

# **DALIT ETHNOGRAPHY - DOMS IN EASTERN UTTAR PRADESH**

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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the M.Phil. Dissertation entitled "**Dalit Ethnography : Doms in Eastern Uttar Pradesh**" submitted by **Ms. Shruti Singh** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Philosophy** has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or to any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.S. Gandhi'.

**Prof. J.S. Gandhi**  
Chairperson



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yogendra Singh'.

**Prof. Yogendra Singh**  
Supervisor

*To my  
Mom and Dad*

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgment

**Page No.**

1. Introduction

1-6

2. Ethnographic Approaches

7-38

3. Construction of Ethnography of Doms

39-60

4. Structure, Development and Change

61-79

5. Conclusion

80-83

References

84-88

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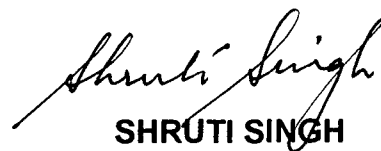
I gratefully thank my supervisor **Prof. Yogendra Singh** for patiently guiding me through my dissertation. He was a continuous source of inspiration for me. He gave me new insights which crystallized my ideas and tightened the loose strings of my thoughts.

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I cannot miss to thank who typed this dissertation with utmost care and competence.

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SHRUTI SINGH

## CHAPTER -1

### DALIT ETHNOGRAPHY : DOMS IN EASTERN UTTAR PRADESH

#### INTRODUCTION :

The purpose of the study is to construct ethnography of Doms, the least researched groups of Scheduled Castes in India. Within the varna divided society (caste system) Doms are the Shudras. Shudras belong to the lowest category of varna system, thus they were the deprived and marginalized sections of society. They are also called Dalits. In order to provide them with certain constitutional benefits they were categorized as scheduled castes within the constitution. Scheduled castes constitute 16.8 per cent of India's population. The largest concentration of scheduled castes is in Uttar Pradesh of which Doms constitute one of them.

#### THE DALIT IDEOLOGY:

The Hindu ideological system had its structural and processual elements. The identity and the functions of the various groups were defined through it. This Hindu ideological system ascribed to the Doms a marginalized identity and low grade occupation like working in cremation ground, removing dead cattle, drum beating, scavenging, mat weaving and basketry. This led to them developing a disadvantaged position in society. The concomitant development resulted in their exploitation and deprivation. To break this vicious cycle, the quest for a Dalit identity started way back in the late nineteenth century.

Shinde, Phule and Ambedkar were the pioneers in this fields. Shinde gave primacy to national identity and preferred to protest against the British ruler. He sought to serve their interests by reforming the caste - Hindu attitudes towards and dealing with the untouchables. He did not want a confrontation between the untouchables and the caste Hindus. He preferred to align himself with the confrontation against British. He emphasized the need for social reform to meet the problems of inequality within Indian society and the cause of revolution against the British. He began with a humanitarian interest to bring about a change in religious consciousness of people.

Phule gave primacy to the non-brahman identity and protested against Brahmanic dominance. He sought to promote their interest by including them in the non-Brahmin protest. While Shinde emphasized the need for social reforms Phule emphasized need for social revolution and a displacement of the Brahmans from their position of power. He moved from social services to social protest and the establishing of a new religious faith. He rejected the caste ridden Brahman dominated Hinduism of his day, rebelled against the basic Hindu hierarchical system and priestly dominance and sought to establish a new faith based on truth as the ultimate value and characterised by rationality, social equality and the abolition of an exclusive hereditary priestly class as the inter-mediaries between an individual and god.

Ambedkar too pleaded for a socio-cultural "revolution" and held the Brahmans responsible for legitimising the social and religious philosophy of inequality. He felt the need for rejecting the religious tradition in which they were born and for identifying another which

would be more than just and which prepared a universal morality, rather than a morality differentiated according to social status. But Ambedkar's ideology was different from Phule's. Phule's main strategy to counter the dominance of Brahmans in social life was to unify all castes other than brahmans into a single homogenous category. While Ambedkar rejected the social ethnic base of caste formation, he saw that the idea of a homogenous Shudra identity did not correspond to social reality. They also differed in terms of the role they attributed to political channels as a means to their ends. (See, Gore M.S. : 1993 )

Ambedkar's ideology was a protest where untouchable may belong to the same religion as the caste Hindus but do not belong to the same society. Untouchability emanates from and reaffirms a philosophy of inequality. Brahmanism is the culprit responsible for the situation and Hinduism is but brahmanism. The problem of untouchability is thus enforced social backwardness, continued discrimination and economic exploitation.

The manifest goal of Ambedkar's ideology was to sensitise the untouchables to their own deprivation to make them socially and politically articulate, to organise them and to agitate on their behalf to ensure immediate modifications to benefit the deprived. The prevalence of social equality was in part a function of the social morality taught by a particular religion but it was equally function of the general widening of economic opportunity.

The ideology of the Dalit during this period oscillated between the exhortation for cultural and social autonomy and a pull towards integration with a reformed Hindu society. (See, Dubey, M : 1995 ).



## MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Very few studies have been done on Dalit Ethnography. During the past few decades the social and economic conditions of Dalit have been extensively studied to formulate policy measures and to obtain feedback on the results of developmental activities. However, intensive ethnographic studies of specific Dalit community have been rarely undertaken. This tradition did exist in the past which we find in the writings of British ethnographers and has been continued to some extent by the anthropological survey of India. But most of the contemporary literature is not intensive and the Doms have particularly not been studied. People of India Survey also does not give an indepth analysis. It gives only a synoptic view on Doms.

There are very few ethnographic studies from a holistic perspective on the nature and causes of shifts of Dalit Ideology and its relationship with the changing social structure. We seek to undertake this aspect of study. Our study of the Doms in eastern Uttar Pradesh is oriented to this objective.

Main objectives of our study are :-

1. to study the cultural profile of the Doms - their beliefs, customs, rituals, myths and other cultural practices;
2. to analyse the relationship between the social policy of development for the Doms and the level of their social and economic changes.

To study this, we have to review the ideological position of the Doms in terms of the processes of their economic and educational advancement, political empowerment and social change.

This dissertation comprises of the following chapters:-

Chapter one comprises of a brief introduction to the study of Doms.

Chapter two deals with the theoretical orientation of ethnography. We have included this chapter because we are constructing the ethnography of Doms through secondary sources because the M.Phil research design delimits us from field work. Chapter three comprises the construction of ethnography of Doms by first drawing their ethnohistory, their cultural profile and finally by bringing about the debate between tribe and caste. In Chapter four we focus on the social structure, development and change of Doms, before Independence and after Independence. Finally in Chapter five, we turn to analysis of data and social change. We mainly focus of Doms during the past three decades that is 1961, 1971 and 1981. We have not included the data of 1991 due to non-availability of data specifically on Doms of Uttar Pradesh.

#### PURPOSE OF STUDY :

The purposes behind my study have been manifold. Firstly, to study Dalit as a category as a case of under privileged and of minority groups and in specific Doms who are mainly artisans caste who have become the most exploited group, due to their being lesser in number and lack of economic assets. Secondly, because they are anthropologically interesting in terms of their link between historiography and present, their link between mythology and present social structure. Thirdly, it would also be interesting to know whether they belonged once upon a time of upper caste and then became lower caste, Doms say that their ancestors were Rajputs. Finally, it is presently interesting to study Doms in the current scenario of change.

### METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION :

For data collection we have depended upon the following:

1. Census of India Reports.
2. The Imperial Gazetteer of India.
3. The District Gazetteer of Uttar Pradesh.
4. Report of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The data available from the above sources have their own limitations. Firstly, we could not collect intensive ethnographic material due to lack of field work which is not permitted for M.Phil level research. Moreover, the Census record of different years are not comparable.

We plan to rectify these limitations when we take up intensive field work at a later stage.

## CHAPTER - II

### ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACHES

“The main task of ethnography is to collect data of cultural anthropology through direct observation of customary behavior in particular societies and reporting and evaluating these observations. Thus an ethnographer is an anthropologist who attempts - at least in part of his professional work - to record and describe the culturally significant behaviours of a particular society. This requires a long period of intimate study and residence in a small, well defined community, knowledge of the spoken language, and the employment of a wide range of observational techniques including prolonged face to face contacts with members of the local group, direct participation in some of that group's activities, and a greater emphasis on intensive work with informant than on the use of documentary or survey data. Ethnography thus refers to the discipline concerned with producing such cultural descriptions.” (See, International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences : pg 172-176).

“While ethnology is a comparative study of documented and contemporary cultures largely excluding their bio-anthropology, archeology and linguistics. Ethnography, in contrast is used to describe the study of the culture of a single tribe or society.” (See, International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences : pg 178-184). According to JOHN BEATTIE ethnology is the science which classifies people in terms of their racial and cultural characteristics, and attempts to explain these by reference to their history or to their pre-history, who

are more interested in reconstructing the past rather than in interpreting the present. But he says it is different from history because ethnologists lack written records upon which to base their theories and they are more interested in items of culture. (See, Beattie, John : 1964).

### APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF ETHNOGRAPHY:

#### CLASSICAL EVOLUTIONISM

EDWARD TYLOR - Tylor is often called the 'Father of Anthropology' because it was in his hands that anthropology became 'the science of culture'. He was the first to clarify and define the concept of 'culture'. In his book entitled 'Primitive Culture' published in 1871, he defined 'culture' as follows : "Culture or civilization, .... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". Tylor was convinced that cultural progress had taken place and that the savage man had developed into the civilized man. He was also convinced that all cultures were capable of progress because he believed in the "psychic unity of mankind". He felt that contemporary differences in cultures indicated differences in the rates of cultural evolution only and that all cultures were on the road to civilization. Tylor suggested that inferences about the past of 'civilized' societies could be drawn on the basis of evidences from contemporary 'savage' societies. In other words, he was explaining 'The' comparative method. It was Tylor again who explicitly defined the concept of 'survivals' which he employed for 'Historical Reconstruction'. According to him, 'survivals' are "processes, customs, opinions and so

forth, which have been carried on by force of habit into a new state of society different from that in which they had their original home, and they thus remain proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which a newer one has been evolved". Tylor found such survivals in myths, riddles, games, nursery rhymes, rituals and artefacts.

One of the outstanding contribution of Tylor was in tracing the evolution of Religion. At the outset he gave a minimum definition of religion. According to him, Religion is the 'Belief in Spiritual Beings' which he termed as Animism (anima = spirit or soul). Tylor considered that the belief in spiritual beings had arisen in response to an intellectual need - the desire to explain the phenomenon of sleep and life that lead to two crucial experiences that of dream and death. These experiences would have inevitably produced the conception of duality - image and reality : vital principle and body. Man must have then named the 'double' as 'spirit' or 'soul'. Having thus established the notion of primitive religion, Tylor went on to trace the evolution of religion. Animism and the consequent belief in life after death in the form of soul must have laid the foundation for the first form of worship viz., Ancestral Worship. In due course, these ancestral spirits might have been deified. As a result of deification, there would have existed several such ancestral deities. Polytheism or the belief in several gods would have thus resulted. Later on the conception of one supreme being above all these minor deities would have eventually evolved. In other words, Monotheism would have been established ultimately.

## LEWIS HENRY MORGAN

Morgan in his 'Ancient Society' published in 1977, gave a detailed exposition of the Cultural Evolutionist position of the 19th century. He not only contemplated on the evolution of specific social instructions like marriage, family and kinship, but constructed a general sequence of human history. He further presented an overall scheme of instituted progress by correlating the stages of human evolution with developments in technology, political organization, family structure and kinship.

Morgan's scheme of human evolution can be understood as presented in the Table.

TABLE - 1

### AN OVERVIEW OF BIO-CULTURAL EVOLUTION OF MAN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERIODS	FOSSIL TYPE OF BIOLOGICAL FORMS	CULTURAL EVENTS
	HOMO HABICIS	First stone tools, old man tools, hunting/ scavenging, seasonal composites
Lower Paleolithic	HOMO ERECTUS	Probable division of labour by sex, Abbevillean and Acheulean tools.
Middle Paleolithic	HOMO SAPIENS NEANDERTHALENSIS	Monoterian tools, Burials Probable religious beliefs.
Upper Paleolithic	HOMO SAPIENS	Blade tools, cave painting, female figurines.

Microlithic	HOMO	Microliths; Broad of food collecting, Increasingly sedentary communities.
Neolithic	SAPIENS	Polished tools, farming, Permanent villages, Domestication of plants and animals.
Bronze Age	SAPIENS	Full time craft speccialists, cities and states, civilization.

TABLE - 2

MORGAN'S SCHEME OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

EVOLUTIONARY STAGES	TECHNICAL DEVELOPEMNTS
Lower Savagery	Invention of speech, subsistence in Fruits and nuts
Middle savagery Upper savagery	Fishing and the use of Fire Bow and Arrow.
Lower Barbarism Middle Barbarism	Pottery Domestication of animals in the Old World; cultivation of maize by irrigation, Adobe and stone brick buildings in the New World.
Upper Barbarism	Iron smelting, use of iron tools.
Civilization	Phonetic Alphabet and writing.



