CHAPTER VI

MORPHOGENESIS OF THE SELECTED RURAL SETTLEMENTS

Morphogenesis refers to the origination of morphological character, i.e. coming-into-being of characteristic and specific form of an organism or settlement. This involves a complex yet regulated sequence of events, processes and changes. The processes responsible for the development of the form and arrangement of the components may be both constructive and restrictive. Morphogenetic studies will include the analysis and explanation of the development of both the inner structure, i.e. the particular arrangement of various constituent units, and the external shape, which is a two dimensional characteristic of a spatial arrangement that may be defined by a closed curve. A number of physical and cultural factors need be analysed to understand the morphological patterns of villages, as Indian villages "are a sort of natural growth in their physical and cultural setting" (Ahmad, 1949, 133). Also, the interpretation of morphology should be done in temporal-spatial context.

The layout of a village reflects not only the physical factors, but also something of its social structure. The Indian village is far more than just a collection of houses, lanes and fields; it is a prime social reality. It is the principal unit for the understanding of the society. We may not accept it as a
"little republic" or a monolithic, atomistic and unchanging entity as conceived by Charles Metcalfe (1883, 470); but it is nonetheless a fundamental social unit (Mandelbaum, 1970, 387-29).

Based on the thesis that the social morphology, involving the notion of functional and social space, guides the morphology of the Indian rural settlements, K.N. Singh (1972, 203-214) has advanced two rather complementary, though working in opposite directions, models: (i) the Religio-ritual model, and (ii) the Secular Dominance model. These models are based respectively on attractive and repulsive forces found in the social structure of India. In Hindu social organization there is a Brahmia-untouchable ritual continuum in which all other various castes occupy different niches. The principle of untouchability is based on the stigma of pollution which may be incurred by contact through food or drink or also as in southern India by distance, called as "distance pollution". The notion of pollution acts as a socio-fugal force and compels untouchables to live outside the main village inhabited by the caste Hindus. The religio-ritual model takes into account the ritual distance which sets apart the various groups. But the socio-fugal force thus generated is counterbalanced, rather outweighed, by the socio-petal force generated by the secular needs of the society. The Secular Dominance model explains how the secular, mainly economic, needs of the society which is reflected through the Jajmani system, brings the various groups closer functionally, operationally and spatially.
Besides, other sorts of cooperation in agriculture, need for defence, site and situation, development of the means of transport are also no less responsible for the particular development of morphological features in rural settlements. Even random forces play quite important role in patterning the structure and shape of settlements, as in many cases settlements grew in random manner.

To understand the morphogenesis of the villages of Chhattisgarh it is necessary to know the social structure of the region. The population of the region is constituted mainly by tribals (Gonds, Kawars, Orans, etc.), Chamars (including Satnamis), Telis, Rawats, Kurmis and Brahmins. Tribals are more predominant in the upland. Almost all the rulers of the Feudatory States, practically meaning the upland, were tribals—either Gond or Kawar, before the Independence. In the plain, which was under the direct control of the Marathas and then the British Government, most of the Malguzasars (landlords), i.e. lessees of land, were mostly Brahmins or Kurmis. Power to a village social group comes from three sources. Number of the members of a jati is the first source. "Any landowner's power is safe-guarded if he belongs to a numerous and unified jati-group or jati. Then the force of many men can reinforce their economic and legal rights. Yet numbers alone do not guarantee jati power. A low-ranking jati in a village may include many people, but their loyalties may be so fragmented among their patrons and their poverty may be so deep and debilitating as to block joint action for self-improvement".
Second source of power is land, "because the landowner has a secure base for his livelihood and because he can control the livelihood of his tenants". Thirdly, "power may also accrue to jati when its members have effective connections with the power of the state" (Mandelbaum, 1970, 209).

Most of the powerful castes (powerful according to the above definition) do not occupy very high ranks in the caste system. Brahmins, who hold ritually the highest rank, have been landowning castes also. But their number in the villages of the region is not large. Consequently there is much mixing of castes in the rural settlements, although the tendency of caste-wise development of wards or hamlets in some villages may also be seen. Caste-wise clustering is more pronounced in weaker groups, because there is "the convenience of freer interchange in food and in all manner of things, ... and mutual protection in living together" (Mandelbaum, 1970, 340). In practically every village where Chamars live, they have a cluster of their own — sometimes a little away from other castes and sometimes contiguous. Hewitt (1869, 34) observed, "the Chamar and Hindupara, in villages where both classes are found, being always separate and distinct".

Regarding founding of villages in the Chhattisgarh Feudatory States, a very good series of articles appeared in the Pioneer, in 1889, from which the following extract was derived by Baden-Powell (1974, 451-2).

