THE STUDY: ITS CONTEXT AND EXECUTION

India is a surface of the earth clearly demarcated and inhabited by relatively distinctive and related ethno-linguistic populations distributed in an ecologically compatible manner. The populations gave rise to common institutional patterns within a frame of variant social types due to co-operative response over centuries to environmental conditions of living and to an evenly distributed assortment of mixed physical types due to inbreeding amongst localized populations. The extensive culture area of India is divided into geographically contiguous and sizable sub-areas or regions distinguished from each other by their specific ethno-linguistic cultural patterns and by a number of rural and urban oriented caste groupings and tribal groups instituting together with their respective community structures. The culture area as a whole has been continually exposed to external contacts in peace and war and to cultural exchanges of innovations absorbed with compatibility. Within the regional system itself there has been a dynamic process of mutual cultural exchange. Inter-regional distribution of specialized functions, and their changing significance at different times, has led to shift of influence and dominance between the regions. Thereby the socio-cultural boundaries of regions had reciprocal penetration and influence between adjacent regions and an over-all transmission and communication beyond leading to a process of integration with the culture area (Panchanadikar and Panchanadikar, 1980:5). India today is apparently divided into six broad sub-areas such as the western, the northern, the northern-eastern, the eastern, the southern and the central. The western sub-area consists of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa states, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Union territories. The ethno-linguistic region of Rajasthan situated in the north of the western sub-area is one constituent of the Indian regional system.
Rajasthan: The Ethno-linguistic Region

The present Rajasthan is an outcome of merger of 25 princely states including 2 chiefships and 1 centrally administered province of the erstwhile Rajputana. The principal states were Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Sirohi, Jaipur, Alwar, Dholpur, Karauli, Bharatpur, Tonk, Kota, Bundi, Jhalawar, Udaipur, Kishangarh, Dungarpur, Banswara, and Pratapgarh. The chiefships of Shahpura and Kushalgarh having two sovereigns were under both the Maharana of Udaipur and the prince of Banswara respectively and the British Government of India. Ajmer-Merwara—a British chief commissioner’s province—was the only centrally administered unit in Rajputana. For integration into the present state passing through several stages, the first union -Matsya Union- consisted of Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur and Karauli was formed on 17 March 1948. Another Union -Rajasthan- inaugurated at Kota on 25 March 1948, with the Maharao of Kota as its Rajpramukh, consisted of nine princely states and 2 chiefships; viz., Kota, Tonk, Bundi, Jhalawar, Pratapgarh, Dungarpur, Banswara, Kishangarh, Shahpur-Lawa and Kushalgarh. Subsequent merger of Udaipur princely state into Rajasthan on 18 April 1948 brought into being the United States of Rajasthan with the Maharana of Udaipur and the Maharao of Kota as its Raj Pramukh and Up Rajpramukh respectively. With merger of Bikaner, Jaipur, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur on 30 March 1949, it came to be known as the United states of Greater Rajasthan which formed a government on 7 April 1949, with the Maharana of Udaipur, the Maharaja of Jaipur and the Maharao of Kota as its Maharaj Pramukh, Raj Pramukh and Up Rajpramukh respectively. The Matsya Union also merged into it on 15 May 1949. With appendage of a major part of Sirohi State—earlier attached with Bombay—to it on 26 January 1950, the state of Rajasthan was given a status of the B-class state (Report...1951:2). Under the re-organisation of states in 1956, with the transfer of Abu of Sirohi princely state from Bombay and the Sunnel Tappa of Mandsaur district in Sironj sub-division of Kota district from Rajasthan to the new Madhya Pradesh, and the merger of Ajmer-Merwara (a C-class state after Independence) into Rajasthan, a full-fledged state of Rajasthan joined the Indian union of states. This process of integration provides an understanding into identity formation of Rajasthan evolving from eco-political communities to the Political system of ethno-linguistic region.

Rajasthan, i.e., the abode of the princes, a collective and classical name for a region of India comprising the Rajput principalities known as Rajwara in its familiar dialect and as Raethan by its more refined people, corrupted to Raipur among the British (Tod 1979:1) is rhombic in shape with a 540 miles long east-west diagonal (Sharma 1966:1), located between 23°3' and 30°12' north latitudes and 69°30' and 78°17' east longitudes and bound on the west and the north-west by Pakistan, on the northern and the north-eastern frontiers by Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, on the zigzag south-eastern boundary by Madhya Pradesh in the central region of India and on the south-western one by Gujarat (Sharma :1).

The Aravali range, the backbone and most striking topographical feature of Rajasthan running towards north-east and south-west for about 430 miles divide the state into two clearly distinguishable regions, i.e., the arid plains and the ever-shifting sand-hills of Marwar, Jaisalmer and Bikaner on its west and north and the forest and plains of black loam, furrowed by the running streams of Mewar, Hadoti and Jaipur regions blessed with wide vales, fertile table lands, great breadths of excellent soils and long stretches of forest with abundance of food and fodder on its east and south-east (Ibid:2-3). The Aravali hills proper lying in the present district of Udaipur and deriving the name from Ada-vala, a
Rajasthani word meaning a beam lying across, virtually the range across Rajasthan, spreads upto Dungarpur and Banswara districts and gets precipitous towards Bhilwara and Ajmer districts with an important branch running through Chittorgarh, Kota and Bundi districts, largely consisting of pathars or tablelands, with fertile black soil on flat hill tops. There is its central block in Tonk and Sawai Madhopur districts, the Nag Pahad range of Ajmer loosely connected with the range in Udaipur more or less continuous ranges in Jaipur and Ajmer districts and the last spur in Delhi proper in the form of ridges between New Delhi and Karol Bagh and to the south of Rastrapati Bhavan. In Udaipur, Dungarpur, Banswara, Bundi, Kota, Sawai Madhopur and Alwar districts, the Aravalis are clad with fairly thick forests” (Ibid : 2).

By ethno-linguistic characteristics the region is divisible into eight homogeneous sub-culture regions such as the Marwar covering Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and the states of Shekhawati region; the Mewar covering Udaipur and Shahpura; the Vagad covering Dungarpur and Banswara; the Dhundhari covering Jaipur; the Haroti covering Kota and Bundi; Mewat covering Alwar; Brij Mandal covering Bharatpur, Karauli and Dholpur and Urdu covering Tonk (Vyas and Doshi 1984:7).

One amongst 25 states of India, Rajasthan in 1991 covers an area of 342,483 square kilometres, i.e., 10.43% of the whole of India with a rank of the second largest state and a population of 4,40,05,990 persons (19.23%) out of 843,930,861 persons for the whole of India. Of these 22,935,895 are males and 2,09,44,745 are females (910 per '000 males) as compared to 437,597,929 males and 406,332,932 females (927 per '000 males) for the whole of India. The density of population is 120 persons per square kilometre as compared to 267 persons per square kilometre for the whole of India. Rajasthan consists of 39,910 (37,889 inhabited and 1,921 uninhabited) villages, 222 towns and cities grouped into 213 tehsils, 90 sub-divisions, 237 panchayat samities and 9173 village panchayats. Respective urban and rural break-up of the population is 1,00,67,113 (23%) and 33,93,18,877 (77%). Net area sown in 1992-93 is 1,69,39,000 hectares and gross area irrigated is 54,86,000 hectare (census 1991; Basic statistics-Rajasthan 1994).

Sub-regions

The state characterized by such a physiography alongwith ethno-linguistic and historical features is divisible into four sub-regions; viz., the Dry region, the Eastern plains, the Southern plateau and the Southern highlands. The Dry region -a part of the Thar Desert extending across the border into Pakistan -comprises 11 districts of the state; namely, Sri Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Bikaner, Churu, Nagaur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Pali, Jalore and Sirohi- primarily the area covered by the former princely states of Marwar (Jodhpur), Bikaner and Jaisalmer. The eastern plains consist of mostly rolling plains of 9 districts of south-eastern Rajasthan- Jhunjhunu, Sikar, Alwar, Jaipur, Dausa, Bharatpur, Sawai Madhopur, Tonk and Ajmer-representing the area historically dominated by the princely state of Jaipur. The Southern Plateau surrounded on the three sides by Madhya Pradesh consists of 4 districts -Bundi, Kota, Baran and Jhalawar- with distinct topological features of the state. Lastly, the Southern highlands formed of 6 districts of the south-western Rajasthan -Bhilwara, Udaipur, Rajsamand, Chittorgarh, Banswara and Dungarpur- is the area of the erstwhile major princely state of Udaipur.

The four sub-regions demarcated in terms of soil, climate, rainfall, vegetation, people, language and history have in each distinct assortment of agriculturist castes and other
groups generally constituting their respective rural communities, which viewed by their social structure and stratification will provide an understanding into their roles in the state as a whole as well as the respective sub-regions.

MAJOR CASTES AND TRIBES OF RAJASTHAN

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<tr>
<th>Caste/Tribe</th>
<th>Jat</th>
<th>Brahman</th>
<th>Mahajan</th>
<th>Chamar</th>
<th>Bhil</th>
<th>Rajput</th>
<th>Mina</th>
<th>Gujar</th>
<th>Mali</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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Source: Census of India, 1931, Vol.XXVII, Rajputana Agency, Meerut: Govt. of India, 1932.

Census of 1931 reported 13 castes which combinedly represented 71% of the states population at the time. Of the castes listed in the table, 3 represent agricultural castes, 2 twice born castes, 2 Scheduled Tribes and 1 Scheduled Caste. Only four out of nine castes, i.e., Chamar, Brahman, Mahajan and Rajputs are broadly distributed through out the state. Owing to the low social status, economic level and educational level, the Chamar could not act as a state-wide effective caste, while the three twice-born castes - Brahman, Rajput and Mahajan - could do. All the other castes are concentrated in limited areas of the state. The Jat - largest single caste of the state- is concentrated in the Dry region and northern districts of the Eastern plains. The Gujar represented between 4% and 8% of the population in the three regions except the Dry one. The Bhil represented 25% of the population in the Southern Highlands, but in the former states of Banswara, Dungarpur and Kushalgarh of the region they constituted 64%, 54% and 84% respectively. The Mina concentrated in the Southern Plateau and the southern half of the Eastern Plains represented approximately 8% of the population concentrated for the most part in Alwar, Sawai Madhopur and Jaipur districts. The Mali formed 2% to 5% of the population in all the regions except their insignificant number in the southern plateau. Despite the fact that there are even many other concentrations of particular castes, the above figures sufficiently reveal that the distribution of caste like peasant castes, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes lacked a state wide coverage. Few castes, above the village level, dominated any area as a majority caste. “Their traditional social organization was limited horizontally in terms of regions and vertically in terms of social stratification” (Shrader 1968: 327-29).

