Comprehensive or Master Processes:

1. Communication: For Loomis and Beegle communication means "the process by which information, decisions, and directives pass through a social system, and the ways in which knowledge, opinions, and attitudes are formed or modified." Redfield says, "the peasant culture is a half-culture... it requires continual communication to the local community of thought originating outside it. The intellectual and often the religious and moral life of the peasant village is perpetually incomplete; the student needs also to know something of what goes on in the minds of remote teachers, priests, or philosophers whose thinking affects and perhaps is affected by the peasantry." Of all the various means of communication, the transmission by word of mouth is most commonly used method since the Vedic times in India. The scriptures like Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, grammar, astrology, mathematics, medicines, epics were transmitted orally from generation to generation. One's status was raised if he could orally reproduce the sacred books. The Brahmin was given a title as Dashgranthi, one who could recite ten sacred books.

Weber noted that the Brahmin priests for a very long time upheld the principle that the sacred teachings could be transmitted only by word of mouth. Indian literature was developed by men who wished to excel in oratorical skills. There were first the rhapsodic bards of the Vedic age. Then

1. C.P. Loomis and J.A. Beegle, op. cit., p. 17.
came the Brahmin priests who stressed the oral tradition. Following the Brahmins were the poets and reciters who told stories and recited myths or law texts. Weber believed that this contributed to the slower development of various sciences by the Indians.

Weber was wrong in claiming that the art of writing was not practiced. The old inscriptions on stones, caves and temples as well as on copper plates are sufficient proofs. The ancient manuscripts on palm leaves are also available. Lateron paper was used for writing. But as Weber also noted it was considered a great achievement to be able to recite from a sacred book without reading from the book each and every word without a mistake. Though illiterate any old villager, male or female, even now is able to recite continuously several verses. Village women used to sing songs in loud melodic voices, while grinding grain early in the morning. There were illiterate women who could compose songs. But now there are flour mills in most of the villages and it is not necessary for the women to grind grain and there is less singing. The younger generation may forget the melodic songs of earlier time. Villagers know several type of songs to be used on specific occasions. Religious songs are of several types viz. Bhupali, Abhang, Sloka, Arati, Bharud, etc. The Bhupali is recited early morning by an old villager and all his family members wake up. The Sloka is recited by a villager in a community feast. The Abhang can be recited by a single person or in the Bhajan (group singing
with musical instruments) at night. The Arati is recited in chorus at the end of the ritual. Some songs are used by a lonely person to amuse himself while working alone in the field, herding cattle or lifting water from the well, with a moat (leather bucket). There are group songs, which are used at the time of sowing and harvesting. Some songs are recited in marriages and festivals. All this poetic literature transmits knowledge, beliefs, sentiments, values, etc. from one generation to another.

Besides these, there are many castes and specialists, who are often nomadic i.e. they go to even remote villages and move from house to house with their musical instruments. viz. Kungariwala, Kokewala, Gondi, Shahir, Vaghya-Murali, Potraj, Vasudev etc. Shahirs sing powadas (songs of warfare) and were very instrumental during the Maratha rule in awaking the masses against Muslim rule. There are Tamangir (dramatic troupe) who perform Tamasha and Jalsa in village fairs. Tamasha was effectively utilised in the beginning of this century by Satya Shodhak Samaj i.e. non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra for propaganda against the Brahmanic supremacy.

Hand and body gestures are profitably utilised in communication. The art of classical dancing is comparatively less developed in Maharashtra than other Indian States in which it is world famous. The Gondhalis can communicate many things merely through the gestures of hand. This art is so developed that a Gondhal can communicate the names of persons to another
Oondhall. The dealers in agricultural produce also use the language of finger-touch, although this form of communication is employed to exploit the farmers. The dealer joins hands with the purchaser under a cover of a cloth and pinches the number of fingers indicating amount of selling.

**Communication in a family**: There is face to face communication between some members of the family and kin, while such communication is tabooed between some members of the family and kin. Surprisingly, there is a similarity of taboo in different cultures. Among the Navajo Indians in U.S.A. for example, the husband must not communicate with the mother-in-law as he does with others.\(^1\) This is also customary among some castes in Maharashtra e.g. Kumbis of eastern Maharashtra. Loomis and Beagle stated that this restriction on interaction and communication appears to be a device provided by culture to prevent persons in status-roles between which there is tension from expressing their feelings in open conflict.\(^2\)

In the authoritative family i.e. joint-family a "via media" is used for communication. For example, a son afraid of his father may ask money from his father through his mother or the son may get his father's approval of his action through his mother. A newly wed wife communicates with her husband through her husband's sister. There is a joking relationship and free communication between husband and his wife's younger

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sister as well as between the wife and her husband's younger brother; but the communications with elders on the part of relatives are restricted and respectful.

There is a wide spread network of kinship and marriage in the villages. Dandekar reported that in 67 per cent of the cases distance between home villages of married partners was 50 miles or less and that in 12 per cent of the cases the distance was more than 50 miles.\(^1\) The wide spread kinship relations connect one family with many families residing in several villages.

Communication in informal social system: In villages informal groups are formed based on Moholla (neighbourhood). This group is usually a caste group as well as a clique. It is a face-to-face group and the feeling of identification is usually quite strong. The Moholla or ward has a leader represented in the Grampanchayat. The members of this group usually come together in the evening near the temple or on the raised platform under the tree. During hot days, they meet in the afternoon and form a gossipping group. Several subjects pertaining to everyday life are debated by them and experiences are exchanged. Agriculture naturally receives priority in such discussion. The times of sowing, hoeing, reaping, harvesting are talked over. The signs for identifying a good bullock and a cow are validated. Prices in nearby markets are compared. Innovations are verbally compared with traditional methods. The

\(^1\) K. Dandekar, *op.cit.*p.54.
Government concessions are also discussed in these gossipping groups.

Another type of plurality is known as the mutual aid group. From a functional standpoint, certain mutual aid groups form in villages and operate as long as the need for such group activity exists. The actual overt joint action may last only during certain seasons of the year. Usually these groups draw their members from within their own caste, but this is not a hard and fast rule. There are numerous exceptions and one known to the author is a small sugarcane crushing group consisting of three to six men who are bound together to increase the efficiency of this particular operation. The small group of the same size may operate a flour mill or an irrigation project or a village shop. This type of group when effective usually has good communication contact with the businessmen in cities.

Economic cliques may frequently cut across caste lines. For instance, a landlord may form a fairly close knit group of his tenants and borrowers. He can control them in village politics and in other activities when their support is needed. Factions are frequently made up of two economic groups opposing each other for the leadership of the village. Village factions are a strong influence and greatly complicate any village action. A dominating group in the Grampanchayat or the Panchayat Samiti, can get first hand information about various government concessions and utilize them for its members'
benefit. With this intention they also maintain good relationships with the Government officers. The Government circulars and announcements are communicated to the villagers by a Mang or a Ramoshi with a beating of his drum calling attention of villagers and then announcing the message loudly at every 200 yards distance.

Communication in the caste association: While decline of the caste councils having jurisdiction over a single village caste associations have been into village areas based on a cluster of a few (2 to 5) villages. The net-work of caste association is widespread linking the urban and rural areas. In times of stress the fellow caste member of the other village or town will come to one's aid. There is a constant interaction between the members of caste associations. The caste norms and customs do change due to these inter-relations and the communication pattern from city-to town- to village.

Communication in agricultural system: The communication of new ideals is most important in the adoption of improved farm practices. The farmers who own and operate bigger farms earn higher incomes and are the well educated farmers. They are often required to go to the town, where the N.B.S. Block headquarter is located, to sell their produce, to see their relatives or to meet the son being educated in a school or college. They can very easily call on the Block Development Officer and Agricultural Extension Officer. Their information contacts are also wide. Their kinship relations are spread over
a wide area. They are able to purchase agricultural books, and to subscribe agricultural magazines and newspapers. Some of them at least can own a radio with which listen to the agricultural information broadcast. These farmers are often elected to Village Panchayat or Panchayat Samiti and subsequently they come in contact with government officers and progressive farmers outside their own village. Thus these farmers have number of contacts which they can utilize for collecting new information.

After getting necessary information from various sources the individual of the above group can actually apply the idea; he can afford to risk experimenting with the idea, without imbalancing his annual income.

The position of small farmers is quite the reverse. They are usually low-income farmers, illiterate or poorly educated, lower caste and socially of low status. These farmers are not in a position to experiment, especially where the financial risks are high. The more judicious course for them, therefore, may be to wait for others to demonstrate the merits of new practices before pressing for adoption. In case of failure the chances of suffering from being ridiculed by other villagers are more for these farmers being of low status. Their contacts are limited often amongst the residents of own village and they have less leisure time to spend in search of new knowledge.

