

## Chapter VI

CASTE, KINSHIP AND RESIDENTIAL GROUPS IN RADHVANAJ

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the population census of Radhvanaj was taken once in 1823 and again in 1825, but the latter census was more detailed and accurate than the former. This chapter is concerned mainly with the analysis of the Census Register of 1825.

I: Emigration and Immigration

According to this Census Register, Radhvanaj had a total population of 720 persons divided into 157 households. It may be recalled that very soon after the British took over administration in 1803 the Desais of Nadiad had tried to increase the prosperity of the village by inviting cultivators from other villages to settle in Radhvanaj. This had resulted in a considerable increase in the population of the village. On the other hand, the Kalambandhi of 1823-24 shows that about half a dozen families had left the village during 1822-23, and the Census Register of 1825 shows that one family had left the village during 1824-25. A few families also seem to have come to reside in the village between 1823 and 1825. Migration of population encouraged or discouraged by the revenue policy of the officials of the State was not a new thing introduced by the British. It is also well-known that migration used to take place due to natural calamities such as famine, flood or epidemic. What seems to have been ignored is the fact that migration used to take place even in normal circumstances due to the operation of various demographic and social factors.

II: Caste Groups

The population data provided by the Census Register of 1825 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Classification of Population of Radhvanaj in 1825

No.:	Caste name :in Gujarati :	Caste name :used in the :monograph :	House-: holds :	Popu-: lation:	Men: :	Women: :	Servants :
i :	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii	viii
1	Bharwad	Bharwad Shepherd	2	14	7	7	-
2	Bhoi	Bhoi	1	8	3	5	-
3	Brahman (Baj Khedawal)	Brahman	13	64	28	36	-
4	Chamadiya	Leather- worker	7	29	20	9	-
5	Charan, alias Gadhvi	Charan Bard	2	8	4	4	-
6	Darji (Marwadi)	Tailor	1	3	1	2	-
7	Dhed	Dhed	3	14	10	4	-
8	Jogi, alias Ravaliya	Jogi	3	14	4	10	-
9	Kanbi (Leva)	Patidar	32	130	73	57	3
10	Koli (Pardeshi)	Pardeshi Koli	19	78	42	36	-
11	Koli (Talapada)	Talapada Koli	18	75	35	40	-
12	Kumbhar (Gujar)	Potter	3	13	6	7	-
13	Luhar (Gujar)	Blacksmith	1	2	2	0	-
14	Mochi	Shoemaker	1	2	2	2	-
15	Molesalam Rajput	Molesalam	8	40	17	23	1
16	Rabari	Rabari Shepherd	1	7	3	4	-
17	Rajput	Rajput	26	139	64	75	2
18	Senwa	Senwa	4	12	7	5	-
19	Sipai	Sepoy	5	17	8	9	-
20	Suthar (Gujar)	Carpenter	1	7	4	3	-

i :	ii	:	iii	:	iv	:	v	:	vi	:	vii	:	viii
21	Valand (Limbachia)	:	Barber	:	3	:	24	:	12	:	12	:	-
22	Vania (Mevada Jain)	:	Bania	:	2	:	10	:	4	:	6	:	-
23	Veragi	:	Rama Priest	:	1	:	1	:	1	:	0	:	-
-	Chakar & Lunda	:	Servant	:	-	:	6	:	6	:	-	:	-
24	Gosai	:	Shiva Priest	:	1	:	1	:	1	:	-	:	-
25	Dhadi, alias Mir	:	Muslim Mendicant	:	1	:	1	:	1	:	-	:	-
Total					159	:	722	:	360	:	356	:	6

Out of the total population of 722, there were 662 Hindus and 58 Muslims. The Hindus were divided into twenty-one castes. The Muslims were divided into two groups named Sipai (lit., soldier; Anglicised, sepoy) and Molesalam Rajput. The Sipais were mercenary soldiers during the Muslim rule, but at the beginning of the British rule most of those living in villages were cultivators. They were Hindus converted into Muslims, but it is not known from which Hindu castes they were converted. The Molesalam Rajputs were converted from the Hindu Rajputs (melesalam = servant of Islam), but we shall soon see that the internal structure of their caste had remained in many ways similar to that of the Hindu Rajputs. For this reason as well as for the sake of convenience, I list the Molesalam Rajputs and the Sipais as two more castes in the village.

