SECTION : B
Certain generalisations have been presented in the previous section. They have been applied to the systematic studies of different elements of rural settlements. Section B tests the validity of these generalisations by way of a detailed and empirical survey of the three basic elements of cultural landscape: (a) the settlement landscape; (b) the house and farmstead types; and (c) field pattern, conducted within proposed framework.

In the study area are found three major culture groups, the Gujars, the Brahmins, and the Kanets. (Fig. 8) Of these, the Kanets are dominant in the Himalayan zone and the Gujars in the Siwalik Hills. The Dun, lying as it does, between these two ecological zones, is an area of intermixing of all the culture groups. Besides, multi-caste settlements also exist in the region. Hence, in terms of their mutual interaction, the culture groups are distributed in three patterns: exclusive, in which within an area all the rural settlements are peopled by one culture group, exclusive mixed, in which settlements of different culture groups are intermixed, and mixed, in which a settlement is inhabited by different culture groups. Hence we can observe a number of settlements which are entirely or
almost entirely settled by single culture groups. The five settlements which have been selected for detailed study are all uni-caste units. A comparison of these units representing three different cultures is intended to indicate the extent to which settlement landscapes created by them are similar or dissimilar from one another.
Brahmin settlements are widely scattered and interspersed with those of other culture groups throughout the region. It is difficult to identify any area which is exclusively settled by the Brahmins and is considered in the folk mind as brahmanon ka ilaqua (a Brahmin territory). Since the Brahmins constitute a small group, occupy the highest rank in Hindu social hierarchy, and are required by the social system to be easily accessible to all other caste groups, they have a scattered distribution.

The Brahmin inhabitants of the region form two groups: indigenous, locally known as bhets and the exotic, who have migrated into this region from the neighbouring Plains. The former, belonging to the Khasiya sub-caste, are believed to be the descendants of the Khasas, and are, thus, related to the pre-Aryan stock. (1) Most of the immigrant Brahmins came to the hills during Aurangzeb's reign (1658-1707) and have continued to settle in the hills since then. They took to cultivation as their primary economic activity and were looked down upon by the Brahmins of the Plains as degraded Brahmins. (2)
Presently, most of the Brahmins of both the groups are engaged in farming for their sustenance, only a few practise their traditional priestly activities. The priests working in temples are called devas. The differences in occupations are reflected in the morphology of their settlements but the settlement landscapes of the indigenous and the immigrant Brahmins look alike, though the stages and the processes involved in their creation have been different. The deva houses are different from those of the other Brahmins. The former have a separate room for the idols and their courtyard is used mainly for satsangs, kirtans and havans. There is no settlement of devas per se but they are present in quite a few settlements of other culture groups where they perform their priestly functions in accordance with the jajmani system. Since their number is small, they serve a large area through horizontal jajmani system.

The present study is based on extensive field survey of ten settlements, Panjiara, Bahman Beli, Bahman Majra, Kundlu, and Shahpur in the Dun, and Kandhar, Koti, Harat, Kalth, and Doddi in the Outer Himalaya. They are settled either entirely or almost entirely by the Brahmins and provide adequate base for a detailed study of typical Brahmin settlement landscapes in the two ecological zones and
for their comparison. Shahpur in the Dun and Doddi in the Outer Himalaya were selected for intensive survey.

Shahpur

The settlement stands on a gently sloping alluvial fan which lies between the Sidh dhar of the Lesser Himalaya and the Siwalik Hills, and which is formed of coarse detritus deposited by the Ratta and the Balad Nadis and their numerous choe tributaries. (Fig.32) Located about fifty three kilometres west of Pinjore and eight kilometres east of Nalagarh, it is approachable by a foot-path from the village Manpura situated on the Pinjore-Nalagarh road. The site has a high elevation and was chosen as a safeguard against recurring floods and marauders. It has helped the cultural stabilization of the settlement through different historical periods.

The mid-eighteenth century was a period of external invasions and internal feuds. (5) Pathans were making inroads into the hill principalities from the west and the southwest while the Gurkhas in the north and northeast had become notorious for their incessant predatory operations. Furthermore, the state of Nalagarh was divided between the Mattiana Kanets and the Thuanu Kanets, both fighting for
supremacy. Under such insecure and strained circumstances prevailing in the state, one group sought the blessing of a Brahmin who could keep the evils away by his mere presence and protect the territory against disintegration. The subservience to the Brahmins, with its spiritual roots and assurance of material protection, characterised all the Rajput rulers whose daily life and decisions were greatly influenced by superstitions.

