The origin of Kanets has been a subject of debate. General Cunningham believes that the Kanets are identical with the Kulindas or Kunindas of early Hindu history and are a mixed race sprung from the Khasas who, prior to the Aryan invasion, occupied the entire sub-Himalayan country from the Indus to the Brahmaputra. This view is more or less endorsed in Ibbetson's report on the Punjab Census of 1881. He describes the Khasias to be more orthodox Hindus in their religious observances and ascribes their descent to the intercourse between the Aryan immigrants and the local hill tribes. The Kulu Gazetteer (1883-84) talks of the Kanets as belonging to the original stock. According to the Simla District Gazetteer they are not pre-Aryan aboriginals, but descendants of the earliest Aryan invaders who preceded the Rajput conquest. However, the Kanets of the study area believe themselves to be Rajputs of impure origin.

The historians of medieval India agree that the earliest inhabitants of the hills were the Khash, the people without caste or class distinctions. Whether they had any connection with the Aryan stock is, of course, not clearly
known, but they were presumably of the same race as the Khasiyas of Kumaon and Garhwal who are generally supposed to be Aryans.

The Khash had a system of governance which can be compared to the modern Panchayat system. In course of time, leaders sprang up in the persons of mawis, some of whom are believed to be the Jat immigrants from the Plains, and others masterful individuals of the Khash tribe itself. The mawis formed small confederacies and preyed upon one another to live on. Eventually they were outnumbered and overthrown by Brahmins and Kshatriyas whom pressure of Muslim conquest drove up to the hills from the neighbouring plains.

The term 'Kanet' was first used to describe 'the deteriorate Brahmins and Rajputs, who, in a strange country peopled by a primitive race, abandoned the orthodox tenets of Hinduism and lapsed into such practices as widow remarriage.' The proposition conforms to one of the two explanations of the origin of the word 'Kanet' given by various historians; the one stemming from the 'kunit' or 'violator of the shastras,' the other being a corruption of 'Kania hai' meaning 'daughters of love.' About the latter derivation, it is said that the early Rajputs were addicted to female infanticide and those who abandoned this custom became degraded, and so were called daughter lovers. A majority of historians and ethnographers,
however, support the former hypothesis. It has been corroborated by field enquiries as well. Furthermore, the dialect of the Kanets also establishes their cultural similarity to the Khasas. A corrupt dialect of Hindi, it still retains several traces of a non-Aryan language.(8)

The Kanets, constituting more than seventy per cent of the population of the study area, are preponderant in the pahari ilagua which has become a distinct Kanet culture area. Grierson remarks that the country they inhabit is held or governed by hill Rajputs of pre-historic ancestry, a large proportion of whom are far too proud to cultivate their lands, and who employ the Kanets as husbandmen.(9) Incidently, the Kanet settlements are characteristically small and, in distribution, intermixed with those of Rajputs. The Kanets cleared the forests standing on Rajput lands and created agricultural fields. They have been good and enterprising cultivators ready to experiment with new crops and methods, but too prone to leave the drudgery of farm work to their women.

The analysis of the Kanet settlement landscape, like that of the Brahmins, is based on extensive survey of the following Kanet settlements, Chambaul, Dodwana, Jamog, Phahwa, Galog, and an intensive study of Majru in the Dun and Kiar in the Lesser Himalaya.(Fig.41)
Majru

Majru is sited at the foot of a spur of Sidh Dhar (Kasauli Range). (Fig. 77) This site was selected by the founding family because the lower parts of Dun experienced heavy rains, had wet soils and were worthless for cultivation, particularly of maize, their main staple food, and were poor grazing lands. On the other hand, vast uplands in the close proximity of the site were ideally suitable for both cultivation and grazing, and, therefore, naturally exerted a strong pull on the potential settlers.