TABLE - 3

THE COMPARISONS BETWEEN LIVING REPRESENTATIVES AND  
THE STAGE OF HUMAN EVOLUTION - MORGAN

EVOLUTIONARY STAGES	LIVING REPRESENTATIVES
Lower savagery	
Middle savagery	Australians
Upper savagery	Polynesians
Lower Barbarism	Iroquois
Middle Barbarism	Zuni
Upper Barbarism	Homeric Greeks
Civilization	Euro - Americans

Morgan was a precursor to Anthropological field work tradition, as he had conducted field work amongst the Iroquois Indians of North America. This field experience initiated a deep interest in kinship terminologies for him. Morgan is often called the 'Father of Kinship studies'. He was the first to typify the kinship terminologies of the world into descriptive and classificatory. He published his works on kinship in the 'Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity.' Morgan believed in the 'psychic unity of mankind' and hence stated that the "history of the human races is one in source, one in experience, and one in progress."

JAMES GEORGE FRAZER

Frazer is best known for his monumental work 'The Golden Bough' published in twelve volumes by 1914. Although his work was published in the early 20th Century he is included among the 19th

century classical Evolutionists for having employed 'The' Comparative Method and Concepts like 'Progress' in a big way. Frazer never did any field work, but developed his theories based on other peoples' ethnographic researches. For this reason, he has been labelled as the 'Armchair Anthropologist.'

According to Frazer, all primitive peoples were mentally irrational and hence superstition pervaded primitive thought. This unpressed itself in the notion of magic. On the other hand modern man is rational in his thinking and hence seeks empirical knowledge which is available through science. Frazer postulated a three state evolutionary development as follows:

Magic — Religion — Science

According to Frazer, in the first stage of human society, magic prevailed. But magic being based on false assumptions regarding cause and effect, could not have always succeeded in producing the desired result. Man must have then realised that there could be some superior power above him that controls him and his activities. He must have then submitted himself to this superior power. Further, he must have worshipped and propitiated it in order to beg for. It is here then that magic gets replaced by religion. Frazer thus distinguished between magic and religion by pointing out that while the former is manipulative, the latter is supplicative. Later on, the antithesis of magic, nearly science, which is based on factual correlations between cause and effect, would have evolved as man also evolved mentally. Once man had learnt to establish causal relations, he had also learnt to control nature.

## II. HISTORICAL PARTICULARISM AND DIFFUSIONISM

### Historical particularism:

FRANZ BOAS was a physical geographer, who turned to Anthropology when he did field work amongst the Eskimos of the Baffin Islands. He found that the influence of culture on people was far greater than that of the environment. It was culture that enabled man to adapt suitably to any environment. He thus formulated the dogma of Cultural Determinism.

Boas vehemently attacked the comparative method employed by the Evolutionists. He refuted the evolutionist typology, which classified some people as 'savages' and some other as 'civilised.' Boas said that no culture should be classified in so subjective manner. He postulated the concept of Cultural Relativity according to which each culture is to be judged by its own standards and values. Boas further criticised the evolutionist theorisation which was based on scanty data. He said that only on the strong foundation provided by empirical data should theories be formulated. Boas thus gave the impetus to the rise of Empiricism in the discipline of Anthropology. He further criticised the evolutionists assumption that cultural similarities were due to similar causes particularly, "The psychic unity of mankind." Boas stated that cultural similarities were only due to Diffusion of traits, and any primary cause must be empirically established. Boas felt that each culture is intelligible only with reference to its past history. This idea came to be known as HISTORICAL PARTICULARISM according to which the intensive field study of both the present and the past of each culture must be done. Boas thus put forth the Historical Method by which the history of a

peoples' culture can be unravelled instead of the evolutionists advocated 'The' Comparative Method.

### ALFRED KROEBER

Rather than formulating laws of diffusion, Kroeber attempted to seek the causes for diffusion. He tried to enlist culture traits to the maximum in order to obtain comprehensiveness and completeness in defining each culture area. Although the process of enlisting culture traits was abandoned the efforts to classify culture areas continued. Kroeber added new dimension to the Culture Area concept by correlating environmental conditions with native American cultures. In a detailed study, 'Cultural and Natural Areas of Native North America', he mapped vegetational, physiographic, climatological and culture areas. Kroeber eventually mapped: 7 "Grand Areas", 21 "Areas" and 63 "sub Areas" for North and Central America.

Later on, however, Kroeber turned increasingly to impressionistic interpretation of culture centre which, he called "Culture Climax." Kroeber was a Configurationist. He found the concept of culture too unwieldy and inclusive. Hence, he sought a means of ordering data or classifying or characterizing societies by their basic patterns. The idea behind configurationism is that each society has a cluster of characteristics that mark it as different from all others. Kroeber suggested that such configurations could be seen in terms of style or in the dominance and persistence of other cultural aspects. He thus made an attempt to create a typology in order to define or identify a culture.

### Diffusion and diffusionism

The concept of Evolution and the dogma of Evolutionism were attacked by a number of anthropologists from different parts of the world. In defiance, they put forth the concept of Diffusion which stated that all cultures originated in only one or more specific areas from which they spread or diffused throughout the world. Diffusion may take place in three ways:-

- (1) By the imitation of cultural traits;
- (2) By the migration of cultural carriers;
- (3) By both imitation and migration.

**Diffusionism** refers to the theoretical construct that postulates the diffusion or transmission of cultural characteristics or traits from one common society to all other societies.

The Diffusionists attacked the evolutionists on several grounds:

- (1) The Diffusionists criticized the Evolutionist premise of the "Psychic Unity of Mankind." The Diffusionists said that man is basically uninventive and important inventions are made only once in one place. As man is easily capable of imitation, these inventions then diffuse to other places.
- (2) The Diffusionist did not accept the Evolutionist contention that cultures originated in different parts of the world independently. They stated that all cultures originated at one point and then spread through out the world. This is because they did not believe that mankind was capable of multiple independent inventions.
- (3) The Diffusionists opposed the notion of ' progress' from simple to complex forms held by the Evolutionists. According to the

Diffusionists, the label of simplicity or complexity attributed to any cultural form is a relative matter. One form that may appear to be simple to one people may appear to be complex to another and vice versa. The notion of progress is then irrelevant here.

- (4) The Diffusionists attacked 'The' comparative method of evolutionists which used present primitive peoples as exemplars of pre-historic peoples or as representatives of the early stages of mans cultural development. The Diffusionists firmly held that 'primitive' or 'modern' is also relative matter and hence 'The' Comparative Method should not be employed at all.
- (5) The Diffusionists did not look for mere 'parallels' as did the Evolutionists and also did not explain away 'variations' as mere differences in rates of evolution. The Diffusionists looked specifically for variations that gradually occurred while diffusions took place. In the process of diffusion, exact imitation is not quite possible and hence, some differences are bound to occur resulting in variation.
- (6) The Diffusionists further criticised the 'Armchair' remarks of the Evolutionists for the speculative reconstructions, based on unreliable and incomplete documentary sources. The Diffusionists said that since the dogmas of the Evolutionists were not founded on empirical observations, cultural evolutionism as such does not stand the test of validity.

### III FUNCTIONALISM

As against the Evolutionists and Diffusionists, there arose a dynamic school of thought founded by BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI, called FUNCTIONALISM. This school of thought postulates that each and every cultural trait exists in order to serve the needs of the individuals in a society. In other words, the function of culture is to fulfill man's needs.

Functionalism is not concerned with origin or the reconstruction of the past. Further, the functionalists opposed the concept of 'survival' because, to them every cultural trait existed in order to serve some purpose or the other. Functionalism, thus looks for utilitarian causes. That is, functionalism aims at finding out which needs of man produce what cultural responses and correlating the two dynamically. As functionalism conceptualised cultures as working units, it emphasised the study of the operation or functioning of contemporary cultures.

Functionalism in Ancient Anthropology was a off shoot of the functional ideas put forth by the eminent sociologist EMILE DURKHEIM. He stated that in order to explain a social phenomena, one must seek both the cause that produced it and the function that it fulfilled. The explanation of social phenomena also entailed the asking of how the phenomena that together constitute social life combine to produce harmony within the society and consequently maintain social solidarity through a satisfactory adoption to the environment. Drawing inspirations from Durkheim, Malinowski developed the concept of functionalism to its greatest elaboration pinpointing the various needs of man as the causes of all social phenomena and the institutions which function in order to fulfill those needs.

## MALINOWSKI'S CONTRIBUTION TO FUNCTIONALISM IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY :

In his ' A scientific Theory of Culture', the contribution of culture to the biological survival and the psychological welfare of man was the prime functionalist tenet put forth by Malinowski. To him, culture was the vehicle through which man satisfied his needs. Each human desire or need impels the formation of a cultural institution which provides the channel through which man fulfills his desires. Malinowski comprehended culture in its totality And declared that all the institutions are interrelated and integrated into the system of culture. Thus, culture is an integrated whole which can be analysed in two ways:

- (1) Institutionally;
- (2) Functionally.

Malinowski actively sought bio-physical explanations in trying to understand institutions in relation to individuals. He tried to analyse how institutions responded or functioned in order to satisfy individual needs. It was individuals' survivals that was crucial to Malinowski. How culture helped an individual to survive was the prime question to which Malinowski sought an answer.

Malinowski found that man primarily had several fundamental or **BASIC NEEDS** which are, in other words, **BIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVES**.



### THE CORRELATION MADE BY MALINOWSKI :

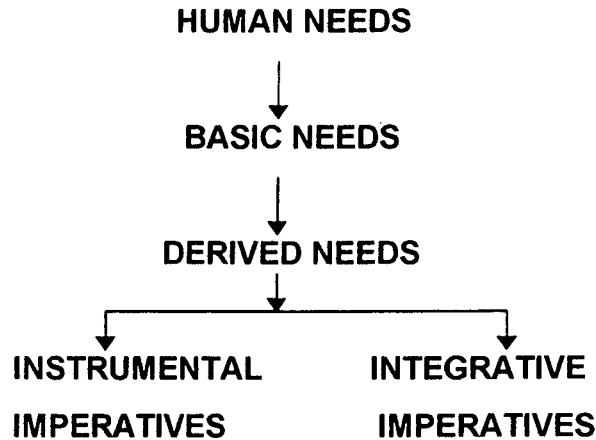
S.No.	BASIC NEEDS OR IMPERATIVE	CULTURAL RESPONSES
1.	Metabolism	Commissariat
2.	Reproduction	Kinship
3.	Bodily comforts	Shelter
4.	Safety	Protection
5.	Movements	Activities
6.	Growth	Training
7.	Health	Hygiene

According to Malinowski, culture was adoptive, and without the satisfaction of basic biological needs, neither man nor culture itself could survive. Although Malinowski did not speculate how culture arose, he had no doubts as to why it came into being; it was a means to human survival. Culture, to him, is then a functioning whole, to be understood in relation to man's biology and his environment.

Having understood man's Basic Needs and their cultural responses, Malinowski felt that a theory could be developed in which the basic needs and their cultural satisfaction can be linked up with the deprivation of new cultural needs which he called Derived Needs. He found two types of Derived Needs or Imperatives: (1) Instrumental Imperatives - arising out of such types of activity as economic, educational and political i.e. necessary for organised activity. (2) Integrative Imperatives - such as knowledge, religion and magic, i.e. necessary for mental and moral integration.

The following figure reveals the scheme outlined by Malinowski in order to show the various needs of human beings:

THE VARIOUS NEEDS AS CONCEPTUALIZED BY MALINOWSKI :



Malinowski states that the analysis in which we attempt to define the relation between a cultural performance and a human need, basic or derived, may be termed functional. He further says that function cannot be defined in any other way than the satisfaction of a need by an activity in which human beings co-operate, use artifacts and consume goods. This very definition implies the essential concept of Organisation. In order to achieve any purpose, human beings have to organise. Organisation implies a very definite scheme or structure. A unit of human organisation may be called institution. Each institution implies a system of organised activity. Malinowski considers an institution as the legitimate isolate of cultural analysis. Functionalism thus, is the analysis of social customs, rules and regulations and institutions in terms of their contribution to the maintenance of social system.

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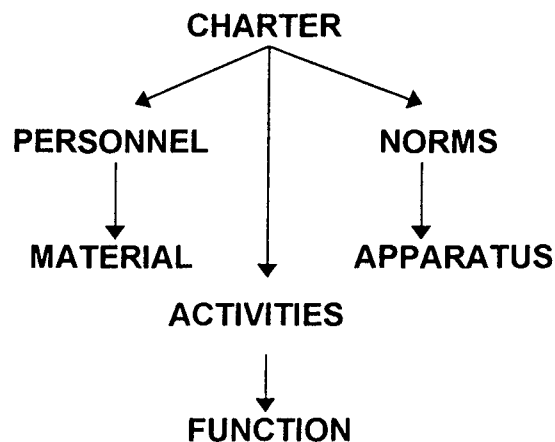
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### INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF CULTURE:

Malinowski puts forth explicitly on institutional analysis of culture. At the outset, he gives a diagrammatic definition of the concept of institution. He then proceeds to explain in detail the various concepts employed in the definition.