The lower caste farmers are socially dependent on
higher caste farmers. The former, being small land-holders, are also economically dependent on larger land-holders, as small land-holders often have to borrow seed, money, bullocks, and implements from the larger land-holders. This manifest itself in what is known as the two-step flow of information.

When any new practice is introduced to the small farmer, his first reaction to the practice may be negative. He may say, "This practice is not suitable to my land". Instead of directly accepting the practice, though its benefits have been promised by the Agricultural Extension Officer, he wants to evaluate the merits of a new practice by actually observing the field demonstrations and neighbors' fields where the practice has been adopted, and by seeking advice of a respected farmer, whom he considers to be an expert on farm matters and by discussing a new practice with his friends. He will only adopt a new practice when his prejudices and doubts are clarified.

Thus, the whole diffusion process follows the "Y" pattern of communication in Indian culture. The farm information from the Extension agencies and mass media first reaches the larger farmers who are the first adopters of the practice in a village. This information is later transmitted to the smaller farmers, who are later adopters of a new practice.

![Figure 6: Communication Pattern of Diffusion of Farm Information in an Indian Community.](image_url)
The mass media are important in making the farmers aware of the new practice. In a recent study in Maharashtra State, it has been observed that levels of knowledge about new agricultural practices increased considerably in villages with a Radio Farm Forum; very little in control villages with radio but no Forum; and not at all the control villages with no radio.\(^1\) This established immediately the usefulness of Radio Farm Forums. Since education is rapidly spreading amongst the villagers, the printed page will be an important source of farm information in future. Exhibitions and result demonstrations also have positive effects in carrying the farmers in the right direction. The background is prepared through mass media so that the job of Extension agents becomes easier. Prior exposure of the farmer to these media enables the Extension agent to convince him more easily at the right stages of evaluation, trial and adoption of a new practice.

In a survey conducted in Vidarbha area 339 randomly selected farmers were asked to give their main sources of information for nine new farm practices.\(^2\) The data are presented in Table 16.

**Table 16: Distribution of Farmers by Main Sources of Farm Information.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Information</th>
<th>No. of farmers</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Institutionalized</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block Development Officer</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agril. Extension Officer</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Contd.)

2. W.B. Rahukar, op. cit.
Table 16 (Contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Information</th>
<th>No. of farmers</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village Headman</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Level Worker</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Demonstration</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B Mass Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>No. of farmers</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C Individual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>No. of farmers</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other farmers</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other farmers' fields</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total No. of farmers          | 339           | -        |

A. Institutionalized Contacts: Though the Block Development Officer is a generalist and not a specialist on farm matters, his advice was sought about as frequently as that of the Agricultural Extension Officer. Both of them work at the Block Level.

At the village level, the advice of the Patil (Village Headman) was sought by a few farmers; but most of the farmers reported that the Village Level Worker was their major source of farm information.
The field demonstrations conducted by the VLW on farmers' fields were observed by two-fifths of farmers.

**B. Mass Media**: Battery operated radios are in operation in many villages. The farmers gather to listen to the villagers' programme in the evening. Radio, magazines, books and newspapers, giving farm information, reach one-third of farmers.

**C. Personal Sources**: The average farmer is in frequent contact with neighbours and friends. Nearly two-thirds of the informants reported that they sought information on new farm practices from their neighbours and friends, as well as observing the effect of new practices on other farmers' fields, before adopting these practices themselves.

**Sources of Information and Adoption of Farm Practices**:

To find out how far various sources of farm information were influential in causing farmers to adopt farm practices, the data were further analysed as shown in Table 17.

**Table 17**: Percentage Distribution of Farmers by Sources of Information and Adoption of Farm Practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Information</th>
<th>No. of Practices adopted</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Extension Officer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block Development Officer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Level Worker</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patil (Village Headman)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Demonstrations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed Page</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other farmers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Block Development Officer and the Agricultural Extension Officer were the most influential information contacts especially for those adopting more than 6 practices. Four-fifths of the farmers who called on these Officers adopted a maximum number of practices. Next in order of influence were field demonstrations and exhibitions. Half of the farmers who listened to the radio and discussed improved practices with other farmers, adopted maximum practices.

The village Headman was not influential; a few farmers sought this source of information. The advice of the VLW was sought by many farmers, but less than half of them adopted the maximum number of practices.

Association of Farmer Characteristics with Information Contacts: It was further evidenced from the data that the institutionalized contacts at the Block level were more preferred by the farmers who were younger, upper caste, comparatively rich, had higher formal education, had a favourable attitude toward Extension Service, participated in community activities and operated larger farms.

The farmers who were older, lower caste and illiterate depended more on other farmers for information on farm matters than other contacts. The mass media were preferred more by the farmers who had higher formal education, operated larger farms, belonged to trader castes, were comparatively rich and younger. The institutionalized contacts at the village level worker (VLW) were sought by a majority of the farmers who were
adopting improved practices.

**Communication in Religious Groups:** There are number of communicators in rural areas, who are effective in communicating religious traditions and values. The myths, legends, folktales and folksongs are communicated by the grandmother to her grandsons and grand-daughters in the family.

There are also priests who move from house to house begging alms and singing religious songs. These are the Vasudev Bhute, Aradhi, Jotibawala, Davari, Potraj, Vaghya-Murali, Gondhali, Dhagar, etc. The Vasudev wears a cap of peacock feathers on his head, a long white coat, and ties ghungur (bunch of small brass bells) on his ankles. He holds **tals** in his one hand and **bansari** in another hand. He is welcome in every house and particularly the children like to watch and hear him as he dances in the courtyard singing songs. He receives grain and money from the villagers. Potraj is a priest of Marial or Laxmial and belongs to a scheduled caste. He does not wear anything on his head and feet, but he wears a white shirt and a coloured skirt. He applies red powder on his forehead and holds a long whip in his hand. His wife holds a basket on her head in which the image of Marial is kept. Both of them dance in village streets and courtyards. The man whips himself, sometimes to the extent that the blood oozes out of his body. The couple receives grain and money from the villagers. **Vaghya-Murali** are priests of Khandoba. The Murali wears a yellow sari and red powder on her forehead, she ties **ghungur**
on her ankles and a brass bell at one end of her sari (padar). Murali dances on tunes of musical instruments called Dimadi, Chondake and Tuntune operated by Vaghya. The troupe sings many songs.

The Jogi, Sadhu, Gosawi, Sanyasi and Fakir are nomadic religious men. The Fakir is a Mohammedan but receives alms from Hindus and Mohammedans. A Sadhu may settle in a village for a long time.

Sanskrit literature has been translated in Marathi by the saints. Brahmin (Grajoshi) and Gurav are village priests. They read sacred books to the villagers. During the rainy season (when people are not able to work in the fields) a village teacher or the educated man reads a sacred book (poothi) to the villagers (males and females) every night. Often there are two persons. One man reads the verse and another man explains the meaning of that verse. This daily programme continues for a month and at the end there is a feast.

Other religious men like Haridas, Puranik and Kirtankar are invited by the villagers on certain occasions. All of these are Brahmins. Haridas and Puranik read sacred book, (Purana) to the villagers. The Kirtankar preaches to the villagers by reciting several verses to the tune of musical instruments. He also explains the meaning of verses quoting instances from everyday life. All these programmes are put on in the village temple hall. In south Maharashtra religious dramas are staged
by the villagers. In Vidarbha, Mahars before embracing Buddhism used to play a religious drama called Gangawat, similar to Ramliila of North India.

Raghavan says, "hardly a day passes without some sweet voiced, gifted expounder sitting in a temple, mutt, public hall or house-front and expounding to hundred and thousands the story of the Dharma that Rama upheld and the Adharma by which Ravana fell."

Besides this, there are pilgrims. The large group of Varkaris pass through the villages singing religious songs and in some villages they halt for rest. The villagers gather to see them, give them feast and hear the discourses. Some of them join the group on pilgrimage.

The fairs and festivals are also the occasions for village gathering. Lectures of prominent leaders both political and religious, are arranged. Tamasha and Bhajan troupes attend the village fairs.

