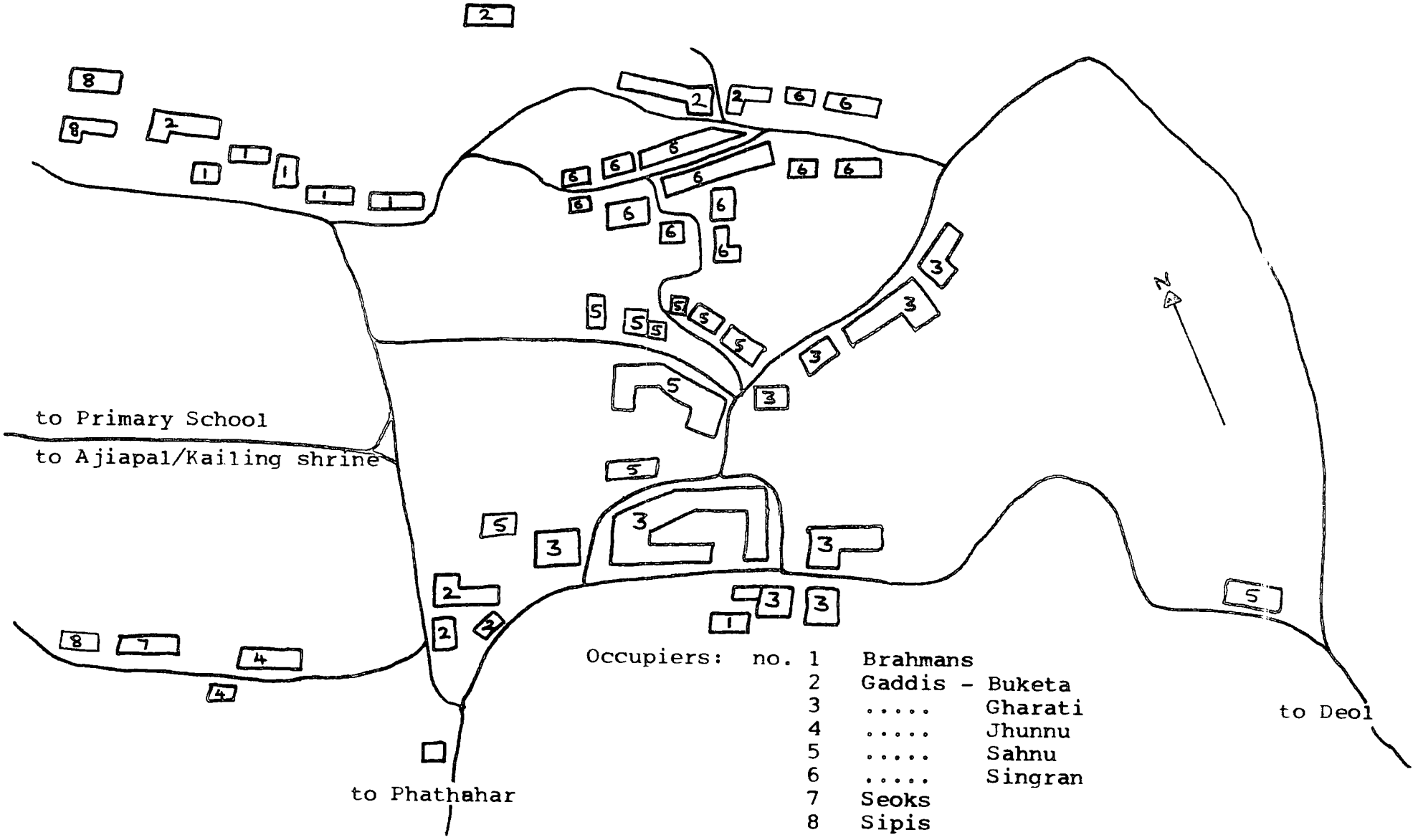
Such a slow growth rate is, not surprisingly, a misleading guide to natural increase in the population. In reality, the 65 assumed households in 1892 have now become 121 households, an increase of 86%, with the additional 34 now located outside Karnāthu. All but two of these have remained in mauza Deol,

and virtually all of those resident in the mauza continue to hold rights in land in Karnāthu, even if they no longer cultivate there. This means that a significant part of the natural increase in population of the Karnāthu Gaddis has been shed to neighbouring villages, and the process still continues: 5 of the 34 households just mentioned were the result of emigration between 1977 and 1980. It must in fact have started around 1892, for the written sources are equivocal as to whether two Singrān brothers had just left for Surājara or were still in Karnāthu (I have assumed for convenience that they were still resident in Karnāthu). Most of those who have left Karnāthu have gone to Phathāhar, where there are now 13 Singrān households and 9 Gharāti households with Karnāthu origins. But 7 Singrān households in Surājara are the descendants of the two brothers who left around 1892, while a handful of former Karnāthu Gaddis are also now living in Deol and Dharer.

The explanation for this pattern is manifestly the village's location. Perched on a steep slope, with a cultivated area of just 35 acres within its boundaries today, Karnāthu's land would have been insufficient for its population even a hundred years ago, necessitating the large flocks and holdings of irrigated land in the valley floor below reported by the Tika Assessment Notes (1915). Even land suitable for building on is scarce, given the steepness of the terrain; and although housing in Karnāthu has expanded (with 20 households now living in clusters away from the village core, in houses built during this century) it would be impossible to absorb the full population increase within the tīka boundaries. If

one adds to this imperative the preferability of being close to irrigated land-holdings, which several people gave as a reason for moving, and the desire to escape from the social consequences of a congested and claustrophobic village layout, hinted at by a few, it becomes apparent how inevitable it is that this shedding of population has occurred. Significantly, it is the clans occupying the heart of the village residential site - Gharāṭi, Sāhnu and Singrāṇ - which have had to shed, and will go on having to shed, the most. The village layout of Karnāthu is illustrated in Map 2.

In summary, then, Karnāthu has been a large village with restricted scope for expansion for about a hundred years. With the need to divest itself of the greater part of its natural increase it is hardly surprising that there has been so little immigration: only the Dundu Brahmans, whose income comes solely from priestly work, and the Cacaretu Sipis have settled permanently since 1915. Karnāthu's population, but most especially its Gaddi section, is characterised today, therefore, by the length of its association with the village. Gaddi children being born today are the sixth, seventh, eighth and in a few cases the ninth generation to be resident in Karnāthu. There are certainly Gaddi lineages which have the same length of association with a Kangra village, but I know of no village where such a high proportion of the population is in this position. If Karnāthu, with its lineages from five Gaddi clans all established there for over 150 years, may be said to represent one model of Brahmauri settlement in Kangra, Phathāhar, with its descent groups from eleven Gaddi clans, many of which have only been resident for a few decades or



MAP 2. Residential Layout of Karnāthu.

even a few years, represents another, probably more typical model.

I shall conclude this section by reference to a ritual dimension to the links between Karnāthu, the Caddi tīkas of Surājara (16 households) and the now vanished Sokhru (10 households), and the Brahmauri section of Phathāhar (64 households out of a total of 100). The extremely close association of members of these villages with Karnāthu - based on proximity, a dense web of kinship ties, and above all on the former residence there of large groups in Phathāhar and Surājara - has until the late 1970s had a ritual expression in a collective cult to local deities embracing all these villages. This cult has been centred on Karnāthu. It took place there through the performance at the main village shrine of rites known as jāgra, which were held twice yearly, and in which all sections of the Karnāthu population and representatives from the other three villages were meant to participate. Today, this ritual unit has effectively broken up, and I suspect that the jāgra I witnessed in 1980 may have been about the last.

The decline of this traditional ritual form [27], now virtually unknown in Palampur, is most obviously due to the widespread perception that animal sacrifice and the possession of a medium are demeaning and backward practices. But its supra-village dimension also implies a kind of satellite status on the part of the other villages, a relation of periphery to centre, at least in a ritual sense, which scarcely reflects any present-day realities in social relations. In Phathāhar especially, this implication has met with increasing resist-

ance, above all among influential Gaddis from clans with no ancestral roots in Karnāthu. Conceivably the cult might have survived as a single village affair (as it had become increasingly in the late 1970s), but a growing lack of interest in it, and even outright opposition, within Karnāthu suggest that it will shortly be defunct, if it is not already [28].

One aspect of this cult has methodological implications for the anthropologist seeking to define the appropriate unit of study. Parry's work in Kangra (1979) shows that there is no single appropriate unit, in either the geographical-administrative, caste or kinship spheres; instead, units at varying levels of inclusiveness appear to be the operative ones to focus on, according to context. The Karnāthu-based cult provides an illustration of this. On the one hand, I have stressed its former supra-village character, as one expression of the links which intimately connect the villages in question. Just as Good found in Tamil Nadu that three villages "taken together ...proved a much more natural unit of study than any one of them treated in isolation" (1978: 7), so I would argue that this cult - as it was until recently - defines what is in many contexts the most appropriate unit of study. Yet this is not the whole picture. For at the same time the supra-village character is embedded in or an extension of a collective village cult. No amount of outside participation alters the fact that sociologically, and almost certainly historically (as a result of emigration from Karnāthu), the supra-village character is secondary to its village character. Karnāthu's strong identity as a village, so unusual in Kangra, is echoed in a cult which is equally rare there, in that it

entails collective participation (cf. Parry's contrary observation from Chadhiar, 1979: 32). What this illustrates, in my view, is that both the village and a larger unit of a cluster of villages are, in this particular case at least, analytically significant, at different levels.

1.9 Thala and Nayagrāon.

My introductory remarks on Thala and Nayagrāon will be brief, to avoid needless repetition, but also because my data from these villages are sketchy beside my knowledge of Karnāthu and mauza Deol. This is an inevitable consequence of the circumstances of data collection. In Karnāthu and neighbouring tīkas my information was acquired through Participant Observation. That is to say, the primary experience of living in a particular locality provided a context and in time generated a range of personal relationships which made it possible to obtain different kinds of data in different ways. The relatively formal methods of data collection (in what is a notably informal style of research), such as interviews which were guided to cover a planned range of questions with each household, were supplemented by more open-ended interviews, and by the enormous range of discussions and chats which could by no stretch of the imagination be considered interviews. On top of this there was the opportunity to observe at length, which in turn led to enquiries, the elicitation of new data, and the chance to observe further. In this kind of research setting, it is the continuous inter-

action between participation, observation and verbal enquiry which shapes the collection of data and gives momentum to fieldwork.

By contrast, Thala and Nayagrāon were places I simply visited in order to conduct interviews. My participation in the life of these villages was non-existent, my observations slight. The data thus consist almost entirely of statements made by those I interviewed. There is consequently an inevitable loss of the three-dimensional quality which, even though its full realisation is bound to be elusive, is potentially more attainable through participant observation. To simplify the contrast somewhat, it is the difference between knowing in numerous ways that 'A' is the sister's husband of 'B', and just being told it. But while the limitations of my somewhat skeletal Thala and Nayagrāon data must be acknowledged, these data are certainly not without value; and so long as it is known how to formulate appropriate questions, in the light of participant observation in one's main fieldwork centre, useful and comparative data can be obtained even from this single method.

Thala Parla and Thala Uārla are situated alongside one another, separated by a stream, in the upper part of mauza Kandi. Invariably referred to as if they were two halves of a single village, Thala, these tīkas lie at 5,000 feet on the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, just over one hour's walk from Palampur town. The nearest road is two miles away. Mauza Kandi has eighteen tīkas, of which five contain the bulk of its Brahmauri inhabitants. None of the Kandi villages approaches the size of the large villages in mauza Deol: the

five tīkas I mentioned, each of which is almost exclusively Brahmauri, contain between 20 and 50 households. The two halves of Thala combined have 57 households. Thala's settlement pattern is intermediate between the nucleated layout of the mountain interior and the widely dispersed layout of the greater part of Kangra, for although these two tīkas are not compact, and consist of separate house clusters, these clusters are not far apart. The boundaries between the two parts of Thala and neighbouring tīkas are immediately clear.

As the census details presented in Table 4 show, the caste and clan formation of Thala contrasts markedly with Karnāthu. Gaddis account for a relatively small proportion of the population, and Brahmans are in the majority, while there is also a sizeable Sipi section. Like Phathāhar, Thala contains groups from a large number of clans, some consisting of just one or two households. But there are no really substantial lineages comparable to the Buketa, Gharāṭi, Sāhnu and Singrān Gaddis in Karnāthu. Almost certainly, a shorter history than Karnāthu has had, immigration which has continued well into this century, and emigration, particularly of branches of longer established lineages, have accounted for this pattern. The extent to which movement away from Thala has occurred can be gauged from the fact that in 1915 there were 26 owners of land in Thala Parla and 32 in Thala Uārla (although two of the latter were members of merchant castes living outside Thala) (Tika Assessment Notes 1915). In other words, its population has remained virtually static throughout this century. The tendency is for people who move away to settle in lower areas, mostly within the mauza at

Uārna, where almost all Thala's high caste households have their rice-growing land.

Parallel, therefore, to the major pattern of emigration, from Brahmaur to Kangra, there has been another less dramatic movement, if Karnāthu and Thala are typical, away from the higher villages along the Dhaula Dhar to the easier terrain and irrigated land in the valley. If this seems surprising in view of the known pressure on cultivated land throughout Kangra (most recently emphasised by Parry 1979), it should be said that great though densities on cultivated land may be in the Kangra valley, they are greater still in many of the villages along the mountain slopes. I shall return to this theme in Chapter 4.

All present residents of Thala live there throughout the year. Indeed, only the most recent settlers, the Kurru Brahman household, still have links with their former village in Brahmaur, going there each year with their flock. It is notable that among the Thala population in general there is much greater ignorance about Brahmaur ancestry than is found in Karnāthu, despite the fact that settlement in Thala has on the whole been the more recent. Of the fifteen clans represented in Thala, of all castes, only six knew exactly which was their ancestral village, while seven merely knew that it was somewhere in Brahmaur. Finally, two groups - the Lāppar and Lunānu Brahmans - claim to have come to Thala from the vicinity of Sujānpur, in the south of Kangra beside the Beās river. Lunānu Brahmans stated that their initial migration had been from Brahmaur to Sujānpur, but the Lāppar Brahmans insisted that they had no Brahmauri

TABLE 4.

Census Details of Thala Parla & Thala Uārla, 1980.

Caste clan (al)	no. of households	population M	F	T	avg. h-h size
		THALA PARLA.			
BRAHMAN					
Bhattu	1	5	4	9	
Bucarenu	1	3	2	5	
Kurru	1	5	4	9	
Langa	3	9	7	16	
Lāppar	4	11	10	21	
Supain	2	6	6	12	
	12	39	33	72	6.0
GADDI					
Bhundu	9	23	26	49	
Rabbūn	1	4	3	7	
	10	27	29	56	5.6
Totals.	22	66	62	128	5.8
		THALA UARLA.			
BRAHMAN					
Kāni	4	6	5	11	
Langa	1	5	4	9	
Lunānu	9	31	31	62	
	14	42	40	82	5.9
GADDI					
Barsain	3	7	7	14	
Cugaletu	4	16	17	33	
	7	23	24	47	6.7

TABLE 4. (cont.)

Caste clan (al)	no. of households	population M	F	T	avg. h-h size
		THALA UARLA.			
SIPI					
Cacaretu	3	9	14	23	
Dhucān	2	3	10	13	
Kaloru	9	26	25	51	
	14	38	49	87	6.2
Totals.	35	103	113	216	6.2
Combined Thala Totals.	57	169	175	344	6.0

Notes. As in Table 2, the totals above include all who count as residents of Thala, even if they are employed away from home.

The ratio of females to males in Thala as a whole is 1036:1000.

TABLE 5.

Census Details of Nayagrāon, 1980.

Caste clan (al)	no. of households	population M	F	T	avg. h-h size
GADDI					
Jhenjānu	13	44	30	74	
Nayagrāyi	9	20	18	38	
Rehlu	3	12	12	24	
Yāru	5	14	10	24	
Totals.	30	90	70	160	5.3

Notes. Total includes all households resident in 1980, and all individuals considered to be Nayagraon residents.

associations (a claim whose significance will be touched on in Chapter 3). These two groups, along with the Bhundu Gaddis, claim to have been the first settlers in Thala, probably around the time of the British conquest of Kangra.

I shall turn now to Nayagrāon, a village of 30 households at the present time, set a little above the Rāvi river on its south bank in Trehta. It lies about 9 miles above the large village and administrative centre of Holi, which is also the furthest point so far reached by the road from Chamba; and about 8 miles below Dhārari, the furthermost Brahmauri village up the Rāvi, before the narrow and uninhabitable gorge leading to Bara Bangāhal. Nayagrāon's altitude is between 6,500 and 7,000 feet. Two of the lowest and most frequently used passes across the Dhaula Dhar immediately to the south (the Jālsu or Sureh pass, 11,300 feet, and the Wāru pass, 12,700 feet) are less than a day's climb from Nayagrāon, and provide access to the area between Palampur and Baijnath at least as quickly as the long journey by road via Chamba and Pathankot. This stretch of the Rāvi valley has steep slopes on either side, although as is usual in this part of the Himalayas the south-facing slopes are the steeper. Like all villages in Brahmaur tehsīl, Nayagrāon is a nucleated village, surrounded by its cultivable land.

Although Nayagrāon literally means a 'new village', I possess no information as to the date of its settlement: it is certainly well over a hundred years old and may be considerably older. It is inhabited solely by Gaddis, from four clans (census details presented in Table 5). The nearest Brahmans in this upper part of Trehta live in Sindi, 6 miles

upstream, and Dhog, 2 miles above Nayagrāon, both of them single caste villages. Sipis are found in Bajoli, immediately across the Rāvi from Nayagrāon, but virtually nowhere else in the dozen or so villages of upper Trehta; whilst Rihāras and Hālis are entirely absent from these villages. Slightly further down the Rāvi, in and around Deol and Holi, all three low castes are relatively numerous, and it is from that part of Trehta that the Karnāthu and some of the Thala Sipis had come originally. The villages of upper Trehta are usually small or, at the most, medium-sized: two villages just exceeded 50 households at the 1971 Census, and another three exceeded 30, of which Nayagrāon was one. The steepness of the hillsides, and the absence of occasional plateaus such as are to be found lower down in Trehta, rule out the possibility of larger settlements.

Attempting to define which families are and which are not current residents of Nayagrāon is complicated by the fact that, just as everywhere else in Brahmaur, most people leave the village in winter. Given its location at the eastern tip of Chamba District, it is hardly surprising that the inhabitants of Nayagrāon have nearly always crossed to Palampur in winter rather than made the longer journey to lower parts of Chamba [29]. But, as I have already noted, the transition to permanent residence on the south side of the mountains is often a gradual process, and I was told of several families who came to Nayagrāon to spend some summers, or who used to come regularly but were now doing so less frequently. A few houses stand empty awaiting such visits, while one or two more that are lived in permanently in fact

belong to agnates now more or less settled in Palampur. Villagers themselves in Nayagrāon, therefore, are not always certain whether a particular family are to be thought of as residents of the village any longer. The 30 households of my census cover all that were resident in 1980; all other households I was told about seemed to be irregular visitors, whose homes were primarily in Palampur according to local judgement.

Of the 30 households resident in 1980, 22 close up their Nayagrāon homes completely for the winter, a further two sometimes go to Palampur and sometimes stay in Nayagrāon, while six count themselves as Nayagrāon residents throughout the winter. 19 out of the 22 households which invariably leave Nayagrāon in winter own property, or a share in property, in Palampur. The remainder rent accomodation where they can find it in Palampur. One household, consisting only of a man and his unmarried son, are without a second home but are nevertheless always away in winter with their flock in lower Kangra. The Palampur villages to which Nayagrāon families move in winter are mostly between Karnāthu and Thala, and significantly further away from the roughest of the terrain. Villages within a couple of miles of the Palampur-Baijnath main road are particularly favoured: Bhethi, Aweri, Banuri and Saliāna. These are localities in which the Karnāthu and Thala high castes have few day-to-day contacts, a reflection of the notable lack of marriage ties, despite their proximity. As I shall show in Chapter 7, it illustrates a tendency for those who look on Brahmaur as their home, and those who are settled in Kangra, not to intermarry. The deeper the roots in Kangra, the more evident this is.

1.10 Previous Ethnography of the Region.

I have already had cause to refer, in some cases frequently, to much of the most significant ethnographic literature on Chamba and Kangra. In this section I shall provide a brief overview of ethnographic sources which relate to Himachal Pradesh, and particularly its western portion. Before looking at modern (in this context, post-war) anthropological studies based on fieldwork, the value of much administrative literature dating from the late 19th and early 20th Centuries must be acknowledged. The early gazetteers, and perhaps even more the Land Revenue Settlement Reports in areas under British rule, contain a wealth of detail that is vitally important to any modern anthropological analysis. Many of these reports were clearly written by administrators with an interest in ethnography and a nascent sociological sense, and despite the characteristic imperial haughtiness which shows through the present-day researcher can only be grateful that there was such an unabashed preoccupation with detail in that era. I would particularly single out the work of Lyall (1876; with Barnes, 1889), whose meticulously detailed remarks have been much quoted by subsequent gazetteers. A derivative of this kind of literature is Rose's massive compilation of ethnographic minutiae (3 vols, 1911 & 1919) based on prior work conducted by Ibbetson for the 1881 Census. A Punjab variant of a format which was favoured in many parts of India (cf. Risley 1891, Thurston & Rangachari 1909), Rose's work is a kind of ethnographic dictionary.

Organised on no coherent basis, it is chaotic, endlessly contradictory, and yet, despite all this, a fund of information which it would be hard to track down elsewhere.

Since the 1950s, social anthropological studies based on fieldwork have been done in several localities in the lower hills (Siwaliks) and the valleys beyond the outer ranges of the Himalayas in Himachal Pradesh. Thus, Ballard (1969, n.d.) worked in Sirmaur, close to the Uttar Pradesh border; while the former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, who had been trained as an anthropologist, found himself at the centre of controversy in his own State Legislature over his study of polyandry, based primarily on the same region, Sirmaur (Parmar 1975). Sharma (1969) worked in Una, close to the Punjab plains; while more than a decade earlier Rosser had studied the remote village of Malāna in Kulu (1956).

Closest to my own fieldwork area there have been studies by Brar (1971) and Nitzberg (1970) from the northern part of Churāh in Chamba District, and by Parry from Palampur tehsīl in Kangra (1970, 1974, 1979). The main ethnographer of the Brahmauris, Newell (1955, 1962, 1963, 1967, 1970), conducted his research close to Brahmaur town itself. I shall return to these four authors in a moment, to look at their work in slightly more detail. One further study by a social and economic geographer should also be cited: for Kayastha's work (1964) on the Beas basin, in Kulu, Mandi and Kangra, contains useful sections on pastoralism and the natural environment.

The largest gap in the ethnographic record in Himachal Pradesh concerns the mountain regions beyond the mid-Himalayas:

the Tibeto-Burman speaking zones and the fringes of the Pahāri speaking world, from Pāngi in the north-west to Kinnaur in the north-east. Certainly the proximity of the Tibetan border has made Lahaul, Spiti and Kinnaur politically sensitive regions, and to all intents and purposes they have been out of bounds to non-Indian researchers. There is little sociological information available from these regions, other than that provided by early administrative sources and the more recent village surveys conducted for the 1961 Census. The latter assume extra value in the absence of further data, but they vary considerably in standard, and while some contain useful details the entire series is disappointingly unsociological.

The main modern source on the Brahmauris is Newell, although the administrative literature from the British period is fairly extensive [30]. Two of the 1961 Census village surveys cover Brahmaur town itself and Chatrārhi (mentioned earlier in connection with the Sakti yātra), but both are typical of the genre [31]. Newell's fieldwork, early in the 1950s and again at the start of the 1960s, was based on the village of Gosen, one mile from Brahmaur town. His most detailed report (1967) was published as a part of the 1961 Census (though not as one of the above mentioned villsge surveys). The circumstances of its publication seem to have influenced its form, for it has the flavour of an extremely detailed gazetteer report: full of valuable information on particular customs and practices, but entirely lacking a coherent sociological perspective. It is, however, a more satisfactory document in many ways than Newell's other, more directly

anthropological publications. Particular criticisms of arguments Newell presents will be made at various points below. I would just say here that his 1970 article is more interesting than his earlier ones; and it was partly in the light of his evidence concerning the direction women moved at marriage, and the implications this has for the sex ratio and marriage practices of the remotest regions of Brahmaur, that I was keen to collect data from upper Trehta (see Chapter 7).

Brar (1971) and Nitzberg (1970), who worked either side of Tīsa, in north Churāh (see Map 1), both provide detailed descriptions of marriage patterns. I have found Brar's by far the more useful of the two, apart from a rather spurious attempt to tack on to his Churāh analysis a little Ladakh ethnography. His attempt to surmount the typological approach implicit in Berreman's well known Plains-Pahari contrast (1960, 1963) is particularly valuable. Above all, he argues convincingly that the marriage patterns of this remote region in the mountains, lying on the southern flank of the mid-Himalayas, are not merely different to those of the lower hills or plains, but are partly generated by processes within the wider Chamba society. Economic developments, and especially increasing communication between the lower hills and Churāh, have not led towards increasing Churāhi imitation of what are perceived to be the high caste orthodoxies of lower regions. Instead, economic pressures and the internal logic of the dominant hypergamous milieu of the Chamba high castes has helped to push the marriage patterns of the remoter parts of Churāh away from conformity with more prestigious models. Thus,

moving beyond a simple contrast of hypergamy and isogamy, Brar delineates the dynamic interrelationship between the two.

This relationship between hypergamous and isogamous forms of marriage is crucial to an analysis of the marriage practices of the Hindus from the higher hill regions of Himachal Pradesh, and more widely to an analysis of patterns of political dominance. The most recent study from western Himachal Pradesh helps to make this clear. Parry's study, based on fieldwork in the lower hills some fifteen miles south of mauza Deol, sets standards of ethnographic and theoretical rigour unmatched in other studies from this region. Although he is concerned with the social milieu in Kangra within which hypergamy is most elaborated, and not directly interested in the patterns of marriage of the higher hills, his analysis has manifest implications for any consideration of the latter. Moreover, his argument is an advance on Brar's, for, by demonstrating empirically the levels at which isogamy flourishes within the birādari system of the Rajputs and Brahmans, subsumed beneath but also a necessary corollary to the dominance of hypergamy, Parry is able to show that hypergamy and isogamy are two aspects, or tendencies, inherent in the same system, each with its own internal structural contradictions. It is to extend these insights, in the light of ethnography from an isogamous milieu which is geographically and socially peripheral to regional centres of power and prestige, that I shall return at points throughout this thesis, but particularly in Chapters 7 and 8.

CHAPTER 2. HISTORY.

2.1 Periods of Mass Immigration to Brahmaur.

In this chapter I shall focus on three topics which seem to me to be particularly relevant to a study of the Gaddis and the castes which live alongside them. First, I shall review what is known about the origins of the Brahmaur population and the identity as Gaddis. I shall then consider briefly the emergence and decline of the 7th-8th Century kingdom of Brahmapura, based on Brahmaur, in order to situate it historically in relation to the later Chamba kingdom. This is important for an understanding of the position of the Gaddis and the Brahmaur population in general in relation to the Chamba State, until its dissolution after the end of British rule, which will be the theme of the third section of the chapter. In the first two sections I shall rely heavily on the investigations of Hermann Goetz (1955, 1969), an art historian and archaeologist whose research into the early history of Chamba was built on foundations first laid by Hutchison & Vogel (1914a, 1914b, 1933).

The two Brahmauri high castes, the Brahmans and Gaddis, have vaguely articulated but unanimously held traditions of origins in the plains. In this connection, a common aphorism refers to flight from Lahore at the time of Aurangzeb's persecution of Hindus in the 17th Century: Lahore ujjra aur

Brahmaur basya ('Lahore was left and Brahmaur was inhabited'). Yet this is without doubt just the most recent in a succession of waves of immigration from the plains, dating back well before 1000 A.D. Some Rajputs and more particularly large numbers of Khatris are said to have reached Brahmaur after fleeing from Aurangzeb's campaign (Rose 1911, vol II: 256; Newell 1967: 4). There are no references to Brahmans, but with their comparatively small numbers it would be unwise to attach much significance to this.

The two preceding waves of immigration on a notable scale were also flights from Muslim domination. One wave seems to have taken place around the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th Centuries, at the time of the Muslim invasions from Afghanistan associated with Muhammad of Ghor, and the fall of Delhi in the last decade of the 12th Century (Basham 1967: 74-5; Goetz 1955: 34). Prior to that, a wave of immigration had also taken place after the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni, whose army penetrated throughout the Punjab, and sacked the Kangra Fort in 1009 (Hutchison & Vogel 1914b: 106), without apparently going further into the mountains.

This period is significant in Goetz' view for the first appearance of the Gaddis on the historical scene. He writes that "Brahmor was overrun by the mass immigration of Gaddis fleeing from the advance of Mahmud of Ghazni" (1969: 137); while elsewhere he argues that for the fledgling kingdom of Chamba, founded in 920 A.D., "the worst disaster" resulting from the Ghazni invasion of the Punjab

> "seems to have been the result not of the attacks from the surrounding states, but of a mass invasion by the present Gaddis of Brahmor...When Sultan Mahmud attacked Nagarkot (ancient name for the town of Kangra), most of them seem to have moved beyond the Dhaula Dhar into Brahmor which since then has become the Gaddi country par excellence" (1955: 34 my parenthesis).

Goetz also suggests that Kangra was merely a staging post in their flight from the Punjab plains, and he associates them with a semi-nomadic group called Gadhaiyas [1].

The immigration to Brahmaur at the end of the 12th Century again coincides with a period of eclipse for the central authority of the Chamba kingdom, according to Goetz. This author's preoccupation with dynastic history and royal patronage of the arts leads him to view the decline of central authority in the Chamba kingdom as a lapse into barbarism, but he remains our best source for interpreting the historical context in which immigration to Brahmaur took place.

> "The high and late medieval periods not only in Chamba, but in the whole Western Himalaya, are separated by a blank interval of ca. 100-150 years. However, the gap covers a very crucial time. For, previous to it Chamba had been a strong and flourishing kingdom... whereas thereafter we discover innumerable estates of independent rānas and thākurs, rājas powerless outside their own capital, and a society relapsed into barbarism" (1969: 102).

This is the period after the conquest of Delhi, when a further influx swelled the population of Brahmaur.

However, while Goetz places the genesis of 'Gaddi' society, in effect, around 1000 A.D., he also refers to a much earlier settlement of incoming Brahmans and Rajputs in Brahmaur, which

he dates after 733 A.D. (1955: 22). Yet for Goetz this 8th Century immigration is pre-Gaddi, not only in the sense that the term Gaddi, or any from which it is derived, was unknown then, but also in the sense that Brahmaur was effectively depopulated between the 8th and 10th Centuries, so that the post-1000 A.D. immigrants entered a virtually uninhabited area. As Goetz sums up, Brahmaur was "at last occupied by the Gaddis so that for almost a millennium it forms a separate ethnic enclave in the Western Pahāri area" (1955: 36). For an anthropologist, this is the most dubious part of Goetz' argument, and the concept of an ethnic enclave is inherently controversial and largely conjectural. Nevertheless it seems that a dramatic depopulation did occur after the collapse of the Brahmāpura kingdom, if Goetz is correct, and it will help to place the periods of immigration discussed so far in a broader context if I now turn to a brief discussion of this earlier period, leading to the formation of a kingdom based on Chamba.

2.2 Brahmaur-Brahmapura and the link with the Chamba State.

The history of Brahmaur as a political centre dates from the middle of the 7th Century A.D., and indeed our historical knowledge of the area goes back no further than that. This was the date at which Brahmaur became the capital of a kingdom of which it had formerly been merely a part. Brahmapura was, according to Goetz' scrupulous evaluation of the scanty evidence (1955), almost certainly a Gurjara kingdom (cf.

Basham 1967: 69-71). The original Brahmapura kingdom, of which the upper Rāvi would have been a part, was probably based on Taleśwar in Kumaon, and collapsed under Tibetan inroads into Kumaon around 650 A.D. A new Brahmapura kingdom based on Brahmaur, well to the west and at that time out of reach of Tibetan designs in Kumaon, was founded at this period by a different but connected Gurjara dynasty (Goetz 1955: 18, 23). It was the second Brahmaur ruler, Meruvarman, succeeding his father soon after 650 and regaining all lost portions of the old Brahmapura kingdom, who had constructed the earliest of the temples for which Brahmaur and Chatrārhi are famous. Meruvarman's reign marked the heyday of the Brahmaur-Brahmapura kingdom, for his successors presided over its rapid decline as territory even as close at hand as Kulu was lost (Goetz 1955: 23), and early in the 8th Century it was merely a tributary of the large Kashmir empire.

Decline led in turn to the total collapse of the Brahmaur kingdom and the depopulation of the upper Rāvi, which I referred to at the end of the last section. The events which triggered these upheavals concerned the Tibetans. For Goetz speaks of "a virulent epidemic, probably brought home by the soldiers returning from the emperor's last exhausting campaigns in Central Asia" (1955: 24), which depopulated Brahmaur and a good part of the Brahmapura kingdom. The emperor in question was Lalitāditya of Kashmir, and after his death in Sinkiang in 756 there was no holding back the Tibetans. Invasion followed epidemic as Brahmaur was devastated by the Tibetans (Goetz 1955: 36); Lahaul, Kulu and Mandi also fell to them. Goetz does not date these invasions, but

they clearly occurred during the period between 756 and 790. Tibetan inscriptions at two places in Brahmaur (Gosen and Kharāmuk) date from this period. Tibetan settlement was brief, however, and by the middle of the 9th Century the Tibetan empire was itself in decline.

At some point, undated but perhaps towards the middle of the 9th Century, Brahmaur was recaptured by an army from Suket (modern Sundernagar). The next decades were spent in obscurity, for the nominal rulers of Brahmaur were merely feudatories of Suket, controlling an area probably no larger than the boundaries of the present tehsīl. Early in the 10th Century, however, one of these minor rulers of Brahmaur, Sāhilavarman, became strong enough to act independently. Having extended his control down the Rāvi, he moved his capital to a new site, founding Chamba town, and with it the modern state of Chamba, in 920. The Chamba ruling house did thus emerge from Brahmaur, but a Brahmaur separated from its period of historical eminence by the Tibetan interregnum.

However, the tradition that has been handed down is that the man who reconquered Brahmaur was none other than the son of the last Brahmapura ruler overthrown by the Tibetan invasion, this son having been taken by his fleeing mother to life-long exile in Kangra and Suket. Now this tradition, although historically plausible perhaps, seems to rest on a significant piece of genealogical manipulation, instigated on behalf of the Chamba ruling family in order to foster the legitimacy of their proclaimed continuity with the Brahmapura kingdom.

The genealogical discrepancy noted by Goetz between a

pair of inscriptions dating from Meruvarman's reign or thereabouts (c.700), on the one hand, and the 16th Century Chamba vaṁśāvali (state chronicle containing a dynastic pedigree), which was based in turn on an earlier vaṁśāvali, on the other hand, involves the relocation in the dynasty of one particular figure (1955: 6, 18). Thus, Mūśūṇa, or Mūśaṇavarman, stands as the founder of the Brahmapura dynasty in the early inscriptions; whereas in the Chamba vaṁśāvali he becomes the man who recaptures Brahmaur from the Tibetans. As Goetz also notes, the tradition associated with his name is transferred as well, though suitably embellished (1955: 19, 27-8). The 'second' Mūśaṇavarman was apparently born in Trehta, at Garoh (modern Gharau, close to Nayagrāon) as the Rāni fled from Brahmaur at the Tibetan invasion. Leaving him in a cave, she said nothing to her party. But her wazīr and purohit learned what had happened, went back, and discovered the child being tended by mice. Rescuing him, they all continued to their exile (Hutchison & Vogel 1933, vol I: 281-2). This story of a foundling among mice in a cave was, according to Goetz, the foundation myth of the Brahmapura dynasty, and associated with the 'first' Mūśūṇa, although contextual details of a flight from the invading Tibetans have made it more elaborate (1955: 19-20).

This apparent shifting of a dynastic foundation myth thereby creates a direct link between the Brahmapura lineage and the line which later founded the Chamba kingdom. The intention is manifestly clear, for the link is made (one might say forged) at precisely the point of maximum political disruption, a period about which the presumption of discont-

inuity must be greatest. Goetz does speculate on the possibility of a historical basis to the tradition of the flight from Brahmaur and its later recapture (1955: 28), but he concludes: "despite this claim to continuity Chamba State has, therefore, to be regarded as a new foundation independent of that of Brahmor" (1955: 29).

I shall return now to the issue of the appearance of the Gaddis on the historical scene, in the light of the present discussion. It appears from Goetz' argument that the massive political and population upheavals surrounding the collapse of the Brahmapura kingdom and the Tibetan invasion of Brahmaur mark a historical watershed in the region in a double sense. On the one hand, the Tibetan invasion may be assumed to have ruptured the line from the Brahmapura to the Chamba dynasties, which the Chamba vaṁśāvali and its forerunner proclaimed existed - a claim of great political and religious significance for the Chamba rulers (and also, as I shall go on to discuss, for the Gaddis). On the other hand, these upheavals ensured that the immigrants who around 1000 A.D. arrived in Brahmaur in flight from the plains found an area that was unusually thinly populated (Goetz 1955: 44). The Gaddis only emerged at this period, as these and subsequent immigrants consolidated their settlement of the area. In other words, the Gaddis are, like the Chamba state, a product of the post-Tibetan era.

However, while Goetz' assessment of the dynastic record demands respect, his 'anthropological' hypotheses compound various fallacies. His use of the notion of an 'ethnic enclave' brings together implicit assumptions, first, about genetic

isolation and isolability, and, second, about an equation of 'race' with 'culture' (cf. 1955: 44-5), neither of which would find the slightest favour with social anthropologists today. He mistakes the emergence of a 'Gaddi' identity, 'Gaddi' ethnicity one might say, for their physical emergence in Brahmaur. Moreover, Goetz seems to overlook the fact that Brahmaur was far from being alone in experiencing population upheavals at the hands of the Tibetans within this part of the western Himalayas, which is the basis of his claim that it forms a separate ethnic enclave. Again, one is bound to raise the rhetorical question of whether the Sipis are as anomalous in regional terms, in relation to other low castes, as he suggests the Gaddis are: or are the Sipis the aboriginal section of the population who miraculously survived the Tibetan period when no other section did so?

I have made these criticisms of Goetz' forays into the thorny field of anthropological origins in part because he is the sole author to have examined the question at all, and because so much of our understanding of early Chamba history derives from his research. What, then, is of value for my purposes in Goetz' work on early Chamba history? I would note the two topics discussed in most detail in these first two sections. First, he has defined the periods and contexts in which the main waves of immigration to the Chamba hill regions, and Brahmaur in particular, occurred, relating one of these to the emergence of the 'Gaddis' as an identifiable population after 1000 A.D. And second, he demonstrates that in all probability the Chamba dynasty's claim to continuity with Brahmaur-Brahmapura was not historically well founded.

2.3 The Chamba State and its Brahmauri Subjects.

I mentioned in the last chapter the existence formerly of a 'special relationship' between the Gaddis, and derivatively the Brahmauri population in general, and the Chamba State, which gave them certain privileges and prestige by comparison with the state's subjects from other areas. It is to this topic that I shall now turn.

The Gaddis' priveleged position in the state derived directly from the Brahmaur antecedents, real and asserted, of the Chamba dynasty. At various periods between the 11th and 15th Centuries Chamba's control over Brahmaur and the upper Rāvi seems to have been merely nominal; and, although by the 16th Century Brahmaur's tendency to autonomy seems to have been checked finally by a stronger central authority in Chamba, one key aim of the vaṁśāvali of that period was "to foster the loyal sentiments of the autonomous Gaddis" (Goetz 1969: 107), by representing the Chamba State as one in which the Gaddis held an ancestral stake. Chamba was represented, and continued to be represented throughout its remaining history as an independent state, as a direct development of the Brahmaur kingdom. The double implication was that Brahmaur and the upper Rāvi was indisputably a part of Chamba, and the ruling dynasty was a Brahmauri dynasty. In this connection it is significant that until the 20th Century dissolution of the Chamba State, each new Rāja appeared on the first day of his coronation dressed as a Gaddi (cf. Newell 1967: 5). In effect, therefore, the state was represented as a Gaddi state with a Gaddi monarch.

As well as checking any tendencies towards autonomy among the Brahmaur population, there was in the 16th Century an immediate military rationale for the preparation of a constitutional document which confirmed the Gaddis' pre-eminent position in the state. For at that period Chamba was an expansionist state, busy reacquiring territory which it had once held. In Goetz' words:

> "Brahmor, already respected as the oldest religious centre of the state, now became the manpower reservoir for the royal house troops. With these Gaddi troops Pratāpsinghvarman could first reconquer Pāngi and Lahul" (1969: 107).

Rewarding the military and keeping them quiet required that the Gaddis should be identified as closely as possible with the fortunes of the Chamba ruling dynasty.

The Gaddis' privileged position within the state extended until the middle of the 19th Century when British control over the Punjab became effective. Chamba remained a princely state, but it was not long before the impact of British domination brought about significant internal changes, albeit at a much slower rate than in areas directly under British administration. One early development was the disbandment of the Rāja's army in 1863-4 (Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 271), but how much impact this had on the Gaddis' position is arguable. To what extent the Gaddis, or certain sections of them, actually contributed to the state army during the decades leading up to its abolition is by no means clear from the evidence available. Newell reports that the Gaddis owed military service to the Raja (1967: 5; 1970: 49), and this is undoubtedly the conventional wisdom. The Chamba Gazetteer,

however, reports that Brahmaur's population was not generally employed on state duties outside the boundaries of their own wizārat (1910: 270), and it expressly mentions that the revenue modifications introduced after the state army had been disbanded did not apply to Brahmaur for this very reason (1910: 271). Be that as it may, whatever the actual position in the mid-19th Century, a tradition of Gaddi military prowess in the service of the Rāja seems to have been the cornerstone of their position in the state. Certain priveleges which were granted to Gaddis (and to Brahmauri Brahmans?), but were not in force elsewhere in the state, confirmed this prestige. Thus, at one time, in any dispute with a state official a Gaddi had a right to appeal directly to the Rāja for redress, over the heads of intermediate ranks of officials, a personal link which strengthened the Gaddi view that the Rāja was in a sense 'their' monarch. Again, men of other 'tribes' in the state (it is not clear which groups or regions this is a reference to) were prohibited from marrying a Gaddi woman or from "keeping a Gaddi widow" (Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 274). This custom had certainly lapsed by the time the gazetteer was written, but it points to a status that received official protection from the risk of 'contamination' through sexual contact and marriage between Gaddi women and men of inferior rank. (Why Gaddi status should have needed this special protection in the first place is an interesting question in itself.)

If in the 16th Century the Chamba dynasty needed the loyalty of the Gaddis, the period since the imposition of the Pax Britannica appears to show how much the Gaddis'

status was dependant on their special relationship with the Chamba Rājas. For with its evident rupture (cf. Newell 1967: 8), in the second half of the 19th and the early years of the 20th Centuries, the Gaddis' prestige went into decline. I have already discussed (Chapter 1) the suggestive evidence that the present internally undifferentiated Gaddi caste has evolved from a caste which was a microcosm of the wider Rajput hierarchy of the region with its own internal gradations of status. The Gaddis' relationship to the state, symbolised in their link with a 'Gaddi' Rāja, is crucial in this regard, for so long as this close link flourished, in institutional and functional form, underlying conditions for differentiation within the caste were maintained.

I have referred to the prohibition of marriages between men of 'other tribes' and Gaddi women: it is clear that these would be, in the terms of classical commentaries, pratiloma, or unions 'against the hair', which were massively censured because the man was of inferior status to the woman (in contrast to the respectability, within certain limits, of anuloma unions, which went 'with the hair') (Tambiah 1973a). Here we have a case of state intervention to protect the purity of a group, which only makes sense in terms of a direct state (or royal) interest in that group's non-contamination. It is not fanciful to suggest, therefore, that the Gaddis' link with the Chamba State has been a catalyst for the gradations of status within the caste which were reported by early authorities of the British period. Different kinds of political service to the state, differential rewards for such services, and a tendency towards hypergamous marriages,

were the outcome and expression of this relationship, which brought prestige to all Gaddis and probably gave the highest echelons of the caste a status on a par with Rajputs of unimpeachable rank elsewhere in the state. But with the breaking of this bond, it appears that these higher grades within the Gaddi caste found themselves unable either to maintain their claim to parity with other higher ranking Rajputs, or to maintain their former superiority over other sections of Gaddis such as the Rāthis. The end result has been that the higher ranks have merged with the lower, reflecting the general slump in their status, and creating in the course of several decades the homogeneous caste which is found today. By the middle of the present century, the Gaddis' link with the Rāja was merely a shadow of what it had once been, a matter of ceremonial detail and folk-memory only.

If the rupture of this relationship between the Gaddis and the Chamba State, and its consequences for the internal transformation of the Gaddi caste, can be established beyond reasonable doubt, the causes of this rupture remain hard to pinpoint. The disbandment of the state army may have been an influence, but it is not clear that the Gaddis contributed to the army on any significant scale by the mid-19th Century, and in any case it is hard to see that merely being deprived of military opportunities would have had such an impact on status, especially if the tradition of former military service to the state remained. Other factors must have come into play also. The emergence, albeit slowly by comparison with areas under direct British administration, of certain features of

a market economy (although not in land itself until after Indian independence), and increased communication with the Punjab, certainly led to greater economic differentiation within the state in the era after the British gained control of the region. This is a more fruitful sphere in which to seek explanations for the changes I have been describing. The beneficiaries of economic expansion were the lower portions of the state between Chamba town and the Punjab. Brahmaur, by contrast, like other geographically remote regions of the state (Churāh and Pāngi), was soon placed at an economic disadvantage in relation to the emerging areas, in a way that was effectively precluded under the economic regime of the pre-capitalist period. The political and social consequences of this economic transformation would seem to have been an irrevocable shift in the orientation of the Chamba State away from its medieval association with Brahmaur and towards the Punjab. Thus, economic marginality built on geographic remoteness, while this in turn was the foundation for Brahmaur's political and social marginality [2].

To sum up, then, increasing economic differentiation within Chamba in the later part of the 19th Century made the Brahmauris' privileged political and social position in the state obsolete; and the association which had in earlier centuries been the cornerstone of the Chamba kingdom's security was finally reduced to a matter of occasional ceremonial routine.

CHAPTER 3. CLAN AND CASTE.

3.1 The Internal Structure of the Caste.

On several occasions in Chapter 1 I mentioned the existence of clans and lineages; it is now time to look in greater detail at the significance of agnatic descent categories in the internal structure of Brahmauri castes. The Gaddi, Brahman, and Sipi castes each comprise numerous named, exogamous patriclans, such as Parry has described for Kangra generally (1979: 132-6), and the Rihāra caste is likewise divided into clans, albeit on an infinitely smaller scale. In Brahmaur, clans tend to be associated primarily with a single village, often with a few component descent groups of the clan being resident in neighbouring villages. Only a small minority of notably large clans (almost always Gaddi so far as I know) are found spread over a wide area in Brahmaur. In Kangra, however, the process of emigration from Brahmaur has resulted in a tendency for clans to be more widely dispersed than in Brahmaur. The pattern is thus much closer to that described by Parry, although the scale is smaller.

Clan membership is defined simply by reference to a clan name, al. This term itself, with the more precise meaning of a title or nickname, is not widely used in the Brahmauri-inhabited villages I know. It is widely reported nevertheless throughout Chamba and Kangra (Brar 1971; Newell 1967; Parry

1979), and cropped up intermittently during my fieldwork. I shall follow Parry (1979: 136) in describing a local segment of a clan as a sub-clan. As he notes, clan and sub-clan may in isolated circumstances amount to one and the same, where a clan's members are concentrated in one village or cluster of villages. Cases such as these are few, however, especially with the majority of clans being found on both the Chamba and Kangra sides of the Dhaula Dhar. Again, a local segment of a clan may amount to no more than a single lineage. But in between these two limiting cases, it is common to find that a clan is represented in a village or cluster of villages by two or more maximal lineages [1]. Since the strength accorded to agnatic ties is closely linked to spatial proximity, it makes sense to recognise for analytic purposes a social category which is intermediate to the clan and the lineage, and which is defined specifically, unlike the latter two categories, by reference to locality.

For example, while the Gharāti and Sāhnu Gaddis in Karnāthu each belong to one maximal lineage (of 8 and 9 generations depth respectively), the Buketa Gaddis consist of two separate lineages and the Singrān Gaddis three separate lineages between which genealogical links cannot now be traced. The point I wish to make is that the ties between members of different Buketa or Singrān maximal lineages are no looser than the ties between agnates of different branches of the same maximal lineage living in the village. A man is always likelier to have close ties with a genealogically remote member of the same sub-clan than he is with a member of the same maximal lineage resident in another mauza. Then

again, while the Buketa sub-clan is confined to Karnāthu, and found nowhere else in the immediate vicinity, all the other Gaddi sub-clans found there are located in at least one other neighbouring tīka as well (i.e. Deol, Phathāhar, Surājara and Sokhru).

A clan or lineage is generally denoted by the terms jāt or khāndān. To discuss the former first, jāt has literal connotations of 'species' or 'kind', and its reference shifts, according to context, between varna, caste, sub-caste or clan. Anthropological literature has tended to pay the least attention to this last and narrowest level, but in practice the term jāt is used at least as much to refer to a clan as a caste in Himachal Pradesh. The range of meaning of jāt and khāndān in relation to one another is well summarised by Parry as follows: "the clan...is not only a jat of the least inclusive order of segmentation but also a khandan...of the most inclusive order" (1979: 132). As this remark indicates, khāndān is also employed in a segmentary sense, and at the narrowest level may denote a lineage of small scale. The term khāndān is used in Brahmaur (cf. Newell 1967: 74) as well as in Kangra, and indeed is common in many parts of north India (cf. Berreman 1972: 178). In the Punjab it conveys an implication of repute or prestige, and the phrase khāndāni ādmi is a common one for a man who comes from a high status family.

Members of the same khāndān refer to one another as gharet, and of all the terms in current use which relate to patrilineal kinship this is by far the most common. One's gharet are the members of one's house cluster, members of one's

sub-clan, and at the broadest level of inclusion members of one's clan. Women belong to their natal khāndān until marriage, when they are transferred to their husband's khāndān. Thus, after her marriage a woman's gharet are her husbands' agnates and their wives and unmarried daughters, and not her parents' agnates (but see also Chapter 8).

Beyond the point of traceable genealogical links, people know that they belong to the same khāndān if they have a common al, or clan title/nickname. If few Brahmauris are familiar with the term al everybody can reel off a list of als, denoting the clans (usually of their own caste only) to be found in their own locality. Newell has presented a list obtained from a Brahman in Chamba containing some 200 Gaddi als (1967: 16-18); while I recorded over 30 Brahman als, over 50 Gaddi als and 20 Sipi als among Brahmauris resident in Palampur tehsīl. The names themselves derive from occupations, curious personal characteristics of the founder of the clan, or from places. The following list provides an illustration, with examples taken from Karnāthu and neighbouring villages.

Occupations:	Gharāṭi	Water-Mill Holder
	Lāde	Trader with Ladakh
	Sāhnu	Shop-keeper
Characteristics:	Adhkāru	Doctor with uncured patients
	Dundu	One-handed
	Jhunnu	Idler
Place-names:	Cunedi	from Cuned
	Kugṭel	from Kugṭi
	Sandāl	from Sindi

Parry reports that in Kangra not only the clan but on

occasions the clan segment or even particular lineages may be identified by an al (1979: 137). Among the Brahmauris this is extremely unusual, and I know of only one example of a clan which has named constituent segments. This is the Barsain (Gaddi), which is widely considered to be the largest and most dispersed of all Brahmauri clans. But few people of other clans know the names of these segments, and they simply refer to Barsain Gaddis by that name [2].

As is to be expected, however, fission of clans does occur. The move from Brahmaur to Kangra appears to be one cause of fission, but the precipitating factors are hard to identify. The Surel al (Gaddi), for instance, a name associating members of the clan with Surai in Trehta, is a Kangra offshoot of one of the two clans found in Surai, the Lore and Phakanenu. Similarly, the Phākas and Bhatān Brahmans, the former with a base in Karnathu, the latter in Phathāhar, recognise a common ancestral link. The Phākas are said to be the descendants of an elder brother, the Bhatān of a younger brother. These common links are still recognised in the clans concerned, and there are for example no marriage ties between Phākas and Bhatān since they still see themselves as distant agnates. The point is, however, that these are straightforward cases of clan fission, and not cases of named segments emerging within the framework of a continuing clan identity.

New clans may also emerge in Kangra through a kind of accretion to Brahmauri society. The Lāppar Brahmans from Thala are arguably a case in point, given that they have no apparent Brahmaur ancestry. An example reported by Rose

is the Agāsani (Gaddi) clan, said to be an offshoot of the Jaryāl Rajputs (1911, vol II: 258). This is a particularly interesting example, for Parry provides details of the somewhat compromised and ambiguous position of the Jaryāl Rajputs in Kangra, a royal clan with some distinctly unroyal attributes (1979: 250-1). It is not hard to envisage that such a Rajput clan might well have shed its more disreputable segments, even if such emergent descent groups more commonly ended up as Rāthis (i.e. within the Rajput birādari structure) than as Gaddis.

All Brahmauris recognise and worship a clan deity (kulaj or kul devta/devi, from kul, a line of descent). Members of the same clan are said to worship the same kulaj. In practice, such uniform adherence to a particular kulaj depends a great deal on the size and geographical spread of a clan. Where a clan is concentrated in a few localities the chances are all the greater that the constituent lineages will share a common clan deity, but the most that can be said with certainty is that all members of a sub-clan recognise the same clan deity. This is in line with Parry's data (1979: 133), but it is at odds with Newell (1967: 79), who implies that not every lineage locally may have a kulaj. But his comments show that he has overlooked the fact that a village deity can also be a kulaj of a particular sub-clan, for there is no discontinuity between the two levels in indigenous thought.

The 17 Brahman and Gaddi clans represented in Karnāthu, Phathāhar, Surājara and Sokhru all worshipped deities which had been 'brought' from Brahmaur to Kangra, and this appears to be the general pattern. Interestingly, in each case these

deities were forms of Devi, and not male gods. (By contrast in the Karnāthu-centred village cult the most powerful deity is a devta, Ajiapāl.) It would be misleading to suggest, however, that sub-clans only worship a single clan deity, and there is nothing to hinder the worship of more. Each sub-clan recognises at least one kulaj, shared by all its members and in theory by the entire clan. Additional kulajs may be worshipped on an equally wide basis within the clan or sub-clan, or they may be confined to particular lineages only. One Gharāṭi lineage in Karnathu, for example, worships two kul devis: the clan goddess and another one whose worship is in actual practice restricted to a particular branch of the maximal lineage. The Singrān sub-clan recognise two kul devis also, a major and a lesser one. Again, the Jhunnu and Lāde Gaddis, both of whom have ancestral roots in Kugti in Brahmaur, worship Marāli Devi and the widely revered Kugti devta, Kailing.

Two additional social categories must finally be discussed briefly. I have mentioned at several points the term birādari, a key category in Parry's description of Kangra Rajput (and Brahman) society, and I have noted that the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans fall outside the framework of the organised birādari structure of the Kangra and Chamba region. I have on occasions, however, heard the word birādari used by Brahmauri high caste individuals in Kangra, to refer to all clans of the same caste resident in the locality, or more narrowly to the clans of one caste living in a single village (i.e. the Gaddis in Karnathu may be referred to as a birādari). This is essentially a loose and not especially

common usage. But the point I wish to make is that it is consistent with the wider Kangra meaning of the term. There the clans of one birādari are considered to be of roughly equal status, often intermarry on a reciprocal basis (where daughters are not given to the birādari above), and, Parry argues, relate to other birādaris within the caste in a way that "is in many respects analogous to the relationship between one caste and another" (1979: 4). With few qualifications, related chiefly to their closed marriage system (see Chapter 7), these are characteristics of the Brahmauri high castes also; and from a sociological perspective the notion of a Gaddi or Brahmauri Brahman birādari is highly apposite, even though there is no explicit indigenous intention to equate their caste with the birādaris of the surrounding region.

The last category to consider is that of gotra. This is emphatically a redundant social category today, although until the early part of the present century it was the widest unit of exogamy, in theory if not always in practice. Parry notes that in parts of north India a gotra (or got) may denote a clan, while elsewhere it denotes a grouping of clans, and he states that in Kangra the term is used in the second sense (1979: 134). This would be equally true of Brahmauri usage. The relation between different clans sharing a common gotra is commonly framed in terms of distant agnation, as if a gotra was a descent category of the very highest level of inclusion. This has its roots of course in one classical view (cf. Ghurye 1972; Madan 1962). It must be recognised, however, as an idealisation. Two clans sharing a gotra may be agnatically

linked if they belong to one caste, for example through processes of fission such as I have described earlier; but our ignorance of how and when populations - especially in remoter areas - acquired this Brahmanic institution, and the pan-Indian spread of many, though not all, the gotras occurring in Brahmauri society, rule out any kind of kinship-derived explanation. As Madan sums up, in his review of earlier analyses of gotra:

> "The Brahmanic gotra...is not based upon kinship or descent, and is not a grouping in its own right. For men it is at best a category of people, sharing a common name, who may be agnatically related and may not, therefore, intermarry" (1962: 75, author's stress).

Today, not only Brahmans and Gaddis but Sipis also (and maybe Rihāras although I cannot say) have their gotras. The lower one moves down the caste hierarchy, however, the more this is simply a case of comparatively recent emulation of prestigious orthodoxy. Many people, of all castes, have difficulty in remembering their own gotras, let alone their mother's natal gotra or anyone else's, so redundant is this category today, and I found that often Sipis (perhaps predictably) were more interested than the two high castes in recalling their gotra.

I have included the gotra identities of the Karnāthu high castes in Table 2 (Chapter 1) simply to be able to demonstrate how unimportant the gotra is for the purposes of exogamy (see Chapter 7). Marriages between clans of the same gotra are commonplace today, and even purohits, the traditional guardians of such information, now have difficulty in remembering the gotras of their jajmāns (patrons).

Moreover, this is by no means just a recent phenomenon, although it has probably become much more common in the last two or three decades. My Karnāthu genealogies show that even in marriages contracted between about 1900 and 1940 spouses were sometimes of the same gotra. Nevertheless, adherence to gotra exogamy undoubtedly was much stricter around the turn of the century and before, judging by informants' statements about the now distant past (cf. also Newell 1967: 15-16; Parry 1979: 331).

Before concluding discussion of gotra, Newell's understanding of its significance needs to be scrutinised, for in my view his failure to distinguish adequately between the clan and the gotra has badly distorted his presentation of the internal structure of the caste in Brahmaur. For instance, the al of the one (Gaddi) clan in the village of Garehṛ is Cauhān, and the gotra Attar (Atri). Newell mistakes Cauhān for the gotra (1967: 16). Then again, he lists the composition of Gosen village confusingly by "gotra or al" (1967: 14). While recognising that these two categories are different he nonetheless confuses them, and indeed sums up his discussion with the words, "the matter is extremely confused" (1967: 16). This is particularly serious because it leads him to attach to the gotra an importance as a corporate group that I am certain it can never have had, and which by rights he should have assigned to the sub-clan (i.e. the localised descent group). Thus, Newell writes:

> "Prior to the settlement (i.e. Land Settlement)...in 1953, the gotra was the principal method by which land inheritance was determined. The pattern of inheritance was sons, brothers, brothers' sons and so on

> within the gotra...To obtain an adoption every single member of the gotra had to approve and, even should it be approved, half the land passed to the other members of the gotra...The gotra was thus the residual owner of the land having ultimate control before it reverted to the rajah" (1967: 15, my parenthesis).

Yet the gotra has never been in Kangra or elsewhere in Chamba a corporate, property holding (or right holding) group (cf. Parry 1979: 135), and there are no grounds for supposing that under the former Chamba State Brahmaur was any different. Given his tendency to confuse the gotra with the local descent group, it is apparent that the above passage is really applicable to the latter [3].

3.2 Transactions between Castes.

In Brahmaur, relations between castes are, by definition, limited to those which have already been identified as part of the Brahmauri caste structure: Brahmans, Gaddis, Sipis, Rihāras and Hālis. In Kangra, however, Brahmauri society exists alongside or is embedded in the wider Kangra caste hierarchy. My choice of words is deliberate. The villages of which I have experience - Karnāthu, Phathāhar, Surājara and Thala - are all on or close to the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, and while Phathāhar contains a sizeable non-Brahmauri population the main Brahmauri portion of the village is slightly set apart from the house clusters of the other castes. To a significant extent, then, the Brahmauri castes of these villages live alongside but apart from the Kangra caste hierarchy, and Kangra people as much as Brahmauris

speak as if the two were distinct systems. On the other hand, further away from the Dhaula Dhar Brahmauri castes are scattered in smaller proportions through largely non-Brahmauri villages. I have little first-hand experience of relations between Brahmauri castes and the wider Kangra population in such settings, but it is reasonable to envisage that Brahmauri castes' interaction with one another will be embedded within a wider set of inter-caste relations. In this section, my data come from Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Thala, and chiefly from the first of these three. This means that, apart from including a restricted range of services sought from castes of the wider Kangra hierarchy, I shall be concerned almost exclusively with the relations between the Brahmauri castes themselves. The structure of inter-caste relations which I shall discuss is, however, perfectly homologous with that of the wider Kangra system, and is therefore open to extension according to contingency.

I shall concentrate upon what Parry has referred to as "the principal rank-defining transactions between castes" (1979: 93), namely, the exchange of greetings, tobacco, food and services. These transactions define rank precisely because they are the main spheres in which inter-caste relations and patterns of deference are most regulated and formalised. I shall also describe briefly the one context at which all castes worship together (the cult celebrated in Karnathu through rites known as jāgras), for while the direct transactions here are between men and deities, these themselves reveal the human hierarchies and provide a further illustration of the regulation of relations between castes.

Although I shall be looking at the transactions which most define caste rank, this is not intended as a rank-determining exercise (i.e. of the type pioneered by Marriott 1959, 1968, 1976), for with such a restricted range of castes within the Brahmauri system and no disputes about precedence such an exercise is unnecessary. My aim is rather to examine how inter-caste relations are ordered, as revealed through these transactions, and to demonstrate the extent to which the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans of the villages along the southern slopes of the Dhaula Dhar make use of services provided by castes of the wider hierarchy.

3.2.1 Greetings.

It is convenient to distinguish here between terms or phrases which are specific to inter-caste encounters, and those others which, while they occur commonly in encounters between high and low castes, are a part of a broader language of superiority and inferiority in social relations generally, whether between castes or between kin. I shall look at this broader set of usages first. Juniors in age terms or low caste men should greet their superiors first, should use the honorific suffix -jī, and should avoid personal names in favour of a title. In relation to these linguistic customs Brahmans and Gaddis are not ranked, and both would use personal names plus the honorific to one another so long as they were of equivalent seniority. Only a priest would be differentiated and treated with deference by Gaddis on greeting. Likewise, just as juniors of both sexes acknowledge various senior consanguines and affines by touching their feet if

meeting after an absence, so low caste men should on certain formal occasions enact their inferiority towards the high castes by touching the feet of high caste men (for instance, when Brahmans or Gaddis attend a Sipi celebration). Low caste women may also on such occasions touch the feet of a superior caste man, but in general avoidance is more common.

Turning now to the linguistic formulae which are specific to caste encounters, my data show close correspondence with the terms reported at the turn of the century by Rose (1911, vol II: 271) for Brahmaur, and with those reported by Parry (1979: 94). Brahmans greet each other with namaskār, Gaddis use jai jai, and Sipis Rām Rām. There are a variety of terms available to Sipis greeting high caste individuals. Pairi bandana or pairi ponde, meaning 'I respectfully touch your feet', and accompanied by a gesture to that effect are particularly appropriate to Brahmans, above all priestly Brahmans. These phrases may also be used to Gaddis (or other Rajputs), but Jai Jai is a more likely greeting. I should say, however, that these phrases are unlikely to be used every time individuals of the castes in question meet or pass one another. They tend to be reserved for more formal contexts, although individuals vary in this respect; and Sipis who pass through high caste courtyards several times a day make do with the ubiquitous Mahārāj for such recurrent greetings, if anything at all is felt to be necessary [4]. Only a priest may expect to receive regularly the pairi bandana/ponde greeting.

These greetings are always acknowledged, in contrast to the code described by Parry for the higher echelons of the Brahman and Rajput hierarchy (1979: 94,206), among whose

members a response to a low caste man's greeting used to be beneath their dignity on occasions. Priests tend to respond with asirbād, a blessing, but other Brahmans and Gaddis are likely to respond with Rām Rām or, the most common form, rāji reh, 'keep well'. Between high caste men, Gaddis would greet a Brahman priest with pairi bandana/ponde, and receive asirbād in return, but to non-priestly Brahmans the element of asymmetry is more or less dropped, and the informally respectful Mahārāj is the commonest form. This verbal etiquette essentially defines relations between men. Women may greet a priest with pairi ponde, and receive asirbād in return, but this is the only phrase they would use. Between low and high caste women appropriate verbal deference is expected, but the formal greetings are not employed.

3.2.2 Tobacco.

Rules concerning smoking are likewise a male domain, for women are in theory prohibited from smoking, and do so discreetly if at all (typically at festive occasions and strictly in the company of their own sex only). Brahman and Gaddi men smoke the hookah together but remove the stem (nai or nari), whereas if the smoking group is solely of either one caste or the other the stem would not be removed. Neither Brahmans nor Gaddis would share a hookah at all with the low castes, while the Sipis themselves would not entertain the possibility of sharing even a stemless hookah with the Rihāras. These rules are consistent with the pattern reported from the lower part of Palampur by Parry (1979: 94-5,105-6), encoding ritual distance in such a way that smoking together

without the stem denotes a slight but defined difference in rank, whereas complete equality is signalled by smoking from the same stem. It is not known whether at one time in the past the different Gaddi sections (Rajput, Khatri, Thākur and Rāthi) marked gradations of rank within the caste by only smoking from the stem when among men of their own section, in line with Parry's evidence of asymmetrical smoking practices within the Brahman and Rajput castes. But given the suggestions discussed earlier that the Gaddis were once organised internally on hypergamous lines, such former asymmetry in smoking habits seems a plausible conjecture.

Rules for smoking the cillum are similar, with the one difference that Brahmans and Gaddis share a cillum on the same basis as a single caste smoking group. In my experience, the cillum is almost always smoked with the addition of cāras or bhāng, cannabis, rather than simply with tobacco; and in contrast to Parry's observations (1979: 94), among Brahmauris, Sipis or Rihāras would not be included in a group smoking cannabis from the same cillum. In other words, there is no relaxation of smoking rules where cannabis is concerned.

3.2.3 Food.

A description of inter-caste food transactions demands first a presentation of the indigenous classification of food. The first distinction to note, for purposes of inter-caste transactions, is that between uncooked and cooked food. Uncooked food (which includes milk, grains, vegetables, fruit and pulses) may be exchanged without restriction, as one would anticipate on the basis of other north Indian data

(cf. Dumont 1972: 186; Parry 1979: 95). As Marriott puts it, grain, the typical uncooked food, is not such a 'gross' medium of exchange as cooked food, and the less gross the medium the more widely acceptable it is deemed to be (1976: 110). Water sources, whether from taps or from springs, are also unrestricted. It would still be unlikely, however, that either of the high castes would accept water from the water-pot of a low caste household.

So far as cooked food (rasoi) is concerned, Parry has provided a succinct description of its classification in Kangra (1979: 95-6). I begin with my own summary, as this classification holds good for most of the Brahmauri population in Kangra. Karnāthu is, however, something of an exception in its linguistic usages (though not in its behaviour). The pan-Indian distinction between two methods of food preparation, usually formulated in terms of kacca and pakka, ordinary and perfect food (cf. Dumont 1972: 186), occurs in Kangra as a distinction between nali rasoi, or colloquially nala, and suji rasoi, or suja. Nali rasoi, ordinary food, denotes a meal which has boiled rice as its staple, and it is the preparation in water which is the characteristic feature. Nali was said by one informant to stem from nalpan, a Kangri term for left-overs. This somewhat curious (and unsubstantiated) derivation does emphasise the relatively gross character of nali rasoi by comparison with suji rasoi, which is made evident in the much stricter rules about who may take it from whom. Suji, on the other hand, is a corruption of succi, meaning 'pure', and strictly speaking it denotes a staple cooked in ghī, clarified butter. A more subtle medium,

it is more readily exchanged than nali rasoi, and food cooked in ghī makes an acceptable offering to a deity in a way that boiled rice could never be.

All cooked food is either considered to be nali or suji rasoi. Leaving aside breakfast, which is a nondescript affair, most people eat one meal of nali rasoi and one of suji rasoi daily: rice is usually eaten mid-morning, and suji rasoi in the evening. The everyday staple eaten as suji rasoi is invariably roti, a thick version of a capāti made from wheat- or maize-flour. The point about roti is that while it is classed as suji rasoi it is cooked (baked) without ghī. Moreover, although the accompanying pulses or vegetables are cooked in ghī (or some more 'ordinary' oil), so also are the dishes accompanying a nali rasoi meal. The conceptual distinction between two classes of food thus emerges in a somewhat different form at the empirical level, for suji rasoi has to be seen in practice as a wider food category than its core association with the purity of ghī, a sacred product of the cow, would indicate [5]. This is an aspect of the classification overlooked by Parry.

Although this conceptual distinction applies to all cooked food it is clearest in relation to festive food, feasts being the main occasions for commensality. Parry has stated that in Kangra "the festive food par excellence is boiled rice accompanied by several side dishes of lentils and vegetables" (1979: 95), in other words nali rasoi. On the face of it, it seems paradoxical that the grosser food, that which is more restricted in its acceptability, should be provided on festive occasions when pure food might be

envisaged as more appropriate. By having Brahmans cook the food, however, it is rendered acceptable to all guests, regardless of the caste of the hosts. Nor is this perhaps as unusual as Parry and Dumont (1972: 189) imply, for reports from Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu indicate the use of boiled rice as a staple at feasts (Mayer 1960; Good 1978).

But in my view Parry also understates the extent to which suji rasoi is provided as a festive food. Rice is, admittedly, the only staple provided at weddings and at the meals held after a death (after thirteen days, three months, six months, one year and four years), and it was always provided at jātras that I attended [6]. But at Sat Nārāyaṇ [7] kathas the meal was usually, though not invariably, suji rasoi; while at a massive jag that I attended in Deol, a ceremony of thanksgiving at the end of a monsoon which had seen a large landslide narrowly miss houses of the village, well over 300 people were fed suji rasoi. This was perhaps something of an exception, for most people agreed that suji rasoi was usually provided at smaller feasts, where less than one hundred or so were to be fed, while rice was simply more convenient where large numbers were to be fed. This point was illustrated at a caubarkha I attended in Phathāhar marking the fourth anniversary of the death of quite the wealthiest Gaddi in the locality. Some 500 people were fed nali rasoi, but beforehand a select group of close kin and guests were offered a light suji rasoi meal in addition.

Suji rasoi offered to guests at such feasts invariably means a staple cooked in ghī, in sharp contrast to the everyday

suji rasoi. All feasts I attended where suji rasoi was served consisted of babaru, a staple made like roti from wheat-flour but containing yeast and ghī, plus the usual dishes of pulses and vegetables. On these occasions the food was either prepared exclusively by botis, male Brahmans acting as cooks, as at the jag, the caubarkha, and one Sat Nārāyaṇ katha; or else it was cooked by a male Brahman after women of the (in each case Brahman or Gaddi) household had done the most time-consuming task of preparing the babaru. The presence of a Brahman boti as cook serves to distinguish a public feast from a purely domestic occasion, and ensures that the meal brings its holders a kudos comparable with large nali rasoi feasts, even though from the perspective of purity considerations alone a boti's presence is intrinsically less vital than at feasts where rice is to be served. This is because the greater 'perfection' of food cooked with ghī makes it much more widely acceptable, as Parry's contrasting matrices for the giving and receiving of nali and suji rasoi show (1979: 98-9).

To summarise, it is in the festive context that the conceptual distinction between two kinds of food is most literally realised; for it is here, and not at the level of everyday food, that a boiled staple (kacca in pan-Indian terms) is contrasted with a staple made with ghī (pakka).

Thala's inhabitants, like most Brahmauris in Kangra who are resident permanently on the south side of the mountains, are familiar with and think in terms of the distinction I have outlined. Karnāthu's inhabitants, on the other hand, are characterised by their complete lack of familiarity with

this categoric distinction, illustrated by the absence of the term nala/i from their vocabulary. Cooked food in Karnāthu is rasoi, as it is throughout the region, and the only differentiation that is made is between everyday food and festive food cooked by a Brahman boti. The latter is classed as succa or succi rasoi, regardless of whether it is based around boiled rice or babaru. Thus, in Karnāthu one element of what is in Kangra a dyadic relation has been taken out of its context and its frame of reference transformed, so that it signifies festive food as a whole. Now by making the presence of a Brahman cook the criterion of 'perfect' food, Karnāthu reveals its ignorance of the much more general conceptual distinction based on the mode of preparation. (The lack of such a category distinction may not be uncommon. Good notes that in the part of Tamil Nadu where he worked cooked food was unclassified (1978: 33-4).)

I have no doubt that we have to look to Brahmaur to account for Karnāthu's apparent anomalousness. Although I have no data on food classification in Brahmaur at the present time (nor has Newell published any information), the inference I draw from the Karnāthu evidence is that traditionally no distinction based on the mode of preparation, such as that between nali and suji rasoi, can have had currency there. Moreover, agricultural realities provide possible support for this view. Wet-rice cannot be grown in Brahmaur; yet in Kangra only wet-rice would be served as nali rasoi on festive occasions. With dry-rice (which is grown on a small scale in Brahmaur) hardly being a suitable food for feasts, it appears that the culinary basis for this distinction would

traditionally have been lacking. It is of course possible that the Karnāthu classification reflects current Brahmaur usage. But I am inclined to see it as a partial assimilation of the wider Kangra schema which has resulted in a curious transformation of its underlying logic. Whether it is a unique and quite parochial version, testifying to Karnāthu's relative isolation from wider Kangra influences, or whether it has parallels among Brahmauris who winter in Kangra but keep their primary homes in Brahmaur, is not a question I can answer. I shall conclude by noting that however much Karnāthu's linguistic usages may be anomalous in this context, this does not mean that behaviour concerning food is significantly out of step with what is customary in Kangra. The same food is eaten, and transactions are in line with the regional pattern, apart from one divergence I shall mention in the next paragraph. It is to a description of inter-caste food transactions that I shall now turn, starting with exchanges in everyday contexts.