### THE STRUCTURE OF AN INSTITUTION AS OUTLINED BY MALINOWSKI:



Malinowski describes what he calls an organised system of purposeful activities. He defines as the Charter of an institution, the system of values for the pursuit of which human beings organise, or enter organisations already existing. The Personnel of an institution, Malinowski defines as the group organised in definite principles of authority, division of functions and distribution of privileges and duties. The rules or norms of an institution are the technically acquired skills, habits, legal norms, and ethical commands which are accepted by the members or imposed upon them. It is clear that both the organisation of the personnel and the nature of the rules followed are definitely

related to the Charter. In a way both the personnel and the rules are derived from and contingent upon the Charter.

According to Malinowski, an organisation is invariably based upon and intimately associated with the material environmental setting. Organised on the charter, acting through their social and organised cooperation, following the rules of their specific occupation, using the material apparatus at their disposal, the group engages in the activities for which they have organised.

For Malinowski, the distinction between activities and rules is clear and precise. The activities depend on the ability, power, honesty and good will of the members. They deviate invariably from the rules, which represent the ideal of performance, not necessarily its reality. The activities over, are embodied in actual behavior, the rules may often in precepts, texts and regulations. Finally, Malinowski introduces the concept of FUNCTION, that is the integral result of organised activities as distinguished from charter, that is the purpose, the traditional or new end to be obtained.

Malinowski ultimately stated that every type of effective activity has to be organised in one way and one way only, through which it becomes culturally stabilised, that is, incorporated into the cultural heritage of a group. Malinowski states that the figure representing the institutional structure stands for the following propositions. Each institution, that is, organized type of activity, has a definite structure. In order to observe theoretically upon an institution, it is necessary to analyse it in the manner here indicated, and in this manner only. No element, trait, custom, or idea is defined or can be defined except by placing it within its relevant and real institutional setting. Malinowski is

thus insisting that such institutional analysis is not only possible but indispensable. It is maintained here that the institution is the real isolate of cultural analysis. It is also maintained that any other type of discussion or demonstration in terms of isolated traits or trait complexes, other than those which would follow the institutional integration, must be incorrect. Malinowski thus establishes that the institutional structure is universal through out all cultures.

#### **FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF CULTURE :**

For Malinowski, Function means always the satisfaction of a need. The functional isolate is the institution that carries out the work required to achieve the goal. At the same time Malinowski also indicates that culture, as the handwork of man and as the medium through which he achieves his ends is a medium which allows him to live, to establish a standard of safety, comfort and prosperity, a medium which gives him power and allows him to create goods and values beyond his animal organic endowment that culture is all this and through all this, must be understood as a means to an end, that is, instrumentally or functionally.

Malinowski then outlines the general axioms of Functionalism, as Functionism, according to him, is concerned with the clear understanding of the nature of cultural phenomena.

#### **IV STRUCTURAL - FUNCTIONALISM :**

##### **RADCLIFFE - BROWN:**

Radcliffe - Brown's approach is called Structural - Functionalism as against Malinowski's mere Functionalism,. Radcliffe Brown tried to

relate structure and function in order to understand society and culture synchronically.

To, Radcliffe - Brown, culture was an abstraction. Therefore, a science of culture as envisaged by Malinowski, was not possible. Radcliffe - Brown preferred to analyse social structure instead. To him, social structure is 'the network of actually existing relation'. According to Radcliffe - Brown, social facts required explanation in terms of social laws . As against Malinowski, he emphasized group survival, and did not search for explanations in terms of the psychology of individuals. Radcliffe-Brown's aim, then was to study social structures and formulate laws governing social behavior cross culturally. He stated that the task of Anthropology was to classify societies and compare them so that generalizations ought be made. It is because of the force of Radcliffe Brown's orientation that British Anthropology is often called as 'Social Anthropology' in contrast to the American 'Cultural Anthropology.'

In order to illustrate the relationship between structure and function, Brown turned to biology. Drawing in Spencer, Brown elaborated the analogy between biological systems and social organisms ' The function of a recurrent physiological process, is a correspondence between it and necessary conditions of existence of the organism.' Thus, the concept of structural - functionalism as applied to human societies is based on the analogy between social life and organic life. An organism is an agglomeration of cells and interstitial fluids arranged in relation to one another not as an aggregate but as an integrated living whole. In other words, it is a complexly integrated system of complex molecules. The system of

relations by which these units are related is the organic structure. The structure is thus to be defined as a set of relations between entities. As long as it lives, the organism preserves a certain continuity of structure although it does not preserve the complete identity of its constituent parts. It loses some of its constituent molecules by respiration or excretion, it takes in others by respiration and alimentary absorption. Over a period its constituent cells do not remain the same. But the structural arrangement of the constituent units does remain similar. The process by which this structural continuity of the organism is maintained is called life. The life process consists of the activities and interactions of the constituent units of the organism, the cells, and the organs into which the cells are united. Thus, the life of an organism is conceived as the functioning of its structure. It is through and by the continuity of the functioning that the continuity of the structure is preserved.

Turning from organic life to social life, Brown, establishes his structural functionalism as given herein: when we examine any community, we can recognise the existence of a social structure. Individual human beings, the essential units in this instance, are connected by a definite set of social relations into an integrated whole. The continuity of the social structure, like that of an organic structure, is not destroyed by changes in the units. Individuals may leave the society, by death or otherwise, others may enter it. The continuity of structure is maintained by the process of social life, which consists of the activities and interactions of the individual human beings and of the organised groups into which they are united. The social life of the community is here defined as the functioning of the social structure.

The function of any recurrent activity, is the part it plays in the social life as a whole and therefore, the contribution it makes to the maintenance of the structural continuity.

The concept of function as here defined thus involves the notion of a structure consisting of a set of relations amongst unit entities, the continuity of the structure being maintained by a life process made up of the activities of the constituent units.

Radcliffe - Brown, however, reminds us that, two important points are there where the analogy between organism and society breaks down. The first is that, in an organism it is possible to observe the organic structure, to some extent, independently of its functioning. But in a human society the social structure as a whole can only be observed in its functioning. The second point is that an organism does not, in the course of its life, change its structural type. On the other hand, a society in the course of its history can and does change its structural type without any breach of continuity.

Radcliffe - Brown says that by the definition there offered, function is the contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part. The function of a particular social usage is the contribution it makes to the total social life as the functioning of the total social system. Such a view implies that a social system has a certain kind of unity, which we may speak of as a functional unity. Brown defines it as a condition in which all parts of the social system work together with a sufficient degree of harmony or internal consistency.

The social structure is an ordered arrangement of parts or components. It may be seen as an arrangement of persons in



institutionally controlled or defined relationships. In the first place, Brown regards as a part of the social structure, all social relations of person to person. Secondly Brown includes under social structure the differentiation of individuals and of classes by their social role. In the study of social structure, the concrete reality with which we are concerned is the set of actually existing relations, at a given moment of time, which link together certain human beings. Thus the study of social structure leads immediately to the study of interests or values as the determinants of social relations. A social relation does not result from similarity of interests, but rests either on the mutual interest of persons in one another or on one or more common interests, or on a combination of both of these. When two or more persons have a common interest in an object, that object can be said to have a social value for the persons thus associated. The study of social values in this sense is therefore, a part of the study of social structure.

An institution is an established norm of conduct recognised as such by a distinguishable social groups. Social Institutions , in the sense of standardised modes of behavior, constitute the machinery by which a social structure maintains its existence and its continuity. Brown defines the social function of a socially standardized mode of activity, or mode of thought, as its relation to the social structure, to the existence and continuity of which it makes some contribution. Thus, the social structure consists of the ordered arrangement of parts and the function of the parts is to interrelate the components of the structure, and to maintain its integrity, social function is the interconnection between social structure and social life.

By the function of an institution, Brown means the part it plays in the total system of social integration of which it is a part. By using that phrase 'social integration', Brown assures that the function of culture as a whole is to unite individual human beings into more or less stable structures as to make possible an ordered social life.

In his **STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES**, Brown applied his structural - functional principles mainly to the analysis of kinship system which remain as classics in socio - cultural Anthropology.

#### RAYMOND FIRTH :

Firth was influenced by both Malinowski and Radcliffe - Brown. Like Malinowski he is concerned to some extent, with the nature of individuals, and the choices that they make. Following Brown, he focuses on observed activities. Firth sets out his impressions on structural - functionalism thus: "To analyse the repercussions of the acts of individuals, to show how they are integrated into sets of behavior, each with a guiding theme, and to make clear the relationship of these themes to one another".

One of the important contributions attributed to Firth is the distinction he made between social structure and social organization. While the arrangement of parts or elements constitutes social structure, how people in the society get things done constitutes social organisation. To give an analogy, the study of social structure is comparable to the study of human anatomy, and that of social organisation to that of human physiology. Within the framework of social structure, individuals always keep making choices, between alternatives, which have significant

consequences. The manner in which a social structure appears at a given time, as it is being activated by the choice making individuals, is social organisation. In other words, social organisation stands for how social structure works out in time.

#### MEYER FORTES :

Fortes has often been considered as the true disciple of Radcliffe - Brown for several reasons. Fortes regarded social structure as the foundation of the whole of social life of any continuing society. According to him, social structure is not an aspect of culture, but the entire culture of a given people handled in a special frame of theory.

In his classic article "The structure of Unilineal Descent Groups". Fortes has analysed the African kinship system.

According to Fortes, the social structure should be thought of in terms of levels of organisation. He says that we can investigate the total social structure of a given community at the level of local organisation, at the level of kinship, at the level of corporate group structure of government, and at that of ritual institutions. Fortes demonstrates how these levels are related to different collective interests which are perhaps connected in some sort of hierarchy. And one of the problems of analysis and exposition is to perceive and state the fact that all levels of structure are simultaneously involved in every social relationship and activity. This restatement of what is commonly meant by the concept of integration has the advantage of suggesting how the different modes of social relationship distinguished in any society are interlocked with one another. It helps to make clear also how certain basic principles of social

organisation can be generalized throughout the whole structure of a primitive society.

Fortes believes that the study of unilineal descent groups as a part of a total social system means in fact, studying its functions in the widest framework of social structure, and that of the political organisation. He ultimately shows that descent is fundamentally a jural concept, as Brown has argued. Fortes sees its significance in the connecting link between the external, that is, political or legal aspect of unilineal descent groups, and the internal or domestic aspect. The dynamic character of lineage structure can be seen most casually in the balance that is reached between its external relations and its internal structure. Maintaining the stable condition in the social structure is one of the chief functions of lineage systems.

Fortes concludes that this frame of reference thus gives us procedures of investigation and analysis by which a social system can be apprehended as a unity made of parts and processes that are linked to one another by a limited number of principles of wide validity in homogenous and relatively stable societies.

### S. F. NADEL

Nadel produced two outstanding theoretical looks that combined philosophical, psychological and mathematical models. *THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY* and *THE THEORY OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE* revealed a synthesis of structural - functionalism. Nadel's central argument was simply that the structuralist orthodoxy was inadequate by itself - it had to be wedded to a functionalism perspective.

Nadel feels that when describing structure we abstract relational features from the totality of the perceived data, ignoring all that is not 'order' or 'arrangement', in brief, we define the positions relative to one another of the component parts. This has an important consequence, namely that structures can be transposed irrespective of the concrete data manifesting it differently expressed the parts composing any structure can vary widely in their concrete character without changing the identify of the structure. Our definition should thus be rephrased as follows: structure indicates an ordered arrangement of parts, which can be treated as transposable, being relatively invariant, while the parts themselves are variable.

Nadel now translates all this into the language appropriate to the analysis of societies. To begin with , societies are made up of people; societies have boundaries, people either belonging to them or not; and people belong to a society in virtue of rules under which they stand and which impose on them regular determinate ways of acting towards and in regard to one another. Conceivably, in theory, there might be as many such ways of acting as there are situations in which people meet, practically an infinite number. But we are here speaking of ways of acting governed by rules and hence in some measure stereotyped. And of the ways of acting so understood it is time to say that they are finite and always less numerous than the possible combinations of people which means that the same way of acting are repetitive in the population.