Milton Singer is impressed with the importance of that he calls "the cultural media" - song, dance, drama, festival, ceremony, recitations and discourse, prayers with offerings - in expressing Indian culture. He is struck by the ways in which these forms constantly merge with one another and suggests that Indians, and perhaps all peoples, conceive of their culture as encapsulated in specific cultural forms which can

be exhibited in "cultural performances" to outsiders and to themselves.¹

The temples are the centres of religious communication. With magnificent architecture, images of deities and scenes from the epics inside and outside the temples speak for themselves to the observers also in the village the many offerings made by villagers whose vows have been granted are to be found in the temples e.g. minors, coins, pictures and many other gifts communicate thankfulness to God.

2. Boundary Maintenance: According to Loomis and Beegle boundary maintenance signifies activity to retain the identity, value orientation, and interaction pattern of a social system.² This process requires that the system actively resist forces which tend to destroy the identity and interaction pattern.

In a family: The solidarity of the family is most important, particularly to the rural family. The peasant thinks that his son should also remain in the agricultural occupation. With this objective the peasant teaches his son many skills from his childhood. The mother also desires that her daughter should become a good housewife. She expects that nobody should say that her daughter does not know the art of housekeeping when married. The existence of a joint family provides prestige to the head. When the joint family splits, the property is divided into uneconomic holdings and

¹. M. Singer as quoted by R. Redfield, op. cit. p.56.
². C.P. Loomis and J.A. Beegle, op. cit. p.9.
prestige is lost. Heads attempt to throw up such boundaries as will prevent fission in breaking up of the joint family.

The solidarity of the clan and larger kinship group is also maintained. If the couple is childless, the clan group brings pressure on the couple to adopt a member of the clan in order to keep the property within the clan. The villager always seeks marriage relations within the larger kinship group.

The stranger is not permitted to enter into the village household in the absence of an adult male of the family. It is a taboo for the household women to speak with strangers. The guests receive hospitality with due respects; but they cannot mix freely with the women of the household. Among high status Marathas, the women shall not come face-to-face with the strangers. The norms are strictly observed to maintain the prestige of the family. In western Vidarbha if a Maratha family migrates from its Vatan village it looses its status or rank and the caste designation changes from Vatandar to Asami. This status or rank is carefully considered at the time of fixing marriages.

In eastern Maharashtra the distinction is always made between Gaoncha (native of the village) and upra (immigrant). The immigrant is looked upon with suspicion. It is hard for him to acquire leadership.

Changes in dress, haircut, hairdressing as well as
change in traditional practices, both in the household and occupation are resisted, particularly if the change is thought to threaten the solidarity of the family. For this reason the high school education for girls is not readily accepted by the villagers. Even the higher education of a single son is resisted by the traditional peasant family, as the son may seek employment in the city and may not be helpful during the old age of the parents.

In a caste system: The caste system functions as an inter-grating and cohesive force in the village life, primarily in intra and intercaste relations. The caste members are bound by kinship, by common traditions, norms, values, interests and social interaction as noted above under Ranking. Endogamy is the chief characteristic of the caste. Marriage for the villager necessarily means a union of persons of the same caste. Actually to the villagers, the very phrase of "intercaste marriage" would be practically incomprehensible. A few intercaste marriages occur in urban areas, but none are reported from the rural areas. Even in urban areas the marriages between differing non-Brahmin castes are rare. Patterson reported that of the 40 cases of intercaste marriages in urban Maharashtra, 37 individuals were Brahmins and of these 21 were Konkanastha Brahmins, 13 marriages were between Brahmin subcastes and only 3 marriages did not involve Brahmins.¹

Restrictions on eating, social intercourse and choice of occupations are strictly observed in villages. There are caste norms for this purpose by which the caste group retains its solidarity and identity. The high castes look with indignation on those among the lower castes who would imitate their customs. Denial of traditional village service by the Mahars after they embraced Buddhism gave rise to the resentment by the high castes and created conflicts in some villages. The traditionally agricultural castes Maratha, Kunbis and Walis think that they only can get the best yields out of the land. Other caste members are amateurs in agriculture and cannot adopt the skill and knowledge of farming. Some of them dislike the prospect of seeing as landowners people who were ritually inferior to them.

In a democratic administration the higher castes try with some difficulty to maintain their superiority by holding their inherited position of status and authority.

At present, the caste associations (Jati Sangh) are set up in some villages. These associations carry on activities on the democratic pattern. The disputes among the caste members are settled through the caste association. Some caste associations have constructed temples attached to the community halls which are exclusively for use of the caste members.

Each major caste lives in a separate mohalla (neighbourhood) in the village. The lower castes tend to live at the outskirts of the village; the scheduled castes living in a
separate habitation area called Maharwada or Mangwada according to the respective caste. There are separate wells for the scheduled castes. Dining and smoking between scheduled castes and other touchable castes are still a taboo. Of course few societies provide examples of such powerful boundary maintenance.

There had been strong ritual restriction for travelling abroad for the fear of commensality. The person after returning from a foreign country had to undergo ritual purification. This restriction is no longer in existence and increasingly rural Hindus show tolerance toward different religious faiths. Nevertheless the whole society retains sacred, as apposed to secular characteristics. During pre-British days some Hindus embraced Muslim and Christian religion; but it was impossible for the person of other religion to be admitted in the Hindu fold as it was not a proselytising religion. Reformists have now investigated and quoted the rules from the Dharmshastras for conversion to Hinduism. In a sense the conversion has been going for a long time as tribal people were admitted to Hinduism. The Dravidians were converts to Hinduism and were known to be more orthodox than the Aryan Hindus themselves.

In a Village: Before the British rule, the village communities were self-governing. The village headman had full authority to collect revenue and to maintain law and order in the village. He was the leader and expected to defend the community from the outside attack. The elders and the worthy
were obeyed as were the councillors in the settlement of disputes. Being isolated from other villages due to lack of transport and free communication, particularly during monsoon, the village community used to be self-sufficient. In a typical village there used to be 12 balutadar (craftsmen) and 18 alutadar (servicemen) required for a typical agricultural community. There was good cooperation among the members of the community. The baluta system embodies the conception of a joint family. Mann says, "The villagers in the past regarded themselves as members of a big family. In a family the misfortunes of any one member are the misfortunes of all; and similar was the case with (village) communities. If a person suffered from theft, the rest of the community would ultimately make up the loss if stolen goods could not be recovered. If a balutadar could not get sufficient grain, the community would not leave him to starve; it would sanction a suitable grant from the village funds." Hence the balutadar never considered leaving the community in search of employment outside the village boundary. Such integration and solidarity provided boundary maintenance.

3. Systemic linkage: Loomis defined systemic linkage as a process whereby the elements of at least two social systems come to be articulated so that in some ways and on some occasions they may be viewed as a single system.

2. C.P. Loomis and Z.K. Loomis, op. cit. (MST) p.16.
Mukarjee observed that Indian culture has grown by a series of responses to the successive challenges of so many invading races and cultures. This has resulted in a synthesis. Western impact is the latest phase in this process of cultural assimilation and synthesis.¹

**Systemic linkage with the Dravidian Social System**

Maharashtra lies between the northern zone, dominated by the Aryans and the southern zone, dominated by Dravidians. Thus the social system of Maharashtra is the harmonious composition of those traits from the Aryan social system and Dravidian social system which persisted. Although there is a slight predominance of Aryan (Sanskritic) traits both societies and culture are linked. The historical records show that parts of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra were ruled by the Satavahana kings for seven centuries, by Chalukya kings for 250 years and by Rashtrakuta kings for a similar period as one kingdom.² Thus Maharashtra has been in contact with southern India for a long period. The cross-cousin marriage (marriage of a man with his mother’s brother’s daughter) is a southern custom and is practiced in Maharashtra by all castes except by some Brahmin subcastes. Such bilateral kinship is taboo in North India. Similarly village exogamy practiced in North India is not required in Maharashtra. A person can marry a girl of his own village in Maharashtra. Similarly the marriage of a man with his sister’s daughter is a southern custom and the same is practiced in southern Maharashtra, by

¹. As quoted by R.N. Saksena, op. cit. p. 11.
². I. Karve, op. cit. (KOLI) p. 155.
many castes including Maratha, Karhada and Deshastha Rigvedi Brahmins. The custom of receiving daughters as far as possible from one family and thus establishing certain rights and duties of sexual behaviour is also a usual southern custom and is practiced generally by Marathas. On the other hand, the levirrate (marriage of a widow to the younger brother of the husband) is a northern custom and is found among the Kunbi, Gosavi and other castes of the north-eastern Maharashtra. The Marathi language has a larger vocabulary kinship than any other Indian language either in the north or the south because of infiltration of these terms in Maharashtra from both the regions and modification of certain words. For instance, Vahini means brother's wife. The word Vahini is really made up of two words Vadh (Sanskrit) + Ami (Dravidian).