In Karnāthu, Brahmans and Gaddis eat each other's food, whether it is based on rice or roti, on a virtually equal footing. But in Thala, on the other hand, where as I have said the contrast between nali rasoi and suji rasoi has some meaning, I was told that Brahmans would eat the latter but not the former in a Gaddi home [8]. Brahman priests are generally more fastidious than other Brahmans, but an instructive example from Karnāthu concerns Śirīdhār Rām, the Dundu purohit who is resident in Kangra during the winter months. Śirīdhār stays in Karnāthu with a Gaddi household who, being Sāhnu, are also numbered among his jajmāns (patrons). The living-

quarters are arranged so that there are two cūlāhs (cooking hearths) at either end of an open and undivided room. When Śiridhar is resident with his family his wife cooks his food as one would expect on the hearth that is reserved for their use. But each year there are days or weeks when his wife is in Brahmaur while he is in Karnāthu. At these times, Śirīdhār eats the food cooked by the wife of his Gaddi host-landlord, when he is not away performing ceremonies, whether the meal is based on rice or roti. Śirīdhār's case is fairly exceptional in my experience, but the point to stress is that it is not considered locally (i.e. in Phathāhar and Deol as well as Karnāthu) in the slightest degree reprehensible. It is also relevant to observe here that Brahman flock-holders from Karnāthu (all from the Phākas sub-clan) frequently combine with Gaddi graziers at various times during the annual grazing cycle. No culinary restrictions are observed in their case; but whether Brahman graziers from other localities in Kangra would avoid taking nali rasoi from Gaddis while with their flocks is not clear to me.

Neither Brahmans nor Gaddis would dream of taking food of any kind cooked by the low castes, either in Karnāthu or anywhere else. This incidentally provides interactional evidence to refute the Sipis' claim to parity of rank with the Lohārs (cf. Chapter 1.4), for according to Parry both Brahmans and Rajputs will accept suji rasoi from Lohārs (1979: 99). Periodically, however, Sipis offer tea to high caste individuals, and this may be discreetly accepted on occasions. Some of the younger generation of high caste youths are open about the fact that they have accepted tea from Sipi friends,

when talking among themselves, and they insist that older men too sometimes find it hard to refuse without seeming rude. But such gestures are always made secretively, and one of our young Brahman neighbours gave a hilarious demonstration of the high caste man gulping his tea down at great speed while looking furtively from side to side in case he had been spotted. None of these people, however, would even contemplate taking tea from Rihāras, but as they are so few in numbers the issue is much less likely to arise than with the Sipis. As I see it, taking tea with Sipis is, for an older generation, an occasionally necessary lapse for the sake of amicable relations with neighbours or co-villagers. Provided that neither party draws attention to the fact, it can conveniently be ignored, even though everybody knows that this occurs. Parry makes similar observations about "the pragmatic spirit in which the rules are commonly translated into practice" (1979: 103). For certain of the younger generation of high caste men (and boys), for the most part those who have had some years of schooling, and are now influenced also by the first generation of Brahmauri college students, the act of taking tea with Sipis is something more than a tolerated indiscretion. It is more like a small rebellion against casteism (the English word is used in this connection), which nevertheless carries no risk of serious reprisals from their seniors unless it is done too brazenly. And just as these young men would not dream of taking tea with one of the very lowest castes, so they would not contemplate extending their gesture against casteism to the point of eating a meal prepared by a Sipi [9].

I know of no occasion, feasts aside, at which a high caste Brahmauri would be likely to feed a Sipi, so the issue is essentially hypothetical. But in all likelihood the Sipi would be fed downstairs, that is to say, outside the living room with the cooking hearth (cūlāh), and therefore out of sight of an area that has to be protected from impurity. Certainly, the high castes state that Sipis are not permitted to enter a high caste living room for any purpose. They expect Sipis to call up from outside, while they themselves answer from their windows, or if they do enter the house to discuss matters downstairs. But in practice patterns of behaviour are more flexible. I have often seen Sipis come halfway up the stairs of a high caste house but go no further, holding a conversation with a person sitting by the hearth while they remain outside the notional boundaries of the room. Furthermore, in a few cases individual Sipis achieve a status which sets them slightly apart from their fellow caste members in the eyes of high caste people who know them. Thus, in Karnāthu Sarnu Rām is a Sipi who is personally treated with great respect by his high caste neighbours, and is a fairly common visitor to many a Gaddi or Brahman living room. He remains, nevertheless, punctilious in his observance of the outward forms of deference (in greetings, for instance, and in his manner generally), in a way which his adult son and several other Sipis are not. Similarly, another elderly Sipi, Makholi Rām, who has a reputation in Karnāthu as a mantra-wāla (a kind of cela, or medium, who diagnoses and remedies afflictions through the use of mantras), is widely respected and is likely to be seen in high caste

living rooms periodically, particularly in conjunction with his healing work.

While these two examples illustrate a relaxation of the rules for senior and highly respected Sipi men, I also knew of a very different and much less conventional case in which for a period one Brahman woman relaxed the rules for a young Sipi girl. Brikma Devi was a young Sipi wife who had an abysmal relationship with her mother-in-law. As a result she used to disappear regularly to the house of one of our Brahman neighbours, where Bero Devi would allow her to come and sit upstairs, albeit in a different room to the cūlāh, so long as Bero's husband and sons were out at the time. Brikma's mother-in-law was incensed by what she saw as Bero's connivance in sheltering an indolent girl, and I remember one occasion when she flouted convention in her anger, storming upstairs to retrieve Brikma and launching into a diatribe against the two of them, wholly in defiance of customary Sipi behaviour towards a high caste adult.

Thus, the rules about Sipis entering high caste houses, which ostensibly are so cut and dried, are in practice modified slightly on a variety of grounds. No such relaxation occurs with regard to the Rihāras. Both in theory and in practice they are prohibited from entering the houses of all the castes above them, even the Sipis', and business is conducted in the courtyard. The greater interactional latitude which in practice is granted to (or exploited by) Sipis in certain dealings with high castes, and which would never be countenanced with regard to Rihāras or Hālis, confirms the resemblances between Sipis and Kolis in the

wider Kangra hierarchy (cf. Parry 1979: 103,112-3).

However, this is all to digress somewhat from the domain of food transactions between castes, although the connecting thread between food exchanges and the entry of low castes into high caste houses is the question of relative proximity to the purity of the hearth. Only those of equal or higher status may sit around a household's hearth, and to keep a person outside or downstairs is to maximise the distance between the hearth and the person of inferior rank. (The downstairs room is also used for more formal or public entertaining on occasions, with no connotations of a visitor's inferiority. In such contexts, the contrast between upstairs and downstairs is made in terms of private and public space. The respected visitor entertained downstairs will always be treated in quite a different manner to the low caste person discussing matters in the downstairs room of a high caste house.)

I shall turn my attention now to food transactions on the main occasions for commensality, namely feasts. The main occasions for feasts are at weddings, after a death (the final one being at the caubarkha on the fourth anniversary), at a jātra and at a Sat Nārāyaṇ katha, to name the main but by no means the only occasions. Brahmans, Gaddis and Sipis attend each other's feasts, although the two high castes can only attend a Sipi occasion provided that a Brahman cook and high caste assistants take care of all food preparation. Where rice is the staple, cooking will automatically be done by a male Brahman, whichever caste the hosts may be; where babaru is the staple, cooking could be done by the women of the

household, either Brahman or Gaddi, without endangering a Brahman's purity, for as suji rasoi it is intrinsically more perfect than nali rasoi. However, all feasts I attended where babaru was served had been cooked by Brahmans, even if not always prepared by them, as I noted earlier. Brahmans who act as cooks are known as botis. Any Brahman may perform the tasks of a boti, both priests and others, and among the Brahmauris there are no specialist cooks, even though it inevitably happens that certain individuals acquire reputations.

But there has been a definite trend away from calling on Brahmauri Brahmans as cooks at the largest and most important feasts, weddings and perhaps caubarkhas (where nali rasoi is served). This has gone further in the lower villages along the Dhaula Dhar, but even in Karnāthu and Surājara it has had its impact. Instead, high birādari Brahman cooks are brought in from outside. This is largely due to the fact that formerly higher birādari Rajputs or Brahmans would have refused to eat nali rasoi cooked by a Brahmauri (i.e. Bhāṭ) Brahman boti, and would therefore have to be served suji rasoi or else could not be invited at all. Certainly for many Brahmauri Brahmans or Gaddis I know this is a fairly academic problem, as they are unlikely to consider inviting the more prestigious Rajputs of the mauza to their weddings. But I recall a wedding at Surājara where the bridegroom was the son of an office-holder in the Gaddi Union: several local Rajput notables from Deol and Dharer attended, and had they been absent it would have been a marked blow to the prestige of the host. Such examples could be multiplied, and they serve to establish a superior pattern for others to emulate. Whether in fact the

higher status Brahmans and Rajputs would today eat nali rasoi cooked by a Brahmauri boti is a moot point. Parry states that "current practice with regard to transactions in boiled food between members of different biradaris...is a great deal more liberal than the ideal rules which are described for the past" (1979: 256). Yet in my experience this liberality is not really put to the test, since the Brahmauri high castes have altered their practices to conform more closely with the former ideal.

I was told that Brahmauri Brahmans were prepared to cook at Rihāra feasts. None of the four Rihāra households in Phathāhar held a meal to which anyone in Karnāthu went during my stay there, however, and members of this caste are rarely rich enough to support the cost of large-scale entertaining. These are likely, therefore, to be feasts on the smallest scale, attended by few but members of the same caste.

At feasts, Brahmans and Gaddis eat together in the same lines (pangat), undifferentiated according to caste, sex or seniority. A select group of prestigious individuals may be raised above the rest, sitting in a row along the verandah of the house while everyone else is fed in the courtyard (weather permitting), but this by no means necessarily occurs, and depends on the design of the house. Sipis are fed in a final sitting, in separate lines from any remaining high caste people who are still to be fed; whereas Rihāras, if they are fed at all, will either be fed around the side of the house or else will be given food to take back and eat at home. Since the food is eaten from leaf-plates there is no problem for the

high castes of having utensils polluted by low caste guests.

This pattern of undifferentiated high caste rows of diners among Brahmauris in Kangra at the present time contrasts with data given by Newell (1967: 94; 1970: 46-7). He reports that in 1952 each caste ate separately at feasts in Brahmaur (he seems to be counting the Gaddis as one caste, not differentiating the constituent sections), but that in the early part of the century the high castes, Brahmans and Gaddis, ate together in the same rows at feasts, ordered by seniority but not by caste. It appears from Newell's evidence that in the first half of the century the Brahmans in Brahmaur were busy affirming their ritual distance from the Gaddis. In Kangra today there is little evidence of this in the key area of food transactions. The Brahmans' superiority is axiomatic and uncompromised, but the distance between the two castes is slight, and correspondingly the keynote of their food transactions is their easy informality both publicly and privately and the minimal degree of asymmetry. This concludes my remarks on food transactions: a lengthy section, largely because by comparison with greetings and smoking rules, food provides an extremely elaborate language in which to make statements about ritual proximity and distance. As Marriott, among others, has observed (1976: 109), Hindu society has taken "transactional thinking" to unusual lengths, and in no context is this better expressed than through the idiom of food. Brahmauri society is no exception.

3.2.4 Services.

Inter-caste services, the '<u>jajmāni</u>-system' of conventional anthropological usage, may be viewed as one sphere of the economy

of the society in question; alternatively, these may be analysed as a kind of analogue of the transactions I have already looked at, a domain through which relations between castes are regulated. Now whatever the economic importance of the services provided by particular castes may have been once, Parry is surely correct (as the next chapter may illustrate) in his view that "if jajmani relations are conceptually central, they are economically peripheral" (1979: 82) at the present time. I prefer consequently to approach these services along the second of the lines I have mentioned, for while an examination of the services exchanged tells us remarkably little about the organisation of the economy, it tells us a great deal more about the ways in which castes are defined in relation to one another.

In Brahmaur, only the functions of domestic priest (Brahmans), blacksmith (Sipis), and in some localities musician and basket-maker (Rihāras) and leather-worker (Hālis), are regulated on a caste basis (cf. Newell 1967: 20). In Kangra, Brahmauris can, and to varying extents do, call upon a much wider range of caste services. Besides Brahmans, specialists of all the following castes are sometimes called upon by the high castes in Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Thala:

Turkhān	carpenter
Lohār	blacksmith
Nai	barber
Kumhār	potter
Sipi	blanket-maker and tailor of woollen garments
Rihāra	musician
Dūmna	basket-maker
Camār	leather-worker

Relations with these specialists vary enormously, however,

in their importance (in either a material-technical or a ritual sense), the regularity with which they are called upon, and the terms of the contract between patron and specialist. These are all aspects which I shall discuss below.

I should also clarify at the outset that relations between high caste patrons and Sipi or Rihāra specialists who provide them with a service or with goods are conceptualised in indigenous terms no differently from relations with low caste specialists from non-Brahmauri castes. This is not to deny that personal ties are likely to be stronger among the Brahmauri castes, especially where, as in Karnāthu or Thala, they live to some extent apart from the wider Kangra population: a Gaddi is almost bound to have a more complex relationship with a Sipi neighbour whose services he calls upon than he has with a Turkhān living in a _tīka_ three miles away. Nor is it to deny that the Brahmauri high castes do tend to look on Sipis and Rihāras as their own low castes (they do not provide services for anyone else), an expression of what seems best described as Brahmauri ethnicity. It is simply to stress that despite these senses in which the Brahmauri high castes have a distinctive connection with the Sipis and Rihāras, in cases where they do obtain services from the latter the transactions are classified in exactly the same way as they would be with other low castes found in the area.

Relations between high caste patron and lower caste specialist are analogous to relations between _jajmān_ and _purohit_, patron (in ideal terms of high caste) and domestic priest. The term _jajmān_ derives from the Sanskrit _yajamāna_,

meaning 'he who has a sacrifice performed', so that the jajmān is the householder who employs a Brahman to perform domestic rites on his behalf (Dumont 1972: 139). The term jajmāni denotes the privelege of performing this function (ibid). Parry has stated that in Kangra "the terms jajman and jajmani are used in accordance with their religious etymology" (1979: 59), that is to say, of the relation between a patron and domestic priest, funeral priest or barber. The Brahmauris likewise only employ the words jajmān or jajmāni to refer to the association between a patron and his domestic priest or barber [10].

Yet even though all other caste-specific occupational roles are classified differently by the people themselves, the complex of prestations I shall describe below require dealing with as a single system. I say this not just out of conformity with the anthropological convention that all such occupational roles fall under the rubric of the 'jajmāni-system' (cf. Good's recent critique (1982) of this convention). Rather it is because the local terminology for the gifts or payments relating to the fulfilment of these caste functions itself overlaps the distinction between categories of specialist. In everyday behaviour, there is a tendency for 'lower' payments to be assimilated with 'higher' ones, suggesting an indigenous perception that the former can be converted into the latter, as if the two are analogous. On these grounds, then, it is in terms of my ethnography quite justifiable to speak of a system, with the authentic jajmāni relationship as its most prestigious element (cf. Dumont 1972: 138-9).

Whilst long-term links between patrons and specialists, symbolised and renewed through customary prestations, indicate

formal relations analogous to the jajmāni tie, many inter-caste transactions for goods or services are on a cash basis. These transactions may be with the same specialist whenever his services are required, or, if there is a choice, with different specialists at different times. Either way, the cash payment suggests that the arrangement falls outside the scope of the traditional system. Yet matters are not so straightforward, and the kinds of transaction for cash that I have in mind are rightly considered within the framework of a discussion of customary relations for two broad reasons.

First, there can be no neat division of service caste specialists into those with whom a customary relationship exists and those who are paid cash on an ad hoc basis. Even within the same village some high caste householders may have no customary link with, say, a carpenter, turning to one only as and when the need arises, whilst the majority of the village do maintain a customary relationship with this specialist. But more important, even in the context of a customary association a low caste specialist may be paid cash for certain tasks. Parry has noted this of carpenters and barbers in Kangra (1979: 68,73), and it applies to others too. Moreover, as Parry emphasises also, extending a contrast first proposed by Pocock (1962), the barber, basket-maker and leather-worker each have functions in two analytically separable spheres (1979: 71-4,77-9). In one sphere, functions may be rewarded in customary fashion, but equally they may be converted to an ad hoc cash footing or may even be dispensed with altogether. This applies to goods or services of an essentially technical and secular kind. Yet these same specialists also provide crucial services of a strictly

religious (i.e. purity-related) character at life-cycle rites, and these cannot be converted into cash transactions. There can, therefore, be no simple separation of customary and cash transactions between patron and specialist, for both are often present within the one occupational role.

Second, even when speaking of ad hoc cash transactions, it must be remembered that we are still speaking of traditional caste-specific occupations. A patron may weaken the bonds of that relationship by converting it to a cash footing, but the changed terms on which the relationship takes place do not alter the fact that these functions are performed within the framework of traditional inter-caste relations. The division of labour is that which is reflected in and through the caste system; and for this reason these cash transactions cannot be assimilated with the division of labour based on class in the agrarian sector.

This theoretical preamble will help to situate within one framework the ethnographic material on inter-caste services which I shall now present.

Each Brahmauri Brahman, Gaddi, Sipi and Rihāra sub-clan is said to have an ancestral relationship with one Brahman purohit and his immediate descent group: this is their kul-purohit, literally the hereditary domestic priest of the lineage. In theory, the kul-purohit officiates at all household ceremonies held by his jajmān at which a Brahman's presence is required (i.e. a Sat Nārāyaṇ katha), and at all life-cycle rites, the full range of mortuary rites included. In practice, among Brahmauris in Kangra this ideal state of affairs is often modified. For many households, their kul-purohit may

be regularly unavailable, necessitating other arrangements. And whilst people usually distinguish between their 'true' kul-purohit and any other purohit they may call on, the less they see their kul-purohit and the more another priest steps in to fill the gap on a regular basis, the more patrons begin to speak as if their regular priest is in effect their kul-purohit, or a quasi-kul-purohit. I use this form of words advisedly, because it is often said that you do not acquire another kul-purohit just because of the difficulties of geographical separation; you only change your kul-purohit if a line dies out, or as a result of some gross act of priestly infamy, which would make continued patronage impossible (a purely hypothetical notion). Thus the theory is that although over a period of time a sub-clan in Kangra may come to rely on a particular priest who is regularly available, this relationship does not supplant the inherited link with the kul-purohit. In practice, however, it often appears to do so.

To some extent, the problem of a kul-purohit's non-availability among Brahmauris in Kangra stems from physical geography: the barrier of the Dhaula Dhar. But this itself assumes relevance because of a particular attitude towards purohits who are based in Brahmaur. Villages with a high concentration of Brahmauris close to the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar retain a strong preference for Brahmaur-based priests. A corollary of this is that many priests prefer to keep their primary homes in Brahmaur. The Brahmaur-based purohit thus has a prestige among many Brahmauris in Kangra that his counterpart, resident wholly in Kangra, lacks. Certainly,

this is one of the reasons why Śirīdhār Rām and Sarnu Rām, with their primary homes in Brahmaur and their secondary homes in Karnathu and Phathahar respectively, are thought of more highly than Dāya Rām, the other purohit serving Karnāthu, who is resident there permanently and no longer has any links with Brahmaur. However, if a purohit remains based in Brahmaur there is an increased likelihood that he will neglect at least a portion of his circle of patrons resident in Kangra, and this is what seems to have happened.

Reference to Śirīdhār Rām's priestly links with some of the sub-clans in Karnāthu will illustrate the preceding discussion. He is kul-purohit to all the Gharāṭi households of Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Deol (one sub-clan), with the exception of a handful which are disputed with Dāya Ram. He is kul-purohit to no other sub-clans in mauzas Deol or Lanod, although he has patrons elsewhere in Palampur tehsīl. The Sāhnu sub-clan's kul-purohit, however, who comes from the same village in Brahmaur (Bāri) as Śirīdhār and Sarnu but from a different clan to either of them, visits Karnāthu so rarely that Śirīdhār is in the position of a quasi-kul-purohit to all households. As I mentioned earlier, he lives with a Sāhnu family when he is in Karnāthu; and indeed members of that sub-clan speak of him as their kul-purohit, although I was made aware that there was also a 'true' kul-purohit. With the other Gaddis in Karnāthu, the Phākas Brahmans, and the two Sipi sub-clans, Śirīdhār has no regular links. The Buketa and Singrān sub-clans have Sarnu or his brothers as their kul-purohit; both Sipi sub-clans have one from the neighbouring mauza, Lanod; while the Phākas Brahmans and

Jhunnu Gaddis have kul-purohits who rarely visit but no well established alternatives. Śirīdhār has, however, officiated at particular ceremonies for Phākas and Buketa households. Thus, Śirīdhār's priestly activities in Palampur tehsīl may be performed as kul-purohit in the context of a hereditary relationship, or as an ordinary purohit contracted on an ad hoc basis, or again in the context of a relationship that falls somewhere between these two poles. In this he is typical of all Brahmauri Brahman purohits.

Purohits refer to their regular patrons collectively as barteśri (from the Sanskrit vrateśvari, a pledge). The term jajmān is reserved for singular usage. In pan-Indian theory all offerings to a Brahman purohit are dān. Now dān denotes an act of charity towards a superior which brings the giver spiritual merit. Every offering made to a Brahman priest is therefore a gift, an act of generosity, rather than a payment. But while this is the theory, most of my informants assessed the specific offerings to a purohit more pragmatically. As a gift (and ideally a disinterested gift made without thought of a return), dān tends to be differentiated from an offering which popularly is seen, even by many purohits themselves, as being close to a payment. Nor is this perception confined to Brahmauris, for it recurs among the wider Kangra population also.

The offering in question, which is probably the most important of those received by Brahmauri priests in terms of its total cash value, is barsaud (cf. Newell's bersord, 1967, and Parry's brasod, 1979). This is given at all auspicious occasions at which a purohit officiates (i.e. excluding

mortuary rites), and consists of grain, cash and clothing, and occasionally more lavish goods (a blanket or quilt for example) from a rich patron. Barsaud is not a seasonal, post-harvest offering among Brahmauris in Kangra, Newell's comments on Brahmaur notwithstanding (1967: 36). Newell too, however, reports that barsaud is popularly distinguished from dān.

Two offerings which are, on the other hand, referred to as dān are nasrān and bidāi. Nasrān is a small gift of grain given to one's purohit at the major auspicious calendrical festivals, and at Sangrānd, the first day of the month, if he cares to call. Nasrān is received by nobody but purohits; bidāi, however, is an offering given to several specialists, although it is only dān when given to a Brahman priest. Furthermore, bidāi is given on auspicious occasions of a non-calendrical kind, such as the birth of a son, a betrothal or a marriage. Almost certainly the purohit will have performed some service, and the bidāi is thus given on top of barsaud, and is conceptually quite distinct from the latter, being seen as an act of generosity. Bidāi consists of cash and cloth, and sometimes sweets, but not grain. Etymologically, it derives from the notion of a departure, and is thus seen as a kind of departure offering, ensuring that the recipient is well gratified. In its donation to purohits a couple of informants compared it to dakṣiṇa, and Parry's comments on the relation of dakṣiṇa to dān, this time from his research in Benares and not Kangra, are an apt summary of the way my informants tended to speak of bidāi in relation to barsaud:

> "Though dan always implies a dakshina, the two terms are not synonymous here. The essence of a dakshina is

> that it is a supplement to dan...The idea is that it makes up for any lingering feeling on the part of the recipient that the dan is deficient" (1980: 109)

Brahman botis would likewise receive bidāi, and again this is distinguished from their cash payment, ranhāi, for their cooking services.

The fact that households are frequently unable to call upon their kul-purohit does not significantly alter the validity of what I have written. Barsaud and bidāi will be given to any purohit who officiates. I am fairly sure, on the other hand, that no priest would expect to collect nasrān from families other than his 'true' barteśri or those who are regular patrons.

Furthermore, Brahmauri purohits, in striking contrast to higher birādari purohits of the region, accept the mortuary offering known as the pāncdān, or five gifts. This is either received shortly before a person dies, as a final act of merit, or 10 or 12 days after the death (the latter in Karnāthu and Phathāhar) to benefit the soul of the deceased. There is little absolute agreement about what gifts should be given, but quantities of two kinds of grain and two brass utensils cover four that are most commonly mentioned. Today the pāncdān apparently goes as often to the deceased's sister's family (notionally to the sister's children) as to the purohit, a trend which arouses priests to considerable grumbling in my experience, at the loss of a gift which they feel is rightly theirs.

But the most lavish dān is given to the purohit at the caubarkha, the fourth anniversary of a death. Although not exactly an auspicious occasion, this ritual marks the end

of the impurity caused by death, and throughout India it is a rite at which the purohit can officiate without undue danger to his own purity. Besides clothing, grain and cash, the purohit receives kitchen utensils, a bed and a hookah, and sometimes additional gifts such as an umbrella, a blanket and a durrie (carpet). This does not go to the sister's family (cf. Dumont, with reference to the Gorakhpur Brahmans of eastern Uttar Pradesh, 1966: 94-5).

These remarks on dān, and the connection between specific named offerings and dān, imply that the position of the Brahman priest at the very pinnacle of the caste hierarchy is entirely unproblematic. Yet as Heesterman (1964) and more recently Parry (1980) have demonstrated, it is precisely through the performance of their priestly duties and, crucially, their acceptance of dān, that the Brahman's claim to superior purity is most endangered, for in accepting the dān a priest accepts and absorbs the sin and impurity of the donor. The priesthood is thus, contrary to Dumont's view (1970: 43; 1972), not the condition of superior Brahmanic purity but its greatest threat. This perspective on priesthood is hardly manifest, however, at the local level of Brahmauri society, where the purohit is indeed considered the relatively purest member of the population. The dān he receives is the testimony to his superior status. Moreover, while Parry (1980) depicts the dangers inherent in any priestly acceptance of dān by reference to the most contaminating dān of all, that which is associated with death, the Brahmauri purohit, as I have mentioned, performs all mortuary rites and receives the associated dān, with virtually no local perception that this

is contaminating [11]. This is elsewhere in the region (and throughout much of India) the domain of the funeral priests, the Cūraj and Sanyāsi as they are known in Kangra, who are the most inauspicious and impure of all Brahmans. Consequently, although Brahmauri purohits receive no stigma within their own society for their officiation at death rituals, they would be considered irredeemably tainted by high caste members of the wider Kangra society. There are signs that certain purohits and a few of their patrons are starting to be influenced by received Kangra views about priestly officiation at death ceremonies [12]. Nevertheless, despite these slight clues to suggest that the underlying structure of ideas concerning the dangers of priestly acceptance of dān is not utterly absent from Brahmauri society, it must be recognised that to all intents and purposes the Brahman's priestly role is for most people the foundation of his superior purity. In short, whatever paradoxes priesthood presents viewed in a pan-Indian perspective, it presents virtually none at the level of local Brahmauri ideology. Priesthood and purity go together, and dān, even associated with death, is the priest's honourable reward.

I shall turn now to services provided by low caste specialists, starting with the tasks undertaken by kamīns. A kamīn is best described as an artisan, but with the further connotations of a menial and dependent condition. Parry states that just as a purohit receives dān, a customary gift, so a kamīn receives gadi-kalothi, a customary payment (1979: 59), the linguistic distinction between the two kinds of transaction encapsulating the quite different character of the two

relationships. Kalothi, as Brahmauris call it, is a twice yearly post-harvest grain payment. It is essentially payment for the maintenance of a customary relationship, and specific services tend to be paid for separately, in cash or in kind. By comparison with the relationship between kul-purohit and jajmān, the ties between patron and kamīn in even the more long-lasting instances are far less formal and binding. It is possible to switch from one specialist to another, or to decide to do without a customary association at all, in a way that would not be a conceivable option with regard to one's domestic priest.

In Karnāthu, nearly all high caste households pay kalothi to a Nāi (barber), a Turkhān (carpenter), a Lohār (blacksmith) and a Rihāra household. None of the Karnāthu high caste households has the kind of regular relationship with any Sipis that entails the payment of kalothi. In mauza Kandi, however, I knew of cases where Sipis were rated as kamīns and paid kalothi for their woollen cloth-making and tailoring. Again, in Brahmaur, Sipis were linked to high caste patrons in a customary relationship described by Newell as kaman birton (1967: 36), the tasks he mentions being those of carpenter and blacksmith, rather than weaver and tailor. Certainly in Kangra the Sipis are not thought of as having a caste-specific occupation in quite the same way as the other castes mentioned above. They do not provide blacksmiths, as they do in Brahmaur; their work as shearers of high caste flocks falls outside the scope of the patron-kamīn relationship; and although they may receive kalothi for working as weavers and tailors of woollen cloth, the caste is not strongly

identified with this occupation.

In Karnāthu, the high castes obtain the services of other low caste specialists who are working in their traditional occupations on the basis of cash for a particular job or article [13]. For instance, certain Kumhārs provide water-pots, and certain Dūmnas provide baskets. All Camārs seem to have abandoned their traditional task of disposing of carcases, in the locality around Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Deol, but one in Phathāhar still makes a type of shoe much favoured by shepherds with their flocks. The same distinction between specialists who are paid kalothi as part of a customary association, and specialists who are paid cash for each transaction, is evident in Thala also, although there I was told that some families included particular Dūmna individuals as kamīn, and thus paid them kalothi.

All low caste specialists who receive kalothi tend to use that word interchangeably with barsaud, the offering to purohits which is most nearly seen as payment. By equating their own payment with priestly 'payment' kamīns are patently emulating the inevitably more prestigious Brahmanic model. The response it meets from the high castes is on the face of it one of lofty, almost amused disdain at such pretensions. A retired headmaster friend in Palampur confirmed, however, that it was no longer unusual to use the term barsaud of the kamīns' twice yearly grain payments, suggesting that low caste pretensions have in fact born fruit. This is just the kind of assimilation of a lesser with a greater transaction which I was mentioning earlier. However, it has not effected any change in the kamīns' status as kamīns.

In relation to data in Newell (1967: 36) and Parry (1979: 63,70), I am out of step in reporting that the Brahmauri musicians, the Rihāras, in Kangra are the recipients of kalothi, and hence rate as kamīns. For Parry expressly excludes the Kangra caste of musicians, the Sanhāis, from among the recipients of gadi-kalothi; while Newell was clearly baffled to find that in Brahmaur the Rihāras were not incorporated in the same framework of customary payments as the Sipis. In fact, a certain amount of disagreement and ambiguity does surround the position of the Rihāras' services in Kangra. The decisive point nevertheless is that they are paid kalothi in Karnāthu and several villages of mauza Kandi. To discuss this ambiguity surrounding their services another kind of customary offering must be mentioned.

Kuṭhai (cf. Newell's kutei) is the name of a small grain offering given to those who come from house to house begging. It is thus a Brahmauri parallel to the bitsa or alms which Parry reports as the appropriate customary offering to a "category which is not normally named but which may sometimes be descriptively labelled magne-wallahs ('those who beg')" (1979: 59). Now the Kangra Sanhāi caste apparently receive bitsa, not gadi-kalothi, and hence rank as magne-wallahs, not as kamīns. Within their locality, they go from house to house after the harvest collecting a grain payment known as bitsa, even though it is considerably more generous than the small amounts given to ordinary beggars (or sādhus). Rihāras do the same in the vicinity of Karnāthu, but their 'payment' is emphatically classed as kalothi, and the same goes for mauza Kandi. Only Sirīdhār Rām, among my informants, dissented,

and insisted that Rihāras were recipients of kuthai. This was interesting, in view of the fact that his primary home is in Brahmaur, for it squares with Newell's remarks. Newell applies the term 'kutei' to the act of begging and not to the offering received, but leaving this discrepancy aside he writes:

> "Some villagers declare that the village relationship to them (Rihāras) should be defined as kutei, a sort of begging. In my opinion this is clearly incorrect as by virtue of their residence in the Brahmaur tahsil, and because of their ability at playing they take turns at playing at the main Manimahesh jatra. They thereby acquire a right to receive money from the bystanders" (1967: 36, my parenthesis).

These remarks show Newell's confusion when faced with evidence of a 'begging' role being institutionalised within the Brahmauri structure, as if begging has by definition to be performed by those who are completely outside the framework of regular social relations; and that by emphasising their established position within Brahmauri society he will somehow demonstrate that Rihāras are wrongly classed as beggars. Yet given the position of the Sanhāis in Kangra we can see that Newell's attempts to rescue the reputation of the Rihāras are beside the point. The real question is precisely how relations between high castes and Rihāras are conceptualised, for which the linguistic categories of remuneration are one of our best guides. And this evidence suggests that Brahmaur conforms to the Kangra pattern reported by Parry, with the grain given to musicians counted as 'alms' rather than payment.

All this suggests that, at least in the area where I worked, some redefinition of the musicians' services has

taken place. Certainly, it is not just Rihāras themselves who refer to the grain they collect as their kalothi, but the high castes also, to the point where high castes are adamant that the musicians are not paid kuṭhai (Sirīdhār excepted). This development may be set beside the tendency mentioned earlier for kamīns to use barsaud and kalothi interchangeably, part of a continual strategy by low castes to redefine their position in relation to the high castes in less demeaning terms.

Certain low caste specialists are also given bidāi, discussed above in connection with offerings to Brahmans. It is given to the barber (Nāi) and to musicians (although here again the matter is not quite straightforward) on the same kinds of auspicious occasion at which it would be given to Brahmans. Other specialists who rate as kamīns do not receive bidāi. This illustrates the distinction which is implicit between specialists who provide a religious service, in that they are vital to the performance of life-cycle rites or the purity of the patron (not necessarily the same thing), on the one hand, and specialists such as the carpenter and blacksmith who provide a material or technical service only, on the other hand (cf. Pocock 1962; and Parry's persuasive discussion, 1979: 76-80). Since bidāi is presented only at auspicious life-cycle ceremonies, it is only those specialists who are essential participants who receive it. In a more elaborate and differentiated caste milieu than I am familiar with this may include additional specialists from other castes; in relation to my data, however, bidāi only goes to the barber and musicians.

While the barber unambiguously receives bidāi in his capacity as a relatively auspicious aide of the purohit (cf. Dumont 1972: 96,339) - as I mentioned he is the only non-Brahman specialist to refer to his patrons as jajmān (sing.) or barteśri (plur.) - there is some dispute over whether the gift of cash and sweets the musician receives should be called bidāi. Śirīdhār and another Brahmaur-based purohit resolutely rejected the idea that someone as lowly as a musician [14] could receive the same kind of gift as themselves, even though most people in Karnāthu and elsewhere in the neighbourhood affirmed that Rihāras did indeed receive bidāi. This might be dismissed as the merest example of priestly hauteur, were it not for the fact that in Kangra generally I learned that musicians are given a token offering which is bidāi in all but name. Dharvaina, as their offering is called, is appropriate to specialists of the lowest castes on auspicious occasions, rather than bidāi as such. I never heard this term used in Brahmauri circles, and to all intents and purposes we may say that Rihāras receive bidāi. But it does illustrate another side of the ambiguity of the Rihāras' services as musicians.

This concludes my discussion of inter-caste services, the classification of these services and the kinds of remuneration. Parry divides traditional caste-based occupations in Kangra into three categories with explicit hierarchical connotations: purohits who receive dān; kamīns who receive gadi-kalothi; and magne-wallahs who receive bitsa (1979: 59). With slight differences in terminology, a similar model can be drawn from the data I have presented. At the same time,

it should be apparent that this model of an underlying order is very definitely an idealisation to which actual usage only approximates. As I have described, it is in the sphere of customary rewards that the scope for category manipulation is greatest, with the tendency for low caste specialists to lay claim to an offering or payment with less demeaning overtones which is more typically and ideally associated with caste superiors. Linguistic usage in practice thus departs from the model. As Rihāras have become recipients of kalothi and have largely lost their association with begging, and as all who receive kalothi have come to equate this payment with a purohit's barsaud, the effect has been to blur at the behavioural level the clear conceptual distinction Parry draws. But it also reinforces the comparability of the different categories.

3.2.5 Collective Worship.

I shall end this chapter by looking briefly at the participation of different castes in the cult based on Karnāthu and celebrated through rites known as jāgras which I referred to in Chapter 1.8. Animals (sheep and goats) are sacrificed at these jāgras to five village deities, three devtas and two devis, while a further devi has to be content with vegetarian offerings (my choice of words is deliberate for this goddess is not actually vegetarian). Each meat-receiving deity demands a particular kind of animal: the two main devtas are given adult rams, for instance, the third devta receives a male kid goat, and the two devis female kids. These animals are supplied in turn by different groups, so that at each jāgra a group supplies the animal for a different

deity. Thus, the Gharāṭi, Sāhnu and Singrāṇ sub-clan members living in Karnāthu supply an animal each, while the Phākas Brahmans, the Buketa Gaddis and the two Sipi sub-clans jointly provide one animal. The fifth is provided by Gaddis in Phaṭhāhar, but in my experience of Karnathu jāgras this was the contribution which was most likely to fail to materialise on the appropriate date (at the cost of some inter-village friction and considerable divine anger!). In theory, households which actually provide the sacrificial animals are compensated in cash or in some other way by the rest of the sub-clan or group in question, but particularly where more than one sub-clan was involved this arrangement was working increasingly poorly by the time of my fieldwork.

Other offerings are also given, to all the deities in general and to the sixth, who does not receive an animal, in particular. A pancake-like offering, fried in ghī (called I think pakwāni), and sweet halwa, also cooked with ghī (in other words, pakka or suji rasoi) are presented, for later distribution as prasād (consecrated food). Some cash is also offered.

Within the framework of arrangements I have outlined there are no restrictions on the Brahmans and Gaddis. The Sipis, however, cannot enter the temples to Ajiapāl and Kailing (the other deities are represented simply by little stone shrines), nor can they provide cooked food offerings of any description to the deities, for this would be even less acceptable to the gods than it would to the high castes themselves. Uncooked food might be offered, but this did not appear to be the practice in Karnāthu. Sipi devotees thus

offer cash, giving it to the Seok pujāra, the village temple priest. Despite these restrictions, the Sipis were counted as full contributors to jāgras, having a share in one of the animals offered, and there were no prohibitions on how close they might stand to the shrines, so long as they did not actually enter the two small temples. The Rihāras, by contrast, who were present as musicians, were regarded more as village servants fulfilling a task on behalf of the community as a whole than as full participants and contributors. Indeed, they were not expected to contribute at all to the Phathāhar sacrificial animal. Additionally, they were expected to stand some small distance away from the shrines, and were not allowed to approach them at all. Finally, the musicians were the one category of people attending a jāgra who received no allocation of sacrificial meat. The two main ritual specialists, the temple priest and the medium (known interchangeably as cela or gur), each had portions of every animal set aside for them, but the remainder was divided up among the members of the donor sub-clans. The musicians received only a cash offering of Rs. 2 each, taken from the sum offered to the deities, the rest of which went to the temple priest. As much as the other transactional domains considered, jāgras provide, then, an affirmation and reflection of the key distinctions of the caste hierarchy.

CHAPTER 4. ASPECTS OF AN ECONOMY: TRANSHUMANT PASTORALISM, AGRICULTURE AND WAGE LABOUR.

4.1 Introduction: Characterising the Brahmauris' Economy.

Throughout this century the Brahmauris' economy has been based on a combination of agriculture and transhumant pastoralism, supplemented by wage labour within the wider regional economy. The importance of these three sectors has varied considerably from one village to another, on both sides of the Dhaula Dhar. It would, however, be fair to say that a strong emphasis on pastoralism, or a marked dependence on wage employment, are closely connected to the adequacy of cultivated land resources.

Transhumant pastoralism is well developed in Himachal Pradesh, and in addition to the locally kept livestock held by most of the rural population there are significant numbers of migratory livestock held by particular groups. Large herds of buffaloes are kept by the predominantly Muslim Gujars, while flocks of sheep and goats have traditionally been kept by certain sections of the population in various regions of the state. Since the advent of British rule, the Gaddis have been renowned as one of the main groups of sheep and goat pastoralists. Today, indeed, they, in conjunction with the Brahmauri Brahman graziers, may well own the largest proportion of all migratory sheep and goats in the state. Other

pastoralists of sheep and goats have traditionally come from Churāh in Chamba (cf. Brar 1971) and from among the Kanets of Bangāhal, Kulu and Sarāj, and Kinnaur. Certainly in Churāh, Kulu and Sarāj there has been a firm trend away from shepherding in the last 20-30 years, however, and it seems probable that the most numerous pastoralists besides the Brahmauris are today those from Kinnaur.

By no means all Gaddi or Brahmauri Brahman households own a flock. In a recent large-scale survey, Bormann found that just over 50% out of nearly 1000 Gaddi households in a sizeable part of Palampur tehsīl held flocks, while in Brahmaur the proportion was just over 40% out of more than 3000 households (1980: 3.1.1-2). (Bormann never discriminates between Gaddis and Brahmans, so it is not clear if the latter are included in those figures.) These averages conceal wide variations from one village to another. Thus, in Karnāthu, the shepherding village par excellence in Kangra, 70% of Gaddi and Brahman households owned flocks in 1980. In Thala the proportion was less than 5%; and in Nayagrāon it was exactly 50%. Newell reports (1967: 22,28) that in Gosen in 1952 only a small proportion of Gaddis kept flocks, but he gives no precise figures. The Sipis and other low castes may be ignored in this connection, as they rarely if ever hold flocks.

Newell's writing on Brahmaur in fact contains repeated assertions that the Gaddis are neither primarily nor traditionally pastoralists, and that their economy is based chiefly on cultivation. Two quotations illustrate this.

> "In nearly every village there are a few families caring for sheep from whence they got the name of shepherds, but the great majority of the village residents depend for their subsistence on the crops" (1955: 104).
>
> "It is clear that the Gaddis are not principally a sheep caring nomadic people but have done so for hundreds of years as an additional means of gaining subsistence. Most Gaddis still have no desire to undertake this task...The Gaddis are an agricultural peoples (sic) who take up other occupations from economic necessity rather than desire" (1967: 29, author's emphasis).

The second passage would be hard to substantiate, but more important it rests on a misunderstanding of the position of pastoralism in such economies. For the Gaddis are typical of a much wider pattern found throughout the length of the Himalayas in their reliance on a combination of agriculture and pastoralism; and it is the interplay between the two, rather than speculation on the purely notional historical primacy of one or the other, which is the sociologically important issue. Whether or not the Gaddis enjoy shepherding is also entirely beside the point, although I might counter Newell's claim by observing that many Karnāthu shepherds I knew seemed to be proud of the distinctive way of life they followed.

I do not wish to underestimate, however, the contrasting influences on our perceptions of Newell's and my own field-work locations. The villages immediately around Brahmaur itself, such as Gosen, appear to rely less on shepherding than the average (cf. also Shashi 1977: 83-4); by contrast mauza Deol and its immediate neighbours contain several tīkas,

of which Karnāthu is simply the prime example, with an extremely heavy emphasis on shepherding. Added to this, Nayagrāon provided an instance of a village in Brahmaur tehsīl where shepherding was important. Clearly such differences are likely to shape one's judgement as to the prominence of pastoralism in the Brahmauri economy. Moreover, as will be shown later, roughly twice as many migratory livestock per capita are held by Brahmauris in Palampur as are held in Brahmaur. This greater emphasis given to pastoralism in Palampur should not obscure the variations between villages on the same side of the Dhaula Dhar (Karnāthu and Thala, for example, provide a complete contrast), but it does of course raise the question of why pastoralism is on the whole more important in Palampur than in Brahmaur. I return to this topic below (4.9).

I shall go into Brahmauri pastoralism at some length because the anthropological literature on pastoralism in India generally, and on transhumance in the Himalayas particularly, is still extremely limited. This contrasts with the now extensive material on the classic pastoral regions of the world, East and North Africa and the Middle East. In a rare publication on South Asian nomadism and pastoralism only one article (Sontheimer 1975) gives an ethnographic account of pastoralists in peninsular India (the Dhangars of Maharashtra). Turning to the Himalayas, from the extreme north-west, where the main Himalayas merge with the Hindu Kush and Pamirs, Jones (1974) and more particularly Shahrani (1978) have described aspects of transhumance among the Nuristanis and Kirghiz respectively. From the other end of the Himalayas, in Nepal, Pignède (1966) and Macfarlane (1976) have both discussed the

Gurungs, once a major pastoralist tribe, among whom only a small proportion are today transhumant graziers. Goldstein (1974) has written on the 'agro-pastoralists' of the Limi valley in north-west Nepal, as well as being co-author (Goldstein & Messerschmidt 1980) of a more general article suggesting that the seasonal shift in latitude may be as important in transhumance as the more generally recognised shift in altitude. Doubtless there are also other contributions from Nepal with which I am not familiar, but there has been no major study of transhumance in that country. Within the Indian Himalayas, there is even less to report. Khatana (1976) provides certain interesting details concerning the Gujar Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir, who, although Muslims and related to other Gujars, are sheep and goat graziers as their name implies and not buffalo herders. Other than this, a limited amount of data on the Gaddis in Newell (1967), and on the Churāhis in Brar (1971) completes the picture. In view of this paucity of material, particularly from Himachal Pradesh itself where, as I have already noted, transhumant pastoralism is by no means confined to a single group, I shall give as full an ethnographic description as I can of Brahmauri transhumance.

4.2 Agricultural and Pastoral Cycles, and their Co-ordination.

For Brahmauris in Kangra (as for virtually all the rural population there) agriculture is wholly subsistence-oriented [1]. This is not quite true of Brahmaur, where emerging apple and

potato production is chiefly for the market, although as yet it is on a small and restricted scale (there are no cash crops in or around Nayagrāon, for example). On both sides of the Dhaula Dhar cultivated land usually supports two crops a year.

In Kangra, the main crops grown through the summer and harvested in the early autumn after the monsoon (the kharīf harvest) are rice (dhān) and maize (makki). The paddy can only be grown on the flatter, irrigated land, known as nehri, which lies in the valley. Maize, on the other hand, is grown on the unirrigated land, called barāni, of the hillsides, where it is dependent entirely on rainfall. The main winter crops, harvested in late April (the rabi harvest), are wheat (kanak) and barley (jaung). The wheat is grown on both irrigated and unirrigated land, but the barley is confined to the unirrigated hillsides. These crops are the staples.

Certain lesser crops are also grown on a small scale. Some pulses, for instance, are produced in summer, in Karnāthu the favoured one being the red kidney bean (raung), which is planted on unirrigated land. But even though this is the pulse most commonly grown by Karnāthu people, it is still only a minority of families who do so. Given the acute insufficiency of land held by Karnāthu's inhabitants, little priority is given to growing pulses; and lentils of all kinds, which form such an important part of the daily diet, are purchased from shops. Elsewhere in the vicinity, however, lentils are grown, albeit on a small scale. In winter, a small proportion of land, both irrigated and unirrigated, is often set aside for a kind of mustard seed (sarson) and linseed (alasi), both grown for their oil. I never saw millet

of any kind being grown, nor were potatoes cultivated in the area I knew best. Additionally, people use little patches of available ground beside their houses or by walls for growing a kind of cucumber (kākri) during the monsoon, while most villages also contain a number of citrus trees.

In Brahmaur, where the absence of irrigation (other than in isolated instances) and the insufficiency of rainfall make wet-rice cultivation impossible, buckwheat (bhares) and millet come into their own. Kodra is the main millet, but other minor millets, as well as varieties of dry- and wild-rice (cf. Newell 1967: 25-6), are also grown. At the same time, a far wider range of pulses are produced in Brahmaur than in the part of Palampur I knew, and different beans, for example, are eaten much more regularly. Despite these crops, and leaving aside apples and potatoes which I mentioned earlier, the main summer crop in Brahmaur is maize. In winter, wheat and barley (the latter grown on a rather larger scale than in Kangra) are the main crops, with some mustard seed also (sarson).

Turning now to the division of labour between the sexes, ploughing, sowing and the thinning of paddy, which involves the use of the plough, are the quintessential male agricultural tasks which women do not undertake. Men also take care of any minor repairs to agricultural implements which do not require the attention of a blacksmith. All other agricultural tasks are performed by either sex: namely, preparation of the walls of terraces for the paddy crop (to ensure that the requisite depth of water is retained), manuring, weeding, thinning (except of the paddy), harvesting and threshing.

Other tasks not directly related to cultivation - the cutting of hay preserves (kharetar) or the lopping of branches for fodder for livestock kept at home, and the collection of firewood for domestic use - are also undertaken by either sex. Women and children are more prominent than men, however, in the tasks fulfilled by either sex. This is certainly noticeable in a village with a strong pastoral bias, such as Karnāthu, for shepherding is a predominantly, but not exclusively, male activity, and a large proportion of men are always away from the village. But I assume that the same pattern is observable throughout Kangra, with the tendency for men to work away from home which Parry reports (1979).

Collective agricultural activity involving several families is limited in Kangra to the repair of terraces after a landslide, or the repair of damaged irrigation channels (khuls). The Brahmauri term for such collective activities (and others which are not agricultural) is khawer, and judging by Newell's comments (he speaks of kwers, 1967: 34-5) these khawers were an extremely important feature of social organisation in Brahmaur at the time he worked there. My knowledge is limited to Kangra, however, where they are much less important, and have an optional rather than an obligatory character. Moreover, in the case of repairs to irrigation channels, something which affects large numbers of households, a khawer is the less likely of two possible courses of action. Instead, it is more common for the kohli, the man chosen locally who has a responsibility within a small area for the control, maintenance and distribution of water for irrigation, to collect money from the affected

households and hire the labour he needs for the job.

Before going on to consider the transhumant sector of the economy, I should mention that almost all households keep livestock of some kind at home. Most high caste and some Sipi households have a pair of bulls, bullocks or male buffaloes for draught purposes; richer families may have more than a pair. A proportion also keep a cow or two for milk; while many more keep a goat or two at home for the same reason. All are valued, in addition, for their manure. I do not have precise figures for Karnāthu, but in all this amounts to between 200 and 250 head of cattle, and some 150 or so goats. The goats and a large proportion of the cattle are taken out of the village each day and grazed some distance above Karnāthu in tīka or mauza sāmlāt, forested wasteland known colloquially as 'jungle'. The animals are grazed together, as a single herd or flock, and each household takes it in turn to provide a person to take the animals out and guard over them during the day.

While agricultural production is wholly directed towards subsistence, apples and potatoes excepted, pastoral production combines a subsistence and a market orientation, although the latter is the primary one. Both sheep and goats are sold for meat, while a proportion of the sheep's wool is also sold. The remainder of the wool, kept for domestic use, and the goats' milk are important subsistence items. A full subsistence inventory should include, in addition, items of subsidiary value: goats' hair, used primarily for rugs, but also for ropes; and the hides of both animals, used for carrying and storing foodstuffs and certain other belongings. This

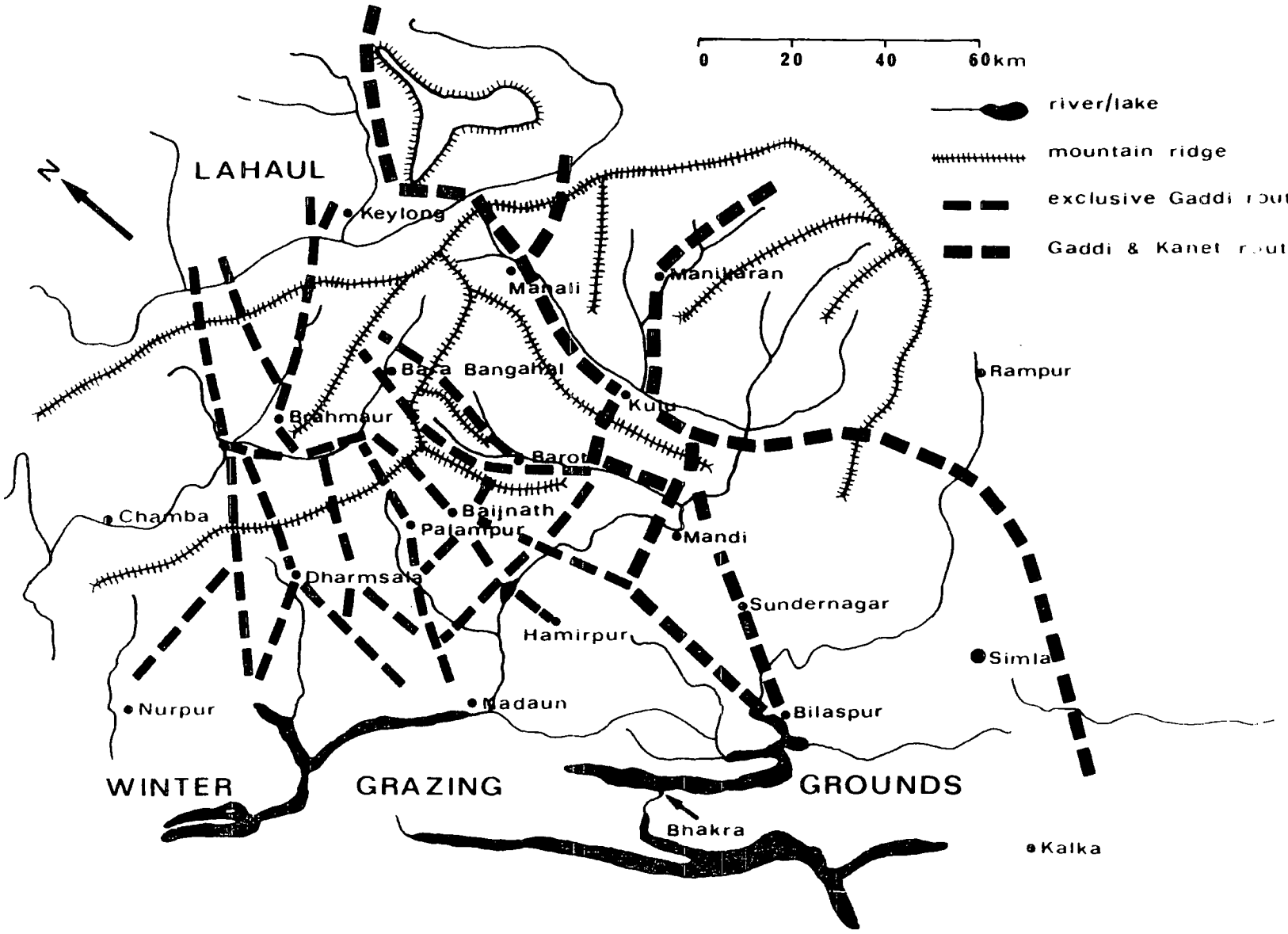
characterisation is at variance with Newell's (1967: 29). He argues that while sheep are "in the nature of a cash crop", goats are "in the nature of a subsistence crop which can be eaten and exchanged in the villages". Unless changes have taken place since Newell's fieldwork, this is a false and over-simple dichotomy. Moreover, it is misleading in my experience to suggest that meat is anything more than the most marginal of subsistence foods, for outside ceremonial contexts it is only eaten if an animal is injured and has to be slaughtered.

The annual cycle of flock migration is dictated largely by the climate. As the Kangra District Gazetteer puts it (1883-4: 172):

> "Snow and frost in the high ranges, and heavy rain and heat in the low, make it impossible to carry on sheep-farming on a tolerably large scale with success in any one part of the country. The only way is to change ground with the seasons".

The routes taken by graziers (see Map 3) are not random means of getting from summer to winter grazing grounds and vice versa, but are governed by the need to use traditional halting places at night. In transit, a flock (māl) is required by the Forest Department to move at least five miles a day, except in the severest weather or when salt is being given to the animals.

The brunt of the summer monsoon bursts on the Kangra side of the Dhaula Dhar. The catchment areas of the upper Rāvi, upper Beās and Ūhl rivers escape the full force of the monsoon to varying degrees, and Lahaul is beyond its reach altogether. In consequence, to avoid the heaviest rain,



MAP 3. Main Routes of Gaddi and Kanet Graziers in Western Himachal Pradesh.

graziers cross the passes over the Dhaula Dhar or into Kulu from the south between April and June, depending on their height. Sheep are shorn in late May or early June. The availability of an effective means to dispose of the wool governs the graziers' decisions on whether or not to shear before crossing the Dhaula Dhar. Bara Bangāhal's isolation necessitates shearing before crossing the final high pass; but graziers going to Brahmaur may delay shearing till after the Dhaula Dhar is crossed. For flocks whose route is through Kulu the May-June cut is always made in the upper part of the valley. (Goats are not normally sheared, and their hair is used only when one is killed.) If a second pass has to be crossed, into Lahaul, this takes place at the end of June, by which time the highest passes are all open. Spiti has never been a recognised summer grazing location, and is altogether too barren (Diack 1898: 39).

In Lahaul there are a multitude of extremely prized grazing grounds. All the Karnāthu flocks which graze there, however, travel to the very furthest point, beyond the Bāra Lāca pass (16,000 feet) and on the border with Ladakh. Many flocks, however, travel less far, and remain throughout the summer in Bara or (less often) Chota Bangāhal, Brahmaur, or Kulu. More than two thirds of the Karnāthu flocks go to Bara Bangāhal in summer, for example, while all Nayagrāon graziers take their flocks to summer pastures immediately above their home village. The two to three months spent on the high altitude pastures, between about 9,000 and 14,000 feet, are invariably considered to provide the best grazing of the year, in quality and quantity. Summer pastures are

known as dhār, of which shepherds recognise two kinds: nigāhar, above the tree-line, where flocks stay put at the end of their route; and gāhar or thac (the latter term favoured in Kulu) lower down in forest, used en route to and from nigāhar. Dhār used as a general term refers to any summer grazing ground.

The return journey south is started in late August or September, depending on the distance to be covered, and the grazier's judgement as to the relative benefit of extending grazing in the desirable summer pastures as long as possible or making an early start in the hope of obtaining a measure of choice at the winter grazing grounds. The main birth season is during September and into October, but a significant minority of births of both animals occur at other periods also [2]. It is common then to see flocks divided, the goats being taken on ahead because graziers prefer that they give birth to the south of the higher passes, on account of their presumed vulnerability. Sheep are brought across at a more leisurely pace, as graziers regard lambs as more robust at birth, and are consequently less anxious where they lamb. Flocks crossing the Dhaula Dhar descend to the altitude at which cultivation begins (6,000 feet) along the southern slopes in time for the animals to manure the land after the maize harvest and before the terraces are ploughed for the winter crop. Shortly before this, in the first half of October usually, the most productive of the three annual shearings takes place, with flocks in roughly the same places as for the May-June cut. By the end of October flocks have moved down to the foot of the mountain slopes, if their route

entails crossing the Dhaula Dhar, and there the animals manure the irrigated land after the rice harvest.

Graziers who own property in Kangra in the mauzas leading up to the Dhaula Dhar tend to arrive on the south side of the mountains earlier than those who do not. This is because normal transit regulations do not apply on much of the wasteland (śāmlāt) of the mauza, or mauzas, where a person owns property, and a flock can graze unchecked (see 4.3). This can be extremely advantageous, for these particular mauzas all cover vast areas (Deol for instance covers 31 square miles), with large tracts available for grazing of good quality at altitudes between 5,000 and 13,000 feet. Graziers with rights in one of these mauzas (that is, the vast majority of Brahmauris resident in Kangra) may arrive, then, soon after mid-September, moving gradually lower in altitude, and only leaving their home territory early in November. This, and a similar extended period from the end of March to the end of May, are popular times among graziers from villages such as Karnāthu, for they are close to their own homes and can arrange to spend time there while other family members help out with the flocks [3].

By contrast, flock-holders with no such rights in the land on the southern slopes of the Dhaula Dhar are expected to move at the usual transit rate. As a result, they tend to cross the passes as late as mid-October, up to a month after the first arrivals, having remained as long as possible on their home grazing grounds in Brahmaur. Likewise, these flocks may cross into Brahmaur sooner in the summer, when they are heading north, or remain longer on the winter grounds.

In the first half of November the graziers leave the vicinity of the Brahmauri villages in Kangra, and head for their winter grazing grounds, known as bān. Further east, flocks head through Mandi and Mahasu on their way south from Kulu. From December to February or early March they remain there in the Śiwaliks bordering the Punjab or Haryana. The third shearing takes place in early February, producing the poorest yield of the year. With communications much easier than in the higher hills or mountains disposal of the wool presents no problems; but prices are lower and it is prone to be an unsatisfactory sale. The winter period, unlike the summer, may not be spent grazing at one spot because many bāns provide inadequate fodder for such an extended period. Arguments over grazing space almost always occur at this period, when the grazing is at its most problematical. During the winter also, a larger number of shepherds tend the flocks than are required in the mountains, for the proximity of cultivation and the confined areas available for grazing necessitate much stricter control over flocks. This extra labour may be provided by women on occasions, for while women and small children rarely travel with the flocks in summer (unless they are travelling between winter homes in Kangra and summer homes in Brahmaur), winter grazing is less isolated and physically rigorous, making it feasible for very young children to share the lifestyle.

By late March the first flocks are once more close to the Brahmauri villages along the southern slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, or alternatively about to enter Kulu, on their way north.

Out of 66 flocks belonging to Karnāthu families in 1980, 46 went to Bara Bangāhal in summer; 11 to the Lahaul-Ladakh border via Kulu; 7 to the headwaters of the Pārbati river in Kulu; and 1 to the Jālsu pass across the Dhaula Dhar. In winter, the vast majority (60 in all) graze at various places around Nadaun, Hamirpur, Sundernagar, Sarkaghat, Bilaspur and Bhakra, with the vicinity of Bilaspur the single most frequented area (see Map 3). Just 5 flocks go to the vicinity of Kalka or Nahan. All the latter go to the Lahaul-Ladakh border in summer, and this route is by far the longest made by any graziers, being over 150 miles as the crow flies. To travel annually between, say, Nadaun or Hamirpur and Bara Bangāhal is, by comparison, only one third of that distance. One Karnāthu flock grazes entirely in Uttar Pradesh.

Of 15 flocks held by Nayagrāon families, 3 are grazed entirely in Uttar Pradesh. The remaining 12 all go to the Rāvi valley above Nayagraon in summer; the majority of these go to Bilaspur in winter, while a few go to Hamirpur and Bhakra.

The flock-owning and flock-managing unit is almost invariably the same as the land-holding unit; both are, in turn, usually coterminous with the household (_tol_) (see Chapter 5), based around a man and his sons or less often two married brothers. The picture is complicated by the question of grazing rights and pasture allocation, and a fuller understanding will emerge only after the next two sections, but for the present it is sufficient to stress that the household is in effect the primary social unit in shepherding, both so far as ownership and actual grazing practice is

concerned. There is no institutionalised system of larger, supra-household grazing units based on collective camps of any kind. This is not to say, however, that flocks never combine. In inhabited areas, especially through the lower hills, flocks always move singly, but in the more mountainous regions various informal combinations may be arranged between two or three lots of shepherds for days or weeks at a time. Flocks may be temporarily amalgamated and grazed as a single unit for the duration of the arrangement. More often shepherds keep their flocks separate, but graze in close conjunction with one another, sharing the same camp-site and cooking together. Again, two or more lots of shepherds may well combine so that one lot takes all the goats across the mountains for the birth season, leaving the others to follow with all the sheep. Such arrangements last only so long as both parties wish them to, and they are far from restricted to agnates or co-villagers.

My only direct experience of living with the flocks comes from a 3 day stay with a number of Karnāthu shepherds camped at 11,000 feet in late May on their way across to Bara Bangāhal. Four flocks were at that period (for roughly a fortnight) based on one named dhār, just within the boundary of mauza Deol. These flocks were grazed separately during the day, but three of the four were next to each other at night and needed to be disentangled for counting each morning. The shepherds of all four flocks - three belonging to Phākas Brahman households and one to a Gharāti Gaddi - cooked together, and in freely changing permutations shared the cramped sleeping quarters, consisting of a tiny hut built

of stone (dera or jhompari) and a couple of vast protruding rocks with a sheltered space beneath. (In better weather than at that time shepherds often prefer to sleep out in the open [4]). In this particular context, therefore, four flocks were loosely associated, but managed and grazed separately. By all accounts I received, this is the most typical summer grazing pattern. But I must emphasise that these informal associations are for the most part temporary: it cannot be assumed that these four flocks will proceed to Bara Bangāhal together, still less that they will be together in the same place the following year. Shepherding units are essentially separate and correspond to the individual household.

Since all Brahmauris who hold flocks also cultivate land as well, the co-ordination of the labour needs of the two sectors can prove a considerable task, unless a family is well supplied with able-bodied members and a good balance between the sexes. It is doubtless not surprising, therefore, that shepherding households are in general larger than non-shepherding households from the same village. To put it another way, below a certain size it becomes so difficult for a household to manage a flock that one finds flocks being sold off and shepherding abandoned. In Karnāthu, the 66 flock-holding households contain an average of 6.3 members, whereas the 31 non-flock-holding high caste households (Brahmans, Gaddis and Seoks) contain an average of 3.5 people. This is directly matched in Nayagraon, where 15 flock-holding households average 6.2 people, and the 15 without flocks average 4.5. Flock-owners may meet their needs for additional labour by hiring shepherd helpers or servants, known as puhāls

(whom I discuss in more detail later), to supplement the household members who are the mainstay of the shepherding labour force. But on the Karnāthu evidence, where 6 out of the 66 flock-holders hired one or more puhāls, the latter are more likely to be employed by a household of above average size with a flock that is much larger than the average, than by a small household.

To end this section I shall now document the annual cycle of one particular household, to show how agricultural and shepherding sectors are co-ordinated, and how severely stretched a small family may be if all tasks are to be performed (Table 6).

The family chosen are Phākas Brahmans in Karnāthu, one of three households whose courtyard we shared. In 1977, the year for which I have the data, the household consisted of Nokar Rām, the household head, aged about 55; Bero Devi, his wife, aged about eight years younger; two unmarried sons, Pūnu Rām and Meda Rām, 24 and 17 respectively; and for most of the year a deaf and dumb Brahman woman of about 30, Runkho Devi, who had been widowed and lived as a kind of servant. Runkho had no natal or marital ties with Karnāthu, but she had lived until her marriage in the same Brahmaur village as the Phākas Brahmans came from. This was the only arrangement of its kind in Karnāthu. Runkho's economic value to Nokar's household was considerable, for they lived on the verge of overdoing their commitments, as a more easy-going friend of Pūnu's kept trying to put across to him. But in the course of 1977 resentment and ill-feeling between Bero and Runkho eventually came to a head, and Runkho took

herself off to live on a similar basis with a Gaddi household in the village.

Nokar's flock, consisting of about 100 sheep and 60 goats, was one of the minority in Karnāthu which followed the lengthy route from Sirmaur through Kulu and Lahaul to the border with Ladakh. In one major respect this household is unique in Karnāthu, and hence atypical, for they continue to cultivate land in Bāri, Brahmaur. With a flock which follows a route that goes nowhere near Brahmaur the co-ordination of their activities presents problems that no other Karnāthu household faces. The difference, however, is only one of degree, and this family are far from being alone in having to marshall their labour resources carefully. Moreover, within the wider context of Brahmauri society there are numerous families who cultivate land on both sides of the Dhaula Dhar and maintain a flock.

As this diary of one year shows, agricultural activity is continuous from mid-April to early December, with the exception - in Kangra, but not in Brahmaur - of seven or eight weeks at the height of the summer monsoon. This is in line with Ilahi's survey (1940: 25) of the labour put into three holdings at Launa, near Palampur, which showed that May, June, July, October and November were the busiest agricultural months. During the lulls in the agricultural cycle, extra time is available for wool-related activities: cleaning, carding, spinning, weaving and shrinking the cloth that provides for domestic needs, or which occasionally may be sold. The rough wear to which woollen blankets and garments are subjected by the shepherds, and the large numbers of

TABLE 6.

Annual agricultural and pastoral cycle of one Karnāthu household.

January.	(Poh/Māgh)	Nokar, Bero & Runkho in Karnāthu. Little agricultural activity. Pūnu & Meda with flock, near Nahan.
February.	(Māgh/Phāgun)	Division of labour as above. Little agricultural activity. Sheep sheared in Māgh. In Phāgun flock starts moving again, towards Simla.
March.	(Phāgun/Cait)	Nokar leaves to join flock, replacing Pūnu who returns to Karnāthu. Little agricultural activity still. Flock heads north through Mahāsu and approaches Satlej river.
April.	(Cait/Baiśākh)	Pūnu, Bero & Runkho in Karnāthu; Nokar & Meda with flock. With Baiśākh, harvest of wheat and barley starts, followed by threshing; all three share the work. Flock crosses Satlej and Sarāj into Kulu valley by end of April.
May.	(Baiśākh/Jaith)	Completion of rabi harvest; threshing continues. Pūnu ploughs unirrigated land in preparation for planting maize. Meda returns to Karnāthu mid-May, leaving Nokar alone with flock in upper half of Kulu valley. Pūnu leaves Karnāthu for quick visit on foot to Brahmaur, to plant maize and beans (raung): away 12 days and back by the end of May [5]. Meda plants maize in Karnāthu in Jaith. Pūnu plants small area of beans (raung) on his return to Karnāthu.

June.	(Jaith/Asārh)	Remainder of Jaith spent ploughing irrigated land, repairing terrace walls, irrigating and planting rice - about 7 to 10 days behind most households because of Brahmaur commitments. Afterwards the maize is thinned. Last week of June, Pūnu returns to Brahmaur on foot. Nokar continues alone with flock. Sheep sheared in mid-Jaith; flock crosses Rohtang Pass into Lahaul in late June.
July.	(Asārh/Sāwan)	Meda, Bero & Runkho in Karnāthu; Pūnu in Brahmaur till last week of month; Nokar with flock. Thinning of rice in mid- or late-Asārh, and weeding; otherwise little agricultural activity after monsoon in Kangra sets in in Sāwan. In Brahmaur, Pūnu harvests wheat. Nokar heads across Lahaul to dhār just beyond Bāra Lāca pass, reached beginning of Sāwan. Pūnu back to Karnāthu.
August.	(Sāwan/Bhādron)	After a week in Karnāthu, Pūnu to Lahaul to relieve Nokar, who returns a week later. Nokar, Bero, Meda and Runkho in Karnāthu till end of August, when Nokar leaves for Brahmaur by bus. Little agricultural activity in Kangra. Flock stationery at dhār till last days of August.
September.	(Bhādron/Asoj)	Meda, Bero & Runkho in Karnāthu; Nokar in Brahmaur; Pūnu with flock. With Asoj, monsoon draws to a close and maize harvest begins in Brahmaur and Kangra. Nokar returns to Karnāthu at the end of September. Flock starts south, and crosses Rohtang Pass in mid-September. Main birth season begins.

October.	(Asoj/Kātik)	Runkho leaves household after ill-feeling with Bero boils over. Nokar, Bero & Meda in Karnāthu till early Kātik when Nokar leaves to rejoin Pūnu with flock in Kulu. Before leaving, unirrigated land ploughed by Nokar after maize harvest. Rice harvest starts in October, continuing into second half of month (Kātik); followed by threshing. Sheep sheared in mid-October. Flock leaves Kulu by late October.
November.	(Kātik/Maghar)	Nokar & Pūnu with flock; Bero & Meda in Karnāthu. In early November, wheat and barley planted on unirrigated land. Before end of Kātik, irrigated land ploughed by Meda, and in early Maghar wheat planted on it. Threshing of rice crop completed. Grass preserves cut for hay, the winter fodder for livestock in the village. The flock crosses the Satlej river, and continues south through Mahāsu.
December.	(Maghar/Poh)	In second week, Meda leaves Karnāthu to rejoin flock. Bero alone in Karnāthu till Nokar returns a week later. Grass cutting complete; then agricultural lull begins (wedding season gets into swing). Flock arrives at winter bān near Nahan by Poh, and remains stationery for the winter with Pūnu & Meda.

blankets needed to withstand the cold while sleeping outside, mean that all households with flocks have to allocate significant amounts of labour time each year to the manufacture of new cloth, and families have to calculate their needs so that they do not sell too much of the wool their sheep yield.

4.3 The Organisation of Tenures under the Rājas, and the Impact of British Rule on Rights in Land.

Under the Rājas of Kangra (until the British took control in 1846) and Chamba (until Indian Independence) all rights in land were held directly from the State. Pastoral and cultivating tenures, to name just the two most important ones, were thus held on an analogous basis. This tenurial regime was characteristic of all the Punjab Hill States. All holdings were therefore tenancies, giving rights of use only, with the Rāja as the sole proprietor. The only exceptions to this pattern were in areas given as jāgīrs to former tributary chiefs, junior members of a ruling family, or senior state officials as a reward for services, in which cases the jāgīrdār acquired many, but not all, of the Rāja's prerogatives (Lyall 1876). As Lyall summed up the position operating in Kangra at the time British rule was imposed:

> "The tenures...were formerly all of one grade. The Gaddi shepherd and Gujar herdsman held their interest in their dhārs or soānas as directly of the State as the regular landholders held their fields" (quoted in Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 127).

These rights of use, whether for cultivation or grazing,

were termed wārisi, an inheritance, and the restricted nature of the entitlement that a wārisi brought its holder may be contrasted with the 'lordship' denoted by the term māliki (Lyall 1876: 17). Moreover, with only a few exceptions there were no corporate rights in land held by social units defined by locality. Holdings, in other words, were not shares in a joint estate formed on the basis of locality. This was a form of land tenure known as raiyatwāri, summed up by Parry thus:

> "Before the British annexed the area in 1846 land was held in severalty, and neither the tika nor the mauza had any corporate property in the waste, nor any joint responsibility for the raja's revenue" (1979: 22).

All residents, landholders and others, had certain automatic rights of use (bartan) in the wasteland surrounding villages, notably for grazing, fuel and fodder, but there were no specific shares in the waste (Kangra District Gazetteer 1906: 200-1). At the same time, the landholder was not necessarily the actual cultivator: unless he wished the land to revert to the Rāja he was responsible for paying the revenue, but he had the right in both Chamba and Kangra to mortgage his holding or lease it on a sub-tenancy basis (Chamba Gazetteer 1910: 268-9,274; Kangra Gazetteer 1906: 202).