Nadel now expands and clarifies For 'determinate ways of acting towards or in regard to one another' we usually say relationships and we indicate that they follow from rules by calling them institutionalized or social relationships. We identify the mutual ways of acting of individuals

as 'relationships' only when the former exhibit some consistency and constancy since without these attributes they would merely be single or disjointed acts. Most relationships however, lack this simple constancy or uniformity. Rather, the concrete behavior occurring in them will always be diversified and more or less widely variable, intentionally changing with the circumstances; it will be consistent or constant only in its general character i.e., in its capacity to indicate a certain type of mutuality or linkage. Thus, in identifying any relationship we already abstract from the qualitatively varying modes of behaviour, an invariant relational aspect - the linkage between people they signify. Nadel now concludes that we arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behavior, the pattern or network of relationships obtaining 'between actors in their capacity of playing roles relative to one another'. Considered by itself, it represents an unproblematic and elementary form of structuring. It becomes interesting and important only through its implications of interdependence between persons or sections so numbered that is, when it goes together with some differentiation and interlocking of their respective 'ways of acting' and hence with a 'network' of relationships. In other words, it is concerned with the function of the structure.

## V. STRUCTURALISM

'Structuralism' refers to the search for the deep innate and orderly principles that underlie any system. The basic assumption of structuralism is that, the human mind possesses certain given properties, which are the source of all human achievements and accomplishments. Structural Analysis consists of discovering these fundamental properties that lie

behind the creation of any man-made system. In other words, structural analysis attempts to unravel the logic of the human mind. Structural Linguistics and Structural Anthropology endeavour to follow this method in the analysis of language and socio-cultural systems respectively. Structuralism, in effect, involves the study of conscious experience through introspection, and focuses on the atomistic or elementary mental states such as sensations, images and feelings.

### **STRUCTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

LEVI - STRAUSS is the founder of structuralism in Anthropology. He developed the idea of reciprocity as the fundamental principle of social structure which Malinowski had demonstrated from his work in the Trobriand Islands. He borrows his ideas from structural linguistics, particularly the Prague Schools of Linguistics, who demonstrated that it is the structure of language is not a mere inventory of its sounds, but that is relationship between sounds that provides significance. These relationships are not normally conscious in the minds of speakers, but they form the basis for discovering cross-culturally valid invariant rules. Levi-strauss develops these ideas further in the following manner. He states that language is a social phenomena, and, of all social phenomena, it is the one which manifests to the greatest degree two fundamental characteristics which make it susceptible to scientific study. In the first place, much of linguistic behavior lies on the level of unconscious thought. When we speak we are not conscious of the syntactic and morphological laws of our language. Moreover, we are not ordinarily conscious of the phonemes that we employ to convey different meanings; and we are rarely, if ever, conscious of the phonemes that we employ to convey

different meanings; and we are rarely, if ever, conscious of the phonological opposition, which reduce each phoneme to a bundle of distinctive features. This absence of consciousness, moreover, still holds when we do become aware of the grammar or the phonemics of our language. For, while this awareness is the privilege of the scholar, language, as a matter of fact, lives and develops only as a collective construct; and even the scholar's linguistic knowledge always remains dissociated from his experience as speaking agent, for his mode of speech is not affected by his ability to interpret his language on a higher level. We may say, then, in so far as language is concerned we need not fear the influence of the observer on the observed phenomena, because the observer cannot modify the phenomenon merely by becoming conscious of it.

Levi Strauss draws attention to the analogy between a social group and a language. The variety of possible attitudes in the areas of interpersonal relationships within a social group is almost unlimited; the same holds true for the variety of sounds which can be articulated by the vocal apparatus - and which are actually produced during the first months of human life. Each language, however, retains only a very small number among all possible sounds, and in this respect linguistics raise two questions: Why are certain sounds selected? What relationships exist between one or several of the sounds chosen and all the others? Like language, the social group has a great wealth of psycho-physiological material at its disposal. Like language, it too retains only certain elements, at least some of which remains the same throughout the most varied cultures and are combined into structures which are always



diversified. Thus we may wonder about the reason for this choice and the laws of combination.

Levi Strauss now discusses the relationships between language and culture:

1. In the first place, language can be said to be a result of culture. The language which is spoken by one population is a reflection of the total culture of the population.
2. In the second place, one can also say that language is a part of culture. It is one of those many things which make up a culture.
3. In the third place, language can be said to be a condition of culture, and this in two different ways: first, it is a condition of culture in a diachronic way, because it is mostly through language that we learn about our own culture - we are taught by our parents, with language. Second, from a much more theoretical point of view, language can be said to be a condition of culture because the material out of which language is built is of the same type as the material out of which the whole culture is built: logical relations, oppositions, correlations and the like. Language, from this point of view, may appear as laying a kind of foundation for the more complex structures which correspond to the different aspects of culture. Following structural linguistics, Levi Strauss explains that when a cultural system different from one's own is first encountered, it appears to be incoherent, but structural analysis shows that it possesses its own internal logic. He holds that this coherence transcends all utility and function, and it follows that the principles of this logic can be accounted for only in terms of the inherent and unconscious structure of the human mind itself. Levi

Strauss is thus interested in discovering the structure of the human mind and human thought processes.

According to Levi Strauss, the basic property of the human mind is "Dualism" or to think in dyads. Each dyad consists of a pair of oppositions which he calls "Binary Oppositions". This dialectic expresses itself in verbal classifications such as these:

Good X Bad  
Clean X Dirty  
Scared X Profane

It is this dichotomizing tendency of the human mind that gives specific shape too the arrangement of social phenomena. The most important activity of the human mind is to organise the raw materials of experience provided by history and environment. Thus the primary distinction between Nature and Culture emerges. The human mind transposes natural phenomena into cultural phenomena. Let us take the dyad,

Raw X Cooked

While the former is a natural occurrence the later is a cultural occurrence.

Levi Strauss contends that social behavior is always conducted by reference to a Conceptual scheme, an ideal model in the action's mind of how things are or how they ought to be. And the essential characteristic of this ideal scheme is that it is logically ordered. it now becomes apparent that by 'structure' Levi Strauss does not refer to an articulation which can be directly observed by a logical ordering, a set of mathematical equations which can be demonstrated as functionally equivalent to the phenomenon under discussion. In other words, the structure can be represented as a model.

While comparing structural linguistics and structural anthropology, Levi Strauss emphasises the revolutionary role of structural linguistics with respect to the social sciences. He reviews the goals and methods of linguistics and argues that it provides a model of scientific method for anthropology. Its approach is objective and rigorous, it has defined constituent units, studied their interrelations and isolated constants; finally language is susceptible of mathematical analysis. Both language and culture are built of oppositions, correlations and logical relations. Language can, therefore, be treated as a conceptual model for other aspects of culture; these aspects can also be regarded as system of communication.

Just as the scholar of linguistics interprets the language structure, the anthropologists interpret the structure of culture.

Structural Anthropology has focused mainly on three fields:

1. Kinship Analysis
2. Analysis of Myth
3. Semantic Analysis

This Chapter on approaches to Ethnography was mainly to focus on the need for Multiple methods to understand the ethnic and institutional characteristics of Doms. We see that each approach has its own limitations, therefore, I am in search of a mixed model that I may apply to the study of ethnography of Doms.

## CHAPTER - III

### CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNOGRAPHY OF DOMS

#### I. A BRIEF ETHNOHISTORY OF DOMS:

There are many legends about the origin and ancestors of the Doms. According to H.M. ELLIOT they are "race of out-castes : slaves in Kattak and Kamon. Their history is worth inquiring into, as they seem to be one of the aboriginal tribes of India. Tradition fixes their residence to the North of Gogra, touching the Bhars in the East, in the vicinity of Rohini. Several old forts testify to their former importance and still retain the names of their founders; as for instance, Domdiha and Domangarh. Ramgarh and Sahankot, on the Rohini, are also Dom forts. Buchanan considers that the Doms are the same as the Dom Katar (Domtikars). He also conceives that the Doms expelled the Tharus and were afterwards expelled by the Bhars. But this order of precedence cannot be admitted according to Elliot.

According to Elliot "There are several Doms or Domras scattered over the western districts of these provinces and in Bundelkhand and Saugor who are engaged in the menial occupation of making ropes, fans, mats and similar articles . In Oudh the term Dom is applied to sweepers, as Bhangi and Chuhra are elsewhere". (See, H. Elliot 1870: pg 84.)

According to CROOKE W "The Doms or vagrant sweepers of the eastern districts of the North Western provinces, hold the NIM tree sacred to Kali or Sitala". (See, W. Crooke: 1894: pg 254)

According to STEPHEN FUCH "Doms are the minstrels and genealogists of the lower castes. Their women sing and dance in the presence of other women. The Doms attend weddings and funerals, where they recite the genealogies of the wedded pairs or describe the brave deeds of the dead man's ancestors. They also have a brand of jokes and anecdotes with which they amuse their clients. If their fees are assured their language is suave and complimentary : but if they are not given their dues they spout out of their well stocked memory, memory old of half forgotten scandals and gibes directed against the unfortunate family which they honor with their company". (See, Stephen Fuch:1992: pg 118-119)

According to the Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers - Gorakhpur "In 1192 A.D. when the entire northern India lay prostrate before Shahab-ud-din Ghori, the Gorakhpur region (however, not then known by this name) was held by the various Rajput chiefs, for instance the Tharus and then by the Domkatars. The latter were overthrown by the Sarnets who acquired a vast stretch of country, the portion round Gorakhpur falling to the lot of the Rajas of Satasi and about 1400, settling in the Purana Gorakhpur area. Local tradition states that the tract of Bhanpur was formerly held by Tharus and then by Domkatars, the latter being overthrown by Chandra Sen, the Sarnet, who established himself in Domingarh. His eldest son became the raja of Satasi and appears to have extended his sway over the land on both sides of Rapti." (See, Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteer - Gorakhpur: 1987: pg 22)

It further goes on to add that "The Sarnets are chiefly confined to the tahsils of Gorakhpur and Bansgaon. According to tradition, the

founder of the Sarnet clan was Chandra Sen who settled in Gorakhpur towards the end of the 12th century A.D. and established his Satasi rule because the perimeter of his territories was 87 kos. As he proceeded eastwards he was confronted by the Donwar Rajputs. They were on the point of compelling him to quit the district, when his Brahmana advisor suggested a matrimonial alliance between his daughter and the son of Denar and Donwar chieftain. The proposal was gladly accepted and extensive preparations were made for the wedding. Chandra Sen in due course entered the Donwar fort with a large number of his followers. Seizing this opportunity, he treacherously murdered the Donwar chief, while his followers outside slaughtered as many of the clan they could find. The power of the Donwars was crippled by this blow and the Sarnets became one of the most powerful in Gorakhpur". (See, Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteer:1987: pg 52)

According to Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers - Basti "It is said that before the advent of the leading Rajput clans, there were the local Hindus and Hindu Rajas in the district and they are said to have supplanted the aboriginal tribes like Bhars, Tharus. Doms and Domkatars, whom general tradition declares to have been the early rulerds, at least after the fall of the ancient kingdoms and the disappearances of the Buddhist faith. These Hindus included the Bhuinhars, the Sarwaria Brahmins and the Bisins. This was the state of Hindu society in the district before the arrival of the Rajput from the west, where the pressure of the Muslim invasion first made itself and caused that extensive migration of the old ruling races into Avadh and

the eastern districts of the Uttar Pradesh. (See, H.R. Nevill : Basti: A Gazetteer, 1907, pg 144)

The various clans of Rajputs did not by any means arrive in Basti at the same time. Indeed their migration was spread over a considerable period; the first arrivals probably reaching these parts about the middle of the 13th century. The first of the new comers appear to have been the Sarnets, who claim to have been originally of Suryavamsi extraction and to have first established themselves in Gorakhpur and the east of Basti about 1275. They afterwards established the principality of Maghar. In this district, the first Rajput invasion which assumed any great importance was that of Sarnets. Their chief, Chandra Sen, expelled the Domkatars from Gorakhpur and eastern Basti. On the death of Chandra Sen his son Jai Singh succeeded him. His principality probably included all bansi, south of Rapti." (See, H.R. Nevill Basti: A Gazetteer : 1907 : pg 145)

H.R. NEVILL in his Gonda - A Gazetteer Nainital says about the Doms - "With the extinction of the Musalman invaders the district appears to have again lapsed into barbarism. There are no old Muhammedan towns in Gonda whose inhabitants claim descent from the companions of Masaud, and the Hindus remained supreme for several centuries. Aiodhya was still a wilderness, for it was not at any rate till the reign of Altamish that the armies of Delhi subdued the province of Delhi. There were no Rajputs either : the Raghubansis who claim descent from the old solar rulers of Ajodhya are not found in any strength on this side of the Ghagra, but remained, if they remained at all, on the southern bank. The whole of Gonda was ruled by low caste aborigines - Doms, Tharus, Bhars, Pasis and the like. Tradition

states that the Jain dynasty of Sahet Mahet gave place to the Doms of Domangarh on the Rapti in Gorakhpur, and that of this race came Ugarsen, a notable Raja who built Domariahdih, once a town, but now a mere mound of earth and bricks on the road from Gonda to Fyzabad. This Ugarsen was a great man, but he came to grief in the usual way by demanding in marriage the daughter of a Brahman. This insult attracted the attention of the Subahdar of Oudh, a valiant Kayasth, named Rai Jagat Singh, who came from Sultanpur with a large force and overthrew the Doms. The date of the overthrow of Doms is traditionally given as 1376 A.D." (see, H.R. Nevill: Gonda: A Gazetteer : 1905 : pg 138)

According to THE IMPERIAL GAZETTEER OF INDIA "Doms are class VII grade that represents the lowest grade of the Bengal system, castes who eat all manner of unclean food, whose touch pollutes, whom no Brahman, however degraded will work. It comprises the scavenging doms and Haris, the leather working Chamars and Muchis and the Bamis who eat rats and revere dog as their totem".