The founder of the settlement, Bhamboo, was originally a resident of the erstwhile Rajput state of Kahlur. (Fig. 3) According to the present descendants of Bhamboo, who claim to belong to the Jagdev Panwar clan, he was expatriated by the then ruler of Kahlur following rebellious activities of Panwars in the state. Incidentally, Abul Fazl also finds the Panwars of this state very quarrelsome and rebellious in nature. (10) Bhamboo, on arrival in the state of Nalagarh, bought 1½ bals (approximately 940 acres) of land for rupees hundred from Raja Ram Saran (1788-1840). The cultivation of the hitherto untilled soil returned good yields and led to the emergence of a new settlement. To begin with, it was a very small settlement. Hence, the name Majru (from majra - a small settlement).
Majru, as it exists today, is a uni-caste and uni-clan settlement. (Fig. 78) It has only thirteen households all of which are consanguineous. As such the settlement is served by a horizontal jajmani system with barbers and chamaras coming from Lodi Majra, and masons and carpenters from Banbirpur, Nandpur and Jatti Majra.

The settlement is approached by a six feet wide path which is fenced on either side by dry branches of kiker and garna trees. Towards the maajra, the approach narrows down to about one foot. (Fig. 79) The abadi extends on two levels corresponding to micro-topographical features and not to the difference in the status of the people. It is backed by thickets of garna, kiker, bamboo and other varieties of trees growing on a Lesser Himalayan spur. On the other sides sprawl terraced fields. At some distance on the west stands a grove of mango trees on shamlat (commonland). A part of their produce is sold and the income generated is used for the community purposes. For instance, the main gali has been bricked and a huge karai used during the wedding ceremonies has been bought out of such money.

In general, a Kanet house has two rooms, one used as living-cum-storing room, and the other for the cattle and for keeping the farm implements. Local names for these rooms are basu kotha and dangran da kotha. Many houses have chhappars.
Genealogical tree (Sajra nasab) of village Majru

Fig. 78
The kothes have centrally located doors and windows on either side of them (Fig. 80). The provision of windows distinguishes the Kanet house from those of the Brahmin houses. There is never a back door nor back windows. Only a few houses have a small hole in the back wall. The doors open either to the east or the north, rarely towards west, and never towards south. The aspect is controlled by the superstition prevailing among the people of the area that north and east are auspicious because they are the directions of devalaya and suryodaya respectively and west is the direction of nisha and south that of the vama (12).

Doors generally have nails of wood resembling tota (parrot) on their top corners, a feature spread through the sub-Himalayan zone of western Himalaya. The totas have a fixed location while other nails can be fixed anywhere. The latter are called khunties, straight nails with round heads (Fig. 81). Thus, even though the function of both, totas and khunties, is the same, that is, for hanging clothes and other household articles, their names are different.

Unlike the construction of a Brahmin house, which involves several families and thus becomes a community activity, a Kanet house used to be built in the recent past by the family members themselves. But now a days, a mason and a carpenter also provide help and are paid in cash or kind. Construction begins with the laying of foundation which is two to three feet
deep and two to two and a half feet wide below the ground level. Broken, irregular stones are filled in the foundation.

Walls are raised on the foundation but in contrast to a Brahmin house, the width of walls in a Kanet house remains the same from bottom to top. These are made of stones cemented with a paste of clay and are plastered on both sides, inner and outer, with a mixture of clay, dung and wheat stalks. The plastering is done once a year. The walls are raised up to a height of about 15 feet. The wooden frames for the doors and windows (generally $5\frac{1}{2} \times 3'$ and $3' \times 2'$ respectively in size) are fixed during the construction of the walls. On the facade, small alas are made between the windows, between a door and window, and between window and the edge of wall, that is, three in each kotha. (Fig. 80) These are used to keep small household things.