The settlement history of Shahpur is representative of the settling of the Dun. It was established around 1760 A.D. when a Brahmin farmer of Dwivedi gotra immigrated from Sunam in the Patiala principality in response to the invitation of the Raja and settled in Brahman Beli. (Fig. 41) After a few years he moved to the present habitation site in the higher parts of the Dun where the Raja granted him 5½ hals (approximately 3,000 acres) for settlement and agriculture. Himself a farmer, he reclaimed the hitherto unutilled land for cultivation. The new settlement was named Sadhupur after him but gradually it came to be known as Shahpur. It was, ab initio, a uni-clan settlement. (Fig. 42) For many years families of Dwivedi gotra, the founder clan, were the only occupants of the village. One of the later descendants had no male child and he invited the family of his daughter-in-law belonging to Awasthi gotra from Garchian near
Movement of founding family

H. P.

Nalagarh
Bahman beli
Shahpur

PUNJAB

Sunam

HARYANA

Rahan

---► Direction of movement

0 30 kms

Fig. 41
Genealogical tree (Sajra nasab) of village Shahpur

Dwivedi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Devi Chand (died issueless)</th>
<th>Ram Shaj</th>
<th>Mulik</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dasondi</td>
<td>Lalu</td>
<td>Kunj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lal</td>
<td>Buldu (no male child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kirpa</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mehar Chand</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moksha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mohan Pandit (died bachelor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathu (died issueless)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devi Lal (died issueless)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Ratan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dev Raj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sadhu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prem Raj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramesh - Ashwani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sushilwar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ramesh Sudershan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neeram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purshotam Gita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajendra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 42
Rahon in Nawanshahr tahsil of Jalandhar district, to take possession of his property. (Fig. 43) Its arrival converted the settlement into a bi-clan unit. Later, similar invitations to the families of Sandilya gotra gave rise to a multi-clan settlement. (Fig. 43) At present there are three gotras - Dwivedi, Awasthi, and Sandilya, represented by six, two and four households respectively.

In the beginning, the invited families lived in the houses of their relatives, which accommodated large extended families. The subsequent natural increase in the size of extended families and social and cultural changes, effected by forces of modernisation and by division of ancestral property, led to their fragmentation into nuclear families. Nuclearization necessitated allocation of space within the settlement for which two options were available. One, the new families could construct their houses adjacent to the existing ones and second, they could build somewhere else in the mauza. In most settlements the former was preferred, irrespective of the gotra to which the adjacent house belonged. New houses were built on the khyot (habitation site) which could be enlarged whenever necessary. The houses of different gotras are, therefore, intermingled.
Genealogical tree (Sajra nasab) of village Shahpur

Awasthi

Nanak (son-in-law of Rulu of Dwivedi gotra)

- Daulat Ram
- Pohlo (died issueless)

- Nath Ram
- Bhud Ram
- Ram Rakha

- Manohar Lal
- Rama Chand Swaroop

- Sachna Ram
- Yash Pal

Sandilya I

Halla (son-in-law of Gribu of Dwivedi gotra)

- Budh Ram
- Datta Ram

- Som Nath Priya Prem Vidya Lal Sagar Sagar

Sandilya II

Chetu (son of second daughter of Gribu of Dwivedi gotra)

- Sri Ram
- Pahu Lal

- Tara Ram Yash Lubhaya
- Chand Kishen Pal

FIG. 43
Houses of different gotras open into behra, which is the principal locale of secular and ritual activities. Villagers assemble in one of the behras on social and ceremonial occasions since in most settlements there is no specific place or structure for community gatherings. The behra is the fundamental agglomeration and is common to the Brahmin and Gujar settlements in the Dun. However, the behra complexes of the Brahmins differ from those of the Gujars in that while the former can be uni-clan as well as multi-clan, the latter are always uni-clan.

The Brahmin settlements, therefore, have two kinds of behra complexes, uni-clan and multi-clan. Uni-clan behra complex has evolved, through different stages, from the initial double-pen thatch house in which one room was occupied by human and the other by his cattle. The two rooms were interconnected by a small passage. Subsequently, a low gravel wall, enclosing the open space in front of the house, was raised. The cattle began to be stalled in it, and both the rooms became residential.

Multi-clan behra complex has a similar evolution. The only difference is that the houses opening into the behra belong to different gotras instead of one. All the families are interrelated and have same status. In the settlements of other communities, the common behra disappears when the settlement becomes uni-caste but multi-clan, and is
replaced by clan blocks with their own behras. (7)

A Brahmin house is everywhere a constituent of the behra complex and is, therefore, not a structural unit physically separated from other cognate structural units. It is revealed as a unit, at the lowest level of observation, of agglomerate morphology. The house, therefore, has to be understood in the context of the behra complex.

In Shahpur we find single-storeyed, flat-roof and rectangular houses. The rectangular form of the house and the rooms and their arrangement around the central courtyard suggest their origin in the North Indian Plains and the subsequent spread towards the Dun following the penetration of the Aryan culture through river valleys particularly those of the Satluj and the Ghaggar.

A typical Brahmin house in the Dun evolves from a rectangular ground plan. It is comprised of two-room houses. The rooms, built adjacent to each other, open into a common chhappar which extends along the entire front side. (Fig. 44) There is thus no notion of a agla (front) or a pichhla (back) room. Instead they are side rooms to each other. There is a continuous flat roof on the two rooms, while the chhappar has appended thatch gable. All the building materials used in the construction of a house are usually of local origin.
The stones used in the construction of the walls are taken from the choe beds. Most of the wood used is extracted from tahli and kikar. Each room has only one door, for both entrance and exit, opening into the chhappar. The doors are centrally placed in the front wall of the rooms. This permits uniform spread of natural light in the room.