In Almora Doms are Scheduled Castes called Shilpkars. They are supposed to be the aborigines of this area who were reduced to the status of serfs and menials by their Khasa conquerors in very early times and have since then continued to form the bulk of agricultural labourers and village artisans. The Doms called themselves Tallijath (low caste) or Baharjati (out caste) but most frequently a Dom would describe himself by the name of his occupational group, how they are generally designated Shilpkars. The quarters allotted to the Doms in a village are known as dumgela dumaura or bhulyuda. Untouchability is not so rigidly observed in the district. They worship many local



godling, ghost and spirit is much in evidence, each mountain peak, river, waterfall and forest being associated with various legends and superstitions. While in Uttarkashi, Doms or Shilpkars are classed as Shudras and they mainly form agricultural labourers." (See, Imperial Gazetteer of India: Vol I, 1907: pg 328)

According to K.S. SINGH "Doms in U.P. are also known as Dome, Doma, Domahra, Dumna and Dombo. Traditionally their origins are to north of river Ghaghra. They are believed to be the descendants of one Raja Ben or Vena, from whom one of Dom sub groups, the Benbasi has got its name. They are largely distributed in the district of Varanasi, Jaunpur, Mirzapur, Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Balha Deoria Gorakhpur, Allahabad, Pratapgarh, Faizabad and Basti. The Indo Aryan language Bhojpuri is spoken among themselves and Hindi is spoken with others. The Devnagiri script is used for written communication. A landless community their principal occupation is scavenging, they are also engaged in armouring carrion, "

"The Doms in U.P. are divided into a number of hierarchically arranged sub groups such as Odiya, Mandini, Mugan or Mirgain, Mohra, Onimia, Magahiya, Bansphor, Litta, Dharkar, Domra and Jallad Harchandi or Harchariya. The last of these sub groups relate to Pauranic Raja Harishchandra."

He further goes on to add that "The making of mats, brushes and weavers, combs is an occupation associated with a nomadic life, not only in India but wherever these gypsy tribes have established themselves and generally connotes an inclination towards burglary or at least towards petty larcenery. The girls of these castes, moreover are usually engaged in satisfying the sexual pleasure of the lower

classes and even those of the upper who dare to run the risk of excommunication from their caste.”

“Much of the cane workers of the eastern and northern India belong to the dom caste. But the sub divisions which have taken to this work are generally settled on the outskirts of village, not wandering like the rest and give themselves the name of Bansphoras (15,604 in 1961) Basors (126,105) Bansors, Bansos, Bansodias in token of their profession. In upper India they admit outsiders into their community after payment of a fee and ceremonial initiation. In Bengal the Bansphoras are said to descend from the Patnis, the fishing section of the Doms.”

“In Bihar and in the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh, we find Moghiyas, who are also Doms; their name is probably derived from the old kingdom of magadha. They are pure nomads or at least were so until a short time ago; wandering about in gangs which were often during the absence of the adult males in jail, under the leadership of woman. They pretend to follow the usual occupation of the vagrant tribes - the weaving of mats, basket making and the like. But these are often only a cover for less lawful practices and the Moghiyas are reputed thieves and cheats.” (See, K.S. Singh: Anthropological Survey of India : 1993 : pg 483-485)

According to A L BASHAM there is connection between Doms and rom (language of the gypsies) and in Syrian language. Romani occurs as doum, which is very close to the Indian form. Therefore the gypsies whose origin is in India, whose language is romani which is Indo-Aryan, have some relation to the present day Doms.(See, A.L. Basham: 1954)

According to CROOKE "Doms are people with no written history and little intelligible oral tradition. Their squat figures, black complexion and specially dark piercing eyes show that they belong to the non Aryan race. they have been, it is fairly certain, a race of Serfs, out caste helots for uncounted generations. Their servile conditions as MR. RISLEY says "would of itself be sufficient to break down whatever tribal spirit they may once have possessed and to obliterate all structural traces of their true origin".

"In Bihar and in eastern districts of United Provinces we find the Maghiya Doms, who take their name from the old kingdom of Magadha or Southern Bihar. They are pure nomads, wandering about in gangs. They pretend to follow the usual occupation of the gypsy. When he is partly civilised and abandon his wandering life, he is sometimes employed as a town scavenger. He has the monopoly of the duties of a public executioner and provides the fire to light funeral pyres."

"Doms will eat the leaving of every caste except that of the Dhobi or washerman with whom for some obscure reason he has hereditary feud. When pressed by hunger he will consume the foulest carrion. He has no scruples about the nature of his food".

"Another large branch of Doms is found in the districts of Kumaon and Garhwal in the lower Himalayas. In the Punjab again the Dom appears as a sort of low class minstrel and genealogist."(See, W.Crooke: 1973: pg 101)

## II. CULTURE OF DOMS:

### DOMS : THEIR BELIEF SYSTEMS:

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1931 "The religion of Doms is largely animistic and demonistic. CROOKE wrote "It is the Doms who preserve to the present day the pure demonism of the aborigines, while the Khasiya temper it with the worship of village deities, the named and localized divine entities and furnish from their ranks the priests". The Doms have always believed in the power for evil of the ghosts of injured persons and Karma (reincarnation). The Doms have specialised in impersonation of deities (good and bad) fortune telling, devil dancing, divination and the like and as not infrequently found, the religion of the lower subject race has had considerable influences on that of the classes above them in the social scale.

The majority of the Doms worship demons of various sorts, chief among them being masan bhut, khabish, kalinka, acherries, goril. But their principal deity is nirankar. The worship of this God is performed with great solemnity and the whole family fast and keep vigil at night singing songs in honor of this deity. The ceremony lasts for three days and ends with a feast to the biradari and killing of goats and swine. The priest who officiates at the ceremony is Dom. Next to nirankar is kali or kalinka. The worship of this Goddess is also performed with much ceremony. Male buffaloes, swines and goats are freely sacrificed in honor of this goddess. The Doms ascribe any kind of ailment or calamity to the wrath of one or other of their godlings. Such is their faith in these Godlings that Doms will spend large sums, even selling or hypothecating their property and incurring

heavy debts in order to propitiate them.” (See, Census of India : Ethnographic Notes :1931: pg 59-60).

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1971, MR. KANNEDY writes that “the Maghaiya Doms have two special divinities of their own, the chief is Gandak, whose grave is to be found at Karmaini Garhi, two days journey to the east of Motihari in Bengal. According to their tradition Gandak was hanged for theft a long time ago, and when dying he promised always to help the Maghaiya in trouble. He is worshipped by the whole tribe, but he is pre-eminently the patron god of thefts. A successful theft is always celebrated by the sacrifice in his honor”.

“Dom also worship samaiya a female divinity. She is without any special history, her function apparently relate chiefly to birth and illness. Maghaiya Doms sacrifice young pig and swine with sugar spices in these two deities. Maghaiya doms have neither altars nor idols nor they erect any platform (chabutra) for worhsip. They also believe in ghosts and spirits. They have also reverence for trees and platforms consecrated by Hindus in passing, but pay no further homage. They acknowledge kali and sometimes offer sacrifice to her”.

“In Mirzapur, Dom of the better class worship Bhawani, to whom in the navaratra of chaitra they make an offering of hog, cakes (puris), gruel (lapsi) and wreath of flower. The Bhawani, if appeased keeps off illness from her votaries. The scavenger Doms, have a special female deity called “kukarmari”, the killer of dogs to whom a sacrifice of pig and some spirit is offered outside the village. Now they have faith in Hindu Gods and Goddess”.

“On the last day of the first fortnight of kuar they make ten lumps (pind) of flour and throw them into the river and when they come home they put some cakes and sweetened rice on a leaf platter and lay it in the field to propitiate the dead. They also believe that trees are inhabited with evil spirits. The fields are in charge of mai masan, the deity which haunts the cremation ground”.

“In Gorakhpur, according to CROOKE, beside the worship described above they also worship their Guru (teacher) who is said to have had his headquarters at Bhojpur in Ballia district. To the goddess named juthaiya bhawani of whose functions they can give no account, they offer young pig, some red lead with a lock of their hair. The Doms also believe that if a woman is not tattooed, in an attempt to enter the heaven, its gate keeper, pitches her down to the earth again.” (See, Census of India, Ethnographic Notes: 1971:pg 59-60).

## DOMS : THEIR RITUALS

### LIFE CYCLE

#### BIRTH :

According to CENSUS OF INDIA - 1971, Ethnographic Notes, pg 58, “Among Doms, the birth of a child is considered as a blessing. The male child is preferred to the female, specially at the first delivery. The mother is not put to any restriction after conception but she is not allowed to visit a grove or lonely places after sunset. There is no change in the routine of her life and she attends to her domestic work as usual. No prenatal ceremony is observed. The womans liking for any change in diet and preference for any particular article of food are catered to by the family members during pregnancy”.

“The delivery takes place at the husbands home. A midwife or dai of Dom or Chamar caste is called in at the time of delivery. The period of pollution lasts for twelve days after which the new born child and mother are given bath in lukewarm water. Some people throw a feast to friends and relations on this day. The mother is given nutritious food like “harira” a preparation of turmeric, jaggery, oil and other ingredients, as well as liquor to restore energy”.

“There is no naming ceremony among the Maghaiya Doms of Gorakhpur. However the Doms of Gonda district informed that the name is given to a child by the grandfather at the age of five months in case of a girl and six months in case of a boy. In rare cases, they have also started consulting Brahmins for the rashi name.”

“Mundan or first tonsorial ceremony is performed both for boys and girls within three years of the child’s birth. In the majority of cases it is performed in the same month in which the child was born. Generally, mundan of a child is done at a shrine or on the banks of a river. After shaving the head of the child, the hair is collected in a thick barley flour bread, made into a ball and immersed in the river. Thus post delivery rituals are chatti, name giving, barthi, chatauna (annaprasan) and tonsure (mundan).” (See, Census of India:Ethnographic Notes:1971:pg58)

#### MARRIAGE :

“Among the Doms the average age of marriage for a boy is 14-16 and for a girl 12-14. In the past infant marriages were common but now the age of marriage has gone up considerably. Monogamy is the usual practice but cases of polygamy are not totally absent.

Considering the population of Doms by Marital Status we see that more number of females are married than males. This indicates the incidence of polygamy among them. Marriages take place within the sub-caste. Marriages with close relation are taboo. Junior levirate is allowed but not strictly enforced.”

CROOKE has discussed the marriage rules of the Doms of Mirzapur as follows: “The endogamous sub castes have exogamous sections some of which are territorial and come apparently totemistic. Thus rule of exogamy is reinforced by the prohibition of marriage in the family of the maternal uncle, the father’s sister or their own sisters, as long as there is any remembrance of relationship which is usually three or perhaps four generation”. However, the Doms of Gonda and Gorakhpur districts did not report specifically for exogamous sections. They stated that marriage among kinsmen is prohibited and village exogamy is usually practised”.

“CROOKE has mentioned prevalence of bride price among the Doms of Mirzapur which consists of five rupees, five seers of turmeric, a sheet, five lumps of tobacco and five packets of betel leaves. But the Doms in Gorakhpur claim that they have been paying dowry instead of accepting bride price. However, the case studies of a few families revealed that the custom of bride price, locally known as altaka (always fixed amount of Rs.15/-) is the usual practice”.

“The proposal of marriage is made by the boy’s side and the father’s sister’s husband plays an important role in negotiations. After the settlement of marriage, the betrothal is done by inter-change of two leaf platters full of liquor. The boy’s father puts a couple of rupees into them and passes them on to the girl’s father.”



“On the appointed day, the marriage party goes to the girls’ house. It camps at the janvasa (a halting place) which is usually in a mango grove or in a house at some distance from the girl’s house. A grand feast of pork and liquor is given by the girl’s father’s sister’s husband (phupha). The girl and the boy are seated on a leaf mat and water is sprinkled by the priest who is the girl’s uncle (phupha). Then the garments of the bride and the groom are knotted together and they go round a semal tree, planted in the centre, five times. After this the bridegroom puts vermillion (sindur) on the parting of the bride’s hair. Among the Magahiya Doms the sindur is applied with the help of a katar (dagger).”(See, Census of India:Ethnographic Notes: 1971: pg 59).