Of the much more evenly distributed twice-born castes, the Brahman ranged from 5% to 9% (latter figure in the Eastern Plains) of the population in all the four regions of the state, the Rajput in each region varied from 2% to 8% of population with their highest concentration in the Dry region. The Mahajan represented 3% to 7% of population with their highest concentration in the Dry region, except their representation slightly less than 1% of population in the southern plateau. This distribution of social groups like castes and tribes in the four regions combines with the ecological conditions of the regions decided their positions in agriculture, trade, politics, etc. in the state.

On the whole, the region of Rajasthan, today, is characterized by interaction of its geographical, historical, socio-cultural and political factors drawn from its various eco-ethno-linguistic sub-regions.

The Southern Highlands

The Southern highlands consist of two areas; viz., the Mewar and the Vagad. The Mewar presently consisted of Udaipur, Rajsamand, Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts, derived from Medapata the well-known Sanskritized form of Mewad reminds of a period
when the territory, later on ruled by the Guhilas, was under a people called Meds or Mers regarded by G.H. Ojha as descendants of Sakas seeing some similarity between the words, Mer and Mihira. It was also known as Pravata, for the Karabel inscription of Jayasimha Kalachuri refers to the Mewar kings Hanisapalta and Vairisimha as rulers of Pragvata. “The Pragvata or Porwal vanik class might have originally belonged to Pragvata or Mewar” (Sharma: 15-16). The areas covered by the erstwhile Dungarpur and Banswara states is still known as Vagad or Bagad with mention in the inscriptions of the locality. The name might have been derived from the word, Bagada, which means a jungle (bid: 17). The area being contiguous to Gujarat represents a cultural mixture of Mewari and Gujarati cultures.

Of all the districts of the Southern highlands, Udaipur is a district till date dominating the entire sub-region in geographical, historical, cultural, social and political sense.

Udaipur District

Situated in the southern part of Rajasthan, oval-shaped with a very narrow strip stretching towards the north, lies between 23°46' and 26°2' north latitudes and 73°0' and 74°35' east longitudes and bound on the north by Ajmer and Pali districts, on the south by Dungarpur and Banswara, on the east by Chittorgarh and Bhilwara and on the west by Pali and Sirohi districts. Udaipur derives its name after Rana Udai Singh founding the city of Udaipur in about 1559 A.D. To carve it out in the present form during formation of the the united states of Rajasthan in 1948, a part of the district of Girwa, Khamnor, Rajnagar, Bhim, Magra, Kherwara and Kumbhalgarh, together with the Thikanas of Nathdwara, Kankroli, Salumbar (excluding Saira Tehsil), Bhinder, Kanod, Bans, Bari Sadri, Amet, Sardargarh, Deogarh and Gogunda were combined to constitute the district of Udaipur. During the period 1951-61 by an inter district transfer village, Lunera of Kapasan Tehsil and nine villages of Dungla tehsil (Chittorgarh district) was added to Bhupalsagar and Vallabh sagar tehsils of the district respectively. In 1961-71, 77 villages from Bhupalsagar transferred to Kapasan tehsil of Chittorgarh and in 1971-81, 3 villages from Dhariauwad tehsil were transferred to Bari Sadri tehsil of Chittorgarh district (census 1981). Recently a new district of Rajsamand has been carved out of it.

The district is divided into four sub-divisions -Bhim, Jhadol, Salumbar and Udaipur-and 10 tehsils in the sub-divisions each containing Bhim and Deogarh; Kotra and Jhadol; Kherwada, Salumbar and Sarada; and Girwa, Gogunda and Nathdwara respectively. The district has 11 panchayat samitis such as Bhim, Deogarh, Badgaon, Sarada, Gogunda, Kotri, Railmagra, Jhadol, Salumbar, Kherwara and Girwa. Of this district encircled by Aravali ranges from north to south, the northern parts consists generally of elevated plateaus while the eastern part has vast stretches of fertile plains. The southern part is covered with rocks, hills and dense forests whereas the western portion known as the Hilly tracts of Mewar is composed of Aravali range. Stretching from Bhim Tehsil, the Aravali range runs south-westerly towards Kumbhalgarh and Jarga and spreads towards the valley of som River. The two important passes in the Aravali range; viz., Desuri NaI and sadri serve as a link between Udaipur and Jodhpur districts.

The district particularly rich has a large variety of important mineral resources. The important metallic and non-metallic minerals found in the district are ores of copper, lead, zinc and silver. Among industrial minerals rock phosphates, asbestos, calcite, limestone, barytes, emerald and marble are important ones. Under the Northern Tropical Dry deciduous type of forests in the district, the major and minor forest produce include timber, coal, firewood, gum, bamboo, tendu, katha, honey, wax barks and grasses. The
common species among a large variety of flora are Am (Mangifera indica), Babul (Acacia arabica), Bargad (Ficus bengalensis lirm), Dohak (Butea monosperma lamk), Gugal (Ficus glomerata Roxb), Khejri (Prosopis spicigera linn), Pipal (Ficus religiosa), Neem (Azadirachta indica), Salar (Boswellia Serrata), Bahua (Terminellia blerica) Dhaman (Grewia tiliafalia), Hingota (Balanites egyptiaca), Bahua (Terminellia blerica) Dhaman (Grewia tiliafalia), Hingota (Balanites egyptiaca), Serna! (Salamalia malabarica), Timru (Diospyros melanoxylon), Bans (Devdscalamus strietius), etc. The shrubs and herbs are Ak (Calotropis procera), Anwala (Cassia auriculata), Thor (Euphorbbia nivulia), Karonda (Carista spinarum), etc. A large wild life variety of animals, birds, and reptiles comprises panther, tiger, wild boar, sambar, wolf, jackal, stripped hyena, chital, etc. Jaisamand is a game sanctuary maintained by the Forest Department of the state government.

Sandy loam soil is available in the panchayat samiti areas of Bhim and Deogarh, clay loam soil in Gogunda, Kotra, Jhadol, Girwa, Badgaon while the red loam soil in Kherwada, Sarada, and Salumber. Generally the soils in the western parts of the district are stoney while yellowish brown soil is met in the small portions of eastern and western parts. The non-perennial rivers like Banas and its tributaries flow through the eastern part of the district and other rivers are Som, Jhakam, Wakal, Sei, though all the three crops -Rabi, Kharif and Zayad- are grown in the district. Kharif remains the main crop while Zayad is raised to produce several types of vegetables in river beds. The crops important by their productions are sugarcane, maize, wheat, barley and gram. The total net irrigated area during 1979-80 was 42.88% of the total net area sown in the district. Over 28% of the total cropped area of the district in 1979-80 was irrigated by various sources but mainly by tanks, wells and lakes. Of them, wells constituted most important sources of irrigation contributing 80.33% of the total irrigated area in the district. Dispersed in all tehsils, wells are more prominently found in the vicinity of rivers and nallahs where water level is high due to percolation. The pumping sets, charas or rahat (Persian wheels) are increasingly being used to lift water from the wells. Tanks-the second most important source of irrigations account for 18.87% irrigated area. The medium irrigation works in the district are Jakham, Berach, Badgaon, Vallabhnagar, Khor Feeder, kala Bhata, Namona, Daia and Bagolia.

According to the livestock census 1977, the total livestock population was 3,445,464 in the district. Of it, 38.56% was cattle, 14.44% buffaloes, 31.71% goats, 14.36% sheep, 0.34% camels, 0.35% donkeys, 0.18% horses and ponies, 0.06% pigs. The total poultry in the district during the period numbered 211,945. There were 21 veterinary hospitals, 15 veterinary dispensaries and 15 mobile veterinary units in the district during 1979-80.

The district is mainly being served by hydro-electric power and supplemented by atomic power. Only a few industries based on minerals and cotton are available in this industrially backward district.

The fairs and festivals of generally seasonal and religious character in various parts of the district, becoming increasingly important from the commercial and tourist point of view, are: Annakut of Nathdwara, Eklingji at Kailashpuri, Gangaur at Udaipur city, Pratap Jayanti at Chawand, Charbuja at Charbhujaji, Jhameswar Mahadeo at Jhamarkotda, Krani Mata at Kunwariya, Keshariya at Rikhbaddeo and Dashera at Kherwara.

One amongst 27 districts of Rajasthan in 1991 (now 31 districts), Udiapur in 1991 covers an area of 17,729 square kilometres (approximately 5% of Rajasthan as a whole) and stood seventh in rank. It has a population of 28,89,000 persons forming approximately 7% of that of Rajasthan as a whole. Of these, 14,70,000 are males and 20,96,300 females. The density of population per square kilometre is 167 persons as compared to 129 persons
for Rajasthan as a whole. The sex ratio is 965 females per thousand males in the district as compared to 910 females for Rajasthan. By sex ratio the district is ranked after Dungarpur (996) and Banswara (969) districts. The rural and urban populations of the district 33,93,900 and 1,00,67,000 persons respectively are found in the ratio of 83:17. The total of the Scheduled tribes persons is 10,63,071, i.e., 37% of the total population of the district -the highest one after that of Dungarpur (66%) and Banswara (73%) districts (Census 1991).

Girwa Panchayat Samiti

This panchayat samiti is a part of Girwa tehsil and Udaipur Sub-division located in the south-west of Udaipur district in the Hilly Tracts of Mewar formed of Aravali range -covered with hills, rocks and forests. The sandy loam soil is available in the samiti area spread in an area of 1339 square kilometers -the second largest in size of the district and populated with 1,77,000 persons- again, the second in size of population in the district and with a density of 132 persons per square kilometre as compared to 167 persons for the district as a whole.