While these remarks sketch the broad principles underlying all agricultural and pastoral tenures, the way that pastoral rights in particular were organised at the local level seems to have varied greatly. In Brahmaur, summer dhārs were held, in conformity with the principles outlined, directly from the Chamba State, to which graziers paid a customary cash rent (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 178). However, the dhārs above the village of Kugti, at the eastern limit

of the Budhal valley in Brahmaur, are an exception. Kugti's (male) inhabitants jointly formed a co-parcenary body for the disposal of the grazing, which right they held collectively from the Rāja. As the Gazetteer puts it (ibid), "they claim...a kind of corporate property in the dhārs", but only so far as the grazing was concerned. The adjacent areas of Bara and Chota Bangāhal are the second exception, for there too the Kanet/Seok villages held corporate rights in the dhārs surrounding them, granted by the Kulu Rājas (although the original deed of grant (patta) may often have been made to one individual only) (ibid: 179-80).

Rights along the upper slopes of the Dhaula Dhar in Kangra appear to have confounded the British settlement authorities: they were apparently open to all comers for the most part, with a few "preferential claims" which were "vague and loose in nature" (Lyall, quoted in Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 126). The organisation of rights in the winter bāns seems to have been equally mystifying, so far as official understanding of them was concerned. But there was a broad distinction between the Nurpur area and the remainder of the former Kangra state. For in the old Nurpur pargana, the bāns were free to all, whereas elsewhere in Kangra each bān was the wārisi of an individual. The Nurpur arrangement seems to have been left untouched by the imposition of British rule in Kangra, for the Rāja of Chamba's anomalous sovereignty over the Nurpur winter-graziers, and his right to control grazing on the winter bāns there as if it were a part of the Chamba State, were recognised by the British authorities. Under this system of all comers' grazing

in Nurpur

> "there are families which go every year with their sheep to the same bān, but they are not held to have a wārisi therein, because the duties and perquisites of a wāris are not in their hands, but in the hands of the contractor of the Rāja of Chamba" (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 175).

As these examples make clear, the general principles on which tenures were based provide only a rough guide to the arrangements found on the ground, which display considerable diversity.

In addition, just as those who held the right to cultivate and had their names on the rentrolls were not by any means the sole cultivators in actual practice, so it must be emphasised that there were numerous graziers besides those with the rights to particular dhārs or bāns. The Kuqti and Banqāhal cases show corporately held wārisis being used as a way of attracting other graziers, from outside the wārisi-holding group, to the dhārs in question. Moreover, a shepherd who obtained the deed (patta) from the Rāja of a state, which gave him the right to a particular grazing ground, would then collect a number of other shepherds with their flocks. They would then all graze together. Rights to a dhār or bān were not to small pockets of land, but to grounds which could accomodate around a thousand head or more; and this explains why early British administrators always wrote of flocks being from 800 to 1200 strong (cf. Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 173), for a flock in this sense (known as kandāh) would usually consist of several families' individual flocks being grazed together.

The shepherd who managed such a combined flock, or kandāh, was known as mālūndhi (from māl, a flock) [6], and minor benefits accrued to him as a result of his managerial responsibilities. But as we are speaking of a period before grazing land became a scarce resource, I would anticipate that the client graziers were not dependent on the mālūndhi as they would be now, for they could easily take themselves off to join another mālūndhi. Indeed, the mālūndhi needed to keep a full complement of client shepherds with him, for grazing rights could be lost where grounds were left unfilled. What is more, in transit in the lower hills (particularly in the periods of Gurkha and Sikh domination?) it was considered advisable for several flocks to stick together for their own protection (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 174), and a mālūndhi might easily have found his right to a winter bān a mixed blessing were it not for the physical support of fellow graziers who were clients.

If this system of grazing tenures proved operable for the shepherds, it presented mammoth difficulties for the newly established British authorities trying to codify rights in a form comprehensible to their own legal minds. For not only was there vagueness about the title to many wārisis, particularly in the winter and intermediate grazing grounds; there was also the complicated question of the precise rights enjoyed by client graziers who helped a mālūndhi to fill a grazing ground. Lyall clearly decided that state intervention risked landing the authorities with extra problems, as the following revealing passage shows:

> "I...had a return of these winter-runs compiled, but I purposely refrained from attesting it. The rights of the persons claiming to be the wāris of the run, and of those who are associated with them (if the latter have any rights), are in a loose, fluid sort of state. I did not wish to strengthen and petrify them by bringing them to book" (quoted in Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 126).

By the time that gazetteer was written the issue had still not been resolved. But by the time of the third and final revision of settlement in Kangra and Kulu (by 1919 and 1913 respectively), the various kinds of customary use and right, including presumably regular clientship of a mālūndhi, were consolidated as statutorily recognised customary rights to customary grazing 'runs'. In Bangāhal dhārs, for instance, the permanent rights of both those who held the former wārisis and those who actually grazed there annually (whether they were wārisi-holders themselves or customary tenants or lessees of the Bangāhal villages which held most of the wārisis) were formally documented. The Gazetteer subsequent to the last Settlement in Kangra summed up the new position:

> "The record of rights divides the country into grazing runs, and details the particular Gaddis that have the right of grazing in each" (Kangra District Gazetteer 1926: 316).

This final Settlement is the basis of the grazing rights recognised by the State today. This is to anticipate the next section, however, and it is necessary first to discuss the changes in tenures generally which came about after the imposition of British rule.

I have concentrated on the issue of grazing rights, partly because it is obviously crucial to an understanding

of a society with a pastoralist emphasis, and has not been discussed fully before, and partly because there is no point in duplicating Parry's perfectly adequate treatment of agricultural tenures generally under the Rajas (1979: 22-5). I shall continue with the same orientation in the ensuing look at the implications of the British-inspired changes in tenures.

The first British Settlement in Kangra, along lines imported from the plains, "undermined the fundamental principles of this severalty system and had the effect of creating incipient joint villages" [7] (Parry 1979: 24). The most important change was that:

> "The body of landholders in each circuit were converted into a proprietary body, in which each landholder...was proprietor of his own holding of arable land, and co-proprietor (in proportion to the amount of land revenue paid by him) of the waste" (Kangra District Gazetteer 1906: 204-5).

Simultaneously, landholders in a mauza became jointly responsible for the payment of revenue. All this had a double impact. First, it made landholders absolute owners of their cultivated plots, and gave them the right for the first time to sell property, so creating a market in land. Second, the joint ownership of waste and responsibility for revenue had the effect indicated by Parry above.

The British authorities were not interested in changing tenures as an end in itself; rather, this was a by-product of their concern to establish revenue-paying units along lines with which they were already familiar. For holders of cultivated land the changes which resulted were clear enough, as I summarised above. But for holders of migratory flocks the

consequences for rights in grazing space cannot easily be summed up in the same way. In essence, while a landholder became an absolute owner of his plot, a flock-holder's right to his dhār or bān (assuming that these lay outside his mauza but within British-administered territory) underwent a far more restricted transformation. Such titles to dhārs or bāns were transformed into a kind of ownership, in the sense that there were no state restrictions on the right to sell them to another grazier. However, a variety of rights have always been recognised in grazing lands: notably, the rights of the local proprietory body in waste within mauza (or other revenue circuit) boundaries; and the State's spectrum of rights in different kinds of classified forest (Kangra District Gazetteer 1906: 205). (The transfer of co-ownership of wasteland in mauza boundaries to the local body of landholders did not destroy the existing rights of third parties, such as Gujar buffalo-herders and flock-owners.) Only where dhārs were held beyond revenue circuit boundaries and outside classified forest (for instance, in Lahaul, parts of Kulu and Bara Bangāhal, with their alpine pastures above forest level), were State rights minimal, and the ownership afforded by recognition of existing grazing rights thus comparatively unfettered.

Nevertheless, the changes did mean that flock-owners could buy or sell rights to grazing grounds, that is, the former wārisis of the pre-British period, plus any new rights to hitherto unexploited grazing grounds granted by the British authorities (cf. Kangra District Gazetteer, Pt. III. Lahul 1918: 222).

Migratory flocks do not just graze on dhār and bān, however, and the growth of a market in land had other significant consequences for pastoralists. By purchasing cultivated land a man also simultaneously acquired the right to use certain areas of wasteland within the revenue circuit for grazing purposes (tīka śāmlāt and śāmlāt deh or mauza śāmlāt in Kangra). Especially where this was extensive and at varying altitudes, as in the mauzas leading up to the Dhaula Dhar, this must have been an attractive proposition to many graziers in areas under princely control still, notably the Chamba Gaddis, for it guaranteed the right to a prolonged stay on intermediate grazing lands in spring and autumn. A small purchase of cultivated land, therefore, could serve the primary purpose of giving a flock-owner access to a large amount of 'free' grazing. Comments in the Kangra settlement literature show how this could become a major bone of contention. With particular reference to Brahmauris buying small plots of land in one tīka in mauza Lanod, adjacent to Deol, creating in the process a great deal of friction, a Settlement Officer wrote:

> "All the Bir Bangahal and Kandi tikas have large areas of waste shamilat, whilst many villages own a large chak of 'shamilat deh' in addition to the shamilat of the tikas. All owners of land have rights of grazing, etc., in both 'shamilat tika' and 'shamilat deh'. Outsiders purchase very small areas at high prices for the sake of the rights in shamilat which they thus obtain. The abuse applies to the whole of these two assessment circles (i.e. Bangahal and Kandi) and not only to this tika, and the purchasers are not only Chamba Gaddis but people from Palam and other parts. The remedy lies with the original owners"
> (Tika Assessment Notes 1915, vol II).

These developments appear to have boosted emigration from Chamba to Kangra, or at least encouraged Brahmauris to obtain property in Kangra. There are no precise figures for Brahmauri emigration to Kangra, but a significant part of the 6-8,000 immigrants who settled in Kangra from Chamba in each of the four decades to 1921 (Kangra District Statistical Tables 1935: Table 8) were doubtless from the upper Rāvi.

Revenue extraction from pastoralism changed in only minor ways under the British administration, and they continued the previous system of charging separately for winter and summer grazing in the territory under their jurisdiction. Certain transit taxes, however, which were in effect spring and autumn grazing ground taxes, were abolished. Although grazing taxes continued to be levied twice yearly until 1970, by the time of the final Settlements in Kangra and Kulu these were transformed in intent, from a payment for the right to graze to a tax on a productive resource - the flock. At the same time, the idea of the punitive use of taxation to control livestock numbers was introduced. "The tax on goats at each triennial enumeration is to be doubled in villages where no decrease in the goats takes place" (Kangra District Gazetteer 1926: 305). This shows the village being given a corporate responsibility for one aspect of pastoralism, in a way that had not occurred before, but the idea seems to have been dropped within a few years.

By making the local body of landholders jointly responsible for wasteland, British rule meant that local groups acquired a corporate interest in certain kinds of grazing. No comparable changes, however, affected the character of grazing rights outside home territory. I shall return to this topic below.

4.4 Flock Control, Grazing Rights and Pasture Allocation Today.

The state government controls grazing activities through the agency of the Forest Department, as was the case under British rule. All flocks must be registered with the Forest Department, which issues grazing permits on payment of the grazing tax (trini). A permit does not constitute a right to graze in particular areas; rather it amounts to permission to hold a flock, subject to access to summer and winter grazing grounds having been otherwise arranged in a valid way by the shepherd.

The right to graze on particular grounds is a different but related issue. Many permit holders are also the holders of customary rights: these derive either directly from a Rāja, as in Chamba, or else were consolidated in the early settlements, in areas under British administration. Unlike permits, customary rights are tied to particular grazing runs; and indeed they are expressly not customary rights to hold flocks as such. Customary right holders are protected by law, and their rights are virtually inalienable. But other current permit holders are less securely placed: they lack customary rights to grazing runs, and consequently do not have the statutory protection open to the customary right holders. Instead, their permits are held at the sole discretion of the Forest Department. In Karnāthu, for example, the majority of flock-holders have customary rights in theory, while a minority do not and hold their permits at Forest Department discretion.

Yet in reality this distinction between permit holders

with customary rights and those without is somewhat blurred. Customary rights may always have been tied to particular grazing runs, but in the course of several generations the original connection between a shepherd and his customary runs may no longer hold good for all his descendants. Thus, a shepherd today may utilise his customary rights in the summer dhār he visits, while in winter he may be obliged to rent a bān on which he has no customary rights, because the ancestral run cannot accomodate all the legitimate right holders, forcing a proportion of customary right holders to make what arrangements they can manage elsewhere. Some flocks use customary runs in neither summer nor winter, despite the owner being the direct descendant of a customary right holder. Today, the Forest Department and the shepherds are poles apart in their views as to what customary rights amount to.

In Karnāthu, the members of the Gharāṭi, Sāhnu and Singrāṇ sub-clans, and one of the two Buketa maximal lineages, are all in theory customary right holders. That is, they are the agnatic heirs of earlier right holders, and now hold permanent but saleable rights in their runs. The dhārs are situated in Baṛa Bangāhal, while the bāns are spread more diversely around Hamirpur, Nadaun, and above all Bilaspur. Yet in winter one in every five of the present graziers from these descent groups has to obtain rented grazing, because there is no space spare in the ancestral run (10 out of 47 flocks on which I have the data); while in summer nearly one in three of the present flocks of these descent groups are grazed on rented land, in all cases at Bāra Lāca in Lahaul or Manikaran

in Kulu (17 out of 53 flocks on which I have the data). In addition, a few of the flocks which graze on the ancestral runs are still short of grazing, in summer and more particularly in winter, so that some supplementary grazing has to be rented. This makes the reliance on rented grazing within these descent groups slightly greater still. To compound the complexities, members of the second Buketa lineage in Karnāthu share a winter grazing ground in which grazing rights were purchased (and with them all the implications of customary rights) at some earlier time. Yet members of this lineage have always had to rent their dhārs in summer. Only the Phākas Brahman and Jhunnu Gaddi graziers in Karnāthu unambiguously hold their permits at the discretion of the Forest Department, and have no claim to customary right holder status [8].

As should be apparent now, the definition of customary grazing rights is in practice fraught with difficulties. Forest Department officials I spoke to interpreted the law strictly in terms of the neat distinctions of the decades old settlement literature, asserting that customary rights derive from grazing in customary runs, so that graziers who have been forced out of the ancestral dhār or bān by the vagaries of human and livestock population trends are in effect no longer customary right holders unless they revert to grazing in the customary run (as does sometimes happen). Thereby these officials reveal their inability to appreciate that the settlement records no longer adequately define the present pattern of holdings. This does not in itself mean that these graziers' permits are jeopardised and could be withdrawn;

but it does threaten their statutory rights, as will be seen below. From the graziers' viewpoint, a customary right to a particular grazing run has subtly merged into a customary right to hold a flock, just as their permit gives them the right to hold a flock, regardless of the legal status of the right to the land they actually graze upon. To add to the gap between the perceptions of the two parties, neither seems aware that there exist these disparate assumptions.

The shepherds' grazing tax (trini) was until 1970 paid twice yearly, and is now paid once a year. Trini is at present Rs.0.40 for each permitted goat and Rs.0.20 for each sheep, with unweaned young going free. Graziers caught with excess stock over their permitted numbers or without a permit at all face a fine of Rs.5 for each unregistered goat and Rs.1 for each sheep. Higher penalties apply to flocks caught grazing illicitly in Protected Forests (Rs.10 per goat and Rs.5 per sheep).

In theory, the Forest Department can take legal action as a last resort against recalcitrants, but in practice this is rare. Forest Officers I spoke to complained that it was hard to make a case against a grazier stick in court, and they were always fearful of a counter-charge that they had tried to obtain bribes.

Government policy today aims to curb numbers of migratory sheep and goats in three chief ways. First, since the early 1970s no new flocks have been allowed (i.e. flocks which have not been directly inherited). Second, permit sizes were frozen at the same time, and can under no circumstances except one be increased. The sole exception relates to the

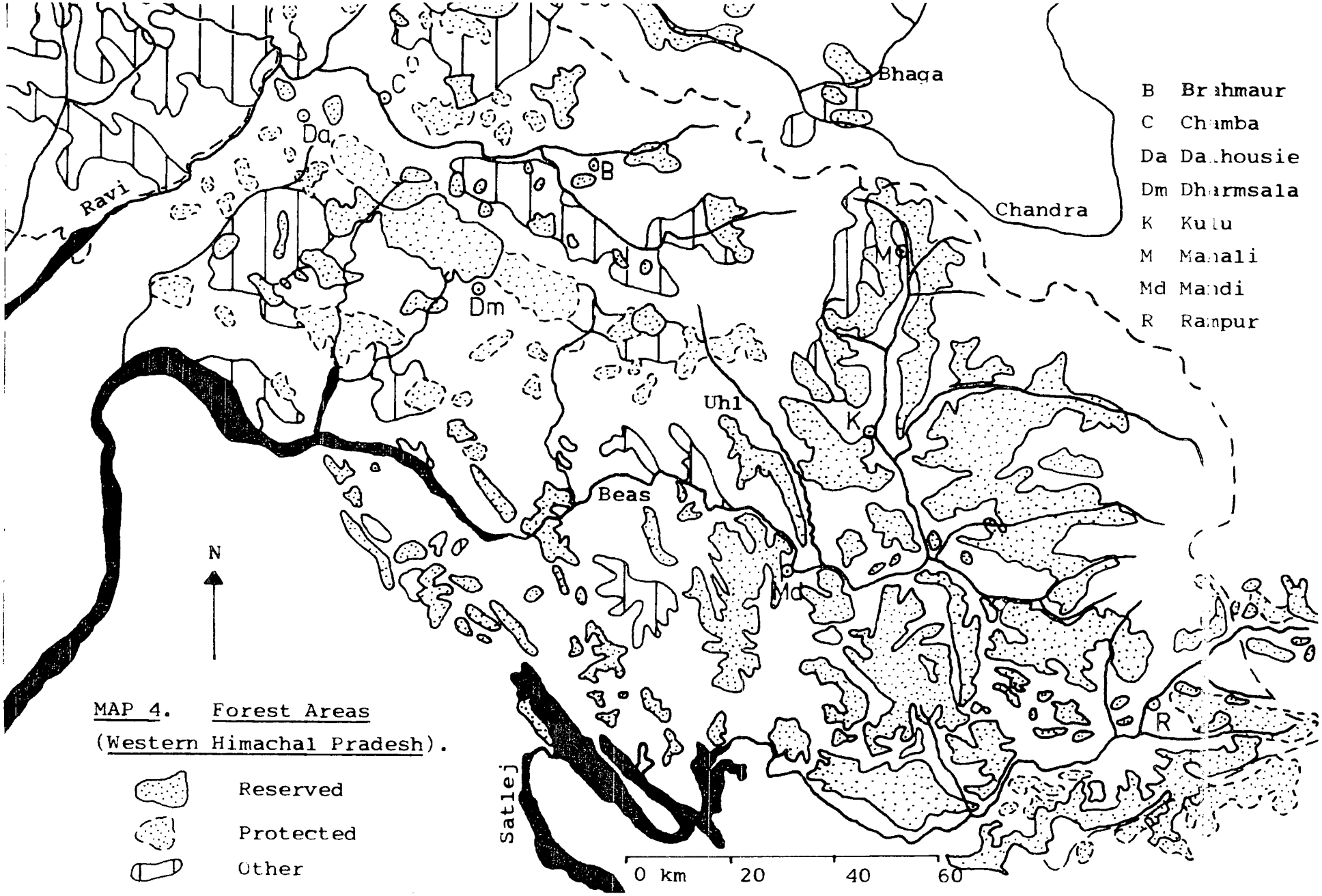
third, and least successful, way of controlling numbers. Due to the greater environmental damage allegedly caused by goats, the Forest Department aims to reduce their numbers much more drastically than sheep numbers. To this end, permission for two sheep extra for every goat surrendered is offered as an inducement. So far the shepherds have not found it attractive.

The permit system gives the Forest Department responsibility for the control of all migratory flocks. But State rights in forest provide it with a further opportunity to regulate the impact of grazing in many areas. Almost 40% of the area of Himachal Pradesh is designated as forest, although in reality only one third of this area (13% of the total) is continuous woodland, the remainder being scrubland and degraded forest (Gaston, Hunter & Garson 1981: 22-3). A similar proportion of the area designated as forest is classed as reserved or protected forest, amounting to 2,850 square miles (ibid). It is over these forests that the Forest Department can exert varying degrees of control, and they are sometimes collectively referred to as State Forests. Reserved Forest is State owned in an absolute sense; and no grazing (or felling) can take place without the permission of the Forest Department, which can be revoked at any time. In the far more extensive Protected Forests, of which there are various sub-classes, all existing rights (i.e. of local residents or graziers from outside) are enshrined, but subject to regulation by the Forest Department, who have the right to close areas for regeneration or reafforestation (1961 Census Kangra District Handbook 1970: 34). Such closures may be for any length of time, but the Forest Department is legally obliged to provide

alternative locations to right holders who are displaced. As Map 4 shows [9], areas of reserved or protected forest, where the threat of possible closure always exists, cover significant proportions of available grazing land, especially in Kulu and the winter grazing regions.

Closures provoke the most contentious disputes, however, between migratory graziers and the State, because of the very lack of a consensus among both parties as to what customary rights are. Invariably, more graziers claim the right to be guaranteed alternative grazing than the Forest Department are prepared to recognise when these closures take place; and because of the factors I mentioned earlier enormous bitterness is created when those graziers who feel they are right holders are not recognised as such by the Forest Department. In winter grazing grounds above all, where pressure on land as a whole is more acute than in the alpine areas, a Forest Department closure with no alternative grazing provided can easily lead to the demise of a flock.

Furthermore, State control over the vast areas of alpine land above the forest line is in some areas another means through which the Forest Department can regulate grazing by migratory livestock. With the incorporation of Chamba into Himachal Pradesh after Indian Independence, all land outside village boundaries came directly under State ownership (cf. Newell 1967: 24). This is not always the case in areas which were formerly under British administration, however, and large tracts of Lahaul and Bara Bangāhal which are not classed as forest are still in private hands. This is doubtless one factor in their popularity with shepherds.



MAP 4. Forest Areas
(Western Himachal Pradesh).

Reserved

Protected

Other

This describes, then, the framework of State intervention in pastoralism, executed through the Forest Department. I shall move on now to consider the internal regulation of grazing, and the primary question of the allocation of pastures. This is essentially the sphere of shepherds' relations with one another. Flocks, as I have noted, are held generally by individual households; so also are rights to grazing grounds, but with certain qualifications.

Dhārs or bāns vary considerably in size, but shepherds still define them as accomodating at least 600 to 800 animals, and hence containing on average several individually owned flocks. Other dhārs or bāns may be much larger. The Bara Bangāhal dhārs owned by the Gharāṭi and Singrāṇ sub-clans, for instance, accomodate over 2,000 animals each. But besides these unified ancestral holdings, which date back a century or more, there are many which have changed hands more recently and involve a patchwork of different ownerships, so that one grazing run does not belong to a single group of agnates.

Within a grazing run no single pattern of allocation is followed. Certain fixed boundaries may well be recognised, particularly in winter grazing areas, and share-holders have to keep to their portion of the grazing run. But within these boundaries, and in other cases within the dhār or bān as a whole, grazing rights are to a notional share of the estate, which is not divided into finite plots in the way that cultivated land is apportioned in Kangra and Brahmaur. In summer, where flocks may be combined for convenience, even the boundaries of dhārs may be ignored, but this of course is subject to the tolerance of other graziers. I would tentatively

suggest that where grazing pressure mounts, there is a tendency towards division of the grazing run on fixed lines. This would be particularly applicable in winter, where grazing runs are in any case smaller as a rule than in summer. However, my data does not allow me to put it forward as anything other than a hypothesis; and I should also note that the early start for winter grazing grounds made by some shepherds, in order to take the pick of the available grazing, illustrates that the freer pattern of allocation is by no means absent in the Śiwaliks.

Today, a shepherd may legally dispose of his share in a grazing estate, for the title to these shares is individual. But certainly in the large ancestral grazing estates it is effectively impossible to sell a share to anyone other than an agnate. To this extent grazing estates are corporately held by lineages or sub-clans, and the overall estate remains intact through successive partitions of the shares in it. Instead, the individual share-holder in a dhār or bān may lease his right (or just a part of it) to an outside grazier for a cash rent. This may be done on a yearly basis or on a longer term arrangement, but the chief point is that the ownership of the agnatic grazing estate is not changed. This pattern is dependent, however, on the group holding the patrilineal grazing run remaining committed to shepherding on a scale that is broadly sufficient to fill the dhār or bān. In Karnāthu, this is indeed the case, and a shortage of grazing capacity, not an excess, is the problem. Where there is a significant drift away from shepherding, on the other hand, the pressure against individuals or small-scale lineages

parting permanently with their rights to outsiders is far less strong. Some dhārs in Bara Bangāhal held by Bangāhali graziers are a case in point.

For the shepherd who lacks or cannot exercise a right to a customary run in summer or winter, there are four main alternatives. First he may find a right-holding shepherd or former shepherd who is prepared to lease all or a part of his share. This is the way in which the Phākas Brahmans, Jhunnu Gaddis and certain Buketa Gaddis from Karnāthu obtain their grazing in Bara Bangāhal. Alternatively, a small minority of shepherds arrange to rent directly from the Forest Department on State-owned lands. Such an arrangement is purely at the discretion of the Forest Department. The third possibility, occurring most in winter areas, is to rent from a zamīndār, or landowner, who holds the grazing rights in certain grounds but does not himself hold a flock, and auctions the grazing to whoever pays him the most. The final possibility is to induce a pancāyat to allow grazing on their wasteland; but it must be understood that this is in addition to any grazing by outside graziers that is enshrined in the local land revenue documents, and it is entirely at the pancāyat's discretion.

All these are seasonal arrangements with no security, and apart from the access to State forest at the discretion of the Forest Department, all involve larger payments per animal than for the permit. In Bara Bangāhal, the rate is about Rs.0.80 per head (shepherds do not distinguish between sheep and goats as the Forest Department do, and charge the same for both), but in winter a shepherd can expect to pay far more (certainly over Rs.2 per head for a full season).

Right-holders also have payments to make, in addition to their permit fees. These are, however, far less than the sums I have just mentioned. Where sometimes a dhār, or almost invariably a bān, fall within the jurisdiction of a pancāyat, shepherds pay an annual fee to the latter. Sums appear to vary, but around Rs.0.80-1.00 per animal seems to be the norm.

4.5 Trends in Migratory Sheep and Goat Numbers.

I intend to turn now to the question of whether shepherding is an expanding or contracting sector of the Brahmauris' economy, as revealed through an analysis of gross livestock numbers and flock sizes. This is an area of some controversy, because recently intensified concern about the ecology of the Himalayas, and especially about deforestation and pasture deterioration in the mid-Himalaya and the Siwaliks, among foresters, biologists and environmentalists, puts a large part of the blame on the numbers of migratory livestock and the scale of unchecked grazing (Eckholm 1975; Kayastha 1964: 54; Singh 1979). On the other hand, whatever the environmental evidence suggests, the only previous anthropological references on pastoral trends, which are admittedly slight, indicate that sheep and goat transhumance is less important than it used to be, and that numbers of migratory livestock are declining (Brar 1971: 16,111-2; Newell 1967: 29-30).

Anthropologists and scientists concerned with environmental issues have taken little note of each other's work. The evidence I shall present supports Newell and Brar, and

as it examines in greater detail than has been attempted before the issue of numerical trends in migratory livestock, it calls into question certain widespread assumptions about the present role of migratory flocks in environmental destruction. My original data comes admittedly from only one village, but Karnāthu is the shepherding village par excellence in Kangra and for that reason provides a particularly valuable case study. Moreover, regional figures by no means tell a uniform tale, and the figures for Kangra District which I shall present shortly show a long term fall in total sheep and goat numbers.

It is extremely difficult to know how reliable livestock censuses are, but I suspect that these words by a former Settlement Officer in Kangra are as applicable now as when they were written. "There is no method by which the animals can be counted which does not depend largely on the admissions of the owners themselves" (Middleton 1919: 31). Kayastha also refers to the lack of "well organised and trusted machinery to carry out the enumeration" and to many of the figures being assumed (1964: 110). Due allowance has to be made, therefore, for the inherent likelihood of significant error in livestock census statistics. In my view, the larger the area covered by the statistics the greater the scope for error, because of the risk of double counting. The more local the figures the more controlled comparisons over a period of time can be, and hence, I suggest, the more reliable the statistical picture revealed.

Himachal Pradesh livestock censuses in 1966 and 1977 indicate that total numbers of sheep in the state increased

marginally in this period from 1,048,917 to 1,055,005, a rise of ½%; while total goat numbers increased by as much as 27%, from 813,041 to 1,035,337 (quoted in Bormann 1980: 6.2.1). There is no way of identifying from these figures the proportion of sheep and goats which are migratory, although it has been assumed to be around 90% for both (Bormann 1980; Singh 1979). I suspect that this is a mistaken assumption, and that for goats the proportion is a great deal lower.

This apparent recent increase in goat numbers state-wide should be set beside the evidence of a long-term fall in numbers in Kangra over half a century (Table 7).

TABLE 7.

Sheep & Goat Numbers, Kangra District, 1920-1966.

Year	1920	1928	1951	1961	1966
Sheep	263879	298068	253236	196317	223812
Goats	328598	314115	238793	193236	205995
Total	592477	612183	492029	389553	429807

Notes. Kangra District here corresponds to 1961 boundaries: i.e. including tehsils Kangra, Palampur, Nurpur, Dehra, Hamirpur, Kulu & Saraj, but excluding Lahaul & Spiti.

1920, 1961 & 1966 figures from 1961 Census Kangra District Handbook (1970: 41). 1928 figures from Kangra District Statistical Tables (1935: Table 22). 1951 figures compiled from Kayastha (1964: 115).

Substantially larger totals are listed for 1914 & 1922 in the Kangra District Statistical Tables; I have omitted these as seemingly freakish.

Even if goat numbers have started to increase again from a 1961 'low', it does not seem to have been recognised that they have a long way to go before the levels of the early part of the century are reached [10].

In my view, the most contentious issue concerning such regional sheep and goat statistics is the proportion of migratory to locally kept stock; the assumption that around 90% of both animals are migratory needs far more critical scrutiny than it has received hitherto. Bormann reports recent figures from Nahan Forest Division showing that 31,000 migratory sheep and goats (of which 9,000 are goats) have to compete in winter with 52,000 locally kept sheep and goats (of which 80% are goats) which are present throughout the year (1980: 6.2.1). I have no comparable figures from other winter grazing areas, but if such a ratio were general in Himachal Pradesh it would be a major blow to the received wisdom.

Moreover, it is ludicrous to assume that migratory and locally kept sheep and goats will have increased or fallen in a comparable way through this century: if 90% of goats once used to be migratory, it patently cannot be assumed that the same percentage are today. The constraints and imperatives of the semi-pastoralist economies bear not the slightest resemblance to the determinants of the local livestock population, scattered in twos and threes among the agricultural population as a whole; nor is the position of sheep and goats the same. Indeed, on a priori grounds it is reasonable to argue that local livestock (and I am talking overwhelmingly of goats, for as the Nahan figures show few people keep sheep) will have grown with the human population, whereas the same correspondence cannot be assumed for migratory stock, given the controls on transhumance.

I shall turn now to examine the Karnāthu data. Only

Mandehar and Gunehar of the predominantly Brahmauri villages in Kangra come at all close to rivalling it, and none of the Seok/Kanet villages in Bangāhal. Whether any village in Brahmaur contains such a large number of sheep and goats spread through so many flocks I do not know, but local comment suggests not. Table 8 shows the number of sheep and goats owned by Karnathu's inhabitants at three different dates. The inescapable conclusion is that even in a village as reliant on pastoralism as Karnāthu numbers of both animals have fallen dramatically.

TABLE 8.

Total Numbers of Sheep and Goats Owned in Karnāthu.

Year	1892	1915	1980
Sheep	6210	7912	-
Goats	4890	4117	-
Total	11100	12029	7930

Notes. 1892 & 1915 figures from Tika Assessment Notes (1915, vol II). 1980 figures are from my own household census estimates. I decided to omit separate sheep & goat totals as informants were not always as confident of the proportions of the two animals as they were about total numbers. However, the ratio is close to 3 sheep: 2 goats.

As there were 65 Gaddi property owners in 1892 and 75 in 1915 (see Table 3) [11], it is clear that average flock sizes must have been considerably greater than today, whatever the proportion of flock owners; this is confirmed also by data I shall present shortly.

The present total of 7,930 is based on 65 flocks, 6 of which belong to Brahman households while the rest belong to Gaddis (I have excluded from calculations one flock which is grazed wholly in Uttar Pradesh). The average flock size is 122.

But this overall average conceals a wide divergence between those 11 flocks which graze in Lahaul in summer, which average as much as 234, and the remainder, which average exactly 100. Almost certainly, this is an indication of the lack of grazing pressure in Lahaul, although of course these same flocks must still compete for the scarce winter grazing. Of the 65 flocks, 11 are under 50 head in size (17% of the flocks), while 6 are over 250 strong (9%). These findings are broadly in line with Bormann's data, also from Palampur tehsīl (1980: 4.6.5).

The decline in numbers portrayed in Table 8 is, however, somewhat misleading, and shows up the potential drawbacks of an analysis based on one village. For, as I noted in Chapter 1.8, there has been a significant amount of emigration from Karnāthu since 1892, chiefly to Phathāhar. Karnāthu's loss has thus been Phathāhar's or Surājara's gain, of flocks as well as people; and a truer reflection of the change since 1915 would involve a comparison of these three villages combined. This I cannot provide unfortunately, as I did not undertake a house-to-house census of the latter two. It may indeed be that while flocks have shrunk in size on average, there are now more of them (a point I shall return to below). But even with all due allowances, there is no question of Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Surājara today matching the 17,000 sheep and goats that the first two of these villages held in 1915 (Tika Assessment Notes 1915, vol II) [12]. There has therefore been a fall in numbers since 1892 and 1915, although it is a good deal less marked than Table 8 would suggest, with its concentration on Karnāthu alone.

A clearer and more detailed picture of trends over the

last 25 years emerges from the next part of this analysis, based on an examination of Forest Department records of individual flocks. Here the evidence for a fall both in the size of flocks and in total numbers is unequivocal. I shall start by presenting in Table 9 figures on trends in flock sizes, comparing as well enumerations and issued permits relating to the same flocks. These data relate entirely to flocks grazing in Bara Bangāhal in summer.

TABLE 9.

Comparison of Permitted and Enumerated/Estimated Flock Sizes in Karnāthu for Three Years.

Year	1954		1958		1980	
No. of flocks in sample	30		31		23	
Source	Permit	Enumer'n	Permit	Enumer'n	Permit	Estim
Average no./flock						
Sheep	173	134	140	120	86	-
Goats	78	60	69	61	45	-
Total	251	194	209	181	131	117

Notes. 1954 & 1958 figures calculated from trini registers, Uhl Forest Range Office, Bir. 1980 permit figures from same source, and from Baijnath F.R.O. 1980 estimates from my own household census, and based on each household's statements.

In each year, permitted and 'actual' sizes of the same flocks are compared, but 1958 & 1980 figures are not based on exactly the same flocks as the 1954 figures, because the data available in trini registers vary from year to year. 'Enumeration' refers to head-counts made during Forest Department checks.

I have assumed for convenience in this Table that flocks permitted correspond one-to-one with flocks enumerated, so that the gap between animals authorised and animals counted

can be compared directly and the contrast between the two be made obvious. But reality is not as neat as this, and some flocks are partitioned in practice before the shepherds register them as divided. Consequently, the actual size of flocks 'on the ground' is somewhat smaller in 1954 and 1958 than is shown in Table 9. In both years, the 30 and 31 registered flocks were found to have split into 36 flocks at the check, making an 'on the ground' average of 162 in 1954 and 155 in 1958. In 1980 my census tallied with the permit lists, so this question does not arise.

The evidence in Table 9 is illuminating in several ways. Permits have been drastically reduced in size during the past 25 years, and are now at just over half their 1954 levels. Over the same period, 'actual' flock sizes in Karnāthu have also fallen steeply. The larger flocks in particular have been pegged back. Of the 36 flocks 'on the ground' at the 1954 and 1958 enumerations, 6 (17% of flocks) and 4 (11%) respectively were over 250 strong; by 1980 only one of the 23 included in this Table was over 250.

These figures also indicate that the Karnāthu flocks have been consistently below the permitted totals, although today the gap between permitted and 'actual' sizes is much smaller than it used to be, especially so far as goats are concerned. This is a consequence both of the considerable fall in permit sizes, and of the shepherd's need to maintain his flock close to the limit if he is to avoid having further cuts made in his permit by the Forest Department. It is the squeeze on goats which is undoubtedly felt the most. Of course, not all flocks are below their required sizes. Of the 1980 sample in

Table 9, 7 flocks exceeded their permits, taking both animals together (by an average of 48%). But 11 flocks were lower than their permits (by 46% on average), with the remaining flocks at almost exactly permitted levels. This gap between permit levels and 'actual' flock sizes is of interest because it undermines a recurring charge made by many Forest Department officials that shepherds are perenially expansionist. This assumption can only be sustained in ignorance of the shepherds' own flock management strategies. The shepherds regard spare capacity on a permit as an important resource, although it is one that they are now learning to live without, for it gives them the flexibility to allow flocks to rise or fall in line with domestic considerations and a family's available labour [13]. Brahmauri graziers frequently see no alternative but to allow their flocks to decline: for instance, at the death of a man whose labour was vital; or because of the necessity to sell stock to help finance a marriage or the construction of a house. Today this flexibility is gone. In 1954, 40% of the permits were for flocks over 250 head (12 out of the 30 in Table 9); by 1980 this had been cut tenfold. Indeed, it is the recollection of large permits in the past, as much as the memory of larger flocks in actual fact, in my view, that colours the perceptions of people in Karnāthu when they recall the past.

Yet has this undoubted fall in flock sizes been nullified by a growth in the number of flocks since the 1950s? I can find no evidence to support this. Taking 35 flocks for which I have enumeration figures in 1954 and whose careers I can trace through to 1980, we find a virtually stable number of

flocks, 37, and a reduction of 28% in livestock numbers by 1980. Similarly, 41 flocks in 1958 which I can trace through to 1980 had become just 42 flocks by the latter date, while total sheep and goat numbers were down by 27% over the period. These statistics are not complicated by the question of emigration, and the explanation for the virtual stability in the number of flocks lies in the fact that natural growth consequent on partition is counteracted by a proportion of households abandoning shepherding. By no means all flocks were smaller in 1980 than their 1950s' predecessors - between one quarter and one third were larger - but the overall trend is clearly downwards. Nor have any 'new' flocks been created in this period, for existing flocks can all be traced back to forerunners in the 1950s.

Despite this very clear evidence of a decline in flock sizes, coupled with no significant increase in the number of flocks since at least the 1950s, the importance pastoralism still has in Karnāthu can be gauged from the ratio of sheep and goats per head of the human population. The same yardstick also demonstrates the greater importance shepherding has in Palampur by comparison with Brahmaur. Taking the Brahmans and Gaddis in Karnāthu (i.e. the flock-holding castes) and counting all 66 flocks, the ratio works out at 15.6 sheep and goats per head. This compares with about 10 sheep and goats per head in Bormann's large-scale survey of Gaddis in Palampur (1980: 3.1.2; 7.1). Both these figures are higher than any available from Brahmaur. In Nayagrāon, the ratio is 7.8 per head; and this in turn is undoubtedly higher than in Brahmaur tehsil as a whole, although it would be hard to put a figure on the latter ratio.

Brahmauris themselves in Palampur consider that pastoralism is declining, taking animal numbers as the yardstick. Three distinct factors may be identified as determining this trend, from the shepherds' points of view. The first is that for the younger generation, increasingly influenced through the spread of basic education to virtually all boys, the pastoral way of life is becoming less attractive. Its rigours (admitted by the shepherds themselves and not just an outsider's point of view) have always made agriculture seem an easier option, but for a growing number of the younger generation it is now seen as symptomatic of backwardness as well: much to the frustration of many older shepherds. The smaller households are the more affected by this trend, for if a single son takes no interest in the family flock it will obviously disappear. Larger households are less immediately threatened, and may indeed encourage the education of sons to a certain point in the hope that the family's sources of income will be diversified without detracting from the labour needs of the flock.

The second factor cited is pressure from the Forest Department to reduce flock sizes. Ironically, while Forest Department officials often complain that the shepherds hold the trump cards in the games of cat-and-mouse with Forest Guards, and assert that the controls of the permit system are no more than a blunt instrument, the shepherds for their part feel that the odds are stacked heavily against them, and that the permit system has been used to crack down on them hard. Moreover, since they do not appreciate the government's view that goats are more damaging than sheep, and since shep-

herds seem to have a special affection for goats that they do not have for sheep (based partly on goats' ability to survive on any available fodder), they particularly resent the policy towards goats.

The third main factor cited by shepherds is the difficulty of obtaining satisfactory grazing in winter areas, either in quality or quantity. This is widely referred to as a cause of a flock being kept small, declining in size, or disappearing altogether. Forest Department closures, which bear more heavily on the winter than the summer grounds, are the particular bane of graziers, but these closures are just the most clearcut of several problems faced in arranging for adequate grazing in winter. Further difficulties include the competition from locally kept livestock - something that the shepherds I know often bemoan - and loss of grazing areas taken into cultivation [14]. Implicit in shepherds' remarks is the view that too many animals are chasing too little grazing, and that the difficulties are greater than they used to be. But since they believe their own flocks to be declining it is axiomatic that the causes of the problem lie elsewhere, in their view, notably with the Forest Department's policy. (The question of whether graziers themselves have a perception of deterioration in the environment is difficult to answer, and the limitations of my data on the subject make me hesitate to comment [15].)

To some extent, the recognition of grazing problems in winter ties in with a broad symbolic contrast between summer and winter in traditional Brahmauri society. For residents of Brahmaur, the arrival of the warmer weather signals the

return to Gadderan, the return home; and indeed for a proportion, who have nowhere fixed to go in winter, the lower hills are synonymous with the insecurity of casual employment and the disruption of kin and village ties until the following summer. The contrast in quality of the summer and winter grazing is thus one aspect of a wider cultural dichotomy opposing the two main seasons.

4.6 Pastoral Production.

As I mentioned above, the pastoral sector of the economy has both a market and a subsistence orientation. While the meat of both animals, and a large proportion of the wool produced by sheep, generate cash for their owners, the remainder of the wool, the goats' milk, and subsidiary items such as hides and goats' hair all have subsistence value. In this section, I shall concentrate on the production of wool and the cash income obtained from wool and meat. I shall also look briefly at the roles of shearers and shepherding assistants (puhāls).

It is hard to generalise about the proportion of wool households keep back for their own use, because it varies considerably. An economic survey in Brahmaur (Evaluation Study of Bharmour 1967) stated that about 70% of wool was sold, but that with sheep numbers falling, shepherds have been obliged to sell a greater proportion than they would like, in order to guarantee a sufficient level of cash income. This is revealing particularly about the pressures on small flock-

holders. Bormann, by contrast, notes the wide fluctuations in wool yield, and shows that the proportion of wool sold or kept is as much a consequence of per capita yields as of total numbers of sheep. On his calculations (1980: 5.3.2), a flock of 80 adult sheep, 66 of which are wool-producing, generate a cash income of between Rs.800 and Rs.2,000 per year. This is based on annual yields ranging from 0.8 to 1.5 kg. wool per head; the 1979-80 sale price of around Rs.28/kg.; 20 kg. kept back for domestic use by the average household; and other deductions to the shearer. He states that for most flocks yields are below 1.2 kg. annually, although my informants in Karnāthu spoke as if yields sometimes went as high as 2 kg. However, this is broadly in line with my own information on some larger flocks, for shepherds with around 150 sheep expected to generate Rs.3,000 or more net in 1980. On a larger scale still, the October shearing of one flock of 240 sheep in 1977 produced 160 kg., a high yield at the top of Bormann's scale. Converted into 1980 prices, this generated over Rs.3,500 net from the one shearing. The October cut is considered superior in quantity and quality, and is usually said to amount to almost half the annual yield. Prices paid for the October wool are also said by some to be two or three rupees higher, but others claimed that prices varied little on a seasonal basis.

Today, meat is more lucrative than wool, although I cannot say whether this has always been the case. Bormann has calculated that on a Palampur flock of 80 sheep and 60 goats, average income from wool sales will amount to only about 20% of the income from sheep. He obtains the following

total cash income on a flock of this size (1980: 5.3)

Wool (after own & shearer's share deducted)	Rs. 1,200
Meat (sheep)	Rs. 4,650
Meat (goats)	Rs. 4,685

These figures, which work out at Rs.73 per sheep and Rs.78 per goat annually, provide the most accurate breakdown of income that is available on the Gaddis' pastoralism. Almost certainly, however, the proportion of income from wool in Bormann's calculations is too low, at least in the larger flocks. To take one example, it would be wildly unrealistic to extrapolate from these figures that a household earning Rs.7,000 annually from wool sales would have an income from meat sales approaching Rs.50,000. The same family which in 1977 had a wool yield of 160 kg. in October, had a cash income in 1980 of about Rs.7,500 from wool, and between Rs.10,000 and 11,000 from meat: in other words, about 40% from wool, and 60% from meat. Even if this is an extreme example (it is certainly one of the largest flocks in Karnāthu) it suggests that the proportions Bormann has arrived at may not hold good across all flock sizes.

Although income from wool sales varies widely, even between flocks of the same size, according to yields and domestic requirements, it is a relatively fixed constituent of the total income from a flock. At least, meat income can be raised or lowered far more dramatically by changes in stock-selling tactics. I would infer from the data above that meat sales are probably pushed to the limit in smaller flocks, in order to maximise cash income. This of course exacerbates the vulnerability of the small flock to accidents and misfortunes, such as mass poisoning or loss to predatory animals (although

the dogs kept by every shepherd are primarily to guard against the latter threat).

The vulnerability of migratory livestock is indeed one characteristic particular to this form of capital. A flock is undoubtedly the most productive capital any Brahmauri possesses (other than, say, an occasional flour mill or shop), as the income it generates shows. It is also a more liquid form of capital than cultivated land or grazing rights, the other major capital assets. Yet unlike these other assets a flock is always at risk, due to various factors which all relate to the animals' mortality. As Barth remarks of the Basseri, in Iran:

> "pastoral capital is in a directly consumable form and consists of animals with a short life span...(T)he capital can only be maintained through a systematic policy of reserving lambs for the replacement of stock. Whereas in agriculture the distinction between produce and land is clearly apparent, among pastoralists nearly every instance of consumption threatens the productive capital itself, and must be considered and evaluated by the nomad. What is more, many of the factors involved are unknown. Disease may strike so that even a conservative policy of slaughter...still results in a reduction of stock" (1964: 79).

Moreover, the accumulation of capital through an increase in flock size is today effectively checked by two major constraints which I have already discussed: the availability of adequate grazing, especially in winter; and the operation of the tough government policy on permits. (There is also, of course, the constraint of available labour resources, but I am thinking here of 'external' constraining factors.) Investment in land, or secondarily house construction, is seen as the most fruitful

way of utilising any surplus in real terms from pastoralism. In itself there is nothing new in this - it is just that today it is virtually Hobson's choice, given the modern pressures inhibiting flock expansion (see next section).

Shearing is never undertaken by the shepherds themselves. Anyone can do it, however, and it is not considered a caste-specific activity (our Brahman landlord and sometime purohit was a fairly regular shearer), although in practice it is mostly done by Sipis. It is indeed the one point at which Sipis individually are likely to have any connection with the pastoral economy. Those who shear are paid a proportion of the fleeces, which they themselves choose, and they often supplement their payment by being in a good position to make favourable on-the-spot purchases. The wool thus obtained provides not only for their domestic needs, but often also for the production of blankets and cloth for sale. In Palampur the rate for shearers is one fleece in ten from the two less productive cuts (February and May-June), and usually one in twenty in October, although it may be one in fifteen if the sheep are consistently small.

Very few flock-holding households produce blankets or woollen cloth explicitly for sale. For Sipis, and for other shearers, however, this is a valuable source of cash, or alternatively a means of acquiring directly through exchange additional grain or flour to make up for inadequate land-holdings. Although the process of turning raw wool into cloth entails a considerable input of labour (and its own sexual division of labour [16]), it is an activity which can be undertaken in odd snatches and at all seasons, and the cash rewards are considerable. At 1980 prices it only takes four to six

blanket lengths to generate Rs.1,000, for the cloth has a high market value and would not sell at much less than Rs.200 per article. In Karnāthu, men from three Sipi households participate in the pastoral economy as regular shearers, while in Thala men from four Sipi households do so.

Raw wool, unless it is circulated within the Brahmauris' own community, is generally sold directly to private agents. Either sex handles such sales, and women are frequently prominent. No long-term arrangements with particular businesses exist in Karnāthu, and generally wool producers like to shop around. The wool purchasers are themselves no more than agents for larger merchants in the Punjab. During fieldwork between 1976 and 1978, Sarnu Rām, the most respected Sipi in Karnāthu, mediated between shepherds following the Bara Bangāhal route and a Paprola merchant, and a large number of shepherds were content to dispose of their May-June and October cuts through this channel. But by 1980 this arrangement had lapsed, and Palampur merchants had cornered most of the Karnāthu produce.

Effectively no organisation represents the shepherds in their dealings with the local wool purchasers, and there is no mechanism to enforce a united front on prices, as the shepherds themselves often bemoan. Various quasi-governmental Wool Sale-cum-Purchase Societies exist, ostensibly to handle the interests of the producers and to purchase their wool at a guaranteed price. But these outlets are little used by Karnāthu graziers, who prefer to deal directly with the private purchasers, and expect to obtain higher prices thereby.

Almost all Brahmauri flocks are today owned by those who shepherd them. There is no "pastoral equivalent of tenantry",

to borrow the phrase Lattimore uses in the context of Mongolian pastoralism (1951: 96). However, it is not uncommon to hire one or more men, who are known as puhāls, to assist with the shepherding, especially of a larger flock of over 250 animals. But even in the small number of cases where puhāls provide most of the labour, the flock-holder or a son is never absent, for graziers are never happy to hand over day-to-day management entirely. Of Karnāthu's present flock-owners, six employ puhāls to supplement the family's own labour, while a further two do so from time to time. Of the six, three employed one man extra, one employed two extra, and two employed three. Puhāls are either Gaddis themselves, or are more rarely drawn from other groups with pastoralist backgrounds (i.e. Kanets from Bangāhal or Kinnaur). Thus, one Gharāṭi flock-holder employs a MZS from mauza Kaṇḍi and two Kinnauris. Three employ agnates. Another Gharāṭi man counts himself as the holder of a small flock of 30 animals, while at the same time he works as a puhāl for a Baṛa Bangāhali shepherd; and in all seven Karnāthu men work as puhāls for other people. Three work for agnates, while one works as far away as Nepal.

Being a puhāl is not considered a demeaning activity (people are not usually hesitant about describing themselves or close relatives as puhāls). But it is thought to indicate relative poverty; and although it is sometimes used loosely of an agnate helping out for a season or so, much more commonly the term has connotations of a degree of economic dependence, whether the person concerned is related to his employer or not.

A puhāl is invariably of high caste: partly because of

the perceived need to have the labour of a person familiar with the pastoral cycle; but also because in the cramped circumstances of the shepherding life, the caste observances and separations which would be required if a Sipi or other low caste man were employed would be quite impossible. The notion is never entertained.

Payment to puhāls is made in livestock, although as well they are provided with food while with the flock. It is hard to discern an annual rate for the job, and seems to be a matter for individual negotiation, but roughly speaking one puhāl would be paid between three and six sheep (goats only rarely) and a couple of lambs or kids. The animals gained in this way by a puhāl may either be sold or used to form a small flock within a flock. In the majority of cases, however, a puhāl's economic circumstances will dictate the sale of most of the livestock he earns. Additional pressure to sell may come from his employer, for unless he already holds a permit (perhaps from former days) which he can use for the animals he earns, a puhāl's accumulation of livestock may cause the flock-owner for whom he works to exceed his permit.

4.7 Cultivated land-holdings among Brahmauris in Kangra.

If, as I suggest, the size of the pastoral sector of the Brahmauris' economy (taking sheep and goat numbers as the criterion) is declining gradually [17], what then are the trends within the agricultural and wage-labour sectors? These are the issues to which I shall now turn, starting with an analysis

of cultivated land-holdings, and basing my discussion on data from Karnāthu and Thala. As a result of this concentration on Kangra, I shall have little to say about Brahmaur itself. To do so would involve taking into account additional considerations. For instance, there are the economic imperatives of the seasonal migration from Brahmaur, which I am not in a position to discuss; while I know little about the precise economic implications of the slow emergence of cash crops there (apples primarily, potatoes to some extent, and even apricots, pears and plums on a minimal scale). All these factors introduce another dimension to the Brahmaur economy. With the bulk of my fieldwork having been done on the south side of the Dhaula Dhar I shall concentrate on the agricultural position of the Kangra Brahmauris.

The density of human population on cultivated land in Kangra has caused concern and aroused comment for a hundred years. For example, the Deputy Commissioner's report on the 1881 Census states:

> "From Nurpur to Palampur the population is very dense, and in the valley which stretches from Shahpur to Baijnath it must be at least 400 to the square mile, which is very high for a tract so purely agricultural" (quoted in Kangra District Gazetteer 1906: 48; the density of 400 refers to the overall density, not the number on cultivated land).

On a more sanguine note, the gazetteer author writes:

> "In Kangra the density of rural population per square mile of culturable area is higher than in any other Punjab District except Simla; but the mountain sides afford pasture to numerous flocks and herds" (1906: 52).

In Palampur <u>tehsīl</u>, the density on cultivated land was

already over 1,000 people per square mile by the 1891 Census. By the 1921 Census it was 1,151 per square mile (Kangra District Gazetteer 1926: 121). Since then the density has risen to 1,920 per square mile at the 1971 Census, and it is scarcely less (1,900) even if the small population classed as urban is excluded (calculated from 1971 Census Kangra District Handbook). Throughout the century until 1970 the area available for cultivation remained more or less stable. Thus, the present population of Palampur tehsīl is well beyond the agricultural carrying capacity of the land, and has been for thirty years or more, as Parry's discussion of what he calls Kangra's 'remittance economy' demonstrates amply (1979). On present trends Palampur's population will certainly have doubled from 1891 to 1991.

In Brahmaur tehsīl the same upward trend through this century is evident, as we saw in Chapter 1.7, although in the last decade for which statistics exist, 1961 to 1971, the density remained static at 1,530 per cultivated square mile, with a slight rise in population being compensated by an apparent rise in the area under cultivation (calculations made from Newell 1967: 14; 1971 Census Chamba District Handbook; and statistics in Tehsildar's office, Chamba [18]). Given that land is almost entirely unirrigated in Brahmaur, these figures probably indicate an even more acute population pressure than in Palampur.

Set against the densities I have just mentioned, the pressure on cultivated land resources available to the inhabitants of mauzas along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar in Kangra is even more acute. Karnāthu and Thala both illustrate this land

hunger in extreme form. By calculating on the basis of all land cultivated by each household, regardless of whether the land was within or outside the boundaries of their own tīkas, Karnāthu experienced a density equivalent to 4,096 and Thala a density equivalent to 3,488 per square mile in 1980. These figures are staggering. I shall discuss both villages in turn, starting with Karnāthu.

The cultivated land at the disposal of Karnāthu's inhabitants thus means a density roughly twice as great as that of Palampur tehsīl as a whole, even allowing for the likely increase in the tehsīl population since the 1971 Census. The economic imperatives underlying the reliance on pastoralism in Karnāthu are evident enough therefore; although the virtual absence of flocks in Thala shows that there is no simple correlation between a shortage of cultivated land and reliance on shepherding. In view of the lack of land available for Karnāthu's inhabitants it is all the more evident that its reputation for wealth rests on the pastoral side of the economy. The Tika Assessment Notes (1915 vol II) show that this reputation flourished at the turn of the century also, for at the 1892 revenue assessment it was noted that "they have got big herds and are well off", with a similar view being repeated in 1915. There are signs nevertheless that both flocks and landholdings were larger then: at least, purchases of three, four or five acres of irrigated land were made by several owners prior to 1892, whereas no-one today cultivates or owns more than two acres of irrigated land. What a closer analysis of the holdings of Karnathu's inhabitants will show is that irrigated land purchases have taken place at least in

the present generation on a significantly greater scale than has occurred in Thala, and this does seem to be connected to the fact that Karnāthu's pastoralism provides the cash surplus to make forays into the expensive land market possible.

All land within the boundaries of tīka Karnāthu is unirrigated (barāni). But as Table 10 illustrates, with its details of all land cultivated by present Karnāthu households, the land used within its boundaries only amounts to about one third of the total area cultivated. A small amount of former wasteland within the boundaries of other hillside tīkas, taken into cultivation in the last decade, adds to the total barāni available; while irrigated land (nehri) accounts for well over half of all land cultivated by Karnāthu people. The nehri is situated in the valley beneath Karnāthu, in several tīkas of mauza Deol but mainly in and around Phathāhar. A certain amount is also held in mauza Lanod.

In Table 10 I am concerned exclusively with actual cultivation rather than ownership. But there is in fact virtually no difference in the totals of both types of land owned and cultivated (a mere 1%), although the picture shows slightly more variation between households. The most important difference to note is that the Sipis own no irrigated land, and have to rent all they cultivate: they do, however, own almost all their unirrigated land. Within the boundaries of tīka Karnāthu all the cultivated land is owned exclusively by members of the sub-clans based in Karnāthu. Non-residents have never purchased land there, although they have occasionally rented small amounts. With the Charāti and Singrān Gaddi sub-clans in particular having shed a part of their natural

TABLE 10.

Land Cultivated by Karnāthu Inhabitants, 1980.

(in kanāls: 10.54 kanāls = 1 acre.)

Caste/ clan	barāni in Karnāthu	barāni elsewhere	nehri	total
BRAHMAN				
Dundu	-	-	-	
Phākas	15	-	32	
GADDI				
Buketa	82.5	-	85	
Gharāti	64	-	124.5	
Jhunnu	20	-	10	
Sāhnu	58.5	-	128.5	
Singrān	38.5	56	130	
SEOK				
Calenu	26	-	-	
SIPI				
Cacaretu	20.5	-	7	
Marenu	21	-	13	
total kanāls	346	56	530	932
total acres	32.83	5.31	50.28	88.43

Notes: The total area of cultivated land in Karnathu is 35.5 acres. The balance is cultivated by Gaddis from Phathahar and Surajara, mainly descendants of former Karnathu residents.

53 kanals of Singran barani outside Karnathu's boundaries, and 36 kanals of Sipi barani is ex-waste brought into cultivation in the 1970s.

All data in Tables 10-13 derive from household censuses, and are thus based on informants' statements. Land within tika Karnathu's boundaries was also checked against the land records held by the patwari; and the close concordance between the official records and informants' statements about land within Karnathu's boundaries gives me confidence that the degree of error in informants' statements about other landholdings is small enough to be insignificant.

increase to Phathāhar, Surājara and Deol, a certain amount of Karnāthu land is owned and cultivated by the descendants of former residents. The area involved is very small nevertheless, accounting for some 2-2½ acres. When land has been sold in Karnāthu it has always been bought by existing residents.

Formal tenancies play virtually no part in Karnāthu's agricultural arrangements. I only know of one acre of irrigated land and about the same area of unirrigated land owned by Karnāthu families which are actually registered as under tenancy. Unregistered tenancies of varying degrees of longevity are more common, but still cover no more than a small proportion of the land owned or cultivated by Karnāthu households. About one acre of unirrigated land within tīka Karnāthu and three acres of irrigated land are rented out in informal tenancies, two acres of the latter to Karnāthu Sipis. Various temporary and much more informal leasing arrangements are intermittently entered into with agnates, but such dealings are too short-lived to enumerate, and in any case involve very small plots of land. In all, well under 10% of land owned by Karnāthu families is tenanted out on any kind of basis. This is a considerably smaller proportion than Parry reports from Chadhiar (1979: 48-9).

It is not surprising, given the pressure on agricultural land throughout Kangra, that it is invariably thought of as a resource to hold on to, and does not change hands very readily. This applies even more forcibly to irrigated land, where rice can be grown and yields are greater, than to unirrigated land. It is interesting to find, therefore, that

slightly over one quarter of the irrigated land owned at present by Karnāthu households has been acquired by the current household heads. The total amount purchased by this generation is very small in real terms (13 acres), but it represents acquisitions by 19 households, and is a significant proportion of the total irrigated area available to Karnāthu families. (None of these transactions were between Karnāthu families, and with one insignificant exception no landowner from there has sold irrigated land in the present generation. The bulk of this land was bought from non-Brahmauris.) I do not have wider tehsīl figures for comparison, but as will be seen this represents a much higher level of irrigated land purchase than in Thala. Moreover, the link between the acquisition of irrigated land and ownership of flocks is direct and emphatic, for all 19 households held flocks at the time of acquiring the land. The data are presented in Table 11.

In this connection it is worth mentioning that a view commonly expressed by the wider Kangra population is that 'Gaddis' are gullible and naive in land transactions, and will pay ludicrously high sums for land. (Irrigated land in mauzas Deol and Lanod fetched not less than Rs.1,800 per kanāl in 1979-80, so far as I could discover.) Yet the point is that in Kangra it takes a very tempting offer to persuade any landowner to part with his land, and few of the agricultural population are in a position to offer a sufficient sum. With the surplus generated from pastoralism, it thus appears that flock-holding Brahmauris can offer enough to prise land away from people who would otherwise probably not

TABLE 11.

Ancestral & Self-acquired Irrigated Land Owned by Present Karnāthu Households.

Caste/ clan	nehri owned	nehri self-acquired	% self-acquired
BRAHMAN			
Phākas	52	52	100%
GADDI			
Buketa	85	-	-
Gharāti	136.5	27	19.8%
Jhunnu	10	-	-
Sāhnu	138.5	44	31.8%
Singrān	111	17	15.3%
total kanāls	533	140	26.3%

Notes: This table documents land ownership only: excluded sections of the village population do not own irrigated land.

The distinction between ancestral and self-acquired land corresponds to the former customary legal distinction between jaddi and jar kharid (see Chapter 5).

sell. What is stereotyped 'Gaddi' naivety, then, to the wider Kangra population, is from the shepherd's point of view an advantageous exchange, for land offers a security which flocks can never provide. The admittedly high price of irrigated land is sweetened by the knowledge that the flock should continue to produce a surplus.

Additional details of Karnāthu's cultivated holdings are presented in Table 12. As this shows, flock-owning households have considerably more land than others in the village, a state of affairs to which their purchase of irrigated land contributes a great deal. But looked at on a per capita basis

TABLE 12.

Average household & per capita landholdings, Karnāthu 1980.

	all high caste households	flock-owning households	non-flock-owning Gaddi households	Sipi households
No. of households (hh)	97	66	27	8
Average hh. size.	5.4	6.3	3.6	5.4
Average cultivated landholdings per hh. (in kanal):				
unirrigated	3.7	4.3	1.9	5.2
irrigated	5.3	6.0	4.3	2.5
total	9.0	10.3	6.2	7.7
Average cultivated landholdings per head (in kanal):				
unirrigated	0.69	0.68	0.54	0.97
irrigated	0.98	0.95	1.19	0.47
total	1.67	1.63	1.73	1.44
hh. cultivating over 1 acre	29	22	5	2
% of hh. in category	30%	33%	19%	25%

Notes: 10.54 kanals = 1 acre.

Without the acquisition of the former wasteland recently brought into cultivation Sipis would be cultivating miniscule holdings: 0.13 kanals unirrigated land per head.

the difference between flock-owners and other Gaddis disappears, due to the difference in the average size of their households. The figures highlight, however, the disparity between those who supplement inadequate landholdings with flocks and those who do not. My evidence on which households need to purchase foodgrains is not complete, but it is safe to state that all households with less than three kanāls per adult head will be obliged to do so. This is an absolute minimum figure, and I know plenty of households with more land which are still obliged to buy grain. Moreover, it ignores such variables as the proportion of irrigated land in a family's holding, and whether they are owner-cultivators or share-cropping tenants. But since only 26% of households in Karnāthu reach this minimum level (26 out of 100 cultivating households, calculating two children under c.14 years as equivalent to one adult) it is abundantly clear that grain-deficit households amount at the very least to 75% of the village total [19]. For those without flocks, therefore, other sources of income are an absolute necessity. This is the topic I shall take up in the next section, but first I shall turn to a brief examination of Thala's agricultural position.

Pastoralism has little importance in Thala, and in this sense it resembles villages throughout Kangra. There are only two shepherding households (one Brahman, one Gaddi), and only one other family had held a flock in the past twenty years. Thala has not changed in this respect, for at the revenue assessment of 1915 there were reported to be less than 100 sheep and goats owned by villagers (Tika Assessment Notes 1915 vol IV).

The land owned and cultivated by Thala's inhabitants is, as in Karnāthu's case, split between hill terraces within the boundaries of the two tīkas and land irrigated sufficiently for rice-growing lower down in the mauza or in an adjacent mauza. With a density equivalent to 3,488 per cultivated square mile, Thala is not much better off than Karnāthu. But this total disguises an enormous gap between the position of the Brahmans and Gaddis, on the one side, and the Sipis, on the other. The two high castes combined live at a density equivalent to 2,847 per square mile, significantly closer to the Palampur average. On the criterion of either ownership or actual cultivation, almost half the high castes' land is rice-growing. The Sipis, by contrast, own and cultivate half as much hill land as the high castes, on a household and per capita basis, and only one household has any rice-growing land, renting a small plot. The contrast between the high castes and the Sipis emerges in Table 13, which also provides a direct comparison with equivalent data from Karnāthu in Table 12. By comparison with Karnāthu, 44% of high caste households (19 out of 43) in Thala hold three kanāls or more per adult, a considerably larger proportion. None of the Sipi households, however, attain this level, and two have no land at all, owned or actually cultivated.

As in Karnāthu, tenancies account for only a small proportion of agricultural land use in Thala. Less than 5% of all land owned by Thala's inhabitants is rented out, formally or informally, although this percentage does exclude informal arrangements between close agnates.

While the high castes in Thala have a greater amount of

TABLE 13.

Average Household & per capita Landholdings, Thala 1980.

	Brahman & Gaddi households	Sipi households
No. of households (hh)	43	14
Average hh. size	6.0	6.2
Average cultivated landholdings per hh. (in kanal):		
maize land	7.4	3.7
rice land	6.7	0.4
total	14.1	4.1
Average cultivated landholdings per head (in kanals):		
maize land	1.25	0.59
rice land	1.13	0.06
total	2.38	0.65
hh. cultivating over 1 acre	20	1
% of hh. in category [20]	47%	7%

Notes: I have described Thala land as maize- or rice-growing, rather than unirrigated and irrigated, because much of the land within tikas Thala Parla and Uarla is technically irrigated (i.e. nehri). Nowhere, however, is the irrigation sufficient for rice-growing. All rice-growing land is elsewhere.

land at their disposal than their counterparts in Karnāthu, they have not purchased land on anything like the same scale under the present generation of household heads. A mere 8.8% of currently owned rice-growing land (25 kanāls out of 288) is self-acquired, a proportion three times less than in Karnāthu (cf. Table 11). It seems to me more than coincidental in this regard that pastoralism should be so

important in Karnāthu and so minor in Thala.

4.8 Wage Labour.

Parry characterises the Kangra economy as "a remittance economy backed up by subsistence agriculture" (1979: 45). Because it is a grain-deficit area, "in order to import grain Kangra has to export labour; and this it does in a big way" (ibid: 40). Parry's Chadhiar figures indicate that over half of the able-bodied men were employed outside the mauza, most of them outside the district (ibid); and this excludes those who are waged but continue to live at home, or those who received pensions. My data on Thala are not sufficiently detailed to put a figure on how closely these two tīkas correspond to the pattern Parry identifies. Without doubt a much smaller proportion of men than in Chadhiar have waged employment, which leads me to the conclusion that levels of consumption must be significantly lower, across the caste hierarchy. Nevertheless, as may be expected of an overwhelmingly agricultural village, Thala conforms broadly to the wider Kangra pattern. Taking regular and periodic outside employment and pensions all together, a little under one half of all households appear to be in receipt of some cash from outside sources. The proportion could well be higher; it is certainly not lower.

In Karnāthu, however, the proportion of households in receipt of cash from wage labour or as pensions (invariably army pensions) is significantly lower than in Thala or in

Kangra generally: 28 households, or a mere one quarter of the total. Of these, 20 receive a regular cash income: nine from men who are currently in the army, and five more from army pensions. Other men work for the Central Reserve Police, as a driver, a cinema technician, a storeman, a police peon, and a domestic servant. In all, fifteen men are employed on a long-term basis away from Karnāthu, with the army by far the major employer. Additionally, eleven households, including three of those mentioned above, had men who undertook periodic labouring jobs in 1980: in all cases for the Public Works Department, State Electricity Board or private forestry contractors.

With six Sipi households having men involved in some form of regular or irregular wage labour, the proportion of high caste households with a cash income falls even lower than one quarter. But the contrast which I wish to draw attention to most is between flock-holding households and those without flocks. Among the former, only seven had a cash income of some kind (11%). Of the 34 Gaddi, Seok and Sipi cultivating households, 21 had men who undertook wage labour or received pensions (62%). These statistics show clearly that households without flocks are much more reliant on wage labour opportunities, and their economic predicament is very much in line with Parry's observations on the importance of the 'remittance economy' in Kangra. For those with flocks, on the other hand, wage labour supplementing the combination of pastoralism and agriculture is uncommon, occurring in only one tenth of the cases, and it is here that the real contrast between the Brahmauri high castes and the

TABLE 14.

Main Sources of Livelihood of Karnāthu Households.

Brahmans, Gaddis and Seoks.

Priestly work (purohitgiri); no land.	1
Flock; landholdings over 3 kanals per adult.	15
Flock; landholdings under 3 kanals per adult.	42
Flock; landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; cash income.	7
Flock; landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; labour as shepherd assistant (puhal).	2
Landholdings over 3 kanals per adult.	8
Landholdings under 3 kanals per adult.	3
Landholdings over 3 kanals per adult; cash income.	3
Landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; cash income.	9
Landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; cash income; labour as puhal.	3
Landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; labour as puhal.	2
	95

Sipis.

Landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; cash income; shearing.	3
Landholdings under 3 kanals per adult; cash income.	3
	6

Notes: Landholdings per adult is calculated on the basis of two children as equivalent to one adult.

Four households are excluded from the total, because I class them as dependent on close agnates. Their personnel have been incorporated into the households listed above.

remainder of the Kangra population in terms of economic organisation manifests itself.

Table 14 summarises this evidence. In it, I have ignored differences of flock size or type of waged employment or income (notably its regularity). Important as these variables are, I decided that to include them would make for an unwieldy presentation of the material, and would detract from the main purpose, which is to illustrate the ways in which the three main economic sectors exploited by Karnāthu's inhabitants are combined. As the figures show, it is the combination of pastoralism and agriculture, without supplementing wage labour, which is by far the most common among the high castes.

4.9 Concluding Remarks.

> "The literature on pastoral societies is fairly cluttered with derelict classificatory attempts to distinguish 'nomadic' from 'sedentary' peoples. Most have foundered on their association with an equally problematic distinction between pastoralism and cultivation. It is observed with almost monotonous regularity that many pastoralists reside for much if not all of their lives in permanent settlements, that most are involved to some extent in agricultural production, and that nomadic movement may actually be occasioned by the simultaneous or alternating exploitation of multiple resources rather than by the specific requirements of herd management" (Ingold 1982: 61).

These comments, in a review, offer a helpful corrective to the tendency to typify a society according to arbitrary yardsticks of the relative importance of livestock or

cultivation in the economy (re. the Gaddis, see Newell 1967: 29). As several other writers also have pointed out, there are considerable variations in the emphasis given to different kinds of production not only within the same society, but even within much smaller units, such as the village or 'camping group', or even within a single household at different periods (Barth 1964: 77-8; Salzman 1978: 620-1). I therefore take it to be analytically superfluous to pose the question of whether the Gaddis (or Brahmauri Brahmans) are 'principally' or 'really' pastoralists according to empirical measurements.

The question remains, nevertheless, whether the partial or complete reliance of a proportion of a society on nomadic or transhumant [21] techniques of animal husbandry justifies describing that society as 'pastoralist'. In my view it does, but then I see the term as a descriptive rather than an analytical concept: this ethnography is about people who are pastoralists and agriculturists. This is because I would hesitate to say that pastoralism per se necessarily has distinctive implications for social relations (which is tantamount to saying that pastoralist societies are of a structurally distinct kind), just as I would hesitate to generalise similarly about 'agricultural' societies. Yet Ingold goes on to argue:

> "So when are people who husband both crops and animals to be regarded as pastoralists rather than agriculturalists? Only, I submit, when both sets of activities are organised by social relations which are materially 'anchored' by the possession of livestock. In other words, if the notion of pastoralism as a system of production is to have any meaning at all, it must imply that under such a system, social commitments established through the control

> and disposition of animal property constitute the dominant structural framework within which practical economic activity - including but not exclusively that of animal husbandry - is carried on" (1982: 62, my emphasis).

Now however ethnographically valid Ingold's proposition may be with regard to other parts of the globe - notably the Middle East? - the passages I have underlined above are of very doubtful applicability so far as the Brahmauris are concerned. I can think of little evidence to suggest that the 'dominant structural framework' for social relations in this society is based on flock-holding; and I would certainly not wish to counterpose Brahmauri society and the wider Kangra society in terms of a structural contrast grounded in the distinction between transhumant animal husbandry and agriculture. But none of this, in my opinion, should cast doubt on the validity of describing the Gaddis (and Brahmans) as pastoralists.

It is not hard to see what Ingold is getting at. The apparently widespread pattern among nomadic pastoralists in the Middle East of indivisible grazing estates being communally held by tribes or tribal sections is clearly bound to create distinctive kinds of social unit - the grazing or herding group as well as the wider estate-holding unit - with considerable sociological implications (cf. R.Tapper (1979), whose discussion of corporate grazing rights prefaces a description of a system of individuated grazing rights in Iran).