According to K.S. Singh, the marriage rituals are engagement (barachacha), matmangra, tilak, barat, dwardpooja, vivah and bidai.

#### DEATH :

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1971 “Among the Doms of Gorakhpur district the dead are cremated. The dead body is carried on a bier of bamboo for burning the corpse. The last rites are performed by the eldest son, or in his absence, by some near relative; and in case of a married woman by her husband. After the cremation is over, the funeral party takes a dip in the river and assembles at the house of the deceased. Next day the charred bones, called phool are collected. These are later on immersed into some sacred river and sometimes carried to Varanasi or Allahabad for this purpose. The other ceremonies fall on the third day, called triratri, thirteenth day called terhi and finally on the sixteenth day called solvi. Those who die

of small pox, cholera or of drowning are not cremated but are buried. Children are also buried".(See, Census of India: Ethnographic Notes: 1971:pg 59)

### III DOMS : MATERIAL CULTURE :

#### DWELLINGS :

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1971, "Ethnographic Notes",  
"In the villages, the dwellings of Doms are generally found a little way from the main habitation. Generally, they live in small kachcha houses or in thatched huts which bespeak their poor economic condition. The huts are usually one room structures with thatched slanting roofs. In fair weather, meals are cooked outside the huts and during rainy season a corner of the apartment is used for cooking. The Kachcha house too are small in size having one room each and some open space in front. In some house a thatched verandah is made in front of the room. The houses of Doms are generally clustered at one place and are often surrounded by other scheduled caste people".

#### DRESS :

"The ordinary dress of a male consists of a "dhoti" and "phatri" or shirt. Nowadays young men wear pants and bush shirts or pyjamas and kurtas. This difference in dress is noticeable more in the cities than in the villages. The young boys are often found in tattered clothes wearing under shirts and underwears. The old men generally have on their shoulders a gamchha (scarf) which serves many

purposes. They can keep food articles in it or wear it for a bath or wrap it round the head to protect it from the hot sun. In villages, men are seen barefooted but in cities they wear shoes and chappals”.

“The woman generally wear coarse bordered “dhoti” along with small shirt or jumper. Some young ladies use under garments also. They have a separate dress for work, consisting of an old blouse, dhoti or skirt (lehenga). Some young girls are also found wearing shalwar, kurta and dupatta. In the villages old women still put on skirt (lehenga) of dark brown color reaching just below the knees. Though it is now out of fashion, the bridal dress still consists of lehenga, dupatta and jumper. women also use chappals, locally made as well as rubber Hawai chappals.”

**ORNAMENTS :**

Sl. No.	LOCAL NAMES OF ORNAMENTS	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT, IF ANY	METAL	PART OF BODY
1.	1. JHUMAR 2. BENDI	-- --	Silver or Alloy	FORE-HEAD
2.	1. LAUNG 2. NATHUNI	Nosepin --	Gold	NOSE
3.	1. JHUMKA 2. BUNDA 3. BALI 4. KARAN PHOOL	Ear ring -- -- --	Gold   Silver or Alloy	EAR
4.	1. HAMEL 2. KANTHA 3. HAR 4. GULUBAND	1. Necklace of silver rupees tied in thread 2-4. Necklace	1 & 2 Silver 3 & 4 Alloy	NECK
5.	BAJUBAND	Armlet	Alloy	ARMS
6.	1. KARA 2. TORA 3. CHOORI 4. PACHELA	Bracelet Bracelet Bangle Bangle	Alloy Alloy Alloy Alloy	WRIST
7.	ANGUTHI	Ring	Gold / Silver / Alloy	FINGERS
8.	KARDHANI	Waist Band	Silver or Alloy	WAIST
9.	1. KARA 2. PAJEB 3. PAYAL 4. BICHUA	-- -- -- --	Alloy Alloy Silver / Alloy Silver / alloy	LEGS

“Among Doms, males rarely use ornaments of any type excepting finger rings made of brass, lead or iron and sometimes ear studs.

The ornaments used by females are made of gold, silver, brass or alloy. Gold ornaments, being costly, are rare. Only “laung” or “bulaka” (nose ornaments of light weight) made of gold are used. There are ornaments for almost all parts of the body i.e. forehead, ears, neck, nose, arms, wrist, fingers, ankles, legs and toes but few possess all types of ornaments; nor are they meant for daily use. The common ornaments worn daily are the nose ring or stud ear ring or stud hansvli or hamel round the neck, tora or bracelet on the wrist, challa or payal on the legs, bichchua on the toes and kardhani (waist band) on the waist”.

#### FOOD AND DRINKS :

“The Doms are non-vegetarian by habit and choice. Their traditions and origin are indicative enough that they eat flesh of all animals, wild as well as domesticated. They eat pork, fowls, ducks, field rats, rabbits and flesh of dead animals. It is however asserted by them that they abjure from taking beef. Their daily food consists of coarse rice, madna, kodon or saman and pulse. Vegetables like pumpkins, gourd and onion are also eaten occasionally. Since they can rarely afford to take mutton, fish or goat meat, they usually purchase intestines, head or rejected pieces of meat and cook it.”

“The Doms are very fond of liquor which is locally prepared from mahua flower or barley. Toddy or fermented palm juice and spirit are also frequently taken by them. Other intoxicants like hemp, ganja

and madak are also used. Chewing of tobacco mixed with lime is common habit among them.”

#### HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES :

“Utensils are generally made of clay, wood or aluminium. Brass or metal pots and enamel ware are also used by some families for cooking, eating and drinking as also for storing of water. Other household articles consist of cots, chakki, big earthen pitchers and baskets.”

#### TATTOOING :

“Tattooing is quite common among Doms. They consider it an aid to beauty and some old members of the community held that it is the only ornament which goes with the body even after death.”

“Among males tattoo designs are generally made on the forearms which include either the name of the persons or name or picture of some Hindu deity. Among females however, chest, wrist, thighs and foreheads are tattooed besides the forearms. On the chest, forehead and wrist, designs some ornament are made. On the forearms, good geometrical designs, flowers and peacocks are popular designs. Normally a girl is tattooed while in the age group 8-12.”

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AND HYGIENIC HABITS :

“In the city of Gorakhpur, though the Doms in pucca tenements, they pay scant attention to their environmental sanitation and deposit the garbage just near their quarters. Thus the surroundings, though open and spacious are quite unhygienic. It is paradoxical that almost

all the families living there are working as sweepers in the municipality or the railways but they do not care to keep their own surroundings clean. They have the satisfaction that they were better in this respect than their brethren living in kaccha houses elsewhere without any drainage system. The condition of environmental sanitation is still worse in the rural areas.”

“As regards their personal cleanliness, the position of Doms of Lal Diggi in Gorakhpur district is slightly better in comparison to the Doms in rural areas. The Doms of the locality assert that since they come into contact with all types of people, they try to remain clean. They take bath after returning from work and clean clothes. However it was noticed that proper attention is not paid to the personal hygiene and cleanliness of children. the females also take edibles and tobacco with unclean hand while sweeping roads and streets. They wash clothes with washing soda, soap and other detergents”. (See, Census of India: Ethnographic Notes:1971:pg54-56)

### DOMS - CASTE OR TRIBE ?

#### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CASTE AND TRIBE :

Caste like the Tribe is a collection of families or groups of families having a common name. While in the case of tribe this common name does not indicate community of function, that is they do not necessarily have to follow the same occupations. But in the case of caste it implies that all the members follow the same occupations.

Caste generally claims a common descent from a mythical ancestor human or divine, while the tribe traces its origin to some

animal, which may be regarded with respect or may be regarded as its totem.

The tribe, occupies or is supposed to occupy a well defined area which is not the case with the caste, members of which are found scattered all over the country.

A tribe has the least functional independence within the community. While the caste system is an example of high interdependence.

Endogamy is not always applied to the tribe, that is to say its members may find wives among the members of another tribe. The caste on the contrary is always endogamous and in addition to it is generally divided into sections or subcastes, each of which is endogamous.

According to the Census of India, after independence, Doms have been classified as Scheduled Castes. While prior to independence, in Census of India, 1931 reports Doms have been classified as Tribes.

Several processes have been involved in the conversion of these tribes with castes. One view is that somehow on aboriginal tribe have got into the world and become independent landed proprietors and enrolled themselves as one of the more distinguished castes. Like setting themselves as Rajputs and their first step bring to start a Brahman priest, who would invent a mythological ancestor and like wise.

Another view is that a number of aborigines embraced tenets of Hindu religions sect thus losing their tribal status.



But it is still not clear structurally whether Doms are caste or tribe. They were functionary or artisan caste who were brought into the jajmani system or patron-client relation thus they were incorporated into the caste system. But only after intensive field work and interview will we be able to conform whether they are caste or tribe.

## CHAPTER IV

### STRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

#### SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF DOMS IN UTTAR PRADESH - BEFORE INDEPENDENCE :

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1931, Ethnographical Accounts, "It seems to be generally agreed that the Shilpkars are the remnants of an aboriginal race who inhabited the Himalayas before the advent of the later conquerors and immigrants. It has been remarked by several writers that they are of darker color than might be expected of a hill tribe. They probably represent the Dasyus of Vedic times - the people whom the Aryan invaders found in occupation of northern India and either drove out or subdued. The Vedic scriptures speak of two varieties of Dasyus, the fairer red haired people of what is now the Punjab and the darker aborigines who probably owed their origin to a more southern source. The Shilpkar it may be supposed belongs to the latter variety. Some writers have mentioned negroid characteristics of Shilpkars, but more careful observation does not support this view. Their own traditions seem to support the theory that they were the aborigines of the hill country. They are found all along the Himalayas from Nepal to Punjab and beyond, wherever the Khasiyas and their related races are found, living with them even now in a state not far removed from serfdom. Crooke says "In the Himalayan district of these provinces the Doms has long been recognized as a descendant of the Dasyus of Vedas, who are supposed to have held upper India before the advent of the Naga or

Khasiya race.” In earlier times they were kept in strict subjection. They were in fact the slaves of the Khasiyas and Brahmans and were passed from hand to hand like chattels, or were attached to the soil like the serfs or *adscripti glebae* of feudal Europe. The Shilpkars are the descendants of this race which have left no memorial of their early occupation of land, unless some curious cupshaped workings on the rocks at Debidhura and elsewhere in the province may be attributed to them.

How the name Dom became associated with this race is unknown. In hilly Himalaya West where the bulk of the population depends on agriculture for its subsistence and villages are far apart and connected by narrow hilly paths, each village community has to be self-contained as regards at least its primary requirements. On the Doms fell most of the hard work. In this way the Doms became split up into numerous occupational groups which by contact with the Hindu caste system have come to be regarded as sub castes of their tribe.”

#### ORGANIZATION AND OCCUPATION:

“As will be seen from the brief account given about the present sub castes among the Shilpkars are purely the result of the fact that they were kept by their conquerors the Khasiyas in a complete state of subjection and each man was allotted his work and kept to that profession, the sub divisions hardening by reason of contact with Hindusim into occupational sub castes.”

A Dom is like a serf either traditionally attached to some old *thokdari* family from generation to generation or bound to serve a money under in lieu of interest on the money which has been

borrowed from a money lender to get a wife. Generally the pay fixed is so low that it barely covers the interest and so the Doms becomes a life long slave to the moneylender unless some other moneylender comes and makes a bargain with the former one in which case the Dom only changes masters. Generally the wife and children of Doms also work along with him for his master. They all get cooked food from their master's house and also clothing once or twice a year. Male Doms often work as *haliyas* (ploughmen) and the women and children do such work as weeding, carrying manure to the fields and bringing grass, fuel etc. to the master's house. The greatest number of these Doms is found in the Jaunpur sub division and the next greatest number in Kirtinagar sub division. In Jaunpur there are 149 males and 119 females. In Kirtinagar there are 80 males and 70 females.

“The greatest curse of the Doms at the present time is said to be in debt and on this account so many of them remain mere *haliyas* or dependents on the agricultural class, kept in much the same servile condition as of old”.

### SOCIAL POSITION

“In Tehri Garhwal State it is said that although the Doms is regarded as of low castes he is not untouchable to the same extent as the untouchable of the plains. He sits with the Khas - Rajputs, smokes from the same *chilam* (earthen pipe) and can touch without polluting ghi, sugar, grain, fruits, oil and such other foods as are not mixed with water. The only ban on him is that he may not touch the *hukka* (mouthpiece of pipe) and water or any cooked food of the Khasiyas or the high caste hindus nor enter their houses. In Garhwal the higher

classes will not take water touched by Doms, much less interdine or intermarry with them. Their touch is still considered to pollute. In the past a Dom was not allowed to touch the dwelling house of a Bith, even his shadow conveyed pollution, which was removed only by sprinkling water over the person. Doms were not allowed to wear shoes nor use an umbrella in the presence of a Bith nor wear ornaments of gold or silver. They were not allowed to use the same springs, nor were they allowed to ride a pony or to carry a bride or bridegroom in a *doli* or dandy at their weddings. Doms were bought and sold. But now the position of Doms has greatly improved. They are gradually adopting the social customs of the higher castes and have begun to rise in the social scale. Some have converted to Christianity and Islam, other have become Aryans and claim social equality with the Biths. They resent being called Doms, Bairshama, tali jati (low caste) or bahar jati (out caste) and have adopted the name Shilpkar (artisans). Still Doms continue to be very backward and depressed class. Their dwellings are in the most squalid parts of the villages, quite apart from the houses of Biths. They are mostly landless. They are only given land by the Biths on service tenure as sirtans or khilars. They still cannot use the same springs as the Biths. They still may not carry a bride or bridegroom in a *doli* or dandy. They have to remove the carcasses of dead animals for the Biths, and carry fire for the cremation of their dead. But in other respects the treatment of the Doms by the Biths has considerably improved. The other old *tabus* are gradually disappearing.