After the walls have been constructed the laying of roof starts. The stone pillar erected along the wall separating the two rooms supports the two latains (logs) generally of kikar (about $7' \times \frac{1}{2}'$) which are laid straight from the walls to meet each other on the pillar. (Fig. 82) On the latains some eight to ten bales (6' x 5") are laid perpendicular to the former, and placed four feet apart. (Fig. 49) After the bales the karis (14' x 3" x 3") are laid horizontally
to the *bala* at their lower ends. The upper ends of these *katins* are supported by the front wall. On this frame, a close network of flattened and horizontally cut bamboos is prepared for spreading *khar* thereon. (Figs. 50 and 81)

Different parts of a house are meant for different functions. As mentioned earlier, in a typical Kanet house, there are two rooms, *basu kotha* meant for people and *dangran ka kotha* for animals. Entering the *basu*, one finds inter alia a couple of *ghares*, a *kothi*, and some *sandooks*. The *ghares* are used to store water, *kothis* to store grains, and *sandooks* to contain household apparel, jewellery, and other costly items. *Sandooks* are always kept behind the doors so as to keep them away from the public eye. In general, the *basu* also has a *there* (bath), mainly used by womenfolk. It is a cemented or slabbbed platform with a small *nandana* (vent) in the wall for draining out bath water. In the absence of the *there*, the women take bath in the open either early in the morning when it is still dark or during day time by contriving privacy. Normally this is done by raising cots on all sides and covering them either with bed-sheets or jute bags.

The *dangran ka kotha* is identifiable from the thick wooden nails firmly fixed in the ground for fastening the cattle and *khurlis* for giving them fodder. In this *kotha* farm implements are also kept.
adjacent to each other in the same direction as the latain, thus covering the whole roof. (Fig. 82) The karuas are laid at right angles to and on the karis. On this closely laid, criss-crossed wooden frame, leaves of ban pipli and shenira (a variety of Ficus religiosa) are spread, which in turn are covered with a thick layer of mud. The mud layer is rammed heavily to make it compact and leak proof. All the four walls are capped with sandstone slabs for their protection against rain-water. (Fig. 80) A slight slope to drain away the rain water is provided. The recent introduction of girders and asbestos sheets for the construction of roof suggests an urban influence. Though they are traditional the people accept the imported material but do not change the method of construction, the floor construction, and the form of roof. The floors are of rammed earth and are plastered with thick paste of dung regularly.

The front wall of the house supports one edge of the single-gabled roof of the chhappar while the other rests on wooden thuas standing about five to six feet apart. For its construction, three to four thuas are erected along the outer longer side of the rectangular platform of verandah. Atop them baha, a long and thick beam of bamboo, is laid. Another set of sloping bamboos is nailed at right angles
In one corner of the chhappar one finds the kitchen which is enclosed by kandhokri on two sides and the other two sides are coincident with the front wall and the extended side wall of the house. Kandhokri is a three to four feet high and L-shaped wall. A gap of about two to three feet is kept as entrance into the kitchen between the front wall and the kandhokri. (Fig. 83) In the side of the kandhokri facing the angan one or two holes are cut to function as chimneys. (Fig. 80) The kandhokri also has a couple of alas on the inner side for keeping essential kitchen goods. In the kitchen, there is a chula, a bundle of fuel wood and a few ghara and utensils. On the other side of the chhappar are kept cots, small agricultural implements, and chakki. Some bundles of harvested crop before threshing can also be kept here to protect them from rains or storms. Chhappar is a place of social interactions during summer days. Also this serves as a sleeping place during rainy nights of summer season. Young ones of cattle or goat are also stalled in this part of the verandah.

Where verandah ends angan begins. The angan is an integral part of the rural settlements. It is mostly used for sleeping during summers, stalling the cattle, threshing of grains and for social interactions.
The concept of baithak is new to the settlement. There is only one house with a baithak. It has been built by a prosperous family only recently, but it can be used for entertaining or accommodating the guests of other families too. There is no specific structure for the religious or social gatherings. The important community decisions are taken in the angan or the chheppar of any house.

Kanet house is a derivation from Aryan clan camp in which four stages of evolution can be identified. (Fig. 48) Most of the Kanet houses in the study area represent the first stage only. Some of them have reached the second stage, only a few, the third stage and no house can be identified with the fourth stage. The original form tends to persist through a long period because joint family is a norm and it rarely breaks off after the marriage of a son. Nuclearisation is induced by quarrel or misunderstanding among the members of the family or by modernisation. The first stage of evolution is expressed by an I-type of house and is occupied by nuclear family. The L and C types of houses develop pari passu with the growth of the nuclear into joint family.