From the account it is obvious that Rajasthan, an ethno-linguistic region within the sub-culture area of western India, is structured of a number of eco-ethno-linguistic-historical sub- and sub-sub-regions. Hence, after a general understanding of the regional system, a discussion with reference to the Bhil of western India, Rajasthan and Udaipur will be quite appropriate.

The Bhil: Origin and Mythology

A massive largest tribe or primitive people or group of aboriginals of India is the Bhil. Presently divided into several endogamous groups (Singh 1981), the bulk of it is concentrated in the rugged region of the forest-clad mountain trinity of the Vindhyas, the Sahayadris and the Satpudas (Naik 1958:1) - exactly in the contiguous areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Besides, a small number of 52 lakhs in Andhra Pradesh constituting 10.34% of India’s tribal population (census 1991), they are found scattered over a wide area in the states of major concentration -from the Aravalli range of hills in the southern highlands of Rajasthan in the North to the Dangs of eastern Gujarat in the South and in the East, through the districts of Jhabua and Dhar upto the forests of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh- the whole region lying between the latitudes 20°-25° N and the longitudes 73°-75° E (Doshi 1974:1).

The word Bhil is derived from the generic term bil, of the Dravidian language, meaning bow -the characteristic weapon of the tribe. The original inhabitants of Tululand of South Kanara district in Karnataka are known as billavas, from the same generic term, who do not use the name bhil among themselves but instead refer to one another according to the personal relationships of father, grandfather, uncle, etc. or the official title such as naik/nayak -the leader, tarwi -the headman, etc. They are generally accepted as the earliest inhabitants of the country and referred to as the bowmen (Chatopadhyaya 1978:55). Beel or Billu are the other Dravidian generic terms of the same meaning as written in different books. There are others who derived the word Bhil from a sanskrit term, Bhid meaning to pierce, shoot or kill as a consequence of the Bhil peoples proficiency in archery (Mann 1978:113).
Among the several prevailing myths of their origin, the most important and widely accepted one declares them to be the descendants of brothers of Parvati, who finding Mahadev unable to pay them dapa or bride-price stole away His nandi -the sacred bull. Later, on killing of the animal, their sister, Parvati, condemned them for the sin to lead, thereafter, a miserable life. This concocted story of unknown source provided them to be contended with a miserable lot of social and economic degeneration and justified their position as the thieves of Mahadev in their predations (Chattopadhyaya: 56).

Another mythological tale recounts of Mahadev making a clay doll, breathing life into it and calling it a Bhil. Their legend of great deluge tracing birth and spread of mankind, as all tribals do, narrates: A washerman, while washing clothes in a river warned by a fish of the impending deluge in gratitude for its regular feed, ensconced himself, his sister and a cock into a box to be saved. The water being subsided, Shree Rama's (god's) scouts searching the survivors, on the cock's crowing, discovered the box with the pair who was asked to go about populating the world. So to start with they had a pair of twins, first (boy) of whom presented with a horse by the God, being unable to use it, abandoned the animal and went into the forest where his progeny came to be called the Bhils-the forest-dwellers (Ibid).

Tracing their birth differently from the first Bhils born as twins, Ninama and Maira, in satyayuga, the Bhils believed that the gods with a view to test the twins sent Kakai, a fairy, to ask for Ninama's eyes and Maira’s head, which they surrendered forthwith to Kakai. The pleased gods restoring their limbs sent them to populate the world (Ibid).

The Puranas, among several distinguished Bhils, speak of their inimitable expert archer, Eklavya; the noted author of the Ramayana, Valmiki, who starting his life as a Bhil bandit, Valia, became a sage turning his extreme grief of dark past into poetry; and Jaratha whose arrow aimed at a deer hit Krishna fatally bringing a curse to the Bhil descendants of their right hand fore-fingers not to be effective in handling bows (Ibid).

Naik noted the Puranic (Bhagavat Puran) account for the Bhil tracing their descent from the thigh of Vena-son of Anga, a descendant of Manu swayambhu. The childless sage, Vena rubbing his thighs, produced a charred log like man with a flat face and extremely short stature told to sit down, i.e., nishad -a name adopted for him as well as his descendants dwelling the Vindhya mountains and distinguished by their wicked deeds (Mann 1978:12).

Rowney accounts another tradition ascribing the Bhil’s origin to Mahadev fallen in love with a forest girl having numerous progeny. One of them being ugly, vicious and distinguishing himself as killer of his father’s favorite bull was expelled from the habitation of men and from him descended the Bhil (Ibid).

Besides, the descendants of the socially declassed Rajputs on account of some social crime such as marrying a Bhil girl, eating beef or any other act and those of the illegitimate union of Rajput ruler with a woman of the low caste like Khants in Dungarpur were obliged to join the Bhils. The Bhils of the areas such as Obri, Depara, Bilak, Kądgar and Barapal in Udaipur, Padar and Dhambola in Dungarpur and Sundhalpur and Mandi Kheda in Banswara districts regard themselves as the descendants of the declassed Rajputs and still maintain the Rajput sub-castes such as Parmar, Chauhan, Sisodia, Rathore and the like (Shyamaldas, Part-1). Conversely, certain Bhil bhomias/chiefs declaring to be Rajputs, known as the Bhila Rajputs for long, were ultimately merged into Rajput fold (Chaturvedi 1968).
Racial Characteristics

The Bhil have characteristic features of short to medium stature, slim body, round head, low and broad nose, darkish brown complexion and broad face and wavy to curly hairs. Small faces and fair complexion are also common and flat nose or prognathous jaw may also be found here and there. Many of them look emaciated and dwarfed due to malnutrition and chronic starvation. The Bhil women seldom fat or plumpy have retained even to this day some of the grace and agility with dark complexion (Ibid : 14-15).

Herbert Risley, from anthropometric point of view, racially assorted them to the Dravidian type reluctantly accepted in the modern research. Crooke also identified them with dravidians. C.V.S. Venkachari related them to the proto-Mediterranean race. Eickstedt, Shah and Guha, all, grouped them with Gonds or Veddis of the proto-australoids. Majumdar states, “The more we analyse the data, the more it transpires that the Bhil are radically more distant from the so-called pre-Dravidian groups while they approach nearer to the higher castes”. Ghurye maintains that even if the Bhil were originally of the same racial stock as the Chenchu or the Munda tribes, the indications are that they have been thoroughly hybridized by contacts with alien races (Ibid). Thus the racial status of the Bhil on anthropometric grounds is still uncertain. Griegson sees some non-aryan element in Bhil language. Whether this element is Munda or Dravidian is all uncertain. Bilih includes a number of languages spoken by the Bhils in a chain of dialects between Rajasthani and Gujarati and Khandeshi and Marathi (Ibid : 14).

The Bhils are in general classified into three categories: (i) the village Bhils, (ii) the cultivating Bhils and (iii) the wild or mountain Bhils. The village Bhils were those who from the ancient times had become inhabitants of villages in the plains (usually near the hills), of which they were the watchman and as such a part of the community. The cultivating Bhils were those who continued in peaceful occupations after their leaders were destroyed or driven away by invaders to become desperate free booters. The wild or mountain Bhils consisted of those who preferred savage freedom and indolence to submission and industry, more or less by plunder. These were not at all closed groups; the number in each category increased or decreased depending upon the kind of government, weak or strong (Erskine 1908:230).

Inter-ethnic Relations of Bhils

The Bhil believed to have been the ancient inhabitants of the Aravalis are today, concentrated in Dungarpur, Banswara, Udaipur and Chittorgarh districts constituting 39% of the scheduled tribes population and 12.13% of the total population in Rajasthan. Excavations and archaeological findings pertaining to proto-historical period of the Bhil region have proved the early existence of man along the rivers Mahi and Sabarmati, and Gambhiri and its tributaries-Berach and Wagen at least 1,00,000 years ago (Prakash 1967:1). The nomad man living on fruits, roots and animal flesh stabilized to cultivate in the area of Ahar river some 4,000 years ago (Sankalia 1967:3-4). This man in all probability was the Bhil either real adiwasi, i.e., autouchthonous or migrated from outside. In the which time followed, a lot of struggle in the region is evident from the fact that Ahar was rebuilt at least 15 times during the pre-historic period and 3-4 times in the early history. The original Bhil settlement found was of not later than 2000 B.C. The people were
agriculturists, cooked food, used metal—specially copper—for domestic utensils and lived in planned houses (Ibid: 12-16).

Their passage through a long and tedious historical process characterized by their checkmated relationship with a number of other ethnic groups may be attempted with a view to do a systematic historiography.

**Bhil Autouchthones and the Civilized**

'The position of the Bhils as the oldest inhabitants of the country, as Russel and Heeralal stated, is recognized by their employment in the capacity of watchman to keep watch and ward over the village boundaries which may necessarily be better known to the oldest class of residents. Though pointing to the uncertainty of their autouchthonous status, C.S.V. Venkatachari ascertained them to be a race inhabiting India earlier than the Aryans and the Dravidians. Ghurye considered them to be the oldest inhabitants of Rajasthan on the basis of a number of references in the religious classics, mythological treatises and the epics—Ramayana and Mahabharata. Tod called them Vanputras or sons of the forest, the uncultivated mushrooms of India, fixed on the rocks and trees on their mountainous walls to the spot which gave them birth. Incidentally, those oldest residents of the region have been living in the hilly and rocky terrain of the Aravallis which the geologists regard as among the oldest rocks in the world (Mann: 11-15). Thus, they are believed to have been the ancient inhabitants of the Aravalis before the Aryans gradually infiltrated the western and the central Indian Plains to dislodge them deeper into the upland forest areas (Tod: Op.cit; Chauhan 1978).