In the north India people use a kitchen knife for cutting vegetables, while in south India a cutting tool i.e. curved or a straight blade fixed on the wooden board is used. The latter is also used in Maharashtra.

**Systemic linkage with the Tribal Social System**

The worship of animals, trees, spirits, devils, ghosts, animal sacrifice and some superstitions are tribal traits assimilated in peasant system.

The Nag (cobra) is worshipped on the Nagpanchami day. A festival on the large scale is organised. Temples of Nag

2. I. Karve, *op. cit.* (Econ. Weekly) p. 151.
are found throughout Maharashtra. The rural people are afraid of the cobra as its bite is fatal. Still there are persons, who catch and play with live cobra.

The pimpla tree is sacred as the spirit Munja lives on this tree. The pantheon of the peasants contains local spirits and deities. The local spirits are ancestral and village tutelary spirits. Reverence to mountains and rivers, is also common.

The rural people believe that deities have power. Some diseases are thought to be caused due to the wrath of deities. They also believe in magic and witchcraft. Therefore, the magicians are respected and the women, who are believed to perform witchcraft, are often beaten by the villagers.

The rural people make vows to local deities and spirits and offer animal sacrifice often in fulfillment of desire. Although killing of animals is a taboo for Brahmins, the contributions are often given by them for animal sacrifice.

Some of the scheduled tribes have fused into Hindu social system forming a separate caste. For instance, Gonds in eastern Maharashtra have provided a functional caste, locally known as Rawal, the members of which are domestic servants to high castes.

Hindu customs have been assimilated by the scheduled tribes, through systemic linkage. For instance, many tribes have introduced child marriage as a claim to higher social
status as it is a recognised practice among their Hindu
neighbours. This has resulted in the restrictions or pre-
marital relations. Bhils (Northern Maharashtra) have intro-
duced child marriages. Tribal women enjoy considerable free-
dom of movement and husbands have to treat their wives as
equal partners. Where caste influence has permeated, the
free movement of women has been restricted and they received
subordinate status. This also encouraged polygyny\(^1\) as is
prevalent among low caste Hindus.

**Systemic linkage with the Muslim social system:** - The
North India was under the Muslim rule for about 800 years,
but Maharashtra with the exception of Marathwada was not under
Muslim dominance for such a long period. The dominant Muslim
influence changed the social ways of the villagers in Northern
India, while the rural Maharashtra was little affected. For
instance, the Muslim parda (veil) system was adopted by the
Hindus in North India. Muslim dress and language was also
introduced among the Hindus. But this had little effect in
rural Maharashtra. The parda system was partially adopted by
aristocratic Maratha families in Northern Maharashtra. The
women did not cover themselves under veils, but only they did
not show their faces to the strangers and remained secluded in
houses.

Urdu or Persian languages are not spoken by the rural
people of Maharashtra (except in Marathwada) although a few

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1. D.N. Mujumdar, Races and Cultures of India (Bombay, Asia
words are adopted in Marathi, particularly in administrative terminology. Even Muslims in south Maharashtra and Konkan speak in Marathi instead of Urdu. In rural area, Hindus converted to the Muslim religion have not altogether changed their dress, language and customs, particularly in south Maharashtra and Konkan Muslim women wear sari and choli (bodice), bangles and black beaded necklaces like Hindu women. They observe some Hindu rituals. Similarly, numerous Hindu castes worship Islamic saints (pir) alongside Hindu deities. They make vows to Tabut in Moharam festival.

Indian Islam also borrowed numerous Hindu rituals. Shaikh Mohamed worshipped Hindu deities and composed religious songs (Abhang) in Marathi. His disciples observe the Ramzan fasts and also Skadashi fast and make pilgrimages to Mecca and Pandharpur. In Northern Maharashtra Bhils, who are converted to Muslim religion are called Tadavl Bhil. They speak Ahirani-Marathi. They practice all Hindu and Muslim rituals and worship the Hindu deity, Khanderao, Bahlroba as well as pir like Muslims. Marriage as a ceremony is a combination of Hindu and Muslim rites. The Muhurt (auspicious day) is given by the Brahmin priest. The bride wears a black glass-beaded chain, green bangles, and silver ornaments like the Hindu bride. She does not wear vermilion like a Muslim bride. Pollution on menstruation is observed as in the case of Hindus. The Shradha and a fast are followed by them like Hindus. They also go on pilgrimages to Jejuri like other Hindus.
The Hindu caste system is adopted by Indian Islam. In theory, Muslims do not recognise commensal and marriage restrictions, but this is not the case in practice. According to religious law, Muslims should eat with everyone. In rural areas, Muslims do not eat Kacca food coming from untouchables, even from the hearths of Pakira (Muslim beggar caste). There are several Muslim castes in Maharashtra viz. the Atar, Manyar, Zarekari, Kanjar, Tell, Dhobi, Wozin, Tamboli, Kasar, Madari, Derveshlm Bandarwale, Kasabi, Katai, Halalkhor, etc. These castes are based on hereditary occupations. Other divisions among the muslims are Sayyad, Moghul, Sheik, and Pathan. According to Karim these divisions are counterparts of the Hindu fourfold structure. Further Dr. Ansari writes; "A graded scheme of society, a modified caste system which moulded the social policy of the Indian Muslims into multiple social groupings is a major cultural trait contributed by the Hindu way of life".

Husain Amber, Muslim by birth from South India, has written Husain Ambari, a treatise on the Gita which is a most sacred book to Hindus.

A Mulani (Muslim) has occupied a prominent place as a balutedar in Western Maharashtra. He is necessarily, required for the animal sacrifice to village deities as well as for

3. Dr. Ghaus Ansari "Machedamisches Kastenwesen in Uttar Pradesh" unpublished dissertation quoted by D.N. Mujumdar in "Races and culture in India p. 311."
butchering a sheep, a goat or a cock for the non-vegetarian meal of the villagers because the killing of an animal by a high caste Hindu is a taboo.¹

**Systemic linkage with the Jewish Social System:**
About fifteen centuries ago a ship carrying Jews was wrecked on the west coast of Kolaba district and fourteen persons reached the seashore alive. Seven were women. They got employment at the Tail's house in a village Nagaon and learned his traditional occupation, which later became their traditional occupation and they were assimilated in the Hindu caste system as "Shaniwar Tail"; because their business was closed on Saturday. Otherwise they are called "Bene Israel". Although they have retained a few original customs; they have adopted many customs of Maharashtra. Their mother tongue is now Marathi. They only know two Hebrew words "Besham Adonoy" (in the name of God). They used to dress like Typical Maharashtrian. Their clan names also resemble Maharashtrian affixed with the name of the village e.g. Jiradkar, Shahapurkar, Rajapurkar etc. They follow the method of cooking and use the utensils of the typical Maharashtrian Hindu. The women used to wear nine yards sari the middle of which was carried between the legs and tucked in the back like typical Brahmin women. They used to wear the same type of ornaments as Brahmin and even the married women wear Mangalsutra but they do not wear the vermillion on their forehead. The girls' earlobes are

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¹ Marathas are not forbidden to kill the game animals like tiger, wild pig, panther, bear, dear, rabbir, fish, birds, etc. They also eat the flesh of wild pig.
pierced. Among children the preference is given to the boy, and if one is not born parents adopt one. Some Hindu marriage customs were also adopted by them. The married woman goes to her mother’s house for first confinement. The method of religious communication, Kirtan, which is most common in Maharashtra was also adopted by them. Their calendar is similar to the Hindu calendar.¹

The author knows a few women of Bene Israel race who married Maharashtrian Hindus. They have been completely assimilated in their husband’s families and it is impossible to differentiate them. They worship Hindu deities, observe the Hindu fasts, speak fluent Marathi and dress like the typical Maharashtrian woman.

At present, the Bene Israels are westernised as are many other Maharashtrians.

**Sanskritization, Urbanisation and Westernisation:**

During British rule and afterwards the process of Westernization and urbanization was quite rapid. Srinivas says “Sanskritization and westernization are linked processes in modern India and it is not possible to understand one without reference to the other. When there is Sanskritization mobility may be said to occur within the framework of a caste, whereas Westernization implies mobility outside the framework of a caste”.² In Maharashtra the Marathi-Kumbi

¹ Lila Bavadekar “Bene Israel” Stree (Marathi) January 1965, p. 29-35.
Caste comprises 40 per cent of the population and thus it is the dominant caste in every sphere of rural life. The Maratha model is imitated by other castes including Brahmins. Thus other castes tend to borrow the style of speaking, dressing, way of farming and values from the Marathas. Orenstein reported in his study that the identification of one's own caste with Marathas was most frequent with upwardly mobile castes or castes whose status was felt as threatened. Srinivas has reported such instances of "Sanad Brahmins in Western Uttar Pradesh and Barots in Gujarat who imitated Kshatriya (Rajput) model. Similarly, Brahmin residents in villages of Delhi State imitated locally dominant Jat caste and Brahmins in south India borrowed many things from dominant non-Brahmin peasant castes. Srinivas pointed out that rural Brahmins cut off or isolated from the urban and monastic centres of Brahminical culture (centres of the great tradition) tend to take over local ways of life (of little communities). Cohn observed that the urban influences may result in a "traditionalism" as well as in modernization" of culture.