In the Brahmin house, the human beings and the animals live under the same roof but in physically separated, unconnected rooms. This feature sharply differentiates this house from the traditional Gujar house. The kind of affiliation the Gujar mode of living has with cattle does not exist in the life of Brahmins.

The chhappar in the Brahmin house serves as a social interactional space. It is thus a threshold beyond which persons other than members of the family are customarily not allowed to go. It is both social and domestic space. Beyond the chhappar spreads the large open courtyard forming the core of the behra complex. The chhappar and the courtyard thus represent different degrees of consciousness of social and private space, the former being less social and more private than the latter.

One room of the house is used for stalling the cattle and keeping agricultural implements and fodder. A khurli (manger) is constructed inside this room. Khurlis are also
constructed on one side of the behra. (Fig. 45) The variations in
the location of the khurlis illustrate the 'Principle of
Alternate Locations.' (8)

The other room is the residential room where inter alia
beds, boxes, takis ( almirahs ), kothis ( grain bins ), and a
chaki ( grinder ) are kept. These are usually placed along the
walls. In one corner is located the chuhla ( hearth ). (Fig. 46)
It is rarely placed in the chhappar. The gharas ( earthen
vessels ) are kept next to the cooking space. This room also
has a centrally placed door and in some houses a window on the
front wall.

In a prosperous Brahmin house there is a baithak, an
additional room, used mainly for inter-familial interactions
and occasionally as a living room for guests. (Fig. 45) Their
houses also have few windows whereas in other houses they are
usually absent. This absence, in the folk perception, is
intended to minimize the effect of the high summer temperatures
and loo ( hot winds ). The scarcity of light also ensures
a good deal of privacy to the female members of the family. When
an adult member gets married, the couple constructs for itself
a new two-room house on the adjacent open space. (Fig. 47) The
continuation of this additive process results in the
multi-directional morphological development which leads to the
emergence of a centrally enclosed behra. (Fig. 44)
Evolution of Brahmin behra complex

Fig. 47

I  II  III  IV

R Residential room  C Cattle shed  V Verandah

Behra
Among the rural folk, the construction of the house is an important cultural and community activity. Many families may co-operate in this work in a system of joint labour known as *jwari*. The construction of a new house is begun on a *mahurat*, an auspicious time, found out by the *purohit* (priest) from the almanac. It begins with the digging of the *neeh* (foundation). The *neeh* is dug to a depth of two to three feet. Usually the eldest member of the family places the first stone in the foundation on the *mahurat* when *havan* is performed. The *purohit* gets cash or grain as a reward for finding out *mahurat* and performing *havan*, while *gur* (jaggery) is distributed among those present at the time of ceremony.

After the foundation stone is laid, the *neeh* trench is filled with stone pieces and *gara* (a thick paste of mud). The activity of laying the foundation and the associated rituals reflect the significance people attach to the shelter and particularly to its foundation. The ritual, people believe, ensures that both the foundation and the structure based on the foundation would survive the onslaughts of time.

The filling up of *neeh* is followed by construction of walls. The walls are one and a half to two feet thick and about eight feet high and are made of sandstones broken into convenient sizes. These are built up to roof level leaving
space for doors and windows which are simultaneously fixed. The 
alas ( niches ) in the walls, are kept at various heights. The walls are constructed by a systematic placing of stones, one above the other and cemented with 
gara, gobar ( cow-dung ), and bhooza ( hay ). These are further plastered with 
gara on their inner as well as outer sides.

After the construction of the house, the outer walls are smoothened and decorated with a whitewash of 
golu mitti ( white clay ) or 
chuna ( lime ) on their lower and 
lipai ( a coating of cow-dung ) on their upper halves. Fresh whitewashing or lipai on the outer walls is done only either on the eve of 
diwali, a festival of lights, or some social ceremony.

The laying of flat-roof begins once the walls have been raised to the requisite height. First 
karis ( wooden beams ) are put across the front and back walls at two to two and a half feet apart. At right angles thereon 
bale ( wooden rafters ) of 
sheesham wood are placed half feet apart.(Fig.48) On these 
bale are laid half an inch thick 
shatteers ( wooden planks ). Dry 
khar ( munja Sp ) grass is spread on the planks where on a thick layer of puddled mud mixed with hay is spread. Finally the entire roof is covered with a layer of clay which is rammed compact. The roof is given a slight slope for draining away
Construction of flat roof

Fig. 48

Construction of chhappar

Fig. 49
rain water. In the new houses built by rather better off families cement and iron bars are used as the roofing materials. However, most of the flat roof houses in Shahpur are made of traditional and local materials.