Yet this is the crux of the matter, for the Brahmauri system of pastoralism - and to my knowledge the same is true

of other sheep and goat pastoralists in Himachal Pradesh - does not lead to the creation of distinctive kinds of social unit. The individuation of grazing rights, which I discussed earlier, ensures that no unit of sociological significance larger than the joint family (cf. Parry 1979: 156) emerges as a product of the shepherding cycle [22]. The consequence is, in my judgement, that the Brahmauris' form of pastoralism does not 'anchor' social relations in any fashion that would distinguish them from the purely agricultural population.

Moving on now to a different topic, I would draw attention to the fact that seasonal migration tends to have a somewhat different range of meanings for the residents of Brahmaur than it has for Brahmauris settled in Kangra. For people in Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Surājara, for example, the annual cycle of migration is - barring one or two exceptions - purely to do with shepherding. But for those whose primary home is in Brahmaur, seasonal migration is above all about a move backwards and forwards between alternative homes on either side of the Dhaula Dhar. The pastoral migration is secondary, in the sense that it involves a considerably smaller proportion of the population than migrate between summer and winter homes. A corollary of the movement of entire families between Brahmaur and winter residences is often also the shift between two separate locations where cultivation is carried on; whilst the migration to winter areas is likewise often made in search of wage labour.

This contrast is to some extent a matter of straightforward observation. At the Jālsu pass, for instance, connecting the upper Rāvi valley with mauzas Deol and Lanod, I have seen

entire families crossing southwards in autumn. Many cross with their own or a relative's flock, living together and helping with the shepherding while their routes are the same. But once they reach the foot of the mountains in Kangra, these small groups are likely to go differing ways until the following spring: some with the flock, some to the winter home and the cultivation of any land, and some (perhaps further afield) in search of wage labour. How different this is to witnessing the flocks pass through the upper part of Kothi Kohṛ in Choṭa Bangāhal on their way to or from Baṛa Bangāhal. With the exception of the 90-100 or so families of Baṛa Bangāhalis, whose pattern of migration resembles that of people in Brahmaur, the vast majority of those one sees (Brahmauri or Seok pastoralists) are simply in transit for shepherding purposes. The virtual absence of women and very small children (the babies perched precariously atop the baggage the women carry) in the latter example is the most visible difference between the two patterns of migration.

Another important contrast to stress between Brahmaur and Brahmauris in Palampur (I hesitate to generalise about the western end of Kangra) is the evidently greater importance of migratory livestock in the latter, judging by the ratios of sheep and goats per head of the human population (see above 4.5). It is not clear to me why this should be so; and my relative lack of familiarity with Brahmaur may well be a consideration here. The demands of cultivating land in two separate locations could perhaps be an inhibiting factor so far as those based in Brahmaur are concerned. But I suspect that a more plausible reason may be the successful

way in which Palampur Brahmauris have exploited new summer grazing grounds not traditionally used by graziers from Brahmaur - in Bara Bangāhal, Kulu and eastern Lahaul (reached via the Rohtang pass) - in effect giving themselves scope for larger flocks. However, in the absence of detailed information on the history of these developments and on the exploitation of different grazing areas, this can be no more than a tentative suggestion. A third possibility is that access to the market for the produce of pastoralism is more problematic for shepherds based in Brahmaur; but there is little evidence to support this hypothetical possibility, for whichever side of the Dhaula Dhar graziers come from, they tailor their sales to the availability of outlets for their produce. The reasons for this disparity between Brahmaur and Palampur must, then, remain in doubt [23]. The central point, though, is clear enough: whether by design or not, Gaddi and Brahmauri Brahman shepherds in Palampur exploit the market potential of flocks more than their counterparts in Brahmaur.

CHAPTER 5. HOUSEHOLDS AND PROPERTY TRANSMISSION.

5.1 Introduction.

One theme to emerge from the last chapter is that in both the pastoral and agricultural sectors of the economy I have been describing the primary and effective social unit is the household (*tol*). In this chapter I shall focus upon the household from another perspective, looking at the transmission of its wealth and productive resources. Thus I shall be concerned with the implications for households of economic transactions centred on marriage, as well as the partition of property between male heirs.

5.2 Partition and the Household Developmental Cycle.

The cultural ideal widely held throughout Chamba and Kangra is that sons should not initiate partition nor cause a breach in joint living arrangements, regardless of their own marital status, during their father's lifetime (Brar 1971: 195; Parry 1979: 159). The Brahmauris are no exception, although adherence to this ideal is far from complete, as both the above-mentioned authors likewise report.

It will be advisable to clarify at the outset, however, the use of certain analytic distinctions concerning residential and property holding arrangements. Parry has succinctly

summarised the drawbacks surrounding many earlier uses of the joint family concept (1979: 155-9), and I shall not rehearse the issue here. Suffice it to say that I shall follow Parry (and before him Mayer 1960: 182), in using the term 'joint household' to refer to a residential unit consisting of more than one nuclear household (husband, wife, and unmarried children), and whose primary characteristic is not co-residence in the same building but the sharing of living expenses and a common hearth (cūlāh). (There may be more than one hearth, and hence more than one household (tol), in a single house (ghar or makān).) By contrast, a joint family is an agnatic property holding unit containing more than one nuclear family.

Now the household and property holding unit, as well as often being joint, may well also be one and the same. Indeed, more often than not they will be, if we count the main forms of property - house, cultivated land and livestock. But there is no necessity for them to coincide, and it is also common for partition of residential quarters to take place before other kinds of property are divided, and sometimes may years beforehand. There are other qualifications to take into account too. De facto division often precedes de jure partition, for instance, whilst the fact that one member of a family sets up on his own does not mean that full partition between all sons or brothers takes place necessarily. Finally, even when the residential partition is matched by the division of cultivated land and livestock, it is quite likely that two important resources will still remain undivided for up to another generation on occasions: the grass preserves for hay (kharetar), and the individual shares in a grazing run (dhār or

bān). The analytic distinction, then, between the residential unit and the unit holding various kinds of property is not an empty one; nor is the division of property necessarily a straightforward, once-and-for-all matter.

Of the households (tols) in the three villages where I conducted censuses (Karnāthu, Thala and Nayagrāon), overall 55%, covering 40% of the population, may be described as nuclear or smaller. Joint households of various forms account for 28% of the total, but this covers 43% of the population. The remainder are households of an intermediate structure. These statistics compare very closely with Parry's (1979: 171-2). There is little difference between Karnāthu, Thala and Nayagrāon in this respect. However, a variation is apparent between the high castes and the Sipis: the latter, from Karnāthu and Thala, seem less likely to maintain joint households, for just 18% of Sipi households are joint, and 64% nuclear or smaller.

Most commonly partition of households and the bulk of the family's property takes place between brothers fairly soon after their father's death. But once a first son is married and has children, and even more once a second son is married as well, household fission becomes a real possibility, despite the ideal of joint living. As Parry puts it (1979: 193), this is the "underlying" cause of partition, for (as others have argued before him)

> "the ultimate reason why no household survives forever is precisely because it is sooner or later disrupted by the competing demands of individual (or conjugal family) interests versus joint family interests" (ibid).

Some kind of partition is on the cards before a father dies, then, once at least two of his sons are married. Whether it will actually occur at this point is likely to depend on a range of factors: notable among them the assessment - from both the perspective of the joint family's interest and that of the potential 'new' nuclear family, which will often conflict - of the sometimes precarious balance between labour availability, labour needs and resources.

My material shows five cases in Karnāthu and the same in Thala where fathers are living but where at least an initial partition of the household (though not always of land or livestock) has taken place. This is not indicative of such an insignificant proportion as it may seem at first sight, given that not all households will be at the stage of their developmental cycle where partition is a possibility. To place these figures in context, there are nine other households in Karnāthu and the same number in Thala which are at a phase of the cycle where the underlying conditions for partition are fulfilled, but where no partition has occurred: that is, households in which at least two married brothers, at least one of whom has children, live jointly, either prior to or after their father's death. In this light the proportion of 'premature' residential partitions is significant, although there are good reasons for not wishing to put too precise a figure on the ratio. Pulling the proportion upwards is the likelihood that some of the undivided households in which the father is alive will split before he dies. But a counteracting factor is that not all households go through the same cycle. For instance, it would be exceptional for an only son to hive off to form his own conjugal

family. Such households have not been included in the reckoning therefore. Roughly, then, I would be prepared to say that between one quarter and one third of all households divide 'prematurely', before the death of the head of the joint household, among Brahmauris in Palampur. 'Premature' division of land and livestock will be somewhat less common than this.

It is not possible to include Nayagrāon in these calculations because the demands of seasonal migration create a rather different set of conditions. A common pattern is for some sons or brothers (often elder ones) to settle in Palampur while the remainder of the family continues to treat Nayagrāon as the primary home. Whether this pattern should be seen as involving a greater amount of 'premature' partition than, for instance, in Karnāthu and Thala is debateable, because it may well be thought in the joint family's interest to have an elder son and his nuclear family based permanently at the 'winter' home; whereas for Brahmauris based in Palampur 'premature' partition is usually attributed to a son flouting the ideal of joint living. At the same time, the various actors may well have very different perceptions of what is going on. Thus, a father may feel that his elder son is acting in furtherance of joint interests by settling in Palampur in order to look after one part of the common estate. The son in question, on the other hand, may feel that his action is in furtherance of <u>his</u> interests, and corresponds more to a sort of neolocal residence, involving his parents' and brothers' co-residence in winter. The one pattern, therefore, embraces various shades of meaning for the people concerned.

The tendency to partition households soon after the father's death, if not before, is reflected in the average size of households (see Tables 2,4 & 5). The Brahmauri figures I report - all between 5 and 6 people per household for the three villages - are very much in line with Parry's Chadhiar figure of 6.5 people per household, which applies equally to the Rajputs alone or the entire caste hierarchy (1979: 37). Whatever the ideal of joint living may imply, the facts demonstrate that really large households are not the norm. This is in marked contrast to the statistics Berreman gives for Sirkanda in Garhwal, for example: in 1958, the average household size there worked out at 8.5, and in 1972 this was even higher, at 10 (1978: 333-5). Obviously there are differences in settlement pattern and resource exploitation in the two areas, but even so it looks as if joint living and property holding arrangements endure well beyond the death of the apical father and head of the household to a much greater extent in Garhwal than in Kangra or Chamba. Only seventeen out of the 192 households in Karnāthu, Thala and Nayagrāon contained ten or more members.

When partition does occur the guiding principle is of equality between heirs, with various minor qualifications. From the point of view of any Brahmauri man, this is the essential fact, that he can expect to inherit a share of his father's total estate equivalent to that of any of his brothers or half-brothers. However, the rules of inheritance, both in the past and the present, involve a good deal more than this simple statement suggests.

Whilst the changes in rights in land consequent upon the

imposition of British rule in Kangra were far-reaching, rules of inheritance remained essentially untouched until the years immediately after Indian independence. In Chamba and Kangra inheritance rules may be said to have derived ultimately from the ideal formulations of the Mitāksara legal commentary (dating from 11th-12th Centuries A.D.). Under this system, ancestral property was, so to speak, held in trust for later generations and could not be disposed of at the whim of the current owner and holder. In Kangra, ancestral land is known technically as jaddi, sometimes more colloquially as pita purkhe. This is in contrast to 'self-acquired' land, known as jār kharīd. Now under Mitāksara-derived rules self-acquired property was not subject to the same restraints as surrounded the transmission of ancestral property, and it could be left to whoever the owner wished provided that a will was made [1].

Where a man had sons there would be little likelihood of any discrepancy between transmission of jaddi and jār kharīd, and so long as the status of all male offspring was undisputed each son would receive an equal share of the total estate (jaddi and jār kharīd). Where the jār kharīd might not necessarily follow the jaddi was in a case where a man died without any son and direct male heir. In this case his ancestral property automatically passed to agnatic collaterals (brothers' sons, father's brothers' sons, etc.) in preference to daughters or daughters' sons; although as Parry has noted (1979: 168), there would come a point, however shifting and indefinable, at which agnatic collaterals became too remote, and precedence was granted to a daughter and her sons. With self-acquired property a will could, in such

circumstances, specify the daughter as the heir, and thus a lineal female descendant could inherit certain kinds of property ahead of all agnatic collaterals. The overall impact of these rules, however, was to ensure the virtual prohibition on female inheritance of ancestral property in the absence of male lineal heirs, and to stress the role of the local agnatic group as co-partners of an estate. This is, as Parry has argued also (ibid), an illustration that the Kangra inheritance rules went further than the Mitākṣara code in their agnatic bias - and the same is true of inheritance under the Chamba State (cf. Newell 1967: 15) - for the medieval commentary places a man's daughter and daughter's son ahead of the brother's or father's brother's descendants in line of succession (Karve 1968: 354-5). (For a discussion of the implications of these rules in relation to the marriage practice referred to as ghar-juāntru, see Chapter 7.)

Since Indian independence there have been several pieces of legislation, chief among them the Hindu Succession Act of 1956, which have radically altered the traditional system of inheritance - in theory. In essence, genealogical proximity now takes precedence over agnation, and daughters have exactly the same rights in landed property as sons, in cases where no will survives. At the same time, the distinction between ancestral and self-acquired property loses all functional significance, since the owner and holder of property is no longer in any sense a trustee for later generations, but can dispose of his entire estate as he sees fit. Yet these legislative changes have by no means transformed the character of property transmission in rural Chamba and Kangra. Parry

has described the Hindu Code Bill (precursor of the Succession Act) as "the most bitterly resented piece of legislation which has been thrust upon Kangra since Independence" (1979: 170); and in Brahmaur and among the Brahmauri population in Palampur daughters virtually never inherit alongside sons (the sādhins I describe in the next chapter are exceptional). Only where there are no sons as heirs might it now be tolerable for a daughter to inherit from her father, or provide a channel of succession between her father and her son. It remains all the same a rare occurrence even then - not least because my genealogies suggest that it is quite rare for the dilemma to arise as to whether or not a daughter or daughter's son should inherit. In Karnāthu - and this is the one village where my genealogies are sufficiently complete to allow me to speak with complete confidence - there have been just five cases in the past c.30 years where a man was survived by a daughter or daughters only: in none of these cases did a woman inherit, and property reverted invariably to agnatic collaterals [2].

From another angle, apart from a couple of cases in which a ghar-juāntru and his wife have inherited from her father (see Chapter 7), I have a record of only four cases where a man has inherited from his mother's father in the past c.30 years. Two of these men were from Karnāthu (one Buketa Gaddi, one Singrān Gaddi), who left their home village in adulthood and adolescence respectively to settle in their mother's natal village. The other two instances concerned Thala men (one Langa Brahman, one Kaloru Sipi) who had each been brought up by their mother's natal family after marriages had broken down.

The net result of the post-independence legislation, therefore, on the practices of property transmission in Brahmauri society has been to facilitate the possibility of a daughter, and through her, her husband and son, inheriting in cases where she has no brother. But empirical instances of such inheritance have until now remained very few indeed.

Today, Brahmauris of all castes divide property equally between all sons, and for most Brahmauris this is what they have always done. The one qualification to make is that some slight differentiation between shares is recognised in theory, although often not in practice. The eldest son, for example, should ideally receive a slightly larger portion than his younger brothers, but along with this he is meant to inherit a proportionately larger share of any paternal debts. This additional portion due to the eldest son is known locally as the jethundi, and is sometimes notionally reckoned at one twentieth of the total property, although this is merely a token figure. The jethundi, and the special share ideally reserved for the youngest son, is referred to in a proverb which has wide currency, in slightly varying forms, in Chamba and Kangra. The version I learned in Karnāthu runs thus: jethe jo jethundi, halke jo cul, manjheri jo nij jama mâ. Translated, this means: to the eldest the larger portion (the jethundi), to the youngest the hearth (inheritance of the family home), to the middle son mother should not have given birth [3]. On similar lines, Rose states that in Churāh the eldest son used to receive the best field as his jethwāgh, the second son (and by inference all middle sons) received a special implement as his hathiār, whilst the youngest

inherited the family house as his mulwaher (1911, vol II: 212. cf. also Brar 1971: 195).

Despite the slight differentiation drawn in theory between the shares due to the eldest, middle and youngest sons, and the aphoristic recognition that the lot of those in the middle of the age order is not as favourable as that of the first and last, brothers may fairly be said to have and to have had equal rights in the paternal estate. This is so whether they are full brothers or half-brothers (of different mothers). In this respect, post-independence legal changes have entailed no discontinuity with traditional practices, for the majority of Brahmauris. The traditional systems of customary division between brothers or half-brothers found in Chamba and Kangra were known as mundāvaṇḍ or pagvaṇḍ, on the one hand, and cūṇḍāvaṇḍ, on the other. The first pair of terms denote a straightforward per capita division on sons; the latter term denotes a per stirpes division where a man had sons by more than one wife. In such a case, an estate would be divided into two or however many equal parts, depending on how many wives had produced surviving sons; a per capita division between full brothers would then follow. Thus, if a man had three sons by one wife and one by another, the one son would receive one half of the total inheritance, his half-brothers one sixth each, unless the issue was complicated by a factor such as the unequal status of the half-brothers and their mothers.

Although the cūṇḍāvaṇḍ system operated among most of the Kangra population (Parry 1979: 165), it need not concern us particularly as it is the alternative principle that has

been prevalent amongst the vast majority of Brahmauris of all castes on either side of the Dhaula Dhar (where mundāvand, rather than pagvand has been the more commonly employed term: munda denotes a boy, vand a share or division) [4]. In Churāh too cūndāvand has been distinctly unusual, with straightforward per capita division the general rule (Brar 1971: 193-5; Rose 1911, vol II: 212).

The contrast between these two systems of division is, it seems to me, related to broader principles of hierarchy and equality in marriage, as well as the issue of political and economic status. For the most characteristic feature of the cūndāvand system is that it allows for the possibility of differentiating between male offspring according to the status of their mothers. This is most likely to be a crucial question at the top of the Rajput and, to a lesser extent, Brahman hierarchies, and I would agree with Brar (1971: 193) in associating the cūndāvand pattern with the higher echelons of the caste hierarchy, where hypergamy is the dominant tendency. It is immaterial in this connection that the cūndāvand system has been followed widely in Kangra among some landowning castes for whom such differentiation between offspring must have been largely irrelevant (Ghirths for instance), for what I am referring to is a potentiality for such differentiation. Mundāvand or pagvand, by contrast, with its lack of potential for differentiating between the sons of different mothers, is more appropriate to an isogamous environment (although the fact that some royal Katoc subclans followed this pattern of division illustrates that no hard-and-fast connection should be claimed).

Whilst the principle of equal rights for all brothers (full brothers under the cūndāvand system, full and half-brothers under the mundāvand) is predominant generally in Chamba and Kangra, the system of inheritance I have outlined does have a potential both for primogeniture and for ultimogeniture. A clue to both lies in the traditional proverb I quoted above: primogeniture in the greater share that is ideally the eldest son's due; ultimogeniture in the right of the youngest to receive the family home. Parry has noted that there is a contradiction between "the idea that the elder is superior to the younger brother, and the rule that all the sons of the same mother are equal when it comes to inheritance" (1979: 167). But the jethundi, or juthunda, which he goes on to mention in this context as minor symbolic recognition of the respect due to the eldest among brothers, is in one sense just an echo of the fuller recognition granted to the eldest son or brother at the apex of the caste hierarchy. For instance, at the higher levels of the traditional State structure, succession to offices and titles was usually according to primogeniture: the eldest son became the Rāja, whilst younger sons were granted jagīrs; the latter in their turn passed to the eldest sons. Lesser titles tended to be passed on similarly.

The tendency towards ultimogeniture, on the other hand, is best represented to my knowledge in the system of inheritance traditional in Chota and Bara Bangāhal. The following passage from Lyall's Settlement Report in fact applies specifically to Chota Bangāhal, but almost certainly it would have been applicable also to Bara Bangāhal.

> "Each household in the village has its vand...The vands were not divided among sons; the elder sons went out into the world, lived for a time by serving the Rājah, and, in the end, were generally provided for by him by grants of other vands, which had escheated to the crown in default of male heirs and other ways, or by being allowed a share in some new settlement in the waste. The youngest son stayed at home to succeed his father" (1876: 35).

It should be added that a vand was not necessarily the same as a household's total landholding, for a man might have two vands. In this case the second vand would be inherited by the second youngest son. As these details show, we find in this now defunct system an emphasis on ultimogeniture unparalleled in Chamba and Kangra to my knowledge. Yet the point I wish to stress is not that this is a unique pattern - Bangāhal is after all marginal to my fieldwork concerns - but rather that we find here a working out of principles which have currency throughout Chamba and Kangra: the ideal-type roles for elder and younger sons in Bangāhal are a logical extension of the position in the proverb quoted above. Whether the system actually worked according to such formulations is of course another matter. (A pattern such as was found in Bangāhal, like a pattern of primogeniture, is one way of minimising the fragmentation of holdings, since the basic unit, the vand, was indivisible: but it also presupposes a lack of population pressure on land resources, which probably would have obtained in Bangāhal.)

5.3 Dowry and Bridewealth.

A decade and more after 'marriage' and 'descent' were placed under the microscope and found deficient as categories for purposes of cross-cultural comparison (Leach 1961; Needham 1971; Rivière 1971), 'dowry' and 'bridewealth' have in their turn become controversial terms. There are at least two aspects to the problem. First, the diversity of transactions that are typically subsumed under the rubric of 'dowry' or 'bridewealth' is so great as to defeat attempts at a unitary, universalistic definition, and to preclude meaningful comparison. Second, it is often far from clear, even within a single society or a single region, which out of a range of transactions should appropriately be defined as 'dowry' or 'bridewealth'.

In a recent volume constructed around just such questions and entitled 'The Meaning of Marriage Payments', one contributor for example makes the general point that:

> "it would be pointless to attempt to say precisely 'what is' bridewealth or dowry, so heterogeneous are the phenomena to which these terms are commonly applied" (Turton 1980: 67. cf. also Barnes 1980: 94).

Turton argues that, as with the term 'marriage', we are dealing here with a 'polythetic' class of word, "which means that no single feature, or set of features, is either a necessary or a sufficient criterion for membership of the class" (ibid: 68). "Overall similarity" or serial likeness (cf. Needham 1971: 13) - the presence of some features and structural concomitants but not others - is what unites the phenomena labelled dowry in the one case and bridewealth or brideprice in the other.

If we accept this standpoint it should at least minimise reservations about using words of ambiguous technical status - like dowry or bridewealth, or for that matter marriage - which have long been part of the anthropological stock-in-trade. For there is no question of trying to 'fit' ethnographic particularities into an inappropriate typology, derived perhaps from some quarter of the globe distant from the society under consideration. In this connection it is interesting to find that all the contributors to 'The Meaning of Marriage Payments' continue to employ the terms dowry and bridewealth.

Yet the problem still remains of deciding which of a range of exchanges centred on marriage may appropriately be designated as dowry or bridewealth. This is certainly a very real issue in the Indian context. In south India, where marriage is in many ways an expression of a pre-existing alliance relationship (cf. Dumont 1957), the prestations associated with marriage ideally continue and reaffirm a relationship that is already established. As Barnes notes (1980: 96), to isolate 'marriage prestations' in such a context is itself "arbitrary and potentially misleading" inasmuch as it suggests "that the exchanges are only concerned with marriage". To then isolate a dowry element, say, within the marriage prestations is arguably to duplicate the arbitrariness of taking one element of a total system out of its context. In north India there is not the same structure of alliance, but even so a pattern of continuing affinal gift-giving is characteristic (cf. Dumont 1966; Parry 1979; Vatuk 1975). The problem is essentially the same, then, in north India too.

Yet although I would acknowledge that these questions of definition do present problems, I do not intend to be side-tracked into pursuing the matter here. I shall use the words dowry and bridewealth in a provisional sense, and restrict them to the translation of specific indigenous terms. At the same time, whilst my choice is in line with earlier anthropological precedents in north India, it is also based on one analytical consideration.

The point is that the linguistic category I gloss as dowry (as other authors have done) cannot be interpreted only from the perspective of affinal prestations, or marriage prestations in particular. It is also a significant transfer of property. Here I agree with Tambiah that in India

> "dowry connotes female property or female right to property which is transferred at a woman's marriage as a sort of pre-mortem inheritance" (1973b: 64).

Parry gives ethnographic confirmation of this view (1979: 239); and I would add that my Brahmauri informants stated that one reason why daughters did not inherit with sons was precisely because they were provided at marriage with the goods I call dowry. For very different reasons, the category I gloss as bridewealth cannot simply be assimilated with a cycle of affinal prestations either, and it too has implications for property.

Brahmauris use two words which I translate as dowry: dāj and sāj. For most these are synonyms, with the former replacing the latter in Kangra. Sāj also has a narrower meaning which is not being supplanted. Dāj (or dahej) is a widespread term in north India (cf. Mayer 1960; Parry 1979; Vatuk 1975). Sāj (or suāj), by contrast, is found in remoter mountain regions of western Himachal Pradesh (cf. Rose 1911).

Among Brahmauris of all castes, dāj (or sāj, though I shall use the former word more as it is the more common in Palampur) consists of three distinguishable components. The first two constitute the core of the dowry. First, there are the clothing, ornaments and jewellery which parents primarily, plus other members of her joint family, provide for a bride's personal possession. The bride's maternal uncle (or uncles) also contributes a gift of clothing for her. This gift is one aspect of his obligation to his sister's daughter at her marriage, and from one angle it is a part of the cycle of gift-giving set up when the bride's mother - the maternal uncle's sister - was herself married (see Chapter 7). But these gifts are expressly included with the clothing and jewellery provided by the bride's parents, and described as a part of the dāj. Although the clothes themselves represent no great financial value, the jewellery that is given to a bride by her own family will certainly amount to several hundred rupees.

If the gifts mentioned above are indisputably for the bride's own use and possession (at least in theory), the recipients of the other main component of the dāj are not so clearly specified. The main items in this context are cooking utensils - brass pots, ladles, dishes - a spinning wheel, generally a bed and a quilt, and a tin trunk or two for storage. Just occasionally I was told a cow or draught animal might be given also. These items are provided by the same people as provide the clothing and jewellery for the bride: her parents, close agnates (who are under an obligation to contribute if the family is joint, but otherwise merely

under some moral pressure), and maternal uncle. Now the pan-Indian theory (following Tambiah 1973b: 62-3) seems to be that a dowry is entirely the property of the bride and provides the nucleus of the individual conjugal estate (perhaps at a later date if not immediately). The husband may exercise rights of management over such property, but no more than that. Yet this is a hopelessly idealised version of the actual position, even though the notion that it provides the basis for a future independent household is recognised by people. In practice, most Brahmauris, like most of the Kangra population, do not think of these items as the bride's personal property. Rather, they are seen more as a gift to the bridegroom's family, a fitting accompaniment to the gift of a virgin daughter (kanya dān). In effect it is the bride's mother-in-law who takes the decisions as to which items may be used, and on what occasions. There is certainly no question, however, so far as I am aware, of these items going immediately into everyday use. What usually occurs is that such goods are stored away initially, and gradually over several years are brought more and more into use. There seems to be no real incompatibility for Brahmauris between this widespread practice, and the recognition that these items are ultimately for the couple at whose marriage they were received.

The third component of the dowry is the smallest in terms of economic value and comes in cash. This money is known as the sāj (the more exclusive sense of the word), and is contributed during the marriage ceremony at the bride's home by all those guests who have bartan with her family [5].

This part of the marriage rites is in fact known as sāj. Each donation is strictly recorded in a book families keep for the purpose, and thereby households can work out their obligations when they attend weddings held by those with whom they have bartan ties. At two marriages I attended early on during fieldwork I tried to offer a sum of money along with other guests, and it was only after the second occasion that I understood that since I had no bartan ties with the hosts there was no way in which my offering could be accepted: the framework for reciprocity was lacking. Money is not given in random amounts, but in sums of Rs.1, 2 or 5. From the total collected small amounts are given to both purohits, the musicians (this is thought of as separate from the bidāi), and the palanquin (palki) carriers. The remainder goes ostensibly to the newly wed couple - a proportion indeed for the bride's sole use - but in practice I believe it comes under the control of the groom's parents, in the same way as the utensils mentioned before.

The reason why this specific contribution continues to be known as sāj, whilst the dowry as a whole is more generally referred to as dāj in Kangra, seems to stem from a transformation that has taken place since the turn of this century. It is implied in Rose's description of a 'Gaddi wedding' (1911, vol II: 266) that the giving of the sāj used to be the occasion at which a large part of the dowry was presented to the couple, and he states that presents were given either in cash or in kind. Today, important though this gift of cash is as a demonstration of the tie between donor and recipient, it is a separate and relatively minor component

of a dowry, and is quite distinct from the main items given. The title sāj equates it, however, with the dowry as a whole.

These, then, are the components of a dowry in Brahmauri society today. The total value, translated into cash terms, is subject to large variations. In Nayagrāon I was told that Rs.2,000 would be about the maximum, but the larger dowries in Palampur certainly go higher than that, up to a maximum around Rs.5,000 or occasionally higher. Nevertheless, the norm in Palampur would be between Rs.2,000 and 3,000. (It makes little difference whether this figure includes or excludes the cash given in fulfilment of bartan obligations, as such contributions represent a very small proportion of the total value of a dowry.)

In addition, two other prestations must be mentioned, even though neither is actually a part of the dāj. Both are important marriage gifts, but as neither is classified as a part of the dāj (or sāj) I consider that I am justified on ethnographic as well as on the broader analytic grounds I discussed earlier in arguing that these are not part of the dowry itself.

The first is a mirror image of the sāj given in cash by those who have bartan with the bride's family. Given the following day during the celebrations at the groom's house by all who have bartan with his family, in equivalent sums of Rs.1, 2 and 5, the gift and the ceremony itself is known as tambol. (The same term, and a comparable practice, are reported from Churāh and Pāngi (Brar 1971: 118-9; Rose 1911, vol III: 196), but I am uncertain whether such a practice is followed among the Kangra population at large.) My

informants always spoke of sāj and tambol in the same breath, and the equivalence of the two gifts is uppermost in local references to them, such that sāj-tambol, as people say, appears almost as one transaction consisting of two parts. Yet the linguistic classification does set the two apart, and informants confirmed that although they spoke of sāj and tambol together they did not count the latter as dāj or sāj. From the analytic point of view, the tambol is not something that comes with the bride to form the nucleus of the couple's future property, as is true of the dāj; instead, it is a transaction which is strictly 'internal' to the groom's side, and is something that the groom brings to the couple's future property.

The other prestation is known as bari, or more formally barasūhi (cf. Parry 1979: 240). This is given by the bridegroom's father to the bride, as a contribution to her trousseau, and consists of her wedding dress, other cloth for making a dress, and some jewellery. It is presented to her natal home at the time of the arrival of the bridegroom's party for the marriage, and is handed over before any of the boy's party are allowed to enter the courtyard of the girl's home. As with the tambol, the barasūhi is not regarded as a part of the dāj, expressly on the grounds that although it is a gift the bride brings to the marriage, it is not a contribution from her side, but comes from the groom's side.

I would argue, then, that dāj or sāj in Brahmauri society denotes clearly gifts and goods that are contributed by the bride's side, ultimately for use in her own individual conjugal household, more immediately (but tacitly) for the

use of the household she enters as a junior bride. Dāj thus covers a very specific set of transfers, and whilst these are certainly to be understood as components of a major prestation in an extended cycle of prestations, there is equally another dimension as well - that of the transfer of property, explicitly in lieu of daughters having rights of inheritance alongside sons. All other marital prestations are conceptualised separately. It is on these grounds that provisionally I gloss dāj/sāj as dowry [6].

Whereas dāj enhances the merit of a father who marries off his virgin daughter appropriately, acceptance of anything in return is considered shameful. Brahmauris today regard such transactions as unvarnished payment for a bride; and the cash given to the bride's father (goods are too visible) is termed barīna, which I gloss as bridewealth. Marriages involving barīna are very rarely admitted, and I only learned of two cases (one Brahman, one Gaddi), although a Karnāthu friend said he knew of half a dozen cases by rumour. Even earlier in the century, when such payments were apparently less censured and covert, and undoubtedly much more common [7], it was still considered an inferior transaction by comparison with the giving of dāj/sāj. I was unable to elicit much information on the sums involved today. Seoks nearby, however, who tended to treat the subject as less shocking than the Brahmauris, spoke of barīna reaching Rs.1,000 or so; and between Rs.500 and 1,000 has been mentioned from Brahmaur (Evaluation Study of Bharmour 1967). The sums may usually be smaller than with dāj, therefore, but it represents nevertheless a sizeable sum for many to find, and may well entail some reorganisation of family resources.

Barīna and dāj, bridewealth and dowry, should not be seen, moreover, as simple alternatives, the payment of the one precluding the provision of the other. Whatever may have been the case in the past, today it is most likely that barīna will be paid partly to enable the bride-givers to provide a dowry. It is after all in the interests of both parties to a marriage that the outward orthodoxies should be observed, which means that a dāj of minimal respectability must be displayed. This is the tendency Tambiah has drawn attention to: "wherever brideprice is given there is pressure on the bride's parents to redirect it in part or full as dowry" (1973b: 71).

It is also possible, however, to clothe a virtual barīna payment in an altogether more respectable guise, by turning the payment into a loan, a ploy which makes absolute secrecy less vital and which only the malicious continue to assert is barīna in all but name. One case concerned a Brahman family in Karnāthu whom I knew well. Doda Rām's first wife has died in childbirth with the child, and when a second marriage was arranged some four years later after considerable difficulty (Doda was not considered a particularly good match, even by his lineage fellows!) his family had to agree to pay all the wedding costs and to provide a loan of around Rs.2,500 to the bride's widowed and fairly impoverished mother. Partly to minimise the expense, both parties agreed to a shorter kind of ceremony, held entirely at the bride's home (known as uthe-bahe). Only a small dowry, equivalent to about Rs.500 was given.

By presenting the large sum provided for the girl's

family as a loan both sides more or less nullified the risk of social stigma attaching to them. The transaction was discreet and private admittedly, but even so it was of a quite different order to the utmost secrecy in which unadorned barīna payments are apparently shrouded.

These remarks illustrate the large gap in meaning between the payment of barīna and affinal gift-giving cycles, in which the provision of dāj can readily be located. It is true that where dowry-giving is less well articulated bridewealth has a different and more public character, and that the demeaning status of bridewealth is intimately connected to the advance of dowry-giving. At a certain point historically in a particular social setting the two transactions may in fact appear almost in balance, as if both are normal accompaniments of a marriage, before the ideology of dowry becomes prominent and forces bridewealth transactions underground. This is the impression gained from Berreman's discussion of Sirkanda in Garhwal at the time of his first fieldwork (1972: 128). Yet even in settings where bridewealth has the cultural endorsement of being the norm, it still appears to have the character of a payment, and does not occupy a place in a larger system of gift-giving as dowry does (northern Churāh is a good example of this (cf. Brar 1971)) [8]. Now it may be argued that a dowry too can have the character almost of a payment in a hypergamous environment, an an inducement to the family of a prospective groom to accept a bride of slightly lower status than would otherwise be thought desirable. This tendency is sometimes referred to in the literature as 'groom-price' (Parry 1979: 240). There are two points to be made here.

First, such cases are a minority. Second, and more importantly, a dowry is never seen as a payment. Like a daughter given in marriage, all that is offered to the groom's family is conceptualised as a gift, being ideologically validated as dān. Nowhere does a transaction in favour of the bride's family receive such legitimation.

5.4 Flocks, Land and Marriage.

The two previous sections have provided data on the contexts in which the main resources of a household are transmitted: partition in favour of sons, ideally after their father's death; and the marriage of daughters. I conclude this chapter with some more general observations.

The salient features of property transmission in Brahmauri society are these. The basic means of production and capital resources - agricultural land, flocks, grazing rights and houses - are split in each generation, but between sons alone. The scope that primogeniture or ultimogeniture offer for passing on an estate essentially intact is not relevant here, given the ideology and practice of fraternal equality in inheritance. Consequently, the size of a household's wealth in one generation is only a qualified guide to the position in the following generation, since much depends on the number of sons who will inherit.

Daughters, by contrast, can make no demands on these basic resources, whether at marriage or after a father's death (unless, in the latter case, a man has no son to inherit).

The point I wish to stress here is that, in line with a pattern general in north India, the chief means of production are never incorporated in a dowry.

Yet the marriage of a daughter can involve a fair expense for a father, and thus is likely to have certain repercussions for the means of production he holds. (To a significantly smaller degree a son's marriage too entails expenditure which may have repercussions for a household's capital.) As Goody expresses the point:

> "Even where the basic means of production are not transmitted, each marriage will entail some reorganization of the family estate. The raising of a dowry in money or other movables may require sacrifices on the part of the parents or the brothers; the family fund will suffer some diminution" (1973: 28).

Quite apart from the burden of providing a dowry for a daughter (of, let us say, Rs.2-3,000) there are the additional expenses of the ceremony and feasts which involve an outlay of Rs.1,000 and more in most high caste households for either a son or a daughter. For a few much wealthier households these sums could be doubled; for low caste households halved or quartered. Inevitably, such a financial drain on a household's resources is not contemplated lightly, and necessitates the pursuit of a deliberate economic strategy. I know of no case where land was sold to provide the cash for a dowry - and such a course of action would be seen as utterly self-defeating. A flock, however, provides a more liquid form of capital, and invariably extra animals would be sold if a marriage had to be financed, the scale depending primarily on whether it was a son's or a daughter's wedding.

For a family with a flock of average size or above, the difficulties or potential drawbacks of making such additional stock sales are as nothing compared to the difficulties faced by a family with a very small flock or with no flock at all. As I showed in the last chapter, surplus grain is a rarity, and the almost inevitable outcome is that a family in such a position would either have to squeeze their flock to a dangerously small size, or realise other relatively liquid assets, or obtain the necessary cash from waged employment. This may all require an economic strategy extending over several years, in contrast to the larger flock-owner, who can raise the necessary cash in a single year or two. A household that grosses between Rs.10,000 and 20,000 annually from its flock is obviously in a vastly different position to a household whose annual cash income is at best measured in hundreds of rupees.

These facts illustrate that while a daughter's marriage involves no transmission of primary capital resources as such, it is likely to involve an outlay sufficiently large as to modify economic strategies in most households for a period of a year or two or even for much longer, and to make a significant inroad into total resources. One important consequence of this is that most households feel an interest in checking the expense a daughter's marriage can involve. Like most Kangra people, the Brahmauris I knew were always quick to rate the lavishness or otherwise of the wedding feasts they attended. Yet on the whole I would say that marriage exchanges do not have the flavour of a 'tournament' (cf. Marriott 1976), and so long as social respectability is

not jeopardised people are keen to avoid any escalation of costs. It may be relevant here that some informants spoke as if dowries should (and do) approach Rs.5,000, when converted into cash value. That dowries rarely approach this value is partly no doubt just a reflection of the ideal character of such statements, but it also owes something in my view to the effectiveness with which Brahmauris negotiate or tacitly agree to marriage transactions at a lower level. Current levels of expense are even so considered obligation enough. I would certainly not want to imply that empirical marriage patterns are determined by these economic considerations alone; but as I shall show in Chapter 7, the arrangement of exchange marriages or unions which renew well-established affinal ties are both statistically frequent and considered desirable on various grounds, including that of cost.

Finally, as others have noted before, marriage marks the intersection of the preoccupation households or local descent groups have with production and reproduction (Goody 1973; N.Tapper 1981). Not only is production to some degree directed towards financing marriages (in this case particularly of daughters); but also in a society where the household is the effective economic unit marriage obviously modifies household composition, with considerable implications for production (recruitment or loss of female labour) and reproduction (if a bride is acquired). Axiomatically, households are likely to try to balance labour and resources, and this entails ensuring that a workable ratio between the sexes is maintained, since certain jobs are done by one sex or the other but not by either. Berreman has argued (1978: 342) that the disparity

between the sexes should not exceed 3:1 either way for agricultural or domestic purposes (although I doubt that this takes into account the peculiarities of transhumant pastoralism with its reliance on male labour). At all events, whilst a household may have very limited control over its size and composition, from the point of view of the vagaries of human demography, circumstances can be manipulated by delaying the marriage of a daughter or her final departure to permanent residence in her conjugal home, or by bringing forward the marriage of a son. These are both well known ploys. One example will suffice.

Basānt Rām and his younger sister Khesro Devi, Karnāthu Gaddis, had both been married for some while in 1977 (over a year and two years respectively). But neither bride had been able to join her husband's household after the post-marriage ceremony known as the sadenoj (see Chapter 7). The cause lay with Basant's parents-in-law. They had no other children, another daughter having died not long before, and kept their sole surviving daughter with them for as long as they could, arguing that they could not manage without her. As a consequence, Khesro was not allowed to leave her parental home, as she was the only female in the household (her father being a widower). Once Basānt Rām's wife joined him, Khesro was swiftly released to join her husband's household, but there was no question of allowing her to go until her 'replacement' arrived.

CHAPTER 6. CELIBATE WOMEN OF THE DHAULA DHAR: THE SOCIAL CONTROL OF FEMALE SEXUALITY AND THE IDIOM OF WORLD RENUNCIATION.

6.1 Introduction.

Throughout Hindu India the requirement that women should marry has the force of an imperative: spinsterhood is almost unknown in rural areas, and has ambiguous but predominantly disreputable connotations. Correspondingly, for these are related issues, women renouncers are a rarity, and female asceticism is an extremely minor dimension of the wider Hindu (and essentially male) ascetic tradition.

Yet fieldwork in Karnāthu brought me face to face with a small number of women known as sādhins, all of whom were adult and unmarried. Their title is regarded as a feminine form of sādhu, and they see themselves and are seen by fellow villagers as a kind of ascetic, albeit in a limited sense. Theirs is a wholly respectable status. All are said to be virgins and had become sādhins before puberty; and they are committed to celibacy and chastity for life, although they take no express vows to that effect.

However, the sādhins' renunciation is only of marriage - and through that, sexuality - for they continue 'in the world': either living at home with parents or brothers, or alternatively living alone after inheriting on terms of

equality with any brothers at partition of the family property. In connection with this emphasis on renunciation of marriage and sexuality, rather than world renunciation itself, the sādhins' appearance is significant. They neither dress in a way that would link them with other ascetics, nor adopt any kind of sectarian bodily marks. But equally they do not dress in the clothing worn by other women in their community. Instead, they wear the everyday clothing of men. At the same time, their hair is close-cropped.

6.2 Sādhins in Karnathu and its Vicinity: and Sādhinis in the Wider Region.

The sādhins with whom I am concerned are extremely few in number. Those known to me directly or by well corroborated repute number seventeen, with vague reports of a further two. All but two are living, although one is a lapsed sādhin. I became aware of their existence because Karnāthu contained five at the start of my fieldwork. This proved to be a larger number than in any other village. Karnāthu in fact is widely considered as the source and centre of a development which has no apparent antecedents prior to the very end of the last century. Ten of the sādhins come from the higher villages of mauzas Deol and Lanod; a further four come from villages on the mountain slopes of neighbouring mauzas. The majority are of Brahmauri caste but several are Seoks. Information on the caste and village of sādhins is presented in Table 15.

The role that I shall describe is not found among the mass

of the Palampur population, nor is it even widely known about. I often met with surprise when I described sādhins to people who had never encountered them; all the more so because the title sādhini is a familiar one in Kangra, and many people thought initially that they knew of the kind of woman I was talking about. By contrast, Brahmauris on either side of the Dhaula Dhar, and Seoks, tend to know about sādhins even if they have never met any; and whilst their knowledge is often scanty, Karnāthu recurs in conversations, as if it were largely a Karnāthu practice.

TABLE 15.

Sādhins in Palampur and Brahmaur.

tehsīl/ mauza	village	number	caste	approx d.o.b. of oldest in village
Palampur				
Deol	Karnāthu	4 1	Gaddi Sipi	1880-85
	Lalwāni	1	Seok	1940
Lanod	Dūhki	2	Seok	1920
	Naini	1	Gaddi	1910
	Utrāla	1	Seok	1940
Bandla	Sukairi	1	Sipi	1900-10
Bir	Gunehar	1	Gaddi	?
Sansāl	Mandehar	2	Gaddi	1930
Kothi Kohr	Kohr Khās	1	Seok	?
Brahmaur				
-	Sacuin	2	Gaddi or Sipi	?

Notes. In addition to those listed above I had some reports of two sadhins from in or around Holi (Trehta).

In Kangra generally, sādhini is a title applied to a quite different female role to that which I shall examine. It is one of two terms used of female mediums or diviners; and while celani, the female form of cela, is probably more common, sādhini is a widely known alternative. There are fewer of them than their male counterparts, but they perform the same function in the same way, usually holding puc (from pucna, to ask), sessions to which clients come for the diagnosis and curing of illnesses or afflictions of various kinds.

All these women have been married, and live with their husbands if they are alive, although in a number of instances they have only become sādhinis after being widowed [1]. Some are said to renounce sexual activity in deference to the wishes of their possessing deity (always a form of the Goddess), but this is by no means a necessary consequence of their role. In all cases they continue to wear women's clothing, although some may put on ochre robes during the divinatory sessions they hold.

Their role and powers set them apart from the women I shall be discussing, and they are not female celibates. At the same time, some idea of sexual renunciation is present, and this is echoed in their title [2]. In this connection, it is sometimes said that sādhinis, unlike run-of-the-mill celanis, are pupils of a guru, and that it is through the latter's teaching that the sādhini acquires superior powers, or siddhi (literally, mastery of the ultra-mundane); others saw sādhinis simply as highly renowned celanis. My data are sketchy on this topic, however, and for most of my informants the terms sādhini and celani were interchangeable. These brief

remarks are intended to distinguish the sādhins I shall discuss from their perhaps more widely known namesakes.

6.3 A sādhin's career.

In describing the sociologically important aspects of sādhin-hood it is more than usually necessary to distinguish between variations in behaviour and conflicting definitions of the appropriate rules, in addition to simply contrasting the behavioural and jural dimensions of this institution. This is primarily because in Karnāthu especially, where most of my data come from, expectations about exactly what being a sādhin entails are by no means settled. The oldest in Karnāthu when I started fieldwork was Prabhi Devi, a Gaddi who died in 1977 when well into her nineties (some claimed she lived to over one hundred) [3]. From all accounts, she was the original sādhin, and not merely the first known in Karnāthu. Be that as it may (and there is no way of ascertaining this point for sure), the practice has developed ad hoc during the past 90 years or so, in other words, during Prabhi's lifetime.

Various issues are still unresolved, and occasionally provoke considerable debate: none more so than the correct method of disposing of the corpse of a sādhin at death. This problem itself reflects the unresolved issue of the sādhin's renunciatory status. From an anthropologist's point of view, fieldwork in Karnāthu gave an ideal chance to witness a kind of 'bricolage' in action, for an apparently unique practice was

in the process of being created while I was there (although for a long time I was blind to this aspect of the phenomenon). While it may be an axiom of most anthropological or sociological methodologies that mankind is to some degree self-defining, it is exciting for an anthropologist to witness a moment in the creation of a practice, and all the more interesting where the development is situated in relation to complex conceptual and ideological considerations. (Nothing could be more helpful also in breaking down lingering assumptions about the static or 'given' character of traditional structures, for cultural production was evident here in a particularly arresting form.)

Informants, sādhins and others alike, insist that it is always a girl's choice and never her parents' decision that she should become a sādhin. The decision should be made before menarche, although this was only confirmed after considerable enquiry: most people volunteered simply that around ten to thirteen was the appropriate age to adopt this new status, while there was complete agreement that it was too late to make this decision once a girl was approaching marriageable age (seventeen or over). In practice, I know two women who apparently became sādhins aged around five or six (one Gaddi, one Seok). Three others had difficulty remembering how old they had been, but guesses ranged from eight to seventeen. Possibly one or more had experienced their first menstruation by the time they became sādhins; but it is clear to me that as a general rule a girl should become a sādhin not simply before final decisions are taken about a marriage, but also before menarche.

It is of course hard to know what kind of decision a pre-pubertal girl, and even more one aged a mere five or six, might be said to make for herself in a domestic environment where the individual preferences of junior females are not notably recognised. This is an issue I shall return to later, but the point I wish to emphasise now is that it is an integral aspect of the status of sādhin that it should be presented as being freely chosen by the girl herself. Moreover, just as the wishes of a deity can often be inferred by devotees from external signs, so the 'true' wishes of a young girl may be detected by her parents in various ways: a forcible and explicit determination not to marry need not be the only one. The Karnāthu Gaddi woman who had become a sādhin aged five or six, and others of her immediate family, were all adamant that she had reached the decision herself, but would not discuss the matter in any further detail. On the other hand, whilst the Seok woman who had become a sādhin equally young would not talk to me herself, her father told me that from a very early age his daughter had simply preferred to wear boy's clothing and had wanted to wear her hair like a boy's. As a result her family had assumed that she wished to be a sādhin [4].

Deciding not to marry and becoming a sādhin are corollaries of one another, and it is hard to state categorically that the decision not to marry logically precedes the act of becoming a sādhin, because the causal link could as easily be expressed the other way round. But having said that, all three of the Karnāthu sādhins whom I knew best independently stated that they had become sādhins because they had decided that they did not wish to marry. Furthermore,

most informants of both sexes described becoming a sādhin as the inescapable outcome of the decision not to marry, the only option if the statuses of wife and mother are rejected.

The girl who becomes a sādhin must be a virgin (kanya or kumāri). This relates closely to the principle that a girl should be pre-pubertal at the time the decision is made. People consider sādhins to have renounced all possibility of expressing any sexuality, and their commitment to chastity and celibacy is often reiterated. As I shall go on to show, sādhins are conceptualised implicitly as 'asexual', and it is in line with this classificatory logic that the transition from presexual immaturity to asexual maturity should not be disrupted by the intrusion of such a recognised symbol of female sexual potentiality (and sexual impurity) as menstruation before the adoption of the new status has occurred. I should note that there is no fiction that sādhins do not menstruate: men told me that they observed the same restrictions and prohibitions as other women at such times, unless they lived alone. The point is that menarche marks the transition from childhood to female sexual maturity, and if it occurs before a girl becomes a sādhin (i.e. denies her sexuality), then the ideological foundation of their asexuality is threatened. If this is true of menarche, it is obvious that lost virginity would pose a far more profound threat. Once a girl has become a sādhin the decision is irreversible. I learned, however, of one Seok sādhin who had eloped with a Gaddi man some twenty years ago (discussed below) [5].

No public or family ritual marks the occasion when a girl becomes a sādhin, nor is there a need to consult a priest to fix an auspicious day. The only way the transition is marked

is by the girl's tonsure (kathu), performed by the barber (Nāi), and by her adoption of male everyday clothes. But whereas a boy's tonsure is a public rite of passage, or samskāra, and the occasion for a minor celebration, a sādhin's tonsure is a private act to which it is apparently unlikely that anyone would be invited (other than her immediate family who would automatically be present anyway). It is thus a minimal and socially almost unmarked rite of passage.

On later occasions when the barber is called to cut a sādhin's hair, there is some disagreement and variation as to whether it is shaved or just cut short. Sādhins themselves differed in this respect too. The discrepancy is not seen as very important by people in Karnāthu, but it is one aspect of the unresolved question of the sādhin's renunciatory status, which I drew attention to above. Those who say that a sādhin's hair is or ought to be shaved manifestly attach greater weight to the symbols of renunciation than those who argue that it is a matter of personal preference whether it is shaved or simply cut short. As a matter of observation, since sādhins always wear caps (topu) of one kind or another the difference is not a visible one generally.

Acceptable clothing worn by Brahmauri men spans several alternatives, from the traditional shepherding garment (cola), through a kind of woollen shirt worn over tight woollen trousers or with bare legs, to shirt, pullover, waistcoat or jacket with pyjamas or western-style trousers. I never saw or heard of a sādhin wearing a cola, on the one hand, or pyjamas, on the other, but otherwise they dressed in any of the articles I have mentioned.

A few men asserted that sādhins ought also to possess a saffron pyjama and kurta for prayer or other sacred occasions, as an indication of their status as renouncers. But none of the sādhins I knew had such garments at the time of fieldwork, and all except one said that they had never done so. Nor apparently had Prabhi Devi in her lifetime. The one exception had been Bhujalo Devi, a Gaddi from Karnāthu, who had acquired saffron pyjama and kurta on becoming a sādhin, although she only recalled wearing them once in Karnāthu (see below), and now no longer possessed them. (Note that unlike the genderless robe of a male ascetic, a sādhin's explicitly renunciatory garb was identifiably male.) Other sādhins and their families dismissed the notion that it was appropriate to have such a pyjama and kurta, and two of them in Karnāthu commented that Bhujalo gave a weight to the wider renunciatory aspects of her position that they personally felt was excessive. This provides another instance of the lack of established notions of exactly what being a sādhin entails.

In becoming a sādhin a girl adopts, or will adopt as she grows older, certain characteristics of a male gender role, quite apart from her male dress. I shall return to this question later, but for the present emphasise that this does not mean that sādhins are classified as socially male. The only obligatory male characteristic for a sādhin to adopt is that she should henceforth dress like a man. (What she does with her hair is less clearcut: for, whilst having it cut short is identifiably male, having it shaved on the other hand is an essentially renunciatory characteristic, and hence genderless.) The performance of male activities, however, is a matter

of choice for a sādhin. She has the right, once she is considered by her parents to be old enough for it to be appropriate, to smoke with men, both tobacco and cannabis (i.e. hookah, cillum and bīdi), whereas women are supposed not to smoke, and do so discreetly indoors when men are absent, if they do so at all. Three of the four sādhins I knew from Karnāthu smoked publicly. In addition, the various domestic or agricultural tasks which men usually perform, or which may only be performed by men, are perfectly acceptable for sādhins to undertake. Two stages in the process of turning raw wool into cloth, for instance, are conventionally performed by men (the plying of two strands of already spun wool, and the weaving); sādhins are not the sole women to perform these tasks, for if no man is resident for a long period a wife or daughter may undertake them, but the right of the former category of women is not conditional on the absence of men from the household. Ploughing and sowing of crops are the crucial agricultural tasks which only men may undertake, and here sādhins are the sole exception to the rule. All domestic and agricultural tasks which women normally undertake, sādhins continue to do as well.

At any ceremony such as a marriage or a post-death feast, a Sat Nārāyaṇ katha or a jātra, an adult sādhin is free to join the men's company if she wishes. This by no means always happens, however, and from my observations more often than not they prefer to remain with other women on occasions when the sexes are clearly separated. Writing of the behaviour of two sādhins at a ceremony in Karnāthu I recorded that one 'sat and sang with the women and girls through the pūja,

whereas Makhori was smoking a hookah and chatting with the men'. Several informants spoke of sādhins often feeling shy in male company on these public occasions, and hence preferring to remain with their own sex, but I witnessed enough instances of sādhins exercising their freedom to join groups of men to demonstrate that this was a perfectly acceptable practice. Bhujalo Devi suggested to me that she felt it was preferable for sādhins to avoid public gatherings or feasts where there was likely to be any revelry, but as already noted she laid greater stress on the gravity of her role than any of the others I knew. None of the sādhins known to me drink alcohol, at least in public, but I am uncertain what the response might be should any do so.

The question of whether or not a sādhin may attend a funeral is problematic. As is well known, cremations in north India are attended strictly by men alone, regardless of the sex of the deceased. The expectation among male informants I questioned was that sādhins would not attend cremations, and certainly the one funeral I witnessed in Karnāthu had no sādhins present. But it is doubtful that this is more than an expectation, and no-one suggested that it would be wrong or inappropriate for a sādhin to be present on these occasions. Moreover, the Sipi sādhin in Karnāthu was adamant that she had attended a number of cremations, and went whenever she wished to pay her respects by taking part. Another, Bhujalo, had only attended one funeral - her father's - but this had been in highly unusual circumstances.

Bhujalo's father had died, long after she had become a sādhin, while her two brothers, both younger than her, were

away with the family flock. As she described the occasion to me, a number of leading men of the sub-clan and village had conferred, and came to the conclusion that as her brothers were out of immediate reach and as she was a sādhin, it would be acceptable for her to stand in for the elder brother and fulfil the role of chief mourner usually performed by a dead person's eldest son. Bhujalo pointed out herself that this had been an exceptional solution to the problem of an absent son at a father's funeral; but again we see the definition of what sādhin-hood may entail being constructed ad hoc in a context where no customary precedents are established. Her role as chief mourner at her father's funeral, lighting his pyre, presenting the oblations, and subsequently taking his ashes to Hardwar for immersion in the Ganga, provided Bhujalo with the one occasion at which she had worn her saffron pyjama and kurta in Karnāthu [6]. Yet the significance of these garments in this context is unclear - as indeed is any stress on her renunciatory status - for renouncers have no role at a funeral to the best of my knowledge since they are ritually dead themselves. It seems most likely that emphasising the renunciatory aspect of her position was simply a way of affirming her general auspiciousness and purity. I return to this shortly.

Sādhins retain throughout their lives the names they are first given. They thus continue to be known by female names, suffixed with Devi, and in address or reference female kin terms are used. This illustrates their unambiguous classification as women; being a sādhin is a female gender role. The fact that sādhins wear men's clothes, perform certain activities usually reserved for men, and may mix freely in

male company, is the outward manifestation of this special female status, and not the sign of social classification as males - nor, I should add, of any apparent male self-conception on the part of sādhins themselves [7].

Having said that, whilst the male characteristics adopted by sādhins do not transform it into a male gender role, such characteristics do have some influence on the way that sādhins are generally perceived in a place like Karnāthu. I can best describe this by saying that a sādhin is in a tacit sense thought of as a female who is an 'as if' or surrogate male. Neither her sex (physiologically given) nor her gender (socially constituted) may be in question, but she can nevertheless operate socially 'like a man' (though not as a man) in various contexts. Nothing illustrates this better than the example I have just considered: Bhujalo's performance of the role of chief mourner at her father's funeral. It was, I suggest, because as a sādhin she was an 'as if' man, more than a renouncer, that she was an appropriate alternative to her absent brothers: she was here her father's 'as if' son. Her renunciatory garments, while lending auspiciousness to the occasion and hence reinforcing the appropriateness of the choice, were a secondary motif and not the primary justification for Bhujalo's performance of this critical function.

Sādhins have neither a performative role as ritual functionaries, nor any special relationship with a personal deity which might bring them powers of interest to the community at large. On the other hand, like many others they attach importance to the worship of their lineage or family deities (kulajs). They observe the same rules as everyone else governing inter-

caste behaviour, and are neither more nor less prone to 'relational' or 'external' pollution (Orenstein 1968; Tambiah 1973a). At mourning they would shave their heads on occasions where male siblings did so [8]. Equally, sādhins are generally considered to be as susceptible as anyone else to malign mystical influences (i.e. jādu, sorcery, or opara, seizure), although opinions on such hypothetical questions in the absence of actual recollected incidents are inevitably vague.

At no stage does a sādhin renounce her social world by leaving home. Rather, at her father's death or at partition of the patrimonial estate, she has the undisputed right to claim her share of the inheritance on equal terms with any brothers. This right is not always exercised, and a sādhin may continue to live with a brother or brother's son after her father's death, being supported by him. But others do inherit, and where there are no brothers a sādhin may be the sole heir. The sādhins about whom I have the relevant details are established as follows:

Prabhi (Karnāthu, Gaddi): lived with brother, then with his son; never inherited land, but did own small flock; died.

Bhujalo (Karnāthu, Gaddi): lives alone, alongside brothers' families; inherited share in undivided agricultural and pastoral estate; sold her share in flock to brothers at final division; recently has sold her agricultural land.

Napāli (Karnāthu, Gaddi): an only child, lives alone, having recently inherited house and land on father's death.

Makhori (Karnathu, Gaddi): lives with widowed mother in own house; all land held by half-brother and now by his son; informal allocation of terraces for Makhori and her mother.

Surtu (Karnāthu, Sipi): has lived with brother, but alone recently; has never inherited land; supported by brother.

Bhauna (Naini, Gaddi): youngest sister of three, no brother; inherited house and land from father.

? (Mandeher, Gaddi): lives with her parents still, and has brothers.

Bhukari (Sukairi, Sipi): middle of three sisters, no brother; would have inherited upon mother's death, but died in accident.

Kasolo (Dūhki, Seok): lives with her parents still and has brothers.

While the immediate cause of a girl becoming a sādhin is usually said to be her decision not to marry, this of course leaves out of account influences encouraging or forcing her to make this 'choice'. Several men drew attention to the value of the institution where a man had no sons to inherit from him; and Napāli Devi explained that the lack of a brother was an important factor behind her decision not to marry, so that her father would have an heir (she insisted that neither her father nor mother had put pressure on her to become a sādhin, however). Yet this indigenous explanation of how people may use the institution only accounts for a minority of the cases known to me (three of the nine listed above, if the Sipi who would have inherited but for her death is included). The majority of sādhins had brothers at the time they adopted their new status.

Furthermore, viewed in a longer perspective, the institution of sādhin-hood only modifies inheritance patterns over a single generation. A sādhin who inherits from her father has nobody to inherit from her (I have never heard of a sādhin adopting an heir), and at her death property reverts to her closest patrilineal relatives. It is, in other words,

a single generation cul-de-sac, with no long term repercussions for the transmission of property. The only obvious benefit to a man with no son from having a sādhin daughter as his heir is that she can make all the necessary offerings for the well-being of his spirit, and for the benefit of their ancestors collectively, at the various occasions for śrāddha; and again here we can see the sādhin as an 'as if' son, for these are a son's obligations after his father's death.

Nobody suggested that a father might see shorter term economic benefits in a daughter becoming a sādhin, benefits which have nothing to do with the transmission of the family property. But perhaps we should not rule out the practical advantages of retaining within the family a girl's labour, though I know of no empirical case to which this might be said to apply for certain. Likewise, it might obviate the need to give a dowry, in the case of an impoverished family or one with many more daughters than sons. Again, I know of no definite empirical instances, but it could be significant that Makhori Devi was the youngest of six girls, with only one half-brother, and this might explain why in her case the decision was reached when she was only five or six years old.

In the light of the sketchy evidence available to me, no single factor can be said to explain why a girl becomes a sādhin in any particular case. The institution can potentially be made use of for various different reasons. So far I have touched on the possible interests a father might have in encouraging a girl to decide to become a sādhin. But before leaving this topic it is important to recognise that certain girls may strongly wish to avoid having to marry and leave

home. Indeed, as I noted above, the desire to avoid marrying appeared to be uppermost for some sādhins I knew. For a decade or even longer relations in the conjugal home will be much more formal and prone to tension than in the natal home, especially in a marriage that takes the bride to another village, and it is not uncommon for girls to be anxious at the prospect of marriage. Sādhin-hood offers a fractional proportion of them an institution to make use of for their own interests. The major proviso is that parents have to agree; and given the pressure on fathers to marry off their daughters (see below) this is unlikely to be forthcoming in most cases, unless the girl's preference is in line with an interest her father already has in her non-marriage. Certainly, Bhujalo insisted that she had not wished to marry under any circumstances, and had faced stiff opposition from both her parents for her refusal to entertain the possibility. She stressed that she had become a sādhin despite parental pressure against her decision, not in conformity with it. What persuaded them to relent I could not say. But several people in Karnāthu in other contexts took the view that a girl who was adamant that she would not marry a particular man could not be forced to do so; and the same logic would doubtless apply to that very small number of girls who decide that they do not wish to marry at all.

Only two sādhins have ever died, to my knowledge. I know nothing about the disposal of the body of the Sipi from Bandla who drowned in an accident some 40 years ago, but after the death in Karnāthu in 1977 of Prabhi there was considerable local controversy about the manner in which her corpse was

disposed of. The issue still rumbles on. For Prabhi was cremated, like any other adult; and whilst there are plenty of people who consider that cremation was and is the proper method of disposal for sādhins, there are others who argue that samādhi, the practice of burial in an upright posture reserved for ascetics, ought to have been and be the method of disposal.

Those who argued for cremation tended to emphasise that sādhins are not ascetics in a full sense, since they have not renounced home and family and property (on the contrary, they have gained property rights), nor do they wear the dress of an ascetic. On the other hand, those who consider samādhi to be appropriate invoked two concepts in referring to sādhins which are anchored in the wider Hindu ascetic tradition. First, I have heard sādhins described as bālbrahmacāri (given the strict connotations of brahmacārya, denoting world renunciation prior to full social maturity (Ghurye 1964), the bāl- prefix, from bālak, a child, is redundant). Those who refer to sādhins in this way are clearly laying the maximum emphasis on the ascetic significance of their lifelong celibacy. This is also true of the second concept I have heard invoked. The sexual abstinence entailed of sādhins not only requires a special kind of power and self-control if it is to be maintained, but also at the same time creates this self-control and mastery. In this context I have heard people use the term tapasya ('ascetic austerities') of the sādhin's commitment and the internal power she generates. Men would remark occasionally, partly with genuine marvel and partly with what seemed a more ironic ribaldry, that it took a special

kind of power to abstain completely from sex while continuing to live among men. With this gloss placed on a sādhin's role, samādhi is a logical conclusion to life. But it derives from a selective and partial interpretation of the institution, much as the alternative viewpoint might be said to do.

These opposed views seem to be more of an issue in Karnāthu than in other villages with sādhins which I have visited: partly this may be because of the larger number of sādhins in Karnāthu; but more especially it appears to be because the need to reach a decision in a particular instance actually arose there recently. In Naini, for example, where the only sādhin is now about 70 years old, I discussed the question with a number of men, who agreed that the issue was not cut-and-dried. But whilst they decided that cremation was the more appropriate (they knew that Prabhi had been cremated), it was scarcely a topic to excite any strong views.

Some men in Karnāthu who felt that Prabhi should have been buried suggested that she had been cremated out of ignorance. A few thought such ignorance was culpable, but the more typical view was that it was an understandable error given the lack of a known precedent. Critics of Prabhi's cremation are not to be found, however, within her own sub-clan; not surprisingly, for the decision had ultimately been theirs. Perhaps the most influential member of the sub-clan, Karnāthu's grām and nyay pancāyat representative, said that when he joined consultations after Prabhi's death about the correct procedure to follow, it was felt that if she had worn the saffron of a renouncer, and if she had had a sādhu as a guru, then samādhi would have been appropriate. But Prabhi did not

wear renunciatory garb, nor did she have a sadhu as guru (though she did have a Brahmauri purohit as guru), and hence cremation was the method chosen.

This leads to the matter of sādhins and gurus. By no means all sādhins have gurus, and once again there is no consensus about what is appropriate. In Karnāthu, all the high caste sādhins have had a guru of some kind, but the Sipi sādhin there, as well as a Gaddi and Seok in nearby villages, have not. There is a view, illustrated above, that the only authentic guru is an ascetic, and that one should be acquired from the moment a girl becomes a sādhin. This has to be understood, however, as a predominantly male version of ideal behaviour in Karnāthu, and it bears little relation either to the reality, or - so far as I can judge - to the sādhins' own views. Each sādhin I spoke to saw it as a matter of personal choice whether or not she acquired a guru, and none acquired a spiritual master until many years after becoming a sādhin. It appears moreover to be more of a token guru - cela (teacher - pupil) tie than any very strong link. In Karnāthu, Bhujalo and Napāli are the two sādhins to have renouncers as their gurus. Bhujalo had met her preceptor at Hardwar, when she had taken her father's remains for immersion there, but she had only met him once subsequently. Napāli acquired her guru, whom she described as a 'former Rajput sannyāsin' living ten miles away, as recently as 1979, upon her father's death. She explained that during her father's lifetime she had been serving him, and had had no need for a guru; but with his death she had felt the need to 'justify' her position by becoming a disciple of a guru. A Karnāthu priest suggested that a sādhin with an

ascetic as her teacher would be likely to renounce the world and leave home, whereas one with a purohit as teacher would not follow such a course. Yet no-one else saw a distinction in these terms, and Bhujalo in particular took the view that because they were women it would be unsafe and would compromise them to move around like male renouncers.

I shall conclude this section by examining more closely the rule that once a girl becomes a sādhin the decision cannot be reversed. In Karnāthu, numerous people of either sex spoke of sādhins 'resolving to lead a pure life', as one man put it, or, in the more vivid phrase of another, 'she can't go and have relations with every third man'. The importance of their chastity is constantly reiterated and must remain intact until they die: 'they can only marry after death', I was told once. Sexuality must in no manner be allowed to intrude in a sādhin's life. She must never flirt, and clearly flirting would threaten her classification as an asexual woman, even if not quite as irrevocably as actual sexual activity. Likewise, I heard one or two tales of the dire consequences which would befall any man who approached a sādhin with sexual designs on her. One story I learned in mauza Kandi concerned a Karnāthu sādhin visiting Kandi for a wedding. She was reputed to have been accosted by a local man who had been drinking, and whilst she had pushed him off with no bother, he had fallen into a river on his way home and had drowned. I never heard anything in Karnāthu to confirm this tale, but its interest lies of course in the meaning it conveys, not in its literal accuracy, for it highlights the inviolable character of the sādhin's renunciation. Again, I picked up

dark hints about the ultimate 'cause' of the fatal accident, also involving drowning, which struck the Sipi sādhin from Bandla prematurely: had she been up to something sexual?

The only case I came across where this strict ideology of asexual celibacy had been directly undermined concerned a Seok sādhin from Dūhki in mauza Lanod who had eloped with a Gaddi some 20-25 years ago. This woman, another Prabhi Devi, had been a sādhin for some twenty years already when it became evident that she was pregnant. She had for a long time kept horses as pack animals; and as Doghru, the man in question, also kept horses, and as the two of them had often worked together while she was still formally a sādhin, villagers later assumed that the relationship may have been continuing for some time before the pregnancy announced the fact. At the first public inkling that she was pregnant Prabhi had gone off to Trehta with her lover, and only later did she settle back on the south side of the Dhaula Dhar in Doghru's village in mauza Kandbāri after marrying him. Prabhi thus missed any kind of formal move to deal with her by her former co-villagers; the latter, all Seoks, regarded her as expelled, and one person used the English word 'boycott' to describe their response. She has never returned to the village since. I was told that feeling against her had been strong at the time. Today the boycott is scarcely relevant, and with the passage of years feelings have inevitably mellowed. All the same, villagers said that they would not expect her to return, nor would any visit on her part be easy to accept.

Reconstructing the strength and character of a collective response a generation ago on the basis of the recollections

of a few people is of course a rough and ready exercise. But I suggest that Prabhi's total absence from her natal village for the whole of this period, and doubtless for life, regardless of whether this is due more to her decision to stay away or her co-villagers' expulsion of her, illustrates graphically the enormity of any challenge to the ideology of a sādhin's asexuality. A lapsed sādhin's physical disappearance and social death is the only way to deny the implications of what has occurred. There can be no way back for her, no renewal of social recognition.

6.4 Sādhins and the Idiom of World Renunciation.

Female asceticism within Hinduism has been little documented. Among social anthropologists, Caplan (1973), writing of a part of western Nepal, has provided the only account I know of female renouncers encountered in fieldwork [9]. A recent survey of women and asceticism in modern Hinduism (King 1981) has brought together and discussed a range of sources, but helpful as it is her examples illustrate modern female asceticism essentially from the perspective of highly literate and reforming strands within Hinduism, associated originally with 19th Century Bengal in particular: only mention of Caplan's Nepalese example derives from a less rarefied Hinduism.

Various Indologists have referred to female ascetics in Hinduism, in classical and relatively modern times, usually contrasting their rarity with their common occurrence in

Buddhism and Jainism (cf. Altekar 1956: 209-10; Ghurye 1964: 28,40). In Hinduism a woman's duty was to marry and procreate, and at some point this appears to have become almost obligatory. In Altekar's view:

> "Later Hinduism took a lesson from what it saw in Buddhist monasteries and nunneries and declared women to be ineligible for renunciation...It maintained that not renunciation but due discharge of family responsibilities was the most sacred duty of women. Nuns therefore have disappeared from Hinduism during the last 1500 years" (1956: 210).

Asceticism was thus a direct threat to orthodox precepts concerning a woman's (dependent) role in society [10].

Now of course in a strict sense sādhins are not ascetics, as this concept is understood in Hinduism, for this institution is not 'about' world renunciation. Sādhins do not separate themselves from the social world, the world of samsāra; they receive no initiation into a sect at any stage (acquiring an ascetic guru is in this sense no true discipleship); they neither complete their own funeral rites to represent the death of the social person, as in the case of Śaiva renouncers, nor form a personal relationship with a redeeming deity, as with most Vaiṣṇava renouncers; and finally they neither dress in the robes of an ascetic nor display any sectarian tilaks on the forehead (Burghart 1981; Caplan 1973: 174; Ghurye 1964: 90-4,151-2).

Moreover, even the ideological basis of their common celibacy is fundamentally different. The world renouncer transcends all worldly sexual classification, as well as sexual desire. The sādhin, by contrast, does not transcend sexual

classification at all, for she is classed as asexual. The difference is absolute, for the sādhin's asexuality is the conceptual foundation for the social control of her sexuality. Her chastity is not an aspect of transcendence, in other words, but one aspect of the social regulation of female sexuality. I shall return to this question in the next section.

Despite all this, the ascetic dimension to sādhin-hood cannot be treated lightly. The point is that we have here a practice which is represented through the idiom of pan-Indian renunciation, as the name of these women alone makes clear; and the legitimacy of the role of sādhin is due entirely to this idiom of renunciation. The ethnography I have presented makes it apparent that, for all the disagreements and ambiguities, indigenous perception views sādhins as renouncers of a kind, albeit in a restricted sense. Whatever the institutional rationale for their celibacy and chastity may be, their self-control wins admiration and even awe as an act of asceticism. Again, this status gives some scope for individuals to gloss their role in a more or less ascetic light, as Bhujalo's case shows.

Furthermore, because the acceptable female roles of wife and mother have always been opposed - intellectually and in practice - to asceticism for women in Hinduism, as I mentioned above, we can see the structural necessity of this ascetic dimension for a role which entails avoidance of the accepted female duties. Such a role has to be framed within an ascetic idiom if these women are not to be abused as a family disgrace. As Basham (1967: 179-80) and more recently King (1981) have pointed out, scriptural and other ideological

pressures worked, and work, against women becoming ascetics. But if sādhins were not seen as ascetics of a kind they would be spinsters, and the odium attached to this position and to the family of such a woman ensures that minor points about the validity of female asceticism within a Hindu framework hardly rate attention by comparison with the risks attendant on spinsterhood (see the next section).