In the proverbial lore of Almora district, the Doms are invariably spoken of with content and dislike. Hard measure is certainly dealt out

to them in this respect . "The marriage of a Dom simply pains the eyes" that is the Biths take no part in any ceremony or festival of the Doms and their merrymaking is felt to be rather offensive than otherwise."The Dom is too lazy to plough or manure but at dinner time is envious" is used as an admonition to lazy people. The Dom eat the morsels and leavings of food given to them by people of higher castes. This is referred to in the proverb. The Doms vessel says,"When shall I go to the dwelling of Biths?" This is applied to the desire of low class people to be connected with the higher castes."The singing of a Dom with a goitre on his neck is no singing at all", is an allusion to a common complaint in some parts of the province, and is a saying used by one who find that his work is not appreciated by the superior. "No one thinks of a Bith being poor, or notices the death of a Dom". Scorn, could not go further than the following. "The bear was killed and the Dom house was burnt down, both good things" originating from a story of a bear who once entered the house of a Dom after honey in a hive (a hole in the wall) and set fire to the place by stirring up the embers." (See, Census of India: Ethnographical Accounts: 1931: pg 19-21).

## **SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF DOMS IN**

### **UTTAR PRADESH - AFTER INDEPENDENCE :**

#### **FAMILY AND KINSHIP :**

According to the CENSUS OF INDIA, 1971, Ethnographic Notes, Family among the Doms is patrilocal with patronymic designation. After marriage the women goes to stay with the husband. "For the Doms of Gonda and Gorakhpur kutumb or joint family is the

ideal situation, but in actual practice, it has been seen that in most cases couples stay in separate houses or have separate establishments in the joint houses. In some cases couples stay with either or both of the surviving parents. They follow patrilineal descent and inheritance and patrilocal residence. All of them allow monogamy, junior sororate and levirate, divorce and remarriage".(See, Census of India: Ethnographic Notes:1971: pg 54).

According to K.S. SINGH, "The Doms in Uttar Pradesh are divided into a number of hierarchically arranged sub groups such as the Odiya, Mandini, Mirgan or Mirgain, Mohra, Onimia, Magahiya, Bansphor, Litta, Dharkar, Damia and Jallad Harchandi or Harchariya. The last of these subgroups relates to the Puranic Raja, Harishchandra. These subgroups are further divided into various exogamous clans, namely Bagh, Nag, Matsya, Kacchap, etc. They categorize themselves in terms of their occupational affiliation, for instance, the Dom who work on burning ghats are differentiated from those who work as sweepers, Bansphore and Jallad. They observe subgroup endogamy and clan exogamy. Marriages are arranged through negotiation or exchange and monogamy is the common form of marriage. The age at marriage ranges from ten to twelve years in the case of girls. Child marriage is followed by gaona. Junior sororate and junior levirate is permissible. Dowry is given in cash. Post marital residence is patrilocal. Divorce and remarriage are permitted. The rule of inheritance is male equigeniture and the eldest son succeeds the father in authority. Rearing children, cooking, collecting firewood and fetching drinking water are the exclusive duties of the women,

besides they are also engaged in basketry and make winnowing fans.”(See, K.S. Singh: Anthropological Survey of India: 1993: pg.484).

### OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE:

According to 1981 census out of 55,590 persons, 23,974 were reported as workers. In other words 54.5% of male population and 18.4% of female population constitute the working place. This shows higher rate of female participation in active work.

According to 1981 census the industrial classification among the Doms of Uttar Pradesh is given below:-

	INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION	RURAL		URBAN	
		M	F	M	F
1.	AS CULTIVATOR	5659	1674	51	11
2.	AGRICULTURAL LABOURER	2573	638	126	5
3.	MINING & QUARRYING	--	--	10	--
4.	LIVESTOCK & FORESTRY	340	49	43	15
5.	HOUSEHOLD INDUSTRY	2606	1158	322	98
6.	MANUFACTURE OTHER THAN HOUSEHOLDS	613	164	283	42
7.	CONSTRUCTION	92	4	25	1
8.	TRADE & COMMERCE	54	6	74	8
9.	TRANSPORT, STORAGE & COMMUNICATION	112	4	244	20
10.	OTHER WORKERS	1038	291	1780	697
	(i) TANNING & CURRYING OF HIDES	--	--	--	--
	(ii) SCAVENGING	533	210	1648	653
11.	NON-WORKERS	9813	15635	3226	4363



It is evident from the above table that out of 55590 Doms, 33037 Doms in Uttar Pradesh are non-workers. In terms of their concentration in services they are mostly occupied as cultivators (30.8%) followed by other services (15.8%) where 12.6% of the population is involved in scavenging, where persons in urban areas outnumber persons from rural areas.

Among the Household Industry making of soop (winnowing fan) dauri (baskets) and beri (shallow baskets for lifting water for irrigation from tank) constitutes 17.4% of the working population, the next largest category.

The fourth largest category is that of agricultural labourers where out of 3342 persons engaged, 2573 males and 638 females in rural areas are engaged in agriculture. And only 126 males and 5 females in urban areas are engaged in agriculture. Agricultural labourers constitute 13.9% of the total working force.

The other categories in order of precedence are manufacture other than Household, Livestock and Forestry, Transport Storage and Communication, Trade and Commerce, and Mining and Quarrying, etc.

In regard to the economic activities of Doms, the observation made by MAJUMDAR (1942) are worth quoting. He says "The nomadic Dom has not shown his skill in any work, he roams in the jungle but has not learnt the ways of the fowler or the bird catcher, he is an indifferent, fisherman and an ill-equipped hunter".(See, D.N. Majumdar: Man of India: Vol. I pg.251) In recent years the Doms have settled down as scavengers or in the manufacture of bamboo products like baskets, fans, etc.

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1971, Ethnographic Notes, "In Gorakhpur, the Doms have taken to scavenging as also service in Railway as porters. Prior to this a Dom was a menial worker in eight or ten families known as jajmans and he used to be compensated by getting a part of the produce at the time of harvesting. This practice has, however, stopped and payment in cash is made for the services they render. Where the Doms have been confined to an area for purposes of reclamation they have turned out to be good cultivators but it appears that cultivation as such does not attract them very much".

"In Unnao, Bara Banki and Faizabad districts, dom females also work as DAIS (midwives), which provides a subsidiary means of livelihood to them".(See, Census of India: Ethnographic Notes: 1971: pg.58).

#### STATUS OF SOCIAL CONTROL, PRESTIGE AND LEADERSHIP:

According to CENSUS OF INDIA, 1971, "The Doms have traditional panchayat of their own which plays an important role in their daily life. They call it the Dom biradari panchayat".

"The caste panchayat deals with the following matters:

1. Action prejudicial to the institution of marriage eg.:
  - a. Infidelity of either spouse
  - b. Breach of contract to marry
  - c. Withholding of the married girl, after she has attained proper age, from her husband
  - d. Marrying a widow without the sanction of the panchayat
  - e. Negligence in maintaining the wife according to caste code.

2. Inter-caste illicit relation.
3. Breach of code with regard to huqqa pani and standard of morality.
4. Cow killing
5. Breach of caste code in *biradari* feast
6. Breach of established tabooed relations eg. elder brothers illicit relations with younger brothers wife.
7. Abusing and mal treatment of elders or parents.
8. Resort to beggary, prostitution and indulgence in actions unbecoming of the community.
9. Bankruptcy and committing violence.
10. Disregard of the panchayat and failure to obey its decisions.”

“The traditional caste panchayat of the Doms has been very active. The office bearers take keen interest in its functionary. The panchayat maintains a register of cases and judgements.”

“The procedure for convening a panchayat is simple. Any member of the community wanting to call the panchayat, approaches the Sarpanch with an application stating the reasons and deposits a sum of Rs.1.25 with him. The Sarpanch thereupon asks the Secretary to call the meeting on some suitable date.”

“A case of panchayat meeting of the Magahiya Doms collected from the records is given below:-

Case 1 - A meeting of the panchayat was held on April 5, 1960, in Nai Bazar under the presidentship of B.S. The matter was in connection with the refusal of a girl to go to her husband. An application to this effect was given by R.B. father of the girl. The statements of the husband and the wife were taken on oath. G.D. the husband of U. stated that he had sent a registered letter to his father-in-law, R.B.

asking the latter to send his wife to him. He further stated that whatever wrong his wife had done, he had forgiven her and now she could come and stay with him. R.B. denied having received any such communication. G.D. countered that immediately after two months of her going over to her parents he went to look for her but came to know that she was remarried.”

“Shrimati U. the wife, stated that she had been living with her parents for the last two years but her husband never cared to inquire about her welfare”.

“The majority of the members of the panchayat passed a verdict against the girl for not staying with her husband but some members held that G.D. was equally to blame for neglecting her.”

“Before the panchayat members could arrive at some unanimous decision, U declared that she would never live with G.D. even if the panchayat decreed her to do so.”

“The panchayat’s decision was that since U (wife) was not willing to live with G.D. (husband) either the wife, or her father should return altaka (bride price) besides other marriage expenses to the G.D. The husband and wife would thereafter cease to have any relationship. G.D. received Rs.40/- as marriage expenses and Rs.15/- as altaka from R.B., father of U.”

“A condition was also attached to this decision that R.B. (father of U) should not marry her again to any Dom living or employed in the police line. (It was known that R.B. was extending to marry her to a sweeper of police line). In case this was done, he would be liable to pay a fine of Rs.500/-.”

“From the case described above, it is evident that the panchayat has a strong hold over the castes and its decisions are effective.”

“No organized effort has been made in the direction of social reform by the caste. the present President of the panchayat has taken steps to strengthen the caste organization. The president claims to have propagated the idea of this community becoming a constituent body of the Zila Adi Hindu Depressed Classes Association, Gorakhpur. By doing so, the Doms could agitate for their demands jointly with other Scheduled Castes.”(See, Census of India: Ethnographic Notes:1971: pg 60-62)

### **STRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE**

Table - I

#### PERCENTAGE SHARE OF DOMS POPULATION TO TOTAL POPULATION OF SCHEDULED CASTES IN UTTAR PRADESH

Year	Total no. of Scheduled Castes	No. of Doms	Percentage
1961	15,399,881	41,388	0.26
1971	18,548,916	79,396	0.42
1981	23,453,339	55,590	0.23
1991	29,300,000	Data not available	

Table I describes the total population of Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh for the years 1961, 1971, 1981. Similarly we describe the population of Doms, who are one of the Scheduled Castes of Uttar Pradesh, for the years 1961, 1971 and 1981. then we calculate the

percentage share of Doms to the total population of Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh..

We see that the percentage share of Doms to Scheduled Castes in 1961 is 0.26% which increases to 0.42% in 1971 and then drops to 0.23% in 1981. This drop in the population can be attributed to several reasons, one of them could be the occurrence of migration, that must have led to sudden drop of their population. Another reason could be that during seventies in the emergency period, there was forced sterilisation programme, followed by the government. This 'population policy' of government which was thoroughly criticised was followed during the period 1977-78, but closer examination is required for population policy programmes.