For the construction of chhappar, three or four thamis (wooden poles), six to six and a half feet high are fixed in a row, parallel to and about seven to eight feet apart from the front wall. A dasa, a long wooden beam, preferably a bamboo is placed across these thamis. To this dasa are nailed the lower ends of the sloping katin of bamboos and the upper ends of which are fixed into as many holes, provided just below the top of the front wall. At right angles to the katin, nahns (long pieces of flattened bamboo) are laid and nailed. Now the wooden frame is ready for final covering which starts from the lower edge of the frame. The khar is spread following the slope of the frame and is tied with munji (Saccharum munja) grass between the underlying nahns and the nahas placed in the same direction over the khar. The lower end of the next upper layer of khar covers the exposed nah. It continues upward till the whole framework is covered with khar.(Figs. 49 and 50)

The laying of floor is much simpler. Low spots between the four walls are filled with mud and by pounding it with a mallet a flat, level floor is created. Unlike walls, floors need regular plastering with a 10 - 15 days frequency.
The family moves into the new house only after the gharasni or griha-prayesh (house warming ceremony) is performed. The janeo (sacred thread) is also tied round the house and the rituals of fire worship are performed to sanctify the house. Interestingly, by a similar ceremony a Brahmin boy is initiated into youth and in religious terms he becomes a complete Brahmin only when he wears a janeo on him. The related ritual for the Brahmin house is symbolic of its induction as a ritually accepted member of the Brahmin settlement, in a sense attaining Brahminhood. All relations and friends of the household are invited and gur is distributed to all present at the time of ceremony.

Internal morphology

The internal morphology of the settlement is very simple, comprising of randomly placed gotra or kunba blocks. The settlement has a gali (approach path) for the movement of people and cattle. It runs roughly in an east-west direction. The gali divides Shahpur into two parts. (Fig. 51) The people living in the settlement recognise this division and use such locational phrases or mutual reference to the two parts as warla, this part, and parla, the other part. Within this division are blocks and within the blocks are multi-clan or
uni-clan behra complexes. The blocks are connected with the gali by the kutcha foot-paths (off-shoots). Such a three level hierarchical structure of agglomeration within the settlement is easily identifiable in almost all the Brahmin settlements of the Dun.

Though agglomerate, the settlement has apparently no point of nucleation. (Fig. 52) The khera, which forms a nucleus in many settlements of other communities, is situated at the periphery of the maje. (Fig. 53)

Most of the Brahmin settlements have roughly a squarish or rectangular form. Field observations and enquiries suggest that it is related to their small size, small number of constituent blocks, and relatively limited societal fragmentation. The settlements generally have about ten to thirty houses and two to four blocks which are arranged roughly in a rectangular or squarish form. In the Brahmin settlements which are characteristically uni-caste, the degree of fragmentation is less than that in the multi-caste settlements and is related to gotra and kul (constituent lineages). Shahpur is no exception to the general norm. It is a uni-caste settlement having twelve houses arranged in three blocks giving nearly a rectangular or squarish form to the settlement.
Land system and field pattern

In the beginning the land received as a grant from the Raja was completely forested. It was a trowel-shaped territory delimited by biryan wala choe (a choe with thickets of bamboo trees) along its broad cutting edge in the north and Phula Nala along the end of handle in the south. The western boundary ran along the crest of a tibbi (a small topographic rise), a chala (a small choe), kendiwal tibbi (a tibbi with kendi trees) and tree-line. In the east, it was demarcated by tree lines connected by a stretch of choe and tibbi. The choes, the nala and the tibbi being permanent topographic features, exist even today as the village boundaries, while the tree line boundaries were concretised by the creation of a series of dauls (mud embankments). At present, therefore, the village territory is hemmed in by a curved line following the tibbi crests, choes, a nala and dauls. (Fig. 54)

The abadi was created near the most fertile land which could be judged from the type of natural vegetation growth. The indigenous assessment and traditional knowledge of land productivity guided the first settler and his descendants in the identification of land types and their suitability for raising crops. A narrow stretch running along the biryan wala choe was occupied by the thick matted sarkanda (munja Sp.) bushes which are difficult to clear from the ground. It was
named as *jhar khanda* (a piece of land with bushes). Even today such bushes grow along the *choe* and this strip of land is referred to as *jhar khanda*. Another narrow but elongated piece of land adjoining the Phula Nala was rather distantly located from the *abadi*. It was reclaimed for cultivation when the other cultivated area had already been divided into a number of fields. The newly reclaimed field, being larger than other fields, was named *bara khet* (large field). The *jhar khanda* and the *bara khet* delimit a large piece of land bisected by an east-west running *choe*. The most fertile land lay to the north of the *choe* and the comparatively less fertile to its south. These were named *lehri* and *jol* respectively. (Fig.54) The *lehri* is a *do-fasli* (double crop) land whereas the *bara khet*, *jol*, and *jhar khanda*, typified as *chanar*, are left as fallow lands for one season after raising crops for three seasons. Thus, the *chanar* lands are *do-fasli* only in alternate years.

These notional divisions of the village territory are known as *vanddas* (divisions) within which exist *taks* (sub-divisions or holdings) of individual owners. The *taks*, in turn, are comprised of *khattas* (plots).