There is a difference to note also between the ascetic idiom in terms of which sādhin-hood is framed, and the other chief idiom through which the institution is outwardly represented. We have seen that sādhins adopt certain male characteristics without this signifying that they are socially classed as men. Sādhins also adopt certain renunciatory characteristics, but in this case the parallel with the idiom of maleness should not be pressed too far. Although a sādhin is an 'as if' man, she is rather more than just an 'as if' renouncer, on my reading of the evidence.

There is finally one other reason for giving due weight to the renunciatory idiom through which this role is represented: that is, the resemblance between sādhins and a kind of nun reported from the fringes of the Buddhist world in Himachal Pradesh. This provides the only close behavioural parallel to the phenomenon of sādhins.

A jomo (or sometimes zomo or cumo) is, typically, a Buddhist nun following a monastic life in Lahaul, Spiti or Kinnaur. However, Rose (1911, vol II: 453) refers to Kinnauri jomos who do not live in nunneries but remain in their own villages, while much more detailed information comes from a village survey undertaken in Kinnaur for the 1961 Census

(Kumar 1963). This source describes a nominally Hindu locality in Kinnaur, but, in an area where Buddhism and Hinduism exist side by side with many practices in common and syncretism working in both directions, it would be unwise to attach too much importance to this religious identity. Kumar reports the existence of girls "of 15-16 or more having short or little hair or with clean-shaven heads, dressed up like boys. They profess to be Jomos" (ibid: 59). He goes on:

> "Any adolescent girls, who shy away from marriage... or where they do not approve of matrimonial proposals put forward by the elders...decide to become Jomos and are initiated to this order at a ceremony by the lamas though they remain Hindus...These family ascetics may be seen working in the fields, carrying manure, water from the springs, doing the usual day-to-day household work...For all practical purposes they remain in their homes with their parents" (ibid).

Unfortunately, it is not made clear if jomos can perform male agricultural and domestic activities, or whether the author is just stressing that after they have become jomos they still continue to perform the usual female practical tasks. Two notable differences are that the jomo is initiated into her order, and that in addition to her "devotion and penance" a respected jomo "may very often be asked on religious functions to recite hymns and prayers" (ibid), a performative role that a sādhin does not have. In addition, Kumar states that jomos from the area had abandoned this role in favour of marriage, although he does not say whether such a course meets with any disapproval or stronger sanctions.

Perhaps the most striking point for me is not the ethnographic parallel as such, but rather the fact that a resemblance

between sādhins and jomos is recognised explicitly by several people in Karnāthu. I first learned of jomos in fact from two informants there, one a purohit and the other a sādhin, who were endeavouring to demonstrate to me that there were parallels for such a female role. Such knowledge of jomos is less surprising than it may seem, given the importance of pastoralism in Karnāthu: for the migratory cycle with the flocks takes some graziers to Lahaul in summer, while a smaller number also touch the southern edge of Kinnaur, near Rampur, in transit.

Now I would hesitate to argue that the behavioural role of sādhin is modelled on the more widespread institution of jomo (Buddhist or nominally Hindu), for the transmission of cultural traits is notoriously problematic and difficult to assess. At the same time, I would certainly not rule out the possibility of some influence working on these lines. What is clear is that while the renunciatory idiom of sādhin-hood is manifestly Hindu, the role does have parallels, recognised by the people themselves, with a practice located within the framework of Buddhist asceticism.

6.5 The Marriage Imperative, the Implications of Spinsterhood, and the Paradox of Virginity and Chastity.

The adult unmarried female is not a recognised social category in Hindu society; because women are required to marry and a Hindu father is under an obligation to provide a husband for his daughter [11], the notion of a woman who is past the marrying age and yet unmarried is not only shocking but also structurally anomalous. There is no indigenous term in Kangra for what we would call a spinster. The virtual absence of references to the existence of unmarried adult women in the anthropological or indological literature is itself significant, testifying I would imagine to the effective proscription of this state. A corollary is that where unmarried women do occur they are in various ways defined as outside the bounds of structured society.

Classical textual antecedents for present attitudes and practices may be found in the comparison drawn between marriage for a girl and the upanayana, the receiving of the sacred thread, for a boy (Altekar 1956: 33), which signified that just as it was through receipt of the sacred thread that full social incorporation was conferred on boys, so it was only through marriage that a girl could acquire full incorporation in society. Again, in connection with pre-puberty marriages for girls, which were enjoined particularly in Brahman circles, a father was said to be guilty of the destruction of an embryo every month that a daughter remained unmarried after reaching

puberty, committing thereby murder of a serious kind (Altekar 1956: 56; Basham 1967: 167).

Although pre-puberty marriage has been legally outlawed since 1929, and continues if at all on a much more restricted scale than in the past, the imperative character of marriage for women remains, reflecting a preoccupation with the regulation of female sexuality and procreative power (cf. Yalman 1963). This same preoccupation is at work in a range of reported practices, past and current, which relate in varying ways to the necessity that daughters should be married. The 'token pre-puberty marriage' reported from Madhya Pradesh by Dube (1953), in which among Hindu castes it is essential for a girl to be married to a wooden rice pounder several years prior to her adult marriage, is a case in point, and Dube writes:

> "the menstruation of an 'unmarried' girl is regarded as highly undesirable. To protect her from any such danger...recourse is taken to a token marriage... This token pre-puberty marriage is also known as 'the first marriage'. Once this ceremony is performed... her offences and lapses may be treated by...caste authorities as are those of a married woman" (1953: 19).

Through this expedient, in other words, all manifestations of female sexuality, starting with a girl's first menstruation, are classified within the framework of marriage.

Good examples of the same preoccupation with the implications of having sexually mature daughters left unmarried can be seen in certain hypergamous systems, for the logic of such systems is to accumulate a surplus of marriageable girls at the top of the hierarchy. The extreme and now defunct practice known as 'kulinism' led to just this predicament among the

Kulin Brahmans of Bengal (cf. Dumont 1972: 162-3). Polygynous marriage on a fantastic scale was the only alternative to leaving many Kulin girls as spinsters. The most thoroughgoing practitioners of hypergamy, however, have generally been the Rajputs of north-west India, and it is they who were identified with female infanticide. This is indeed the ultimate solution to the 'problem' created by the birth of many more girls of the highest status within the caste than could possibly be found appropriate husbands, given extreme sensitivity about who counted as acceptable potential partners. This practice can be linked directly to the preoccupataion with the control of female sexuality: rather than waiting for the issue to arise later, Rajputs 'solved' it at source (i.e. birth). Kangra was merely one of the areas in which female infanticide was prevalent (Cave-Browne 1857; Parry 1979: 213-19). Parry raises the theoretical possibility that these girls might have been allowed to remain unmarried, only to show, perhaps with some understatement, that it would have had "drawbacks" for any Miān Rajput.

But inevitably some women never marry [12]. Moreover, the later marriage is delayed beyond the appropriate age (which may vary according to region and caste) the less likely it is ever to take place. The lot of such women cannot be an enviable one, and both in behavioural and classificatory terms they fare worse even than widows, the class of women with whom they have most in common and who also are subject to particular regulation. Yet while widows are comparable to spinsters in having no husband, they are a great deal better off than spinsters on account of having had a husband

once: their sexuality and procreativity have been channelled in the socially approved manner in the past, and, as Dube's example shows, the fact of having been married is the over-riding consideration. Writing also of Madhya Pradesh another anthropologist, Selwyn, has recently had this to say about attitudes to unmarried women:

> "an unmarried girl tends to attract unfavourable attention as she grows older. In discussions in the bazaar, accusations of her promiscuity, and the ineptitude of her father would be heard. Eventually she might well become an object of 'moral panic'...A woman still unmarried in her twenties is regarded with deep suspicion and hostility. She becomes dishonoured...The message seems very clear. A woman, untamed by wife-hood and mother-hood, is perceived to be a threat, a danger and a liability to her kin, her caste and to society in general (1979: 688, my emphasis).

Another illuminating comment comes from Quayle, writing of Kumaon:

> "an unmarried woman...brings shame upon her family, and is not entitled to orthodox funeral rites and cremation should she die unmarried" (1981: 65).

His last point has textual authority, and Altekar gives the example of a Sūtra which states that a spinster can only be cremated if she first goes through a formal marriage, that is, even after her death (1956: 33).

These introductory remarks are sufficient to establish the vulnerability of adult unmarried women in Hindu society, and their problematic status in its classificatory order. They are, following Douglas (1966), anomalous. How does this affect the position of sādhins? Like Hindus in general, the

three main Brahmauri castes regard the idea of daughters simply remaining unmarried as shocking and unimagineable; and I never came across a Brahmauri spinster - other than the sādhins. Yet this of course is the crux of the matter. Sādhins may be spinsters in the sense that any unmarried adult woman is by definition a spinster; but this is to overlook the whole purpose of their role, which is to circumvent the dire implications of spinsterhood in Hindu society. Sādhins are not spinsters, in an indigenous perspective, precisely because they are sādhins. Their status is the one alternative to both the orthodox, accepted female roles of wife and mother, and also the ignominy of unadorned spinsterhood.

The radical transformation of what would otherwise be a degrading and potentially threatening status into the pure and auspicious status of sādhin, is achieved, as we have seen, through the renunciation of sexuality, for it is the potential of her sexuality uncontrolled by the state of marriage which is the source of the threat posed to her family and society at large by an ordinary unmarried woman. By making their renunciation before puberty, the value and purity accorded to virginity attaches to girls who become sādhins. I shall now examine notions surrounding virginity.

Young girls prior to marriage are in certain contexts assimilated with the divine and worshipped as goddesses (embodiments of Kanya Devi, the Virgin Goddess) (re. Kangra, cf. Rose 1919, vol I: 327,329-31). Adult female virgins receive no such sacred recognition, which is scarcely surprising in view of the preceding discussion. Given, however, the existence of women who are not going to marry, an insistence on their

virginity and an extension of the purity attaching to young virgin girls upwards from childhood to post-pubertal maturity, are necessary aspects of their transformation and reclassification. It is perhaps significant that while there is no common word in Kangra for the concept of a spinster, an unmarried adult woman, I learned that the only term which would suffice as an approximation would be kumāri, a virgin, reserved in all other contexts for young girls.

Yet if lifelong virginity is the foundation on which the social acceptability of sādhin-hood rests, as an alternative to marriage, virginity itself is not simply the 'safe' and unambiguous state implied so far. At an explicit level, virginity and purity are synonymous and guarantee the respectability of sādhin-hood. But undercurrents of ambiguity are latent, as Allen (1976) for one has suggested in his study of Newar Kumāris, young girls who embody the Virgin Goddess Kumāri, in the Kathmandu valley. He points out, concerning worship of the Virgin Goddess generally in India and Nepal (his predominant concern is with the goddess in the form of Kumāri, but he specifically notes the unusual prominence of the same goddess as Kanya in Kangra):

> "Throughout the long history of her worship she has displayed qualities of a highly ambiguous kind: on the one hand, she is literally by name 'virgin' or 'chaste young girl'; on the other, she is classed as one of a group of mother goddesses who are also the sexual partners of leading male deities" (1976: 293).

In the Newar context, Allen examines the identification of Kumāri with the blood-receiving and sexually active goddess Taleju Bhavāni, most dramatically at the installation of each

newly chosen two- or three-year old girl as Kumāri. He notes the association of Kumāri with the colour red, connoting inter alia blood and sexual potential, and he argues that in certain Tantric rituals which these young child goddesses may be invited to, "it is the full power of Kumari's delayed sexual and creative potential that is especially venerated" (1976: 310). Thus, Allen goes on to conclude:

> "it is evident that there is a recurrent theme of dangerous sexuality associated with this overtly virginal and pure young goddess...Though the Newars formally insist on the pre-menstrual purity of their living Kumaris, they nevertheless display some ambivalence through their barely concealed admiration of such mature Kumaris as the present Patan incumbent ...The key (to an explanation) is...to be found in the ambiguous evaluation of virginity itself. The virgin girl, though highly rated for her natural purity, is nevertheless a threat to men and to male sexuality...The danger that enters the young virgin at the Kumari installation rite and is finally removed at the barha ceremony (first menstruation ceremony) is essentially the danger of sexual maturity in an unmarried girl" (ibid: 312,315, my parentheses).

The Kumāri cult offers persuasive evidence that if we look beyond the explicit valuation placed on virginity as something inherently pure and unsullied, we find a latent concern with the potential for sexuality. These notions surrounding the conceptualisation of virginity lead back to themes associated more generally with renunciation. For sexuality which goes unreleased is thought to be stored up and concentrated into a potency which transcends the purely sexual. Thus, O'Flaherty writes:

> "Inspite of the importance of chastity in Indian religion, and inspite of the logical analogy between chastity and quiescence, Hinduism presents an equally strong case for the view that chastity, suppressing and building up a pressure of thwarted powers, is far more dangerous than the sexuality which releases them naturally" (1973: 294).

The interrelation between chastity and sexuality is epitomised in the Śiva mythology, and nowhere more so than in the seduction of Śiva by Pārvati: it is her tapas (literally, the 'heat' generated by ascetic austerities) which gives her the power to seduce him or have him seduce her (O'Flaherty ibid: 152-4). Chastity, in short, may generate an all-consuming sexuality.

In the light of these underlying, pan-Indian notions it is possible to understand better aspects of the institution of sādhin. On the face of it, sādhins win respect for their renunciation of sexual activity; while their virginity gives them a lifelong association with the presexual and immature purity of young girls. Yet an implicit concern with the sexual potentiality of these women is revealed in several aspects of the way that this institution is ordered. Moreover, whereas the Kumāri cult among the Newars shows a focus just on the transition to sexual maturity, with sādhins it is the entire lifetime which is focused upon.

The crucial ethnographic facts in this respect are these. First, there is the emphasis on the necessity for a girl to become a sādhin before her first menstruation; and, second, there is the lifelong character of the commitment, with no possibility of the decision being reversed. Third, any lapse is a public, collective matter, and thus far more than just

a question for her family alone. Fourth, there is their male dress and close-cropped hair.

What these facts add up to is an attempt to deny altogether, at the underlying level of social classification, that sādhins have any positive sexuality: they are represented as non-sexual or asexual women. Adoption of the status in childhood ensures that menstruation - normally taken as the first evidence of female sexual capability - does not occur before the transition from a presexual to an asexual identity is made. Once through this transition, asexuality is maintained for life by the prohibition on reversing the decision, and also by representing the sādhin as a woman who is a surrogate or 'as if' man. In this latter instance, an association with the imagery of widowhood too may be detected, for widows also on occasions are known to crop their hair.

Yet sādhins' sexual potentiality cannot be classified out of existence completely; indeed, the cultural emphasis on the irreversibility of their commitment to chastity and celibacy in one sense draws attention to their intrinsic sexuality, the potency of which is of course concentrated by abstinence. The tale I heard of the sādhin accosted on her way to a wedding, the hints about the sādhin who had herself fallen into a river and drowned, and the male attitude of marvel at the self-control of these women, all overtly reaffirm the inviolable character of their sexual renunciation. Yet paradoxically they also convey a different meaning, for it is implicit here that the female sexuality of sādhins cannot wholly be disposed of by a kind of classificatory sleight of hand. Sexual relations between a sādhin and a man

continue to be plausible however much they may be prohibited.

In this section I have explored what I consider to be the crux of any explanation of this unusual practice. To become a sādhin is the sole way for a girl to avoid her orthodox duties as wife and mother without threatening the social order with the anomaly of an adult female who simply remains unmarried. But the corollary, one could say the price, of this transformation from degrading spinster to respected sādhin is nothing less than the strictest possible control over the sexuality of such a woman: she is classified as asexual. That is to say, not only is sexual activity prohibited, it is in theory inconceivable, for a sādhin has no sexuality to express. But such a classification comes up against a contrary ideology, on the one hand (namely, that chastity leads to the storing up of a dangerously concentrated sexual potency); and behavioural reality, on the other hand (namely, that one sādhin has eloped with a man, and the actual perception of people that sādhins need to exercise self-control). The danger posed by the exposure of sexuality in a sādhin is a threat to the community, or at least the caste community, as a whole: partly for the general reason that the sexual activity of any mature but unmarried woman would by definition be a threat in a Hindu context; but more particularly in this case, I would suggest, for the reason that it would also challenge an inherently vulnerable classification, which attempts to deny altogether the sexuality of these women for the purpose of resolving the anomaly of spinsterhood.

Not for sādhins the transcendence achieved by world

renouncers, which brings in its wake what is from a 'worldly' point of view a degree of apparent sexual licence, based on philosophical or mythological legitimation [13]. Nothing illustrates more clearly the underlying rationale of this institution, by comparison with the wider renunciatory tradition, than the fact that a girl must become a sādhin before puberty, whereas a world renouncer can set out on his path at any stage of his life and without his past sexual actions having the slightest relevance.

6.6 Sādhins and the Idiom of Maleness.

My interpretation of this institution is not yet complete, however, and it still remains to examine the second of the two idioms through which sādhin-hood is outwardly represented: the idiom of maleness. From the perspective of her social categorisation what is all-important is the sādhin's separation from her erstwhile status as a bride and mother of the future. But why should the idiom employed to express this separation entail the wearing of male dress and the permissibility of performing certain male activities? As I see it, there are two complementary ways of addressing this question.

One way is to approach the matter in purely structural terms. From this perspective, the category opposition, male/female, provides the idiom through which to express the relevant opposition in this context, abnormal asexual female/normal sexual female. Masculinity thus provides the idiom through which to represent the atypical femininity of sādhins.

Since women who reject the 'proper' female roles of wife and mother are separated from others of their sex, and since sexual classification only embraces the simple dichotomy, male/female, it is structurally logical to represent the otherness and separation of sādhins by making them like men, 'as if' men. I must reiterate that I am talking about an idiom for the representation of a female role, and not about the social classification of sādhins as male. The idiom used to express the separation of sādhins from orthodox female roles is entirely secondary to the relation between the separated elements. It is the relation of sādhins to other women that is the focus of symbolic expression, not the maleness of sādhins. In short, therefore:

normal sexual female: abnormal asexual female:: female: male.

Yet the question cannot be left there, because there are certain substantive ethnographic grounds within the wider Indian context which equally help to explain why sādhins should be represented as surrogate men of a kind. In this perspective the maleness of sādhins is not a secondary motif, but a prominent one in its own right. In the light of our present ethnographic knowledge of India the phenomenon of sadhin-hood appears very unusual. Yet isolated reports from different parts of the subcontinent suggest the possibility that sādhins are but a local realisation of a predisposition latent in India. Bradford, for example, has recently (1982) written about the jogappas and jogammas associated with the Yellamma cult in north Karnataka: the former being 'female men' who undergo a permanent gender change; the latter being women with certain similarities to sādhins who, while not being

'male women' in a sense parallel to jogappas, still wear men's clothing. Again, Mayer recalled (pers. comm. [14]) from his fieldwork in Madhya Pradesh the existence of a woman with a number of similarities to sādhins, including the wearing of male dress. Closer to Himachal Pradesh, but in a mixed Hindu and Sikh research setting in the Jullundur Doab (Punjab), Hershman has written about the sporadically practised custom of widows shaving their hair, and he concludes:

> "I argue that a woman in shaving her hair or wearing a top-knot becomes as a man and by doing this achieves his normal degree of profane purity" (1974: 290).

Although Hershman is writing about widows primarily, his remark seems to be applicable to women generally. In any case, as I hinted earlier, sādhin-hood is a synthesis of notions relating to renunciation, men and maleness, and even widowhood, the latter two being particularly important in the definition of the sādhin as asexual. Thus, even in relation to the specifically male characteristics of sādhins, this phenomenon should not be seen in isolation, as a perhaps unparalleled case; for it is seemingly a variation on a theme which may be far more common (even though marginal) than ethnographic reports to date would indicate.

Yet what does the idiom of maleness convey in the case of sādhins? Here I shall make three observations. First, the only local insight I learned to account for the male dress and short hair was that it might help to discourage men's sexual advances, by making a sādhin less attractive to men in appearance than other women. Making her like a man was, then, a way of neutralising her sexual desirability, and a visible correlative to her conceptual asexuality. Altekar (1956: 159)

makes a similar point in fact about the tonsure of widows from medieval times onwards, whilst also noting that "it was to make the outward appearance of the widow in harmony with the ideal of renunciation...that she was expected to follow" - an identical play on a double theme. My second observation is the point I have already quoted from Hershman: namely, that the adoption of male characteristics is another way (the first being through the idiom of renunciation) of laying claim to a day-to-day state of purity greater than that enjoyed by women in general. This is based on "the implicit value that a man is always relatively pure as opposed to a woman" (Hershman ibid: 283). And my third observation is that male dress and the adoption of male activities may be said to convey the sādhin's release from the behavioural subordination to men which typifies the 'proper' female roles (bearing in mind of course that this release from subordination does not extend to her sexuality). Her male characteristics testify both to this release and also to her implicit equality with men as a result of her renunciation of sexuality. A parallel comes to mind from our own cultural background, for Joan of Arc seems to me an exemplar of the kind of symbolic statement to which I am referring.

6.7 Concluding Remarks.

I have taken my interpretation as far as I feel able to do with confidence. However, numerous puzzles still remain. I cannot, for instance, explain why sādhins should apparently

be confined within such a narrow social and geographical milieu. Similarly, I cannot account for the apparent emergence of this practice at the very end of the last century [15]; nor for the enigma of its strong association with Karnāthu. These kinds of question are of course often unanswerable. But in these final remarks I want to introduce one new angle which I suspect has some bearing on Karnāthu's strong association with sādhins. For there is one category of woman I have not considered which is in an important sense a polar opposite of the sādhin, and that is the sorceress (ḍain). It seems to me more than a coincidence that ḍains are considered to be especially prominent in Karnāthu. These comments are a tentative attempt to map an underlying structural relation between these two categories of 'abnormal' women.

Karnāthu may be known in Brahmauri circles for its association with sādhins, but it has a wider reputation on either side of the mountains for the practice of jādu, sorcery, as I mentioned in Chapter 1. For example, when a young man I knew well was struck down in a jādu attack which left him listless but also emotionally disturbed, the cela called in to diagnose the full context of the attack and suggest the necessary remedies refused to hold his session in Karnāthu, as would have been usual, apparently from his prior fear of the village's reputation. This reputation for jādu is recognised as much within the village as outside it, as is illustrated by the fact that at one jāgra I attended Ajiapāl, the chief village deity, condemned his Karnāthu subjects for harbouring 32 practitioners among their number. These practitioners in theory may be men or women (dāg or ḍain): however, the only

names I ever collected of people rumoured to practise jādu were all women (six of them); and the few cases of affliction being attributed to jādu which I learned of all involved attack by married women (usually on other members of their conjugal sub-clan).

The striking point about the conceptualisation of ḍains is that they are represented in a manner which is, to an anthropologist, the structural inverse of the way that sādhins are conceptualised in certain key respects - above all, in relation to sexuality and power. A sādhin is classified, I have argued, as asexual, and there can be no stricter social control of sexuality than that; a ḍain, by contrast, is credited with excessive and uncontrolled sexuality. A sādhin exercises neither recognised power nor influence over others, any power deriving from her sexual renunciation and self-control remaining wholly internal; a ḍain, on the other hand, is only revealed through the exercise of her malign powers and her capacity to intervene harmfully in the lives of others, and until such time as one is suspected to have used the special techniques associated with jādu she goes unrecognised. The link between ḍains' power and their all-consuming sexuality emerges most strongly in an annual battle they fight with the local gods atop a ridge of hills close to Karnāthu, partly in Kangra and mostly in Mandi. This takes place at the start of Bhādron (August-September), and victory for the ḍains is achieved and symbolised by the sorceresses lifting up their dresses and taunting the gods (obliging the latter to withdraw). Rose describes (1919, vol I: 215,473) a variant of this fight, but he makes it clear that a defeat for the devtas is an

extremely ill omen, whereas Karnāthu people I spoke to assumed that the ḍains often won on the night they call ḍain cauden, with no devastating adverse effects.

Finally, in style sādhins are, as a matter of observation, quiet and passive women, almost muted figures in their local society; whereas ḍains are imagined as concealing frantic activity behind a facade of normality. Sexual renunciation and sexual excess, incomplete womanhood and overblown womanhood, revealed purity and concealed malignity, legitimated deviance and intolerable deviance, are thus placed structurally in tension. 'Normal' womanhood occupies the middle ground, so to speak, between these two opposed versions of 'abnormal' womanhood. I can go no further than this; and my intention is simply to highlight the fact that there is a female role operative in the wider regional culture, and particularly familiar in Karnāthu, which is in key respects a structural inversion of the role of sādhin. As I said earlier, the prevalence of both roles in Karnāthu is doubtless more than a coincidence.

CHAPTER 7. THE SUBORDINATION OF HIERARCHY AND THE DOMINANCE OF EQUALITY IN THE BRAHMAURI MARRIAGE SYSTEM.

7.1 Theoretical Overview.

The starting point for a review of modern developments in the anthropological analysis of marriage and the relations that are created thereby in north India must be Dumont's influential 1966 article, 'North India in Relation to South India'. Whilst taking care not to minimise the radical structural differences between north and south India, Dumont was the first to suggest that similarities may be detected, amounting to a "common, pan-Indian pattern" (ibid: 90), in the ways in which affinity is conceptualised. Affinal relations, he argues, are strongly emphasised in both north and south, and in a covert or restricted form the north echoes the south in giving affinity a diachronic aspect and in the tendency for existing affinal ties to be renewed or repeated. In a key passage Dumont observes:

> "while we should as yet avoid the expression of marriage alliance, which supposes intermarriage being ideally or factually repeated from one generation to the next, it is nevertheless the case that affinity has something of a diachronic dimension: it does not ...disappear into consanguinity for the next generation. Although nothing in the form of kinship terms indicates it, this results from the allocation of ceremonial functions" (ibid: 95).

In addition to the stress on affinity itself, this passage is important also for its reference to the distribution of ceremonial functions as a guide to the underlying structure of affinal relations; and for the attention Dumont draws to the lack of direct correspondence between the terminology and the structure of affinal relations in north India (cf. also Dumont 1975: 197). In the same article he writes (1966: 114):

> "The terminology does not register the similarity which the people see and which their usages embody between wife's brother and mother's brother on the one hand, sister's husband and father's sister's husband on the other".

This question of the connection between terminology and practices is a large and problematic one, to which I shall return in Chapter 8.

With regard to the ordering of affinity in north India, Dumont highlighted the centrality of the distinction between wife-givers and wife-takers. The following quotation, citing the Sarjupari Brahmans from eastern Uttar Pradesh, brings us to the crux of this distinction. Rules concerning the prohibition of marriage include two which are formulated

> "in a language utterly different from that of consanguinity...The former rule prohibits the <u>reversal</u> of intermarriage between larger units, i.e. local descent groups; the latter prohibits the <u>repetition</u> of intermarriage (in the same direction) between smaller units, i.e. households or families. It is most striking to find that both rules are couched in terms of the repetition of intermarriage, that is, in our language, in terms of marriage alliance" (1966: 104-5).

Now these rules themselves may be specific to a particular

group, and not general, but they illustrate for Dumont essential features of the configuration of affinity in north India: wife-givers and -takers differentiated by the unidirectional flow of brides and ceremonial gifts (the bride is of course the ultimate gift); the prohibition on the reversal of this direction of flow; and the asymmetry of status, with the wife-takers always superior to the wife-givers. The corollary of this last point is that the principle of hierarchy permeates the field of kinship as manifestly as it operates at the level of caste, and results in a more or less elaborated tendency towards hypergamy.

Given the state of anthropological knowledge of north India at the time he wrote, Dumont's 1966 article was necessarily as much a programmatic statement as an analysis in its own right, and it has undoubtedly set the terms of much subsequent debate. Yet such has been Dumont's concern - in all his writing - to articulate the 'encompassing' character of the principle of hierarchy in Hindu India (cf. 1970: 154), that he has left himself open to the charge that he has underestimated the importance, conceptually and empirically, of countervailing egalitarian tendencies. Parry, for example, has criticised Dumont for "a rather cavalier neglect of those 'encompassed' aspects of the ideology" (1974: 119), and has drawn attention to his neglect of the egalitarian foundations of certain types of property holding system in particular. I would suggest further that because equality is for Dumont so strongly associated with the concept of the human being as an individual (that is, in the Hindu setting, with the world renouncer alone (1970: 45-6)), he overlooks its manifestations

in spheres which have nothing to do with individualism as he defines it. The relations created through marriage are just such a sphere. This is not to dispute that hierarchy is the encompassing ideology on the pan-Indian scale, but it is necessary that egalitarian ideology and practices should be assigned their proper place in the overall system.

Empirically, affinity is likely to be characterised in north India by a combination of asymmetrical/hierarchical and symmetrical/egalitarian tendencies. Studies by Ahmad (1978), of relevance even though it concerns a Muslim context, Fruzzetti & Ostor (1976), Madan (1965, 1975), Parry (1979), Pocock (1972) and Vatuk (1972) have all identified inherent structural tendencies which are liable to lead to the assertion of egalitarian values and practices, or contexts in which symmetry prevails in affinal relations. In all these cases, however, with the possible exception of Ahmad's, asymmetry - expressed in the superiority of the wife-takers - is the dominant tendency; symmetry - expressed in the equivalence of wife-givers and -takers - the secondary or muted one.

If we envisage a continuum of ideal-typical forms, on the other hand, with thorough-going hypergamy and a strong emphasis on the superiority of wife-taking affines at one pole, and isogamy and consistently symmetrical relations between affines at the other pole, we more accurately reflect in my view the empirical diversity which has to be incorporated in any general model of north Indian kinship. For particularly at the lower end of the caste hierarchy in the plains, and commonly across the caste hierarchy in Pahāri-speaking zones,

isogamy and affinal symmetry emerge as the dominant tendencies, hypergamy and asymmetry the muted ones. (We may incidentally ignore hypogamy in north India: it only occurs in isolated cases, is invariably deviant, and the inescapable conclusion is that it could not be instituted as a system of marriage, as to do so would make for enormous structural contradictions.)

The Gaddi marriage system today reveals a pattern of isogamous marriage, based on equality between affines, which is in direct contrast to the milieu analysed by Parry (the same goes for the Brahmans and Sipis too, although for reasons which will become clear I shall concentrate primarily on the Gaddis and secondarily on the two high castes together). Looking at other neighbouring, interior regions of the mountains in western Himachal Pradesh likewise reveals a strong emphasis on isogamy and affinal symmetry. This is not to say, however, that egalitarianism in affinal relations is unalloyed. The pattern of affinal prestations on ceremonial occasions, for example, offers several instances of the pervasive north Indian asymmetry, and thus implicit acknowledgement of the superiority of the wife-taker. The point is that this does not reflect the dominant tendency in Gaddi kinship, but instead runs counter to it.

On one level, the system I shall describe is an inversion of the hypergamous Rajput setting in which Parry worked: there, egalitarian potentialities within the system can never be discounted, but can rarely make enduring headway; among the Gaddis it is the hierarchical potentialities which, to an even more marked extent, are strictly suppressed. Yet to counterpose the two milieus as if both are equally autonomous

would be a serious error. The Gaddi marriage system may be self-contained, in the sense that Gaddis and other Rajputs rarely intermarry, but this statistically striking degree of endogamy itself requires an explanation. This means that while on one level the Gaddi marriage system may be treated in isolation, any fuller analysis must treat it as a sub-system of the wider regional Rajput system. This has nothing to do with typologies, but arises from the dynamics of a relationship between centre and periphery, the structurally superior and the inferior. The Gaddi marriage system may not be incorporated into the hypergamy of Chamba or Kangra Rajput society, but its very separation owes something to the dominant regional influence of the latter. In a localised perspective, then, hierarchy is supplanted by equality within the Gaddi marriage system. But when we integrate this local system into its regional Rajput context we find that, in conformity with the Dumontian model, hierarchy indeed encompasses equality. Much the same could be said of the Brahmauri Brahmans in relation to the wider Brahman hierarchy.

What is missing in Dumont's analysis of north Indian kinship and marriage is an awareness of the dialectical interplay between the two tendencies towards hierarchy and equality. This is also true in one respect of Carter's ambitious aim, "to discover for Indian kinship a generic paradigm or structure" (1974: 50). By classifying certain ethnographic examples in terms of two axes (hypergamy/isogamy and patrilineal/matrilineal transmission of status) (ibid: 51) he produces a typology which, his own denial of the anticipated criticism notwithstanding, is open to the charge of

'butterfly collecting'. My complaint with it is that hypergamy and isogamy are treated as fixed elements of a system, and not more accurately as alternative forms of a common underlying structure, the tension between which may often find expression within a single local system.

On the other hand, Ahmad (1978), Parry (1979) and Pocock (1972) all illuminate well this interplay between hierarchical and egalitarian tendencies in north Indian kinship. One anthropological model, drawn on by Parry for comparison with the flux and structural upheaval of the birādari reform cycle (1979: 267-9), is Leach's (1954) presentation of the gumsa-gumlao-gumsa oscillation in highland Burma. A more recent model, similarly grounded in the recognition that most social systems are not unitary or internally wholly consistent, has been put forward by Salzman (1978). He has argued that ideological and organisational alternatives which may be present but muted within a society represent 'social structures in reserve', available for activation. The specifics of Salzman's model need not concern us, and in any case seem to me less useful comparatively than his central insight; by relating to one another variant forms, in time and space, of a common structure, it becomes clearer that what is in one context a dominant tendency (for example, affinal symmetry and isogamy in Gaddi society today) is in another context a structure in reserve, latent but with the potential for realisation (as in the Kangra hypergamous milieu).

7.2 From Internal Differentiation to Homogeneity in the Gaddi Caste.

Prior to the present century, the available evidence (summarised in Chapters 1 & 2) shows that the Gaddis were internally subdivided, and strongly suggests that their marriage system was structured on hypergamous lines. Related to this, the Rāja of Chamba was represented as the highest ranking Gaddi of all. Today, the Gaddis are internally undifferentiated, their status as Rajputs is more ambiguous than it once was in relation to the wider regional Rajput hierarchy, and the isogamous marriage system is based on an ideology of complete equality within the caste.

In the long run the breakdown of the hypergamous structure and the establishment of isogamy extending across the whole caste has dissolved altogether the former internal classification of Rajput, Khatri, Ṭhākur and Rāṭhi; but an intermediate step in the process seems to have been the redefinition of the Rāṭhi Gaddis as Rānas. Thus Newell reported the same fourfold classification as the administrative-ethnographic sources of the early British era. But by the 1950s marriage across the caste was completely isogamous, and Newell makes virtually no mention of the identity of Rāṭhi. Instead, Rāna occupies its place in Brahmaur as the fourth term (Newell 1955: 105; 1967: 19-21). Rāna of course has appropriately high status connotations, and its emergence in place of Rāṭhi ensured that the isogamous merger within the Gaddi caste was paralleled by a modified internal classification in which the blatant asymmetry signified by Rāṭhis

in relation to other grades was removed.

In Palampur today the former distinctions are scarcely even remembered, let alone operative. Even older Gaddis I knew were often unable to say which grade their clan had once belonged to. In Brahmaur, where caste homogeneity appears to have emerged more slowly than in Kangra, the older generation of Gaddis at least remain familiar with the erstwhile classification, although it is now equally redundant for interrelations within the caste. Gaddi and Rajput, used without additional qualification, are the sole terms of caste identity used, with one exception I shall mention shortly. This is the logical outcome of decades of isogamous marriage; and the gradual erosion of internal differentiation itself reinforces the view that the earlier subdivisions within the caste were the corollary of a hypergamous marriage structure.

My suggestion that internal divisions within the Gaddi caste have been defunct in Kangra for longer than in Chamba must be tentative in the absence of firm evidence about Kangra Gaddis from an earlier period. But the much greater ignorance about the old classification among Gaddis based in Palampur, by comparison with those in Brahmaur, is a useful clue. In any case, it would not be surprising for the fourfold distinction to lose its force outside or on the margins of the Chamba State. Indeed, I would argue that permanent settlement in Kangra, particularly at its eastern end in Palampur, cut these Gaddis adrift from the relationship with the Chamba State which engendered the differentiated structure within the caste. (The situation may have been slightly different the further one moves west in Kangra, for the Chamba State appears to have

exerted a greater residual influence over its erstwhile subjects in western Kangra, and indeed in Nurpur continued to exercise some authority over grazing (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 175-6)). This weakening of the tie with the Chamba State may of itself have been sufficient to undermine internal Gaddi hierarchies in Kangra (or at least Palampur); but I would add that the Gaddis' emphatic endogamy in their new milieu, i.e. their non-incorporation within the wider Rajput system analysed by Parry, must also have been a factor underlying their emerging internal homogeneity.

The argument that marriage within the Gaddi caste was at one time structured on hypergamous lines does not, of course, mean that the majority of marriages - or even more than a small minority - were hypergamous. Parry's analysis of his Kangra material is instructive here, for even prior to the egalitarian upheavals of the birādari reform movement, about one third of all Rajput marriages took place within the birādari (i.e. were notionally isogamous); whilst in the period since the collapse of the reform movement and the reversion to the ethos of hypergamy, only one third of Rajput marriages have been unambiguously hypergamous, that is, inter-birādari unions (1979: 254). This may underestimate the actual extent of hypergamy, for as Parry notes (ibid: 201, 274), status distinctions are by no means absent within the birādari, particularly higher up the scale. But the general point is clear enough: hypergamous marriages only account for a (variable) proportion of marriages in a hypergamous system.

So far as the Gaddis are concerned, the prevalence and I would even go so far as to say the conceptual centrality of batta-satta, 'exchange marriage', in which a brother and sister are exchanged with a sister and brother, suggests that even within a hypergamous structure the vast majority of marriages were between people of clans of equal status. The probably small statistical incidence of hypergamous marriages is beside the point, however, and what is significant is that the internal structure of the caste implied a potentiality for hypergamy, whether it was much exploited or not. It is this potentiality which is today nullified by the internal homogeneity of the Gaddi caste.

Each Gaddi clan and sub-clan is today considered to be of precisely equal status. Explicitly, no distinctions are drawn between clans or sub-clans to which one gives daughters, and those from which one receives brides, for the assumption is that they will be one and the same. In other words, there is an assumption of a constant reversal of the direction in which brides are given, and this is borne out by the statistical evidence. Since clans and sub-clans stand as both givers and takers to one another, the asymmetry between the two characteristic of so much of high caste north India is nullified. Nor could informants recall a period when the structure of marriage had been different.

The only exception here is a group of Rānas from three neighbouring villages, Ulānsa, Garola and Suāi, close to the junction of the Rāvi and its tributary, the Budhal nalla. These Rānas are not former Rāthis; quite the reverse, they form the clan or clans of the former ruling families of the

three jagīrs of Ulānsa, Garola and Suāi, and as Hutchison & Vogel point out (1914a: 59) these minor principalities date back to the period before Chamba was founded. Senior branches of these Rānas, although probably not the lesser collaterals, traditionally used to avoid giving their daughters to local Gaddis (even Rajput Gaddis?), and exchanged on a two-way basis notably with the similarly aristocratic Rānas of Triloknāth in Lahaul (formerly Chamba-Lahaul) [1]. This pattern of marriage was quite widely practised among these particular Rānas, continuing till as recently as a generation ago by all accounts, although I was able to establish during short visits I made to Ulānsa and Triloknāth that it has more or less died out now, partly due to the sheer difficulty of communication between the upper Rāvi valley and the Chandra-Bhāga valley. Today, the Ulānsa, Garola and Suāi Rānas are said to intermarry freely with other Gaddis on isogamous lines. But the available evidence of people's recollections hints clearly at a hypergamous association between these Rānas and neighbouring Gaddis in the not so distant past, and my superficial impression is that some sense of distinctiveness remains among them.

I should finally mention in this context one exceptional practice: the sole documented instance of marriage ties between Gaddis and Brahmans. This took place in the isolated village of Kugti, a sizeable settlement at the head of the Budhal valley in Brahmaur, and without doubt the remotest point of the Brahmauri social system. It is not wholly clear if these marriage links were on a hypergamous or isogamous basis, although I take it that Newell's later remarks,

subsequent to a brief visit to Kugti, supersede his earlier report. In his 1955 article, he stated that "the Gaddis gave their daughters in marriage to the Brahmans, but Brahmans would not give their daughters in marriage to Gaddis" (p.105). But later statements (1963, 1970: 47-8) suggest instead an isogamous pattern. Aside from the clan providing the pujāris of a former State shrine to the devta Kailing, whose marriage ties were solely with other Brahmans, all Kugti Brahmans intermarried 'freely' with Gaddis, with the child taking its father's caste (implying that it was permissible for Gaddi men to take Brahman brides as well as the other way round). I am not certain if this cross-caste pattern of marriage has now come to an end: Newell's most recent article refers to increasing prejudice against it (1970: 55), but it is not clear if that is more generally in Brahmaur or specifically within Kugti itself. Without doubt it has or had been a longstanding practice, for the earliest reports of the British era mention it (cf. Lyall 1876: 99). Newell attributes the pattern to the drain of daughters away to less inaccessible villages at marriage, and the difficulty of attracting brides into the village to counterbalance that loss, particularly for the Brahmans (1955: 105; 1970: 45); the Kugti response thus represents one kind of closure of the marriage system, with village (i.e. territorial) endogamy supplanting the rules of caste endogamy. I shall return to this topic of the closure of the marriage system later in the chapter because, from this perspective, the Kugti pattern is not as aberrant as it may seem, in relation to other ethnography on the Brahmauris.

There are occasional hints in the literature on the

Brahmauris that Kugti might not have been alone in regularising Brahman-Gaddi marriage links. Lyall (1876: 99), for instance, writes that there are "some places", of which Kugti is one, where this occurred; while Newell, commenting on the inclusion by Lyall (and others) of Brahmans within the Gaddi category, argues that "the exact nature of the isogamous union between different castes naturally varies with the district and the time the observation has been made" (1967: 21) (as I noted in Chapter 1 he assumes there to have been an isogamous union). But while it would be unwise to be dogmatic on this point, there is no good evidence of Brahman-Gaddi intermarriage except from Kugti. No other village has ever been cited in the administrative-ethnographic literature.

Moreover, it is not only in the literature that Kugti is known as the example. Any Brahmauri in Kangra knows of Kugti's marriage practices - but no other locality is ever mentioned as having been similar. There is confirmation of this too in the fact that a series of Gaddi clans are actually former Kugti Brahman clans, regraded on account of their marriage ties with Gaddis. These clans suffer not the slightest stigma, but they are no longer recognised as Brahmans and indeed make no attempt to claim Brahman status. The Jhunnu al, for example, represented in Karnāthu, Phathāhar and Sokhru, and the Lāde al, with a branch in Surājara, are just two of the former Kugti Brahman clans. Several others are found in the vicinity. Since almost everybody knows that these Gaddi clans are downgraded former Kugti Brahman clans, and since no other Gaddi clans have Brahman antecedents, this reinforces the view that Kugti was the sole locality where Brahman-

Gaddi marriage links used to take place. When these clans lost their Brahman rank is uncertain. Significantly, Rose (1911, vol II: 257) lists both the Jhunnu and Lāde in Brahmaur as Brahmans, while referring to the Jhunnu in Kangra as Khatri Gaddis, with whom Brahmauri Brahmans in Kangra nevertheless intermarried. Behind the apparent confusion of these statements I would draw the inference that the change in their status was occurring in Kangra at about the time the data in Rose were being compiled, but that their status remained unaltered in Brahmaur for a while longer.

7.3 Rules of Exogamy.

Operative exogamy rules echo those Parry reports for the Kangra high castes (1979: 222-3), but in a somewhat reduced and diluted form. The key exclusions are invariably expressed in terms of the clans (not just the sub-clans) which are, or ought to be ideally, ruled out. There are only two clans which are unequivocally ruled out as a source of possible marriage partners: one's own clan and one's mother's natal clan. In addition, one's father's mother's natal clan and mother's mother's natal clan are widely cited as units which ought to be avoided, although any breaches (which occurred very occasionally) were regarded lightly. These complete the four clans of the well known north Indian rule of exogamy (Karve 1968: 118-24), and they are the clans which people mention most readily. But in addition, in cases where a child grows up in the house of a step-father of a different

clan to his own father, the step-father's clan is certainly excluded as a source of a spouse. No other step-related clans are excluded. On paper, then, the Brahmauris appear less strict in their exogamy rules than the hypergamous castes in Kangra. However, Parry does make it clear that the two lower Rajput birādaris are often lax in their observance of these rules, and he comments:

> "the prohibition on marrying into one's own clan, or with a girl of one's real mother's brother's clan, is a kind of uncouth minimum which even the lowest of Rathis cannot ignore with impunity" (ibid: 227).

Complementing the exogamy rules which exclude entire clans, a reduced version of the rule of sapinda exogamy, as elaborated in medieval legal commentaries, operates to exclude an individual bilateral kindred. In these legal treatises, people who shared a common male ancestor up to and including the sixth ascending generation through their father's line, and the fourth generation through their mother's line (counting Ego's parental generation as the first), were sapinda of one another; that is they were considered to share the same bodily particles, and hence were not permitted to intermarry (cf. Karve 1968: 48-50).

Among Brahmauris of all castes the principle of this rule is undisputed, whereby an ego-centred category of people defined bilaterally is excluded. The boundaries of cognatic kinship, and hence of exogamy, are, however, much more narrowly drawn here than in the medieval texts, and marriage is only prohibited if the possible partners share a common male ancestor three generations back through either line. In other words, while second cousins are excluded as possible marriage partners,

third cousins are admissible, other than those belonging to already prohibited clans. Another way to look at this is to say that, with regard to non-agnatic kinship, a person cannot marry anyone related to him through direct descent from his FMF, MFF and MMF. Beyond this, Brahmauris do not trace non-agnatic links. The par- prefix to kin terms of the second ascending and descending generations, used to denote the third ascending and descending levels, literally connotes the idea of a 'vanishing' link, the very limit of the recognition of kinship. In this the Brahmauri castes are fully in line with kinship practices in Kangra (cf. the proverb Parry quotes about the disappearance of non-agnatic kinship after three generations (1979: 224,330)).

As I noted in Chapter 3, obsolete gotra affiliations play no part in the regulation of marriage today, and do not appear to have done so among Brahmauris in Kangra during the lifetime of even 70 or 80 year old people.

7.4 Marriage Forms and Ideology.

The foundation of marriages arranged by parents for their children is the assumption that the parties to be united are of equal status. In a clear majority of cases this will have already been established by the mutual giving and taking of brides between the two sub-clans in the past, but even where a marriage breaks new ground it is an explicit principle that the arrangement is between status equals. A marriage celebrated with the full sacramental wedding rites which are known as

śādhi (evening ceremony), is described by the term biāh. The precise reference of biāh, therefore, is to a girl's primary marriage (Dumont 1972: 153). However, in a looser sense it may be used of marriages in general.

The arrangement of a marriage (that is, by definition, a girl's primary marriage, even if her husband may have been married before) is sealed at the betrothal, kurhamāi, conducted by the purohits of both sides. This ceremony is so named from kurham, the kin-term by which the fathers of a married couple refer to one another, and it denotes in effect the creation of a kurham relationship. Betrothal takes place at any time from six months to some four years prior to the wedding itself. The expectation is that in the case of girls betrothal will be before puberty; but paradoxically it has been traditionally the Sipis, with their tendency towards the earlier arrangement and celebration of marriages, who have fulfilled this expectation more than the Brahmans and Gaddis. Nevertheless, in general girls are betrothed before or very soon after puberty.

For Brahmans and Gaddis, marriage takes place when the bride is aged seventeen to nineteen (certainly it would be unusual for her to be over twenty), and the bridegroom is between nineteen and his mid-twenties. For the Sipis, the age at which marriage takes place is now rising, thus closing the gap with the high castes. Girls are today around fifteen or sixteen, boys three or four years older. Sipi betrothals nowadays take place when girls reach twelve or thirteen: lower than in the high castes, but the age at which marriage would have taken place two or three generations ago.

After the marriage ceremony is completed, there is a gap

of a year or so in the case of the high castes and in many recent Sipi marriages, but several years in the case of earlier Sipi marriages where the bride was around twelve or thirteen, before the newly married girl comes to live in her conjugal home. A two- or three-day ritual known as sadenoj, involving the husband and his party going to collect the bride and bring her to her new home, marks what is the final stage of the marital rite of passage, the completion of the bride's gradual transition from incorporation in her natal group to her new allegiance and incorporation in her conjugal group, and from girlhood to womanhood. Newell is correct to stress the significance of this rite (1967: 60-3), which remains just as important among Brahmauris in Palampur today as it was in Brahmaur at the time of Newell's fieldwork [2]. But it is not as unique as he implies (ibid: 63,96), for the notion of a final, post-śādhi conclusion to the gradual transfer of a bride to her husband's group is widespread throughout the lower hills adjoining the Punjab, even if the gap between the śādhi and her final collection is often much shorter than a year.

In arranging a match, both parties profess to attach great weight to the personality and character of their child's prospective spouse, and, even more strongly, the overall reputation of the family concerned. Parents with girls particularly take the line that they do not want to 'lose' their daughters to families where they will be poorly treated. Horoscopes do not play any part - at least in Karnāthu - for it is only in the last few years that a few households have started to have birth charts (tipra) prepared, and the practice is still largely foreign there. Relative wealth, as one would

expect, plays a major part in people's marital calculations. But its significance appears to be lessened where the parties know one another well, one major sign in this respect being the tendency to provide a smaller dowry than would be considered desirable (if possible) where a new affinal link was being established. The size of any flock the bridegroom's family may have, the security of their grazing tenure, the amount of land at their disposal, the number of sons between whom the estate will have to be divided, plus external sources of cash income, are all taken into account, without necessarily being considered crucial where other links already exist between the two parties. In such cases, less tangible characteristics such as the reputation for sociability and integrity of the family are arguably more prominent considerations. All this suggests a rather less fraught and competitive edge to marriage calculations than in the hypergamous environment studied by Parry (ibid: 271-3).

Once a girl has been betrothed she should take care to avoid the presence of her future husband, his parents, and his brothers, both full and agnatic classificatory brothers. On one occasion I remember a girl came to visit my wife in our house and instantly retreated when she saw that I was talking with an agnatic third cousin of her future husband. More often than not these problems of avoidance are limited to ceremonies such as weddings, where numerous people from several villages are present, for the majority of marriages are between partners from different villages, in which case it is unlikely that a girl will keep coming across her spouse-to-be or his parents or brothers. But there is no requirement

of village exogamy (as the Kugti example showed), and in Karnāthu especially the proportion of intra-village marriages is quite extraordinarily high. Where a girl is betrothed to a boy living in the same village she is frequently likely to have to adjust her movements abruptly, in order to avoid the necessary categories of people, although I was assured that ostentatiously avoiding your prospective husband's third cousin was carrying matters further than necessary.

7.4.1 Dān-pun and batta-satta.

The overwhelming majority of marriages for Gaddi, Brahman and Sipi alike entail the full śādhi rites, and are thus appropriately described with the word biāh. Only in the very small number of cases where a girl elopes before any primary marriage, or in 'secondary' unions, are these rites not performed. Any biāh entails the gift of a virgin, kanya dān, which specifically takes place in the rite known as lagan at the bride's home. In this the Brahmauri castes follow the classical and prestigious pattern found throughout India (cf. Dumont 1972: 159). But there is a distinction drawn between marriages which are described as dān-pun and those which are batta-satta. Both involve the same ceremonies and the provision of a dowry by the bride's family, but only the former is unambiguously in conformity with the ethos of kanya dān (echoed in the name dān-pun). For dān is a meritorious gift, suitable as we have seen for Brahmans to receive; and the ultimate gift is of a pure virgin in marriage (pun conveys the meaning of merit and duplicates the connotations of dān). But the ethos of dān demands that it be given without a return, and only on this

condition will the full benefits, this worldly and other worldly, accrue to the donor.

One corollary of the ideology is that kanya dān is inherently an asymmetrical act, for dān is axiomatically an appropriate offering from an inferior to a superior. Such marriages engender and reflect then the superiority of the wife-takers, as recipients of dān; and the potential for hypergamy may be seen as implicit in the very act of kanya dān. A second corollary is that dowry is the automatic accompaniment to the gift of a daughter. Any transaction which might be interpreted as the donor himself receiving some material return for his daughter would completely nullify the non-material rewards of social reputation and spiritual merit which he may otherwise anticipate. The third corollary is that batta-satta marriages neutralise the value of the gift of a daughter and violate the ethos of kanya dān by ensuring that the daughter given away is compensated by the receipt of a bride from the same group in exchange. The asymmetrical character of kanya dān marriage, as represented in the dān-pun form, is replaced by symmetrical exchange.

Batta-satta (literally 'like for like') in its most straightforward form entails a daughter of family A marrying a son of family B, while reciprocally the son of family A marries the daughter of family B. Commonly, however, the siblings exchanged are classificatory rather than full; and sometimes they may not be agnates: a FZD, MBD or MZD might be provided in the exchange, rather than a full sister or FBD. Indeed, the exchange may not involve pairs of the same generation at all, as when a man's bride is received in return

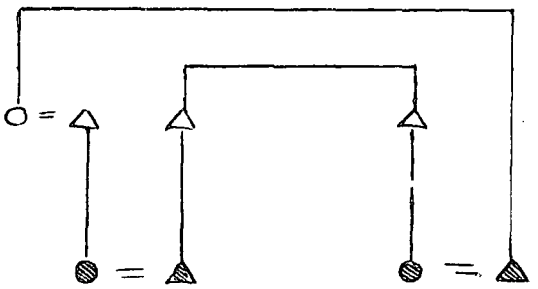
for his FZ or MZ, BD or ZD, full or classificatory [3]. It is thus possible for a single batta-satta pair to involve four, and not just two local descent groups; although I should add that the examples recorded in my genealogies all involve two or three, rather than four. Examples from my data are given in Figure 1. The possibilities I have mentioned so far involve direct, bilateral exchange and a pair of marriages. But just occasionally more complicated chains of marriages take place. Typically, such chains comprise three marriages, with daughters going from A to B, B to C, and C to A. I recorded no cases of anything more elaborate, although I was told that chains of four or perhaps five marriages were not unknown. Here we have, first, the simplest form of direct or 'restricted' exchange, and second, the simplest form of 'generalised' exchange (as discussed, in the context of 'elementary structures', by Lévi-Strauss most influentially (1969: 265, 474-5)). Brahmauris refer to all these variants of 'exchange marriage' as batta-satta, whether the exchange is direct or triangular [4]. The essential point about all of them is that the gift of a daughter in marriage is balanced by the guarantee of a bride for a son or sibling's son in return. Even though batta-satta marriages invariably incorporate the formal ceremony of kanya dān, the ethos of dān is undermined here, for the giving of a daughter is not a disinterested act of generosity but is contingent on her 'replacement' by someone else's daughter, generally from the group to whom one's own daughter is given.

Batta-satta, as the very simplest kind of exchange, is in consequence also the simplest component of an endogamous marriage system in north India. This, moreover, is an environ-

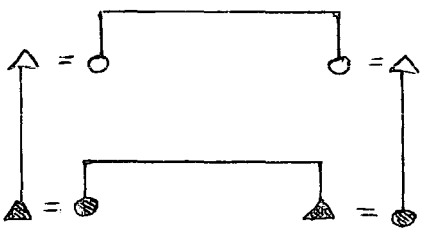
(a)



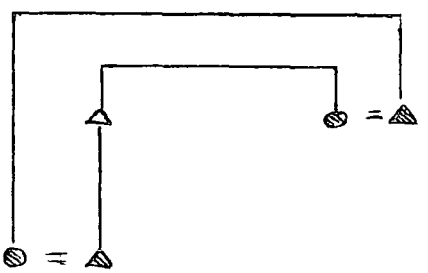
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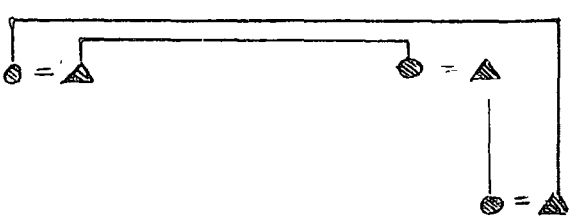
(c)



(d)



(e)



(a)-(d) bilateral exchanges; (e) triangular exchange. Relevant marriages are shaded.

FIGURE 1. Examples of batta-satta marriages.

ment where strict endogamy on the part of groups of Brahman or Rajput status implies the attempted closure of the marriage system against the encroachment of hypergamy. But this is to anticipate a later discussion and I shall say no more on the question at present.

Statistically, there can be little doubt that batta-satta is today a good deal less common than it used to be. Figures presented later in the chapter will support my assertion, and these are reinforced by the widespread perception, shared by members of all Brahmauri castes, that the majority of marriages were batta-satta transactions in the not so distant past. The main reasons given locally for its waning popularity are, first, that it is regarded as a practice most suited to those who are poor and who cannot afford a dān-pun marriage for their children; and second, that if friction arises in one of a pair of marriages it is liable to spill over to the other, perhaps causing a double breakdown instead of just a single one. These local explanations are interesting, but as much for what they conceal as for what they reveal.

To take the second, and simpler point first: precisely the same feature of batta-satta was identified by people explaining the popularity of this practice in the past (and its continued importance even today). I was often told that a double link helped to cement good relations, both between the two couples themselves and their families. A similar view was that if one had confidence enough to make one marriage tie with a family, one should have the confidence to make another, and thereby obtain the presumed benefits of a double union. Thus opposed interpretations of the same characteristic

were possible and indeed prevalent. I suspect in fact that exchange marriages of this kind often produce similar conflicting judgements elsewhere in India: certainly Good (1978: 369) reports virtually identical perceptions from a part of Tamil Nadu.

The association of batta-satta with relative poverty in local eyes is altogether more complex. On the face of it, this seems a surprising attitude, considering that the wedding ceremonies (which in my experience are invariably performed quite separately from one another) involve a financial outlay not obviously less than at a dān-pun wedding, and that a dowry is just as obligatory as at the latter. Moreover, it is not as if a father who gives his daughter in marriage will necessarily receive a bride for his son in a batta-satta arrangement; it may be his brother or WB for example who will, so to speak, reap the benefit.

All the same, batta-satta marriages do in practice entail markedly lower levels of expense; there is little doubt that dowries, which should match each other precisely (this may not be so easy a matter if the two marriages of the pair are separated by several years' interval), are negotiated at the lower end of the cost spectrum. Additionally, it is not just the dowry itself which is comparatively small in a batta-satta marriage. The affinal gift-giving obligations set up by such a marriage are generally carried out on a modest scale also. In this respect, however, batta-satta marriages are not unique. As a rule, dowry and the full range of affinal prestations grow in scale where prospective affines have little or no prior relationship with each other. Where a marriage is arranged

between already established affines, and especially where they are in frequent contact (daily or weekly), dowries are negotiated at much lower levels and subsequent affinal prestations should not be an economic burden. Thus, there are plenty of dān-pun marriages which share with batta-satta the characteristic of a low expenditure on dowry and other affinal prestations.

Nobody ever explicitly said to me that a larger dowry was necessary where a prospective alliance broke new ground, but the converse was frequently implied, without being stated outright. I often heard Gaddis in Karnāthu say that intra-village marriages, or marriages with families from Phathāhar, Surājara or Sokhru, where the web of affinal ties and physical proximity combined to produce the densest interaction, were popular because they were so much easier to arrange and cheaper to undertake. As I see it, neither the element of conspicuous consumption for prestige purposes represented by a large dowry and generous gifts on later occasions to members of one's daughter's husband's family, nor the element of guaranteeing a daughter's well-being by material generosity (i.e. enhancing the kanya dān), are necessary where strong ties already exist between the parties and where the assumption of equality between them has already been demonstrated in the two-way exchange of brides. Batta-satta unions, then, are by no means the only context in which affinal transactions take place at a relatively low level. If a batta-satta pair of marriages is just the latest in a series of alliances, a dowry on the low side and a modest exchange of gifts on subsequent occasions may be assumed automatically; but equally,

if the alliance is a new one the two-way contract makes it far easier to pitch the financial or material exchanges at a moderate level than in the case of a single dān-pun marriage.

Given then that the small financial burdens of batta-satta, on which rests its association with relative poverty, are not specific to it, but are common to dān-pun unions in many contexts also, we must move beyond the indigenous viewpoint and introduce other factors which account better for the decline in the frequency and popularity of this type of marriage. In my view, the most compelling influence behind the decline in batta-satta is the fact that it is looked down on by the high castes of Kangra (and presumably Chamba). In a hypergamous context, of course, exchange marriage is disliked because it undermines the principle of asymmetrical affinal relations, equating the wife-givers with the wife-takers when the two should be radically differentiated. Now in the Brahmauri system batta-satta offends against no such principle: to a very considerable extent, but with some qualifications (see below), the WB and the ZH are comparable. Yet whilst Brahmauris have not adopted the underlying rationale in terms of which batta-satta is rejected, they have tended to emulate the outward forms of high caste practice. Batta-satta is becoming less common and popular in conformity with a wider Brahman and Rajput code. I would argue that its decline owes little to connotations of poverty (which I would say is a rationalisation), and everything to connotations of backwardness in a high caste milieu. In this emulation of a more prestigious orthodoxy the Brahmauri castes are far from being alone [5]. My anecdotal enquiries among Seoks of mauza Deol and

Chota Bangāhal suggest that batta-satta has declined among them too; while Parry states that

> "the Rathis have been partly successful in suppressing some of their most conspicuously 'inferior' attributes. These days they affect as great a disapproval of... batta satta marriages as anybody else, though in reality such practices are by no means extinct" (1979: 256).

All this exemplifies the increasing homogeneity in customs and outward practices, not only within the internal Brahman and Rajput hierarchies, but across the whole caste hierarchy, noted also by Parry (ibid: 92, 210).

One important factor that has been advanced for the prevalence of exchange marriage is that it is a response to a shortage of women. The Kashmiri Pandits studied by Madan identified this as one reason for its occurrence in their society, and he obviously concurs with the local interpretation (1965: 115; 1975: 240). From an analytic viewpoint, it has a lot to recommend it, and it relates directly to Levi-Strauss's discussion of the tendency for hypergamy to engender endogamous reactions through restricted forms of exchange (i.e. keeping one's daughters for one's own sons) (1969: 475). Parry likewise draws a connection between batta-satta and a shortage of women, when discussing the dilemmas confronting the clans of the lowest birādari (ibid: 227-8), as a direct consequence of brides being drawn up the scale by the dynamic of hypergamy; and it is at this level of the Rajput (or Brahman) hierarchy that batta-satta has traditionally been most entrenched. None of my Brahmauri informants ever suggested that batta-satta provided a way of guaranteeing scarce brides for their sons, now or in the past. This may be because in the

villages I studied no scarcity was apparent. But the indigenous perception should not obscure the fact that, viewed at a systemic level, exchange marriage is one simple way of helping to obviate the possibility that outgoing daughters may not be replaced by incoming brides. In a regional context where hypergamy is so dominant a force, this possibility is far from being remote. Not only batta-satta, but the whole endogamous structure of Brahmauri Brahman and Gaddi marriage in one sense testifies to this potential danger. From this perspective, the very effectiveness of this endogamy eliminates any awareness that a scarcity of brides could be a potential problem [6].

The trend towards dān-pun marriages and away from batta-satta, however, does not in itself demonstrate any change in the underlying structure of the marriage system: quite the contrary, in fact, and as I have already observed the decline in batta-satta among all Brahmauri castes is essentially a matter of outward conformity with high caste orthodoxy only. The pattern of repeated reversals of the direction of affinal alliances continues unmodified, which is a far more fundamental issue than whether or not a pair of marriages are labelled batta-satta.

At the simplest level, the declining reputability of batta-satta means that more and more marriages which might formerly have been negotiated jointly as pairs are now outwardly negotiated as separate contracts and thus defined as dān-pun. A man may marry the sister of his sister's husband, and both marriages may be represented as dān-pun unions, even though they are the structural epitome of batta-satta. In

collecting genealogies I also encountered intermittently instances where my informants either could not remember whether a pair of marriages were batta-satta or dān-pun, or disagreed among themselves, or appeared to be passing off their own batta-satta marriages as dān-pun. The important point to emphasise is that since the structure of the marriage system has not been transformed, and the reciprocal exchange of brides remains the most evident social fact and guiding principle, dān-pun unions are often from a sociological point of view virtually batta-satta links under another name.

All this indicates that, as will be seen later in this chapter, the statistical incidence of batta-satta is fairly unimportant. The principles which batta-satta exemplifies can be realised just as readily through a series of outwardly 'orthodox' dān-pun marriages: either through direct exchanges which are not represented as such, or through the more complex forms of societal integration achieved by a more generalised pattern of reciprocal exchange of brides between two sub-clans or major lineages. This takes me back to Madan's Kashmiri Pandits, for his statistics reveal a high incidence of explicit exchange marriages (45%) (1965: 115). This is about the same level as my genealogies for Nayagrāon Gaddis and Thala Brahmans show, but it far exceeds the proportion of batta-satta unions in Karnāthu among any caste. What is significant in my view, however, is that this high incidence among Kashmiri Pandits runs directly counter to the ideal that wife-givers and wife-takers should be kept distinct, and the overall ideology of asymmetry in marriage (Madan 1975: 241); whereas in the Brahmauri case, although batta-satta in itself may be seen

as undesirable (and its statistical frequency may vary considerably from one place to another, often being quite low), the structural principle of two-way exchange, which batta-satta embodies, is by contrast well established. In short, statistics give no clue to the structural importance of exchange marriage in any given setting.

There is one final point to make in this context. Every primary marriage for a girl requires the accompaniment of the full śādhi rites, whether the pair are of Brahman, Gaddi or Sipi caste. These last three days generally, although there is scope for trimming the ceremonies if the bridegroom has been married before and the bride's family is content with a slightly shortened version (cf. Parry 1979: 235). Furthermore, all but an insignificant number of Brahmauri girls have a primary marriage, in conformity with pan-Indian orthodox ideals. In theory, without the full marriage rites a person does not pass through one of the two most crucial saṃskāras (the other being after death), the sacramental rites of passage which mark the Hindu's progress through worldly life.

This may seem unexceptional in comparison to the high caste milieu in Kangra; however, it differs radically from the situation reported from north Churāh, in Chamba, an area to the north-west of Brahmaur but likewise lying to the south of the mid-Himalaya. Nitzberg mentions a situation in which only 5-10% of marriages are arranged, and most of these among the high caste and relatively fastidious Rānas (1970: 163). Brar, who worked in the same area, confirms the picture: he maintains that the incidence of marriages "accompanied by some form of sanskritic ceremonies", and known as pun-biāh,

has declined even further recently, and he gives a percentage below 5%. No less than 70% of all marriages were, he states, lacking any kind of ceremony or even a feast (1971: 35-6). Neither author distinguishes here between primary and secondary marriages, but it is clear enough that such a contrast is scarcely relevant in this particular setting, where co-residence after elopement is the characteristic pattern.

These brief details illustrate the striking difference in marriage arrangements between all the Brahmauri castes and the population of one of the neighbouring Pahāri-speaking regions beyond the Śiwaliks in the mountainous interior. The contrast confirms, among other things, my point that even though the underlying structure of Gaddi and Brahmauri Brahman marriage practices is out of step with the dominant regional tendency towards asymmetry in marriage, and links the former more with the ethos of other Pahāri-speaking systems, the Brahmauris are nevertheless comparatively strict in their observance of outward forms considered respectable in the wider regional society. This is true of Brahmauris on both sides of the Dhaula Dhar, even allowing for slight variations. So far as I can discern, the 'Gaddis' (i.e. using the term to include the Brahmans as well) are generally considered by the Kangra and Chamba high castes to be more respectable than groups such as clean caste Churāhis or Bangāhalis. Their observance of full marriage rites, like their gradual shift away from ostensible batta-satta marriages, is one reason for this perception.

Tentatively, I would say that the whole sphere of marriage

practices reveals the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans to be somewhat out of line with, on the one hand, the prestigious practices of high caste hypergamy, and, on the other hand, an evidently greater degree of laxity in marriage characteristic of Pahari-speaking areas immediately to the east and west (Churāh, Bangāhal, perhaps Kulu). I suspect that a key factor in the rather anomalous position of the Brahmauri high castes has been their former priveleged relationship with the Chamba State. For unlike other geographically isolated mountain regions, Brahmaur was historically never a social or political backwater, such as Churāh and Bangāhal especially - a fact that has led to repercussions, as I have already suggested at various earlier points, in the marriage systems and practices of the Gaddis and Brahmans. Not only the disappeared structural tendency towards hypergamy, but a greater orthodoxy in formal observances were the result.

7.4.2 Ghar-juāntru.

One uncommon, and for a man demeaning, type of marriage arrangement is known by the name given to such a husband: ghar-juāntru. Literally meaning a 'home son-in-law', it denotes a practice which, in various forms, is found widely across India (cf. Tambiah 1973b: 84): the uxorilocal son-in-law in a patrilineal, patrilocal environment. Typically, it operated (and still operates) in India generally as an instrument for inheritance, enabling a father with a daughter but no son to attract a husband for her who will live uxorilocally in return for inheritance rights at his wife's father's death. The exact rights which the ghar-juāntru or his equivalent

elsewhere enjoyed, varied from place to place and even within the same locality. But the underlying theory, whether he inherited full rights in property, or restricted rights, or whether his wife was the inheritor, was that they would produce a son, and that thereafter the line of descent would be restored. The institution was therefore "a temporary discontinuity in the patrilineal-patrilocal fabric" (Tambiah ibid). Tambiah surely overstates the extent to which the incoming son-in-law enjoys the stronger negotiating position, for while a son-less father may be keen to find a bridegroom for his daughter who will live uxorilocally, the tendency is for this kind of marriage to be seen as suitable only for young men from poorer families. Parry indeed paints a rather bleak picture of the ghar-juāntru's stigmatised position in Kangra, where his property rights were liable to be hotly disputed (1979: 169; cf. also Mayer 1960: 222). However, one of my closest Kangra friends, a retired schoolmaster, insisted that attitudes were now changing, except among the most conservative of the Rajputs, and that little stigma need now attach to a man living and inheriting uxorilocally.

So far as the Brahmauri castes are concerned, the ghar-juāntru arrangement is now extremely rare on either side of the Dhaula Dhar, although it seems that it was once significantly more common in Brahmaur. It is undoubtedly thought of as a demeaning position for a man to occupy; but my enquiries suggest that the ghar-juāntru has not generally faced personal hostility such as Parry describes. This is one sign of a rather different institutional emphasis in Brahmaur to that which I have outlined above. For until Indian

independence, the ghar-juāntru in Brahmaur could not inherit from his wife's father, and frequently in fact he was not strictly an uxorilocal son-in-law at all. Residence in his wife's father's house was often apparently prior to marriage only, and at marriage he would return to his natal home with his bride, where he would inherit in due course in the usual way. The ghar-juāntru in Brahmaur thus earned the right to marry by working for his prospective father-in-law for a variable length of time. In theory, seven years was the full period required, but in practice it seems often to have been less. All wedding expenses were borne by the bride's parents (Newell 1967: 66), but any dowry was small, and I am uncertain what kind of marriage rites were performed (a curtailed form of the śādhi rites seems the most probable).

The contrast with the institution of the uxorilocal son-in-law as it is more widely known is, therefore, marked. Although the girl's father was typically without a son (hence the value of the boy's labour) the purpose of such a marriage was not to produce an heir for the bride's father, through a pattern of inheritance via the daughter to the daughter's son; but instead was to enable a boy from a poor family to obtain a bride, and thereby ensure the continuity of his line of descent. The demeaning connotations of being a ghar-juāntru stemmed partly from the association with poverty, as in Kangra generally. But more particularly, I would say, they stemmed from having to labour for a prospective father-in-law in order to obtain a bride; and from the fact that the years of service were regarded as a substitute for bridewealth, which of course increasingly has brought its own opprobrium. The source of

the stigma associated with this institution is thus not the same as it was traditionally in Kangra (Parry 1979: 169). Some stigma is in fact implicit in the title, for, as Newell also observed (1967: 66), juāntru is not the standard term for a daughter's husband, but a diminutive form.

The fact that this pattern of marriage in Brahmaur seems to have been oriented towards providing a man with a bride, rather than towards ensuring that a son-less father secured an heir through his daughter, encourages the view that its utility may in certain spots have reflected local shortages of brides. Like batta-satta, it clearly may be employed in such circumstances, as a way to encourage a father to give a daughter to one potential spouse rather than another: both, after all, guarantee the girl's father something valuable in return, be it a bride for his son or several years' labour when he has no son of his own. But this must remain no more than a plausible hypothesis, for there are neither sufficient numbers of these marriages known to me, nor adequate contextual detail to explain the strategies determining these few marriages [7].

To what extent, if at all, ghar-juāntrus actually did inherit in Brahmaur under princely rule is impossible to say. But it should not be assumed that the prohibition in principle on a son-in-law's inheritance is the end of the matter. It should be borne in mind that Chamba was no different to other neighbouring regions of the Himalayas north of the Punjab in its emphasis on the priority in inheritance given to agnatic collaterals over daughters or daughters' sons in the absence of direct male issue (cf. Parry 1979: 168). Yet, as Parry says, it is no simple question to determine how far

the principle of agnatic priority would be taken in practice, before a daughter was given precedence. This is obviously directly relevant to the case of the uxorilocal son-in-law. What is clear is that ghar-juāntrus did inherit, even in such an agnatically-oriented society as pre-independence high caste Kangra (Parry ibid: 169). Furthermore, in Kulu a daughter or an uxorilocal son-in-law had definite customary entitlements (cf. Rose 1911, vol II: 462). Thus, without wishing to deny differences in institutional emphasis between these adjoining regions at all (for instance, did Kulu take the principle of women's rights in property furthest?), I am arguing that we should not take the theoretical prohibition on a ghar-juāntru inheriting in Brahmaur simply at its face value.

Although the cases of this kind of marriage which I recorded are very few, something of the contrast in emphasis which I have been describing is discernable. I only learned of two cases in Kangra (both men were Thala Brahmans), where people told me the practice had all but died out among Brahmauris. One marriage had taken place more than twenty years ago, the other in the past decade. In both the son-in-law was expected to inherit from his still-living father-in-law; and significantly neither entailed a period of pre-marital service. My Brahmauri informants in Kangra, even where they could not actually recollect any case of a ghar-juāntru (as in Karnāthu), all spoke as if the practice were above all an instrument for inheritance uxorilocally, and there appeared to be no necessary link with a period of service before marriage. In other words, the ghar-juāntru arrangement among Brahmauris in Kangra is close in meaning to the instit-

ution as described by Parry.