It is often argued that the landless lower castes often leave the villages in search of employment in cities since they are the worst off under present conditions. Karve and Damle also suggest that the solution of the problem would lie

mainly in the mass migration of the scheduled castes to industrial areas. But it is observed that more upper caste men migrate from the villages than the scheduled castes. This fact has been confirmed by the above cited study as well as by Eames, Lewis and Mayer and several other investigators. Eames found that the largest group going outside the village Madhopur (U.P.) are upper caste Thakurs, who are the landowners, holding 82 per cent of the village land. Lewis observed that it was the higher-caste Jats and Brahmins at Rampur (Delhi) who had taken the greatest initiative in getting outside work and had the best paid jobs and the greatest number of them. Mayer observed that among 17 villagers who moved from Ramkheri (M.P.) none belonged to scheduled castes and Rajput caste.

The spatial-occupational mobility between three generations in rural households has been studied by Pethe. His sample consisted 3114 heads of households from 70 villages of Poona, Sholapur, Ahmednagar, Satara and Bijapur districts. His data indicated that about 80 per cent of the households were geographically immobile in the sense that all the three generations i.e. head of household, his father and grandfather

1. I.Karve and Y.B.Damle, _op.cit._p.70.
belonged the same village as that of the present head. In the case of remaining households there was a shift in place either at the point of the generation of the father and/or that of the head. The occupational mobility between three generations was quite low. There was no occupational change throughout three generations in the case of 84 per cent of the households. The rest recorded change at once or both of the two points in three generation chain. As between the different occupations, agriculture showed the least inter-generational mobility. Petha concluded that migration and occupational mobility were quite closely interlinked with each other.¹

The persons who migrate from the villages are comparatively of younger age and a large majority of them are married and have children but do not take families to the city with them. The most frequent causes of initial migration are for the purpose of earning money to pay debts, build a new house, buy bullocks and pay for marriage; but other needs are discovered once the family is established in the city and often these replace primary needs.² These migrations may reduce the efficiency both in agricultural production as well as in factories because of the migrants are dual interests.

Migration has caused little change in the social

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2. Edwin Sames, op.cit.
structure of the village in cases where migration is significant. It has affected the social structure especially in Konkan and Satara district. Adult males from Satara district either migrate to Bombay and Poona or join the military service, while outmigration to Bombay is more than a century old tradition in Konkan. A large number of men find employment in Bombay city either seasonally or less permanently.

People live in Bombay leaving their wives and children at homes (native) and occasionally visit them. There were 338 married women whose husbands were away in Bombay for a large part of the year. But this did not adversely affect the fertility of these women. On the contrary in younger age groups, it enhanced their fertility.

With industrialization, the peasants have taken to growing, cash crops such as cotton, peanuts and sugarcane useful for industries as raw material. As the scope for irrigation increased the peasants have taken to the growing of vegetables and fruit crops. Thus the rural economy changed to a market economy system and peasants saw surplus profit in growing cash crops. They adopted intensive cultivation with improved farm practices and utilized the advice and help in kind and money given by the Government to raise crop production. Steady and high prices of agricultural produce were good incentives. With increased income thus secured, the peasants imitated urban customs and costumes. How the development of cotton
cultivation improved the lot of peasants in Vidarbha area is described by Rivett-Carnac who was Cotton Commissioner of the Central Provinces at that time. The famine crop failure and the civil war in the U.S.A. drove home to the British Government the wisdom of having an alternative source of supply of cotton from India for the United Kingdom. Rivett-Carnac wrote "The cultivator was emancipated during that period from the money-lender and many capital improvements were made, fruit trees planted, wells dug, irrigation developed and housing improved. There was also a general levelling up of the caste hierarchy (though not without struggle) as the lower castes secured enough wealth to take on the costumes and customs of the higher castes. Marriage and other ceremonies became more lavish and silver plough shares and tyres of solid silver for cart wheels made their appearance here and there. The reader like the writer may wonder how India might have progressed had systemic linkage of this type been made a part of British Indian relations during the last hundred years.

In unirrigated areas it was found that most of the land newly brought under cultivation and the area formerly under bajri and linseed has been diverted to peanut cultivation. On irrigated land, the area under groundnut and bajri had been diverted to onion and paddy. This allocation of area was in response to a shift in the relative price relationship and the relative profitability of these crops.

With the extension of rural electrification, the village farmers are changing to electric pumps and discarded bullock-driven moats and oil engines for lifting water from the well. The Maharashtra Electricity Board supplied electricity to 1806 villages. Of these 1672 villages were in Western Maharashtra, 77 in Marathwada and 901 in Vidarbha area. The number of villages electrified so far constitutes 6 per cent of the total number of villages in the State. The electricity and rapid growth of transport and communications linking villages with towns has changed the face of many villages. The village streets and houses are brightened with electric lights. The villagers receive pure drinking water from the tap. With the pressing of a button the peasant can irrigate his field with contour irrigation system. The women have not to worry about fetching water from the river or common well and grinding of grains. Flour mills driven by power, are now found in most of the villages. The hotel unknown to villages about 30 years back is now being introduced and popularised in villages. The cinema and talkies have been built in some villages by rich villagers. But surprisingly, buildings for cinema talkies are not in use due to lack of customers. The high schools even colleges, have been introduced in villages. The number of village boys and girls now able to receive higher education has greatly increased. The Government is also contribute to their education, as the boys and girls whose parents annual income

1. I know two villages Warud in Amravati district and Wadegaon in Akola district where well-built buildings now being idle are used as godowns.
is less than Rs.1200 do not have to pay tuition fees. Systemic linkage through the spread of education means penetration of new ideas, decline in influence of tradition and growth of new aspirations. Eradication of malaria removed the major impediment to health and economic efficiency. Malaria and smallpox once common in the village has practically disappeared. The advantages of family planning are now been realised by the villagers and they are prepared to adopt effective means.

The employees of the National Extension Service, Maharashtra Electricity Board, Educational Institutions, Cooperative Societies, Dairy Development Department, Irrigation Department etc. are now living in the villages and are linkages and are directly influencing the villagers as agents of social change. The constant linkage between urban social systems and rural social systems influence the villagers to accept urbanization and westernization. Thus the distinction between town and village- in food, dress, housing conditions, customs and values is gradually disappearing.

The above picture of rapid urbanization of villages is true in limited area, where irrigation water is profitably utilized and agro-industries are introduced. There is still a wide disparity between the standard of living of people in this area and that of people living in dry farming are where poverty is more intense.

Marriage as systemic linkage:

Marriage is an institution regulating the relationships
of man and his wife and is the process by which two families of orientation are systemically linked. The wife takes a vow at the time of marriage that she shall be faithful to her husband.

Manu recognised eight forms of marriage. In view of the fact that marriage forms a model for the process of systemic linkage generally these and other forms will be briefly discussed. In the Brahma form, the parents invite a learned and virtuous young man and offer their daughter to him along with clothes and ornaments. In the Daiva form, the father of the girl performs a sacrificial ceremony and the learned Brahmin who officiates at the ceremony is not paid any dakshina (present) but is offered the bride, properly decorated and bejewelled, as his fee. The Arsha form of marriage is based on a system of barter, in which the father of the bride receives from a young man a pair of cattle or two, in exchange for his daughter. The Prajapatya form is not attended with any solemnity or ceremony. The bride is given away to a young man of her choice, extolling the virtue of the married state and praying that the union may turn out to be happy and prosperous. In the Asura form, the relatives of the bride receive money from the bridegroom. The Gandharva form, which is marriage by mutual choice, obviates the role of the parents as the couple decide to marry without even consulting their guardians. The Rakshasa form of marriage is by abduction, sometimes carefully planned and executed but sanctioned by legal code. In the last form, Paisacha, a man who rapes a woman is allowed to
keep her as his lawful bride.¹

The present Hindu society recognizes only two forms, the Brahma and the Asura. There are modifications in these forms and a Hindu marriage is the combination of these two forms. The bridegroom brings the ornaments and clothes for the bride and receives money (dowry) from the bride’s father. The dowry system has been prohibited by law, but this law is not enforced vigorously and the dowry system as prevalent among the Brahmins persists. It was not prevalent among Kumbis and other castes, but now the educated bridegrooms of these castes often demand dowry in various forms from the bride’s father. The Asura form is practiced among the aboriginal tribes and backward communities even today. The Gandharva form was prevalent among the lower castes including Kumbis in case of widow remarriages, but is now practiced by other castes also.