Six persons were entered in the column 'servants' in the Census Register. The Gujarati words used are chakar and lundan. The former meant an agricultural labourer employed on a long term basis, and the latter meant domestic servants of various kinds. As the servants were not classified according to caste and sex, it is possible that some of the

domestic servants, particularly the three servants employed by the Hindu and Molesalam Rajputs were hijadas (eunuchs) or khavasas (men of mixed parentage).<sup>(1)</sup> I have shown the servants in a separate column in Table 1 as in the Census Register, and also placed them at the end in the list of castes so that their population can be distinguished from that of the castes of their masters.

Sources other than the Census Register show that two mendicants, a Gosai and a Dhadi had their permanent dwellings in Radhvanaj, but they were not included in the Register most presumably because the Gosai had his dwelling adjoining a shrine a little away from the village site and the Dhadi was wandering about in other villages most of the time. I have included both of them in the list of castes in Table 1.

A few remarks on the Gujarati names of the castes and the names generally used in the monograph will provide an introduction to the castes. The names of the following castes were etymologically also the names of their traditional callings: Chamadiya = Leather-worker, Darji = Tailor, Kumbhar = Potter, Luhar = Blacksmith, Mochi = Shoemaker, Suthar = Carpenter, and Valand = Barber. When the English equivalents of any of these caste-names is used with the first letter as capital it refers to the caste, and when used without a capital letter it refers to the occupation. Vania and Sipai were also occupation-names: Vania = Trader, Sipai = Soldier. I have, however, preferred to use their well-known Anglicised forms, Bania and Sepoy respectively. The etymology of Bharwad and Rabari is not yet known with certainty, but the well established meaning of both is 'shepherd'. The two castes could be classed among

about half a dozen shepherd castes in Gujarat, and it is convenient to refer to them as Bharwad Shepherd and Rabari Shepherd. In the same way, Charans could be classed among about eighteen bardic castes in Gujarat, and are referred to in the monograph as Charan Bards. Etymologically, Jogi (Sansk., yogi) means an ascetic, and the caste name seems to be a result of the existence of a large number of sorcerers, mendicants and beggars in the caste. Another name for the Jogis was Ravaliya, derived from the royal title Raval, which probably indicates the Jogis' claim to belong to the Kshatriya varna. For reasons I shall explain in the next chapter, I will not use any English equivalent for Jogi or Ravaliya.

It has been mentioned that Kanbi was the ancient name of the traditional peasant caste of Gujarat, and only the narwadar Kanbis were called Patidars. The Census Register of Radhvanaj also mentions only Kanbis because there were no narwadars in Radhvanaj. However, as the entire caste is now known as Patidar, and as the name has become current in recent sociological and anthropological literature, I have preferred to use it in the monograph.

The Kolis in Radhvanaj, as in many other villages in Central Gujarat, were divided into two 'sub-castes', Talapada (lit., indigenous) and Pardeshi (lit., foreigner) or Patanwadiya (lit., belonging to Patanwad, the region around Patan). The two sub-castes were known by these names because the Talapadas were indigenous to Central Gujarat whereas the Pardeshis or Patanwadiyas were immigrants from the Patan area in North Gujarat. It seems some, if not all, of the Patanwadiyas in Radhvanaj had immigrated after the beginning of

the British rule. Neither is the etymology of 'Koli' known nor have the Kolis followed any single occupation. I consider the Kolis a group demanding special consideration, and shall therefore use the name as it is.

Rhois, Dheds and Senwas practised several occupations. Rhois were water-carriers, palanquin-bearers, fishers, menial workers and labourers. Dheds were weavers of coarse cotton cloth, quite different from the Salvis, weavers of fine cotton and silk cloth, resident in towns. Senwas made ropes, mats and brooms, and worked as messengers, labourers and menials. I will not transliterate these caste names. Dheds and Senwas, as also Leather-workers and Shoemakers mentioned earlier, were Untouchable castes.

Brahman and Rajput are too well-known categories to need transliteration. Molesalam Rajputs were, as already explained, partly Rajput (Hindu) and partly Muslim. They will be referred to briefly as Molesalams.

Veragis (Sansk., vairagin = one who is disinterested in the world) were priests in Rama temples. They belonged to the Ramanandi sect devoted to the worship of Rama. Gosais (Sansk., goswamin = lord of cows) were priests in Shiva temples and formed a sect known by the same name. I will refer to Veragis and Gosais as Rama Priests and Shiva Priests respectively. Dhadis were partly Hindu and partly Muslim Mendicants, and will be referred to as Muslim Mendicants.

I have reserved the discussion of the problem of relation between caste and occupation for a later chapter. It is

however clear from the discussion of caste-names that a single caste could practise several occupations, and a single occupation could be practised by several castes.