The break up in the joint family gives rise to a G-shaped house complex. It may lead to the construction of a new house too which is detached from the parent house. Addition to the domestic space is generally horizontal and rarely vertical.
Kanets have different name for khera, though the basic function remains the same. They call it than ( derived from sthan, a Sanskrit word, meaning a place ).

In Majru, they do not have any specific structure for than. It is situated under the kheir tree on the peak of a small hillock and is identifiable by the idols ( of the sidd ). (Fig. 77)

The inhabitants do not visit it every day or every week as Gujars do. But they go there daily during the auratas. (13)

The location of the than suggests the high esteem ascribed to the deities. Perhaps their fore-fathers wanted to secure the blessings of their ancestor by creating the than at a place higher than the maira.

The village well is located in the shamlat towards the western margin of the abadi. It is about 120 feet deep and its water is used only for drinking and bathing purposes. The water is drawn with the help of a lai or lajian ( rope ) running over a pulley and tied to the neck of a ghara. Cattle drink water from the nearby tobags. Milch cattle drink water from the broken earthen vessels at home.

Land System and Field Pattern

Extending mainly in the north-south direction and sloping east to west, the village territory, prior to the Kanet occupancy, was completely covered by natural vegetation
which was of the same type as grows at present on the adjoining hill slopes. The territory was well defined by a spur crest in the north, a tree line in the west, and a choe in the south. In the north its boundary coincided with the line along which the steep hill slopes abruptly break to form a piedmont plain in the upper parts of the Dun valley. The First Land Settlement records of 1896 show that burjias (small sandstone pillars) had also been erected at some prominent points on the village boundary. Today, we find the dauls forming the western boundary and spur crest, slope-break line and choe continuing as the northern, eastern and southern boundaries respectively. (Fig. 84)

The first requirement of the new settlers was the land for habitation and cultivation. They, therefore, embarked upon the slow but steady removal of vegetation. The removal was completed in two distinct phases. In the first, it was limited to the choe which runs east to west bisecting the mauza into almost equal parts. The southern half was the first one to be cleared of the vegetation. It was here that the maja was built and fields were prepared for the raising of crops. Regular tilling and manuring of the soils converted this part (lahar) into lehri (a productive agricultural land). For many years, cultivation was confined only to the lahar.
Village Majru
Location of Vanddas

Choeya paar

Lahar

Fig. 84
The land situated to the north of the choe was used as a charand or a ghasni. Situated on the other side of the choe it was referred to as choeya paar. Thus, while lahar contained the agricultural land of the village, choeya paar comprised the charand and the ghasni.

The second phase of removal was accompanied by the reclamation of choeya paar as well. The reclamation had become imperative following the increase in population and the resultant pressure on lahar. The entire mauza excluding the abadi, the choe bed and two patches of the shamlat land, was converted into the production territory. Over the years, the shamlat land near the settlement has been used as a charand and the one in choeya paar as a ghasni. The hill slopes lying just outside the abadi and owned by the state government also serve as charand.

The cultivated land has been traditionally divided, as in Shahpur, into vanddas, taks and khattas. (Fig.55) But here we find only two types of land based on the soil fertility, lahri and changar. The talla land is absent because strictly speaking there is no low-lying area in the village territory. A narrow strip of lowland on the either side of the choe is treated as lahri on the lahar side and changar towards the choeya paar. The spatial structure of Majru, therefore,
consists of only four components of abadi, lehri, changar and banjar. (Fig. 85) The fifth component, talla, existing in many other settlements, is missing in Majru.