"In marching through the numerous tracts of forest with which the greater parts of the more backward of the
Chattisgarh Feudatory States are covered, it is not unusual to come across a small group of primitive huts, surrounded by some acres of sandy soils on which charred stumps are still standing and which are sown with cotton and oil-seed and coarse kind of hill-rice. On inquiring to whom this little clearing belongs, it will generally be found that it has been settled by an aboriginal emigrant from some neighbouring village who, in his forest wanderings, has selected the spot as favourable for cultivation, and whom the greater freedom and absence of restraint, with possible hopes of future gain, have induced to try his fortune here, and to carry on with his own hand the unceasing war waged by man against the unchecked forces of Nature. He may have induced a brother or an uncle to emigrate with him, and they with their families and the propitiator of the village god, who is appointed as soon as the hamlet is settled, make up the nucleus of the village, which, if energy endures and fortune favours, will in due time take the place of the present little settlement. For the first year or so little can be done. The forest is burned down where the difficulty seems to be least, and ashes afford manure for the first scanty crops of hill-rice.

Meanwhile, however, cutting is being commenced on a large scale; and soon, with the aid of the axe and fire, plots are cleared where oilseed can be sown, and the surplus produce sold at the distant bazar. Irrigation is not yet thought of, and it is interesting to notice that it is the high-lying and inferior lands which are the first to come under the plough, and that the lower rice-lands and richer and less yielding soils are reserved for times when some little capital and more easily available
labour gives the needful means for cultivating them.

"The original settler soon notices that there is abundance of waste land for cultivation, and that, if he could induce other settlers to join him it would not only add to the comfort and safety of the settlement, but would give him labour for the common purposes of the village, and would thus allow him leisure to commence some simple irrigation work and to bring some of the lower lying land under the plough. As the village is already started and the land practically cleared, he soon induces a few landless cultivators from neighbouring tracts to join him, and as the little community grows, they are joined by waifs and strays of the lower castes, whose subsistence is everywhere precarious and who are glad to find a home where they can always live on wild fruits and roots, and where they can generally obtain a subsistence as watchmen or menial servants in the rising village. The new cultivators are not in most cases called upon to pay rent. The ruling chief has probably not heard of the little settlement, and even should he have heard of it, he is only too glad to encourage the enterprise and to let the original settler have the plot on a nominal payment of a rupee or two a year.

"Though, however, rent is not generally paid, help is taken and given. The original settler, who now assumes the position of headman, lends seed and cattle to the cultivators, if they need it; while they, on the other hand, agree to give him a certain amount of labour in ploughs and men for the cultivation of his home-farm. In this way the headman gains
some little leisure, and can begin to embark a suitable spot
which will serve to irrigate the lower lying lands which promise
a richer crop of rice than those which he has hitherto reaped.
In due time a small tank is made; other improvements follow;
the produce of the land becomes more plentiful; cultivators
gradually increase, and the few village servants are appointed
from among the non-cultivating residents and are paid by grants
of land and small payments in kind. New cultivators are welcome;
the competition is for men, not for land; and both in the case
of cultivators and in that of village servants, the hereditary
principle rules. The village watchman, the priest of the village
god, and the herdsman of the cultivator's cattle, form the simple
village staff, and there are no disputes regarding lands, because
on that point there is no rivalry."

Rural Setlements Selected For Morphogenetic Study - There are
13,631 rural settlements in the Chhattisgarh region, of which
even 1% makes too large a number for sample study. The author
has selected six settlements for detailed study. The selection
has been done by judgement sampling. The author has tried his
best to select such typical villages as may represent main
characteristics of the region's settlements. While making
selection the author kept in mind that selected settlements
should represent different physiographic sections, different
settlement types and different social structures. Some main
characteristics of the sample settlements are mentioned in Table
10.
Table - 10

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Settlement</th>
<th>Tahsil</th>
<th>Physiographic Division</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Hamlets</th>
<th>Important Communities</th>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>Rajnandgaon</td>
<td>Plain</td>
<td>1,320</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Teli, Kowat, Kurni, Ahir.</td>
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<td>Raipur</td>
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<td>1,030</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Ghinabahar</td>
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<td>Jashpur Plateau</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Osran, Christian, Kumhar, Kowar, Chauhan</td>
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</table>

**Mohad**

Mohad (21° 3' 49"N - 81° 3' 55"E) is situated at a distance of 7 km from Rajnandgaon town towards the south on the northern bank of the river Shivnath in Rajnandgaon tahsil.

Rajnandgaon-Balod pucca road is 1 km away, with which it is joined by a kachcha road. It is sited on a sufficiently high ground to be safe from the river-flood, but the soil being Dorsa (loam), drainage of rain water is imperfect causing muddy condition and dampness in houses in almost whole of the village during the rainy season. Only the southern part of the settlement is free from mud
because of steep slope towards the river, which drains rain water swiftly. Thus the site condition is far from ideal, but good agricultural land in proximity and secured water supply have attracted people for clustering at this site. The settlement is of compact type and exhibit a 'L' shape, for which the 'L' shape bend of the river Shivnath is mainly responsible.