I have mentioned in Table 1 the names of the 'sub-castes' to which the Brahmans, Darjis, Kanbis, Kumbhars, Luhars, Suthars, Valands and Vantias of Radhvanaj belonged, but it should be noted that I have used the term 'sub-caste' only for the sake of convenience. 'Caste' and 'sub-caste' are relative terms. There were named endogamous units within most of the 'sub-castes' mentioned here, and some groups I have called 'castes' claimed to belong to named groups of higher status. It is not only awkward to use such words as sub-sub-caste and sub-sub-sub-caste, but such usage would also mean false conceptualisation of the 'caste system'. I doubt the validity of even the usual anthropological and sociological convention of considering every caste name as the name of a group. The discussion of this problem is however outside the scope of this monograph.

The Rajputs with a population of 139 <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ the largest caste in the village, and the Patidars with a population of 130 were next to them, but the latter had more households (32) than the former (26). The Pardeshi Kolis (popu. 78, households 19) and the Talapada Kolis (popu. 75, households 18), considered separately, had less population as well as less households than the Rajputs and the Patidars had, but the two Koli sub-castes together formed the largest single caste group in the village, forming 21.2 per cent of the total population of the village. The Brahmans with 13

households and 64 persons and the Molesalams with 8 households and 40 persons were sizeable castes. The remaining twenty castes had each seven or less than seven households, and nine out of these twenty castes had each only one household. I will consider the Hindu and Molesalam Rajputs, the Talapada and Pardeshi Kolis, the Brahmans and the Patidars, as 'major castes', and the others as 'minor castes', not only because the former had each more than eight households but also for other reasons to be made clear in the course of further analysis.

It should be noted that the various caste groups in the village are called 'castes' for the sake of convenience. There were castes the entire population of each of which was confined to a single large town, but the population of most castes was distributed in many different villages and towns. What was found in any one village was only a section of the total population of a caste. In the case of some castes, as we have just now seen, the caste section in a village was as small as composed of a single household, and in the case of some others it was composed of a fairly large number of households. The significance of the numerical size of a caste section in a village will become apparent as we proceed with the analysis.

It would be useful to make a distinction between domicile and residence regarding village population. When a family migrated from one village to another village, for some time at least it remained domiciled in the original village. I shall mention in this and other chapters a number of cases in which a household resided in one village but was domiciled in another village, but here I want to refer to castes all of



whose members remained domiciled in towns, although some resided in villages. The records of Radhvanaj mention specifically that the Banias resident in the village belonged to the neighbouring town Vaso and that they always performed their weddings there. The Tailors were also domiciled in a town and performed their weddings there. I may add, on the basis of my knowledge of these castes at the present time, that they also performed all other ceremonies in towns and went to the town to celebrate their festivals. They had their permanent household establishment in the town and for a considerable part of the year their women lived in the village. Both the Bania and the Tailor were, to use the expression of the village records, uparvadiyas (lit., on the other side of the boundary, i.e. outsiders). These were only two of a large number of castes in Gujarat who had their moorings in town culture and society. I shall discuss this question further in a later chapter.

The records do not contain much information about the ritual status of castes in the village. It is however possible to group certain castes under certain categories on the basis of knowledge gained from early ethnographic literature and from oral traditions of the people. First of all, we distinguish between the Hindu and the Muslim or semi-Muslim castes. Molesalam, Sepoy and Dhadi belonged to the latter category. Among the Hindu castes, Brahman, Bania, Patidar and Rajput were called the shahukar (lit., moneylender, creditworthy, respectable) castes, because they were the most highly Sanskritized and the most wealthy castes in Gujarat. They were also called unchi or 'high' castes. They were arranged

in a hierarchy in the following descending order: Brahman, Bania, Patidar, Rajput. In the context of the varna system, the positions of the Brahman, Bania and Rajput were clear: Brahmans belonged to the Brahman varna, Banias to the Vaishya varna, and Rajputs to the Kshatriya varna. It is however noteworthy that the Banias who belonged to a varna lower than that of the Rajputs', were ranked higher than the Rajputs in the local ritual hierarchy. This was clearly a reflection of the crucial role of trade and commerce in the economic system of Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch, and the thoroughgoing Sanskritization undergone by the Banias over centuries.