Besides these eight forms recognised by Manu, there are two forms of intermarriage viz. anuloma in which form the man selects his wife from a lower caste and pratiloma in which form the man selects his wife from a higher caste. Such marriages occurred even before Buddhist period and are mentioned in Mahabharata. It is said that a Brahmin saint, Malapant married a Mahar girl unwillingly. When the husband found out her caste he did not put her away.¹ If one desires to marry a girl outside his caste, it is customary that his first bride should be

¹. M.G. Ranade, op.cit.p.151.
of his own caste and then he may select subsequent ones from a lower caste.

Marriages are dissolved very simply in lower castes. The common village word for dissolution of marriage is kadi modane (to break a twig). The phrase is derived from the custom whereby the caste council in the presence of the public breaks a small twig and declares the marriage null and void. Divorce proceedings may be instituted by either husband or wife. Divorce is granted if the husband ill-treats the wife, if the wife is guilty of adultery, or if either party suffers from an incurable disease. A divorced woman may remarry in the caste, according to the rites of widow remarriage. However, if she be divorced because of adultery with a man of a lower caste she is driven out of caste and may not marry in her own caste.

4. Institutionalization: For Loomis institutionalization is the process through which human behaviour is made predictable and patterned. Through this process social systems are given their own distinguishing elements of structure and the processes of function. According to Von Wiese and Becker institutionalization is essential to the upbuilding of plurality patterns. He defined institution as a network of relatively continuous or permanent interhuman processes and relationships initiating and maintaining connections between

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persons and groups within a plurality pattern for the purpose of preserving the latter or otherwise serving its interests. They further noted that "there are many customs that persist for a long time without taking over any determinable function that contributes to the upbuilding of the plurality pattern; the connection is relatively fortuitous and external. The use of force for the purpose of establishing enacted institutions is frequently fruitless. ... British India affords a striking example of this; the really vital activities of Indian life go on virtually independently of British rule, and efforts to alter those activities invariably provoke determined and successful resistance." For Von Wiese the caste system in India is the most important regulative institution as a great deal of emphasis is placed on the norms which it incorporates; it is the social mould or channel within which the behaviour of members is confined. There is no legal coercion in emphasising the caste norms as the caste councils did not receive legal sanction from the British Government and later from the present Government; but norms are strongly emphasized through social coercion in the interests of the plurality pattern. The deviants are excommunicated. Inter-marriage is uninstitutionalized and tabooed.

Like caste, religion is also a regulative institution. The peasants are more religious in terms of time spent worshipping and the using ritual procedure than the urban people. The

religion of peasants is the synthesis of sacred standards of
the religion and tradition; the latter, however, has the
dominant influence over the former. Weber observed that the
great merchants and financiers seldom concerned themselves
with religious questions and religious orientation. He noted
further that the Jains and Parsis, in India, and possibly the
commercial groups in Islam manifest a type of common religio-
sity which lead the accumulation of wealth. Symbols and
tabooes are adopted for the standardization of the religion,
but for these group different from other sects norms and
goals were retained without an effort to remake the world.

The joint family and property are two inter-related
regulative institutions, which may give prestige to the
members in the community. The efforts of the head of the
joint family, Karta, with his authority are directed to main-
tain the solidarity of the joint family and property in tact.
When the joint family is divided into nuclear units, the pro-
erty is also divided accordingly. The joint family functions
to preserve the family traditions and to serve the interests
of members.

All these regulative institutions present the private
interests of the actor from deviating too much from the over-
all interests of the collectivity.1 Customs frequently develop
into institutions and organisations.2

2. Von Wiese, op.cit.
Exchange of help in agricultural operations is a custom among most of the peasants of the world. It is developed in Maharashtra into a form of operative institution known as Irjuk. A poor peasant or a disabled farmer or a widow invites other peasants and labourers to work on his/her farm for ploughing, harrowing, sowing and harvesting operations. In exchange, the host has to give a feast to the invitees.

The theatre is an institution that furthered the aesthetic interests of the large body of persons making up the aesthetic plurality pattern. Two forms of theatre are popular in rural Maharashtra, viz. drama and tamasha. Drama is more popular in Konkan and urbanised areas, while tamasha is most popular in the rural areas of Vidarbha, Khandesh and South Maharashtra. Several tamasha troupes are always present in village fairs to entertain the masses. A tamasha troupe is also invited by a rich villager to perform a show to celebrate the birth of a son to the rich villager.

The customs, which serve a large number of persons, become so closely interwoven with social life that they may eventually be regarded as its characteristic, regular and even necessary components. Such customs may eventually develop into institutions and agencies. Festivals and fairs are examples. The village leaders become functionaries in organising the festivals and fairs and are granted special privileges as a

1. Ibid.
The village temple and Chavadi (community hall) are two facilities and are centres of activities of the village life which have been highly institutionalized from ancient times. Men and women offer prayers in the evening individually at the village temple. Women carry a small amount of sweet oil for the temple light and keep a few small coins at the feet of a deity and return home immediately, while the men sit awhile gossipping in groups. There are traditional norms tied up in these two institutions. The women can go to the temple in the presence of men; but are forbidden to the Chavadi except if they are called culprits. The village women as far as possible avoid passing through a street in front of the Chavadi as the strangers, guests and officials. They always halt at Chavadi. It is customary that village women should not show their faces to the strangers.

Recently, the Grampanchayat and Consumers Cooperative Society have become extremely important village institutions in the area of study. Grampanchayat is the statutory council for the village administration and the latter is the formal body for supplying multiple needs of the villagers, both household and agricultural.

Surprisingly, although there is solidarity among caste groups in a village, there are no stable agricultural organizations as for example the Farmers' Union, Tenants Union or Agricultural Labour Union which cross caste boundaries as to
the strong and stable labour unions in cities. The attempt is being made to organize the Farmers' Forum and the Farmers' Union at village, taluka, district, state and national level, but barring few exceptions these organizations have not yet taken roots in villages even though they have been backed by the State and Central Department of Agriculture. Perhaps the strength of the joint families and castes accounts for this.

In the event a farmer becomes ill at the time of sowing or harvesting other farmers will form a mutual aid group and will act as a group until the crisis has passed. If a farmer's house or the stack of fodder (gud) catches fire, not only farmers but non-farming villagers will gather to extinguish the fire. These events involve interdependence of interests. Refusing to help the neighbour in the event of illness would deprive the farmer of one of the most important forms of insurance against his own illness. These cooperative tendencies can form the basis for institutionalizing modern agricultural cooperation.

Due to lack of group action or solidarity in occupational groups on large scale, the farmers, tenants or agricultural labourers are unable to bring group pressure on the government or traders for their own benefit. The prices of agricultural produce are controlled by the traders and not by the farmers, who are producers. When a large scale irrigation project is undertaken, many farmers have to leave their houses lands. No institutional form of group protest by these farmers
is made. Cesar and Emery have presented a reason for such apathy on the part of farmers: "Essentially the farmers occupy similar class positions which produce like interest but they do not have common interdependent interests; rather do their like interests entail certain element of conflicts as for example over land. .......... As a consequence their organizations are usually based on like interests and lack the solidarity and potency for the individual that arises in organizations based on common interdependent interests".¹

**Socialization** — Socialization is the process through which the social and cultural heritage is transmitted.² Sociologists maintain that "The complex processes by which the human animal develops the habits, skills, beliefs, and expectations that are necessary for participation in the groups to which the belongs are called, collectively, socialization."³ Davis and Havighurst found certain differences in child-rearing practices between middle-class and lower-class families. The authors maintain that these differences in early training produce significant personality variations between social classes. The study confirms the idea that personality in the subjective aspect of culture and that cultural factors involved in child training produce certain personality traits. Not all personality traits result from cultural influences, however, as the study also demonstrates.⁴

Socialisation in rural Maharashtra may be studied among three viz. (1) Big land-holders, (2) Small land-holders or peasants and (3) Agricultural labourers.