The *ghasni* (grassland) and the *charand* (grazing land) are located on the *tibbis* which are located along the periphery of the *mauza*. The *charand* is used as a grazing land the whole
year whereas the ghasni is closed for grazing for six months from July to December. The grass grown during the rainy months is cut by November or December. It is stored as a winter feed in dome-shaped stacks. After the grass has been cut, the ghasni is used as charand till July next.

The taks of different gotras and individual owners, well defined by dauls, appear as a mosaic of different sized rectangles with a few intervening triangles. For the convenience of ploughing, the taks are further divided into khattas which generally resemble the taks in shape. Small variations, if any, in the shape are caused by slope breaks.
The nupga has been traditionally divided into parts which, in terms of fertility, conform to an apparently scientific classification. According to the traditional classification which was based on relative elevation and distance from abadi, there are four types of land, lehri, talla, changar and banjar. (9) The banjar is the least fertile land and is not cultivated. Each of the other three types is further divided into three sub-types depending on variations in fertility, awal (most fertile) daum (moderately fertile) and saum (less fertile). As such there are nine sub-types. (Table VI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Types Based on Distance from Abadi and Relative Elevation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lehri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Depending upon the availability of irrigation these nine sub-types can be either chahi (irrigated) or barani. Thus, in all there are eighteen sub-types.

Agriculturally, lehri awal is the best land and changar saum has only a marginal value. Such a traditional classification of land has also been identified by Noble in southern India. (10)

The distribution of various land types reveals that the lehri land occurs near the abadi and with increasing distance from it, fertility goes on decreasing so that the banjar occurs near the boundary of the village. In between these two land types lie the talla and changar. (Fig. 56) This general pattern of fertility is, at places, modified by local variations in slope and relief. The existence of chasni and charand on tibbi just to the west of the abadi exemplifies such a modification.

The average size of the fields is 0.21 hectare. The fields owned by the families of Dwivedi gotra are the largest followed by those of Sandilya and Awasthi. While those belonging to the former two are widely distributed in all the four vanddas, those of the Awasthi gotra are confined only to lehri and jpar khanda.

The existing field pattern has evolved as a result of division and sub-division of land among the four generations of the Dwivedi gotra and three generations of the Sandilya and
the Awasthi gotras. Equal distribution of benefits and handicaps has been the guiding principle for such fragmentation, as if following a pan-Indian principle which can be thought of as a Great Tradition. (11) This, however, should not be taken to imply that all the three gotras and their different lineage segments equally share the village territory. As a matter of fact, there are marked variations in the pattern of land ownership. (Fig. 57) The inter-gotra inequalities are explained by the fact that the Sandilya family inherited one-third of the total village territory from one of the three first generation brothers of the Dwivedi family. There were four claimants of the remaining two-thirds of the territory. The land belonging to one of these four claimants was given over to the Awasthi family. Thus, in all, half of the total land remained with the Dwivedi gotra while the other half went over to the Sandilya (1/3) and the Awasthi (1/6) gotras. This 3 : 2 : 1 ratio in the land ownership has since been more or less maintained.

The inequalities among the various lineage segments of a gotra are attributable to: (i) unequal number of inheritors; (ii) transfer of land of a childless man normally to his co-inheritor; (iii) exchanging larger but less fertile land for smaller but more fertile one, and (iv) mutual sale and
purchase of land. The last two factors also explain the concentration of the field belonging to Awasthi gotra in only northern half of the mauza.

The fields are covered by maize, groundnut, and chari crops in the kharif season and wheat, gram and berara (wheat and gram mixed in the same field) in the rabi season. (Figs. 58 and 59) Farming techniques are largely traditional and crop yields are highly dependent on vagaries of climate. The cropping pattern lacks variety partly for want of irrigation and partly because of continued preferences for growing particular food crops considered necessary for household consumption.

The standing crops are protected against the cattle by means of bars (wooden or thorny fences) along the paths extending by the cultivated fields and leading to kuhar (cattle shed) and charand. Similarly as a safeguard against the wild animals particularly monkeys and boars in the maize and groundnut growing season, manhas (temporary thatch huts) are constructed at vulnerable points on the margins of cultivated land. (Fig. 60) The manhas are manned by one or two villagers who scare away the animals either by loud cries or set their dogs on them to chase them away.
The settlement of Doddi, sited on the east facing middle slope of a Lesser Himalayan range and located some three kilometres southeast of the Arki town, is another example of a uni-caste Brahmin settlement. From Arki, it is approachable by about two kilometres of metalled road and a kilometre of steep pagdandi (foot-path).(Fig. 61)

The Brahmin occupancy of Doddi began some hundred years ago with the arrival of three Brahmin families from the neighbouring settlement of Batal. In Batal the growing population and the resultant pressure on limited cultivable land uprooted many families which were forced to move out to adjacent areas in search of agricultural land. The three families which arrived at Doddi began to earn their livelihood as tenant cultivators of the Kanet landowners of the adjoining village, Bowana. As a matter of fact, Doddi was a part of Bowana at that time. The Kanets called it Doddi, because a clump of dodan (ritha) (Sapindus emarginatus) trees grew over this area. The new settlement created on the land, cleared of this clump, assumed the same name and is referred to as such even today. Of the three families two belonged to Garg gotra and one to Angiras gotra. The first settlers and, in the subsequent years, their descendants continued serving as tenants to their Kanet landlords till 1974 when the Himachal Pradesh Land Reform and Tenancy Act, 1972 came into force. The Act
conferred the ownership rights on them of the land they cultivated and occupied. Thus, after about ninety years of tenancy the Brahmins became owner cultivators. The numerical dominance of the Garg gotra, initially expressed by the land they cultivated is now evidenced by the landownership pattern. (Fig.62)