Origin and Evolution - The old name of Mohad was 'Mohra', which has been used in the 1951 Census Report also. As told by the villagers, the word 'Mohra' is the corrupt form of 'Mehra', which means a household servant serving water for daily use. This service is performed mainly by 'Kabars' in the northern India and also by 'Ravats' (Ahirs) in Chhattisgarh. Ravats are the first settlers of the village. Evolution of the settlements from its humble beginning to the present size took place in the following phases (Fig. 30 A):

1) First Phase (Before 1800 A.D.) - Although it is not known with certainty as to when the first hut was constructed in the village, yet it is almost certain that Ahirs had settled here permanently some time in the second half of the 18th century. There are two high grounds in the village — one in the east and the other in the west near the bend of the Shivnath river. These two sites being safe from water-logging acted as first nuclei for settlement. The Ahir families immigrated here from near Rauandgaon in search of agricultural land.
ii) **Second Phase (1800-1885 A.D.)** - During this phase one more caste, Kevat, was added in the village. Kevats are fishermen and in the beginning they used to live in this riverside village only temporarily, as they used to move to far off places along the river in search of fish. But when the families swelled and it became difficult to get livelihood solely from fishing, they made permanent habitation first near the old site and then along the river.

iii) **Third Phase (1865-1900 A.D.)** - In 1865 Rajaundgaon was made a Feudatory State and the village came under the control of a Satnami Guru, who settled here some Tell (oil-presser) families. Availability of good agricultural land attracted Kurmis (an important cultivating caste) also from the village Basantpur, which is 10 km away from Mohad in the north-west. With the expansion of agriculture more labour was required and Goans immigrated as agricultural labourers. By the end of the 19th century the gap between two early sites was filled in by expansion in the village population and immigration of families from outside, and thus a rectangular compact settlement evolved.

iv) **Fourth Phase (1900-1921 A.D.)** - The village experienced a set back during this period because of epidemics and famine. Many families left the village in search of their livelihood. But even during this period of exodus of population, a few families belonging to Mochi (shoemaker), Lohar (blacksmith), Mali (barbar), etc. service castes came here from the neighbouring villages
and settled on the outskirts of the village, as there was now no space inside. These service castes were actually induced by Kurmis.

v) **Fifth Phase (1921-1960)** - With the establishment of 'Jaithkham' (a platform constructed for religious rites by Satnamis) in the north-east, the Satnami Guru settled near it a few Satnami families.

vi) **Sixth Phase (1960 to present)** - There is a suitable site for settlement in the north of the Shivmath-bend, where people have started settling because of non-availability of space in the old site. Many persons have shifted here from the old site, and some families have immigrated from outside also. Gujaratis, Rajputs, etc. came in the village only recently. Gujaratis do market - gardening. With this expansion the settlement has taken a L shape.

It may be noted that shifting in the sites of dwellings of many families has also taken place. Ahirs, the original settlers of the village, have mostly left the village and their dwelling-sites were later occupied by other castes. At present there are only 11 families of Ahirs in the village.

**Community Structure** - At the time of survey (May, 1977) by the author, the total population of the village was 1,320, residing in 208 houses. The population is constituted by 19 castes (Fig. 30 B). Talis are numerically the most dominant caste, who
constitute 33.87% of the total population and hold almost the same percentage (33.80%) of the agricultural land of the village. They are scattered in whole of the settlement, but their main concentration is found in the old site, where first two parallel rows along the river are formed mainly by their houses. Kevats are the second most numerous caste, constituting 22.96% of the total population. They are poor agricultural labourers and fishermen. Their share in the agricultural land of the village is only 7.45%. They are widely scattered, but in the eastern half of the third parallel row in the old site a number of their dwellings are found in contiguity. Kurmis, an important landowning caste of the region, constitute 7.73% of the population but own 16.28% of the agricultural land. Their dwellings are found mainly in the western part of the old site.

Ahirs (Rawats), the original settlers of the village, have a share of only 7.73% in the population and negligible share of 0.80% in the agricultural land. They are mostly landless labourers. Not all the Ahir families are autochthones to the village; some, inhabiting the northern new site, are late comers, and even the descendants of the early settlers, who didn’t leave the village, were not able to retain their early dwelling sites because of poverty which caused instability in their habitation also.

In the village there is sufficient mixing of the dwellings of various castes. Even Satnamis do not inhabit in a separate hamlet. Their dwellings are found contiguous to those of Telis and Kavats. Gujaratis, of course, have made their
dwellings in the north, detached from the cluster. Their dwellings are situated in their farms.

**Bangoli**

Bangoli (21° 23' 54" N — 81° 50' 21" E) is situated on Raipur-Baloda Bazar road at a distance of 28 km in the north-east of Raipur city in Raipur taluk. Like most of the settlements of the region it is sited on 'Bhatha' land. There are three kutchas tanks for water supply: two, adjoining each other, in the south-east, and one in the north-west. The village is known for Ghasidas (the propounder of Satnam Patha) fair, which takes place on Magh Poornima (January or February) every year.