1. In Big land-holders Family: The big land holders family is often a joint or the extended family. In such a family the child comes in contact with many members. The child remains with the mother only for breast-feeding during the day time and for other periods it is fondled by other members of the family, particularly the grand-mother and grand-father. It has a number of playmates in the family especially its cousins and siblings. It, however, remains with its mother during her sleep at night till the breast-feeding period which lasts about a year, ceases. Later the child sleeps with its cousin or with old persons of the family. Separate from its mother is preceded by training because it is thought that it should not develop such intimacy and as to give trouble to its mother when the next child is born to her. It is considered against etiquette for the father to fondle his own child in the presence of other elder members of the family and strangers. He may and does fondle the child when these elders are not present. Thus, the psychological development of child is not so much influenced by its parents as by the elders of the family. The arrival of a new child is traditionally as well as in practice a welcome event for a family, and is an occasion for celebration. The preference is always more for boys than girls as marriage of girls incur much expenditure to the family, also
boys are needed for ritual and economic purposes. There is traditional desire of the family that the first child should be a boy.

The breast-feeding is not scheduled. The mother takes the child in her lap when it cries or when she gets some leisure to feed it. The breast feeding continues till the child reaches the age of one year or in some cases till next delivery of the mother. The child is massaged by elder woman with sweet oil and then receives a bath with hot water. This practice is continued after the birth of the child for one year. Diapers may or may not be used; but a piece of cloth under the child's privates is always used. The child receives bowel and bladder training as soon as it is able to walk independently. It is instructed to get out of the house to the courtyard or along the street for easing. Afterwards the mother (or a sister, or a grandmother) will cleanse it with water. When the child is 3 to 5 years old, it also goes with its mother or cousins but of the village for easing. If a grown-up child eases in the house or in bed, it receives a slap on the back. It also receives an affectionate slap from his mother to warn it not to crawl too near the fire. The child is prevented from thumb-sucking. A bitter substance is applied on his thumb to check the habit of thumb sucking. Training to wipe out the mucus flowing from nose is also given in early childhood. After weaning the child is fed three times a day with male members or with all children of the house. Its diet consists of bread of jowar or wheat mixed with milk or
varan (the pulse boiled in water) and gur (jaggary) or sugar. Occasionally curd is also added. The child is often reminded of its duty with threats: "The tiger will get you!" or "The devil will carry you off!" The child is dressed by the elders until the age of 4 to 5 years. The boy wears a half pant and a shirt and the girl wears a frock generally without underwear. Restrictions on nakedness are more severe in case of girls. All children of the joint family wear clothes tailored from the same cloth to avoid discrimination and to avoid quarrels between the mothers. Children also occasionally go with their mother to her father's household. Generally children play outside the house in the courtyard or in the streets. Occasionally they go to fields with servants in a bullock cart and play there. After attaining the age of six they attend school. The children of this group have full freedom and do not have to worry about the household chores except some light work occasionally done by them, such work includes shutting the doors, bringing drinking water in a glass or betel leaves to the grandfather, feeding pet dogs, etc.

After the evening meal all family children come together to surround the grandmother and sometimes the grandfather, who tells them folk-stories. They are also taught to sing Abhang, Arati, Slokas etc. (religious songs), through which the children learn, sentiments, beliefs, values and about the Gods. This verbal training initiates their thoughts to the non-imperical environment. The children of the house live in a well-ordered hierarchy of relations according to their age.
This hierarchy is only infrequently challenged. The children are encouraged to build a small imaginary house with a real boundary. They are given miniature household articles made of clay or wood or brass like the grinding wheel, hearth, clay pots, bullocks of clay, wooden dolls etc. The children perform the marriage of dolls with all pomp and show. The elders assist them. Sometimes the boy becomes a husband and his cousin or sister acts as his wife. Some elder children may act as father-in-law and mother-in-law and younger children are sons and daughters. All these actors behave as if they are members of the joint farm family. A boy acts out the role of shopkeeper and uses a small balance or scale made of two halves of the hard-skinned fruit. A girl acts as the vegetable vendor. The children of the joint family often quarrel, which sometimes gives rise to the quarrels between their mothers. The fissures are thus developed can result in the division of the joint family.

Children are expected to avoid damaging family property, endangering their own lives and aggression towards siblings. The children are much loved, but are punished in case of disobedience. They are also praised for good behaviour and are rewarded. The rewards consists of a little amount of money for the purchase of sweets from the local shop, carrying the child on the waist to a place of amusement etc. Once a boy passed childhood there is a minimum of overt affection between him and his father. The son looks upon the father with some measure of fear and subservience. Even
SCENES from EVERYDAY LIFE

Harvesting Peanuts

Harvesting Cotton

Gossiping group of Women

Camp of Vadar labourers

Family lunch in field

Camp of Dhanger (Shepherd)
adult sons with families of their own are almost invariably obedient to their fathers.

Socialization in a peasant family: The peasant family is comparatively small - a nuclear or extended family in which generally all adult members of the family have to work in the fields, at least occasionally. Besides working in fields the family woman - a housewife - has to attend to the household tasks viz. cooking, washing clothes and utensils, cleaning the house and child rearing. If there is no older woman or man in the family, the child remains with a mother for a long time, especially if it is the first or second child. The mother has to carry the child to the fields. She stops the work for breast-feeding, otherwise the child is kept in a cloth-sling tied to a horizontal branch of a shady tree. Other children play in the field and assist the mother in light farm work, e.g. picking beans, irrigating, watching, taking cattle to water, feeding cattle, tending cattle, etc. A boy or a girl of 10-12 years can tend the cattle independently. A boy of 12 years can operate a harrow in the open field independently. He can drive the bullock-cart. He assists his father in ploughing the field, the son drives the bullocks and the father holds the plough. The girl after the age of six years, also helps her mother, in washing clothes and utensils, carrying water, cutting vegetables, cleaning the house and courtyard, sewing and cooking. She also takes care of younger brothers and sisters.
girl of 10-12 years old can prepare bread of jowar (Bhakari). Actually there is more need of a girl's help in the household than of the boys. The purchases of small quantities at the village shop is often made by children. Thus they learn to know what are the good and bad things, various coins and weights in an early age. They can do some oral multiplication before they enter the school. Both girls and boys attend school after attaining the age of six years. Their school attendance is irregular, particularly during harvesting season. The children are loved and punished in case of disobedience is mild. There is likely to be less ambivalence in the attitudes of adults towards children than is the case in other classes. Thus the peasant family enjoys a greater amount of "family life".

Socialization in an agricultural labour family: The family may or may not own a piece of land; but the main or major portion of income is derived from farm employment or employment outside the village viz. maintenance of roads, bunding and construction work. The family is often a nuclear type or small extended family. All, adult members are employed except when sick. The family members are not necessarily employed at the same place. Husband and wife work at separate places except on contract work like digging channels, bunding, etc. The housewife is usually very busy. She has to do all types of household work besides the employment outside the home. She has to maintain the house and family with minimum facilities and no husband's help. During harvesting season
her workload is increased even. In former times she was feeding a small grain of opium to the child in order to prevent him from crying. The child kept in the sling was locked in the house, while the mother had to go to the river to wash the clothes. It is risky to carry the small child to the river. Now the sale of opium is prohibited by the Government and it is not available in the market.

The labour women are not permitted by the landowner to bring the grown up children with them to the field, as they eat many things on the farm. They are kept at home. The elder girl has to take care of her younger brothers and sisters at home. She feeds them, washes them and plays with them. The elder girl has to bear the responsibility of the house at a very early age and thus she is not allowed by the parents to attend school. Therefore, very few girls from the labour class attend school and those, who are in school, attend very irregularly. Boys and girls start earning money from a very early age seeking employment at the house of a rich landowner or by tending cattle or working in the field doing light work like flowing water through irrigation channels, watching the fields, picking vegetables, etc. However, a full adult wage is generally not earned by boys and girls till they reach the age of eighteen. By this time they are married.

The children play in the dust and often are not clean as their mother is engaged in other needful chores. The boys remain naked from the waist down till they attain the age of
4 to 6 years, while the girls remain naked till they attain the age of 2 to 3 years. During the sterile period the sex exploration among children is common, when the children are left to themselves. Adults view children's experimentation as in no way wicked but still they reprimand children for it. This effectively prevents morbid curiosity about the physical difference between the sexes and enables adults to discuss the physical aspects of sexuality without false embarrassment.

Wife beating is not rare in this class. The children are also occasionally punished with a stick for failure to do the allotted work.