Despite being very little known by the seventh century, the Bhils have been so ancient as to be regarded a separate ethnic group in Sanskrit literature of B.C. 500 (Raghav: 404) and there has always been some implication of aboriginal attached to the word, Bhilla, as wheat and barley have been respectively referred to as Bhil bhojanam and Bhil-anna (Jain: 6). Adiparva of the Mahabharata narrates the story of rejection by Dronacharya of the lowly born Nishad Eklavya going all along to Hastinapur to learn archery, his mastery over archery before a clay-idol of the guru and asking by Dronacharya for the right hand thumb to render his archery ineffective. The Harivansh Puran accounting for relations of the Semi-civilized Bhil aboriginals with Lord Krishna and His kinsmen mentions ultimate killing of Krishna by a Bhil’s arrow as well as snatching of ladies of the Royal Yadav families being escorted to Mathura by Arjuna equipped with his famous Gandiv (bow). The first historical mention of the word, Bhil, not before 600 A.D., in Gunadhya’s Kala Sarit Sagar is of a Bhil chief opposing the progress of another king through the vindhayas. Yashodharman, while his capital at Mandsor in Madhya Pradesh adjoining Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan and earning fame for defeating the great Hun, Mihirkula, in 532 A.D., is regarded by the Bhils of Kanthal (Pratapgarh) as one of their chiefs of those days. After his death, the region was annexed by Harshavardhan to his empire only to disintegrate into several independent units after his death. The eastern part of Wagar, i.e., mostly the present Banswara district, captured by the Parmars of Malwa was ruled over by their vassals from Arthuna. but the remaining parts had independent sway of the Bhil chieftains for a century.

Thus, the early historical accounts lead one to derive that
1. The Bhils were unaware of the caste hierarchy.
2. They were marital people considered aboriginals by the civilized others.
3. They had their independent political units scattered in the Bhil regions.
4. Despite the scarcity of historical material, the available some of historical evidence and also their settlements such as Bhilmal and Bhilwad (presently Bhinmal and Bhilwada) proved of the Bhil region being much more extensive over the vast tracts of better lands wherefrom the Bhils were driven away by the civilized in the subsequent ages.

**Bhil-Rajput Relations**

Drawing from bits and parts of Bhil-Rajput relations in the recorded history, one can identify the following high points in the historical development of the Bhils (Doshi 1974:2):

1. Presence of the Bhil kingdoms particularly in the southern half of the province of Rajputana (now Rajasthan) about 1300 to 1500 years ago.
2. Unseating of the Bhils and annexation of Bhil kingdoms by the Rajputs.
3. The Bhils moving away to deeper gorges of Aravalli hills and the casual/unpredictable relationship between the Rajputs and the Bhils.
4. Oppression of the Bhils by the Rajput kings by way of high taxation, forced labour, etc.
5. The Bhils as plunderers, thieves and law-breakers; the problem of lawlessness caused by inefficient, weak and corrupt administration of the Rajput kings and the arrival of the British on the scene.
6. The Bhils as settled agriculturists.

The checkmated Bhil-Rajput relations forming almost the entire recorded history of the Bhils may be classified into the following types:

**Phase of the Bhil-Rajput Co-operation-I**

When around sixth century A.D.-the state of Vallabhi in Kathiawar of the Western India, on the killing of its king, Shiladitya, in Ram’s dynasty of sunline, fell to the barbarian Hun invaders, his pregnant wife escaping into forest handed over her newly born son to a Brahman woman before her immolation to the fire in the Rajput tradition. The Child, Goha (Cave-born), assuming his name from his birth in a guha (cave), being brought up in the Brahman family mostly played with the daring and forest-loving Bhil companions in the state of Idar ruled by a Bhil chief, Mandalica, at that time. Once elected by the companions as their king, Goha ungratefully realized the playing-at-role situation into the one of becoming the king of Idar with help of the Bhils after killing his own benefactors. His name became patrimynic to his descendants styled as Gohirole -classically Grahirole, in time, softened to Gehlote (Tod 1960:181).

About 626 A.D. the state of Idar was lost to the family of the king Nagaditya who was fourth in the Guhilot dynasty founding Nagda (near Eklingji) with the Bhils' cooperation (Ojha: 402) and was while hunting killed by the Bhils tired of his snobbery and ostentious superiority (Tod: Op.Cit). His infant son, Bappa, (Shiladitya) conveyed to the fortress by a Bhil of Yadu descent was later removed for greater security to the wields of Parassur (Ibid). Bappa Raval is regarded a corrupt form of Vap-raaj-kul, i.e., the father of the royal dynasty -a title. According to a legend, Bappa while living near Nagda, one day played the game of marriage with the princess of the Solanki Rajput chief of Nagda. Knowing the king’s enrage over his marriage, even in sport, Bappa with his two companions Bale of Oondri village in the Valley of Udaipur and Dewa of Oguna-Punarwa-escaped into the western wilds. The two companions’ names have been coming
down with Bappa’s, as the former had honour of drawing a teeka of sovereignty with his blood on the occasion of taking crown from the Mori (Ibid: 183). This custom of coronation was continued by the descendants of Bale and Dewa, until it became prohibitive.

There is little in historical accounts about life, social status and relations of the Bhils with the other maintained during the next six centuries.

The new capital of Mewar, i.e., Ahar shifted from Nagda in 951 A.D. and later the region around Chittorgarh was won first in 974 A.D. by the Parmars of Malwa and thereafter by the Chalukyas of Gujarat. In 1174 A.D. Raval Samant Singh revolting against the Chalukya authority from Gujarat was uprooted altogether (Ojha Vol.I: 455) to be fugitive to seek shelter and co-operation of the Bhils to kill Chaurasimal, the oppressor of the Bhils, and to found the kingdom of Wagar with the capital at Baroda which was later shifted to Dungarpur (Ibid -vol.III: 49). When Kirtipal of Nadaul (Pali-Marwar) taking advantage of unsettled political conditions spread his sway, Rawal Kumar Singh, the younger brother of Samant Singh, again, with the local cooperation of Bhils easily reinstated Guhilote authority in the region. In about 1224 A.D., after invasion of Nagda by Shamshuddin Altamash, the slave king of Delhi, the capital of Mewar was shifted to Chittor.

These historical accounts show that

1. The Bhil and the Rajput closely co-existed and the latter established their rule in the region with cooperation of the former as well as alongwith ruling chiefs from the former, and

2. The Bhils were in no way despised as is evident from the frequent Bhil-Rajput intermarriages and occasional instance of the children of a Rajput by his Bhil wife being recognized as the Rajputs (Naik 1958: 19).

**Phase of Bhil-Rajput Antagonism-I**

In 1304 A.D. Raval Vir Singh Deo of Wagar with an intention of founding a more safe and inaccessible capital, i.e., Dungarpur, treacherously killed Dungaria, the Bhil chief of the region. Being afraid of the curse of Dhanna and Kali, two devoted wives of Dungaria, who followed their husband to the funeral pyre, the Raval named his capital after Dungaria and constructed two shrines one each of Dhanna and Kali on the Hill adjacent to the southern flank of the town known as *Dhanna Mata Na Magra*, i.e., the *hill of mother Dhanna* where animal fair is held. This shows how the invader Rajputs diplomatically legitimized their authority over the Bhil region. In the period that followed, a large scale subjugation and ouster of the Bhil from their better lands drove them to desperate courses. Rao Ran Mal of Mandore acting as the regent of Maharana Mokal from 1420 A.D. to 1428 A.D. during his operations for subduing the Bhils of Bhomat openly beheaded the *gameti* (headman) of Pai pal in Girwa tehsil of Udaipur (Shyamaldas Part-I: 318). In the atmosphere of overwhelming Bhil antagonism, the Bhil assassins -Chacha, Mera and Mehpa Panwar sought after by the Rao’s forces- were given shelter and guaranteed safety in a small fortress called Rata Kot (Tod vol-I: 330). All efforts of the state forces to capture them rendered abortive, Ranmal himself ultimately went to the slain gameti to ask pardon of his widow and persuaded them to withdraw their support to the assassins (Shyamaldas: 318-19). About the same time Maharaval Gopinath crushed the unruly and rebellious Bhils of Wagar who a few years later in 1460 A.D. when the Mewar forces attacked Dungarpur provided shelter to the same Maharana and his family (Ojha n.d.: 66). During the period the Bhil were not only beings robbed of their good lands and qualities of truthfulness, unadulterated simplicity and non-diplomatic ways for
ignoble ends but their blood was also considered as having some magical effects to provide strength to the forests and the edifices constructed by the rulers. Among 32 forts and numerous other constructions by Maharana Kumbha (1433-1468 A.D.) and dam of Gaip Sagar constructed by Maharaval Gopinath, there were very few where does not lie buried the head or the whole of body of one or more Bhils under their foundations. These unfortunate being either killed by force or offered themselves for the bane in the hope that the ruler would be making the life of their descendants more comfortable than they could do in their life time. Alike Dungarpur, the two new states -Banswara and Deolia -were founded in 1530 A.D. and 1561 A.D. by killing the Bhil chiefs -Bansia and Deolia- respectively and the places named after the slain savage chiefs as a diplomatic compensation or recognition of their mystical rights on the land. The treacherous killings and the uprooting of the Bhils from better lands and impelling them towards unfertile, marginal, small and uneconomic holdings leading to the life of despise and economic degeneration went on till 1568 A.D. when Chittorgath was finally sacked by the Mughal forces under the Emperor Akbar.

Thus, during the phase the Rajputs came to occupy positions of political, social and economic dominance and superiority, while the Bhils sank to the one of subjugated, despised, oppressed, exploited and degenerate people continuously being pushed from their fertile lands to uneconomic lands in the hills.