The field pattern in Majru exhibits variations in shape and size of fields. (Fig. 85) One may come across a few rectilinear or triangular fields but most of them are rectangular in outline. The rectangles are more regular and larger and therefore more conspicuous in the choeva paar than in the lahar. In this gently sloping area, though terracing has been resorted to, the dauls are low, one to two feet in height, and fields are wide. The dauls do not always follow contours. They run in different directions in different parts of the mauza, depending upon the convenience for cultivation. (Fig. 36)

The fields become larger with increasing distance from the abadi. The smallest fields are found just around the abadi and the largest in the choeva paar. (Fig. 85) The land near the abadi has been subject to very high incidence of division amongst all the lineages. The land in the immediate neighbourhood of the abadi has a high preference and is keenly sought after not only for raising crops but also for constructing new houses. People are not keen in a share in the (outfield) changar.
The field pattern, as of today, is a product of continuous division of land over the past 150 - 170 years. The earliest records are available for the year 1896 when the mauza had only 30 fields of which 26 were cultivated, two uncultivated (banjar), and two uncultivable (abadi and choa). (Fig. 87) Out of the 26 cultivated fields 15 were situated in the lahar and 11 in choeva pear. In 1960-61, the year in which land consolidation was implemented, the number of fields had risen to 92 of which 85 were cultivated, 29 in choeva pear and 56 in lahar. The number of the fields increased almost three times in choeva pear and four times in lahar, leading to a differential reduction in their size. (Fig. 87)

Reconstruction of the history of landownership reveals that the first division of land was made by the two second generation descendants of the initial settler but their individual share is not known. Of them one was childless while other had only one son. In the third generation, therefore, the entire land was owned by one man. In the fourth generation there were six inheritors, out of which five had fields in the lahar as well as choeva pear. The sixth, who happened to be the youngest, had all his fields in the lahar. (Fig. 87) Incidentally, he owned the smallest amount of land among all the six brothers. On the other hand the eldest brother possessed the largest share. The
fifth generation division, however, did not go in favour of the eldest brother. The state inheritance laws, providing for equal share, had come into force. All the lineage segments except the one belonging to the youngest of the fourth generation brothers have fields in the lehri and chancer lands. (Figs. 85 and 87)

The cropping pattern seems to have had no impact on the evolution of field pattern. Compared with the latter, the former is too simple, with maize, mash, groundnut and chari as the kharif and wheat gram and rai as the rabi crops. (Figs. 88 and 89)

Just as in Shahpur (the Brahmin settlement discussed earlier) one finds extensive use of bars and mannahs to protect the fields from the cattle and wild animals. (Figs. 79, 90 and 91)

Kiar

Kiar, located about four kilometres west of Arki town, is another fine example of a uni-caste, uni-clan settlement in the Himalayan zone. Except for one household of the Doms, a scheduled caste, it is inhabited entirely by the Kanet Rajputs of Garg clan. (14) It is sited at the end of the lower slope of a steeply rising and an imposing Himalayan range.
As the north-south cross-section of the village territory indicates, the mauza is comprised of a higher, steeper segment and a middle gentle part and another steeper lower segment. (Fig. 92) The former two are separated by a kuhl along the line of contact. The kuhl also marks the upward limit of cultivable land. To the south of the kuhl steep slopes and thin soil cover render the land difficult of reclamation for agriculture. As such it constitutes the banjar land of the village. At some distance northwards from the abadi, the slope abruptly breaks to form a cliff which overlooks the southwest to northeast running, deeply entrenched Arki khad. The khad coincides with the northern and western boundary of the village. In the topographical map of the village the banjar and the khad stand out as the most conspicuous landmarks. Between these two topographical features and around the abadi is situated the perennially irrigated arable land.

The settlement is comprised of four individual clusters of houses located within walking distance from each other but at different elevations. (Fig. 93) Such scattered, cluster agglomerate settlements, are quite common in the Himalaya, an obvious adaptation to the limited availability of flattish niches. Even though morphologically it is a fragmented settlement, social interaction and social cohesion are
facilitated by pagdandis connecting the four settlement units.