In Nayagrāon I learned of four Gaddi ghar-juāntrus. Here, by contrast, a period of pre-marital service in the household of the prospective father-in-law had been obligatory in each case. In two instances, one involving a marriage in the 1940s and the other in the 1950s, the Nayagrāon-born ghar-juāntrus had returned to their natal homes with their brides at marriage, without inheriting uxorilocally. The other two instances, however, both of which involved marriages in the 1950s on my estimate, led to the men settling and inheriting uxorilocally after their years of service. In other words, whatever the situation may once have been, uxorilocal inheritance had become a practicable possibility at least by the years straight after the end of princely rule. On either side of the Dhaula Dhar, where residence after marriage is uxorilocal the children take the clan identity of their mother. Where the ghar-juāntru returns to his natal home at marriage after his period of service, any children naturally take their father's clan identity in the usual way.

The numbers of such marriages I came across are altogether too small to make reliable generalisation feasible, but there are enough signs that this now almost defunct institution has offered some scope for one aspect rather than another to be stressed according to the context and the relative positions of the two parties to the marriage. This reading of the evidence is encouraged also by Brar's data on the uxorilocal husband in north Churāh. There, as many as one marriage in seven was uxorilocal, and his comments are based on no less than 40 cases. In some circumstances, the initiative clearly

lay with the father-in-law, who would extract a period of service from a prospective groom desperate for a wife. But in other circumstances the initiative seems to have been more with the groom-to-be, for Brar speaks of fathers having to attract a husband for a daughter with a "positive inducement in the form of a written or unwritten promise of land transfer" (1971: 36). It is this undoubted flexibility in practice, whatever the formal position, that I wish to emphasise.

7.4.3 Secondary Unions and Elopement.

An infinitesimal proportion of girls of all the Brahmauri castes evade a primary marriage by eloping first. The cases I recorded amount to just 1% of the total. Despite the shock-waves that these incidents are reputed to send through the girl's family initially, no long term disrepute seems to attach to the couple, even in the eyes of the girl's parents, so long as both belong to the same caste. Only an association which crosses the dividing line between high and low castes is considered utterly beyond the pale, and I only learned definitely of one such case, in which a Karnāthu Gaddi girl had gone off with a man of unspecified low caste status from Mandi. Otherwise, de facto elopements are generally given subsequent social validation by the holding of what is, in the analytic term used by Dumont (1972: 156), a 'secondary' marriage rite (jhanjarāra). (Sometimes the couple will go through a civil ceremony also.)

Much more common are 'secondary' marriages in the strict sense of the term: that is, marriages which are entered into after a woman's first marriage, her 'primary' and prestigious

one, has ended. Either the woman may be widowed, which is by far the most typical precondition for a secondary marriage; or alternatively she may leave her husband directly for another man whose wife she then becomes. In a very few cases a wife leaves her husband, or is thrown out by him, and returns to her natal home, only making a subsequent marriage later. But except in cases of known physical brutality by the husband or his kin, or where it is recognised that the girl's primary marriage is beyond repair, the unhappy wife is likely to meet a very mixed reception from her natal kin. Their pressure is more commonly directed towards encouraging her return to her husband without blowing up the issue.

All secondary marriages accompanied by ceremony entail the secondary rite known widely in Chamba and Kangra as jhanjarāra (cf. Newell 1967: 64-5; Parry 1979: 234-5; Rose 1911, vol II: 292). This rite entirely lacks the sacramental value (i.e. as a saṃskāra) of the full primary rite, but it is nonetheless a perfectly valid marriage ceremony. It does not of itself guarantee the legitimacy of any offspring, since cohabitation alone is sufficient for that; but it is undoubtedly considered desirable that a secondary union should be initiated with the jhanjarāra rite, especially for the woman's reputation in the eyes of other women of her husband's sub-clan and in the village as a whole. I never had an opportunity to witness a jhanjarāra, but my understanding is that it lasts for no more than a part of one day, and centres on a short rite conducted by the groom's purohit (or any available priest), during which the balu, or nose-ring

symbolising her married status, is put on afresh by the bride. (In the case of a widow the balu would have been removed at her husband's death; where a woman leaves her husband for another man there are no guidelines, but the new husband will provide her with a new nose-ring.) A small feast may also be given, and members of the sub-clan of the groom, plus a handful of neighbours are likely to be the sole guests - and not even that many, in the case of a very large sub-clan. It would be unusual apparently for members of the bride's natal group to attend, and likewise their purohit would play no part in the ceremony. This is a reflection of the fact that the bride is not on this occasion being given away by her natal group; after all, in a secondary union she is no longer theirs to give, having been transferred at her primary marriage to her first husband's lineage. Consequently, no formal relationship of affinity is established through a secondary marriage. Above all, there are no customary affinal prestations to exchange, either at the marriage or after it. This does not of course rule out the development of personal ties between affines (the bride's natal family and her new husband's may already be affinally related in some way), but it does mean that there is no formal, ceremonial dimension to the link. Finally, I would note that while Newell states that in Brahmaur the jhanjarāra is usually held in a temple (1967: 64), my informants in Kangra denied that this was the case so far as they were concerned.

There is a distinction to make in Brahmauri usage between two kinds of secondary marriage: remarriage upon widowhood to a brother (or a FBS) of the deceased husband, which is

known as balu-jhanjarāra or rakhewa; and remarriage to a man of a different descent group as a result of the initiative of the couple themselves and the woman's elopement, which is referred to as udhāla.

Rakhewa (which seems to be a corruption of the more general Punjabi term karewa, meaning widow remarriage (Karve 1968: 134,379; Rose 1911, vol III: 281)) and balu-jhanjarāra unions are a form of levirate. At one time the sole permissible form of widow remarriage, at least among the Brahmauri high castes, was to the brother of the deceased husband, and indeed specifically to the younger brother. In fact my informants often spoke as if a widow still should not marry the husband's elder brother, although the genealogical data indicate that such links do occur and that relative age is in effect ignored [8].

Whether any ceremony marks the inheritance of a brother's widow (and the right, particularly of the younger brother, is regarded as strong, even now) is not clear to me. Newell states (1967: 65) that no ceremony is required, and my knowledge of certain instances tends to bear that out, for I know of no instance where a public ceremony with a feast was held. Given the equivalence of full brothers, we can see that the transition from being the wife of one to the wife of another is minimal. On the other hand, the title balu-jhanjarāra does imply a ceremony in theory, at which the symbolically important nose-ring is restored to the woman. I am not satisfied, then, that this question is fully resolved. (Informants could not explain why other jhanjarāra weddings, at which a nose-ring is also re-adopted by the woman, were

not referred to using the balu-prefix. My interpretation would be that, since the only socially sanctioned form of widow remarriage was formerly to the dead husband's brother (in theory younger), the balu- prefix consequently distinguished the one legitimate form of jhanjarāra from other more or less deplorable circumstances in which the ceremony was used.)

In Kangra Brahmauri circles at least, the children of a rakhewa or balu-jhanjarāra marriage belong to their mother's new husband, without a shadow of doubt. This appears to be contrary to the situation Newell reports from Brahmaur (1967: 65), where traditionally children of the second marriage were considered to have the dead man as their father. Informants' statements and genealogical facts also show that if a woman has a living child by her first husband, then it is extremely unlikely that she will remarry his brother. Rakhewa or balu-jhanjarāra unions are only contemplated where the widow (randi) is left childless.

With or without children, however, a woman may make an udhāla marriage. This term is general among Brahmauris in Palampur and immediately across the Dhaula Dhar in Trehta, although slightly further east, around Bir and in Bara and Chota Bangāhal, the variant form of duhāl is used. Whether it is more widely used I do not know: none of the usual authorities report it. Udhāla is best translated as a 'love-marriage', and the essential characteristic of such a marriage is that it takes place entirely on the initiative of the couple themselves. If a woman is widowed young and has no children such an action provokes no lasting hostility today, for even supposing that a rakhewa marriage is on the cards,

it is widely conceded that a woman cannot be forced to marry her husband's brother against her will. On the other hand, if a woman leaves her husband for another man, or if she is widowed with young children and then were to leave for a new man, public opinion in her husband's village is swiftly mobilised against her, whatever extenuating factors may be admitted by the more sympathetic. There are two considerations to take into account here: first, the insult to the husband, if he is alive, and the flouting of all conventions of appropriate wifely behaviour; and secondly, the separate issue of what is to become of children who belong not to their mother but to their father's descent group.

There is no straightforward resolution to the latter problem, although in fact it arises only rarely. Nor indeed is it common in any of the three main Brahmauri castes for wives to leave husbands. In 1980, there were 30 women of the three Brahmauri castes in Karnāthu living as widows, of whom three were the widows of second husbands, and the rest widows for the first time. A further seven living women had been widowed in Karnāthu and were remarried at the time of my enquiries, five in rakhewa and just two in udhāla unions. These proportions are instructive. The two women who had made udhāla marriages both had children from their first husbands: in one case the only son was virtually adult and had remained behind in Karnāthu; in the other case the young children had left with their mother, but they returned intermittently and the property rights of the one son continued to be fully recognised, although there was some doubt as to whether he would ever return to exercise them as a resident.

The question of wives leaving living husbands in order to make an udhāla marriage is a bit more complicated. I only have details of two women who have left their Karnāthu Gaddi husbands, and in neither case (both within the last decade) were there children. But five of the ten cases of udhāla marriages contracted by Gaddi men in Karnāthu involved wives who had left living husbands. Only one of these women brought a child to Karnāthu, and that was a girl and not a boy, but I cannot say whether this was because in the other cases there were no children, or whether children had remained in their natal villages when their mothers left. I have spoken of wives leaving husbands, for it has to be recognised that the patrilocal orientation of Brahmauri society entails the woman signalling the breakdown of a marriage by her departure. A husband or his family may be known to make life difficult for a wife, but the onus of bringing matters to a head rests with the latter alone through the possibility of leaving her marital home. In this sense, formal rectitude is seen to lie with the man, and the blame attaches to the woman, regardless of the precipitating factors. I only knew of two cases in Karnāthu where (Gaddi) men had ordered their wives to leave (as opposed to making their lives intolerable so that they chose to leave), and both of these incidents caused far more embarrasment to the man's close agnatic kin than if the wives had left on their own initiative.

Any association involving co-habitation entered into on the initiative of the couple themselves is referred to as udhāla, and has the status of a secondary marriage in the eyes of Brahmauris, other things such as caste and minimal

exogamy rules being observed. In other words, the offspring of such unions rate as legitimate heirs. Significantly, however, I recorded just two cases of a man having heirs by both a dān-pun or batta-satta union (i.e. a biāh) and an udhāla union (one Gaddi, one Sipi), and I have the impression that this is thought to create domestic tension over the partition of the estate. In all other examples of a man having heirs by two marriages, the second wife had either been taken with full rites (i.e. her primary marriage) or in a rakhewa union. For a union to be classed as udhāla does not in itself, then, indicate whether or not any ritual was performed at its inception. Where a ceremony does take place, the jhanjarāra rite is considered the appropriate one. I never found any informant who had heard of the minimal rite reported as jhind-phunk in Brahmaur (Rose 1911, vol II: 267) and brār-phuki in Kangra generally (Parry 1979: 235-6), which has been described as appropriate after an elopement; and at least so far as the Brahmauris are concerned I would regard it as totally defunct.

Divorce (chadi or talāk) is ideally marked by the payment of compensation (harja or harjāna) to the former husband. There is a possibility that compensation was once due, in theory at least, to the brother of a man whose widow refused to honour his right to a rakhewa marriage by going off with someone else. This is today entirely a thing of the past, in theory and in practice. Informants in Nayagraon put compensation at around Rs.2,000 today, and it may be slightly more in Kangra by some accounts. After the payment of the money the old husband gives the new a note of confirmation, to the

effect that the old marriage has ended and with it the former husband's rights. This is known as phargatti. It is highly problematic, however, whether or not compensation is actually paid in any particular case. The chances are clearly greater where the woman's new conjugal home is in a village easily accessible to her old. In principle, the aggrieved husband can take his wife's new husband to court if compensation is not paid or if an insufficient sum is offered, but this final recourse to the law is unusual, so far as I can ascertain, and it is more likely that the issue will be dropped if negotiations prove fruitless. The parents of a girl who enters an udhāla marriage before her primary marriage may also press for compensation. But this seems to be a surreptitious affair, for there are connotations of a demand for bridewealth about such a claim, quite apart from the fact that the daughter is self-evidently a willing partner to the elopement. Yet the girl's parents may feel that they at least have to go through the motions of pressing for some financial settlement if the girl had already been betrothed to someone else at the time she absconds with her lover, for the prospective groom's family may initiate their claim against the girl's parents.

7.5 Marriage Patterns and Strategies.

I have already suggested that the marriage systems of the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans need to be contrasted not only with the wider regional Rajput and Brahman systems, in the tendency towards isogamy rather than hypergamy, but can also be contrasted with the system operating in the neighbouring Pahāri-speaking region of northern Churāh. In the latter, the lack of scope for the creation of marriage alliances between groups as a result of preempting elopements, the transience of the marriage tie as a result of the high frequency of divorce, and the relative prominence of uxorilocal marriage, are all major factors which have inhibited the significance of agnatic ties. But also, and far more radically, these have played havoc with the development of affinal kinship links, as Brar recognises (1971: 102-9). On the other hand, among the Brahmauri Brahmans and Gaddis (and the Sipis likewise are not significantly different here), marriage alliances and the affinal links they create or reinforce have an importance which is much more typical of the hypergamous milieu in the region, even though the egalitarian emphasis gives relations through marriage a markedly different cast.

In this section I shall present the statistical-behavioural data on marriage patterns. These derive from genealogies collected in Karnāthu, Nayagrāon and Thala. The bulk of the discussion will be concerned with the Gaddis, and secondarily with the Brahmans, because I wish to concentrate on situating the Brahmauri high castes in relation to the regional high caste pattern. Some attention will nevertheless

be paid to the Sipis.

I shall focus my discussion on what appear to me to be the two main characteristics of the empirical marriage patterns of the Gaddis and Brahmans. Each of these may also be divided into two parts. Thus, I shall look first at the extremely localised form the marriage networks take, especially among the far more numerous Gaddis, and at one important accompaniment of this: namely the absence of a pattern of marriage across the Dhaula Dhar. The second, and larger, theme that I shall explore is the repetition of marriage alliances through the reciprocal exchange of brides. Associated with this, I shall move on to examine the implications of really dense patterns of repeated intermarriage (above all among the Karnāthu Gaddis), through which we may discern the tendency towards endogamy within endogamy. Having presented this information, I shall then take up further points which arise.

7.5.1 Localised Marriage Networks.

The overwhelming majority of Gaddi marriages are contracted close to home: for instance, roughly four couples out of five will have come from villages less than two hours' walk apart. For the Brahmans and Sipis the constraints of demography are likely to make such a high proportion impossible to match, but the pattern in these castes is otherwise similar. The statistical facts (see Tables 16 & 17) closely mirror stated preferences, and a father almost always hopes to ensure a conjugal home for his daughter which will be in close reach of her natal home. There is nothing surprising in themselves about either the statistics or the preferences

(see for example Berreman 1972: 24,159). However, among the Rajputs studied by Parry it appears that a statistical pattern of local marriage networks (cf. the genealogies presented, 1979: 289-94) is accompanied by a preference for marriages not to be arranged too close to home. The following passage reveals a series of considerations which are largely absent so far as the Brahmauri castes are concerned:

> "All things being equal people prefer not to marry too close to home. One reason for this is that they do not like to feel that their in-laws are keeping close tabs on them, or to risk their continual interference. The other major consideration is one of status. For the wife-givers such proximity entails a continual and mortifying subservience; while the wife-takers regard it as undesirable since such marriages are said to tar the groom with the same brush as a ghar-jamwantru. On the principle that familiarity breeds contempt, the boy's side also feel that they will not receive the respect which is their due" (Parry 1979: 274).

Given that there is no rule of village exogamy in this part of Himachal Pradesh, intra-village marriage is the logical outcome of taking a preference for local marriages to its limit. Demographic constraints often make this impossible; and in any case not everyone who wants to marry his daughters locally is keen to marry them off quite as locally as that: more because of anxiety that any marital strains could sour the neighbourly relations of day-to-day life, than because such proximity conflicts with any requirement for a degree of social distance between affines. But Karnāthu Gaddis intermarry among themselves to an extent that is unusual in

this region (see Table 16), and many see this as a happy solution, both on social and economic grounds. However, this is to anticipate a fuller discussion later.

Tables 16 & 17 present the most extensive of my data on the Gaddis' tendency to localised marriages. As these show, there is around a 60% likelihood that a Karnāthu Gaddi boy will obtain his bride from within certain villages of mauzas Deol and Lanod, and likewise a similar prospect that a Karnāthu girl will be married within the same two mauzas. In Nayagraon, the proportion to obtain a spouse within an equivalent area is slightly higher still. So far as both villages are concerned, the percentage of marriages involving spouses from outside a narrow range of villages is very small indeed (well under 10%) (see here Maps 5 & 6).

In Thala, my most extensive data are on the Brahmans, since they are the most numerous caste in these twin tīkas. They do not display quite such a localised pattern of marriage (either sex, for example, would have just over a 20% prospect of obtaining a spouse within the mauza), but this is largely a reflection of where Brahmans are concentrated. Overall, a similar pattern is very much apparent, and for either sex there is an 80% likelihood of a spouse being obtained from a group of villages along the slopes of the Dhaula Dhar within some eight or nine track miles.

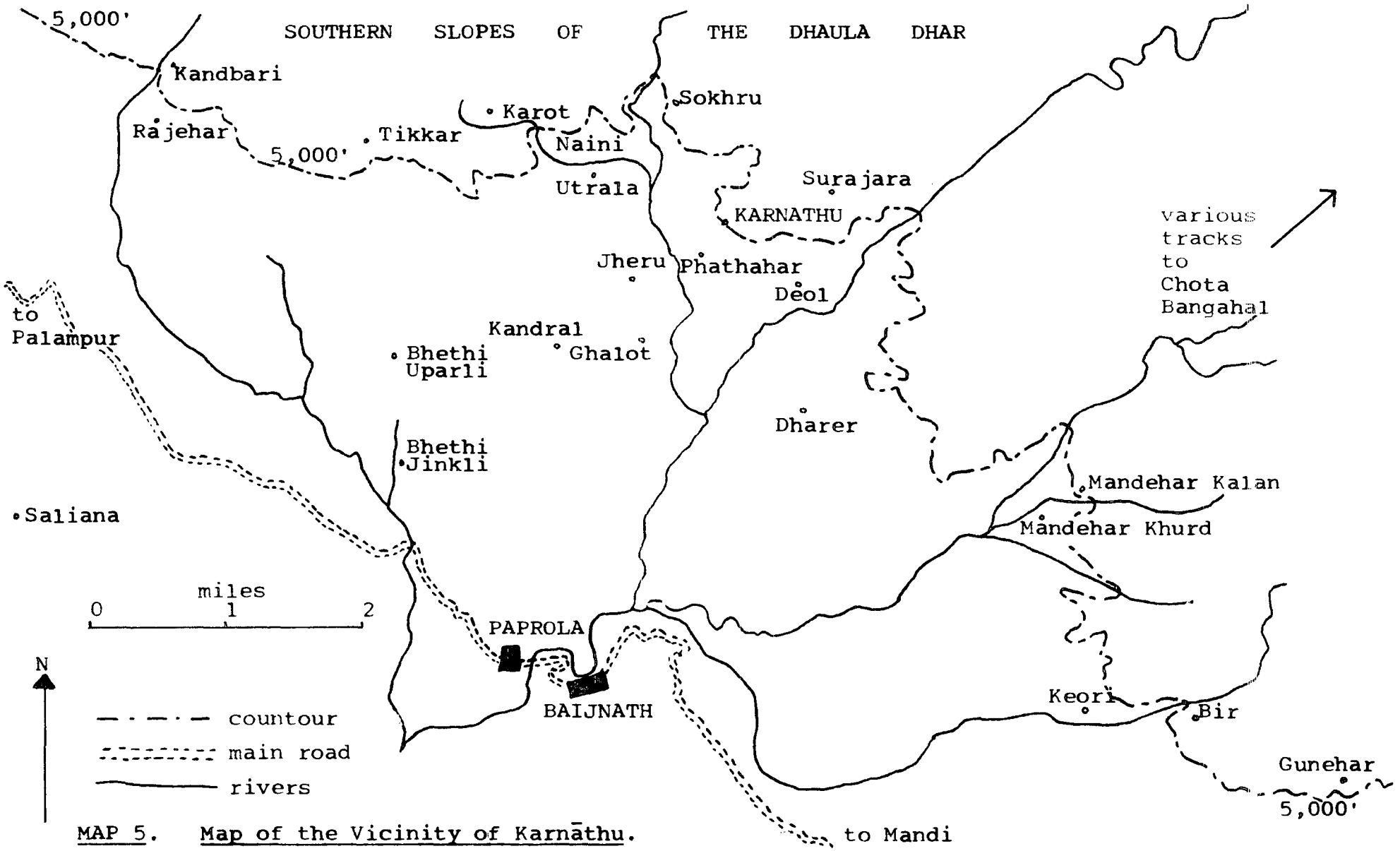
The Sipis, being spread much more unevenly than the two high castes, generally find it that much harder to marry in the immediate locality. Even so, all the marriages made by Karnāthu Sipis involved spouses from within 15 miles; and the Thala Sipis in every case obtained their marriage partners

TABLE 16.

Geographical Location of Karnāthu Gaddis' Marriage Links.

mauza	tīkas	approx. distance (miles)	Karnāthu girls married to Gaddis	Cumul. % of total	Gaddi brides from	Cumul. % of total
Deol	within Karnāthu		59	35	59	27
	Deol, Dharer, Phathāhar, Sokhru, Surājara	1-2	41	60	43	47
Lanod	Kandrāl, Karot, Naini, Tikkar, Utrāla	1-3	12	67	22	57
Sansāl	Mandehar Kalān & Khurd	4-5	14		16	
Kandbāri	Kandbāri, Rajehar & others	4-5	10	81	24	76
Eir	Gunehar, Keori	7-9	14	89	20	85
Bandla	Bandla, Dūg, Lāhnga & others	10-12*	8		10	
Kandi	Daroghu, Darobhi, Malenta	13-14*	3	96	5	92
		Total marriages listed	161	96%	199	92%
		Total all marriages	168	100%	217	100%

Notes. Statistics refer to arranged marriages, i.e. bride's primary marriage: secondary unions are excluded. Of the 25 marriages not detailed, 20 were arranged with Gaddis elsewhere in Palampur or Kangra tehsils or over the District Mandi border; 4 were with Gaddis resident in Brahmaur; 1 was with a Gurkha from mauza Deol, the only full-rite, primary marriage I recorded with a non-Gaddi. Distances refer to track-mileage in all cases; but asterisked locations would today be reached partly by bus. Intra-Karnathu unions of course occur twice, i.e. in both the 'to' and 'from' columns. A disparity between numbers in the 'to' & 'from' columns reflects a tendency to forget girls married out.



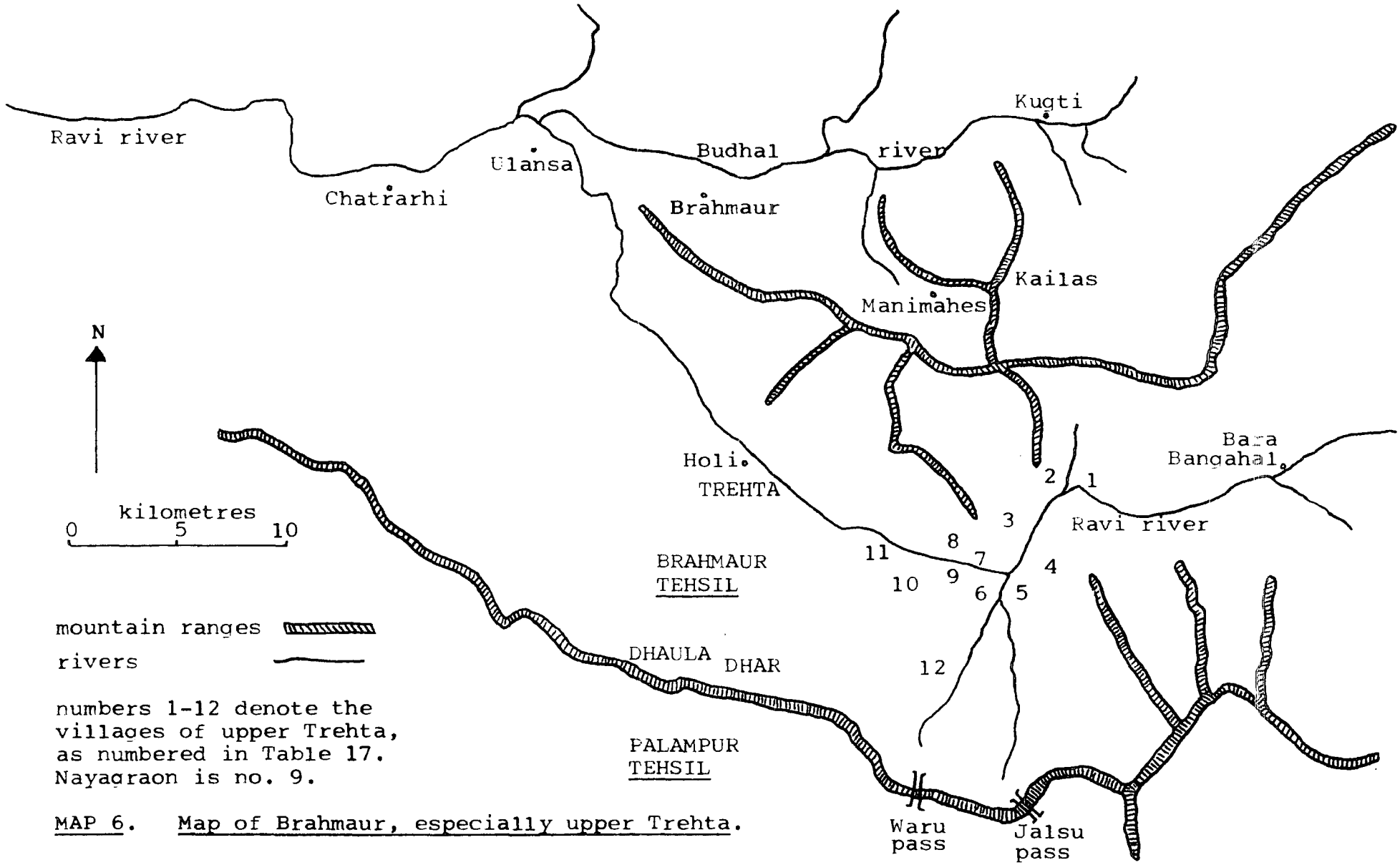
MAP 5. Map of the Vicinity of Karnāthu.

TABLE 17.

Geographical Location of Nayagrāon Gaddis' Marriage Links.

	villages (from E to W)	approx. distance (miles)	Nayagrāon girls married to Gaddis	Cumulative % of total	Gaddi brides from	Cumulative % of total
1	Dhārari/Khanār	8	3		1	
2	Garaunda	7	8		6	
3	Tarāngari	5	0		1	
4	Urna	4	5		4	
5	Surai	3	1		4	
6	Cuned/Agrāli	1½	9		12	
7	Bajoli	1½	18		12	
8	Gwār	2½	2		2	
9	within Nayagrāon		8	69%	8	68%
10	Noi	1½	4		2	
11	Gharau	2	11		15	
12	Thanetar	4	4		3	
	Total marriages listed		73	97%	70	93%
	Total all marriages		75	100%	75	100%

Notes. Statistics refer to arranged marriages, i.e. bride's primary marriage. Of the 7 unions not detailed, 6 were with Gaddis based in Palampur, and 3 of these involved links with former residents of villages listed above; 1 was with a Gaddi from lower down the Ravi. I have excluded 4 marriages between Nayagraon people and partners from Garhwal (U.P.). These were primary marriages, but were made during long residence in Garhwal, leading in the case of one family to permanent settlement there. These links are irrelevant to an analysis of Nayagraon marriage networks. Distances refer to track-mileage.



MAP 6. Map of Brahmaur, especially upper Trehta.

from within a slightly narrower radius.

On their own these bald facts have no special significance, and really need to be appreciated alongside the discussion in the next subsection on the repetition of marriage alliances. But I shall explore here two implications arising from these data which will lead into the discussion in the following subsection. The issue I shall consider first is the lack of a pattern of marriage <u>across</u> the Dhaula Dhar between Brahmauris on the two sides (although one qualification should be noted). Related to this, I found no discernable pattern of asymmetry in the direction brides move at marriage, such as the westward drift (corresponding to a movement away from remoter, more hilly areas) reported both by Newell (1970: 45) and Parry (1979: 219-20). This spatial asymmetry is directly parallel to the social asymmetry with which Parry is concerned: if brides tend to move to the west at marriage it is self-evident that the more prestigious bride-takers must generally be to the west also. Yet the genealogical evidence I have does not fit this model: in fact, the correlate of social symmetry is spatial symmetry in marriage [9]. What is more, this is the pattern in Nayagrāon, Karnāthu and Thala. On my analysis, Nayagrāon does not appear to 'lose' daughters either down the Ravi or across the Dhaula Dhar to Palampur; and Karnāthu and Thala show no signs of 'losing' their daughters in a westerly drift. This summary statement of the facts must now be looked at in greater detail.

Out of slightly more than 650 primary marriages contracted by the Brahmauri high castes from the three villages where I collected genealogical data, just 21 involved a union across

the Dhaula Dhar, a mere 3% or so of the total[10]. The one qualification to make is that it is probably fair to say that cross-Dhaula Dhar marriages are a more likely event where the Kangra partner is from a family newly settled on the southern side of the mountains, or where the Brahmaur partner comes from a family which is in the process of gradually shifting its residential allegiance from Brahmaur to Kangra. It is certainly striking that in Karnāthu, which is widely seen on either side of the Dhaula Dhar as the most Brahmaur-like of all Brahmauri settlements in Palampur, among the Gaddi sub-clans scarcely 1% of unions involved a link across the mountains with Brahmaur. In other words, its cultural traditionalism is in no sense based on or reflected in a pattern of marriage with the ancestral homeland; and this seems to me to derive from the fact that the present Gaddi sub-clans have all been established there for around 150 years or more (i.e. from long before my marriage data start). Thus, there is no statistical evidence from my research to suggest a pattern of cross-Dhaula Dhar marriage: to the contrary, it is the absence of any such pattern which is most apparent. (This is just as true of the Sipis, and I recorded no instance of a Karnāthu or Thala Sipi marriage link across the mountains.)

This evidence is out of step with the model of marriage patterns in the Budhal valley in Brahmaur presented in the most interesting of Newell's articles (1970). He reports a tendency for women to marry out of the remoter areas, such as Kugti, and for the direction women move at marriage to be down the valley and even across the Dhaula Dhar to Kangra.

He examines the link between this pattern of marriage, growing pressure on land resources, village location within the valley, and the distribution of the sexes. His general argument conforms with evidence presented by Parry (1979), and also with merely anecdotal evidence I recorded on my visits to Chota Bangāhal. Yet Newell's observations are not themselves backed up with much ethnographic support for his argument. I shall quote Newell's summary on this topic, for it was in the light of his discussion that I was determined to collect data on marriage patterns in Trehta.

> "The marriage pattern of the area is roughly as follows:
> (1) Women of Kugti marry inside Kugti or into the Brahmaur area.
> (2) Women of the Brahmaur area tend to marry into Holi, Dharmsala, or Chhatrari.
> (3) Women of the Holi area tend to marry into that area, into Dharmsala, and into Brahmaur.
> (4) No women from the Brahmaur-Holi-Kugti area will marry into the Tundah area and never into the Lil Bilj area below the valley near Chamba.
> (5) Tundah women seem to marry into Tundah or into Lil Bilj.
> Although it is difficult to document, it is clear that women marry down the valley in the order Kugti, Brahmaur/Holi, Kangra" (1970: 45).

Some of Newell's geography is grossly in error (he entirely misplaces the important village of Ulānsa, for example), and it is not quite clear what the pattern of marriage is meant to be for women living around the junction of the Budhal and Rāvi rivers (i.e. the Tundāh, Ulānsa, Chatrārhi locality). But the gist is clear enough: that the remoter areas lose women without easily replacing them, and that the marriage

chain extends across the Dhaula Dhar to Kangra, with girls from Brahmaur not being fully replaced by brides from the Kangra side. A pattern of marriage across the Dhaula Dhar is thus asserted by Newell; what is more, it is an asymmetrical pattern. Now of course if I had worked further west in Kangra, around Dharmsala, I might have discovered evidence of a pattern of marriage in which a significant proportion of brides were acquired from families based in Brahmaur, as Newell suggests; and it is hard to know how much my evidence from Palampur and the uppermost stretch of the Rāvi valley may be seen as generally applicable. On the other hand, I am in a position to provide statistical support for my claim that - slightly to my surprise - there is no detectable pattern of cross-Dhaula Dhar marriage.

In terms of Newell's bride-loss model, Nayagrāon's location would suggest either that brides tend to marry downstream in the direction of Holi, being replaced by girls from the few villages which are even further up the Rāvi (see Table 17, and Map 6); or, perhaps more plausibly given the proximity of the Jālsu and Wāru passes, that brides tend to marry across the mountains to the Palampur villages without any reciprocal movement in the other direction. Yet neither supposition would be correct. As Table 17 shows, the Nayagrāon marriage circle is virtually a closed one, and barring a mere handful of cases brides are given and received within the twelve uppermost villages in the Rāvi valley, before the narrow gorge which leads to the final settlement of all, the Seok/Kanet village of Bara Bangāhal. The figures show that brides are given upstream as much as downstream, and there

is no tendency for brides to marry across the Dhaula Dhar. So clearly defined is the circle of villages within which Nayagraon families expect to contract marriages for both their sons and daughters that Deol, a very large village less than two hours' walk downstream, does not figure in the circle (just a single marriage). Indeed, downriver the Nayagrāon circle extends no more than two miles, to the village of Gharau [11].

Marriages across the Dhaula Dhar are so few that it is hard to generalise about them. But even the 21 instances I recorded show no simple pattern of brides marrying out of Brahmaur, for while in 13 of these cases the bride came from the north side of the mountains and moved to Kangra at her marriage, in 8 cases she moved in the opposite direction. Of the 6 cross-Dhaula Dhar marriages I recorded in Nayagrāon, 4 involved brides marrying into Nayagrāon from Palampur. I am aware that my informants may have forgotten a few girls who married out of the village, but any such cases are clearly not going to modify the overall picture.

The Nayagrāon evidence, corroborated by that from Thala and Karnāthu, thus provides no vindication of the 'bride-drain'-to-Kangra model put forward by Newell. I shall return to this theme in the next subsection. The population-drain experienced in Nayagrāon is not of daughters marrying into Palampur; it is of couples settling in Palampur at various stages subsequent to marriage. For example, of 71 Nayagrāon men (on whose marriages the 'brides from' column in Tables 17 is based), 24 later left Nayagrāon with their families to settle permanently in Palampur. This proportion of one third in fact

underestimates the extent of permanent, post-marital emigration to Palampur, for undoubtedly a proportion of those whose marriages I recorded but who are still resident in Nayagrāon will at a later date move across to the south side of the mountains. This pattern obviously has very different demographic implications for local sex ratios from the Kugti pattern reported by Newell (1963, 1970). In the latter case, spatial asymmetry in marriage leaves the remoter areas extremely vulnerable, insofar as their inability to attract brides to replace the daughters who leave at marriage exacerbates the inherently unfavourable sex ratio found throughout so much of India [12]. In the Nayagrāon case, the data suggest that spatial symmetry in marriage, or strict territorial endogamy, minimises the demographic and social risks of exacerbating this inherent shortage of females in the population. Girls from upper Trehta do not move to Palampur as the brides of Palampur Gaddis, but as the brides of upper Trehta Gaddis.

One consequence of this absence of a cross-Dhaula Dhar pattern of marriage is that in winter, when many Brahmaur residents have crossed to Kangra, Gaddis and Brahmans from either side of the mountains live in the same vicinity as one another, and yet in effect rule out a large segment of their caste fellows as a source of potential marriage partners. For example, two thirds of the 30 Nayagrāon households cross in winter to property in Palampur that they own or in which they hold a share. All live within a ten mile radius of Karnāthu. Yet there are no marriage links with the Karnāthu Gaddis, nor with the (considerably fewer) Thala Gaddis.

So far as indigenous preferences and perceptions are concerned, Brahmauris in Kangra are generally explicit that they do not entertain the possibility of marrying their daughters into Brahmaur. Despite the emotional identification with Brahmaur as their ancestral homeland, it is considered too remote a place and too strenuous an existence to inflict on one's daughters. Of course there is no comparable reluctance about marrying girls from Brahmaur. Now at this level we can see clearly the asymmetry in spatial terms which Newell described, and which is echoed in Parry's data. Yet the point is that empirical marriage patterns manifestly do not conform to these stated preferences of Brahmauris in Kangra. Indeed, whilst my Karnāthu and Thala informants said that they were perfectly happy for their sons to marry girls from families resident in Brahmaur, such unions were, as the statistics show, very rarely arranged. It appears that the reluctance of Brahmauris in Kangra to give their daughters in marriage to Brahmaur-based families ensures that marriage alliances in the opposite direction are ruled out also. In Nayagrāon, people said that they were willing to develop affinal ties with Palampur Gaddis - but evidently not if the cost is the loss of daughters, without a compensating influx of brides for sons.

This territorial endogamy in upper Trehta, the virtual closure of the Gaddi marriage circle formed by these twelve uppermost villages, is a microcosm of a process that has occurred on a much larger scale within Gaddi society as a whole. For just as the Gaddis as a caste have (in effect, if not in intention) used endogamy and its corollary, the two-way

exchange of brides, to insulate themselves from the hierarchical implications of asymmetrical marriage ties which would place them at a disadvantage within the wider Rajput order; so the upper Trehta Gaddis have maintained a striking pattern of local endogamy, thereby minimising the prospect of a pattern of marriage with Gaddis down-river or, more especially, in Palampur, which would almost certainly have proved asymmetrical and disadvantageous to the inhabitants of Trehta. It is the very lack of a pattern of intermarriage across the Dhaula Dhar, in other words, which prevents the emergence of asymmetry and an unequal ranking of those on the Brahmaur and Palampur sides of the Dhaula Dhar.

Yet whilst the tightly-knit character of the Nayagrāon marriage network is particularly striking, there is just as little evidence of asymmetry in the direction brides move at marriage in my Karnāthu and Thala genealogies. In this respect, high caste Brahmauris in Kangra clearly differ from the Kangra Rajputs, among whom a tendency for brides to be married to the west reflects the "hard facts of political and economic power" (Parry 1979: 220) - that is, paternal reluctance to marry daughters into the less developed, more impoverished areas lying further into the hills to the east, especially over the border into Mandi. Table 16 and Map 5 show that Karnāthu Gaddis are just as likely to obtain brides from villages slightly to the west and to give daughters to villages further east as vice versa.

7.5.2 The Repetition of Marriage Alliances.

In this subsection I shall provide the data on empirical marriage patterns which is most crucial for my analysis, for I shall be examining the tendency towards the repetition and indeed concentration of marriage alliances, realised in the reciprocal exchange of brides between lineages and sub-clans. I shall start by looking at the statistical occurrence of batta-satta. As I argued earlier (7.4.1), the actual incidence of this form of marriage is from a structural point of view entirely a secondary matter, since the principles which it exemplifies can be - and are - realised just as effectively through a series of dān-pun unions. Nevertheless, batta-satta is the epitome of a form of marriage which amounts to direct exchange in a complex marriage system, and the reciprocity is the reason why it is so anathema to the higher echelons of the regional Rajput and Brahman hierarchies. It makes, therefore, a logical point to start my discussion of the way in which Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans (and Sipis also) cement affinal links through repeated intermarriage, on the basis of bilateral exchange.

Of the different descent groups on which I collected information, the Gaddi sub-clans of Nayagrāon and several of the Brahman sub-clans of Thala revealed the greatest reliance on batta-satta marriages. Out of 142 primary marriages on which I have the necessary details from Nayagrāon, 71 (50%) were dān-pun unions, 67 (47%) were batta-satta, and 4 (3%) were ghar-juāntru contracts. (Secondary unions are additional, and I recorded seven cases of udhāla). Yet more interesting

than these straightforward totals is the contrast between marriages which took place more than a generation ago and marriages within the last 20-25 years. These data are presented in Table 18, and show that batta-satta used to be a great deal more popular and frequent than dān-pun, but that today the positions are reversed, with a decreasing proportion of explicit and obvious batta-satta marriages occurring. In parenthesis, I would also draw attention to the fact that the four cases of ghar-juāntru I recorded there all took place well over 20 years ago.

I must emphasise that splitting the marriages recorded in my genealogies for Nayagrāon into the two categories of 'older' and 'recent' marriages is at best a rough-and-ready exercise, for three main reasons. First, my yardstick of a generation, or 20-25 years, is itself fairly arbitrary, and is chosen simply to ensure that I have a reasonably large number of marriages in either category. Second, a certain amount of guesswork has been necessary in deciding if particular marriages belong in one category or the other. And third, this division is based on an estimate of the date of a man's first marriage: in a handful of cases a man may have married originally more than a generation ago, only to remarry with virtually full ceremony during the last 20-25 years after his first wife's death. For the sake of this table I have classed any subsequent marriage with the original one. Some approximations are almost inevitable in handling genealogical data of this kind, but in this case the main factor has been my lack of knowledge of the people concerned, bearing in mind that I only stayed in Nayagrāon for four days.

TABLE 18.

Comparison of 'older' and 'recent' marriages in Nayagrāon.

clan	'older' marriages				'recent' marriages			
al	d-p	b-s	g-j	total	d-p	b-s	g-j	total
Jhenjānu	12	22	2	36	21	15	-	36
Nayagrāyi	2	7	2	11	6	10	-	16
Yāru	2	6	-	8	12	5	-	17
Rehlu	1	1	-	2	7	1	-	8
within Nayagrāon	2	-	-	2	6	-	-	6
total	19	36	4	59	52	31	-	83
percentage	32%	61%	7%		63%	37%		

Notes. Code: d-p: dan-pun; b-s: batta-satta; g-j: ghar-juantru. Classifying 'older' and 'recent' marriages rather differently, as a check on the data, produced the following totals and percentages:

	'older' marriages				'recent' marriages			
	d-p	b-s	g-j	total	d-p	b-s	g-j	total
Nayagrāon total	39	48	4	91	32	19	-	51
percentage	43%	53%	4%		63%	37%		

Nevertheless, despite these provisos, I consider that the broad trend is patently clear. As a check on my handling of the data, I drew the dividing line somewhat differently in a second division into 'older' and 'recent' marriages. These second figures are summarised in the notes to the above table, and likewise show the same clear trend away from the previously more favoured batta-satta.

In collecting the genealogies I found that people's recollections rarely extended beyond a span of three generations. There is also no great interest in precisely how two different affines of the same sub-clan or lineage may be connected to one another, unless a batta-satta is involved,

in which case people generally appear to remember how the exchange was constructed. In Figure 2, I have reproduced a section of the Jhenjānu genealogy in which the emphasis on batta-satta into the third generation has been considerable. It also contains a high proportion of straightforward full brother-sister exchanges.

In Thala, three Brahman sub-clans, of the Kāni, Lunānu and Supain als, show a greater propensity towards making batta-satta marriages than other sub-clans of the same caste, or than either the Gaddis or Sipis of the village. 40 out of 74 primary marriages (54%) that I recorded for these three Brahman sub-clans were batta-satta unions. Interestingly, in these particular cases it is hard to discern any clear trend away from batta-satta over successive generations. But in all other sub-clans of the village (Brahman, Gaddi and Sipi) batta-satta unions are a much smaller proportion of primary marriages - taking all three castes together I recorded 26 cases out of 147, or 18% - and although its declining frequency cannot be shown as conclusively as is possible for Nayagrāon, there is adequate empirical evidence to support the indigenous claims that it is practised less frequently than used to be the case once. Figure 3 reproduces the genealogy of the Kāni sub-clan. One aspect of this genealogy which is exceptional, in the context of the data I have, is that there are no less than five cross-Dhaula Dhar unions: this represents one quarter of the marriages recorded in this genealogy; but likewise it also represents one quarter of all cross-Dhaula Dhar ties I documented. In line with my observations in the previous subsection, two of these cases involved girls marrying into

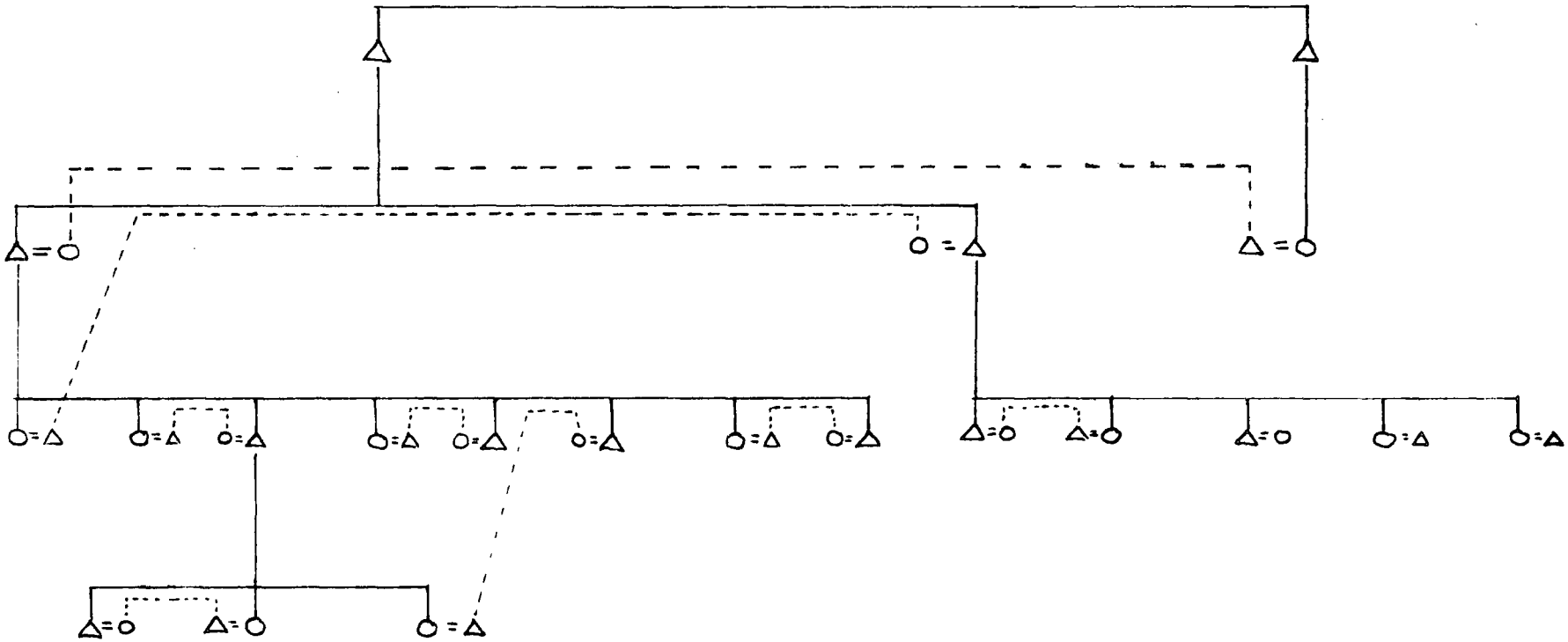


FIGURE 2. Genealogy of part of the Jhenjānu sub-clan (Gaddis, Nayagrāon) showing an exceptionally high concentration of batta-satta unions.

(All marriages listed in this segment of the subclan were with clans from the nearby villages of Bajoli, Cuned, Gharau, Gwar, Thanetar, Urna.)

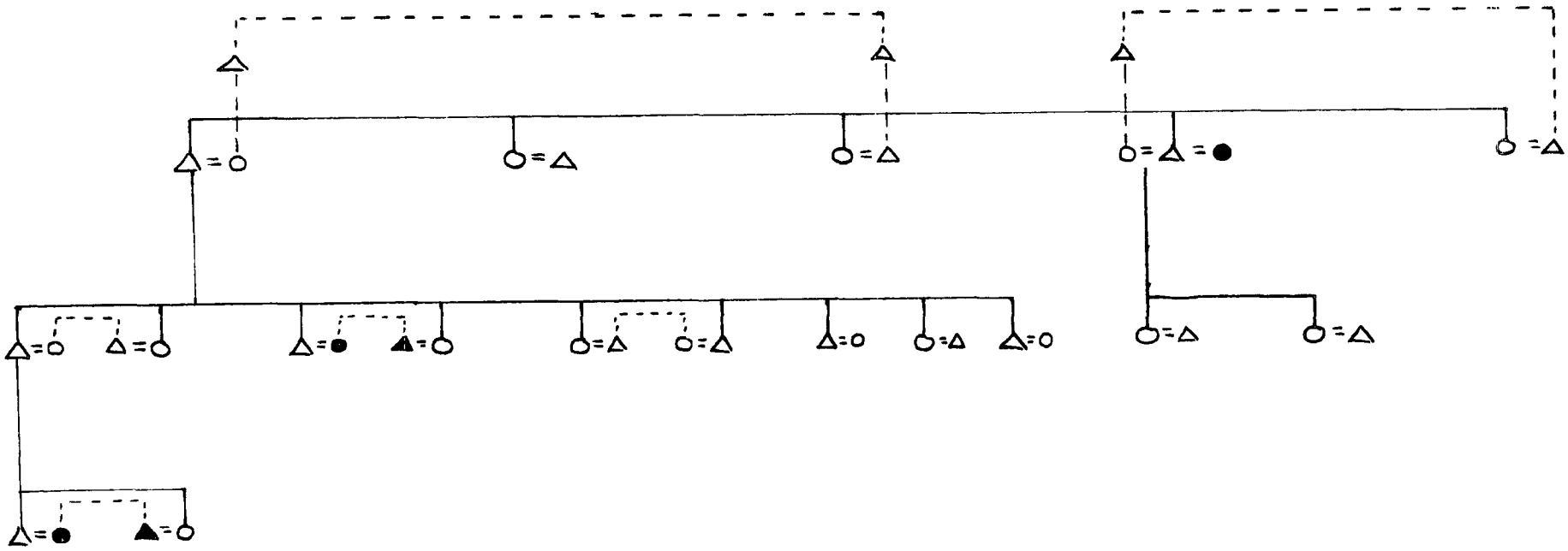


FIGURE 3. Genealogy of the Kāni lineage (Brahmans, Thala Uārla) showing a high concentration of batta-satta unions.

(▲/● refer to spouses from Trehta, Brahmaur. In all five cases they were from the same village, Gwari, nr. Holi. Two separate clans were involved.)

Brahmaur-based families, thereby demonstrating my contention that when such marriages do occur they by no means uniformly conform to the 'bride-drain' model discussed above.

Yet important as batta-satta is, both at the statistical level and at the conceptual level, it is far from being the sole way to establish reciprocity in marriage alliances, as I have been at pains to point out. Nor does its statistical occurrence in itself provide evidence of the extent to which the Brahmauri castes sought, and seek, to renew existing affinal ties through subsequent marriage links, either in the same or in successive generations. The data on the Karnāthu Gaddis is particularly valuable for illustrating patterns of reciprocal exchange achieved without any notable reliance on batta-satta as such. But more than that the deep and ramifying lineages of the Karnāthu Gaddis reveal the diachronic dimension to relations between affines, through patterns of repeated intermarriage continued over a long period. It is through the evidence I shall go on to present that some idea of the variable density of affinal links between different sub-clans can be gauged.

In Karnāthu, surprisingly few batta-satta marriages were admitted. Among the Gaddis, I only recorded 34 marriages that definitely belonged to batta-satta transactions, just 10% of the total: with no examples of ghar-juantrus, all other primary marriages were reported as dān-pun unions [13]. A further twelve marriages look to me as if they were probably halves of a batta-satta arrangement, but were identified by informants as dān-pun. I am inclined to think that there may have been more still, which my informants had either forgotten or for various

reasons chose to disguise; but, as I have indicated already, this is in a sense immaterial.

The most revealing points to make about the marriage patterns of the Karnāthu Gaddis collectively are that 31% of all spouses have married partners from within the village (33% if the agnatic descendants of former Karnāthu residents in Phathāhar and Surājara are included within the circle); and furthermore that where a marriage partner came from outside this circle, 33% belonged to just three clans (in order, Tutān, Cugainu and Jhunnu [14]). Table 19 gives details of all the significant affinal clans for each of the four main Gaddi sub-clans and demonstrates both the concentration of marriage ties within the village, and the prominence of these three other clans.

The marriage details contained in my Karnāthu genealogies date back consistently earlier than is the case with my Thala or Nayagrāon data, so that I have substantial details from c.1910 onwards. The pattern of concentrating marriage alliances with a relatively small number of clans has been occurring throughout this period, with the same clans featuring through three and occasionally four generations. The one development which is statistically noticeable is, however, a trend towards an increasing number of marriages within the village during the last 20 years (since c.1960). I have documented this, again for the four main Gaddi sub-clans, in Table 20. As this table shows, intra-village marriage has been common since well before the past 20 years; indeed, the genealogies which follow will show that such marriages have occurred as far back as I have the relevant details. What is new, so far as I

TABLE 19.

Clans with which the 4 largest Karnāthu Gaddi subclans have contracted over 5% of their marriages.

Clan	Location	Daughters given to	Brides taken from	Total no. of marriages
	Buketa al.			
Singrān	Karnathu, Phathahar, Surajara (mauza Deol)	5	10	15
Gharāti	Karnathu, Phathahar (mauza Deol); Kandral (mauza Lanod)	5	6	11
Tutān	Deol (mauza Deol); Kandral (mauza Lanod); mauza Kandbari	5	3	8
Cugainu	mauzas Bir, Kandbari, Sansal	3	3	6
Sāhnu	Karnathu	2	2	4
Hadokar	mauza Sansal	3	1	4
Lāde	Surājara (mauza Deol); mauzas Bir, Sansal	2	2	4
Total no. marriages listed		25	27	52
Total no. marriages contracted		36	42	78
percentage of marriages with above-listed clans		69%	64%	67%

TABLE 19 (cont.)

Clan	Location	Daughters given to	Brides taken from	Total no. of marriages
	Gharāti al.			
Singrān	Karnathu, Phathahar, Surajara (mauza Deol)	6	6	12
Jhunnu	Karnathu, Phathahar, Sokhru, Dharer (mauza Deol); mauza Sansal	5	5	10
Tutān	Deol (mauza Deol); Kandral, Tikkar (mauza Lanod); mauza Kandbari	2	8	10
Sāhnu	Karnathu	6	3	9
Buketa	Karnathu	5	3	8
Cugainu	mauzas Bir, Kandbari	2	3	5
Total no. marriages listed		26	28	54
Total no. marriages contracted		40	50	90
percentage of marriages with above-listed clans		65%	56%	60%

TABLE 19 (cont.)

Clan	Location	Daughters given to	Brides taken from	Total no. of marriages
	Sāhnu al.			
Singrān	Karnathu, Surajara (mauza Deol)	8	9	17
Gharāti	Karnathu	3	6	9
Cugainu	Karot (mauza Lanod); mauzas Bir, Kandbari	0	6	6
Agāsani	mauzas Bandla, Kandbari	1	5	6
Buketa	Karnathu	2	2	4
Ghora	Phathahar, Sokhru (mauza Deol)	2	2	4
Bhākre	mauza Bandla	1	3	4
Kowentu	mauzas Bir, Sansal	1	3	4
Total no. marriages listed		18	36	54
Total no. marriages contracted		28	50	78
percentage of marriages with above-listed clans		64%	72%	69%

TABLE 19 (cont.)

Clan	Location	Daughters given to	Brides taken from	Total no. of marriages
	Singrān al			
Tutān	Deol (mauza Deol); Kandral (mauza Lanod); mauza Kandbari	5	10	15
Sāhnu	Karnathu	7	7	14
Buketa	Karnathu	9	3	12
Gharāti	Karnathu; Kandral (mauza Lanod)	6	6	12
Cugainu	Naini (mauza Lanod); mauza Bir	3	7	10
Lāde	Surajara (mauza Deol); mauzas Bir, Sansal	4	5	9
Jhunnu	Phathahar, Sokhru, Dharer (mauza Deol)	3	4	7
Total no. marriages listed		37	42	79
Total no. marriages contracted		57	67	124
percentage of marriages with above listed clans		65%	63%	64%

Notes. Within mauzas Deol and Lanod I have recorded the precise tikas with which marriage links were made. In all other mauzas I have not named the individual tikas.

can judge, is the scale on which such marriages have been occurring in the past two decades. The figures presented in Table 20 show that there has been a 50% increase in the likelihood of a Gaddi from one of the four main Karnāthu sub-clans being given a spouse from within the village, by comparison with the pre-1960 period. In fact I consider that this underestimates the extent of the increase in such marriages: for demographic checks on my data show that whilst I have virtually full coverage of all marriages made during the last 20 years, with details of equal numbers of Gaddi men and women who have married (79 men, 78 women), a familiar kind of genealogical amnesia among my informants has meant that I have details of some 25% fewer Gaddi women than men from the earlier period (121 men, 88 women). These forgotten Karnāthu daughters would all have been married out of the village, it is safe to assume (with intra-village marriages there is the added check of acquiring details of a marriage from both the husband's and the wife's side).

To some degree this increase may be attributed to the growth in size of the Karnāthu Gaddi lineages, for the growth in the number of branches of each maximal lineage enhances the range of options available without infringing exogamy requirements. Yet this can be no more than a contributory factor, for even over the two generations prior to c.1960 the main lineages were sufficiently ramified that a greater degree of intra-village marriage by the Gaddis could have taken place.

I suspect that a more promising explanation may rest on certain economic considerations: declining flock sizes,

TABLE 20.

Intra-Village Marriage among Karnāthu Gaddis:

the 4 main sub-clans.

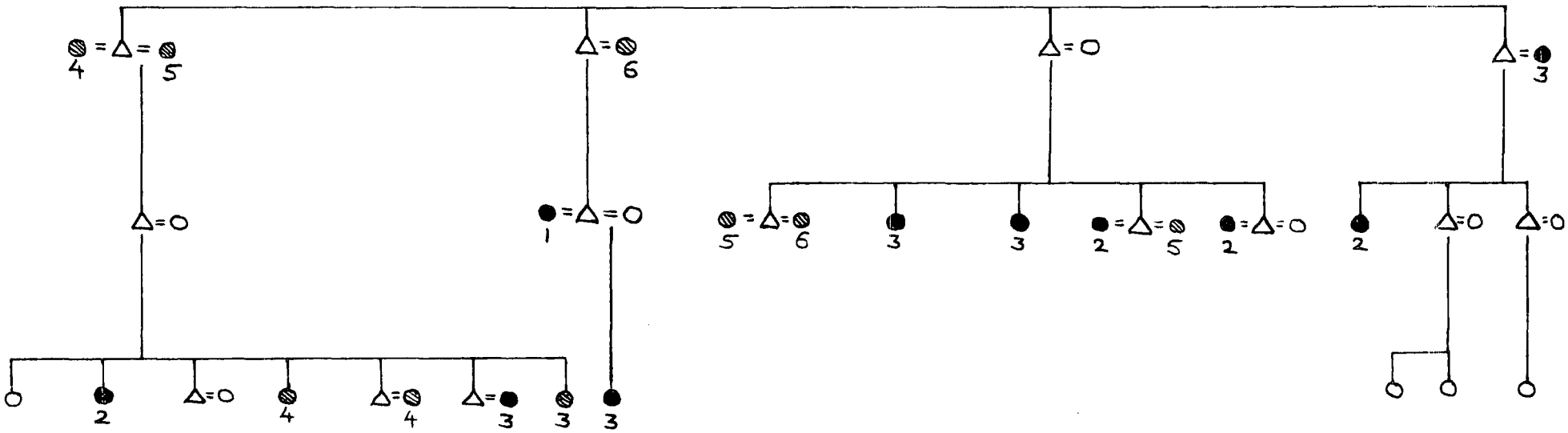
sub-clans	Prior to c.1960			c.1960-80		
	marriages made by sons and daughters of sub-clan	marriages in which spouse came from Karnathu	% within village	marriages made by sons and daughters of sub-clan	marriages in which spouse came from Karnathu	% within village
Buketa	49	11	22%	29	13	45%
Gharāti	48	12	25%	42	16	38%
Sāhnu	47	13	28%	31	14	45%
Singrān	73	20	27%	51	17	33%
Combined Total %			26%			39%

Notes. I have excluded the Jhunnu lineage in Karnāthu from the calculations as it is not sizeable enough to make it statistically worthwhile to include it. All secondary unions are excluded. It will be apparent that intra-village unions each feature twice in this table - a Buketa bride marrying a Gharati man is listed under both Buketa and Gharati - with just two exceptions: one case involves a Jhunnu marriage; the other involves a clan named Cambetu, of which one family used to be resident in Karnathu for a period, during which time a marriage took place with a Singran spouse.

uncompensated by an equivalent growth in cultivated land resources, may be increasing the financial desirability of 'marrying in' (I emphasise 'may' because there is no information to show whether cash yields per sheep and goat have risen at a rate which partially or wholly counteracts the fall in total livestock numbers). But certainly marriage within the village is cheap, in relative terms, for Karnāthu Gaddis and, I would anticipate, more generally, in the same way that batta-satta is cheap.

Whatever the determining factors, it is clear, first, that intra-village marriage among Karnāthu Gaddis has increased; and, second - a point I have not yet made - that such marriages are definitely perceived to have grown more frequent. With regard to the latter point, the low cost is often cited as a reason.

What this concentration and two-way repetition of marriage alliances within Karnāthu and with a certain number of clans outside actually means can best be shown through genealogies, several of which follow. In Figures 4-9, I have used different kinds of format for the presentation of this information. The first two, Figures 4 & 5, show the main affinal clans of a Sāhnu lineage and one of the Buketa maximal lineages respectively, highlighting the particular frequency of marriage with the other Gaddi clans in Karnāthu. By recording all marriages made, these two figures set those links with the favoured affinal als in their full context. In the other figures I have ignored marriages which are not of interest to me. Figure 6 is the most important of all, for it includes all marriages known to me between the Karnāthu Gharāṭi and



Code. 1 Buketa
2 Gharati
3 Singran
4 Agasani
5 Cugainu
6 Tutan

● Marriage partners from within Karnathu

◍ Marriage Partners from outside Karnathu

FIGURE 4. Genealogy of part of the Sāhnu sub-clan (Gaddis, Karnāthu) showing main affinal connections.

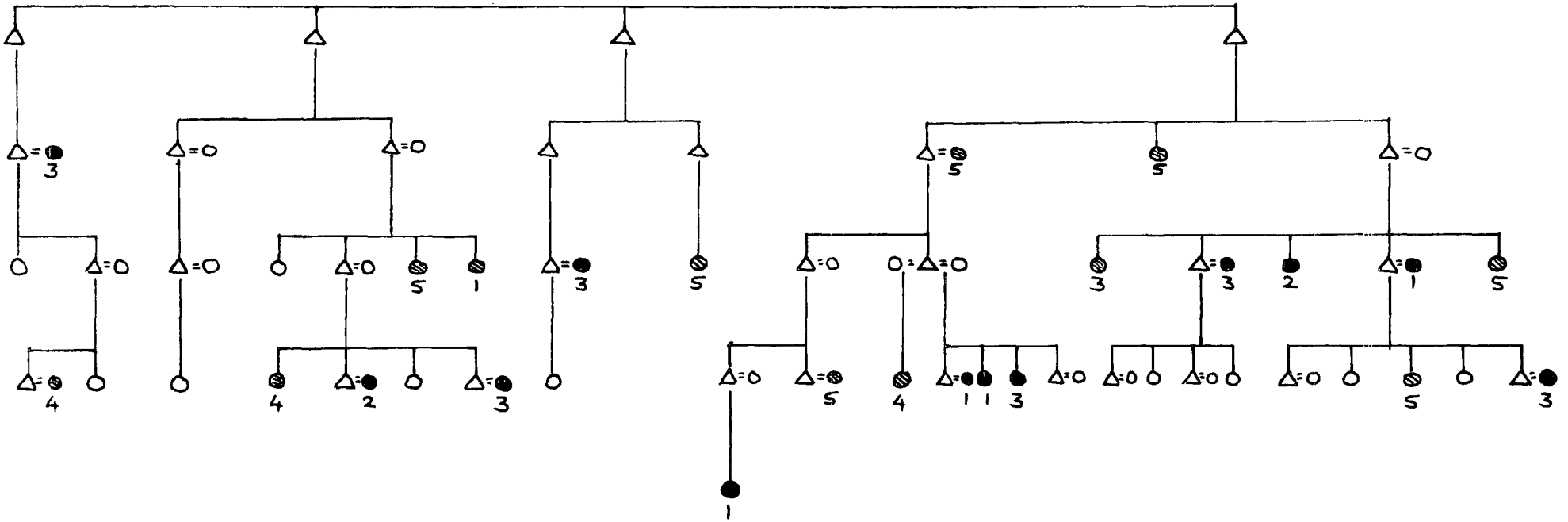


FIGURE 5. Genealogy of one Buketa maximal lineage (Gaddis, Karnāthu) showing main affinal connections.

Code. 1 Gharati
2 Sahnu
3 Singran
4 Cugainu
5 Tutan

● Marriage partners from within Karnathu

◍ Marriage partners from outside Karnathu

(where no marriages are indicated - as in senior generation - relevant details are unknown)

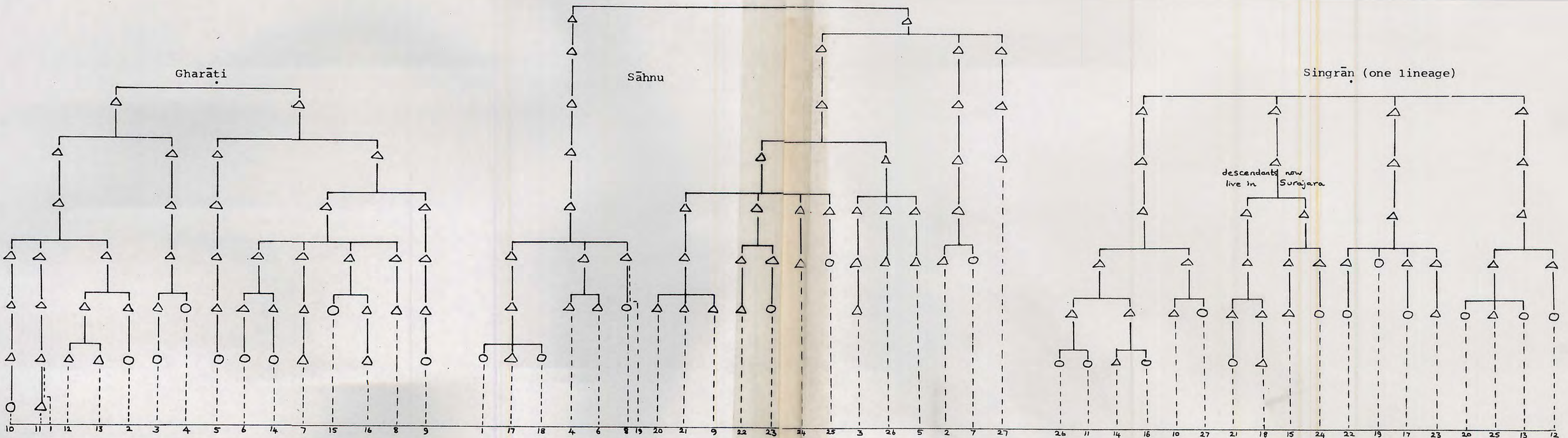


FIGURE 6. Genealogy showing 27 direct marriage links between the Gharāti, Sāhnu and part of the Singrān sub-clans.

Code. Marriages numbered: 1-9 Gharati - Sahnu
10-16 Gharati - Singran
17-27 Sahnu - Singran

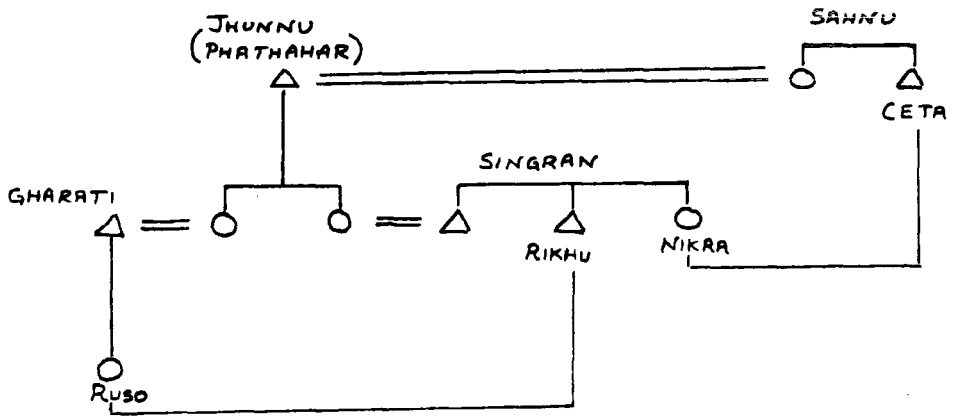


FIGURE 7. An example of a network of Gaddi intermarriages.

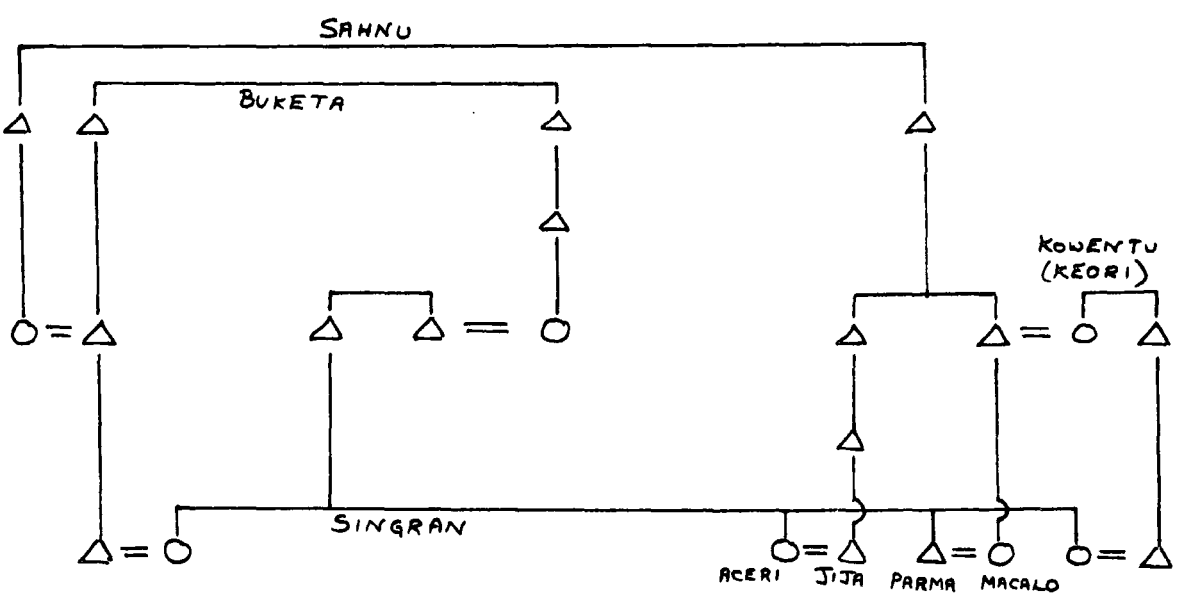


FIGURE 8. Another example of a network of Gaddi intermarriages.

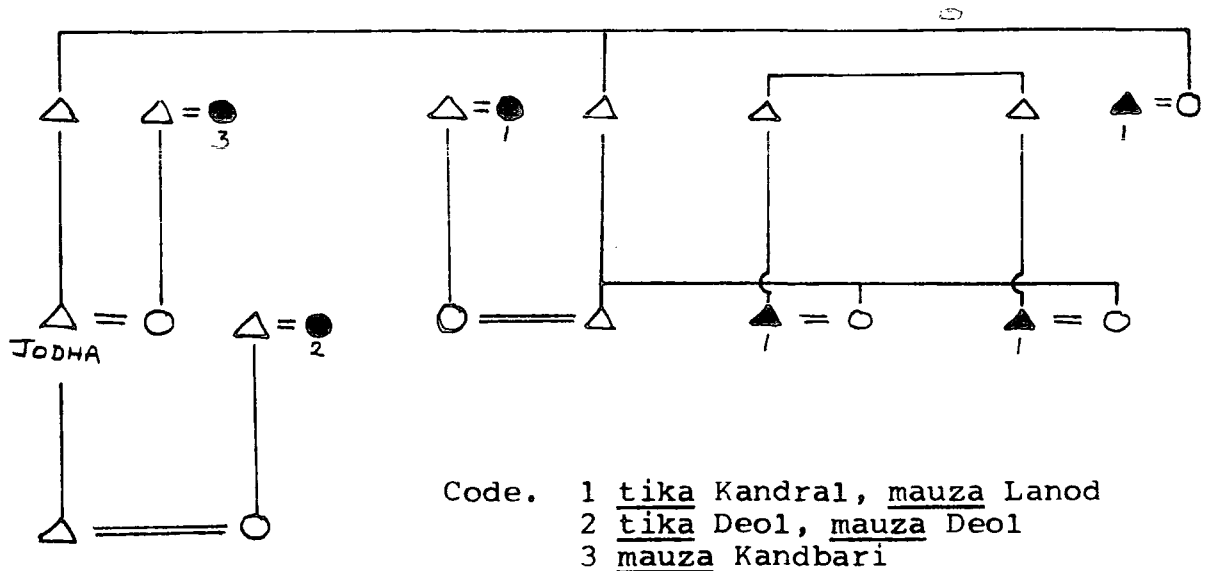


FIGURE 9. Known Tutān affines and affines of affines of Jodha Rām's minimal lineage (Singrān).

Sāhnu sub-clans and one maximal lineage of the Singrān (which includes a branch now resident in Surājara). Nothing shows more clearly than this the density of the marriage ties between the Gaddi sub-clans in Karnāthu, particularly in the past generation; and when it is borne in mind that slightly less than half the intra-village marriages are recorded here, it will be appreciated just how intertwined the links are.