**Phase of Bhil-Rajput Co-operation-II**

Just before the final sack of Chittorgarh, Maharana Udai Singh took shelter among the Bhils and migrated to Raj Pipla (Ojha- Part-I: 725). But it was Maharana Pratap, Kika or Son in their dialect, who associated with himself the Bhils in the long drawn battle against the Mughal emperor, Akbar (Sharma 1962:75). Equating with the Rajputs, he rewarded their services with grant of free-holding of land and jagirs and the association between the two was symbolized in the royal crest of Mewar with a Bhil and a Rajput standing by the sun between them. In the battle of Haldi Ghati Rana Punja, the Bhil chief of Panarwa, leading the Bhil infantry valiantly fought against the Mughal army. The Bhils resorted guerilla warfare, conveyed messages and looted supplies to the Mughal army. Before the death of Pratap, most of the lost territories had been regained. This cooperation continued during the reign of Amar singh I. Awakened by the Mewar-happenings, the impoverished Bhils of Khandu in Banswara (Wagar) revolted in 1583 A.D. and Maharaval Man Singh while insulting an arrested gameti was killed by the latter before he could be done to death (Ojha: 82). Then, in 1679 A.D. at the time of invasion by the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb, the royal family was shifted to Nenwara in Bhomat (Sharma 1962:170). The Bhil chieftains of Panarwa, Merpur, Juda and Jawas along with 50,000 Bhil footmen joined the forces of Maharana Raj Singh (Ojha:868) and later in 1681 A.D. the Bhils of Bhomat conducted the Mughal Prince, Akbar, while on his way to seek asylum from Sambhaji. Thus, the social and economic status of the Mewar Bhils improved during 125 years but the Bhil of Kanthal and Wagar regions-Dungarpur, Banswara and Deolia-remained despised and destitute.

During this phase the Bhil-Rajput co-operation was an enforced event because the rulers of Mewar and their men had to seek shelter with the Bhils in order to save themselves from the danger of the Mughal Emperors, while the oppressions of Bhils continued in the other states of the regions which had been relieved of the danger by accepting suzerainty of Mughal Emperors. This event, to some extent, regenerated their social, political and economic conditions.
Phase of Bhil-Rajput Antagonism-II

In the wake of the authority of Delhi becoming feeble after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D., the Rajputs became oblivious of the services by the Bhils and began to regard them as inferior, monkey-like people, more akin to wild beasts and vermins than men (Carstairs: 1722). They occasionally put them to forced labour, ab ducted their women for inhuman molestation or to use as kepts or concubines and imparted rough justice to the victims by whipping or gouging out their eyes or decapitating them (Ibid: 172). Pillage and burning of one or more paals of the Bhils was considered the heroic act of a new ruler ascending to the throne. As an exemplary punishment for refusal to beggar or forced labour, the bodies of executed Bhil chiefs of several paals were kept hanging for several days by Maharaval Ram singh of Dungarpur. Maharaval Vairishal of Dungarpur employed the Bhils to assassinate Tulsidas Gandhi, the deposed prime minister, near Parsad in Udaipur (Ojha: 133). Thus, during the phase the rulers perceived the Bhils with an antagonistic attitude and tried to annihilate them totally.

Bhil-Maratha and Pindari Antagonism

Between 1748 A.D. to 1818 A.D. till the treaties of princely states accepting the British suzerainty were made, the Marathas and the Pindaries freely looted belongings of the rulers, plundered civil population, burned villages and destroyed cultivation (Tod: 372). The desperate Bhils resisting the freebooters were treated like beasts without pity (Hendley 1875:369), flogged, hanged, thrown over cliffs, beheaded or gunned down. Their women were mutilated or smothered by smoke and their children were smashed to death on the stones (Dutt: 28). Thus, the Maratha and the Pindari free-booters further added to their destitution.

Bhil-British Confrontation

In 1823 A.D. when Col. Tod appropriated bolai, the money collected by the Bhils for safe passage of travellers through the forest region of Magra and Bhomat, the revolt by Bhils could not be quelled till the position was restored. In 1836 A.D. the unruly Bhils in different regions of Banswara were brought under control by a large scale operations and in 1839 A.D. the large scale uprising in Bhomat (Mewar) could be quelled with assistance of the British. In 1840-44 A.D. the Mewar Bhil Corps (MBC) was organized under a British commandant at Kherwara and his deputy at Kotra with the object of weaning them away from predatory habits, giving honorable employment and assisting the Darbar in preserving order (Erskine part-1. 78-9). In 1856 A.D. the Bhils of Banswara rose in revolt on the cessation of rakhwali -the money paid to the Bhils for guarding the villages on Malwa border. In 1957 A.D. revolt the MBC was the only native troops in Rajasthan to stand by the British. In 1864 A.D. severe operations were carried out against the Bhils of Deolia-Pratapgarh by Maharaval Udai Singh.

In 1881 A.D., the mistrust, dissatisfaction and rumours among the Bhils over the state activities such as Census operations, prohibition of liquor-manufacture, establishment of police and custom posts in the Bhil areas and official interference in their customs like banning of witch-killing led to spread of uprising in the south-western part of the Mewar. In Kherwara area, Bara Pal police station was raided by the Bhils killing 16 souls in all and in the Girwa Valley the Bhils of Alsigarh and Pai killed Dulji Kamdaar, a revenue
clerk, and a couple of policemen. The Bhils tired of perpetual harassment blocked roads by felling large trees and retreated into the forest interiors.

The events indicate that while introducing reformative activities, the historical particularity of the Bhil society was neglected. Therefore (i) the Bhils drawing from the feudal set-up thought of their oppression and harassment in every state action and (ii) generally such actions raised doubts, mistrust and antagonism in their minds. About the census operations, some of them thought that the British Government wished to levy a Barar (tax) as contribution towards the Afghan war or to recruit able-bodied men to fight for the British Government at Kabul or to attempt for gradual extinction of the Bhil population or to assign fat women to stout men and lanky to lean (Saxena 1971:166-70; Doshi 1974:5-6).

**Bhil-Vilayati Antagonism**

The Vilayatis; i.e., the foreigners in the region were the Mussalmans from Arab, Makran and Sindh employed as mercenaries during the Maratha predation in Mewar, Dungarpur and Banswara. After the treaties of 1818 A.D. shifting to the job of revenue collection from the countryside and keeping the aboriginals under control, they floated petty loans among the Bhils, charged heavy interests and deprived the debtors even of their ladies and children (Shyamaldas: 2193). Whenever the Vilayatis were killed by the Bhils, the deaths of those men of the state were retaliated by massacre of the Bhils and destroying their habitations in the paals as in Dungarpur, Banswara and Udaipur in 1868, 1870 and 1872 respectively. After an enquiry into these cases the Vilayatis being found at fault were turned out of the states (Chaturvedi 1968:51; Saxena 1974:173-77).

**Bhil-Mahajan Contacts**

Mahajans or Banias, i.e., traders had entered the Bhil areas in the distant past. The Bhils pressed hard by begar, revenue tax and the nazars on Dashehra, Diwali, Holi, birth or marriage for a ruling family had to take loans out of dire necessities from the Mahajans who charged fleecing interests and cheated them ultimately leading to the deprival of their lands. This poised them in an antagonistic relationship with the Banias, mostly Mahajans. During the uprising of 1881 A.D. all the Bania shops were burned in Bara Pal (Saxena 1971: 168). In the remote past the traders from Nai, a village nearby, and Udaipur came on horseback to do their business in Alsighar, Pai and other villages during the day time and returned to their homes in the evening. Later, some of them began to settle in the villages for their business purpose. In Pai, not long ago the Mahajans from Nai-Mohanlal, Vardi Chand, Ratan Nagori, Ujjanlal and Fatehlal had their shops at houses of Dewa Bhagora, Dita Relat, Ganga Ram Nath, Bhera Pargi and Gangya Pargi respectively all from Mual Phala and Vardi Chand Javeria and Bandi, both from Udaipur, had their shops at houses of Nathu Dungaria in Vadla Phala and Ambawa Katara in Hamli Pipla respectively. Vardi Chand and Heera Lal, two grandsons of Mohanlal, still come twice or thrice a week to open the only Mahajan shop in Pai. A Sindhi shopkeeper after several years of his business in Pai returned to Udaipur about 15 years ago. Saiffuddin Bohra has a shop in Vadla phala since the last 6-7 years. Another Bohra has opened a shop at the Pai Bus Stand 2 years back. In Alsighar, Shanti Lal Mahajan from Nai and Vijai Singh Kothari from Sisarma have been running their shops since the last 40 and 7 years respectively.
This shows that the Bania mostly Mahajans had their lucrative business in the Bhil areas which gradually reduced after Independence in the wake of increasing awareness among the Bhils, writing off their loans and occupational changes among them.

**Bhil-Missionaries Contacts**

The Christian missionaries coming to this region in 1850 A.D. spread their activities gradually to convert many of the Bhils to their faith. By their efforts slavery was abolished from the region in 1872 A.D. During the famine of 1889-90 A.D., epidemic plague of 1904 A.D. and influenza in 1918 A.D., the missionaries worked among the Bhil victims to bring relief through treatment, education and economic assistance. By this, several areas underwent the conversion to Christianity. The converted Bhils are today socially separated from the remaining. Spread of this process was arrested by the movements and organizations drawing motivations from Hindu ideas.

**Bhil-Hindu Reformers Encounters**

Though the Bhils since their hoary past have been in contact with the Hindu culture and society, conscious efforts to spread Hindu ideology among them were made in the beginning of present century through the Bhagat movement, the Vanwasi Sewa Sangh, etc. Between 1903 and 1908 Govindgiri of Banjara caste, through the Samp Sabha formed in 1905, started a movement aiming at the regeneration of the Bhils. The Bhagats or his followers were required to abstain from liquor, meat, sexual adultery, burglary, cattle theft, robbery, dapa, abduction of women, etc. He also raised a demand for a separate Bhil State in the region as necessary for their regeneration. He was arrested in 1913 A.D. at his dhuni on Mangarh Hills in Banswara after a bloody resistance and sentenced to life imprisonment (Chaturvedi 1968:54-55; Shyamla11986: 126-29). Vanwasi Sewa Sangh established for welfare of the tribals also brought social and political awakening among them, particularly in their abstention from liquor and opium (Saxena 1971: 185-86).

**Bhil-Freedom Fighters Convergence**

In the years 1921-22, the Bhils of Mewar, Idar, Dungarpur, Sirohi, Danta and other places rising against different systems of taxation in the region were organized and led by Motilal Tejavat of the Praja Mandal for their salvation from bondage and evils. He could organize them to a large extent against the rulers and to instill ideas of freedom among them (Saxena 1971: 179-84; Pande 1974: 49-53).