The settlement proper is spread over two distinct terraces which are identifiable with as many clan territories. The upper and the lower terraces accommodate residential complexes of the Angiras and the Garg families respectively. (Fig.63) The settlement is delimited by a series of terraced fields on its northeast and south and a stretch of village commonland in the east. An upland charand ( grazing land ) nearly a furlong to the east, overlooking the settlement is a prominent feature of the settlement landscape. (Fig.64)

House Type

A typical house complex consists of three separate structural units, a residential house, a kitchen and a gowain ( cattle shed ). (Fig.65) Both residential house and kitchen open into the angan ( courtyard ) which like behra in the Dun, is a locale of many religious and secular functions. Standing in the angan one can easily have a look at the cultivated fields. Gowain is situated at some distance from the house, usually on the periphery of the abadi.
Genealogical tree (Sajra nasab) of village Doddi

Aangirnas

Shibha

Malkia

Kamu

Nikru

Duru Dutt

Naresh Kumar

Jitendra

Jagat

Bhan

Sant

Niku

Baa

Garg II

Chhotu

Ran

Lakhi

Nand

Devi

Bachnu

Heera Raj

Jagdish Raj

Prakash Nandan

Raj

Baal

Jagdish

Narain

Durga Dutt

Nikru

Lakhi

Hand

Bhan

Ran

Garg I

Ram Deyal

Namiv

Chhotu Ram

(died issueless)

Nikru

Sant

Mehr Chand

Birinder

Lakshai

Hand

Dhan

Dhani

Baa

Ran Ditu

Motil

Birju

Yadubi Ram

Ram Ditu

Dhan

Leek Ram

Set Ram

Ram Chand

Pira Lal

Hand Lal

Prakash Niyam Nan Ram

Ram Raj

Jagdish

Jaidev

Prem Chand

Leek

Ram
Constituents of Brahmin hill house

Fig. 65
A residential house is invariably double-storeyed and rectilinear in shape. Interestingly there is no chhappar attached to it. Its facade has a thick mud wall, plastered with cow-dung, and a well decorated double panel wooden door on the ground floor. At the first floor, the mud-wall is almost replaced by four to five windows fixed very near to one another.(Fig.66) Following the popular norm prevalent in the region, doors face only the north or the west. All along the base of the facade runs the pandioli, about one to two feet high and two feet wide platform.(Fig.67) The pandioli is basically designed to strengthen and protect the front wall, in the absence of chhappar against rain. But it is also used for keeping cots, farm implements etc. and for sitting. In front of the main door there is break in the continuity of the pandioli. Here, one or two steps are constructed to facilitate entrance inside the house. The steps are made of standstone slabs. In some cases the pandioli is also capped with such slabs.

The residential house, as mentioned earlier, is double storeyed. The ground floor has two rooms, the beondh (front room) and the obra (back room).(Fig.68) The beondh is usually twenty to twenty five feet long and seven to eight feet wide. It is principally used for keeping agricultural implements. The obra, on the other hand, is used for storing agricultural produce including grains and other household goods.
Ground plan of Brahmin hill house

First floor

Ground floor

D - Door  W - Window  S - Stairs leading to first floor
Future addition in domestic space

Fig. 68
The upper storey has the same ground plan but the rooms are named differently. Paora and bohr correspond to beondh and obra of the ground floor respectively. Paora is connected with the beondh through a flight of stairs. (Fig. 68) Bohr is the place for sleeping and keeping valuables. Paora usually functioning as a formal sitting place indoors, accommodates guests and other outsiders. With a few windows it is the most lit part of the house.

A two to three feet deep and one and a half to two feet wide trench is dug for laying the foundation of the house. The foundation is prepared after the first stone has been laid by an elderly member of the household as per the muhurat and the havan has been performed, by filling in the trench with hard sandstones laid systematically one above the other and cemented with mud mortar. For raising walls above the ground level, pairs of wooden planks are so erected above the foundation as to keep the same width between them as that of the foundation. The inter-plank space is filled with a mixture of moist clay and hay which is rammed with moongri (pestle) till it becomes hard and compact. This process is repeated upwards till the completion of all the walls. The door and window frames are fixed during the construction of walls. These walls are as strong as those made of bricks and require periodical lime. Since the roofs are gabled, the side walls
are higher than the front and back walls. The former taper off at the top. For the construction of roof, a bala is placed above the apices of the side walls. (Fig. 69) The bala serves as a ridge whereon rests the central joint of the sloping gable frame. The lower margins of the frame are placed on the front and back walls. Galvanised tin sheets being the most popular roofing material in Doddi, the gable frame has a rather thin network of katin and gais (wooden rafters). (Fig. 69)