Table - II

## PERCENTAGE SECTORAL OCCUPATION OF DOMS IN UTTAR PRADESH (1961, 1971 &amp; 1981)

OCCUPATION / SECTOR-WISE	1961					1971					1981				
	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN
				%	%				%	%				%	%
1. CULTIVATORS	3557	12	3569	99.66	0.34	7333	62	7395	99.16	0.84	9208	15	9223	99.84	0.16
2. AGRL. LABOUR	1726	0	1726	100.00	0.00	3211	131	3342	96.08	3.92	8256	86	8342	98.97	1.03
3. MNG. ORG. LSTK. FRSTRY, ETC.	33	2	35	94.29	5.71	389	68	457	85.12	14.88	576	12	588	97.96	2.04
			26.6%					46.6%					65.3%		
[I] PRIMARY SECTOR [1+2+3]	5316	14	5330	99.74	0.26	10933	261	11194	97.67	2.33	18040	113	18153	99.38	0.62
4. HH IND.	6420	189	6609	97.14	2.86	3764	420	4184	89.96	10.04	2962	139	3101	95.52	4.48
5. MFNG. OTH THAN HH	313	29	342	91.52	8.48	777	325	1102	70.51	29.49	539	179	718	75.07	24.93
			34.8%					22.0%					13.7%		
[II] SECONDARY SECTOR [4+5]	6733	218	6951	96.86	3.14	4541	745	5286	85.91	14.09	3501	318	3819	91.67	8.33
6. CONSTRN	38	13	51	74.51	25.49	96	26	122	78.69	21.31	65	24	89	73.03	26.97
7. TRD & COMMERCE	112	12	124	90.32	9.68	60	82	142	42.25	57.75	114	191	305	37.38	62.62
8. TRANSPORT	242	218	460	52.61	47.39	116	264	380	30.53	69.47	237	147	384	61.72	38.28
9. OTH. SERVICES	6229	825	7054	88.30	11.70	2072	4778	6850	30.25	69.75	3095	1947	5042	61.38	38.62
I. TNNG. CARRYING OF HIDES															
II. SCAVENGING															
			38.5%					31.2%					20.9%		
[III] TERTIARY SECTOR	6621	1060	7689	86.11	13.89	2344	5150	7494	31.28	68.72	3511	2309	5020	60.33	39.67
[6+7+8+9]															
GRAND TOTAL			19970					23974					27792		
[IV] NON-WORKER	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	25448	7584	33032	77.04	22.96	46686	4918	51604	90.47	9.53

Table II describes the occupational structure of Doms in Uttar Pradesh. For convenience sake, we have broadly classified these occupations into Primary Sector, Secondary Sector, Tertiary Sector and Non Workers.

Primary sector comprises the following occupations :-

1. Cultivators
2. Agricultural Labourers
3. Mining, Quarrying, Livestock, Forestry, etc.

Secondary sector comprises the following occupations :-

1. Household Industry
2. Manufacturing other than Household.

Tertiary sector comprises the following occupations:-

1. Construction
2. Trade and Commerce
3. Transport
4. Other services
  - a. Tanning and currying of Hides
  - b. Scavenging.

Non-workers comprises that population who are not occupied in any of these sectors, in other words, the unemployed.

We have drawn the occupational structure of Doms for the years 1961, 1971 and 1981.

In the Primary sector, we see that in 1961 5330 Doms are working in this sector, that is 26.6% of the total working population of Doms.

In 1971 this increases to 11,194 Doms working in this sector, 46.6% of the total working force of Doms is occupied in this sector.



In 1981, there is further increase, that is 18,153 population of Doms working in this sector, that is 65.3% of the total working force of Doms is occupied in this sector.

We, therefore see an increase in the percentage share of the working force population of Doms in the primary sector. This can be attributed to several reasons, one of them is that Doms who were mainly artisans, due to the process of modernization through plastic bags, demand for baskets and bamboos have declined. This in a negated fashion has affected doms. Therefore a shift from artisan role to labourers.

In the Secondary sector, in 1961, 6951 Doms were working, that is 34.8% of the total working force of Doms were occupied in this sector. That is during this period more people were occupied in this sector than primary sector.

In 1971, this decreases, that is only 5286 Doms were working in this sector, the percentage share drops to 22%. It further declines in 1981, where only a mere 13.7% of the total working force of Doms is occupied in this sector. There is also a decline in comparison to primary sector for both these years.

This decline was mainly due to the decline in household industry mainly because of industrialisation and modernization where large scale industries were encouraged while no attention was paid to these artisans, who survived either on sole entrepreneurship or small scale industry.

In the Tertiary sector, in 1961, 7689 Doms were occupied in this sector, that is 38.5% of the total working force of Doms was in this

sector. In 1961, maximum percentage of working force of Doms was occupied in this sector.

In 1971, it declined, only 7494 Doms were occupied in this sector that is 31.2% of the working force of Doms was occupied in this sector. This percentage is more than the secondary sector but lesser than the primary sector.

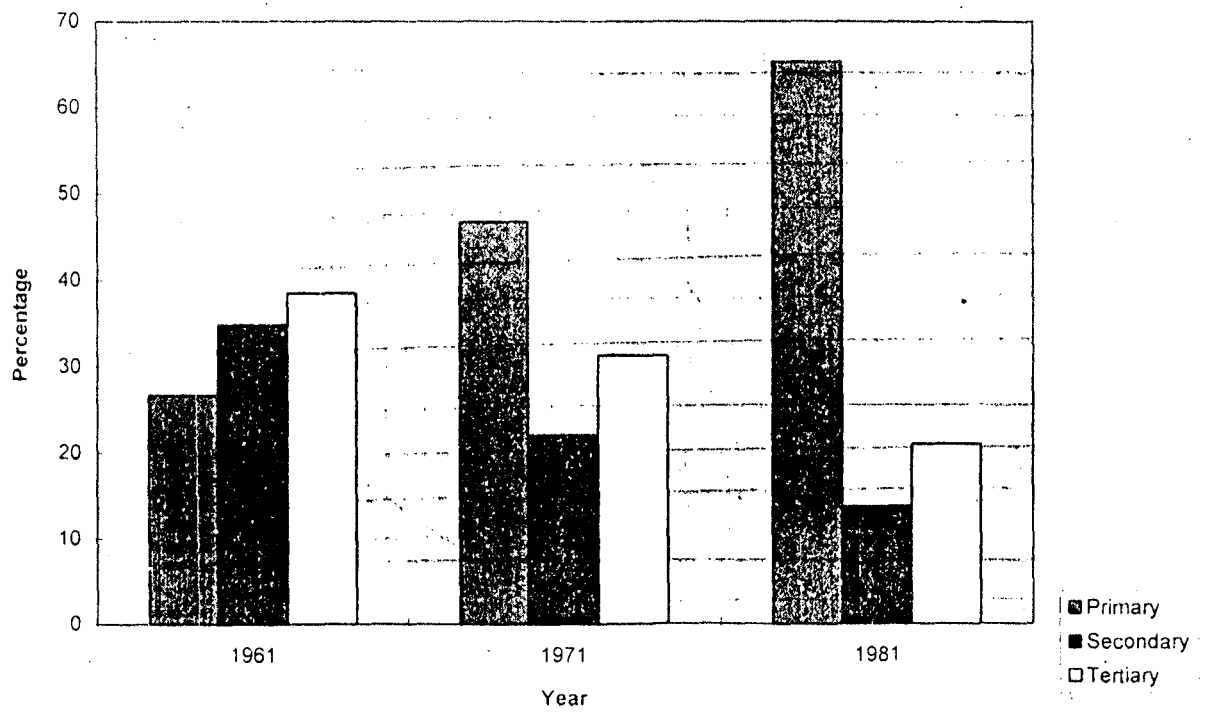
In 1981, it further declined, where only 5820 Doms were occupied in this sector, that is 20.9% of the working force of Doms were occupied in this sector.

On the whole we see a consistent decline in Secondary and Tertiary sector while increase in the Primary sector. This may be attributed to the process of modernization and lack of education and illiteracy. As a result of which there was decline in Secondary and Tertiary while increase in labourers, because they were mainly uneducated.

In the section of non-workers data were unavailable for 1961, but for 1971 and 1981 we see an increase in the unemployed. In 1971 there were 33032 non-workers while in 1981 there were 51,604 non-workers.

In the Bar diagram we can see explicitly the shift in the occupational structure of Doms - a consistent increase in Primary sector while a consistent decline in Secondary and Tertiary sectors.

Shift in the % of Population of DOM's in UP



ILLITERATES & LITERATES : DOMS IN UTTAR PRADESH

YEAR	ILLITERATES						LITERATES					
	RURAL			URBAN			RURAL			URBAN		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1961	18121	18703	36824	1125	1204	2329	1709	129	1838	342	55	397
1971	32071	33992	66063	3239	3212	6451	5062	613	5675	949	258	1207
1981	19606	20592	40198	4605	4981	9586	3454	405	3859	1592	356	1948

Source: CENSUS OF INDIA [VARIOUS ISSUES]

Table III describes the distribution of population of Doms in Uttar Pradesh in terms of Illiterates and Literates for the years 1961, 1971 and 1981. Accordingly to the Census of India, Literates include all those people who have had formal or non formal education. Illiterates means those who have had neither formal or non formal education.

The total number of illiterates in 1961, in Rural area 36,824 while in Urban area 2,329. In 1971, it is 66,063 in Rural area while 6,451 in Urban area, while in 1981 we see in Rural area 40,198 while in Urban area 9586. We notice a large amount of disparity in the number of illiterates in rural and urban areas, this is not to be attributed that there are more urban literates, but inversely, since lesser number of Doms are distributed in the urban areas, we have lesser number of illiterates there.

Also we notice a sharp increase in the number of illiterates from 1961 to 1971 and simultaneously a sharp decline in the number of illiterates in Rural areas while in Urban areas we see a consistent increase in the number of illiterates.

In the case of Literates in rural area we see the same pattern as in illiterates where there is a sharp increase in the number of literates between 1961 to 1971 and simultaneously a decline from 1971 to 1981.

While in urban areas we see a consistent increase in the number of literate population.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The purpose of my study was to draw the cultural profile of the Doms and thereby study their social, political, and cultural system. To study this, I made an attempt at constructing the ethnography of Doms. Since my study was made on the basis of Census Reports and secondary sources, I introduced the Chapter of ethnographic approaches. By bringing about a detailed description of each approaches to ethnography, I have come to the conclusion that not one , single approach can help me understand the ethnic and institutional characteristics of Doms. Each approach had its own limitations, therefore, the need is to study Doms with an integrated approach. Therefore, I am in the search of a mixed model that I may apply to the study of ethnography of Doms.

I have also attempted at analysing the relationship between the social policy of development and their social and economic changes, but there is need for generating more data and first hand information and ethnographic observation of Doms in this regard. Since the M. Phil dissertation delimits us from field work. I was unable to carry out this work to its end.

About the Doms, it is still not clear whether they are a caste or tribe. Prior to independence, in the census reports they are classified as tribes, but after independence they are classified as Scheduled Castes. Their cultural life is marked by peculiar characteristics. Their religion is animistic and <sup>on</sup>domestic like tribes. The rituals that they follow

during birth, marriage and death are similar to caste people. That is during birth they follow the rituals of Chatti, Name giving, Chatauna(Annaprasan) and tonsure(Mundan). During Marriage the rituals are engagement(barachacha), tilak, barat, dwarpooja and bidai. The dead are cremated and death pollution is observed for ten days. The mortuary ritual observed is terahi, they also observe barsi.

About their origin, many myths and legends are attached. They appear to be one of the aboriginal tribes of India, with no written history and little intelligible oral tradition. Their squat figures, dark complexion and dark piercing eyes reflect their origin to non Aryan race. They perhaps have been out caste for generations.

They are also perhaps related to gypsies, because the language of the gypsies is rom and in Syrian language Romani occurs as doum (close to Doms). Romani language is also Indo - Aryan. Therefore, perhaps the gypsies of the world have some relation to the present day Doms.

Their houses are mainly found in the suburbs of villages, in some areas they are nomad. Dress of male and female are now similar to other dwellers of village, that is males wear 'pyjamas' and 'kurtas' while females generally wear coarse bordered 'dhoti' along with a shirt. The ornaments worn by male or female or generally of less expensive, made of brass, silver and alloy. Very few ornaments are made of gold. The females have ornaments covering their forehead, nose, ear, neck, arms, wrist, fingers, waist and legs. Their eating habits is mainly non vegetarian and they are fond of liquor. The utensils used for cooking is generally made of wood, clay or

aluminium. Brass or metal pots and enamel ware are also used by some families. Tattooing is also very common among them. They pay very scant attention to environmental sanitation and hygienic habits.

In structural terms there is persistent backwardness and decline among Doms. We see a constant shift from artisans to Agricultural Labourers for the past few decades, among the Doms. We see a persistent increase in labour force in the primary sector over 1961, 1971 and 1981. Similarly we see a constant decline in the secondary sector over 1961, 1971 and 1981. This indicates that modernisation, in a negated fashion has affected the Doms. Also the social policy for development of these Doms were ineffective for their development, as can be clearly seen in their shift from secondary to primary sector. This was mainly due to the government's policy, for the welfare of scheduled castes was focused more on scheduled castes which were more in number. While Doms who are in minority among the scheduled castes have not benefited from these government policy of development, welfare and education.

In terms of education also we see a rising number of illiterates, this is also an indicator as to why there is an occupational shift from secondary to primary sector and very few of them shifting to Tertiary sector (services).

Our access to the data has in a significant manner, however, delimited the ethnographic analysis. We have drawn heavily from the Census the Gazetteers, published material available on the Doms. The construction of Dom's cultural system and its linkages with other institutions such as family and kinship, economy and polity etc. have not been portrayed due to this limitation. This may also explain a certain degree of lack of fit between our



analysis of the ethnographic approach and their application to the study of the Doms cultural system.

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