In sum, the entire course of the events reveals that the Bhils with their increasing interaction with the civilized came to be despised, exploited, desperate, degenerate and marginalized in their own region. On the economic plane they have become donors of labour (Baily 1958), on the cultural plane -the receivers of culture through the processes of Christianization , Bhagatization or Hinduization and on the political plane, the subjugated ones. But lately with political awakening. Passing through a long process of ordeals, they have come to join the vortex of socio-political consciousness by their participation in elections and various political and administrative bodies, specially in the rural local self-government bodies. After Independence the democratic structure operative in the country has been a means, both for participatory governance and development which are further consequential for modernization of the tribal people. Therefore, the
concepts like politics, democratic structure, development and modernization will be taken up for clarification in the following analysis.

The Study

This empirical study examining Politics, Development and Modernization, is undertaken in context of the Bhil with their primitive/traditional, micro and underdeveloped social organization to know validity of the dichotomy of tradition and modernity. Before discussing the working of the three processes in the given Bhil setting, the concepts will be clarified in their theoretical perspective.

Politics

The concept politics, since ancient times, carrying various connotations had been equated with acts of political authority, states’s relations with individuals and institutions and also an act by state in the works of Plato, Aristotle and Kautilya. The specification of political relations as a part of human behaviour in society emerging through separation of disciplines of social sciences in the late 19th and 20th centuries identified politics for a discipline studying political relations, though the relations could not be taken exclusive of other kinds of social relations (Lipset 1972: VII-VIII). Now-a-days the concept is being used in three senses, i.e., lexicographical, ordinary and technical. Lexicographers define it as science and art of government which embraces the entire field of political life and behaviour in society, i.e., mutual relations between state and individuals, between state and other institutions and between governments of two states. Ordinarily the concept is often used synonymously with political science, public law or manipulations such as in trade unions, universities and churches (Encyclopaedia 1978: 224-25). Technically, politics is a social process involving the actions for attainment, distribution and exercise of power (Chauhan 1994: 308). “By power is meant the ability of an individual or a social group to pursue a course of action (to make and implement decisions, and more broadly, to determine agenda for decision-making) if necessary against the interests, even against the opposition, of the other individuals and groups” (Bottomore 1977). The politics is found patterned into a net of institutions called polity or political structure which by the mode of legitimacy of power, may be autocratic, authoritarian or democratic. For the present study the politics or political structure is meant for democratic structure. Hence, the concept of democratic structure is clarified hereunder.

Democratic Structure

The concept of democracy as used here has been a cultural borrowal from the West during an enforced period of subjugation and cultural contact. The term, democracy has normative as well as structural connotations, i.e., it is both a set of ideals and a political system. Democracy considered as the opposite of autocracy implies that the legitimate power is always derived from the people’s authority or consent. Therefore, democracy is connotative of a self governing people (Sartori: 112-21). In actuality the so-called democracies are no more than poliarchies (Dahl 1956: 963-89). The democracy could positively be identified on the basis of developed representative institutions and an
established and operative constitutional government. The representative democracy presupposes not participation and exercise of power but delegation of power. In short, present day democracy is not a system of self-government but a system of control and limitation of government, based on an intricate system of checks and balances.

In the structural connotation, democracy is a political system—a set of political institutions—with a definitive structure, i.e., relatively regular, invariant and repetitive patterns of legitimate multi-functional political interaction, introduced as demands from across the institutional boundaries and responded to as policy performance and is typified into traditional, transitional or modern. Modern political systems are characterized by a relatively high degree of structural differentiation with each of the components tending to perform a specialized regulatory function within the system as a whole. By contrast primitive, traditional and transitional systems have omnifunctional structures wherein other social institutions perform intermittent political functions in addition to their respective social functions. However, polarized limiting instances are mere abstractions and the empirical reality consists of political systems that are mixed, such that traditional non-differentiation of components and intermittency of functions persist. Similarly certain kinds of political structures peculiar to the primitive societies are also found in modern political systems, not as marginal institutions but having a high functional importance. Specialized modern structures exist in relation to persisting non-specialized structures modified by the former but by no means assimilated to them, nor supplanted. There is thus a mixed system combining the primitive and informal components and functions with the modern that are distinctly formal. There exists a cultural dualism in regard to political systems whether they be modern, primitive, traditional or transitional.

As Almond (1960) points out the conceptual model of Parsonian variables polarizing the traditional systems (having affective, diffuse, particular and ascriptive characteristics) is not compatible with the universal reality situation of dualistic mixed systems. The Princeton empiric studies have identified the differentials distinguishing the modern from the traditional systems. In the modern Western systems the secondary institutional structures and relationships are far more differentiated and significant and in turn affect and modernize the primary institutional structures such as family, lineage, clan, caste, class, religion, language, region and primary psycho-physical habituations and adaptations to technology. The political dualism in non-Western transitional societies seems to amount to a subversion of the formal by the informal and, in the Western societies, they result in penetration and domestication of the informal by the formal. Thus, all political systems are multifunctional and are subject to a process of political acculturation under cultural dualism (Panchandikar and Panchandikar 1980: XXII-XXIII). In India traditionalization of the formal structures, borrowed from the west, by the informal and non-associational ones is very obviously perceived at the macro-and micro- levels of political structuring.

Development

The concept of development finding expression in the writings of the founding social scientists and assuming special significance in the recent years generally connotes advancement in an aspect or the whole of society. Initially economic development was the focal point of discussion; with the passage of time specially after the world war-II, political development got wider coverage and recently the focus has shifted to social development, the fundamental problem of the developing societies fraught with social
issues of decisive nature. The current realization among the scholars is that development of society as a whole is possible only when society develops economically, politically and socially. It is a process of all the three inter-related categories constituted of the components such as output and income, condition of production, consumption level, political participation and level of awakening, nutrition, shelter, health, education, leisure and recreation, security, world-view and work culture, institutions, etc. Ideational connotation is traceable right from the ancient Greek thought. “There evolved a variety of notions of what constitutes development: in one conception development signifies innovative possibilities of discovery. Development is also viewed as the unfolding of the definite stages of the new in the place of the old. There is also the ‘aesthetic’ approach which views development as the working out of a theme or a variation on a theme. Finally, in the humanist tradition, development depended on knowledge and the bringing to light of new information” (Horowitz 1966: 39). Structurally, development is a process of transformation through differentiation of a society, passing through a number of stages.

Theories of development have been conditioned to the changing meaning, range and scope of the term and the ideological disposition of the scholars. The theoretical explanations of development may be grouped into five approaches; viz., the economic, the Weberian, the Marxist, the institutional and the diffusionist. The basic principle of the economic approach is that development goes with a rational economic order characterized by the fundamentals of private property and liberty. Various proponents of this approach are Adam Smith, David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill. The Marxist approach has two variants; viz., the orthodox Marxist approach and the neo-Marxist approach. The orthodox Marxist analysis revolves around evolutionary and historical development of mode of production in societies. “In the social production of their existence men inevitably enter into definite relations which are independent of their will; namely, relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material force of production. The totality of these relations of productions constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which arises a legal and political super-structure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life” (Marx 1970: 20-21). However, the orthodox Marxists recognize the mode of production as the driving force behind the class struggle leading social development right from the primitive communism to the modern communism passing through slavery, feudalism and capitalism. The neo-Marxist approach does believe in the Marxian theory so far as the basic principles are concerned but, in addition, advocates for revision in a few of its aspects in the light of better information collected from the life conditions new and different from the one in which Marx himself propounded the theory. The variants of this theory have been propounded by the thinkers like Maurice Dobb (1963), Paul Sweezy (1976), Kohachiro Takahashi (1976), Robert Brenner (1977), Andre Gunder Frank (1975), Earnesto Laclau (1971), Samir Amin (1976), J.A. Schumpeter (1961) and Gunnar Myrdal (1958). The neo-Marxists like J.A. Schumpeter and Gunnar Myrdal are the two main spokesmen of the institutional approach to development. Distinguishing economic development from social development, Schumpeter writes “economic development is so far simply the object of economic history only separated from the rest for purposes of exposition. Because of this fundamental dependence of the economic aspect of things on everything else, it is not possible to explain economic changes by previous economic conditions alone. For the economic state of a people does not emerge simply from the preceding economic conditions only but from the preceding total situation” (1961:58). Thus, development is
definable in terms of specific historical situation with the preceding total societal facts. Associated with the institutional approach, **Gunnar Myrdal's** principle of circulacumulative causation derived from the division of the world into **developed** and **underdeveloped** explains that there starts a commulative process of mutual interaction starts in which a change in one factor gets continuous support by the reaction of the other factor and vice versa in a circular way. This principle of inter-locking and interdependence within a process of commulative causation has validity over the entire field of social relations. Therefore, equality is pre-requisite of development and inequality -economic and non-economic- is the cause of underdevelopment. Development of the whole society is possible only through reforms in societal institutions brought by the process of circular-commulative causation (1958: 22-25; 1970: 68; 1972: 121). 

The **diffusionist** sociologists and anthropologists like Wilbert Moore, Neil Smelser and Hoselitz emphasizing importance of diffusion in the development of human culture and the relative rarity of new inventions advocate for the transfer of technology and skills along with a particular social setup from the modern urban centers to the rural and from the developed societies to the underdeveloped. For them, the technological level and associated social organization or differentiations/specializations or **Parsonian** pattern variables is the criterion to differentiate between developed and underdeveloped societies. In a wider context, the **modernization approach** to development may be taken as its substitute. In the **Weberian approach**, which eliminates the concept of totality from social theory and advocates methodological individualism, one finds a rationalistic model of development, in fact, of man and society. Weber considered a number of factors responsible for **development**, i.e., **capitalism** such as geography, population, permanent enterprise, rational spirit, rational world view and rationalistic economic ethic. In his *Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism* Weber explains how the Protestant ethic-sectarian religious convictions of a rationalist kind promoting methodical conduct in all spheres of life including the economic realm are found secularized to become the spirit of capitalism-a set of rational attitudes towards the acquisition of money and the activities involved in it. Thus, to refute Marx's theory of historical materialism, Weber emphasized cultural factors to explain economic development. In general, he advocated a multi-factorial, situation-specific and rational theory of social development.

Briefly, wider in its range and scope, the concept of development, rather social development, consisted of the interrelated aspects -social, economic and political- explained in terms of changing perspectives and ideological predispositions.