**Origin and Evolution** — The tract around Bangoli was formerly densely forested, and when the village was founded amidst the jungle, it was named as 'Bangson' (a jungle village), which later changed into Bangoli. The Pendrasen tank, constructed in 1864 by damming the Banjari Nala for irrigation purpose by the Government at a distance of 2.5 km from Bangoli, has played a very important role in the evolution of this village. Its evolution may be divided into the following phases (Fig. 31 A):

1) **First Phase (Before 1864 A.D.)** the evolution of Bangoli started from the south-eastern part nearly two centuries ago
when a Satnami Mahant immigrated here along with some Teli and a Rawat (Ahir) families for his service from Giraud (a village 10 km away in the south-west direction) and constructed a Ghasidases temple close to the tank in the south-east. These early settlers made their dwellings in the north and east of the present middle school, i.e. slightly (about 100 metres) away from the temple and the tank, as the land near the tank is 'Matasi', which is less preferred than 'Bhatha' for habitation, and was then covered with thorny trees and bushes.

11) Second Phase (1854-199 A.D.) With the construction of the Pendrasun tank in 1854 a member of the Kurmi malguzar of Raikheda (a village 2 km away from Bangoli in the north-west) migrated along with some servicemen to settle near the tank, where good water supply for agriculture was available. But a few years afterwards when these families learnt about the tank of Bangoli and good agricultural land near it, they shifted en masse to Bangoli. The Kurmi malguzar and his followers made their dwellings in the north of the old nucleus, slightly detached from the latter. With the coming of Kurmis agricultural activities increased a lot, and two Kevat families were also induced as agricultural labourers from Khauna (3 km north-west of Bangoli). Kevats also settled near the dwelling of the malguzar, but they vanished from the village after some time due to epidemics and out-migration. Thus a second nucleus developed in the village.

111) Third Phase (1900-1920 A.D.) During this phase some more families of service castes, such as Hai (barber), Teli and Dhobi
(washerman) were induced in the village from neighbouring villages. With these in-migrations and also with the growth in internal population the second nucleus developed in dimension. New dwellings were constructed in the west and south of the dwellings of Kurmis.

iv) Fourth Phase (1920-1940 A.D.) This phase experienced the maximum expansion of the settlement. During this period the Pendraon tank was expanded, in which many labourers were engaged. After the completion of the work, the labourers, belonging mostly to Satnami caste, settled in the nearby village Bangoli. Satnamis made their houses on the western margin of the village and thus a new ward of Satnamis developed in the west. Besides, infilling of gaps between various nuclei took place by internal growth of population. Kurmis expanded in all directions.

v) Fifth Phase (1940-1960 A.D.) Further infilling of gaps took place during this phase solely by internal population-growth.

vi) Sixth Phase (1960 to present) In 1960 the Kurmi malguzar started business in bamboo. The basket makers, belonging to Kadra caste, started coming here from the neighbouring village Baronda and Mura to purchase bamboo. Two-three years later some Kadra families settled in the village permanently to avoid daily movement.

Now Bangoli has developed into an approximately rectangular compact settlement. In the eastern side there are a
primary school and a middle school. In the centre of the settlement there is some open space, where weekly market is held on every Saturday, and where there is a small temple of the goddess Shitala.

**Community Structure**

The total population of Bangoli is 1,030 (1977 - the year of survey), which is constituted by eighteen castes (Fig. 31 B). It may be treated a predominantly Kurmi village, as Kurnis constitute 42.52% of the total population and own about 3/4th (74.83%) of the agricultural land of the village. Before Independence the village was under a Kurmi malgusar. Kurmis reside mostly in the central part in many groups of four or five houses each. Kevats are the second most numerous caste, constituting 12.14% of the village population. They own 6.05% agricultural land. They are small cultivators and agricultural labourers. Their houses are found in the north-central part. Three Kevat families have settled near the tanks in the south-east. Telis form 10.39% of the population and own 7.77% of the agricultural land. They are also small cultivators and agricultural labourers. They have mostly settled in the eastern part of the settlement. Satnamis, constituting 8.35% of the population and owning 11.86% of the agricultural land, reside in a linear block on the western margin of the settlement. In the village there is sufficient mixing of various castes. Only Satnamis have settled on one margin. But although they are treated as untouchables, some Kurnis and Rawats have made their dwellings in their neighbourhood, which shows the liberal attitude of the villagers. On the other hand, it is surprising and a paradox that the Satnami Mahant who resides in the
eastern part of the village, keeps ritual distance from Satnamis, and treats the latter untouchables. He himself maintains a prestigious position in the village society.

Magar Kunda

Situated in Kawardha tehsil, Magar Kunda (21° 41' 43" N - 81° 0' 46" E) occupies a small valley site in the foothills of the Naikal range surrounded on two sides, the west and the north, by a meander of the Surghi nala. It has grown from north to south avoiding the flood-affected lowlands along the stream. Hills clad in forests are found on all sides of the village, and agricultural land is limited to the small valley only. One of the surrounding hills, known as the Kala Pahar (black hills) or Loha Pahar (Iron hills), in the north-east across the nala contains iron ore. Availability of agricultural land and water supply, proximity to Kala Pahar, wherefrom iron ore was available for blacksmithy, and defence were the main considerations of human occupancy of this interior site. As regards facility of communication a 3 km long cart-track joins the village with Gaudai-Salhewara road in the south. The settlement is of semi-compact type with two hamlets, Mahapara and Gondpara, each named after the two dominant castes of the village, i.e. Mahars (also known as Kostas-weavers) and Gonds.