Of the four clusters, three belong to the Kanets and one to the Doms. The latter, in addition to owning some fields, work as agricultural labourers on the fields of the Kanets. While the separation of the three Kanet clusters has resulted from the terrain constraints that of the Dom is explained in terms of the pan-Indian ritual purity-pollution principle. On the other hand their proximity is derived from the necessity of maintaining the functional relationship. The cluster A is the largest and the oldest of all the clusters and is owned by the members of the first lineage segment of Teju and has been built on the highest elevation. It has a much more open aspect than cluster C which reveals a close aspect on the older cluster and thus tends to be both larger and to have a commanding view of the village territory. Also the lineage segment occupying cluster A is socially and economically dominant. (Fig.93)

The origin of this settlement can be traced back to the early nineteenth century. According to the recorded and oral history, Teju, a resident of the state of Dhami, was the first settler of this village. He was granted a large chunk of land for cultivation in the vicinity of Arki town by the Raja of Baghat state. (Fig.3) Some years later Manglu, another
resident of Dhami state, belonging to the same caste and clan as Teju, purchased from the latter about fifty bighas of land and settled down. All the Kanet families of the village are direct descendants of these two ancestors. (Fig. 94) Both Teju and Manglu and their descendants through the years took full advantage of proximity to the perennial khad by digging kuhls to irrigate their fields. Their hard work turned the erstwhile barren land into water retentive terraces, called kiars in the local dialect, which are ideal for paddy cultivation. The new settlement surrounded, as it was, by kiars on all sides also came to be known as Kiar.

The site of the abadi at some distance from the khad scarp seems to have been selected very carefully. Firstly, it has ensured protection against hazards of scarp erosion. Secondly, its central location with reference to the khad and the banjar, as also to the extent of cultivable land, is suggestive of far-sightedness and intelligent planning of the initial settlers.

In this mountainous zone, a typical Kanet house complex, like that of the Brahmins, consists of three separate structural units, namely, the residential house, the kitchen and the gowein. (Fig. 65) Although in the recent past there has been an increasing tendency to shift the kitchen from a detached structure to a room added to the residential house on the
Genealogical tree (Sajra nasab) of village Kier

Fig. 94
ground floor, the nature and construction of the new kitchen is the same as in a Brahmin house. As a matter of fact, the two house types are, generally speaking, similar to each other with regard to the shape, form, ground plan, upper floor plan, facade, roof, and nomenclature of rooms. All the same, one can observe several differences in the Kanet house type: (i) an absence of external decorations on the entrance door and presence on the windows; (ii) the presence of a niche between the windows in the first floor, which is related to the religious practice of lighting a lamp at the time of festivals and/or reserving a place for the isht (personal god) or kul devta (family god); (iii) the absence of steps to the entrance door; (iv) pandioli is less prominent and ill-maintained. (Fig. 95) This reflects high status consciousness of the Kanets who consider sitting on the pandioli even for informal gatherings below their social standing. Instead, paura and beondh are used for such gatherings and consequently some of the uses of these rooms found in a Brahmin house are shifted out to other places. For instance, different agricultural implements are hung on the pegs fixed in the walls of the cowain. (Fig. 95)
The village territory extends from the deeply entrenched khad along its lower boundary to the ridge crest forming its upper boundary. Striking topographic features, thus, characteristically form boundaries of village territory and variations in elevation are reflected in, literally, every aspect of the village landscape. Between these two main topographical features, one observes three slope segments, the upper, middle and lower. The upper slope partly forms a steep escarpment and is characterised by thin soil and rapid flow of water and is covered mainly with thorn scrub and grass. It is a charand as well as ghaspi. It is a community land and does not contain fields but in the perception of the members of the community, the parts belonging to the individual lineage segments seem to be well understood.

The larger proportion of the area surrounding the abadi and the cultivated land on the lower and middle slopes and the natural terraces are in the possession of the founding family and its descendants. This land for obvious terrain reasons has high productivity sustained by organic manuring. In the initial phases the distribution of land was highly discriminatory among the founding family and subsequent occupants. The three major divisions are all contour belts and possess different
fertility levels, with the lower part possessing the most fertile lands. In the subsequent years through different phases of division and sub-division of land the initial discriminatory distribution of land possession has been maintained. (Fig. 96) As a matter of fact the original division of land in terms of contour belts has been preserved through all the subsequent phases of division of property so that the present day map reveals mostly the contour bounded individual fields and only a few strips which run down the slope across the contours. In this, the constituent fields have a longer extent across the contours.