**Modernization**

The term, **modernization** derived from its Latin root, *mode* meaning **modern** (Mlay and Ray 1973:2) is found with varied conceptual formulations lacking mutual logical consistency (Singh 1978:20) and generally confused with **westernization**, **industrialization** and **urbanization** owing to the industrial revolution-its cardinal feature-occurring first in the west to be disseminated through the Western inter-mediation to the other parts of the world (Joyce 1967:1:14). Broadly, there are two conceptual formulations of modernization; viz., the popular concept and the analytical concept. The **popular concept** of modernization grounded in layman's mind with the space-time perspective comprises its two variants: first, the phenomenon of modernization refers to the things appearing **modern** in a given place and, second, it is meant for the **latest** of
origin in the form of **time-reference**. But both the conceptual variants are logically untenable because neither the **modern** is necessarily a perceivable thing in all cases and places nor the **latest** can always be termed as the **modern**. Modernization is a typical process of transformation in a given society rather than to be termed with appearance of things in the **space-time frame of reference**. Therefore, analytical formulation of modernization is found widely prevalent among the professional social scientists.

In **analytical concept** of modernization, there is derived a specific meaning which by the specific focus of a discipline and inclination of individual social scientist is found varied into a number of formulations with their different dimensional contexts grouped into the following types:

1. The historical (Giddings, Black 1966, James 1976)
2. The philosophical
3. The psychological (Lerner 1958, Banfield 1958, McClelland 1965, Rogers and Shoemaker 1971, Inkeles 1974, etc.)

The **historical type** of modernization refers to a historical process of complex, fast, large-scale and discontinuist changes taking place in the events since 1760 A.D. onwards, i.e., the British Industrial revolution manifesting the massive material expansion and the French revolution signifying the age of enlightenment fabricated with the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity. The two were a gradual and delayed culmination of the renaissance in Europe which led to emergence of Protestantism as a critique of faith, triumph of reason over the ritualism of Catholicism, scientific and technological emergence in Britain and a new political order based on humanistic reasoning in France. The **philosophical formulation** of modernization is analyzed at the levels: **Teleological**, epistemological, ontological, cosmological, ideological and theoretical. **Teleologically** modernization is conceived of the technology as an essential object and key to the characterization of a society; **epistemologically** the process of increasing dominance of rational mode of cognition, i.e., science, in all domains of life leading to disjunction between objective and subjective attitudes and to supremacy of the former; **cosmologically** as a rational and universal world-view; **ontologically** as the technology only being the real thing in the world; **ideologically** as a process for emergence of a unified civic nation-state rather than a plural society; and **theoretically** as a process signifying globalization of society and uniformatization of culture.

The **psychological formulation** defines it as a process of deeper and complex changes in individual’s ways of thinking and feeling characterized by rational beliefs, scientific outlook, readiness to respond to the environment, willing participation, tolerance towards other’s views, distributive justice, technologically advanced life-style, etc. leading to the formation of modern industry, society and government.

The **normative formulation** refers to a process of emulation by the developing societies to acquire behaviour patterns of the developed societies characterized by rational (scientific) mode of knowledge in the cognitive domain (weber); Scientific application of technology, occupational differentiation, specialization, impersonal marketing, large-scale financing, competition, etc. in the economic domain; individualism, democracy, secularism, freedom, equality, fraternity, high participation, civic culture, formalization, etc. in the
political domain; achievement-orientation, self-reliance and mobilization-social, occupational, aspirational and spatial (Sorokin) in the behavioural dimension and differentiation, interdependence, complexity, etc. in the social-dimension.

The structural formulation is the most prominent one which includes elements both of psychological and normative dimensions, though mainly emphasizing on structural ingredients such as bureaucracy, money and market complex, attachment to universalistic norms in social roles and democratic associations termed as the structural pre-requisites of a modern society. A rational administration, democratic power and cultural organization and mobilization connoting structural adaptations are some of the attributes of modernization available in its various treatments (Singh 1978:21). Lastly, the technological concept of modernization describes it in terms of economic resources, or use of inanimate infra-structure bringing about qualitative and progressive mobilization in the total resources of society. The structural, normative and psychic processes are either supposed to go along with them or follow them (Ibid: 21-22). None of the above formulations are, however, exclusive but rather are included in each other.

From these formulations, two features of modernization manifesting its biased nature may be derived: (i) That modernization is a unilinear universalistic process of transformation which is empirically not warrantable and (ii) that following a simplistic view oblivious of the context of historicity, modernity is posed to be in opposition to tradition in an implicit attempt to define modernization through such a dichotomy. Similarly the assumption counterposing science with religion exists no more.

Tradition is very substance through which processes of modernization articulate themselves. There are reliable data to support the theory that processes of modernization may not endanger the existence of tradition. The structural changes relevant to modernization beginning first at the level of a few crucial sectors of society once start, the consequences may either be high acceleration of modernization or regression to traditional forms (Eist enstadt 1964) or may even be a further reinforcement of traditional structures (Horowitz 1966). The nature of such divergently emerging patterns depends upon the historicity of circumstances. Similarly, at the level of values, the emerging fact following modernization is not increased conflict between scientific and religious values but a co-existential continuity of both through a process of their respective transformation (Bellah 1964).

Yogendra Singh avoids this bi-polar viewpoint by formulating modernization at two levels: First, as a system of new role structures and contingent modern skills and, secondly, as a dual system of values: first, the system of values basic to a scientific world-view of normative problems of human life is open-ended, continuously revisable and relativistic and the second, the system of categorical values free from the instrumental definition of science due to being rooted in the wider existential reality of man (Ibid). The distinctive systems of role structures and values of modernity defined by a scientific world-view do not, however, rule out the meaningful role of tradition essentially serving as a reservoir for drawing categorical or moral values. Alongside scientific values, there would always be a need for a source to derive categorical values expressing the highest levels of symbolizations. "This source might develop as a modern religion (Ibid: 371-74) through a self-transcendence of the established tradition itself, which of necessity shall form a part of any cultural process of modernization (Singh : 22-23). Thus, a realistic formulation of modernization should describe this process in terms of (a) role structures emerging from the continual impingement of science and technology and continual differentiation of social structure on the social system, (b) a system of values representing a scientific
world-view, and (c) a parallel system of values categorical in nature and representing both a self-transcendence of pre-existing-traditions as well as the traditions of modern science. Such a formulation may be free from the fallacies of unilinear universalism, most insular dichotomies and of cultural ethnocentrism that most formulations of modernization imply (Ibid).

Given into this conceptual context, one cannot rule out meaningful interaction between modernity and tradition in a tribal society, or modernization of a tribal tradition or traditionalization of modern role structures.

**The Problem**

Operation of a democratic structure, as widely assumed, takes a society towards development, i.e., a process of economic, political and social differentiation of a society. But the omni functional traditional or transitional democratic structures and modern democratic structures with specialized functions are differentially consequential for the social development in a society. The level and nature of the two processes mutually involved takes a society differentially to its modernization, i.e., a structural multiplication of role structures defined by a scientific world-view under the continual impingement of science and technology in a given historical context. Besides, the three processes have also the contextual differentials of macro and micro types each represented on a wide continuum ranging from tradition to modernity. Therefore, in view of variety of structural and spatial contexts, these processes have a vast potential from the viewpoint of a scientific enquiry. Enquiring them within a micro unit like a village panchayat placed in a tribal context makes a specific, typical and particular case of study. Their impact on a tribal panchayat leadership and its responses to them is the central focus of the present study.

**The Panchayat Studies in India**

Studies on panchayats, on tribals and on political participation, development and transformation of the tribals in India and Rajasthan have been reviewed here to draw insights to formulate the problem for the study.

Broadly the studies undertaken on panchayat in India may methodologically be divided into the following two approaches: (i) Analytical-didactic approach and (ii) Historical-institutional approach. They may be sub-divided into the following approaches:


3. Diagnostic and didactic approach (studies by this approach fall under the second approach also).

6. Dynamic class-structural approach (Singh 1987)

**Historical-institutional** approach studies the panchayat institutions in terms of their development, changes and significance through various historical periods. **Institutional-legalistic** approach describes the panchayat institutions in terms of their various features as defined by the law under which they are constituted. **Diagnostic-didactic** approach looks into causes and solutions of problems facing the panchayat institutions which ought to exist in India. Of this orientation predominating over the scientific-analytic, "the first attitude emanates from an exaggerated claims for social sciences through *ad hoc* studies and surveys to suggest cut and dried formulae for the solution of problems of social planning and reconstruction and the second from an essentially historical fact", lying in the significance attached to panchayat system and village society by Mahatma Gandhi, profoundly affects the image by the Indian elites about the panchayats which have come to symbolize a moral commitment and ideology (Singh 1987: 570). **Reflexive-normative** approach looks into legal-normative patterns of the panchayat institutions with a critical view based on deliberations and observations to suggest for a better model. **Structural-functional** approach viewing the panchayat institutions in a systemic perspective studies the actual processes of political structuring and functioning of the panchayat institutions as a system. Lastly, **dynamic class-structural approach** while studying a panchayat primarily discusses economic and political factors, drawn from class structure and its consciousness in rural India along with cultural factors such as dominant caste, casteism, caste, factionalism, etc and, there by, introduces in structural-functional approach the methodological richness, i.e., synthesis between the dialectical and functional approaches to the understanding of the dynamics of social structure (Singh 1987:571).