There are two ceilings one each at the top of ground and first floors. For the construction of the former, karis of kachner ( Bauhinia variegata ) or tuni ( Cedrela toona ) wood are laid parallel to one another above the front and back walls roughly two and a half feet apart. Thereon flattened bamboos are laid which, in turn, are covered with thick layer of gara beaten to make it smooth and hard. The ceiling of lower storey functions as the floor of the upper storey. The method of construction of the upper storey ceiling is the same as that of the lower one except that instead of flattened bamboo, takhte (wooden planks) of chir, simal, or tuni wood are spread and that nothing is laid over these planks. The space left between the upper ceiling and the roof, comparable to the attic, is called krainchi chhat and is used for keeping various household articles.
Framework for the construction of gable roof

Fig. 69
Field Pattern

The production territory created by removing the natural vegetation, mainly dodan trees, extends from the ridge crest towards the अरकी की खाड, which lies about two kilometres in the east. In this territory three slope segments are clearly identifiable - the upper, the middle, and the lower. The gently sloping middle segment lies between the lower and upper segments of moderately steep slopes. (Fig. 70) All the three segments contain terraced fields of different sizes and shapes. These fields run roughly parallel to the contours and are created by means of two simultaneous operations, cutting into the sloping land with a hoe and erecting a wall, termed bir, of stones or earth or both, along the lower edge of the cut out strip. The end product is an elongated terrace supported by bir. The bir checks the soil erosion by reducing the velocity of surface run off on the terrace and thereby helps maintaining the levelled character of a field. Fodder trees like beol (Grewia oppositifolia) and kachnar sprouting out naturally in these birs are allowed to grow. Apart from preventing sheet wash, they provide green fodder, fuel wood and a shady shelter to farm workers during summers. (Fig. 71)

The fields reveal a wide variety of shape, breadth and height of birs which depend principally on the degree of slope. As is evident from figure 72 the height of the bir increases
Field-slope-elevation relationships

Fig. 72
with increase in the degree of slope and vice versa. Since slope is a highly variable element of hilly terrain, recurring topographical breaks and undulations have created fields of various shapes. Nowhere do two fields have identical shapes. But for convenience in ploughing most fields are made rectangular or rectilinear. Four types of regular shapes can be identified: rectangular, curvilinear, rectilinear and triangular, of which the first two are the most common. (Fig. 73) The fields, with an average size of 0.43 hectares make an irregular strip pattern, like the gewann pattern of southern Germany, with each one of them running along a contour. (12)

The fields are notionally grouped into three categories depending upon the distance from the abadi. Those nearest to the abadi are termed as awal and the farthest saum. Those falling in between are called daum. (Fig. 73) These terms express the fertility of soil which is related to the number of ploughings and amount of manuring. The fields nearer the abadi receive maximum attention in terms of cultivation and manuring and are, therefore, the most fertile or awal. As one moves away from the abadi, the perceived fertility and actual productivity go on declining. Thus, the division of land into awal, daum and saum reflects the decrease in fertility with increasing distance from the abadi. This division is used to denote the fertility of land in official records as well.
The distribution of these notional groups broadly corresponds to three slope segments of the settlement territory. Much of the awal land is located around the majra in the middle segment. A broad elongated belt of saum land occupies the whole of the upper segment. The daum land with its major concentration in the lower segment also cuts across the other two segments. The village territory lying beyond the saum land has shallow and unworkable soils due to steep slopes or high altitude or both. It is, therefore, used as chesni or charend.

Besides this notional division people also name different fields after some topographical features for their own reference. They refer to their fields as ambe wela khet (the field near the mango tree), tille wela khet (fields near the hillock), dodni (fields near the dodan tree) and chaloni (fields near the pine trees) etc. The names have survived even though the topographical features such as mango tree, dodan tree, etc., after which these fields were named may not be existent at present.

The pattern of landownership reveals that the entire mauza is divided into two discontinuous blocks each belonging to a gotre. Fields belonging to each family are further consolidated into a maximum of three sub-blocks. (Fig. 74) It
also suggests that the numerical strength of the gotra has been a principal determinant of the number, size and quality of the fields it possesses. The gotra which is comprised of a greater number of families owns a major proportion of the total land. It is because such families, with their many farm workers, cultivated a large number of fields and increased their productivity. With the abolition of tenancy in 1974, they became the owners of the land they were cultivating as tenants. In terms of aggregate landownership, therefore, the gotra to which these families belonged emerged dominant. As is evident from the maps 73 and 74 the whole of awal land and a considerable part of the daum land is in the possession of Garg families. They also account for 8.95 hectares of land out of the total village area of 11.53 hectares. The Angiras families own the remaining 2.58 hectares, the whole of which is either daum or saum land. The nexus between numerical strength and landownership is further corroborated by the distribution of land between the two lineage segments of Garg gotra itself. The larger segment owns two-thirds of the total land and 94 per cent of the awal land. (Fig. 74)

Reconstruction of the evolution of field pattern in Doddi is a difficult task considering that the present inhabitants became owner cultivators only in 1974. During
this short period, there has been only one case of division of land, in which all the four inheritors got equal share in all the fields. But there is no landscape expression of this division. Thus, the influence of the present owners in the evolutionary process of field pattern has been insignificant.