The location, shape and the mode of distribution of fields of individual holdings in all the three slope segments having different productivity levels, conforms to the ancient principle of the equitable distribution of handicaps and advantages. It ensures the sharing of different types of land having different productivity levels and is similar to the distribution, for the same objectives, of fields in different annules surrounding the settlement as observed in the adjacent plains of Punjab. Because of the terrain constraints the annular pattern of the Plains has not evolved in the study area and, instead, one observes the contour strips.
According to the revenue records, there are six types of land aabi awal, barani awal, barani daum, ghasni, banjar kadim, and charand, of which the first three are cultivated and the last three uncultivated. As the map showing land types will suggest, except a small patch of daum land in the southeast, the entire cultivated land is awal or very fertile. About 95 per cent of the awal land is aabi (irrigated round the year). Only 5 per cent of it is barani. The aabi land receives irrigation from a number of kuhls taken out of the khed. (Fig. 97)

The fertile soils and availability of irrigation has greatly influenced the cropping pattern of the village. Until recently paddy was an all important crop of the kharif season and wheat in the rebi season. The recent linking of the village with Simla by the Solan-Arki-Simla highway has promoted the large scale cultivation of vegetables which finds ready and lucrative market in Simla. As a result the vegetables have become the most important crop of the mauza in both the seasons. (Figs. 98 and 99) Such a cropping pattern has led to the creation of very small plots within individual fields for cultivation of different vegetables. Most of the fields are bounded by high birs two to four feet high and a foot wide. With the increase in elevation and steepness of the slope the birs are raised
higher. These are the property lines and, in addition, they help in preventing sheet erosion (flow of water). As a matter of fact, they definitely help in the accumulation of water in fields. The maps show only property lines and hence the fields recorded in the patwari saira. Actually on the ground, each property field is divided into a number of plots for the purposes of growing different crops. Hence the landscape reveals a high density of plots and birs and displays an appearance of intense division and occupancy. The individual fields range in size from 0.01 hectare to 0.51 hectare. The landscape observed is quite different from the landscape revealed by the map. This landscape is the landscape of land ownership while the landscape observed on the ground is that of land-use, landownership and field pattern. Most of the fields, following the contour lines, are attenuated elongated, the length being several times larger than the breadth. (Fig.27) For some fields the ratio of width and length is as high as 1:30. This is one of the better indicators of shape. It is obvious that greater widening of the field would extend it beyond a particular contour line and prevent the emergence of a workable surface for cultivation. Also, widening of the field automatically necessitates extending the niche deeper into the body of the high slope. Along the kuhl and khad, quite a few fields are rectangular or even quadrilateral
permitting them to have access to kuhl which is the only source of irrigation. In general, the fields have a strong similarity with streifen (strip) in terms of the enormous length of long sides and their approximate parallelism. The curvature of the long sides results from their alignment with the contour lines. Thus, these fields are typical langstreifen (long strips) as well as schmalstreifen (narrow strips). The fields appear all the more strikingly elongated when contrasted with those in the adjacent Punjab Plains. Since the strips of a particular farmer are located in the three slope segments and are physically separated from each other, as constituents of fragmented holding, they form streifengemenge. (15) Ploughing has also played a role in shaping the individual fields. Their elongation is related to the necessity of ploughing along the contours. This contributes to the stability of the field and prevents erosion of the top soil. On the other hand, a long strip extending over all the three slope segments would also be extending across the contour lines. Ploughing in such fields would have immediately removed the top soil and thus resulted in the destruction of the field. This explains why the contour bounded attenuated fields of a particular holding occur in all the three slope segments. Distance from the abadi and the cropping pattern do not appear to have influenced much the shape of the fields. Undoubtedly,
the fields near the abadi are small but their shape is more or less the same regardless of their distance from the abadi. (Fig. 97)

The maps showing landownership during different stages clearly indicate that there have been few changes in the field pattern. (Fig. 96) Though there has been continuous distribution of property among the sons and grandsons, the entire fields were transferred from one owner to the other. In very rare cases have the individual fields been divided and distributed among the successive inheritors. Hence the proliferation of lineage segment is not reflected in the field maps. Also, the comparison suggests that the role of consolidation of holdings on the evolution of field pattern has been marginal.