The two most recent marriages to have taken place among those recorded in Figure 6 are numbers 11 and 16. In number 11, Prakās (Gharāti) marries a Singrān girl to whom he is already related in a myriad of ways, some distant and some fairly close: inter alia, she is his classificatory ZHBD, MZHZ and MBWBD. But, rather like a set of Chinese boxes, at every level of the marriage system smaller networks can be found within the larger network. Figures 7 & 8 take small portions from Figure 6 and, by adding one or two further affinal links, illustrate just how closely related genealogically the various individuals in such networks within

networks may be. All the named couples in these two figures may also be traced through Figure 6 (Rikhu and Ruso, no. 10; Ceta and Nikra, no. 27; Jīja and Aceri, no. 20; Parma and Macalo, no. 25); but with the addition of the extra ties I have shown, the tendency towards a concentration of marriage alliances becomes even clearer. Figure 8 is more typical than Figure 7, inasmuch as the completely integrated network achieved in the latter is empirically unusual. Nevertheless, Figure 7 provides an ideal example of the logical outcome of Gaddi marriage practices. Ceta was not only Ruso's actual MMB, but also her HZH, and - through a more convoluted link - her MZHZH: a bringing together of genealogical positions which is emblematic of isogamous marriage but directly antithetical to the rationale of hypergamy, where the HZH is a wife-taker of a wife-taker and highly superior, and the MMB is the wife-giver to the wife-giver and notably inferior. (The unlikely equation of a second ascending generation relative with a '0' level relative is in this case explicable by the fact that Ceta, who was some 20 and more years older than Ruso, had been married and had children before he married Nikra on his first wife's death. The marriage with Nikra was, however, her primary marriage.)

In Figure 9, I have changed the perspective again, in order to show the closest direct and indirect links through marriage held by one minimal lineage with an important affinal clan. If I had chosen to identify such links with another Karnāthu sub-clan, it would not have been hard to show a denser web of ties; but even so, this figure reveals that Jodha has a FZ and two classificatory sisters married into

Tutān households, whilst his own WM, his classificatory BWM, and his own SWM were all received from Tutān families. These individuals are all sufficiently close in genealogical terms to be referred to by kin terms; with remoter links through affines the number could, not surprisingly, be expanded greatly.

The orientation towards the continuous and reciprocal repetition of marriage links over successive generations among Karnāthu's Gaddis is thus evident. Although exogamy rules do not permit a spouse to be given to or taken from the mother's clan or, ideally, the father's mother's and mother's mother's clans either, and also deny the chance to renew links with particular households of other clans where a consanguineal relationship is recognised, this is no real obstacle to the pattern of sustained intermarriage. Figure 6 is the best illustration of this. Such a pattern of marriage is general among all the Brahmauri castes on both sides of the Dhaula Dhar, even if the density of affinal ties is not everywhere quite as outstanding as in Karnāthu, where the tendencies towards local marriage, on the one hand, and marriage repetition, on the other, have intersected to create the extraordinary web of criss-crossing ties which I have tried to depict. In Nayagrāon, for instance, 40 of the 78 (51%) Jhenjānu marriages I recorded were with just five sub-clans (in order of frequency, the Cunedi al from Cuned/Agrāli, Dedkaru from Gharau, Kharainu and Saihlān from Bajoli, and Noālu from Noi and Gwār); whilst 58% of the Nayagrāyi marriages were with just three sub-clans (Cunedi, Dedkaru and Saihlān).

In Thala, it is hard to discern among either the Brahmans

or the smaller number of Gaddis quite the same concentration of marriage links with a limited number of affinal sub-clans - a fact which does not seem to be due solely to the high proportion of small and fragmented lineages there, since even in the largest lineage (the Lunānu Brahmans) such a concentration of ties is not apparent. But having said that, I would recall the high percentage of batta-satta marriages among the Thala Brahmans, and I would also note that my genealogies show that very few marriages indeed go unrepeated: almost always a second and third follow, even if there is not quite the sustained pattern of intermarriage I have been describing. For example, among the Lunānu Brahmans in Thala, only three marriages out of 43 for which I have details appear as isolated unions, a proportion that is very much in line with the Karnāthu and Nayagrāon data.

In focusing upon the repetition of marriage I have ignored the fact that marriages often do break new ground, and provide a new set of affinal links. The transition from having a primary home in Brahmaur to gradual settlement in Kangra is characterised among other things by a reorientation of marriage strategies in a big way. But the point to emphasise is that very few such 'new' marriages remain isolated cases, and the likelihood is that further ties will follow. Figure 10 is an excellent case in point. The generation of Phākas Brahmans in Karnāthu marrying at present is the first in their sub-clan to be oriented wholly towards marriage on the Kangra side of the mountains. Since the first pair of batta-satta marriages with the Sandāl al from Ghalot in mauza Lanod there have been two further marriages, as well as three more

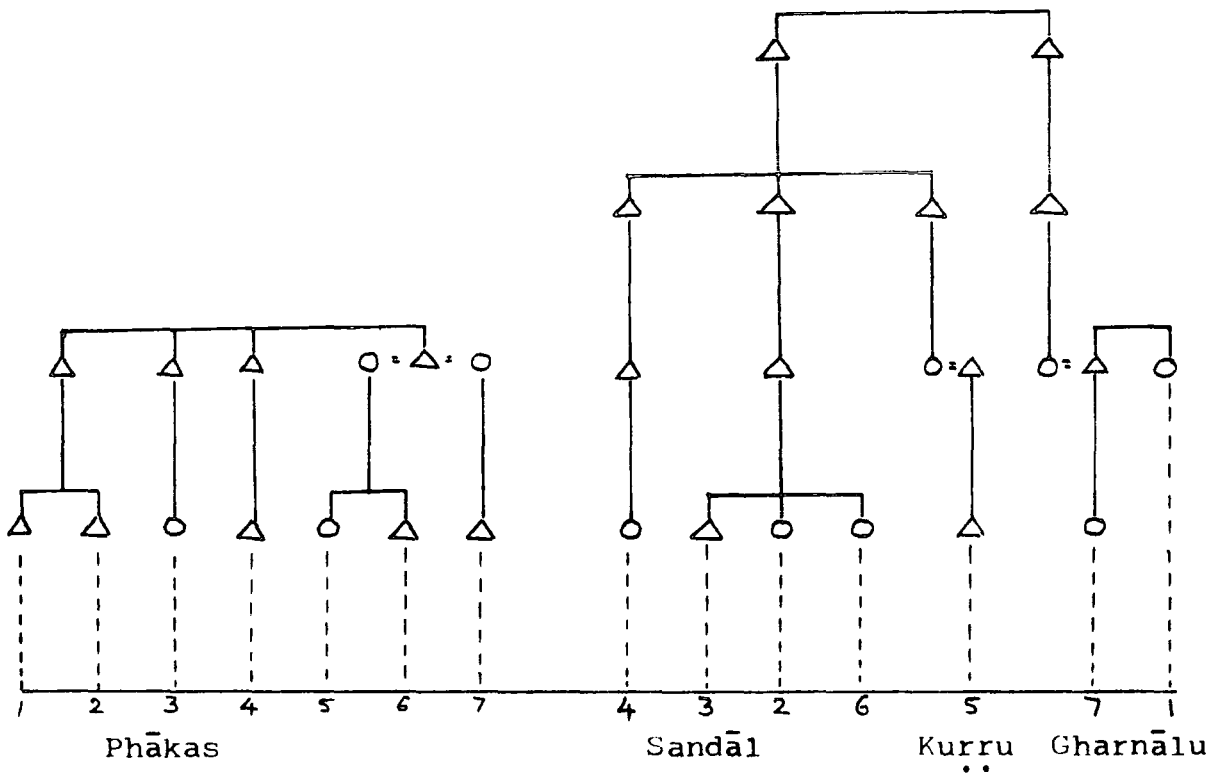


FIGURE 10. An example of new affinal links being cemented through a series of intermarriages.

(Marriage numbers 2 & 3 were the original ones.)

with partners from other clans (Gharnālu and Kurru) where the mutual affinal link with the Sandāl sub-clan in mauza Lanod was instrumental in the arrangement of the marriage. These seven marriages represent exactly half of the total number which have taken place in the present Phākas generation, and all have taken place during the 13 or 14 years prior to 1980.

Now although I hope that I have demonstrated conclusively not only that there is a strong statistical tendency for the Brahmauri castes to repeat their affinal alliances, but also that daughters are exchanged on a reciprocal basis between sub-clans, it is of course possible for two-way exchange between larger units to mask a pattern either of non-repetition or of largely unilateral exchange between the smaller components of these larger units. This is one of Krause's findings from

a part of Mugu District in north-west Nepal, close to the limits of the Pahāri-speaking world (1980: 178). She states that although an ideology of isogamy is well entrenched in Rāra, and exchange between lineages or clans is reciprocal, latent tendencies to hypergamous differentiation and asymmetry can be discerned. One of the forms this takes, so far as the Chetris are concerned, is a reluctance to repeat, and more especially to reverse, the alliances made by one's immediate household (ibid: 188-91).

Quite how much the Brahmauri evidence should be interpreted in a similar light is a difficult matter to decide. On the one hand, for example, the decline in the frequency and repute of batta-satta marriages may owe something to an emerging disapproval of direct reversals as such, although as I have argued I think the major factor in the decline of these formal sister-exchange marriages is the simpler consideration of conforming to the practices of the most prestigious sections of the wider population. Again, Figure 6 offers an example of how, within the dense and complex pattern of exchange between maximal lineages, the component minimal lineages tend to spread their alliances around, rather than just concentrating them within a certain number of other minimal lineages, encouraging thereby the view that the patterns of marriage of the smallest social units are not simply carbon-copies of the overall pattern.

But in my view this is only a part of the picture so far as the Brahmauris are concerned. For a start, the prominence of batta-satta throughout the first half of this century, shows that direct reversals have until recently been the

norm, both in ideological and behavioural terms, in Brahmauri society, even if this is now gradually changing in favour of a more indirect and complex system of reversals. The second point I would make is that demographic vagaries and the rules of exogamy are bound to necessitate a more dispersed network of marriages if we view the system from the perspective of the household or minimal lineage, by comparison with the larger scale pattern. It would be misleading, therefore, to invest too much analytical significance in inferences about the avoidance of direct reversals. A third point to bear in mind is that, although Figure 6 may suggest that minimal lineages disperse their affinal connections widely within the larger units which are the favoured source of marriage partners, small-scale marriage networks are often extremely dense webs of close affinal ties. To illustrate this point was one of the purposes of placing Figures 7 & 8 alongside Figure 6. If we look at these networks from an ego-centred rather than a descent-group perspective, which is the essential difference between Figures 7 & 8 and Figure 6, and include all the consanguineal and affinal links which are relevant, we obtain a rather different view of the variety of ways in which marriages are repeated and affinal links cemented, than we obtain by looking at the totality of dyadic ties between particular large-scale lineages or sub-clans.

To a limited extent I would thus follow Krause and agree that Brahmauri isogamy shows some signs of avoiding direct reversals on a large scale between descent categories at the lowest level of segmentation at the present time. But there are, as I hope I have shown, good grounds for not pressing

this argument too far. Not only is direct reversal of the batta-satta type historically important, and still significant, albeit on a reduced scale. In addition, the dense web of close kinship interconnections found within these micro-networks shows that the idea of minimal lineages dispersing their alliances is to some degree a kind of optical illusion, created by too great a concentration on particular large-scale inter-lineage alliances of the kind displayed in Figure 6. Thus, even if direct reversals between households or minimal lineages are declining in popularity, this cannot be taken to indicate a trend towards marriage with more distantly related affines.

There is one final question I wish to touch on now: whether or not there are significant differences in the empirical marriage arrangements of those high caste Brahmauris with flocks and those who concentrate on agriculture. There are a number of aspects to this question, but the short answer is that pastoralism is one variable among several dictating marriage preferences, and by no means the key one. For a start, in Nayagrāon locality is the single factor which overrides all others in shaping marriage arrangements, and it makes little difference whether an affinal household keeps a flock or not by comparison with the importance attached to marrying within the circle of villages in upper Trehta. On the other hand, the position is slightly different in Palampur, although care is needed in drawing inferences from the data. It is not in fact at the level of the household that a pattern should be sought, in my view, but at the level of the sub-clan or large-scale lineage. Thus, it is apparent

that the main affinal sub-clans of the Karnāthu Gaddis (see Table 19) tend to have similarly strong associations with pastoralism. That is, a sizeable proportion of households from these groups maintain flocks (though I cannot be more precise than that). To this extent it looks as if local descent groups with a pastoral bias tend to intermarry. Yet I would be cautious. It is hard to say how much this reflects a real preference based on shared pastoral interests; and how much such affinal links, which may have been formed long ago on the basis of these common interests, are now renewed largely on account of the already dense ties which exist between the groups concerned. I would emphasise the latter. Common involvement in pastoralism may, then, have importance initially, but I doubt very much that it remains the crucial factor about such alliances. (My Thala data can contribute little to the argument. There are too few Gaddi marriages to be useful; and the marriage networks of the Brahmans, less concentrated than in Karnāthu or Nayagrāon, involve many links with groups I know little about. In any case, the Brahmauri Brahmans have generally been shepherds to a much lesser extent than the Gaddis, with obvious implications for the relevance of this pastoralist/non-pastoralist distinction for them.)

The data are not conclusive, but in my estimation they tend to rule out any view that pastoralists and non-pastoralists follow distinctive marriage strategies or exhibit marriage patterns which differ structurally. In short, I would say that it is a distinction of secondary relevance in this context. (This assessment also bears on my discussion of Ingold's (1982) proposition in Chapter 4.9.)

7.6 Isogamy and the Closure of the Marriage System: a Defensive Position.

Perhaps the chief conclusion to emerge from the preceding section is the inward character of the Gaddi and Brahmauri Brahman marriage systems; the way in which the tendencies to endogamy and isogamy, in reality two sides of the same coin, perpetually turn the system in on itself. This operates at every level, so that, just as the overall pattern is one of endogamy, so does it comprise countless mini-systems each displaying, in more or less dramatic form, the same propensity towards marrying inwards. This is what I mean when I speak of the tendency towards endogamy within endogamy. Nothing could be further from Tambiah's general proposition, based on assumptions about hypergamy, that:

> "The consequence of the North Indian notion of affinity is seemingly to drive marriage outwards towards the formation of newer and newer affinal links" (1973b: 93).

The result is the remarkably effective closure of the marriage systems of these two high castes; remarkable especially from the perspective of fieldwork in Kangra, where Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans live permanently alongside or in close proximity to Rajputs and Brahmans with whom they almost never intermarry.

All this has its parallels, although in a less thorough-going form, in the Rajput milieu analysed by Parry. The birādari reform period in particular (Parry 1979: 248-51) generated a series of efforts aiming at biradāri endogamy and closure, and for a period the four birādaris of the

Palampur area functioned more or less as closed endogamous units, until the hierarchical impulse reasserted itself. Although lip-service may have been paid to the notion of the unity of all Rajputs, the more plausible - if limited - outcome was equality within each birādari for a spell.

Now Parry, drawing on certain themes in Lévi-Strauss (1963, 1969), has explored the structural contradictions inherent in hypergamous systems and the potential for the breakdown of the hierarchical ethos (1979: 265-67). This leads to the emergence of a period of egalitarianism in marriage, and of course its corollary, strict endogamy. In particular, hypergamy runs into difficulties at either end of the hierarchy: at the top, there are problems over what to do with the surplus of girls of the highest status, for whom there are insufficient grooms of appropriate rank; but more critically, at the bottom there is likely to be a shortage of brides, as a result of the dynamic of hypergamy whereby brides are sucked up the hierarchy from below. However, Parry's data, from an environment where hypergamy so strongly imbues Rajput and Brahman culture, encourages him to see strict endogamy and egalitarian marriage in these castes as no more than a temporary reaction to the contradictions within hypergamy.

This poses problems for an understanding of the endogamy and isogamy of the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans, which has predominated for much the greater part of this century and which continues to display a longevity which does not square with Parry's claims. On the other hand, he does concede that

> "not all systems of circulating connubium are necessarily unstable...It is rather that such systems are in the long-term unviable when (as in north India...) they are located in milieus thoroughly permeated by the values of hierarchy; and where the egalitarian marriage circle has been formed in response to the problems of anisogamy, the ethic of which continually subverts it" (1979: 267).

The inference to be drawn from these suggestions is either that the egalitarian marriage systems of the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans are ultimately unviable (but on what kind of meaningful timescale?); or that their atypical stability derives from a cultural milieu less imbued with hierarchical values than is the case in Kangra or lower Chamba generally, and is somehow more than just a structural reaction to contradictions within hypergamy. Both these latter points have some plausibility in the present instance, but their explanatory value is, I consider, limited.

Berreman was the first anthropologist to argue that Pahāri-speaking areas exhibited a less elaborate preoccupation with hierarchy than in the adjacent plains, and he defined this partly in terms of "greater flexibility of intercaste relations and freer intercaste interaction than on the plains" (1960, quoted 1972: 345). He did not mention relations within the caste, especially between affines. This is in fact a notoriously difficult matter to assess comparatively, for it requires not only a contrast between formal transactions in different cultural settings, of the kind examined in Chapter 3, but also some experience of the tone or ambience of informal day-to-day behaviour in the different contexts being compared. Certainly my experience of Brahmauri society would make me

hesitate to assert that the egalitarian marriage systems of the high castes are securely established because the cultural environment is significantly less 'permeated by the values of hierarchy' than is the case in Kangra generally. The relation between equality in marriage and the strength of hierarchical values in any given setting is a highly complex matter: witness, for example, the fact that throughout north India the low castes are structured internally on a strictly endogamous and isogamous basis (cf. Ahmad 1978: 175).

Parry's other point, that egalitarianism in marriage might be stable where it is not a response to the problems of anisogamy (in the Indian case this means hypergamy), is a more usable proposition. Now whatever precipitated the transformation in the internal structure of the Gaddi caste around the turn of this century, Gaddi and Brahmauri Brahman isogamy today cannot be seen just as reactions to contradictions within hypergamy, and in this sense there is a difference from the isogamy propagated during the birādari reform period. Yet I would contend that, while the isogamy of the Brahmauri high castes may not be the outcome of contradictions inherent in hypergamy, it is, less directly, a response to the implications of hypergamy for both castes. It is, in short, an attempt to preserve a somewhat precarious status by denying the possibility of marriage outside the group.

The connection between status mobility and the practice of hypergamy has been noted before, recently by Ahmad (1978) and Parry (1979). Isogamy too has potential as a strategy for the furtherance of status claims, as both these authors have also shown. Isogamy is, however, a more cautious strategy, and

is more a means to conserve status gains or protect one's group from a drop in status than a common status-enhancing device, Ahmad's interesting Sheikh Siddiqui example notwithstanding. Certainly this would be my reading of the Gaddis' situation (also, rather less emphatically, of the Brahmauri Brahmans' situation), for their marriage patterns and ideology over recent generations suggest above all an attempt to come to terms with an unfavourable change in their social and political fortunes. Egalitarian marriage within a closed system is, for the Gaddis, the means of perpetuating their Rajput status without ever putting their precise position in the hierarchy to the test by contracting marriages within the highly diverse Rajput milieu 'outside'. The same goes for the Brahmans. This is a classic defensive reaction to a perceived threat to one's status. (If the Gaddis were confined to the mountain isolation of Brahmaur their lack of integration within the wider Rajput hierarchy would scarcely need explaining, and geography alone would be the overwhelming factor. But their numerical strength along the south side of the Dhaula Dhar poses the question of why there should be no pattern of marriage incorporating them within the Rajput birādari framework.)

The absence of such a pattern of marriage is reminiscent of one of the transactional strategies identified by Marriott (1976). Taking much further his earlier attempts to analyse transactions between castes (1959, 1968), Marriott examines here the implications of maximising and minimising strategies: in the former, actors spread their transactions - and thus their social relationships - as widely as possible; in the

latter, characterised as "symmetrical nonexchange" (ibid: 122), transactions are kept to a minimum. The author states that both strategies are "means of rising above or avoiding a fall into the lower ranks of the system" (ibid: 121); but he goes on to argue that those who follow minimizing strategies

> "are felt to be weaker elements in their respective... localities. Since such castes are less likely to win rank or power at the local tournaments of exchange in cooked food, they are not surprisingly found pursuing tactics of symmetrical nonexchange" (ibid: 127).

If we change the transactional context to marriage within the broader Rajput framework, this is a fitting summary of the rationale underlying the Gaddis' endogamy.

Yet the closure of the marriage system achieved by strict endogamy is double-edged. It may insulate those within the endogamous group from the unpalatable verdict of asymmetrical marriage ties, but as the Rāthis found during the birādari reform period in Kangra the resort to endogamy puts into question their very status as Rajputs. In Parry's words:

> "the position of the Rathis was a somewhat ambivalent one, and their status as Rajputs was, as it were, vicariously derived from their affinal alliances with those whose authenticity was beyond question... Whatever the disadvantages of such associations, they did at least keep the Rathis within the pale of the dominant caste" (1979: 253).

This is the dilemma the Gaddis have had to live with in recent decades, and it explains why, even though there is no evidence in the form of marriages which may be used to locate them in the regional structure, any Kangra or Chamba Rajput knows that the Gaddis are 'low Rajputs' or 'not true Rajputs'. To the extent that their status remains ambiguous, the strategy

of closure may be deemed a partial failure. On the other hand, identities are important, and the Gaddis have successfully escaped any explicit identification with Rāthis. To that extent, their strategy has not been a failure at all.

These comments amplify my contention that, although the endogamy and isogamy of the Brahmauri high castes cannot today be described as a product of a breakdown of hypergamy, in the way that the egalitarian interlude during the birādari reforms can be, this marriage structure is nevertheless indirectly shaped by the structure of Brahman and Rajput marriage within the wider regional society. And, whilst the birādari reforms in part reflected the desire of those lower down the Rajput hierarchy to escape the demeaning implications of being on the wrong end of asymmetrical marriage alliances, the Brahmauri high castes have effectively maintained over several decades a system which achieves just this.

So completely has this closure been effected that the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans are thought of as quite separate castes in the regional context in a way that could never be asserted of the Rāthis or general run of halbāh Brahmans [15].

The logic of endogamy, however, is towards closing the cycle ever more narrowly, on my reading of the evidence I have. Karnāthu, with the growing tendency towards village endogamy among the Gaddis in a large minority of cases, is one instance of this; another is the virtually closed marriage network to be found in the twelve villages of upper Trehta, assuming that Nayagrāon provides an accurate guide to the overall pattern. Evidence of the same tendency at work may also be seen in the otherwise exceptional case of Kugti. On the face

of it, this looks like a widening of the cycle, with the constraints of caste endogamy being abandoned in favour of Brahman-Gaddi intermarriage. But in its acute geographical isolation, Kugti seems to have suffered from an inability to attract brides in to replace daughters married out. Village endogamy, overriding the barrier between Brahmans and Gaddis, thus exhibits the same tendency as I have been describing towards the closure of the local system. Admittedly these are the most clearcut examples I have: nothing from Thala compares with them, and Thala is, significantly, the least geographically and socially isolated of the three villages in which I worked. Nevertheless, in its main features - the endogamy and isogamy of the high castes - Thala is essentially in line with the other two villages.

7.7 Symmetry and Asymmetry in Relations between Key Affines.

Attention has been drawn in recent years by Bloch (1978), Parry (1979) and N.Tapper (1981) to the interaction of potentially or apparently contradictory kinds of symbolic statement about equality or inequality within the same marriage system. Emphatic though the egalitarian ethic within the Gaddi and Brahmauri Brahman castes is at the present time, as the preceding sections have made clear, it is not unqualified; and in moving now to a detailed look at certain contexts in which affinal roles are formalised, I hope to shed light on the interplay between these opposed tendencies. While the dominant

strand is the emphasis on the equality of wife-givers and wife-takers, and the lack of differentiation between them, there are muted ways in which the differentiation between the two, and their asymmetry, is apparent. So far I have not paid much attention to relations between affines, but it is at life-cycle rites where key affines have obligations and rights that the latent asymmetry I mentioned can be most clearly discerned. In other contexts where affinity (or potential affinity) is formalised this asymmetry is not so apparent, and the overall impression is one of symmetry between affines, as the following examples will show.

The common generic term for all non-agnatic relatives - that is, non-agnatic consanguines and affines - is riste or ristedār. But at a lower level of inclusion, Brahmauris reserve riste or ristedār for non-agnatic consanguines only (i.e. MB, MBC, FZC, ZC), while strictly affinal relatives (i.e. ZH, WB) are differentiated by the term nāte (plural; nāta/i, singular). This is to simplify matters slightly by looking only at certain salient features, and I shall discuss the overarching kin categories more fully in the next chapter.

The contacts and negotiations leading to betrothal are generally in the lower hills of Himachal Pradesh - and certainly among the hypergamous castes - initiated by the girl's family, and entail the girl's intermediaries visiting the father of the prospective groom (cf. Parry 1979: 241; Rose 1919, vol I: 786). This fits in with the ethos of kanya dān, the gift of a virgin, for such a gift should be unsought. It would be quite inappropriate for the boy's family to initiate the contacts. Throughout the mountainous parts of

Kulu, Kangra and Chamba, however, the pattern is reversed, and the boy's family takes the initiative through its intermediaries. The Brahmauri castes on either side of the Dhaula Dhar have traditionally followed and still follow this pattern. Rose suggests that when the initiative comes from the boy's side it is generally indicative of a bridewealth contract and the low status of the parties involved (ibid: 789). But as I have already made clear, all Brahmauri castes today eschew bridewealth, and exceptions are few. The pattern is not necessarily, therefore, linked to the payment of bridewealth. In itself, this pattern has no particular connotations for the status of the two parties to the proposed marriage, but it does stand in sharp ccntrast to the more prestigious pattern of initiative by the girl's side, which gives expression to the superiority of the groom.

Parone are honoured guests, and whereas in a hypergamous context this means one's wife-takers but expressly not one's wife-givers, the Brahmauris bestow this term on all nāte and riste, regardless of whether they come from a giving or taking side. Only the remark from one Karnāthu informant that although the ZH and WB are both parone the former does receive slightly more respect betrays recognition of a latent and largely unstressed asymmetry in status.

This virtual equality in affinal relationships is reiterated in norms concerning commensality. In Kangra generally there are restrictions on receiving hospitality in the households of one's wife-takers (cf. Parry 1979: 208), and in particular a father would not dream of visiting his married daughter in her conjugal home. (A brother would not be an unusual visitor

in his sister's husband's home, but he too would almost certainly refuse food other than tea or a light snack, although there are signs that this is relaxing slowly.) As Parry observes, to accept hospitality from one's wife-takers is to cancel out the value of the initial gift of a daughter by accepting a gift (of hospitality) in return. Yet no such inhibitions affect the Brahmauris, on either side of the mountains. The very idea of hospitality being asymmetric struck most of my informants as bizarre and at worst insulting. As one man in Nayagrāon put it, backed up by a circle of others, reluctance to visit the household of one's married daughter or to eat there is an insult to her husband's family since it implies that they are polluting, "like Camārs". Reciprocal hospitality demonstrates the equality of the two parties; any reluctance to receive such hospitality is not construed in the same light as among the Kangra high castes, but as a disparaging slight.

Public demonstrations of respect between affines in formal greetings broadly confirm the principle of equality, with seniority in age generally being the chief consideration, but there are one or two cases where asymmetry is manifest. Significantly, a MB pays his respects to his ZC by touching his or her feet (pairi bandana). This is a key relationship which I shall return to below, but this act stands out in the context of Brahmauri observances of this kind, for it so manifestly accords superiority to the ZC: in every other context the junior generation touch the feet of their superiors. Logical though this deference on the part of the maternal uncle is in a context where the superiority of the wife-takers is

well implanted, it is all the more striking in the Brahmauri context, as the WB only touches his ZH's feet without reciprocation if he is much younger than the latter, and has his feet touched by his ZH if he is markedly the elder. This presupposes the curious combination of a man having his feet touched by another, while he himself touches the feet of the latter's child; but since I never observed both acts taking place simultaneously I am not in a position to say how the matter is actually worked out in practice.

Between kurham (SWF & DHF), a relationship of easy familiarity (as Parry reports among the lower Rajput birādaris, but in contrast to the more rigid formality appropriate at the top of the hierarchy (1979: 302-3)), nearly all my informants were insistent that the girl's father touches the feet of the boy's father. However, a minority argued that equality was the keynote in this relationship, and that either both would touch each other's feet or the younger would acknowledge the elder. The majority view undoubtedly testifies to the recognition of an implicit asymmetry, although the only two examples I can recall observing both entailed the pairs of kurhams going through the motions of touching one another's feet.

The above are examples of contexts in which relations with nāte and riste are formalised, even if in some of them the formal aspect is only mild and perfunctory. Overall, it is the equality of those who are linked through marriage that stands out, although there is clear evidence of some implicit asymmetry also. It would be fair to say, in fact, that the more one focuses on informal, secular, day-to-day relations

among nāte and riste, the more their equality is evident. A man and his ZH may well be partners in a range of activities at different times (for instance, shepherding their flocks together for a while, or seeking waged employment), and they live alongside one another on terms of complete equality. There is no question of wife-givers acting out any kind of subordination to their wife-takers, nor of any social distance being maintained between them. This is of course all the more explicable when one bears in mind the implications of the traditional prominence of batta-satta and other slightly more disguised forms of direct exchange: for a WB will also be a ZH, the MB a FZH, and the SWF a DHF, either in a full or classificatory sense. Moreover, the extent of extremely local marriages ensures that those who are related in this way often see each other regularly, or even on an almost daily basis, which is hardly conducive to the maintenance of asymmetrical relations. Pragmatic considerations of day-to-day existence thus tend to confirm the equality of nāte and riste.

But if we move away from the pragmatic and secular, and focus on the ceremonial rights and obligations involved in particular key life-cycle rites, the latent asymmetry between wife-givers and wife-takers becomes more pronounced - although not as complete as in Kangra generally, as my next case shows.

Mourning (bicār), for example, is a context where Brahmauri observances reflect a largely symmetrical treatment of wife-giving and -taking affines. When a death occurs junior male agnates of the deceased have their heads shaved (bhadar) by the barber on the tenth day, the day of khapar dhuāi. This is standard throughout India, and it marks the first stage in

the diminution of the pollution (patak) incurred at death. What varies far more is whether affines of a dead person observe a mourning period, and if so which affines and for how long. Classically, death pollutes a group defined bilaterally through the concept of sapiṇḍa, but in actuality pollution and mourning are observed to their full length only by the local agnatic group (the sub-clan or segment of it); in addition, mourning may be observed on a restricted basis by other relatives, including those who are not sapiṇḍa of the deceased. Parry sums up the position among the high castes in Kangra as follows:

> "A man shaves his head in mourning five days after the death of his FZH and ZH, and seven days after the death of a married sister or FZ, but is not obliged to shave for any relative of a wife-giving group" (1979: 301).

The asymmetry of one's obligations to one's wife-giving and wife-taking groups in this environment is clear.

Now in Karnāthu the position is rather different. At the death of a married sister or FZ, a man will have his head shaved either after seven days or after the full ten days (the longer period seems to be general if the deceased had been married within the same village as her natal family). It is not usual to shave after the death of either wife-takers such as the FZH or the ZH, or wife-givers such as the MB, WF or WB, although a less elaborate mourning and purification procedure (involving mainly restrictions on food and the avoidance of auspicious ceremonies) is followed, generally lasting for five days for all those kin listed. On the other hand, the picture is modified somewhat by intra-

village marriage, at least on the scale it occurs in Karnāthu among the Gaddis. Almost any Gaddi death in Karnāthu tends to involve a great deal of mourning outside the deceased's sub-clan, with men shaving their heads for their non-agnatic elder 'brothers' or 'sisters' (MBC, FZC, MZC), their FZH, MB, WF, eZH or WeB, and the full period of mourning being observed. How typical Karnāthu is of Brahmauri communities generally I cannot be sure, although I checked my data with two Brahmaur-based purohits. In Thala, enquiries suggest a broadly similar pattern of observances, although my informants there stated that whilst the FZH, MB and ZH were all mourned for five days, with men shaving their heads at the end of this period, a WF and WB were never mourned to that extent.

Yet if mourning observances reveal a largely symmetrical treatment of wife-giving and wife-taking affines, two kinds of gift offered at different stages of the lengthy mortuary rites reveal the asymmetry familiar in the surrounding hypergamous milieu. First, on the night before a caubarkha, four years after a death, the gift known as nimantran is made by the deceased's family not only to a few Brahmans but also to a few relatives. The latter should belong to the generations junior to the person who died, but more particularly they count as wife-takers: bhānj (ZS), jawāi (DH) or dyotru (DS). This is completely in line with the pattern of distribution reported by Parry (1979: 301), and demonstrates a Brahmauri identification of the superiority of one set of affines which is at variance with the expressed ideology and empirical marriage patterns.

The second, and more interesting gift is the pāncdān,

or 'five gifts', which in high caste Kangra society goes to the funeral priest, or Cāraj, either immediately prior to death or in the days immediately afterwards. This is considered a horribly inauspicious gift, contaminated by its association with death, and would be quite unacceptable to a purohit. In Brahmauri society, however, as I mentioned in Chapter 3 in discussing the domestic priest's customary rewards, the pāncdān has rarely gone to the Cāraj, as this officiant has scarcely ever been called upon in the villages along the southern slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, and is totally unknown in Brahmaur. Instead, the pāncdān goes either to the purohit (the traditional practice), or to the deceased's sister's family (ZH, ZS) or a married daughter's family (DH). Three purohits I spoke to on the matter were most unhappy with this apparently recent trend, which has developed by all accounts over the past generation or two. Each insisted that the pāncdān was rightly the priest's - as one put it: "these days daughters and sisters snatch it themselves" - and neither they nor their patrons in Karnāthu and certain neighbouring villages considered that it was in the least compromising to accept such a gift.

There are, however, some signs of the infiltration of more orthodox Kangra views. Our Phākas Brahman landlord, an occasional purohit (without any particular patrons) who had left to settle near Deol, was adamant that the pāncdān could only be given to a Cāraj or, failing that, to a panda at Hardwar when the ashes of the deceased were taken for immersion. He made a great show of being appalled at the idea of such a dangerous gift going to the sister's or daughter's families. The occasion for these remarks was prior to a communal feast,

the sog, on the 13th day after a death, and I had been asking questions of quite a large group of men. Others then and later challenged our landlord's views as too rigid, and insisted that the Cāraj was never called to Karnāthu, reaffirming the acceptability of the pāncdān for either the purohit or for the specified nāte and riste. It would nevertheless be surprising if in the long run views such as our landlord expressed did not make headway.

Where the gift of pāncdān is conceptualised as dangerous and death-tainted, affines of any description - but especially wife-takers - would scarcely be appropriate recipients. But in a milieu where it lacks these connotations, its offering to the dead person's sister's or daughter's family makes sense in terms of much more general Hindu notions. This is because on occasions where gifts (dān), bringing merit to the donor, may be offered to a Brahman priest, it is often valid also, in lieu or in addition, to offer them to the ZH, DH or, par excellence, the ZS. In such a context these relatives are assimilated with Brahmans; and as Brahmans are themselves identified with the divine, there is a sense in which the ZS, etc. is also identified with divinity (cf. Dumont 1966: 95; Parry 1979: 5).

The interesting point about the permissibility of the ZS, ZH or DH receiving the pāncdān in Brahmauri society is that it simultaneously highlights their unorthodoxy and their orthodoxy in relation to high caste Kangra norms. I have dwelt on the former aspect enough: the receipt of what is generally thought of as a highly contaminating gift. Yet this practice also demonstrates vividly that the Brahmauris

recognise here a radical difference between two kinds of affinally-linked relative, exactly along the lines of the ubiquitous north Indian distinction between wife-givers and -takers.

Having said that the ZC are the perfect affinal recipients of dān, like Brahmans, I turn now to a more detailed look at the key māma-bhānj/i (MB: ZS/D) relationship. I have earlier mentioned that, quite atypically in relation to other formal greetings between relatives of different generations, the MB touches the feet of his ZC, clearly suggesting the superior status of the wife-receivers, even though at the explicit level no such implication is admitted. The tonsure of a young high caste boy provides another context for a play on the status of the māma towards his bhānj. Popularly known as kathu (occasionally by the Sanskrit mundan), tonsure is performed by the barber, after the first cuts of hair have been made either by a full or classificatory māma, or by a man of low caste (none particularly specified, but commonly Sipi) who is henceforth referred to as the boy's māma (a kind of dharm-māma), and is given in theory the same role and responsibilities as a genealogical māma (including apparently at the bhānj's wedding). I never witnessed a tonsure, but believe that it is usual for the māma to be a genealogical one. Yet in Thala I was told that a low caste man was preferred, although my initial informant there had had his first locks cut by his genealogical MB. The main point nevertheless is the assimilation of a wife-giving relative with an obviously inferior status.

In the case of the Sipis, an interesting reversal seems

to occur, for I was told that they generally prefer a high caste man to become the boy's māma by performing the same task at tonsure. This shows clearly that while the Sipis (or other low castes) may follow a cultural pattern which is consistent with asymmetry between two sets of affines (their presentation of the pāncdān to the sister's family, for instance), this indicates a solely cultural conformity with or emulation of the high castes; there is no trace of the unequal status of wife-givers and wife-takers having a proper structural foundation in the castes at the bottom of the hierarchy, in a way that it would be hard to claim of the Gaddis or Brahmauri Brahmans, despite the egalitarian tenor of their marriage systems. For this example shows the Sipis following the cultural pattern of their high castes, but with the significant structural signs reversed, so to speak. Needless to say, this should not be taken to mean that in this case wife-givers are, at a latent level, superior, but rather that the symbolism of asymmetry is irrelevant. The determining factors are almost certainly the stable and non-defensive character of low caste endogamy (see last section), and its corollary, that agnatic ties are of less primacy, with relatively greater weight being paid to bilateral ties (following Yalman 1967: 280): this reduces the scope for marked distinctions between the status of the two sides to a marriage. In this Sipi example, I would suggest that it is the māma's status as a consanguine (the brother of the mother) which is given institutional recognition; in the case of the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans, it is the māma's status as an affine (a wife-giver) on which play is made [16]. I shall return to this theme later.

Finally, I do not want to leave consideration of the MB: ZC relationship without looking at the occasion which marks the culmination of the maternal uncle's ceremonial obligations to his nephew and niece: their weddings. In essentials the pattern I shall describe, applicable to the three main Brahmauri castes, mirrors that reported by Parry (1979: 306), the differences being of detail rather than structurally significant. Both māmas, the groom's and the bride's, pay for a wedding feast (dhām), although not necessarily for one of the main feasts involving guests from both sides; both provide certain items of clothing, although while the bride's MB gives something to the bridegroom the latter's MB does not give clothes to the bride; and both bear a large part of the priestly costs of their side (for the hawan). But in addition, the bride's māma has further costs to bear and duties to perform. Above all, he is expected to provide the ved, the bamboo-framed canopy beneath which the sacred parts of the marriage ritual take place at the bride's home. He is also required to carry his niece to the ved so that she can process around the sacred fire (hawan) linked to her groom in the crucial rite known as ved pherna. He also anoints the feet of the couple as they complete their three (traditionally four [17] or seven) circumambulations of the fire.

Now inasmuch as the prestations flow from the MB to his ZC, without any return which would nullify their value, the pattern is asymmetrical, and is entirely consistent with a pattern of alliance in which wife-takers rank over wife-givers. I would additionally agree with Parry that the particular responsibilities of the bride's māma show that he plays a big

part in giving away the girl to her conjugal family: most demonstrably when he brings her out to perform, on her own or supported by a brother, the three rounds of the fire. In this sense, the role of the bride's MB has structural implications that the role of the groom's MB lacks, for the prestations of the latter exclusively involve his own sister's family.

Yet while the pattern of prestations is manifestly consistent with affinal asymmetry, I am not convinced that it can be read solely as conclusive evidence of an underlying or unadmitted asymmetry in this context. This is because the pattern is also consistent with an emphasis on the consanguinity rather than the affinity of the MB. Thus, if from one perspective the MB of the bride acts out his inferiority in relation to the wife-takers of his wife-takers; from another perspective the MB's prestations at his niece's wedding affirm the bilateral nature of the blood links: just as her father gives her away in marriage, so her mother's brother shares the responsibility with him, as the closest representative of the maternal side. In the case of a ZS's wedding, there is no spouse to give away, and accordingly the MB fulfils lesser responsibilities. The former perspective will obviously make more sense in a hypergamous milieu. I suggest that the latter makes more sense where endogamy and isogamy are most deep-rooted (i.e. in the low castes). In the case of the Gaddis or Brahmauri Brahmans both are applicable to a certain extent. The particularity (and ambiguity) of the MB's position is of course that he is the affinal consanguine or consanguineal affine par excellence in patrilineal north India.

All this is to evoke the article by Dumont which provided my starting point in this chapter; and especially the remark (quoted earlier) that "affinity has something of a diachronic dimension: it does not...disappear into consanguinity for the next generation" (1966: 95). In other words, although on the face of it the affinity of the WB: ZH tie gives way to the tie of (classificatory) siblingship between their children (MBC: FZC), there is a strong sense in which the two families or groups so related remain affines, whatever siblingship may imply about consanguinity. It is of course axiomatic that the status of the MB in a patrilineal system as affine and/or consanguine cannot be assumed a priori but must be shown empirically (cf. Leach 1961). The existing north Indian ethnography makes it abundantly clear that the mother's filiation with the child is everywhere recognised, this being the obvious precondition for the bilateral conception of consanguinity. But at the same time, all non-agnatic consanguineal ties have a prominent affinal dimension also, as Dumont (ibid) insisted (cf. also Inden & Nicholas 1977; Krause 1980; Parry 1979). Where differences occur is in the emphasis placed on the two aspects. My reading of the Brahmauri castes' practices is that in 'profane' day-to-day activities the emphasis is on the fact that riste/ristedār (as opposed to nāte) are kinsmen (consanguines). This is illustrated in the common remarks made to me that the MB, assuming he lives locally and is seen on a regular basis, is virtually a member of the family or household. It also ties in with the notably egalitarian tenor of day-to-day interaction among members of affinally-related lineages (assuming equivalent seniority), which I mentioned at

the beginning of this section. It is in more formal contexts that we may observe the stress changing, with the same people being treated in effect as affines. Moreover, in the main life-cycle rites this aspect becomes even more apparent, with the greater prestige of key wife-takers here given a degree of ceremonial expression among the two high castes that is not echoed in other spheres of Brahmauri social life. Thus, the variable emphasis on the affinity or the consanguinity of certain classes of relative is not something that differs just between one area and another, or one social group and another. It is equally a shift which takes place within one society according to the context.

It is precisely the dual character of the maternal uncle's position in the kinship structure which Newell failed to appreciate, when he analysed the MB: ZC tie in terms of the 'submerged descent line' (1962). His essentially Africanist - and Radcliffe-Brownian - approach to kinship led him to miss the affinal implications of this relationship - and thereby also the element of asymmetry which emerges at one level.

7.8 Conclusion: the Tension between Equality and Hierarchy.

In this chapter I have aimed to show that the marriage systems of the two Brahmauri high castes entail patterns of repeated marriage alliances structured on an egalitarian basis. My data thus provide further endorsement of Dumont's insight (1966, 1975) that, despite the lack of a positive marriage rule, the repetition of marriage ties is not foreign to north

India; and consequently that affinity is not a short-lived relationship which disappears after a single generation. But at the same time, my ethnography concerns a population where hierarchical principles, differentiating those who give wives and those who receive them, are manifestly subordinated to the primary emphasis on equality within the caste.

The interplay between the dominant tendency to equality and the muted or minor tendency to hierarchy may be summarised by using the three-fold analytical distinction between the behavioural, jural and categorical levels of social reality first presented by Needham (1972) and adopted recently by Good (1978, 1981) in his work on kinship and marriage in Tamil Nadu. The virtue of this analytical scheme lies simply in the reminder it gives that when anthropologists speak of ideology (in contrast to behaviour) they subsume two distinct levels or facets of reality: the level of rules and cultural statements or perceptions about society, and the underlying level of classification. Now at the behavioural or statistical level I have shown in this chapter that the marriage practices of the Brahmauri castes are unambiguously egalitarian at the present time. Not only are marriage alliances renewed, but this renewal is based on the two-way exchange of brides, in contrast to the pattern in Kangra high caste society, particularly the upper echelons of the Rajputs and Brahmans. At this level, wife-givers and wife-takers are one and the same.

At the jural and categoric levels matters are not quite so simple. To take the jural first, people state unequivocally that they marry their equals, and informants would never countenance the idea - in answer to my enquiries - that there

might be gradations of status within the caste or that wife-takers might be superior to wife-givers. Many of the usages discussed in the last section bear this out, and affirm the extent to which an ideology of egalitarian marriage is explicit and indeed axiomatic. But as I also showed in the last section, there are other contexts, notably transactions in life-cycle rites, where customary rules amount to a tacit recognition that the givers and receivers of wives are not quite equal. I say tacit because the significance of these rules - the limited intrusion of hierarchical principles into an overwhelmingly egalitarian system - goes unadmitted. Their significance derives from their place within a hierarchically structured marriage system, and they are clues to the potential within this egalitarian and isogamous system for a shift towards hierarchy. In Salzman's words, these particular usages are "components which can be best understood as...alternatives to currently operating forms" (1978: 619).

The categoric level, which in the context of an analysis of kinship and marriage refers to the classification of kin primarily, is the subject of the next chapter. But I would just note here that the Brahmauri terminology is of an 'intermediate' character, in the sense that the terminologies of other societies in the region take symmetry in the classification of kin a great deal further than do the Brahmauris. To this extent, empirical marriage practices and the explicit ideology of equality are not wholly matched by a logically congruent terminology. These remarks beg certain questions which I prefer to tackle in the next chapter [18].

Another sociologically important feature of the marriage systems of the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans is their strict endogamy, a point I have stressed frequently. At the foot of the caste hierarchy (i.e. the Sipis or Rihāras) this is wholly predictable and a characteristic pan-Indian pattern (cf. Ahmad 1978: 175). But given the pervasive regional influence of Rajput and, to a scarcely lesser extent, Brahman hypergamy, the segregation and non-absorption of the Gaddis and Brahmauri Brahmans in Kangra is particularly striking. As I see it, this remarkably effective closure is rooted in strategic considerations: how can status and a once fairly prestigious identity be preserved?

The initiative for the closure undoubtedly comes from the two Brahmauri castes themselves. It rests on a withholding of daughters from marriage 'outside', which it appears dates back to the earliest period of settlement in Kangra. But a crucial part of an explanation of this endogamy must also be the emphasis placed on 'Gaddi' (i.e. Brahmauri) ethnicity. In Kangra, Brahmauris are seen as a group apart (cf. Parry's remark, quoted earlier, that "the villagers know that there are different castes of Gaddi...but...it does not occur to them to rank these castes in relation to village castes" (1979: 103)). Their distinctiveness, especially in the mauzas along the Dhaula Dhar, is given emphasis in both dress and language, and enhanced by the popular association of Gaddis with pastoralism. All this ensures that Brahmauri identity has had and continues to have a high profile in Kangra; and one consequence has been the creation of an effective caste-type barrier between the Brahmauri castes and their counterparts

in the wider society. A strong 'Gaddi' or Brahmauri ethnic identity in Kangra has thus contributed to the maintenance of a closed marriage system: it is, in effect, one way of saying, 'Keep off our daughters'. It would be wrong to infer from this, however, that the distinctiveness of the Brahmauris is buttressed by indigenous notions of blood and bodily substance. No such local theory might be said to rule out marriage between Gaddis and other Rajputs, or Brahmauri Brahmans and other Brahmans, either from the point of view of the Brahmauris themselves or, so far as my limited knowledge goes, of the Rajputs and Brahmans generally.

The distinctively high profile of the Brahmauri castes in Kangra is of interest partly because of the contrast it provides with what is known about the position of these castes in the middle section of the Rāvi valley, between Chamba town and the boundary of Brahmaur tehsīl. There, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, the signs are that Brahmans and Gaddis have increasingly preferred to disguise or drop their Brahmauri status, in the expectation of merging themselves with the wider hierarchy. An unwillingness to admit to a Brahmauri identity, the denial of social ties with Brahmaur, and the abandonment of traditional dress (except, significantly, on festive occasions) were clues which I picked up during my three short visits to the village of Chatrārhi and its vicinity - and this is a locality which is far closer in mileage to Brahmaur than to Chamba itself. Thus, whatever the factors influencing this line of development are, we find a strategy which is quite different to that followed by Brahmauris in the villages I know in Palampur. The lack of data - my own or anyone else's -

on the Brahmauris or ex-Brahmauris of the mid-Rāvi valley in Chamba makes it hard to take this contrast further; but what we can say is that in both of these areas where the Brahmauri social system 'meets' the wider society, marriage practices and the manipulation of identity have gone hand-in-hand, but in somewhat different directions [19]. This is not to assert that 'Gaddi' or Brahmauri identity is never deliberately shed or gradually lost in Palampur, still less in Kangra generally; and it would be particularly foolish to imply that Brahmauri society in Palampur had definite boundaries that were wholly absent in the mid-Rāvi. What I would say is simply that until now the Brahmauris' distinctive identity has been strongly maintained in the core locations - that is, in the mauzas running up to the Dhaula Dhar - and that a relatively effective boundary has been created, separating them from the wider Kangra society with some success.

I shall end this chapter with a brief reference to one theoretical issue concerning the analysis of the internal structure of the caste. An important dimension of Dumont's analysis of the encompassing ideology has been his insistence that hierarchy permeates the entire system - within castes as much as in relations between castes. As he put it on one occasion:

> "Castes are not homogeneous status groups hierarchized from outside, an ordered series of pigeon-holes. This is a substantialist fallacy. The hierarchical principle does not stop at the outward boundary of each particular caste-group, it permeates it, and the caste boundary is only one more marked cleavage than others" (1964: 83).

An alternative approach to the lack of homogeneity within castes comes from Pocock (1972: 65), who reserves the concept of 'status' strictly for inter-caste relations, while employing 'standing' when speaking of differentiation within the caste. Among subsequent authors, Fuller (1975: 306-9), in his examination of the structure of the Nayar caste, gives qualified approval to Pocock's distinction, but nonetheless prefers to set it aside in favour of his own model of a continuum from stable to unstable statuses, which is not tied to the inter-caste/intra-caste or endogamous/exogamous contrasts. Parry sides much more with Dumont than with Pocock, and his summary is that

> "almost every social relationship in Kangra is pervaded by the spirit of hierarchy, and that in this respect there is no fundamental distinction between inter-caste and intra-caste relations. The relationship between junior agnates and their seniors, between wife-givers and wife-takers and between members of different biradaris of the same caste has something of the same quality as the relationship between one caste and another" (1979: 314).

Now it is not my intention to enter the debate on the relative merits of either Dumont's or Pocock's approaches to the analysis of differentiation within the caste. From my point of view, all four authors I have cited have one thing in common: namely that they are dealing with extremely large-scale systems characterised by marked internal gradations of rank and prestige. With my ethnography, however, in a much smaller social system (even so, 70-80,000 strong), there is plenty of evidence in this chapter that the hierarchical principle does have boundaries. Hierarchy does not permeate

the internal structure of the Gaddi or Brahmauri Brahman castes today (even though evidently it used to). To this extent, there is a discontinuity in the Brahmauri system between relations across castes and relations within the caste, for in the latter equality intervenes as the dominant principle. It must, clearly, be a matter for empirical determination where the limits to hierarchy are drawn in any particular system or subsystem. (I have phrased it in this way because, for example, Brahmauri society can obviously be looked at both as a semi-autonomous system in its own right, and as a constituent of the wider regional structure.) I would not dispute that Parry's Dumontian model characterises accurately the pattern of relations general in the upper half of the regional caste hierarchy. This is, moreover, the prestigious pattern, in Kangra as in north India as a whole. Nevertheless, the more that isogamy and endogamy become prominent - whether as one moves geographically into the mountains or socially down the caste hierarchy - the more this model becomes deficient and needs supplementing by the recognition that the emergence of equality in the marriage system puts firm limits to the encroachment of hierarchical notions.

CHAPTER 8. BRAHMAURI KINSHIP CLASSIFICATION.

8.1 Introduction.

In a study of a system of kinship and marriage it is virtually axiomatic that an analysis of the kinship terminology is an integral part of the overall account. Beyond this initial and basic consensus, however, there are long-running theoretical controversies. Chief among these is the question of the relationship between the domain of kin classification, on the one hand, and the jural and behavioural levels of social reality, on the other (to follow Needham's three level model (1972)). What kind of social fact can legitimately be inferred from terminological evidence? There is also a distinct but related debate over how to define the terminological domain in the first place. It is because this whole area is widely considered to be so problematic that it makes sense to tackle it as a separate topic in a chapter on its own.

The perceived problem with kinship terminologies may be introduced by the following quotations from authors who are particularly sceptical about their colleagues' approaches. Scheffler, for example, has written recently:

> "Most recent attempts to specify the structures of north Indian systems of kin classification have been motivated by the assumption that these systems somehow 'encode' basic principles of social structure. Following the

> lead of Dumont (1966), most writers have attempted to detect correspondences between kin classification and relations between persons as members of families or larger kin groups related by marriage. By and large, however, hypotheses about such correspondences have not fared well" (1980: 148).

His main charge, then, is that anthropologists "shortcut the interpretative process by 'reading' terminological structure from social structure" (ibid: 157). His is a 'formal' analysis of north Indian material; but whilst proponents of such an approach tend more than others to treat terminology as autonomous, and hence are more likely to eschew drawing connections with other levels of the social structure (although Scheffler actually denies that this is his intention (ibid: 157)), anthropologists of other persuasions would to differing degrees share similar doubts. Inden & Nicholas argue:

> "it has been considered almost obligatory that a study of kinship include an attempt to analyze the structure of the terminology itself. The first difficulty encountered in such attempts is the problem of defining what the kinship terminology or lexicon is in a given group or society...The other major difficulty centers on the question of just what 'structure' or 'patterns' the classification of the kinship terms is supposed to reflect or represent" (1977: 67-8).

Finally, Fruzzetti & Ostor, whose ethnography, like the previous authors', comes from Bengal, cover some of the same ground:

> "Nearly all approaches to Indian kinship systems take it for granted that we know what constitutes a kinship term, what terms form a part of the nomenclature, and what makes up the 'kinship universe'...We would suggest, however, that not only is terminology a poor guide to kinship, but that we do not even know what constitutes kinship in north India" (1976: 64-5).

All these authors have based their arguments on north Indian ethnography, and there are particular reasons why north Indian terminologies present problems of analysis. But it would be misleading to imply that controversy surrounding terminological analysis is confined to north Indian systems, for besides the issues raised by regional particularities, there are also general issues applicable throughout the subcontinent and, indeed, throughout the world.

My own position is that while the statements I have quoted reflect real problems of analysis, these would be recognised by most anthropologists. Few - at least in the post-Dumontian period - have written as if the question of what terminologies 'mean' is unproblematic. To a considerable extent, then, these authors have constructed targets of straw. Nearly two decades ago Dumont stressed, in a cryptic and much quoted aphorism, that "kinship terminologies have not as their function to register groups" (1964: 78), which is a perhaps oblique way of insisting that group structures 'on the ground' are not necessarily reflected in terminology. Moreover, his shift in interest from south to north India led him to even more cautious formulations:

> "while we were prepared on the basis of South Indian experience to give to the vocabulary of kinship a high status as the chart of kinship conceptions and behaviour, we are compelled to acknowledge that the very complicated Northern vocabulary has a different, and much more modest, place in the whole" (1966: 114).

Dumont also speaks of the "crystal-clear Dravidian scheme" in contrast to the "very approximate language" of the northern terminologies, and introduces the metaphor of the centre of

gravity of a kinship system lying sometimes in the terminology (as in the Dravidian environment) and sometimes elsewhere (as in the north of India) (1966: 103). Now however over-simplified some of these images are, and however much Dumont's attempt to discern a structure in the north Indian terminology has been developed subsequently, these are hardly the views of someone trying to read terminological structure directly from social structure. Vatuk (1969) likewise assumes no simplistic connection between the Meerut terminology and other levels of the overall kinship and marriage system.

A more sympathetic view of the criticisms raised by the authors quoted at the start would be possible if their varying approaches had yielded major substantive insights into the relationship between the terminology and the kinship system as a whole. Yet this has not been the case in my view. Inden & Nicholas stick strictly within indigenous kinship conceptions. Fruzzetti & Ostor, despite their expressed reservations, argue within the framework adopted by Dumont and Vatuk (see 1976: 91). And Scheffler concludes that

> "the argument...was not directed against the general heuristic assumption that the structures of systems of kin classification are socially motivated... because there is, I think, more than sufficient comparative and historical evidence to the contrary" (1980: 157).

His methodological strictures boil down to the uncontroversial statement that we should leave open

> "the questions to what degree, if any, and precisely how the structure of the system of kin classification may reflect, express, or (more weakly) be consistent with other features of social structure. The qualifications

> 'if any' and 'may' are important, not because we have good reasons to believe that in some instances no such relationships exist, but because it is methodologically essential to allow for the possibility of demonstrating that in some instance or instances they do not exist" (ibid: 135-6).

All of which is a bit anticlimactic.

As clear a statement as any concerning the relationship between terminology and the overall kinship and marriage system has come from Good (1981). Framing his analysis in terms of Needham's three-level model (1972) which I referred to before, he sums up:

> "Neither the terminological structure nor the marriage rules can therefore be said to be <u>contradictory</u>, with respect either to each other or to actual behaviour. At the same time, there are inconsistencies and incongruences, logical lacunae not serious enough to cause the collapse of the system. The extent of this <u>inconsistency</u> is explored for the K.K.Maravar case, after which it is argued that, in general, inter-level incongruence is not only inevitable in practice but necessary in theory" (ibid: 123, author's emphasis).

Moreover, as Good recognises, kinship terminology is one aspect of a marriage system - relatively autonomous it may be, but it is an aspect nonetheless. As he puts it, "there are then, three different levels at which marriageability can be studied" (ibid: 109). (This is in fact to echo the title of an early article by Dumont: 'The Dravidian kinship terminology as an expression of marriage' (1953)). It is this fundamental (social) fact which Scheffler and Inden & Nicholas seem to overlook: in their justified desire to avoid a kind of crude over-determination of the kinship terminology by the 'social structure' they seem to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Of course the connection between terminology and marriage is clearer where categories of 'marriageable women' or 'marriageable men' are terminologically specified, as in prescriptive systems, such as most Dravidian ones (cf. Good 1981; Needham 1962, 1972; Stirrat 1977). It is not perhaps surprising that Dumont, after his south Indian field experience, should have found north Indian terminology so difficult a code to crack (1966). Yet a connection between terminology and marriage is nevertheless intrinsic to the meaning of a terminological system, regardless of whether one is dealing with an 'elementary' or a 'complex' structure.

To move now to the specific issues raised by analyses of north Indian kin term data, two recurrent topics have been at the centre of debate. The first is whether or not north Indian terminologies generally are based on or reflect an opposition between consanguinity and affinity. The polar positions are expressed in Dumont's statement, on one side:

> "Instead of the structure of the terminology being based on affinity in its contrast to consanguinity as it is in the South, the importance of affinity is marked in North Indian terminology only by the great number of terms for affinal relatives" (1966: 114).

And on the other side by Scheffler, who states:

> "Dumont to the contrary...the structure of the terminology <u>is</u> based on an opposition between consanguinity and affinity or, more precisely, on a set of oppositions between relationship by birth and relationship by marriage" (1980: 148, author's emphasis).

Others have expressed doubts about this opposition primarily on the grounds that it corresponds precisely to no indigenous conceptions (chiefly Inden and Nicholas 1977: 68-9).

The second recurring topic is whether or not the structure of north Indian terminologies generally is based on or consistent with the tendency towards affinal asymmetry, and ultimately hypergamy, at the jural and behavioural levels. Dumont, both in his 1966 and 1975 articles, avoids stating that it does, arguing rather that the asymmetry manifested in the irreversible flow of brides at marriage and in the crucially important affinal prestations set up by marriage is largely obscured by the terminology. Vatuk goes further than Dumont in her 1969 article in arguing that the terminology differentiates wife-givers and wife-takers (cf. especially her Figs. 2 & 3, pp. 105-6). A later article suggests some qualifications to her earlier position, however: I have in mind the emphasis she places on a bilateral dimension to the key concept of dhyāne, which she expressly detaches from an interpretation solely within the terms of a wife-giving/wife-taking model (1975: 178-80, 186-94). Both these writers, then, have been extremely cautious in what they do infer from the terminological evidence. Certainly, neither suggests that the terminology provides a kind of model of a marriage system, and as Fruzzetti & Ostor rightly put it: "when Dumont and Vatuk discuss the irreversibility of direction in marriage they are no longer arguing from within the terminology" (1976: 92). At the same time, Dumont and Vatuk take it as methodologically appropriate to look for evidence of asymmetrical or hypergamous principles being reflected in the terminology, and Fruzzetti & Ostor are again correct in stating that for Dumont "hypergamy ...complements the terminology, without being required by the terminology" (ibid).

It is this methodological stance which Scheffler attacks as 'premature' in the light of present knowledge, although the writer whose interpretation he challenges specifically is neither Dumont nor Vatuk but Carter (1974) (a fellow componential analyst who, unlike most anthropologists of his persuasion, is interested in the social structural concomitants of kinship terminologies) (Scheffler 1980: 149-56).

My own position on these issues will, I hope, emerge in the course of consideration of the ethnographic material from Kangra and Chamba which I shall now go on to present. My intellectual sympathies lie with Dumont and Vatuk (and to some extent Fruzzetti & Ostor), however, rather than with Scheffler. The data I shall present seem to me to affirm that certain logical shifts in the classification of kin in different localities of the region I am concerned with may be correlated with the passage across a continuum from thoroughgoing hypergamy to an equally thoroughgoing isogamy. No neat, simplistic 'reflection' is postulated; but it would, I maintain, be perverse to suggest that the shifts in the mode of classification which I shall discuss could be independent of transformations in the wider kinship and marriage systems.

8.2 The Ethnographic Evidence.

Increasingly, anthropologists of India have started to recognise that any account of a particular kinship terminology is deficient unless it incorporates certain general categorical terms, which stand at a much higher level of inclusion than

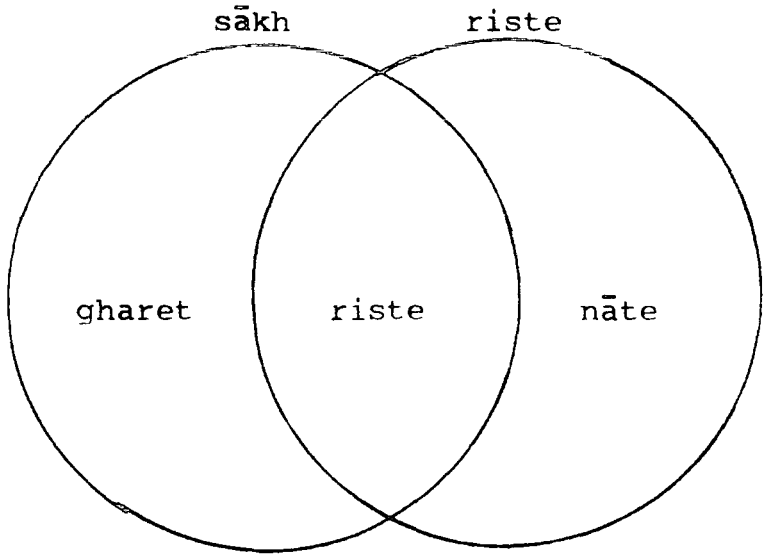
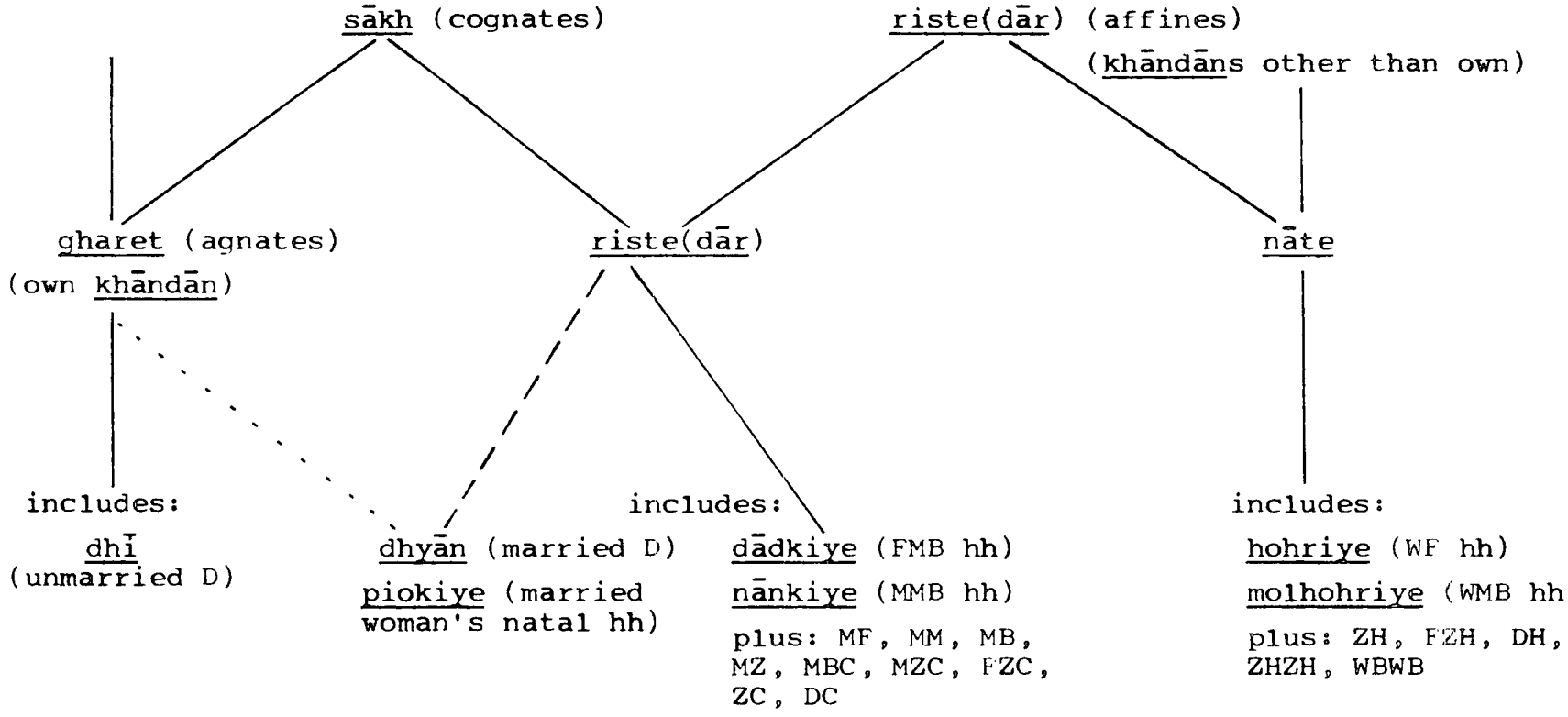


FIGURE 11. The Classification of Kin: the Overall Framework (A)

those which traditionally feature in lists of kin terms (cf. Inden & Nicholas 1977: Krause 1980: 181-87; Majumdar 1962: 97-8; Parry 1979: 138,297). Among the Brahmauris the main such category terms are presented in Figures 11 and 12. Gharet, riste(dār) and nāte have all been mentioned and used before; sākh has not. This is because whilst the former three terms are all part of day-to-day usage, in my experience sākh is employed much more rarely. An adequate account of Brahmauri kinship could omit sākh, in a way that the other categories could never be left out.

What we have here are two different ways of carving up the kinship domain. It would not quite be justified to see the two in terms of the opposition between the operative structure and the 'structure in reserve' (Salzman 1978), since the less common alternative is still perfectly familiar and a good deal more than a temporarily unrealised potentiality.



Notes. The strength of the dotted lines to dhyan indicates that this is not unambiguously a riste relationship: the transfer of a woman at marriage to her husband's lineage is not unqualified. Related to this point, the terms hohriye and molhohriye would also be used by a wife of her HF's and HMB's households respectively. This suggests that to some degree a married woman continues to belong to her natal group, and views her conjugal household as affinal.

FIGURE 12. The Classification of Kin: the Overall Framework (B).

But the arrangement does, nevertheless, tend in that direction.

Commonly, at the most general level gharet (agnates) are differentiated from riste(dār), the latter at this level embracing all non-agnatic cognates and purely affinal kin. In this schema, the riste(dār) category is then broken down into a subcategory of cognatic or consanguineal kin (riste(dār) also), and a subcategory of purely affinal relatives (nāte). This is the classification I have referred to at earlier points. It corresponds to the classification in use widely in Kangra [1]; and with the basic distinction being between gharet and riste(dār) it affirms the primacy of patrilineal affiliation: other distinctions are secondary.

Yet from the alternative and much less common perspective, gharet is subsumed within the more general category of sākh, which defines a kind of cognatic kindred. With riste(dār) also a subcategory of sākh, the primary distinction is thus not between agnates and non-agnates (who are in effect all affines), but instead is between all cognates and affines (nāte) (re. sākh, cf. Leaf on Punjabi kin terms (1971: 549)).

Now clearly the implications of these two perspectives are quite different. The former ties in more closely with an explicit ideology that emphasises the patrilineal inheritance of blood (khūn). This in turn is tantamount to recognising the agnatic group as the status-bearing unit (see Parry 1979: 133). (The consanguinity of riste is recognised in this model, but at a secondary level.) The latter perspective ties in with an ideology that stresses more the bilateral nature of blood links [2]. This means that status is transmitted through both the father and the mother. As Parry has reported, Kangra people "switch

capriciously" between these two discrepant theories of blood (1979: 223). (However, he reports only the gharet-ristedār distinction, and gives no term such as sākh which would correspond to a bilateral definition of recognised blood links.)

Taking these points further, there is an indirect association between the two models of the kinship universe I have presented and the contrast between the principles of hypergamy and isogamy. As Barth (1960: 132) and Yalman (1967: 280,355) among others have pointed out, the stronger the ideology that status is transmitted patrilineally, the less the stress that in theory need be placed on strict endogamy. This is a model for hypergamy, because it nullifies any problem over the fact that the bride is, axiomatically, of lower status than her husband: within culturally defined limits her lower status will not affect the status of her children. On the other hand, the concomitant of status transmission through both parents is that endogamy must be strict; unless husband and wife are of the same status, the children's status will be compromised. This is a model for isogamy.

But in moving from the abstract to the level of the particular case study two points should be made. First, it is interesting to find that in practice the Brahmauri castes give weight to a model of the kinship domain which, in its emphasis on agnatic identity, is more suitable to hypergamy than to isogamy - despite their own firmly established isogamous marriage systems. Certainly this demonstrates amply that there is no simple reflection between kin categories and other levels of the social structure. Tentatively, I would associate the primacy of the gharet-riste(dār) opposition in Brahmauri

society today both with the Gaddis' own former internal caste structure, with its four ranked grades, and with the all-pervading regional dominance of the hypergamous milieu Parry describes. Second, it is important to note that whilst the two models of the kinship domain exhibit different orientations, they are not wholly mutually exclusive. Thus, in the dominant model the consanguinity of riste(dār) is recognised at a secondary level, in opposition to nāte; similarly, a contrast between agnatic and non-agnatic cognates is intact in the minor model, albeit subsumed under the major distinction.

Before leaving this issue, I should emphasise that it is an analytical step to infer that the Brahmauris (and, judging by Parry's comments on 'local genetic theory', Kangra people generally) have at hand two alternative models of their kinship universe. So far as the people themselves are concerned, there are simply a set of terms, several of which have overlapping shades of meaning or reference, and some of which crop up in conversation more regularly than others. But I consider that I am justified in drawing this inference from the data, partly on the grounds of my experience of witnessing these categories being used, which very much showed that the gharet-riste(dār) distinction was primary, and partly because of the meaning of the categories themselves.

In moving towards more exclusive levels of classification I wish to comment briefly on the position within the overall framework of a married woman in relation to her natal and conjugal families. Now strictly women are formally transferred at marriage to their husband's family (cf. Chapter 2) [3]: the gharet of a wife are her husband's gharet, not her brothers'.

Since a married daughter is no longer part of the category of gharet to her natal agnates, it follows that she is their risti. Yet it would not be wholly adequate to describe her as their risti either. The formal transfer of a woman to her husband's group does not capture fully the reality of the married woman's position, and I would concur with Vatuk's comment that "there is in practice considerable ambiguity in the position of a married woman vis-a-vis her natal and conjugal families - in an important sense she belongs to both" (1975: 178) (see my Figure 12). The claim made by some of my informants that a daughter remained a dhi to her own parents after her marriage (the term dhi is otherwise reserved for unmarried daughters), even though to all other natal agnates she becomes a dhyān, seems to bear this out. Furthermore, the transfer to a husband's group is reversible (through separation and divorce), and thus married women retain the potential to become gharet of their natal group once again. The scope for varying emphases to be placed on the position of the married woman in relation to her two homes, from one caste or locality to another, is suggested in the ethnography from Himachal Pradesh. Whilst Parry, like me, speaks of gharet being a category which basically excludes married daughters and includes wives (1979: 138), Sharma indicates that in Una, directly south of Kangra, a wife is always primarily an affine in her conjugal home (1978: 221) - which is to say, she could not be thought of as a risti (or equivalent) to her natal agnatic group.

I shall turn now to an examination of certain aspects of the Brahmauri terminological structure presented in Table 21.

TABLE 21.

Brahmauri Kinship Terminology [1].