The personality of children of the peasant class and the labour class is developed more independently than the children of the landowner class. In a school quarrel of children the child of the landowner class may receive more blows than those he will give to the child of a lower class, as the latter are more confident and strong. Children are seldom excluded from any of the adult activities of village life. Children and adults often play together indoor games in the village community hall. There is indeed an absence of the western emphasis on the separate role of childhood.

6. Social Control: For Loomis a social control is the process by which deviancy is counteracted. Lundburg et al defined social control as "a phrase generally used to

designate those social behaviours which influence individuals or groups toward conformity to established or desired norms.\(^1\)

In the rural area social control is exercised on the individual for the conformity of norms of the family, caste and village. In the modern Maharashtra, the Government is the main agency for social control and it extends this control at the village level through the Police Patil, Talathi, Grampanchayat, Nyaypanchayat, courts, schools and Government officers. The social control is of two types: (1) coercive control and (2) persuasive control. The former type is often resorted to by the Government, while the latter is used in informal groups. The conformity to social expectation is achieved by various means. Praise, elevation of prestige, recognition, and reciprocal response are the rewards for conformity, while criticism, ridicule, gossip, withdrawal, reciprocity, ostracism, excommunication, and even beating are the penalties for nonconformity.

There are several types of group norms. Folkways are norms the violation of which are weakly punished. Summer further divides folkways into usages and mores.\(^2\) Usages are merely practiced, whereas mores are considered necessary to group welfare and are sacred. Radcliffe-Brown used mores as sanctioned usages.\(^3\) Violation of the mores result in severe punishment.

Control in the Family: Karta, the head of the joint family is the locus of authority. Economic power is vested in him. He exercises his power over the members of the family in conformity of family norms. He carefully uses his power in order to maintain the solidarity of the family and as far as possible avoids displeasing the family members. Therefore, he gives his suggestions or shows disapproval through the elders of the family who consequently convey this to the deviant of family norms. Efforts of other members are also directed to maintain the unity of the family. For instance, if a boy plays any mischief, he is not punished by just any members of the family, but his parents, who are informed of the mischievous act of the boy. On the other hand, the rewards are given to the boy by other members of the family, particularly the head of the family and not by his parents at least not in the presence of others. There is a mutual sharing of tensions which arise in the course of activities of the members. For instance, if one of the bullocks dies at the time of sowing, one of the brothers may approach his father-in-law and borrow the bullock for some period.

The husband-father is the locus of authority in the nuclear family or the extended family. The maintenance of parental authority is the responsibility of the father. The mother is more concerned in the socialization of the children. She exercises control of the children to a greater extend than the father. This difference is owing to the much greatest part
played by the mother in coaxing the children into carrying out their duties by promise of rewards. The father is often away from the children working in the field. When the question of punishment comes up, the children probably below five years, are punished by the mother who uses words, abuses, threat, slapping and beating with a stick according to the nature of fault and temperament of the mother. In case of children over 5 years the father’s participation in punishment is somewhat greater than that of the mother. The mother often uses a threat of “telling father”, even the grandmother and other children of the house use this threat to bring round the mischievous child. The girls are subjected to a closer and more rigorous control than the boys. The acts of punishment involve disobedience, abusing, allotted work being improperly done, failure in school studies, destruction of property, immoral behaviour, aggression, defying or attacking parental authority, disrespect towards elders etc.

The rewards are of two types: (1) physical rewards and (2) psychological rewards. The physical rewards involve freedom of movement, receipt of sweets or small amounts of money for the purchase of sweets, patting on the back, carrying to the place of amusement, new clothes, etc. Psychological rewards are praise and promise in the presence of other children.

The punishments are of four types: (1) physical punishment (2) restriction (3) reciprocal actions and (4) psychological.
For the mild faults psychological punishment such as verbal disapproval or abuse is exerted and for severe faults physical punishment like slapping or beating with a stick is resorted to. Restrictive and reciprocal punishments are not common.

The parents are blamed by persons outside the family for the children's mischievous acts. The teacher is blamed by parents for school-going children's disobedience or non-conformity. Mother often says to her son, "Is this taught to you in school?"

Among the husband and wife, the husband is often dominant in the family. Wife dominance is ridiculed by outsiders.

If there is a conflict of opinions between husband and wife, both resort to non-communication for some period, or communication through children. In case of disputes between husband and wife the mediation of wife's father is sought. If the latter is not successful, the mediation of elders of clan or caste is sought. The wife sometimes escapes from husband's dominance by going to her parents. Karve writes her observations as follows: "In fact this type of conduct has resulted into almost a norm of social behaviour. A girl comes away or runs away very often from the husband's house, goes back reluctantly, only to return in a few week's time. A woman settles contentedly in her husband's house only after she has given

1. Abuses of mild nature are freely used in rural area.
birth to a few children, though the slightest excuse sends her with her children on a visit to the parents' house. This behaviour of the bride is encouraged by her parents, sometimes from motives of extracting presents from the boy's parents. ... The quarrels of the two parties and the lawsuits filed by husbands for the restoration of conjugal rights form a considerable number of cases in the civil courts of Maharashtra.¹ This type of behaviour is prevalent among the lower castes and can be observed from notices and counter-notices given by a wife and a husband to the opposite party through their pleaders. A number of such notices appear in newspapers. Among the higher castes the mother-in-law may instigate her son to compel his wife to take shelter in the latter's parental house. Mujumdar writes, "The new wife takes her lessons from her mother-in-law or the husband's grandmother if she be alive. She learns what makes for family prestige and what does not, and when she fails to profit by instructions and examples, she is brought to book and receives chastisement and even ill-treatment as she deserves." He further writes, "In the majority of cases, the husbands are cornered and are dominated by their wives and live happily by conniving at or submitting to the latter's control. They may earn approbrious epithets in their social group, but what they lose in one way, they gain in peace, and many husbands would prefer to submit rather than to rule".²

¹. I.Karve, op.cit. (KQII) p.163.
Social Control in a Caste: Folkways and mores are important to the members for the maintenance of the status of the caste. The conformist is rewarded by way of taking him into the executive body, while the nonconformist is punished by several agencies such as criticism, ridicule, withdrawal and excommunication.

Folkways and mores vary from caste to caste; some are contrasting. For instance, among Brahmin and Sonkoli women, the end of sari (Padar) is kept on the shoulder, while among other castes including Kunbi-Marathas it covers the head keeping the face open.

The social control on the members of caste is exerted by the caste council and recently in some villages by the caste association. Excommunication is a strong weapon in the hands of the caste council; which is used in severe cases. In mild cases, the deviant is penalised liberally in which case he has to pay a fine or has to stand for a feast to all caste members.

Social Control in a village: Though the villagers do not interfere with or harm a promiscuous woman, they sever their relations with her family and ignore the greetings of any of its members. Social isolation is a terrible punishment. A person so defiled is also socially disabled. He looses, at least temporarily, his full previous status. It may be applied either to resort against an individual or a whole caste. For instance, when the Mahar caste refused to act as village
servants and to carry dead animals after they embraced Buddhism. As punishment they were isolated in some villages. They were not engaged as farm labourers and were not given any employment in the village. In a few villages, they were actually beaten by the high caste villagers. In 1957, Nav-Buddhas of village Vadaki about 11 miles from Poona refused to celebrate the Holi ceremony. This enraged the villagers who had beaten the Nav-Buddhas on this account.¹

There are always a few families in a village whose social position is so low that they are in a sense immune from the pressure of public opinion or indifferent to disapproval and fear only physical punishment.

There are separate wells for the untouchables in a village; dining and smoking between higher and lower castes are still taboo; low-caste persons are forbidden to sit on the carpet. However, these norms are more liberal in Maharashtra than they are in Northern and Southern India. This means that deviants are not severely punished in Maharashtra. Marathas are more liberal in this respect.

In a village other castes are inclined to conform the norms of the dominant castes. This influence of dominant caste is so compelling that even the Brahmins do not go against the norms of the dominant caste of the village. Karve has cited an example as follows, "A vegetarian Brahmin, who worships his own

household gods with sandal wood paste and flowers, does not feel it contradictory to pay his share of the contribution to buy a goat or a chicken to be killed as sacrifice before the village god and/or Marial.\textsuperscript{1}

The outsiders temporarily staying in the village or visiting are not immune to social control. When the author reached a village near Poona with a movie projector the elders of the village objected to his showing films in the village. The author enquired concerning the reasons. He learned that the officers of the Social Welfare Department had shown the films on family planning about a week back in the presence of children. When the village elders were convinced that there was nothing against their social norms in the agricultural films and children can very well see these films, the author was allowed to organize a film-show in that village. This does show how social control is applied to those who wish to link their programmes to the villages.