In both the maps three or four fields, which on an average form a holding, are located on different sites. As a functional adaptation to the terrain handicaps the number of fields constituting a particular holding is small and placed at a few sites. A larger number of constituent fields means a larger number of sites which, given the terrain ruggedness, would have forced severe strain on the movement of the farmer.

A comparative study of Majru and Kiar provides sufficient material for identifying areas of similarity and contrast in the Kanet cultural landscapes of the Dun and the Himalayan zone. In general, the two are as different from or similar to each
other as are the Brahmin cultural landscapes in the same ecological zones. The observations made at the end of previous chapter with regard to house complexes, central courtyard, that is, behra or engan, ground plans, number of storeys in a house; roof types; methods of construction of walls and roofs; presence or absence of pandolcis or chheppars; field pattern, their shape and size; traditional classification of land; proportion of banjar land to the total land, ways of protecting cultivated fields against cattle and wild animals hold true in case of Kanet cultural landscapes as well. More striking differences are noticeable between the spatial structures of Majru and Kiar, the shape of fields and land types in the two. Kiar has an extensive and compact charand which due to steep slope, high elevation and thin soils is unsuitable for cultivation. In Majru, on the other hand, there are only two small patches under charand which, though not unfit for cultivation, have not been cultivated because their possession lies with the government. The rectangular outline of fields in Majru stands in sharp contrast to the narrow highly elongated, terraced and contour bound fields of Kiar. The change in shape results not only from change in slope but also in crop pattern. Unlike maize, grown in Majru, the paddy cultivation necessitates creation of level terraces wherein
water can be retained for long. Similarly vegetable
cultivation requires the division of fields into a number of
small plots. The land types based on distance from the **abadi**
such as **lahri**, **talla** and **changar** are not found in Kiar. Instead
we find types based on soil fertility, for instance, **awal**
and **daum**. Unlike in Majru a large part of the cultivated area
in Kiar is **aabi**.

References and Notes

   in 1878-79,' *Archaeological Survey of India*, Vol.XIV,
   pp. 126-27.

   for 1881*, Part 1, Lahore : Superintendent of Government
   Printing, ref. pp. 269-70.

3. Compiled and Published under the authority of the
   Punjab Government. (1885). *Gazetteer of the Kangra
   District, Vol.11*, Kulu, Lahaul and Spiti 1883-84,

4. Compiled and Published under the authority of the Punjab
   Hill States 1910*, Lahore : The Civil and Military Gazette
5. The term mawi belongs to the dialect of the Simla Hills, and means a powerful independent man, who owns no chief and pays no revenue. See ref. 4, Chapter 11, "Mahlog State," ref. p. 3.

6. See ref. 4, p. 20.

7. See ref. 4, p. 20.

8. See ref. 1, p. 133.


14. Mukerji, A.B. (1978). 'Cultural Ecology of Rural Settlements of the Chandigarh Dun (India),' *India: Cultural Patterns and Processes,* (eds.) A.G. Noble and A.K. Dutt, Boulder: Westview Press, pp.337-53, in this publication Mukerji, although not propounding a hypothesis on the cultural origin of the Kanets, places their geographic origin in the Lower Himalayan tract. This observation does not conflict with those of Cunningham, Ibbetson, Crooke and Blunt. There is ample historical evidence to suggest that beginning from about ninth century A.D. there have been frequent movements of the Rajputs into the Lower Himalayan regions for permanently settling here and escaping the tyranny of the Muslim rule. Most observations are corroborated by the information gathered through field enquiries. All the old members of Kanet families hold that they are in all respects Rajputs. Henceforth, Kanets and Rajput Kanets will be used interchangeably and synonymously.