Origin and Evolution  It is told by the villagers that in the past the Surghi nala abounded in crocodiles, after which the village
was named as Magarkund, which means a deep portion of a river (Kund) abounding in crocodiles (Magar). The area is actually very deep in the village, but now crocodiles have almost vanished because of their incessant killing by man. The settlement indicates how in search of livelihood man has occupied even the remotest lands. A small patch of agricultural land and availability of iron ore from the neighbouring Kala Pahar were all that attracted man to occupy this highly inaccessible hilly tract. The settlement has evolved in the following phases (Fig. 32 A):

1) First Phase (Before 1750 A.D.) The evolution of the settlement started in the early 18th century, when the feudatory chief of Gandai, who owned this whole tract, settled two families of Lohar (blacksmith) caste here to utilize the iron ore of the Kala Pahar for making iron tools and implements. He also settled a Kosta family for general supervision and perhaps two Satnami families for carrying iron ore from the Kala Pahar to the village. All these families belonged to Pandaria, which is 4 km away in the south-east from Magarkund. Since flat habitable site near the Kala Pahar was available only in the valley, those families settled here. At first they occupied the northern most site (north of the settlement) near the stream, where it makes a hair-pin bend. But because of flood they left this site soon and shifted eastward but again near the stream. This shifting also brought them closer to the Kala Pahar. But occasional floods compelled them to leave this second site also and to settle at a slightly higher site in the south. Now from this third site,
which is the northern part of Mahapar hamlet, the permanent settlement started.

ii) **Second Phase (1750-1800 A.D.)** Once the permanent settlement started, a few more families belonging to Ahir, Satnami, Kosta and Gond castes immigrated from Pandaria and Gandai. They made their dwellings just in the south of those of first settlers. With this expansion the need for the development of agriculture was felt. The development of agriculture needed more human power than was available in the village for clearing off forests and tilling, so a number of Gond families were brought by the ruler of Gandai from Pandaria and Gandai and were settled on another site in the south which is known as Gondpara.

iii) **Third Phase (1800-1850 A.D.)** Gradually the business of iron tools went on expanding and tools were sent in large quantities for sale in the market of Gandai. Expansion in this business needed more labour for carrying iron ore and iron products. So the village headman, who belonged to Kosta caste, induced some Kosta families of Pandaria and settled them in one group just in the south of his residence. Since this site is quite high to be safe from floods, the hamlet expanded towards the river. Thus a hamlet of good size with predominance of Kosta (Mahar) caste emerged and was termed as Mahapara.

iv) **Fourth Phase (1850-1900 A.D.)** During this phase the Gondpara expanded due to internal population growth.
v) **Fifth Phase (1900-1960 A.D.)** During this phase a few service castes (Teili, Ahir and Kowat) immigrated from Fossilmeta (1 km south-west from Magarkund) and Salhewera (10 km north-west from Magarkund) as agricultural labourers and settled in Gondpara where good space for settlement was available.

vi) **Sixth Phase (1960 to Present)** Seven dwellings were added to Maharpara — three in the north and four in the south. With these additions Maharpara hamlet has taken roughly a 'T' shape and the gap between the two hamlets has reduced. In Gondpara two dwellings were built in the south east and three dwellings in the west. Gondpara has assumed a 'L' shape.

It may be noted that the iron tools-business of the village is almost finished now. A few Lobar families have already left the village. For the further expansion of the settlement the land in the north, which has been slightly higher and habitable because of the deposition of iron ore wastes, may be proposed.

**Community Structure** — Magarkund has a population of 388, constituted by eleven castes (Fig. 32 B). The most numerous caste is Kosta (Mahar), which has 147 members, i.e. 37.80% of the total population. All the Kosta families reside in Maharpara, which is named after them. They own 35.52% of the landed property. The second important caste is Gond, which with 96 members constitute 24.74% of the total population. They form the second hamlet, Gondpara, although two Gond families live in Maharpara. They own
19.92\% of the landed property of the village. Ahirs (Kavata) form the third biggest community forming 19.92\% of the total population. They own 10.08\% of the landed property and reside mostly in Maharpura, although three families have settled in Gondpara also. Next come Telis with 5.88\% of the population and 16.08\% of the landed property of the village. They occupy the northern part of Gondpara. There are four families of Marar caste — three residing in Gondpara and one in Maharpura. Lohara, the founder settlers of the village, now do not form a large group. Their families, only two in number, live in the northern part of Maharpura. Satnas live separately in the south of Maharpura. Other castes are Kalar, Soni, Pathan and Kavat.

**Banseoni**

Banseoni (21° 9' 55"W — 82° 9' 37"E) is situated along the Kedar Nala, a small tributary of the river Mahanadi, in Mahasamund tahsil at a distance of 8 km in the north-east from Mahasamund town. As means of transport a cart-track joins it with Mahasamund. It is a semi-compact settlement having three hamlets, named as (i) Junadih, the main site and also known as Banseoni proper, (ii) Kamardera, and (iii) Nawadih.