Term	Genealogical Referent	Additional Referents	Level
purdādu	FFF	FMF	+3
purdādi	FFM	FMM	+3
purnānu	MFF	MMF	+3
purnāni	MFM	MMM	+3
dādu	FF	FFB, FMB, FFZH	+2
dādi	FM	W of dādu	+2
nānu	MF	MMB, MFB, MFZH	+2
nāni	MM	W of nānu	+2
bāp, bāpu	F		+1
cāca	F, FyB	FFBS, FFZS, FMZS, FMBS (younger than F)	+1
kāka	FyB	.....	+1
tāu	FeB	.....(elder than F)	+1
tāyi	FeBW	W of tāu	+1
cāci, kāki	FyBW	W of cāca, kāka	+1
ij, ijji	M	step-mother	+1
māma	MB	MFBS, MFZS, MMZS, MMBS, FBWB	+1
māmi	MBW	W of māma	+1
bubi	FZ	FFZD, FFBD, FMBD, FMZD	+1
buba, buāi	FZH	H of bubi	+1
mausi	MZ	MFBD, MMBD, MMZD, MFZD	+1
mausa, māsar	MZH	H of mausi	+1
hohra (sohra)	WF, HF	referents listed below, plus ZHF, BWF	+1
hāhu (sāsu)	WM, HM	referents listed below, plus ZHM, BWM	+1
terhohra	W/HFeB		+1
terhāhu	W/HFeBW		+1
pitrohra	W/HFyB		+1
pitrāhu	W/HFyBW		+1
molhohra	W/HMB		+1
molhāhu	W/HMBW		+1

(cont.)

Term	Genealogical Referent	Additional Referents	Level
bubhohra	W/HFZH		+1
bubhāhu	W/HFZ		+1
māhohra	W/HMZH		+1
māhāhu	W/HMZ		+1
bhāu [2]	B	FBS, MBS, FZS, MZS	0
bahin [3]	Z	FBD, MBD, FZD, MZD	0
bobo	eZ		0
ter/i bhāu/bahin	FeBS/D		0
patrer/i	FyBS/D		0
māler/i	MBS/D		0
buber/i	FZS/D		0
māser/i	MZS/D		0
bharoji, bhābhi	eBW	W of bhau (elder)	0
banoa, jīja	ZH	ZHB, H of bahin	0
sāla (m.s)	WB	BWB, WFBS, WMBS, WFZS, WMZS	0
sāli (m.s)	WZ	BWZ, ZHZ, WFBD, WMBD, WFZD, WMZD	0
sādhu bhāu (m.s)	WZH	BWZH	0
salain bahin (m.s)	WBW	BWBW	0
jeth, jethi (f.s)	HeB	all elder male cousins of H	0
dyor (f.s)	HyB	all younger male cousins of H	0
jethān (f.s)	HeBW	W of jeth	0
darān (f.s)	HyBW	W of dyor	0
rāhnu (f.s)	HeZ	all elder female cousins of H	0
nanān (f.s) [4]	HyZ	all younger female cousins of H	0
nanoi bhāu (f.s)	HZH		0
lāra	H		0
lāri	W		0
kurham	SWF, DHF	F of nuh & jawāi	0
kurhamani	SWM, DHM	M	0

(cont.)

Term	Genealogical Referent	Additional Referents	Level
putar, beta, munu	S		-1
dhiu, beti, muni	D		-1
bhatīja, bhatrīya [5]	BS	S of bhāu	-1
bhatīji, bhatri	BD	D of bhāu	-1
bhānj [6]	ZS	S of bahin, sāla, sāli, rāhnu/nanān	-1
bhānji	ZD	D of bahin, sāla, sāli, rāhnu/nanān	-1
jethutr/i	HeBC		-1
darutr/i	HyBC		-1
nūh	SW, yBW	W of bhatīja, bhānj jethutr, darutr, SSW, DSW	-1, 0 -2
jawāi	DH	H of bhatīji, bhānji, jethutri, darutri, SDH, DDH	-1 -2
potru	SS	S of bhatīja, bhānj	-2
potri	SD	D of bhatīja, bhānj	-2
dyotru	DS	S of bhatīji, bhānji	-2
dyotri	DD	D of bhatīji, bhānji	-2

Notes. 1. The terms and classification presented here correspond to usage in Karnathu and Phathahar, on the south side of the Dhaula Dhar, and Nayagraon, on the north side. Only terms of reference are listed.

2. In address the following are also bhau: WZH, HZH (terms of reference listed), plus ZHZH, WBWB, HBWB (no terms of reference).

3. In address the following are also bahin: WBW, HBW (terms of reference listed), plus BWBW, HZHZ, WZHZ (no terms of reference).

4. nanan is gradually making rahnu redundant, as the former comes to denote HZ regardless of age.

5. bhatriya/bhatri are more or less obsolete in Palampur, but are still widely thought of as the traditional Brahmauri terms.

6. The classification of WBC with ZC, and not with BC, is paradoxical in the light of reports by Newell (1967: 72), Parry (1979: 299) and Vatuk (1969: 100). But my informants were adamant. Their rationale, when I suggested that bhatija/i seemed more likely to me, was that because of the traditional prominence of batta-satta, one's WBC are classed as if they are more directly one's ZC. Oddly, this logic does not extend to the HZC.

Like Fruzzetti & Ostor (1976: 71) and Parry (1979: 297-9) before me, I have adopted Vatuk's format (1969: 98-100), specifying the 'core' genealogical referents separately from additional referents. This is not done from any prior assumptions about the 'true' referents of kinship terms, but because - as Parry notes - in Kangra people commonly speak about such-and-such a relative as their sakka bhāu or sakka māma, meaning their 'real' brother or mother's brother, and so on. The terms listed are those used in reference, with various key address usages appended in the notes. The classification presented in Table 21 derives chiefly from my work in Karnāthu and Phathāhar, but it is definitely applicable to Brahmaur also.

Although I have a few points to make about aspects of the 'plus 1' and 'minus 1' generation levels later, overall I shall have little to say about these parts of the terminological structure, and nothing to say about the second ascending and descending levels. The most interesting part of the structure is, predictably, the '0' level (Ego's level), and it is here that my analysis will be concentrated. Above all, it is in the structure of siblingship, and in the revealing classification of the ZHZ (m.s), that important clues may be found.

The configuration of siblingship in north India (and in Pahāri-speaking parts of Nepal) has been recognised as conceptually central to any analysis by the authors mentioned in the preceding section (i.e. Dumont 1966: 99; Vatuk 1969: 101). Its significance lies in the fact that not only does

siblingship cover all cognates of the same generation, that is both parallel and cross cousins (in contrast to typical Dravidian structures), but, more important in this context, it also includes a range of purely affinal relatives with whom there is no consanguineal link. It is these latter that Vatuk refers to as 'quasi-consanguines' or 'quasi-siblings', "genealogically 'affinal' relationships which are treated 'as if' they were based on more immediate consanguinity" (1975: 182, also 1969).

In the systems reported by Fruzzetti & Ostor (1976), Parry (1979) and Vatuk (1969), 'quasi-siblings' occupy an extremely restricted set of niches: they are those affines of affines who are either wife-givers to one's own wife-takers, or else the wife-takers of one's own wife-givers; in other words, groups in a structurally homologous position to one's own [4]. Such structural niches are typified by the WZH (sādhu bhāu or, in Hindi, bhāi) and the HBW (jethān/darān, bahin in address). Remoter specifications include HBWB, WZHB, BWZH as 'brother' and ZHBW, WZHZ, HBWZ as 'sister'. Yet this logic is not followed through consistently, for in Bengal, Kangra and Meerut the WFZS is classed along with the WB as sāla, while the HMBS is likewise classed with the HB as jeth or devar (or equivalent). The former is thus classed with wife-givers, the latter with wife-takers, even though they belong to groups in a structurally 'neutral' position (takers of givers or givers to takers). In Kangra at least, despite the terminological classification there is clearly some behavioural ambiguity surrounding appropriate deference patterns towards individuals in these niches, and Parry's overall assessment

is that those who have taken wives from the same wife-givers and given to the same wife-takers are in something of an ambiguous limbo vis-a-vis one another (ibid: 311-2).

In these systems, all other affines of affines are assimilated directly with affines: the key equations here are that ZHZH = ZH, WBWB = WB, HZHZ = HZ and BWBW = BW (Vatuk 1969). Thus, the wife-takers of one's wife-takers are structurally equated with one's wife-takers, the wife-givers of one's wife-givers with one's wife-givers.

It is this apparently widespread north Indian pattern from which the Brahmauri classification, like many in Pahari speaking zones, departs. For in the Brahmauri system all affines of affines are classed as siblings, whether they are givers of givers, takers of takers, or a combination of the two, where the linking relatives likewise belong to the '0' generation level [5]. The HZH is referred to with bhāu suffixed to the widespread term nanoi, while the WBW becomes salain bahin (and would never be nuh, as Parry reports for Kangra generally). There are no commonly used reference terms for more remote lateral extensions - in line with the wider Kangra pattern, yet in contrast to the structures reported by Fruzzetti & Ostor and Vatuk - but in address the underlying logic is extended, so that the ZHZH and WBWB are called bhāu, and the HZHZ and BWBW bahin. This is all in line with the pattern reported from north-west Nepal by Krause (1980: 172-4), and, as she observes, the classification of affines of affines with kin (consanguines) accords with an explicit ideology of marriage between equals and the reciprocal exchange of brides. Your ZHZH could well be your WBWB, who in turn could well be

a consanguine, a full or classificatory brother. A group of informants summed up neatly the position of these affines of affines within the framework of siblingship by saying that they are "nāte, but a kind of brother/sister too" [6].

The other important divergence in the Brahmauri structure at the '0' level from the configuration reported by Parry is the classification of the ZHZ (m.s) with the WZ as sāli. Now obviously non-prescriptive terminologies do not contain categories of 'marriageable men/women', i.e. categories which exist prior to marriage (cf. Stirrat 1977: 276). The closest that north Indian terminologies come to this is, however, in the category of sāli, for a man, as an unmarried WZ may always be seen as a possible or potential marriage partner. To class the ZHZ as a sāli is thus to identify her as marriageable. (There is no reciprocal term, for BWB (f.s).) What is more, through direct forms of exchange, typified in batta-satta, a man does indeed marry his ZHZ.

By contrast, in Kangra generally, there is no term for ZHZ (m.s) (Parry 1979: 299) [7]. The same is true of Meerut, and here Vatuk makes some interesting observations:

> "The ZHZ is neither a potential bride nor a 'sister' with whom marriage would be incestuous. She is an ineligible female of another kind: a woman who cannot be taken because she is of the group to which one gives and must continue to give. The absence of a term does not appear to be fortuitous" (1969: 107).

Yet unlike the avoidance which characterises the ZHZ-BWB relationship in high caste Kangra (for obvious reasons given the former's ineligibility in a hypergamous milieu), in Meerut this is a joking relationship, and Vatuk concludes:

> "the unmarriageability of BWB/ZHZ is not unambiguously established, and...concomitantly, the idea of exchange marriage (a violation of the principle of unidirectional bride-giving) retains an element of conceptual possibility. A fundamental repudiation of exchange marriage is revealed not only in the terminological scheme, but in the marriage rules that informants both quote and go to great lengths to conform to, while the possibility of such marriages is nevertheless hinted at elliptically in the context of stereotyped joking between the members of this terminologically indeterminate pair" (ibid: 109).

I have quoted Vatuk at length because her comments illustrate so well the logic whereby the ZHZ (m.s) is classed as sāli by Brahmauris. What merely has 'an element of conceptual possibility' about it in Meerut is conceptually central in Brahmauri society, as I showed in the last chapter; whilst marriageability is added to the joking and sexual innuendo Vatuk describes (which is in any case characteristic of the relationship between a man and his sāli among Brahmauris).

The pattern within the '0' level which I have depicted is one which the Brahmauris seem to share with their Pahāri speaking neighbours in western Himachal Pradesh. Thus, in Chota Bangāhal the HZH is nandoi bhāu, the WBW is salain bahin, and the ZHZ (m.s) is sāli. In north Churāh, among Hindus the HZH is bhā (B), the WBW is bhīn (Z), and the ZHZ (m.s) is sāli [8]. However, the Brahmauri terminological structure by no means takes principles of formal symmetry in classification as far as it might at this particular level, and I want now to go on to illuminate what I mean by this remark.

While the Brahmauri terminology does not differentiate between affines of affines, and classes them all with siblings,

there are important areas of the affinal structure at the level under discussion which conform much more closely to the configuration revealed in Vatuk's and Parry's terminologies. I have in mind the differentiation between two sets of affines (as opposed to affines of affines). The diagnostic features of this differentiation are that the ZH (banoa, jīja) is distinguished from the WB (sāla), and the HZ (rāhnu/ nanān) from the BW (bharoji/ bhābhi, nūh). In other words, while the wife-taker to the wife-taker is in this structure equated with the wife-giver to the wife-giver, the wife-taker and the wife-giver are not to be so equated. The only exception here is the specification of ZHZ as sāli. This helps to highlight the extent to which the Brahmauri kinship terminology is symmetrical and asymmetrical [9] in different areas of the '0' level structure. By turning now to a Pahāri speaking region further into the Himalayas in Chamba District, it is possible to show a wholly symmetrical terminological structure at this level; and thereby to situate the Brahmauri classification in a broader regional perspective.

The area chosen for this comparison is Pāngi, which is quite the remotest part of Chamba District, lying beyond the Pir Panjal along the Chandra Bhaga valley, wedged between the Lahaul valley to the east and Udhampur in Kashmir to the west. Virtually unstudied and sealed off for 5-6 months of the year by snow, Pāngi marks the very edge of the Indo-European speaking world, for to the north the languages spoken all belong to the Tibeto-Burman family (cf. Grierson 1916, vol IX, pt IV). Although Pāngi was one area I did not reach, I had three separate opportunities to interview

Pāngwālis [10], and made the collection and checking of kin terms a priority. I shall not present a complete Pāngi terminology, but limit myself to the range of terms which cover the '0' generation level (see Table 22).

TABLE 22.

Pāngi Kinship Terms, '0' Level [1].

Term	Sex of speaker	Referents
bheu, bhāu [2]	M,F	B, FBS, FZS, MBS, MZS, HZH, WZH
dei	M,F	eZ
bhāin [2]	M,F	yZ, FBD, FZD, MBD, MZD, HBW, WBW
mith	M	WB, ZH, BWB, ZHB
lebu	F	HB, ZH, BWB, ZHB
dhauji	M	WZ, BW, ZHZ, BWZ
rāhnu [3]	F	HZ, BW, ZHZ, BWZ

Notes. 1. This list covers terms of reference. In address these terms are used only of the elder half of a category (i.e. eZH, HeZ, ZHZe), the younger half being addressed by name. In reference, relative age may be designated by the addition of the prefix baṛa/i (for elder) or maṭhaṛ/maṭhi (for younger), except in the case of a 'real' eB, who is prefixed with jeṭha.

2. In address the following are also bheu: ZHZH, WBWB, BWZH, HBWB. Likewise, the following are bhain: BWBW, HZHZ, ZHBW, WZHZ. In reference, people in such genealogical niches are denoted descriptively.

3. Some informants, but not all, mentioned another term alongside rahnu, namely bhāni. Of those who mentioned it, some implied that it was synonymous with rahnu; but there are also signs that whilst rahnu covers HZ and ZHZ, bhani covers BW and BWZ.

This remarkably symmetrical system of classification (an element of ambiguity surrounding rāhnu and bhāni notwithstanding) is, moreover, not unique in the region. At Triloknāth in Lahaul (formerly Chamba Lahaul), during the course of

enquiries in this Hindu pocket about intermarriage with the Rānas around Ulānsa (Brahmaur) (see last chapter), I obtained a structurally similar terminology; one, indeed, which is even more economical, with no sex-of-speaker distinctions for affinal terms. (The four terms which comprise the '0' level are: kāka B etc; dede Z etc; kagāi BW etc; dhis ZH etc [11].) Now whereas Pāngi lies demonstrably within the Indo-European orbit, albeit at its very edge, the area around Triloknāth literally straddles the great Indo-European - Tibeto-Burman boundary (in fact Grierson classes 'Chamba Lahauli' with other Lahauli languages as part of the Western sub-group of complex pronominalized Tibeto-Burman languages (1916, vol III, pt I), although the terminology I collected is a syncretic mixture of Hindi and Tibetan-derived elements).

Yet it would be a serious mistake, in my view, for an Indianist to disregard the Pāngi, or for that matter the Triloknāth classification, on the grounds that, even if the religious identity of the people in question is Hindu, their systems are peripheral to considerations of north Indian Hindu social structure, and may owe more to Tibetan influences. For the fact is that Pāngi (and Triloknāth) reveal a classificatory pattern which works out and takes to a logical conclusion a potentiality for the symmetrical ordering of the '0' level structure which may be seen, in only partial form, in other Pahāri-speaking societies of western Himachal Pradesh.

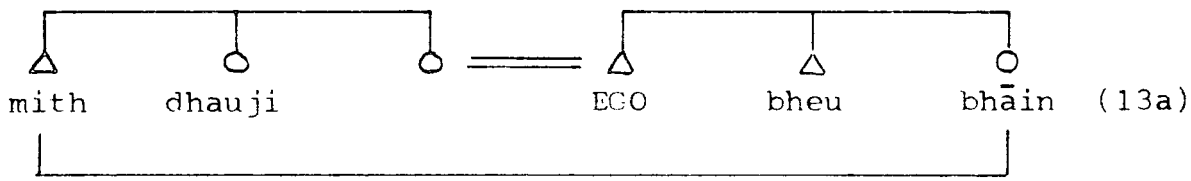
The Brahmauri classification is a good example of this partial symmetry, for the collapsing of distinctions among affines of affines appears to be a logical first step as one moves along a hypothetical continuum from full asymmetry to

full symmetry. But - aside from the suggestive and important identification of the ZHZ (m.s) as sāli - the Brahmauri classification does not go further and collapse the distinctions between affines of the wife-giving and wife-taking sides. To this extent, therefore, the behavioural pattern of reciprocity in marriage alliances and the explicit ideology of marriage being between equals are accompanied by an implicit ideology (if the categoric dimension of the kinship system as a whole can be so described) which takes structural symmetry between affinal categories to a certain point but not all the way.

Looking briefly at other adjoining areas, we find that the Chota Bangāhali terminology is the same at the '0' level. In north Churāh, on the other hand, kin term data I collected in Tīsa suggest that one key equation of the further step is made, with sāla including the WB and ZH (m.s). But the other key equation, of HZ and BW (f.s), is not made there[12]. However, it is only when we cross the Pir Panjal to these two remote fringes of the north Indian social system, Pāngi and Triloknāth, that we find examples of a completely symmetrical terminological structure at the conceptually central '0' level. What kind of marriage rules and empirical marriage patterns accompany this classification I cannot say much about, other than that marriage within the caste is assumed automatically to be between equals (for what that is worth as a general statement). Certainly in Pāngi unions of the batta-satta type are said to be common and approved[13].

Now just as the more fully asymmetrical '0' level structures of north India lend themselves to presentation in the idealised genealogical format, based on the one-way flow of brides,

chosen by Vatuk (1969: 107, Fig. 4) and Dumont (1975: 201, Fig. 2); so the Pāngi terminology lends itself to presentation in the idealised format of Figure 13 below, based on direct exchange of brides. The Brahmauri terminology, by contrast, does not lend itself to either format, being essentially intermediate between the two.



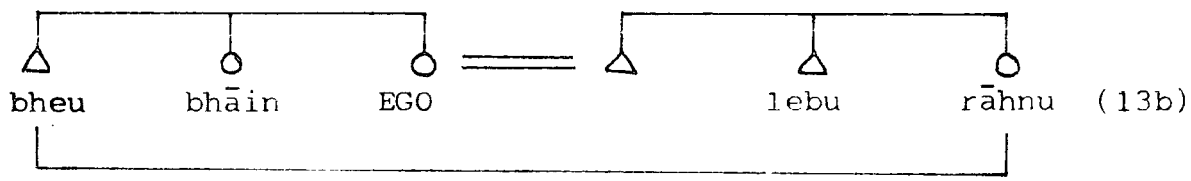


FIGURE 13. Idealised Representation of '0' Level Pāngi Kin Terms.

I want to hark back now to the perspective I outlined at the start of Chapter 7. There I argued that, however much hierarchy may be the encompassing ideology if we are to reflect in our general models of north Indian kinship the empirical diversity of this half of the subcontinent, egalitarian ideology and practices and the associated tendencies towards structural symmetry must be given due recognition. I also argued against any simple opposition between hypergamy

and isogamy, and in favour of seeing these as alternative forms of a common underlying structure. Both my data and Parry's, diachronic and synchronic, justify this perspective. Now in my analysis in Chapter 7, the marriage systems of the two Brahmauri high castes emerge manifestly at the egalitarian end of the spectrum, despite some evidence of secondary tendencies towards hierarchy. In this chapter, however, I have aimed to complete the analysis, and here, in the Brahmauri terminological structure, it becomes apparent that the tendency towards symmetry in the classification of the crucial '0' level is significantly qualified. More symmetrical structures are not just logically possible, but actually exist, as I have shown in the examples of Pāngi and Triloknāth. And just as Brahmauri high caste isogamy and Chamba-Kangra hypergamy are variants of a common structure, so in my view may the kinship terminologies of this region be interpreted as transformations of one another. Whatever the lexical distance between the Pāngi terminology and the more-or-less standard Hindi/Punjabi terminology in Kangra, we should not be distracted from recognising the structural relationship that links them both, and the intermediate position of the Brahmauri terminology (in which whilst affines of affines are undifferentiated and all identified with consanguines, the affinal categories maintain - with one exception - the wider north Indian distinction between wife-givers and wife-takers).

From all this it should, I think, be apparent that the transformation in terminological structure is related here to variations in marriage patterns and explicit ideology; to imply otherwise is in my view to omit an entire dimension.

But there is equally clearly no direct determination of one level by another, as Good (1981: 127) for one would agree. The same terminology, or a structurally similar one, can be associated with different marriage practices (cf. Krause 1980), and, vice versa, similar marriage practices can coexist with different terminologies. Thus, marriage between equals can coexist on an enduring basis not only with the Pāngi or Brahmauri structures of kin classification, but also with the Kangra structure: as for instance among the low castes, who marry isogamously, and also, to a limited degree, at the foot of the Rajput birādari hierarchy. Yet the point remains that where kinship terminologies of the northern half of the subcontinent classify all affines of affines together with siblings, and beyond that dissolve the distinction which otherwise serves to separate wife-giving and wife-taking affines, it is clear that the dominant tendency is towards isogamy and an egalitarian ideology. What is more, such structures appear to be typical of Pahāri-speaking groups along the Himalayas, rather than low castes in the plains or lower hills. In the latter case it is perhaps safe to assume that the dominant and prestigious model of neighbouring high castes is followed by and large, even though it may poorly reflect empirical patterns or expressed marital ideology.

I have concentrated on the '0' level structure because it is by common consent the key to north Indian terminologies (Dumont 1966, 1975; Fruzzetti & Ostor 1976; Vatuk 1969). Illustrative of this, it is only at this one level that the structural transformations I have been examining, and to which I have attached so much significance, may be seen.

In the 'plus 1' and 'minus 1' levels, the Brahmauri terminology differs little from that which Parry reports. I would merely draw attention to the somewhat surprising (and possibly very localised) classification of WBC with ZC, rather than with BC as is more common, on the apparent grounds that because of the traditional prominence of batta-satta a man's WBC are more directly his ZC [14]. This logic is not extended, however, to the HZC: they are classed, as elsewhere, with ZC, even though in a batta-satta arrangement they would more directly be a woman's BC. In the Brahmauri system at the 'plus 1' level it is interesting to note that the category māma does not cover FZH, but only MB; this is in line with Kangra generally (and the plains), but it contrasts with an equation which seems to be quite widespread in neighbouring Pahāri-speaking areas, including to my knowledge Chota Bangāhal and Pāngi (in neither of the latter are FZ and MBW classed together though). Such an equation between MB and FZH is the only sign we have of the assimilation of two sets of affines in the 'plus 1' level in certain of those Pahari-speaking areas adjoining the Brahmauris.

There are, furthermore, certain potential genealogical niches in the 'plus 1' and 'minus 1' levels which are simply not recognised by a term of reference or any agreed term of address, for - just as Parry found - the Brahmauris do not seem to go in for a very wide lateral spread of kin classification. Perhaps most surprisingly, there are no Brahmauri terms for the SWB/Z or DHB/Z, given that their parents are recognised by a term (kurham, kurhamani) and that the reciprocal niches are specified (ZHF/M and BWF/M are both hohra/hāhu).

Similarly, in the 'plus 1' level, there are no terms for parents' BWB or ZHZ.

Finally, I turn briefly to an issue raised by Stirrat (1977) in his discussion of the variant Wellagoda terminology in Sri Lanka. He makes a convincing case that the variant terminology he reports, and the kinship ideology (or 'morality' in his usage) that it accompanies, are to be explained by the specific character of fishing production among these particular groups. Now I do not consider that any comparable relationship can be established with regard to the terminological transformations I have described. I see no grounds, let me stress, for giving explanatory status here to variations in the prominence of pastoralism.

Where I do think we may seek an explanation in the present case, not just for the shift towards certain types of terminological structure, but more broadly for the orientation of the kinship systems of the area as a whole, is in the past and present relationships to centres of state power. Overall, egalitarian values and symmetry at different levels of the marriage system coincide with economic, and above all social and political, marginality. I have dwelt on this theme at various points already, and I will simply suggest here that there is an association between the isogamy and absence of internal caste hierarchies among all castes in the comparative remoteness of the Pahāri-speaking regions of the Himalayas, on the one hand, and among the castes at the foot of the hierarchy in the lower hills and plains, on the other hand. Both are socially and politically peripheral to centres of authority, economic dominance and prestige.

CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION.

A study such as this does not lead to a straightforward set of conclusions. Essentially this is because the presentation and analysis of the ethnography have been ends in themselves in this thesis, rather than the means to a theoretical goal. That is, theoretical perspectives and analysis have been employed here to elucidate the ethnography; in contrast to a primarily theoretical study, where the ethnography would be used in a largely illustrative fashion. As a consequence of the kind of study this is, I have therefore drawn conclusions and attempted generalisations within each chapter.

However, I shall recapitulate briefly two related themes which have recurred throughout the study: the apparent transformation in the internal structure of the Gaddi caste; and the social distinctiveness of the Gaddis - and derivatively the other Brahmauri castes as well - in the area where my fieldwork was primarily done (Palampur).

It is well established that the Gaddi caste used to be differentiated internally, with four named sections: Rajputs, Khatris (arguably the most numerous), Ṭhākurs and Rāṭhis. Now given this internal arrangement it is no radical step to conclude that the Gaddis were formerly subdivided on hypergamous lines, representing a structure which mirrored that of the wider Rajput society of the region. The signs are, however, that this arrangement was most in evidence in the

Chamba State of the pre-British period. At least, by the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one, the asymmetry in relations implicit in a system containing groups identified as Rajputs, Khatris and Rāthis had started to erode. Outside the Chamba State, among Gaddis who settled in Kangra in increasing numbers after the British annexed that district in the 1840s, the gradual transformation within the caste towards an undifferentiated and homogeneous form may well have started earlier than in Brahmaur. That, at any rate, is a plausible inference from recent ethnographic evidence: for whilst in Brahmaur the former differentiated structure is recollected, even if no longer of any functional significance, in Palampur there are few Gaddis who can even recall it. Moreover, it would be entirely predictable to find the differentiated structure losing its significance among Gaddis who moved outside the bounds of the former Chamba State, given that so much of the raison d'etre of this fourfold structure was tied up with the unique position of the Gaddis and Brahmaur in that state. Indeed, since the Chamba kingdom continued to exercise a certain limited degree of sway over Brahmauris in the western fringe of Kangra (from Dharmsala to Nurpur approximately), the erosion of the old internal structure of the Gaddi caste was probably swiftest and started soonest in the very area I worked in.

The corollary of this trend towards a homogeneous Gaddi caste was the entrenchment of an isogamous marriage system of the type I have described at length. Even under the old structure, the majority of marriages would almost certainly have been between equals, rather than between a bridegroom

of a higher grade, or birādari, and a bride of a lower one. The empirical prevalence and conceptual centrality of batta-satta is evidence enough of that. But the point is that under the former structure there would have been an inbuilt potentiality for hypergamous marriage, as Parry's Kangra analysis shows very well. What is more, even where marriage was between theoretical equals, local descent groups of the same grade, the language of asymmetry between those who gave and those who received brides would always have been prone to intrude, if the Kangra data is a good guide (Parry 1979: 201), although probably less so lower down the scale. This was doubtless another factor in the ideological attachment to batta-satta, as it is the most effective way to proclaim equality between the parties involved.

With a homogeneous Gaddi caste has come the complete closure of the Gaddi marriage system, at least in Brahmaur and in Palampur. At the same time, echoing the broader pattern, we find small-scale systems, exemplified in the data from Karnāthu and upper Trehta, which reflect the same tendency towards closure: endogamy within endogamy, as I described it. Such closure of the system is to my mind more thought-provoking, from a sociological point of view, in Palampur than in Brahmaur. For whereas Brahmaur is geographically more or less enclosed, Palampur (and the rest of Kangra) has comparatively open terrain, and a large-scale Rajput society in immediate proximity to the Gaddis. Now this brings me to the Gaddis' social distinctiveness, which is so strongly emphasised - by Gaddis and the wider Kangra population alike - in Palampur. The assertion of a strong

ethnic identity by the Gaddis in Palampur - which inevitably embraces the other Brahmauri castes as well - appears to contrast with the behaviour of their present and erstwhile caste fellows in the mid-Rāvi valley in Chamba tehsīl, whose aim has been instead to play down a sense of Gaddi/Brahmauri distinctiveness, if not to shed that identity altogether in favour of a 'safer' one. By highlighting rather than minimising their distinctive identity in relation to the wider Kangra population, the Gaddis in Palampur have till now reinforced the tacit intention of their marriage system. For both strict endogamy and the emphasis on cultural distinctiveness are ways of insulating themselves from the encroachment of a larger-scale and more dominant system. Incorporation within the latter, with its unappealing prospect of unfavourable, asymmetrical marriage transactions and the uncompensated loss of marriageable girls, is neutralised as a danger by the implication that the Gaddis are a caste apart, a distinct ethnic group.

Palampur Gaddis - and by extension the same goes for the Brahmans, and even the Sipis too - thus enjoy a social position which has no real parallel among Kangra Hindus: they belong to a caste which is in certain key respects outside the framework of the wider Kangra caste hierarchy (cf. Parry 1979: 103), and instead is located within its own self-contained hierarchy, a microcosm of the larger system. Now this is close to the implication conveyed by Scheduled Tribe status in Chamba, even though protective legislation plays no part in defining the Gaddis in Kangra. How the position of the Gaddis in Palampur, and indeed in Kangra generally, will

change in the future is of course a matter of speculation. But I suspect that with a gradual decline in their pastoralism - the most visible marker of 'Gaddiness' in the region - likely to continue, they may be hard-pressed to sustain the distinctive identity and social niche that they have achieved for well over a century in the area I know best. Moreover, this need not be incompatible with particular cases where localised marriage networks do remain closed.

NOTES notes to pages 1 - 22

Chapter 1

1 Chamba = 3,160 square miles; Kangra = 3,240 square miles, though this includes Hamirpur and Una (Directorate of Economics & Statistics, H.P. 1973).

2 Newell reports an annual snowfall of 6 feet in Brahmaur as typical.

3 In addition, and important for my study, there are grazing rights held by non-residents (see Chapter 4).

4 Technically, Brahmaur is currently defined as a sub-tehsil. For convenience I shall refer to it as a tehsil, as people often do. It has its own Subdivisional Magistrate, the senior government official of a full tehsil.

5 This knowledge is based primarily on three brief visits to the village of Chatrarhi.

6 In State times, the region classed today as a subdivision would have been known as a wizarat, i.e. Brahmaur wizarat.

7 I owe the main point of this paragraph - that the title Gaddi may formerly have been used in a segmentary way - to a suggestion made by Jonathan Parry. With regard to the operation of principles of inclusion and exclusion within the Gaddi caste, Newell made some possibly relevant remarks in an early article (1952), which he did not follow up. Thus, he states that around 1950 a Rajput Gaddi called himself a Rajput, whilst Khatris, Thakurs and Rathis styled themselves as Gaddis. In a contrasting comment, he also raises the possibility that the Rathis had formed a "third" caste, intermediate between the Rajputs, Khatris and Thakurs above, and the Sipis below (1952: 93). It is easy to see why he did not pursue this inappropriate formulation; nevertheless, it is more explicable as an initial attempt to account for a lingering and partial exclusion of the Rathis by the higher Gaddis (cf. also note 14 below). This is the only publication where Newell speaks of Rathis; in all others he speaks of Ranas instead. Another point: the suggestion in Rose that the Khatris were the most numerous section is probably borne out by the tendency for members of the majority of Gaddi clans to style themselves Kapur, a title with well known Khatri associations, in dealings in the wider society (i.e. Durga Ram Kapur). Rana is the other common title.

8 Rose states (1911, vol II: 259) that the traditional woman's woollen dress used to be called colu (cf. the man's cola, see below), and he implies that luancari referred only to a bride's wedding dress. There must have been some change in usage, for a luancari is now any dress of the appropriate pattern. There are minor stylistic differences between cotton luancaris in Brahmaur and Palampur.

9 The dora's purpose is a matter of speculation. It is sometimes said to have been valuable formerly in rescuing animals trapped on precipitous slopes. This could well be just a rationalisation, and I never heard of it being used for that purpose today.

10 It would be misleading to imply that Gaddi women always wear the luancari. It is always worn on ceremonial/festive occasions, but in day-to-day work (especially in the hotter months) it may be discarded. Where a 'Gaddi' identity is being played down it is obviously discarded; conversely, where 'Gaddi' identity is given emphasis (as in the village I lived) the luancari is worn a great deal.

11 In no ethnographic sense would it be appropriate to speak of the Gaddis and their associated castes as forming a 'tribe'. They have been Hindus for as long as they are known about in historical sources, and the presence of a Brahman caste is a significant enough fact in itself. The classification is a purely administrative device. At the same time, it obviously helps to reinforce the 'ethnic' distinctiveness of the 'Gaddis'.

12 Whether I would find the term Brahmauri acceptable as a generic title if I had worked in the mid-Ravi valley in Chamba tehsil is a moot point. But I would justify my choice on the grounds that it is a usage which makes sense in Kangra - or in Brahmaur itself.

13 Biradari is a term used widely in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent. Literally it denotes a 'brotherhood', but it corresponds to different kinds of social grouping or category in different areas. In the Kangra valley it corresponds to a series of clans which are acknowledged to be of broadly equal status, and which should in theory be able to exchange brides on a reciprocal basis. There are four ranked biradaris in the Rajput hierarchy in Kangra, and likewise four Brahman biradaris, although in both cases there is a tendency for the bottom two to be collapsed into one. Particularly in the Rajput case, the biradari schema is quite an elaborate and formalised arrangement, and at various periods there have been biradari councils (Parry 1979: 200-3, 250-1).

14 I prefer to speak of 'sections' of the Gaddi caste (or an alternative such as 'grade' or 'division'), because it would be quite inappropriate to suggest that these four categories themselves corresponded to castes. This is equally true of the Kangra biradari structure. But as Parry also notes (1979: 232-4), "relations between biradaris... are governed...by a set of interactional rules which are strictly comparable to the rules by which castes within the total hierarchy interact"; and he argues that there was formerly "a 'caste-like' barrier" between Rathis and those above. This was expressed most clearly in the Rathis

rating as Rajputs in some contexts and yet as Sudras in others. This apparent paradox dissolves, as Parry says, when it is understood that the hierarchy has always been seen in segmentary terms. (Cf. also here Newell's notion of the Rathis as a caste between the Rajputs etc. and the Sipis, mentioned in note 7 above.)

15 Rathi is a term which literally denoted a commoner, but has more prominent connotations close to 'bumpkin' or 'yokel'. The fact that they rated as Sudras in some contexts during the last century, further evidence of inferiority, has already been noted (see above, note 14).

16 The Chamba State patronised certain temples, which were accorded a special status and were served by Brahman pujaris, known as 'state pujaris'. These temple priests held a far more prestigious office than any other local pujaris (who were not necessarily even Brahmans), and they seem to have been more fastidious than other Brahmans as to which Brahman clans they intermarried with. In the upper Ravi region, there are former 'state shrines' at Brahmaur, Manimahes, Kugti and Chatrarhi (Newell 1967: 86).

17 Presumably the tendency which Newell reports (1967: 37) for lohar Sipis and all other Sipis in Brahmaur not to intermarry reflects an attempt by the former to define their caste identity more favourably, by separating themselves from the latter. I put this forward tentatively, however, as Newell's comments are somewhat baffling.

18 Siva's territorial jurisdiction in this case is mirrored at the level of the local cults found in most villages in Brahmaur and some Brahmauri villages in Kangra (including the village where I lived), where the village devtas and devis are often associated with a roughly defined territory. This is a pattern found widely in mountain regions of western Himachal Pradesh, but it contrasts with the lower hills, in which territory plays little part in local cults.

19 A jatra or yatra generally in India denotes a sacred journey, or pilgrimage, with the word yatri meaning a pilgrim. This meaning of the word fits well with its use in the context of these three ceremonies.

20 The main day of the Manimahes yatra is the 8th day of the bright half of the lunar cycle (suklapaksa) of Bhadron.

21 I cannot say what the position is with regard to the Halis.

22 The 1901 Census reported 4,343 people resident in Brahmaur wizarat (Chamba State Gazetteer Statistical Tables 1909: ix). This total is hard to credit in relation to the population figures reported in Table 1.

23 So numerous are Brahmauris in this area that at the time of the 1977 State Assembly Elections a serious attempt was

made to obtain a Gaddi candidate to fight the Baijnath constituency - for either of the two main parties, though in the 1977 context the strong preference was for the Janata ticket. The constituency is a large one, however, and outside the mauzas close to the mountains Brahmauris are not numerous. Not surprisingly, therefore, the attempt came to nothing.

24 Apart from the Brahmauri population, the castes found in mauza Deol are as follows (cf. Parry 1979: 110):
1 Brahman
2 Rajput (including Seok)
3 Mahajan (trader)
4 Turkhan (carpenter); Lohar (blacksmith); Nai (barber); Kumhar (potter); Hindu Gujar (cultivator)
5 Jullaha (weaver); Soi (tailor); Sanhai (musician)
6 Dumna (basket-maker); Dagi/Dogri (see below)
7 Camar (leather-worker)
Dagi, or Dogri, is the low caste associated with Seok/Kanet.

25 Ajiapal is unambiguously the 'chief devta' in Karnathu, and, indeed, in a wide area around. He is primarily a Bangahali deity, his main shrine being at Palacak, at the foot of the Thamsar Pass, which links Kothi Kohr with Bara Bangahal. Peripheral villages of mauza Deol, such as Karnathu, may be said to mark the fringes of his 'territory'. The limited mythology associated with Ajiapal identifies him as a former rakas (demon) who was transformed, one might say tamed, by Bangahalis, in return for acknowledgement as the dominant deity of the locality. Ajiapal's importance for Karnathu people stems not just from the fact that their village falls within his 'jurisdiction'; for that itself may stem partly from the fact that a large proportion of the flocks held by villagers spend their summer in Ajiapal's heartland, Bara Bangahal, crossing the Thamsar Pass to and from the pastures. This is a deity, then, whose benign disposition - not easily achieved - is regarded in Karnathu as absolutely critical for the well-being of the flocks.

26 Two households of Gaddis, of the Cambetu al, lived for a short period in Karnathu in the 1950s and 1960s. So far as I can discover, they acquired no land other than their house site.

27 The term jagra derives from the Sanskrit jagri, with the meaning of 'awakening'. This refers to the awakening of the deity invoked, or in other words the advent of possession, as the deity is incarnated in the body of his chosen human vehicle (who is known in Karnathu interchangeably as cela or gur: the former term is the Brahmaur usage; the latter the Bangahal usage). Rose associates jagra with a vigil (from the Sanskrit jagarana) (1919, vol I: 474), and this is closer to the popular meaning in Karnathu, where emphasis is placed on the devotees keeping awake for the god's revelation rather than on the god's awakening. Jagras in Karnathu have not for many years, if ever, taken place at night, however, but are held shortly before dusk. Jagras of this kind have traditionally been widespread in Brahmaur (cf. Rose 1919, vol I: 147, 332-4).

28 A recent letter from Karnathu, received since the thesis was written, confirms that the traditional jagras have now been replaced by puja-paths at both navratras. These involve recitation of sacred texts by a Brahman priest, and emphatically no animal sacrifice.

29 Inhabitants of the Brahmaur (Budhal) valley tend to look more towards lower parts of Chamba District, the western parts of Kangra District, or even the Punjab around Dunera, as their favoured winter areas. The same goes for those who live around the junction of the Budhal with the Ravi river. The inhabitants of the uppermost reaches of the Ravi (i.e. Trehta) have traditionally wintered in Palampur, by contrast. This is only a tendency, however: witness, for example, the fact that all the Karnathu Gaddis and Brahmans came originally from the Brahmaur valley.

30 One source I have been unable to locate is O'Brien & Morris (1900). I suspect that much of their report is incorporated in various ways in the gazetteers and other administrative literature; but even so it would have been valuable to have tracked down a copy.

31 Karnathu was in fact chosen for one of the village surveys to be done for the 1961 Census, but the survey was never started.

Chapter 2

1 The etymology of the word Gaddi is still largely a matter of speculation, in the absence of definitive historical evidence or any folk tradition among the Gaddis themselves. Goetz associates the Gaddis with the Gadhaiyas (1955: 34), quoting Cunningham in support. Other common linguistic associations centre on their pastoralism. Related terms include gadariya, a Hindi word for a shepherd (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 83); and also gahar, a high altitude pasture (Chamba State Gazetteer 1910: 137). An entirely different possibility is that the title derives from the word gaddi (or gadi), denoting a throne, a word in use throughout north India. This particular derivation could refer to the Gaddis' association with the Chamba ruling dynasty (hence the Chamba throne). But it could on the other hand be an association with the even earlier kingdom whose capital was Brahmaur itself (see below). The etymological association with terms for shepherds and shepherding are perhaps the most plausible.

2 Another factor to consider is whether Gaddis may have suffered a decline in reputation in the later part of the 19th Century from their association with migratory pastoralism. There is no evidence to back up this tentative suggestion, other than the fact that today there is a tendency in the wider society to view the transhumant way of life as fairly 'backward'.

Chapter 3

1 I follow conventional anthropological usage with regard to the terms clan and lineage (cf. Notes & Queries 1951: 88-90). All members of Brahmauri clans are assumed to be agnates; genealogical links are only demonstrable, however, at the level of the lineage.

2 The vast difference in scale between the Gaddi caste and the wider Rajput society must be recognised here. Many Rajput clans are far larger (in numbers and geographical dispersal) than the largest of Gaddi clans.

3 Part of the problem with Newell's misunderstanding of the relation between gotra and al is, I think, due to his failure to recognise that people sometimes use gotra loosely to denote what is strictly an al.

4 Some young Sipis particularly resent these asymmetrical forms and try to avoid them altogether.

5 Note that roti is classed throughout this region as the equivalent of pakka food. Dumont, however, refers to capati (1972: 186) as kacca. My interpretation would be that roti is classed as suji rasoi because it is baked, which is a relatively pure method of preparation (cf. Dumont's comments on grilling, which he classes as pure (ibid)).

6 These jatras are different in form to the major annual festivals called by the same name which I mentioned in Chapter 1, note 19. These jatras are domestic (i.e. household) ceremonies held in fulfilment of a vow to a kul devi (or some other goddess), which culminate in a feast to which quite large numbers of people may be invited. There are no evident or locally recognised connotations of pilgrimage about such jatras.

7 These purohit-performed ceremonies have become popular in Karnathu and neighbouring Brahmauri villages in recent decades - and indeed are still growing in popularity.

8 In drawing this contrast between Karnathu and Thala, the nature of my data from the two places needs to be remembered. With regard to Karnathu, observation of behaviour supplements informants' statements; in Thala it does not. I suspect that in practice Thala Brahmans may be slightly less strict, then, than appears to be the case from their statements alone (cf. Parry 1979: 103).

9 In my experience Sipis tend to steer clear of rural cai-stalls (tea-stalls) where they are known, and use town ones only. I only once recall seeing a Sipi at either of the two Phathahar cai-stalls. He washed up his own cup, unlike high caste patrons, but whether he was given a cup reserved specially for low caste men I could not say.

10 The barber has important functions as an aide to Brahman priests (purohits) at major life-cycle rites, where he receives lesser versions of the same customary rewards/payments. In line with this, and because strictly jajman and purohit are reciprocal terms, the barber also counts as a kind of purohit - but only in the specific context of life-cycle rituals, and one would never hear a barber referred to as a purohit in secular, day-to-day contexts (cf. Parry 1979: 71-2).

11 The Brahmauri Brahman purohit typically officiates throughout the period after a death. He recites daily from the Garur Puran, which is read traditionally for ten days. He accompanies the chief mourner at the head of the procession to the cremation ground (hila colloquially, samsan more formally); and guides the chief mourner in his functions at the funeral. Subsequently the priest presides over the offering of pinds for the deceased (daspindi), a ten day process, leading to the culminating rites of the immediate post-death period, the sapindi and kriya karam on the 12th day after death. On this day the deceased makes the initial stage in the gradual transition from pret (a marginal, ghost-like being) to pitr (an ancestor); and the main burden of impurity is lifted from the mourners. Later ceremonies for the deceased are held at three months (trimai), six months (cemai), one year (barah or barkha) and four years (caubarkha). The purohit officiates at each. In Brahmaur, on the kriya karam day, the deceased's clothing is washed and a goat killed, and both clothes and goat are accepted (or certainly used to be) by the priest (Newell 1967: 68). This practice no longer occurs among Kangra Brahmauris, where no animal is sacrificed and the dead person's clothes are burned.

12 For example, see p.417 below. I was also told that one reason for avoiding the services of the Caraj was the exorbitant cost: to have one's own purohit perform the necessary ceremonies was a great deal cheaper. This suggests a residual reluctance on the part of Brahmauri priests to exploit the economic value of a death, as if they recognise tacitly that post-death offerings are contaminating: the avarice that apparently characterises the Caraj's behaviour must be carefully avoided by other priests. In Brahmaur, the non-availability of funeral priests makes such considerations academic of course, and there the kul-purohit or his stand-in is the only possible officiant.

13 Cash is also the usual basis for transactions between members of different low castes who call on one another's services.

14 Since Musicians are not associated with caste activities which entail handling and removing impure substances it is not immediately clear why they should rank so very low in the caste hierarchy (with only the Dumna, Camar and Bhangi below them in Kangra) (cf. Parry 1979: 110-12,114). Could an implicit association with mendicant entertainers, with females as dancers (i.e. prostitutes in the eyes of others), be a factor?

Chapter 4

1 The only cash crop in the Kangra valley is tea, and this is produced only on a very small scale. Potatoes are an emerging cash crop in Chota Bangahal, but nowhere else in Palampur tehsil. Apples and apricots are not a commercial proposition in the Kangra valley on account of the damage the crops would sustain from the summer monsoon.

2 Bormann reports that while the vast majority of lambs are born at the end of the summer monsoon, goat births are much less concentrated at this season, with only just over one half of births occurring then, the remainder taking place throughout the year (1980: 5.2.2-3). Moreover, at the turn of this century the main birth season among Kulu shepherds was apparently April-May (Diack 1898: 36).

3 In Karnathu these are also thought of as important ritual periods: between the harvesting of one crop and the preparations for the next; and between the summer and winter journeys of the flocks. These are the periods when the village jagras are held.

4 Scattered about the alpine pasture I stayed at were substantial huts belonging to the Gujars, who arrived after the shepherds had moved on to Bara Bangahal and left before they returned in September/October. These huts were larger and more weather-proof than anything the shepherds used. There was no question of the latter making use of these Gujar huts to sleep in themselves (the huts were dismissed as filthy places), but it was common for sheep and goats to shelter in them during rough weather.

5 The beans will not be harvested till late October/early November. Nokar's family thus depend on the co-operation of relatives in Brahmaur, and collect the bean harvest the following year. Much of their produce from the Brahmaur land cannot be transported to Karnathu, and is disposed of locally for cash (after relatives have had their share for the labour they have put in).

6 It should be clear that the malundhi was not necessarily the holder of a warisi, although often the two would go together. It was quite possible for a waris (i.e. the right-holder) to lease the right to graze to another person, who acted as malundhi (Kangra District Gazetteer 1883-4: 174).

7 The emphasis should be placed on the word 'incipient', for at no time did the Kangra tenures develop into full-blown bhaiacara or pattidari systems: compare, for example, the more far-reaching changes which the British introduced in the area of Garhwal where Berreman worked (Berreman 1972: 26-7) (See also quotation from Lyall in Kangra District Gazetteer 1906: 206.)

8 Nayagraon shepherds all hold customary rights to graze around/above their home village in summer. What the position is with regard to winter grazing grounds I cannot say.

9 I am grateful to Gaston, Hunter & Garson (eds) (1981) for the opportunity to use this map.

10 Available statistics from Brahmaur are hard to compare with one another. At a livestock census in 1974-5, there were 55,044 sheep and 35,624 goats reported for the Upper Ravi Forest Division (an area somewhat larger than Brahmaur tehsil), which compares with 54,800 sheep and 33,898 goats permitted at the time (figures from D.F.O Upper Ravi Division, Chamba). Newell's figures apparently cover Brahmaur tehsil and are thus not directly comparable, although they are of interest as they show a noticeable drop in permitted numbers over the decade to 1961/2 (1967: 30).

11 It is known that at these dates only the Gaddis held flocks. The Karnathu Seoks have apparently never held flocks.

12 I state this in the full knowledge that one Phathahar Gaddi holds the largest flock reported from either Palampur or Brahmaur tehsils - a flock of some 1,400 animals.

13 Spare capacity on a permit can always be put to good financial use, for it allows another grazier, who has exceeded his own permit, to pass over his excess stock - especially when Forest Department checks are thought to be imminent - in return for a fee.

14 It has proved easier to fulfil political commitments to redistribute land by delving into wasteland resources than by actually redistributing existing cultivated land. Kayastha & Juyal refer to the former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh when they write (1979: 37).

> "Dr. Y.S.Parmar...wrote in a newspaper article that the 20-point promise of land to landless resulted in cutting down 39 trees per allottee. Forest lands became an easy target to meet the 20-point promise".

15 This is a field of enquiry where I consider that botanical knowledge would have been a necessary basis on which to build up some knowledge of Brahmauri ethnobotany. Only on this double foundation would it have been possible to frame questions in an appropriate fashion for eliciting responses about environmental alterations. I did not tackle this field of enquiry.

16 Raw wool is first washed by women. It is then carded and afterwards spun, also by women. The following stage is undertaken by men, and involves the plying of two strands of spun wool using a drop-spindle. The wool is now ready for weaving, and this also is a male activity.

17 It is of course conceivable that cash income per animal has risen fast enough to compensate for declining flock sizes. Unfortunately, this is not something on which I have any data; although, for what it is worth, shepherds invariably took the view that such compensating developments had not taken place, and that they had suffered in real terms through the fall in the size of their flocks.

18 I was given and have used for the 1971 calculations the figure of 11,315 acres of cultivated land (or 17.68 square miles) in Brahmaur tehsil.

19 No more than three or perhaps four Karnathu households have a surplus of grain to sell, and any such surpluses are sold direct to consumers in Karnathu, rather than to traders. Most households, however, are obliged to make good any grain shortages by purchasing from shops (in Phathahar). Rice is the grain that is bought most commonly; whereas maize is almost never purchased (people eat what they have and leave it at that). I should also note that Berreman takes 0.5 acre of cultivated land per adult as a guide to consumption and subsistence needs (with two children under 15 years counting as one adult) (1978: 334,342). This figure is much higher than my yardstick of 3 kanals (0.28 acre). The discrepancy is, nevertheless, less marked than it may seem, for I have defined 3 kanals as an absolute minimum, and readily concede that around 4 kanals would be a safer average for grain self-sufficiency. The gap between this figure and Berreman's may then easily be accounted for in terms of the greater yields obtained on irrigated land in the valley floor in Kangra than on hillside terraces there or presumably in Garhwal.

20 This statistic, and the equivalent one in Table 12, is not directly comparable with figures Parry gives (1979: 37-9), for he includes holdings of grass-preserves for hay (kharetar), which I have excluded.

21 The technical distinction between transhumance and nomadism is generally framed in terms of the presence or absence of 'stable settlements' or 'communal centres'. The following quotation from a Food & Agriculture Organisation publication defines transhumance first and nomadic pastoralism second:

> "Flocks and herds maintained for most or all the year on a system of free-range grazing, but following definite migratory routes from the communal centre to reliable seasonal pastures elsewhere when grazing at the centre is no longer available...The truly nomadic flocks and herds which have no fixed centre, but which follow seasonal routes to grazing areas" (1962: 358; quoted in Tapper 1979: 96).

This distinction is between ideal types, and was framed in relation to arid and semi-arid zones. Even in these zones, empirical cases often only approximate to the definition, or involve some mixing of the two forms. In the present case, obviously the Brahmauris (or Kanets) are transhumant rather than nomadic; but equally clearly the seasonal movement of flocks frequently does not correspond to a movement between

centre and seasonal pasture, for the centre may well be at some intermediate point, or away from the route entirely.

22 In this sense, the separate rights/holdings characteristic of the 'severalty' system of tenure in the pre-British period, may be seen as leading easily into the 'individualised' pattern of rights/holdings characteristic of the British and post-Independence era. Inasmuch as the principles underlying both kinds of tenure were antithetical to corporate or joint estates, there was little fundamental discontinuity between them. (I should emphasise that I am speaking here strictly about grazing tenures - indeed grazing tenures outside home revenue circuit boundaries.)

23 The introduction of cash crops in Brahmaur is, I think, too recent, and still on too small a scale, to be a factor here; although the long-term implications for pastoralism could well be dramatic if communications with Chamba were improved, judging by the decline in shepherding in Kulu since apple-growing took off on a large scale in the 1950s.

Chapter 5

1 I have found no record of the distinction between ancestral and self-acquired property being recognised in Chamba, but I think it is safe to assume that it did exist (even if its provisions were scarcely ever implemented). The reason for this is that, as several authors have noted, such a distinction is central to the Mitaksara commentaries, and the Mitaksara rules are the source of inheritance principles in use traditionally throughout north-west India (cf. Karve 1968: 343-5; Parry 1979: 164-5; Tambiah 1973b: 77).

2 The reason for the apparent rarity of men being survived by daughters only is not, I think, a case of 'structural amnesia', of such cases being forgotten: partly because this is in the fairly recent past; and also because the patwari's records (especially his kursi-namas, or genealogies) provide a check. I would suggest that it has more to do with the fact that instituted morality encouraged procreation to continue until a son was born. If a wife died young, another one was obtained; and in a few cases men would take second wives whilst first wives were still living (polygynous households are not common, and during my fieldwork there were just two in Karnathu). It is hard to assess how much such patterns are changing, but I suspect that it is slowly becoming less culturally imperative to produce a son. There may thus be rather more cases in the future where men will be survived by daughters alone, increasing the likelihood of female inheritance.

3 One informant substituted the word gharatha(n), meaning the ground for a house, for cul.

4 There are reports in the administrative literature of the British period that Brahmauris living to the south of the

Ravi in Trehta followed the cundavand system, and that migrants from that part to Kangra continued to follow this rule (cf. Rose 1911, vol II: 268,292). I found no corroboration of this in Nayagraon, where people had no recollection of ever having followed any principle but that of straightforward per capita division. On the other hand, in mauza Kandi, above Palampur town, I was told that some Brahmauris used to follow the cundavand pattern, and this may confirm the earlier reports, for quite a large proportion of Brahmauris in that mauza came originally from the area around Holi - i.e. lower Trehta, the area that Rose's report seems particularly to have had in mind.

5 The concept of bartan is an important one, and it formalises certain rights and obligations within almost the entire range of regular and amicable relationships held by a household in its locality. Bartan denotes a relationship of obligatory and mutual assistance, and is expressed through activities such as wood-gathering for a wedding feast or a funeral, and in the past (but rarely today) for the timber used in house construction. At the same time, bartan ties are expressed in prestations such as saj and tambol at marriage. Bartan ties are by no means all of the same strength: one's strongest bartan ties are likely to be with one's locally resident agnates, other local kinsmen and kinswomen, and immediate neighbours regardless of caste. Almost everyone in Karnathu recognises bartan with everyone else in theory, although inter-household tensions may temporarily strain this recognition. As Brar put it: "a quarrel between two kin does not alter the fact of kinship but may break the birton between them" (1971: 120). Essentially, bartan provides a framework in which the utility and active social importance of several kinds of relationship may be given formal recognition.

6 It is interesting, for example, that the donor of the gift known as bagge is not the same in Parry's research setting as in mine. The bagge consists of clothes and some ornaments for close female kin of the groom and a few young boys. At one wedding I saw bagge distributed to the groom's M, FBW, BW, Z, dharm bahin, BD, ZD, BS, ZS; however, I believe distribution is often wider at many weddings. In Parry's area, the bagge is provided by the bride's family, and he speaks of it as a part of the dowry even though it will not go towards any future conjugal estate (1979: 239-40). Yet among the Brahmauri castes, the bagge is not a gift from the bride's side at all, but is purely an 'internal' prestation on the groom's side, for his family provide the presents to distribute. Quite predictably, the bagge is in no sense recognised as a component of the daj in this case.

7 Parry's comments, for example, on the pressure on Rathis to desist from demanding brideprice, show that in Kangra it used to be widespread and much less covert than today, even if fairly compromising in terms of high caste ideals (1979: 242-4,256). Newell too refers to bridewealth in Brahmaur in the

1950s (1962: 20). Incidentally, there is plenty of evidence in Parry's monograph that in indigenous thought 'dowry' and 'bridewealth' are seen as comparable but opposite kinds of marriage transaction - a point that is not without analytical significance. For example, of the motives of certain second biradari Rajputs during the biradari reform movement, he writes (1979: 249):

> "Their real interest lay in convincing the Rathis of the sinfulness of their exorbitant bride-price demands, for their immediate objective was to remedy the state of affairs by which their biradari got caught both ways by the pattern of marriage prestations".

8 Since such gift-giving is one expression of the importance attached to affinity, there does seem to be an association between bridewealth as the prominent marriage transaction and a lack of investment in affinal ties.

Chapter 6

1 Some of the information in this paragraph and the two either side of it I owe to notes sent to Jonathan Parry by Om Prakash Sharma. I am most grateful to both of them. Most of my other information on these female mediums comes from a well known Palampur cela (Brahmauri) and his son. I myself have not had any contact with a female medium.

2 The application of the term sadhini to a medium suggests an association of ideas linking possession by a deity and world renunciation. Dumont (1970: 55-7) has touched on one aspect of this; and recently Quayle (1981) has characterised the ritual activities of possession specialists in terms of their temporary world renunciation.

3 Although Prabhi died six months after I started fieldwork I never knew her, and was in Brahmaur when she died.

4 Particularly in my enquiries with sadhins themselves I was clearly hampered by being male.

5 The father of the Seok sadhin already mentioned said, in response to my enquiry, that if his daughter had changed her mind and decided that she wished to marry in the years immediately after entering her new status aged five or six, it would have been possible. After puberty, however, there could be no going back. He was the one person to suggest that such a reversal was possible, and I suspect that he did not know what might be permissible and what would not; in this he is not alone.

6 Bhujalo said that she had worn her renunciatory clothing a few times outside Karnathu - for instance, on pilgrimages she had made to Manimahes in Brahmaur.

7 A term with such strong Western clinical associations as 'transsexual' is notoriously difficult to use in a satisfactory way for purposes of cross-cultural comparison (see Wikan 1977, and the ensuing correspondence, especially Carrier 1980). I would stress, however, that under no plausible definition would sadhins be transsexuals.

8 Susceptibility to birth and death (relational) pollution, and the worship of kulajs, a kind of lineage or sub-clan property, are of course hardly the signs of world renunciation, and demonstrate the strictly limited nature of the sadhin's renunciation.

9 I learned of a recent article by Ojha (1981) too late to take into account in this study.

10 At the same time, there is no bar to a woman achieving liberation (mukti or moksa), at least according to various authorities (a point I owe to Mary Chaterjee). There must therefore have always been a certain tension between a woman's eligibility for renunciation at one level and her effective ineligibility at another level.

11 This may help to explain the considerable indigenous emphasis on the voluntary character of the girl's decision to become a sadhin. Any implication of paternal neglect in providing a daughter with a husband, in favour of 'encouraging' her to become a sadhin, would risk massive social and divine censure.

12 The 1961 Census, for example, reported 122 women over the age of 25 who had never married in Palampur tehsil, or 0.3% of the female population over 25 (1961 Census Kangra District Handbook). Doubtless a proportion of these are Christians.

13 I have in mind here the performance of sexual intercourse once desire has been conquered and indifference to sensual stimuli achieved, typically in the technique of coitus reservatus, which is a kind of fusion of asceticism with sexual activity (cf. O'Flaherty 1973: 261-2).

14 Mayer referred to this individual in discussing a paper on sadhins at a meeting of South Asian anthropologists at the London School of Economics, 1982.

15 It is necessary to be extremely cautious over this question. I take the view that this institution may be a recent development on two main grounds. First, it is unusual and curious to find a predominantly Brahmauri practice that is not considered to have its source in Brahmaur, the homeland, but in Palampur, where Brahmauris only started settling from the start of the 19th Century onwards. And second, ambiguities and uncertainties about what is appropriate suggest an institution still in the making. I'm inclined to think that this practice was in fact a consequence of Brahmauri emigration to Kangra, on the grounds that the need to do something about non-marrying females only became

imperative as a result of the contact with new influences there concerning appropriate or orthodox behaviour. I have no evidence, admittedly, to suggest that spinsters were readily tolerated in 19th Century Brahmaur; but to east and west of Brahmaur there is some slight evidence to that effect. Thus, Rose reports that in Kulu "old maids are not unknown, as land set aside for an unmarried female of a family is called pharogal" (1919, vol I: ix). And in my own conversations with men from Pangi doing winter work near Dharmsala, I encountered no recognition of any status comparable to sadhin-hood, but instead the admission that women who never married and simply lived in their natal home were not uncommon. This suggests the possibility that further into the Himalayas in this region it is, or has been, less imperative for a woman to marry; and thus sadhin-hood is the local response to a cultural environment where unadorned spinsterhood is unthinkable.

Chapter 7

1 The Triloknath Ranas are in fact said to have come to their present home from the Tundah area of Brahmaur, which is close to Ulansa, Garola & Suai (Hutchison & Vogel 1914a: 58-9).

2 The sadenoj ceremony may be performed in a curtailed form, but it is unlikely to be omitted. I only knew of one recent case in Karnathu where it had been dispensed with, and the circumstances here were highly unusual. This involved Doda Ram, the man whose uthe-bahe marriage has already been mentioned (Chapter 5.3). When news reached Doda that a bride had been found for him (his first wife having died) he was with his flock in the lower hills. The marriage was arranged to take place at only about two months notice, and when he left his flock soon afterwards, Doda made a promise at the shrine of a nearby Baba that he would return with his bride after the marriage in order that they could jointly make an offering, so relieved was he that a new wife had been found. Immediately the marriage was over, Doda told his wife's mother that he wished his bride to accompany him back to the flock almost immediately. She flatly refused, despite his protestation that he had made the Baba a promise. But the next day, the Baba took possession of Doda's bride and, revealing himself, told the girl's family that she should accompany her new husband in order that the offering should be made. Faced with this instance of divine will, the girl's mother relented, and her daughter left home in a final sense a mere four days after her marriage.

3 Jonathan Parry told me that it would be quite inconceivable in his fieldwork setting for a man to obtain a bride in exchange for the giving away of a daughter of non-agnates, such as my genealogies show occurring in a few

cases. This was because in Kangra generally there would be no sense in which a man could make a claim on his ZH WB or WZH to give a daughter in exchange for his son receiving a bride. Now, as I have said, such exchanges are rare, but I have recorded a handful - almost all from Nayagraon. (Their rarity can be gauged by looking at Figures 2 & 3, which contain nothing but examples of straightforward exchanges between two sets of agnates.) But the possibility of making such exchanges does suggest implications concerning the importance of bilateral kinship in Brahmauri society, in contrast to the very strong emphasis on agnation typical in Parry's milieu (cf. below Chapters 7.7 & 8.2 where I pursue this; also note 7 below).

4 I never heard the term tarvadla used, as Parry reports (1979) for triangular exchanges, although one informant mentioned a word triunda in this context.

5 The Sipis likewise are not immune to these influences.

6 Newell does not discuss batta-satta in terms of a response to a shortage of potential brides, although he does suggest that a westerly drift of women at marriage creates a shortage in the remote easterly areas of Brahmaur (1970). This is a topic I return to below (Chapter 7.5.1).

7 Discussing forms of marriage at a relatively abstract level, concentrating on the moral or ideological aspects, inevitably leads to the vivid detail of individual cases being lost. One example is worth giving here to counteract that tendency. It concerns a quartet of marriages where the element of labour service to obtain a bride was combined with batta-satta. The case concerns some Brahmans from the vicinity of Holi, in Trehta, around the 1940s; and I learned about it from the Government Doctor based in Brahmaur, who was the son of one of the men whose marriages I shall describe. After the death of their mother, her two sons left their father (who they felt was only interested in securing another wife for himself, and not in their marriage prospects) and went to live with their MB. There they lived and worked for ten years or so. The arrangement was based on the fact that the boys' MB had no sons and needed male labour; and in return for this labour two of his daughters would be provided for batta-satta marriages which would enable the two boys to receive brides. In this way, two pairs of batta-satta unions were arranged, with a MBD being given in exchange for a bride in both cases (see note 3 above). This was the only case of its kind that I learned of, but it would not be surprising to discover that in Brahmaur such labour for the right to marry was/is a fairly recognised way to arrange a batta-satta marriage involving the exchange of a non-agnatic 'sister'.

8 Terminologically, yBW = nuh. In this, she is classed along with SW and the junior generation. Marriage of a man to his yBW thus carries connotations of a union with his SW, an unthinkable association. Despite making this terminological equation, however, Brahmauris do not treat marriage to the

yBW as any serious breach of rules.

9 Jonathan Parry told me that the tendency to marry from the east towards the west is most marked at the top of the Rajput hierarchy, and is progressively less evident as one moves down the biradaris. The Brahmauri pattern is thus not in complete contrast to the pattern Parry found; rather, it is one end of a continuum, whose other pole is represented by the highest biradari Rajputs.

10 I have for obvious reasons excluded marriages with Brahmaur-based partners made by Phakas Brahmans while their primary home was still in Brahmaur, and before they settled in Karnathu.

11 It is not just an observer's extrapolation from empirical marriage patterns that the villages in the uppermost part of Trehta form a distinct group. When a Karnathu friend heard that I was going to Nayagraon he recited the list of villages in that part of the Ravi valley, as if he recognised it as some kind of geographical entity in its own right.

12 There is an excess of men over women, more or less pronounced from area to area. Berreman discusses this in relation to his Garhwal material, and notes the lack of any easy explanation (1978: 338-9).

13 This is based on n = 326. i.e. intra-Karnathu marriages have not been counted twice, as was appropriate for the presentation in Table 16, because here I am interested in the number of marriages, rather than the source of spouses.

14 In these and subsequent statistical or genealogical data, marriages all denote the bride's primary marriage.

15 I would reiterate here that I am writing about the area I am familiar with: Palampur, and to a lesser extent Kangra in general. As I indicated in Chapter 1, there is evidence to suggest that the position is rather different in Chamba tehsil, lower down the Ravi valley from Brahmaur.

16 Indirect confirmation of the interpretation I have put forward comes, I believe, from certain details Newell gives of the occasion when he was invited to become the MB (mama) of children of a Sipi friend (1962: 18). This he did by taking part in a short ceremony to make him 'brother' to the children's mother. In a social environment where the MB's consanguinity is given ceremonial emphasis, such signs of respect and closeness to the MB/WB make sociological sense. But such an act would have a different meaning where the MB's affinity is given ceremonial recognition. Certainly, at the other end of the marriage spectrum, in a hypergamous setting it would be an ambiguous and probably unacceptable gesture of affection to cast someone in the role of ceremonial MB, given that the MB and WB epitomise the lower status of wife-giving affines. Newell says that the Gaddis in his village followed the same custom as the Sipis. But

even though this may be so, it has to be recognised that the Sipis tend to give greater weight to the consanguinity of the MB than do the Brahmauri high castes. The latter in various ways emphasise the MB's affinity as well, and in this respect are intermediate between a caste such as the Sipis, at one pole, and the higher Rajput biradaris, at the other pole. (The wedding Newell witnessed where the bride's MB was driven out by merciless teasing is a good instance of the MB as wife-giving affine (1952: 100).)

17 In Brahmaur, four circumambulations were the rule: this was expressed in the term carlai, for what Karnathu people call the rite of ved pherna (cf. Newell 1967: 54,57). In Kangra I heard that seven rounds were standard, but this is in practice reduced to three at the present time.

18 Quite apart from the specifically Indian ethnographic context, however, there is a more general dilemma confronting societies where marriage is ostensibly between equals, as Bloch has recently re-emphasised (1978): unless brides are directly exchanged, any marriage is in the short term an asymmetrical transaction. Overall, Bloch's point is a valid one, and viewed in this light the marriage practices of the two Brahmauri high castes may be seen as a continual attempt to overcome this inherent ambiguity: whether through batta-satta, or through slightly more disguised forms of reciprocity (which tend to lose something in directness).

19 I know nothing about the area around Chuari, in Chamba but on the southern slopes of the Dhaula Dhar, where Brahmauris are also settled, so I cannot comment on processes there.

Chapter 8

1 Although Parry does not report it in his monograph (1979), he told me that the term natedar was in use in the area he did his fieldwork.

2 It would fit well with points I made in Chapter 7.7 to be able to say that the Sipis emphasise the category of sakh more than the Brahmauri high castes do, in line with a stronger Sipi emphasis on the bilateral character of kinship, and thus on the consanguinity more than the affinity of non-agnatic kin. My data from Karnathu would not support such a view, however, and I would say that the Sipis tend to follow the high castes in giving greater weight to the gharet-riste(dar) distinction. I would also make a further point in this context. Although the Brahmauris use the gharet-riste(dar) distinction more commonly than the sakh-nate one, and although the former ties in better with an ideology which stresses the patrilineal inheritance of blood, in day-to-day living people are more likely to

say that blood is transmitted from both parents (even if the paternal blood is the stronger). This is not surprising when it is borne in mind that in day-to-day contexts the high castes as much as the Sipis tend to think of their MB and other non-agnatic kin as consanguines, and that it is in ceremonial contexts that the focus switches to their affinity (cf. Chapter 7.7).

3 For instance, the responsibility for conducting all rites after the death of a married woman rests with her conjugal household and kin (although her natal kin may also hold some minor optional ceremonies to observe her death), and she is incorporated with her husbands ancestors (pitri).

4 With regard to Fruzzetti & Ostor, this is to simplify somewhat; even so, in relation to the ensuing discussion, the point stands. I should add that in Kangra it is in address, rather than in reference, that certain of those who have taken wives from the same wife-givers or given to the same wife-takers are recognised as siblings of a kind (Parry 1979: 308-9).

5 The last phrase refers to the fact that in Brahmauri terminology, as in Kangra and other north Indian systems mentioned, WFZS = sala, HMBS = jeth/dyor.

6 As this comment shows, the fact that they are seen as siblings of a kind does not make them any the less nate - although predictably an actual consanguineal connection will always have primacy over a more distant nate connection.

7 In neither Kangra as a whole nor Brahmauri society is there a term for ZHZ (f.s).

8 I collected these terms and specifications myself on visits to Chota Bangahal and Tisa (north Churah). Unfortunately, I failed to collect remoter extensions.

9 When I speak of symmetry and asymmetry in the terminology I must stress that I am using these terms to refer to a strictly formal property of the terminology. It is not an evaluation of the implications for affinal relations, which I have also discussed in terms of symmetry and asymmetry (or equality and hierarchy). That there is some relation between the two levels is certainly one of my arguments; but it is nonetheless important that the two levels be kept analytically distinct. In short, symmetry/asymmetry in the terminology and in the organisation of affinal relations are two separate but related social phenomena.

10 I twice interviewed young men from Pangi who were doing winter work at Khanyara slate quarries, near Dharmsala, in 1978. Then in 1980 I checked my data fully with four boys from Pangi studying at Chamba Degree College. In all cases my informants came from the area around Kilar and

Dharwas. Of course I recognise that the impossibility of cross-checking these data against actual genealogies raises a slight doubt about their reliability. But in justification I would reiterate that I had three chances to check my material, and that certain key elements of the terminological structure are corroborated in a 1961 Census Village Survey of four small Pangi villages. Specifically, mith is listed as covering ZH,ZHB & WB; dhauji as covering eBW & ZHZ; and rahnu as covering HZ.

11 These terms and specifications were collected in the village of Khilaun, one mile from Triloknath, from a Thakur family. I am grateful to Sri Rattan Lal, a school-teacher at Triloknath Government High School, for helping me by acting as interpreter on that occasion. The 'etc.' after each term refers to the equivalence with the Pangi structure, allowing for the fact that there are no sex-of speaker distinctions.

12 As a rough generalisation it does appear that the further one moves into the Pahari-speaking zone, away from the lower hills and plains, the more classificatory tendencies in the terminologies increase: for instance, apart from Krause (1980), cf. also Berreman (1963: esp. 412) and Majumdar (1962: 99-111).

13 I do know that Triloknath is complicated by the presence of fraternal polyandry; whereas apparently, if my informants are correct, it is only a rare occurrence in Pangi. I should also raise the question of cross-cousin marriage in these areas. Enquiries in Khilaun (Triloknath) and with Pangwalis indicated that cross-cousin marriage is not permitted; and the kinship terminologies accord with this prohibition, it would appear, by classing all cousins together as siblings. But Krause has shown (1980) that terminological classification of cross- with parallel-cousins does not rule out cross-cousin marriage in practice, so further work could be interesting in these areas. Certainly, the structure of the terminologies in Pangi and Triloknath at the '0' level is suggestive of a symmetrical prescriptive terminology, apart from the absolutely crucial differentiation of parallel- and cross-cousins. Whilst I have brought these examples into my analysis to demonstrate my point about a structural transformation from formal asymmetry to formal symmetry, corresponding to the passage from Kangra valley Rajput society to the remote Chandra-Bhaga valley, this is obviously only one way of looking at these data, and certainly does not preclude other kinds of interpretation.

14 This is a nice example of informants themselves deriving their terminological classification from their marriage practices.

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