**Studies on Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan**

The studies on panchayat institutions in Rajasthan may be divided into two categories: First, those found in the form of reports prepared on terms of references decided by the state government for the committees (Mathur Committee 1963; Sadiq Ali Committee 1964; SC and SC Commission Report 1964-65; the Rajasthan High Power Committee 1973) Sadiq Ali Committee while analyzing the functioning of the Panchayat institutions followed the models of Panchayati Raj in Maharashtra and Gujrat and advocated for adequate resources and powers to the Zila Parishads for original executive functions at the district level and for transfer of district level officers under the Zila Parishad (Bhangle 1977: 14). The Rajasthan High Power Committee headed by Girdhari Lal Vyas also recommended for strengthening of the first tier, i.e., the Zila Parishad, instead of the middle one-the Panchayat Samiti (Rao 1978: 16). The **second category** consisted of the studies conducted by social scientists. Mathur, Narain and Sinha (1966) in their attempt to examine the emerging institutional leadership, behaviour patterns and interests of members in the panchayat bodies, their functioning with specific context of planning from below and implementation of development programmes and the baffling problems of non-official relationships, financial and administrative challenges to the institutions and finally their overall impact in Jaipur district of Rajasthan concluded about the panchayati Raj institutions to be failing to fulfill the expectations of the rural people who, though appreciate the Panchayati Raj as a concept, are disappointed and disgusted with its operational aspect in the wake of emerging neo-rich rural leadership. Mathur and Narain (1969) concentrating...
basically on two issues; viz., (i) Panchayati Raj and democracy, and (ii) the politico-administrative aspects of the Panchayati Raj discussed the conflict between Panchayati Raj and parliamentary democracy, inevitability and desirability of political parties in rural politics, need for a close linkage between Panchayati Raj institutions and community development and the problem of relationship between the officials and the non-officials and suggested for success of the institutions the essential programme of training and education for the elected representatives. Grover, et. al. (1972) looking into efficacy and utility of supervision and controls exercised by the Government of Rajasthan over the Panchayati Raj bodies pointed out the traditional bureaucratic type of controls, indifferent official attitudes and lack of guidance, education and encouragement for the institutions which could be improved by provision of lumpsum financial grant to them and of an extensive programme of education and training for the officials and the non-officials. Narain, et.al. (1976:40) in a sample study found the Panchayati Raj institutions dominated by the upper castes' leadership. In an another study (1976:278), they observed that individual mentality and patterns of social relations in the Panchayati Raj institutions were traditional. Nagla (1978) in his study of Badgaon Panchayat Samiti in Udaipur district noticed that a major part of the leadership was constituted by the three upper castes-Brahmans, Mahajans and Rajputs. Sharma (1974:203-4) observed in the six villages of Jaipur, Bharatpur and Sikar districts the influence of the key families - quite resourceful and dynamic from amongst the ex-zamindars and upper castes in the village power structures. Bhargava (1979) studying role of political parties pointed to the leaders of self-interests, weak financial position, official indifference and uncertainty of elections being the hurdles for the Panchayati Raj institutions acquiring reasonable level of legitimacy. Sharma (1984) making an enquiry into administrative efficiency, political factors and socio-economic background of the elected members of Bhankrot village panchayat in Jaipur district found unnecessary interjection of political element in the official-non-official relationships and changes in administrative policies regarding staffing and transfers and inadequate auditing rules to be aggravating its administrative deficiencies which should be removed to make the Panchayati Raj a real agency of rural development and local government with a statutory Gram Sabha and the regular elections. Focusing on the inter-relational and interactional patterns of change agents and target groups at the village panchayat level, Singh (1987) drew a gloomy picture of the gram panchayat ridden with authoritarian and corrupt functionaries, indifference of representatives, government and people, and factional and conflictual tendencies and advocated for creation of a proper atmosphere for the functioning of the Panchayati Raj institutions.

Tribal Studies in India

The studies on tribals in India may be divided into four categories; viz.,


The descriptive-analytical studies mostly describe or/and analyze a single or various aspects of a tribe or tribes, being generally introductory, diagnostic or reflexive. The normative-structural studies analyze the structures of culture or/and society of a single tribe or in the tribe-caste frame of interactions within a broad systemic perspective. The studies of tribal movements deal with social movements of various types-religious agrarian and political; uprisings, revolts, etc. in various parts of the country. The change-oriented studies focus on two types of change: first, the changes occurring through a continuous historical process of contacts in the form of cooperation or/and conflict in the tribe-caste/religious contexts and, second, the planned changes being brought through the deliberate efforts by the state or its agencies through development programmes, education or political mobilization and participation.

**Tribal Studies in Rajasthan**

Tribal studies in Rajasthan are broadly divisible into two categories; viz., (i) Historical-analytical (Sherring 1881; Hendley 1875; Barnes 1909; Carstairs 1952; Saxena 1971; Pandey 1974; Ram 1986; Chaturvedi 1968; Singh 1981; Hooja 1984; Chauhan and Chelawat 1966; Tod 1970; Erskine 1907; Chauhan 1970; Mann 1978; Vyas 1976; 1978; Doshi 1971; Doshi 1974; Shyamlal 1986; Palal 1987; and (ii) Planned change-oriented studies (Sadiq Ali Committee report on Panchayati Raj 1964; SC and ST Commission Report 1964-65; Mathur, Narain and Sinha 1966; Doshi 1974; Vyas 1966; Chauhan and Swaroop 1966; Shyamlal 1987; Mann 1978; Pamecha 1985; Doshi 1978; Trivedi 1991; Ram 1995.)

The historical-analytical studies of the tribals in Rajasthan mostly give historical accounts or analyse tribal situation and features such as their evolution through the ages, their historical and contemporary contacts with the non-tribals and changes, their historical movements and uprising, structures of their culture and society, etc. The planned change-oriented full-fledged studies found in a negligible number are partially or indirectly related to this category of studies. The reports of the Sadiq Ali committee on the Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan (1964: 150-1) pointed out the failure of Panchayati Raj in its attention and help to the weaker sections, which is confirmed by the dissatisfaction expressed by the SC and ST commission (1964-65: 10) over the working of welfare schemes for the SCs and the STs under the Panchayati Raj.

The emerging (rural) leadership (Mathur et.al. 1966: 283) of new elite (Roy-Burman 1965) is drawn from the influential and traditionally upper sections of rural society, while there is indifference of the rural people towards the Panchayati Raj (Jacob 1967: 155). The new leadership model emerging under the Panchayati Raj is accretive to the
traditional one (Mann 1978: 101-2), which emerged in a limited number only even in the areas of preponderantly tribal population and in their working they just ratified the decisions taken in the traditional tribal councils (Chouhan and Swaroop: 359-65). Under the impact of democratic institutions the greater participation of the tribal people in national life (Doshi 1974:79) and the emergence of a new tribal elite, alongwith the traditional leadership, producing modernization effects amongst the tribals (Pamecha 1985:122-7) are the positive features being visualized. Entrepreneurship (Trivedi 1991) or occupational innovation (Ram 1995:37-42) as a part of planned change by the state government has been consequential for their social differentiation and segmentation.

From the review of the literature it is quite obvious that there are only a few studies devoted to the planned change of the tribals and even they also touch it in a very limited way or selectively, though the state has of late come to cover, on a massive scale, economic and political aspects through developmental activities and administrative controls affecting their life significantly. Therefore in such a vacuum a comprehensive study of the planned changes among the tribals is immensely felt need of the time. To fill up the gap, the present study of democratic structure and development with their normative-structural consequentialities has been designed to bring out the empirical realities of the Bhils in Rajasthan.

The problem of study is formulated in terms of the following questions:

1. What is the nature of democratic (political) structuration among the Bhils in Rajasthan?
2. What kind of response to development is taking place within this democratic situation among the Bhils in Rajasthan?
3. And in what way the politico-developmental dynamics are consequential for modernization or else among the Bhils in Rajasthan?

Objectives of Study

From the strategic questions, the objectives set for the study are as follows:
1. To investigate the nature of democratic dynamics of political structuration and formations among the Bhils in Rajasthan.
2. To analyse developmental dynamics and nature of operative democracy among the Bhils.
3. To apprehend normative-structural patterns of change, especially with reference to modernization, occurring as a result of politico-developmental processes among the Bhils.
4. To understand socio-historical conditioning of politico-developmental processes among the Bhils.

Hypotheses

To realize the objectives, there were formulated the following hypotheses for testing in the present study:
1. The democratic political socialization accentuates social dynamics among the Bhils of Rajasthan.
2. Development through the democratic process leads to mass politicalization of the Bhils in Rajasthan.
3. The democratic process of politico-developmental dynamics is consequentially significant for the Bhils in Rajasthan.
4. The stronger the traditional (tribal) social structure, the lesser is the possibility for breakdown of modernization among the Bhils in Rajasthan.

Research Design

**Concepts/Variables**

Following concepts/variables and empirical referents have been used in the present Study:

- **Democratic Structure**: The statutory village panchayat during historical process with particular reference to Bhils in Rajasthan.
- **Development**: The process of economic, political and social differentiation particularly visualized through investments in the panchayat.
- **Modernization**: The composite normative-structural process of change in a given historical context.
- **The Bhil**: The collective nomenclature for several groups of a specific socio-cultural formation.

Variables like village, phala, gotra/clan, caste, family, education, occupation, basic amenities, social standing, developmental expectations, political aspirations, etc have been employed to examine the processes of democratic structure, development and modernization among the Bhils in Rajasthan.

Methodology

**Data and Their Sources**

The study required two types of data:
1. Documentary data collected from various documents of the institutions pertaining to census, education, medical, panchayat, etc.
2. Field data in the form of observations and oral responses evoked from the respondents in the field of study.

**Field Selection**

Gram Panchayat, Alsigarh, of Girwa panchayat samiti in Udaipur district being of tribal population, adequate size and proximity to the Panchayat samiti and the District head quarters was purposively selected for the study.

**Respondents**

Field responses were drawn from amongst all the panchayat leaders elected to constitute various panchayat bodies since 1960, who are still alive in the three villages of the panchayat.
**Tools of Data Collection**

An interview schedule of structured questions regarding social background, political career in panchayat and present life situation was constructed and administered to the respondents. Besides, the information was also taped through informal interviews of some informed persons as well as observations of the situations in the villages of the panchayat.

**Analysis**

Using a dynamic class-structural approach within a systemic perspective, the empirical data have been treated into tables and charts both of quantitative and qualitative nature to reveal interconnections of social structure, statutory panchayat and change among the Bhils.

**Importance**

This study of comprehensive perspective and scope devoted to bring out dynamic ground reality of a village panchayat assumes significance to understand nature of and response to the planned change in tribal and rural communities, specially at a time, when the Panchayati Raj system in India is being strengthened through constitutional measures. It is also to add to the knowledge existing about the changing reality of tribal and rural communities in contemporary India to pave the way for advanced research in the area.