**Origin and Evolution** — The village received its name after a wild flower-plant, locally known as Seoni, which is found in plenty in
the village. The settlement evolved to its present shape and size in the following phases (Fig. 33 A) :-

1) **First Phase (Before 1800 A.D.)** About two centuries back the whole tract was covered with forests and long grasses. The Kurmi malguzar of village Sorid (1.5 km north-east from Banseeoni), who owned this village also, got some land cleared for cultivation. To look after agricultural work he also made a temporary residence in Junadih, which is surrounded on the three sides — north, east, and south — by the Kudar Nala and a small tributary. The house occupied a high ground on Bhatha land. The nala provided defence and water supply.

ii) **Second Phase (1800-1850 A.D.)** The eldest son of the malguzar, who got this village in share, shifted here from Sorid permanently alongwith some agricultural servants belonging to Rawat, Gond and Satnami castes, who settled around the dwelling of the malguzar. Thus a permanent settlement started in this phase.

iii) **Third Phase (1850-1900 A.D.)** Up to 1850 the malguzar used to receive the services of barber and blacksmith from the parent village Sorid. But with the growth of population in Junadih he induced the families of these two castes to settle near his residence. He also provided them agricultural land for their livelihood.

iv) **Fourth Phase (1900-1947 A.D.)** During this phase the settlement reached its zenith, when a few Kamar (basket-makers)
families were added in the village. Thus a compact settlement evolved at Junadih.

v) **Fifth Phase (1947 to Present)**  The Kudar Nala is dammed at five km upstream from Bassein. In 1946-47 the dam got cracked causing severe flood, which inundated almost the whole of Junadih. The mud houses were devastated. But the house of the malguzar and a few more houses around it, occupying the highest ground in the settlement, were above the flood level. After this fateful event, a few families rebuilt their houses, but most of the Gonds, Satnamis and Kamars, who occupied lowest ground in Junadih, left the old site and settled at a distance of about 200 metres in the east of the Kudar nala. Kamars made their own hamlet, known as Kamardara, and Gonds and Satnamis made another hamlet, named Nawadih (New Settlement). Satnamis occupy the northern part (known as Satnamipara) and Gonds the southern part (known as Gondpara) of Nawadih. Thus three hamlets have evolved in the village.

**Hamlets of the Village:**

**Junadih** This is the old and main site of the village. It is semi-circular in shape, which has been determined by the nala encircling the hamlet on three sides. It has been inhabited by Kurmis, the predominant casts of the village, and some service castes, like Lohar, Ahir, Rai, Kewat, Dhobi, Gond, etc. The houses of service-castes people are of much smaller size than
those of Kurmis. Service castes occupy southern and peripheral positions. There is a temple of the Lord Shiva in the north. Wells and naals are the sources of water supply.

Kamardera As the name indicates, this hamlet belongs purely to Kamars. It is of rectangular shape.

Nawadih This hamlet has two 'pares' (wards) — Satnamipara in the north and Gondpara in the south. These two wards also are based purely on castes. Only in Gondpara there have settled two families of other castes — one belonging to Lohar caste and the other to Ahir caste. The means of water supply in Kamardera and Nawadih is well.

Community Structure The village has a population of 816 persons, out of which 42.43% are Gonds, 20.16% Satnamis, 11.83% Kamars, 10.66% Kurmis, 6.01% Ahirs and 4.07% Lohars (Fig. 33 B). Dhobi, Brahmin, Nai, Kewat and Sunar are the other, but less important castes of the village. Kurmis are the main landowners, holding 57.68% of agricultural land. Presence of various castes in Junadih, the hamlet of the Kurmi malguzar, indicates how the landowning caste attracts around it various service castes. Kamardera, Satnamipara and Gondpara are inhabited by low caste poor people, who have not been able to induce other caste people.
Tilora

Tilora (22° 46' 5"N — 31° 7' 6"E) is situated in the Pendra plateau in Bilaspur tahsil. It is joined by a 6 km long cart track with Kotmi Kalam in the north-west on the Gaurilla-Fasan road. The whole tract is highly undulating and covered with forests. The site of the village itself is highly dissected by streams and people have occupied only the raised grounds. The settlement is traversed by three small streams. The river Bambhani flows from the west to east in the south. Its tributary, the Bahrijhorki, flows south-eastward on such a steep slope as it justifies its name Bahri (sweeping) Jhorki (a small stream). Another nala, flowing west to east, joins the Bahrijhorki. In absence of any extensive habitable site, the people have settled in hamlets. The settlement is of hamleted type, with four hamlets — Patel tola, Bahrijhorki, Banderwadih and Thihaipara. Pateltola is settled in a linear fashion on the narrow crest between two streams. It is predominantly a tribal village.