The shallow soils and absence of irrigation which are the natural handicaps to the local agriculture, compel the farmers to grow mainly cereal crops. As a result, maize and wheat stand out as the most important crops of the kharif and the rabi seasons respectively. (Figs. 75 and 76) These crops are exposed to a constant menace of wild animals particularly monkeys. In order to keep them away, the farmers construct jugars, similar to the manhas on the margins of the cultivated land and man them regularly. Similarly bars of thorny bushes or other woods are erected to prevent the cattle from entering into the cropped area. (Fig. 71)

A broad comparison of the settlement landscape of Shahpur and Doddi brings out many features of uniformity as also of contrast between the Brahmin settlements of the Dun and the Himalayan zone. The existence of such features is very natural in view of the distinct environments in which the settlement landscapes have evolved through the years. The Dun and the Lesser Himalayan zone differ significantly from
each other with regard to their topographical and climatic elements. These differences are evidently reflected in the cultural landscapes as well.

(1) The most notable difference is in the very composition of the typical house complexes. In the Himalayan zone, the residential house, kitchen and gowain are physically separated units whereas in the Dun all the three units exist under the same roof. The separate kitchen and the location of gowain away from the residential house indicate easy availability of land for expansion within the majra. This part of the settlement territory is hardly cultivable because of the thin cover of soil. By contrast, in the Dun, the land around the majra is covered with a relatively thicker layer of soil and is thus agriculturally valuable. Construction of separate kitchen and gowain means permanent loss of arable land to non-productive uses. Besides, perhaps the Gujar mode of living in the Dun in the adjacent Siwalik Hills has also influenced that of the Dun Brahmins.

(2) The enclosed behra of the Dun house complex is replaced by an open angan though, of course, both have the same functional utility. The open character of angan appears to be a product of only terrain and not of any difference in cultural perceptions.
In the Dun, houses are generally single-storeyed and flat roofed whereas in the Hills these are invariably double-storeyed with two gabled roofs. The popularity of double-storeyed houses in the Hills is attributable to the absence of verandah and difficulty in cutting the hard rocks for construction of an additional room in horizontal direction. The heavy rainfall experienced in the Himalayan region necessitates the construction of gabled roofs, instead of flat roofs, for the protection of walls.

In the Dun house, the ground plan consists of two squarish and equally large rooms lying adjacent to each other all along the chhappar. On the other hand, the Hill house has rectangular rooms with one located at the back and not adjacent to the other. Both the rectangles have the same length but the width of beondh is much smaller than that of obra. The same ground plan is repeated in the upper storey. Similarly pandioli, so common in the Hill houses, is altogether missing in the Dun. The construction of pandioli becomes a must in the Himalayan region, in the absence of a chhappar, to protect the front wall of the house.

Unventilated walls of the Dun house stand in sharp contrast to those of the Hill house which always has a few windows.
(6) The materials and method of constructing walls are different. While in the Dun, walls are made of rough stones cemented together by mud mortar, in the Himalayan zone these are made of thick gara filled in between the planks and hard pressed by moongri. This difference has resulted from the easy availability of sandstones in the numerous choe beds in the Dun and comparatively high cost involved in cutting rocks and breaking these into stones of convenient sizes in the Hills. However, after construction both the types of walls are plastered with a mixture of gara, bhoosa and gobar.

(7) The differences in field patterns of the two landscapes are easily discernible. (Figs. 56 and 73) The rectangular and rather uniform sized Dun fields exist in complete contrast to the terraced and elongated fields of the Himalayan zone. In terms of size too, the former are larger than the latter. But in both the regions these are well defined by dauls and bhrs.

(8) The proportion of banjar land in relation to cultivated land is higher in the Himalayan zone than in the Dun, due to steep slopes and high altitude.

(9) In both the areas the cultivated land has been divided into different types on the basis of fertility of land as judged by the traditional experience in farming. Coincidently, the awal, daun and saum types are recognised as such in both the settlements.
Lastly, the practices of the protection of crops against wild animals as well as cattle have a striking similarity. Bars and thatch huts (*manhas* in the Dun and *jugaris* in the Hills) are features common to both the ecological zones.

References and Notes


2. See ref. 1, p.137.

3. *Satsangs* and *kirtans* are congregations, secular or religious, and *havan* is fire worship.

4. *Jaimani* system is the system of economic exchanges and is characteristic of rural India. (Lewis, O. (1958). *Village Life in Northern India*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, ref. p. 352). *Jaimani* system can be vertical in which each caste group within a village give certain standardized services to the families of other castes. In the horizontal *jaimani* system, the *kamin* (literally, worker) serves a larger number of villages instead of one.


7. See ref. 6, p. 103.


9. Lehri - land lying near the village habitation.
Talla - low lying land.
Changar - land on the hill slopes.
Banjar - barren land.