Origin and Evolution It is told by the villagers that the village was named as Tilora, because of producing til (sesameum) in the past. The village was settled by migratory tribes, who, being in unstable condition, used to make temporary dwellings. But gradually with the expansion of agriculture they became permanent. The evolution of the settlement may be divided into the following phases (Fig. 34 A):—
1) **First Phase (Before 1860 A.D.)** The settlement is about one and a half centuries old. The first settlers of the village are Gonds, who made their dwellings in Bahrijhorki hamlet in the north of the present Shiva temple.

ii) **Second Phase (1860-1900 A.D.)** Then came Kawar and Bhains tribes from the neighbouring villages of Deori Kalan and Gorha. Bhains settled on a separate site known as Thibaipers (meaning a hamlet occupying a high site), and Kawars first settled near Gonds in Bahrijhorki and then a few of them shifted to the south of the Bahrijhorki nada. Some more Gond families also migrated in the village during this phase. They settled in Bahrijhorki hamlet. But soon because of their migratory nature a few Gond families searched one more site in the north which is known as Bandarwadih (meaning a site occupied by monkeys). Pateltola was up to this time almost uninhabited. Only three of four Gond and Kawar families made their dwellings in this hamlet, but later Kawars left even these dwellings.

iii) **Third Phase (1900 to 1960 A.D.)** Expansion of agriculture attracted some more castes, such as Ahir and Lohar from Kotmi Kalan, and Oraon from Amarkantak, in the village. Ahir families (three in number) and Lohar family (one) settled in Patel tola (Patel means village headman). The Oraon family (one) settled near Bhains. A primary school was also opened in Pateltola.

iv) **Fourth Phase (1960 to Present)** Because of population growth a few Gond and Bhains families shifted from the north and
settled in Pateltola. The Oraon family also shifted the site of its dwelling in Thihaispara.

**Community Structure** Tilora is a tribal village. Tribes (Gond, Bhaiana, Kawar and Oraon) constitute 98.96% of its total population of 342 (Fig. 34 B). Besides, there are three Ahir families and one Lohar family. Of the tribes, Gonds predominate with 60.24% of the total population. Bahrijborki and Banderwadah hamlets are mainly inhabited by Gonds. Some Gond families are settled in Pateltola and Thihaispara. Bhaianas, with 20.76% of the total population, form the second biggest group. They have settled in Thihaispara and Pateltola. The village headman belongs to this tribe. Kawars constitute 9.94% of the population. Out of their five families, four reside in Pateltola and one in Bahrijborki. There is only one family of Oraon tribe residing in Thihaispara. Ahir and Lohar families occupy spaces in Pateltola. Thus while Gonds and Bhaianas have settled in groups in Bahrijborki, Thihaispara and Banderwadah, there is much mixing of different castes in Pateltola.

**Gisabahar**

Gisabahar (22° 46' 10"N — 83° 57' 40"E) is situated at a distance of 43 km towards the south-west from Jashpur town in Jashpur tahsil. A 4 km long katcha road joins it with Kukuri on Jashpur-Kukuri pucca road. The site of
the village is quite undulating, and in the west of the village the Chhuriya hills rise above the ground. The undulating surface has divided the settlements into eleven hamlets, namely (i) Ginabahar Khas, (ii) Halkatoli, (iii) Despa toli, (iv) Pakar toli, (v) Machhua sand, (vi) Bangla toli, (vii) Mada para, (viii) Buddhlat, (ix) Bartoli, (x) Mangla para, and (xi) Chattan toli (Hata). Thus the settlement is a hamleted one.

Origin and Evolution The village has received its name after a species of fish, locally known as Gina, which was found in plenty in a small streamlet flowing in the village. The streamlet was later dammed to create a tank, named as Gina tank. The evolution of the settlement started near this tank and the hamlet evolved at this site was known as Ginabahar, meaning a settlement where Gina is found in plenty. Since the surface is highly undulating and dissected into a number of small habitable patches, the settlement could not grow into one compact cluster, but there evolved a settlement with a number of small and very small hamlets. The evolution of the settlement may be divided into the following phases (Fig. 36 A):

1) First Phase (Before 1820 A.D.) Because of the rugged terrain, the area was not attractive for agriculture. But since the Gina nala abounded in Gina fish, fishermen used to come here for fishing. In this process, about two and a half centuries ago, a few fishermen settled here permanently near the Gina nala at the site now known as Ginabahar Khas. Ginabahar Khas provides a high, though not extensive, and good site for habitation because
of the availability of water nearby. With the increase in population of early settlers, perhaps a few persons made their dwellings in the north of Ginabahar Khas, where has developed Halka toli (meaning a small hamlet). This is all which is told by the villagers regarding the early history of the village. This is almost certain that agriculture was not developed by this time, and people depended for their livelihood on fishing and gathering.

Then came the British rule in 1818 and an English administrator was appointed at Kunkuri, who once came towards Ginabahar and saw this settlement of fishermen, which he was unaware of till this time. Then he imposed taxes on the fishermen. With this interference and taxation, the poor fishermen were compelled to leave the village en masse deserting the early settlement. Thus the first chapter of village settlement was closed.

ii) **Second Phase (1820-1850 A.D.)** Desolation of the village by fishermen had a demoralizing effect on the English administrator, who as a compensation of his act induced some Gond and Kaver families of Kunkuri to settle at Ginabahar. Then a number of Oraon and Rawat families of Kunkuri and neighbouring villages migrated to Ginabahar. Since the surface is undulating and there isn't any extensive habitable site, people started settling in different hamlets. The settlers started agriculture also alongwith woodcutting, gathering and fishing. The Gias nala was dammed to create a tank, now known as Gias tank. The nala gradually dried up, but the tank remains. During this phase most of the hamlets, viz. Ginabahar Khas, Khas Halkatoli, Deepa toli, Pakar toli,
Nachhua sand, Bangla toli (Bhanatar), Nuadapera, Burhilet, Bartoli, came into existence.

**Third Phase (1950-1987 A.D.)** During this phase some families belonging to Chauhan, Kumhar, and Brahmin castes immigrated in the village from the neighbouring villages. They all settled in the Ginasabhar Khas. Besides, the hamlets grew in size because of the internal growth of population. A few Orca families settled in the south which is known as Chaitan toli, after the name of a Orca (Chait).

**Fourth Phase (1927 to Present)** The year 1927 marks the beginning of a socio-cultural change in the village, when the chief Christian priest of Kuskuri established a church in Ginasabhar and settled a few converted Christian families near it. The church was constructed in the south in Chaitan toli and the whole Christian establishment is known as Mata (compound). The Christians established a primary school by the side of the church in 1927 itself. Later on, a middle school (1940), a Girls' Higher Secondary School (1963), a Girls' hostel and a post office were established in Mata. Expansion of hamlets took place due to internal growth of population.

**Hamlets of the Village** There are eleven hamlets in the village -

1) **Ginasabhar Khas** This is the oldest and the main hamlet of the village. There are 36 houses here, belonging to Chauhan (10 houses), Kumhar (8), Goad (8), Oron (2), Ravat (2),
Domar (2) and Brahmin (1) castes. The families belonging to same caste live together.

ii) **Khas Halka toli**  This lies in the north of Ginabahar Khas. This is a Oraon hamlet, where 34 of the 35 houses belong to this tribe and the rest one to a Tell family. The Halka toli (meaning a small hamlet) indicates its subordinate nature to the main hamlet, Ginabahar Khas.

iii) **Deepa toli**  Occupying a high site in the west of Halka toli Khas it is a Oraon hamlet. Out of ten houses of the hamlet, seven belong to Oraons, two to Kasaeras (brassware makers) and one to a Lohar (blacksmith). It has been named as Deepa (high) toli (hamlet) because of its high site.

iv) **Paker toli**  Situated on the north-western margin of the settlement, this hamlet, named after the Paker tree, has only two Oraon houses at present, although the remains of the deserted houses indicate that formerly it was of considerable size.

v) **Machhua Sand**  Machhua Sand means a bull with flies sitting on its body. Formerly a bull used to sit at this spot, after which the hamlet has received its name. It occupies a site west of Ginabahar Khas. It is also a predominantly Oraon hamlet, as there are 15 houses of this tribe, 7 of Rawats, 5 of Kawar tribe and 2 of Christians. There is a statue of Christ also.
vi) Bangla tol This is a one house hamlet belonging to the Brahmin malguzar of the village. This absentee malguzar was a resident of Jashpurnagar. But, for general supervision, he had made a house in the village, termed by the villagers as 'Bangla'. Later on, one member of the family came to settle here permanently. The malguzar made his house away from the other hamlets to maintain distance from the tribal population of the village and thereby showing his ritual, economic and administrative superiority.

vii) Mundapara The site of the hamlet is circular because of which this is known as Munda (circular) para (hamlet). There are nine houses in it, of which seven belong to Oraons and two to Kawars.

viii) Budhile It is told that sometime in the past an old woman lived in a very small hut here, after which the hamlet, which is occupied by Oraons and Kawars, was named as Budhi (an old woman) let (to lie). There are five houses, three belonging to Oraons and two to Kawars.

ix) Bartoli The hamlet is named after the banyan tree (known as Bar). It is a small hamlet with only two houses of Kawars, but formerly it was a well settled site, the settlers of which left the village for neighbouring towns in search of livelihood. The remains of deserted houses may be seen here.

x) Maunglupara The hamlet was settled by a Oraon named Maunglu, after whom the hamlet received its name. Now there are two houses of Oraons. It occupies the south eastern margin of the settlement.
xi) Chaitan toll ( Mata )  This is a Christian establishment with good social amenities, such as schools, dispensary, post-office, grains' stores and garden. There are some houses of Oraons in the south-east and the north-west of the hamlet. One Brahmin family has also settled in the north-western part beside a Oraon house.

Community Structure  There are twelve castes/communities in the village (Fig. 35 B). About half (50.73%) of the total population (1151) is constituted by one tribe-Oraon. Oraons hold nearly half (48.48%) of the agricultural land also. Kavars and Gonds are the other two tribes constituting 6.17% and 3.78% of the total population, and owning 14.35% and 7.42% of the total agricultural land respectively. Christians are the second numerous community, sharing 17.38% of the total population. They are landless people. They get grains almost free of charge from the grains' stores maintained by the Church. Brahminas form only 1.91% of the population, but they hold 9.52% of the agricultural land of the village. Other castes are Chauhas (5.73% of the total population), Ahrir (4.69%), Domm (1.30%), Lohar (1.04%), Kasera (0.52%) and Telii (0.35%).