The position of the Patidars in the varna hierarchy was rather ambivalent. According to the theory of castes laid down in the Hindu scriptures, agriculture, trade, and pastoral pursuits were to be exploited by the Vaishya.<sup>(2)</sup> In Dalpatram's Jnati Nibandh or Essay on Caste written in 1851<sup>(3)</sup> and in Forbes's Rasmala written in 1887<sup>(4)</sup> the Patidars were classed among Vaishyas according to the scriptures, because they practised agriculture. Another prominent writer of that time, Narmada-shanker,<sup>(5)</sup> described them as Shudras. The Vahivancha Barots of the Patidars, however, faithfully recorded the Patidars' own claim of being Kshatriyas. Dalpatram also referred to this claim, but he obviously did not accept it. The Patidars claimed that the Levas and Kadvas, their two divisions, were the descendants of Lava and Kusha respectively, the two sons of the epic hero Rama. The Bards' books explained the Patidars' descent from a warrior to a cultivator caste by the myth that Lava and Kusha were cursed by their mother Sita to become cultivators. The books then describe a long account of the

migration of the Patidars from Ayodhya to Central Gujarat. The Patidars argued that they were Kshatriyas because they, i.e. the Patidar Desais, Amins, narwadars, etc., had political power like the Rajputs. They had adopted several Rajput customs. The lesser Patidars or Kanbis living in small villages like Radhvanaj had followed the powerful Patidars in claiming to be Kshatriyas. They were also not taking food and water from the Rajputs. Whatever be the position of the Patidars vis a vis the Rajputs in the varna hierarchy, they were higher than the Rajputs in the local ritual hierarchy.

Rama Priests and Shiva Priests were sectarian castes. Each of them had two kinds of members, the sansaris, i.e., those who were married and lived in families, and the sadhus, i.e., those who lived alone as celibates. The celibates were recruited from several different castes by rituals of initiation. I do not know how the samsaris were recruited, with whom they married, and what were their relations with the sadhus.

Shoemakers, Leather-workers, Dheds and Senwas were Untouchable castes, themselves arranged in a hierarchy in the descending order in which they are mentioned.

An important category of castes was vasvaya. Literally it meant a caste brought to settle in a village to provide a certain service to the village community. It is not possible to make an agreed list of vasvaya castes either for the past

or for the present time. I shall consider the following as vasvaya castes: Carpenter, Blacksmith, Barber, Potter, Tailor, Charan Bard, Bharwad Shepherd, Rabari Shepherd, Rama Priest, Shiva Priest, Muslim Mendicant, Bhoi, Jogi, Shoemaker, Leather-workers, Dhed and Senwa. That is to say, seventeen out of the nineteen minor castes were vasvaya. The remaining two minor castes, Bania and Sepoy, and the six major castes were non-vasvaya. It is noteworthy that the Kolis were classed neither among the shahukar nor among the vasavaya castes, but they claimed to belong to the Kshatriya varna.<sup>(6)</sup>

### III: Household Groups

As the Census Register provides details only about the numerical and sex composition of households, it is not possible to say much about the kinship composition of households in 1825. A few significant points however emerge from the analysis of the available data.

The average size of a household in the village was 4.54 members (excluding servants). The classification of households on the basis of the number of members in a household (excluding servants) is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Classification of Households in Radhvanaj according to Numerical Size

Category	: Number of members : in a household	: Number of such households
Very small	1	13
	2	17
	3	27
		<u>57</u>
Small	4	25
	5	34
		<u>59</u>
Large	6	16
	7	15
		<u>31</u>
Very large	8	2
	9	4
	10	3
	11	1
	12	2
		<u>112</u>
Total		<u>159</u>

The households composed of 4 or 5 members may be considered small, those composed of 1 to 3 members, very small, those composed of 6 or 7 members, large, and those composed of 8 to 12 members, very large. 116 out of 159 households, nearly 73 per cent of the total, were 'small' and 'very small', and the proportion of 'small' and 'very small' was almost equal. On the other hand, there were only twelve 'very large' households. The widely prevalent belief among both sociologists and historians, that Indians lived in very large households in the past is, to say the least, very doubtful.

As regards kinship composition itself, it is safe to assume—i.e. it is not necessary to cite any definite historical

source to prove—that patrilineal descent and virilocal or patrilocat residence were the basic principles of kinship system among almost every caste in Gujarat. It is also safe to assume that joint family households were a social ideal. We have however to investigate how far was the ideal practised in reality.

Four out of the 159 households in Radhvanaj were each composed only of one woman, a widow; one was composed of two women, most presumably a widow and her unmarried daughter; one was composed of three women, most presumably a widow and her two unmarried daughters; and one was composed of a widow and her one unmarried son and one unmarried daughter. There were thus seven households each either composed of a widow or headed by a widow.

All the remaining 152 households were each either composed of a single adult man or headed by an adult man. Nine of these households were each composed of one man. Three of these nine were composed of a Rama Priest, a Shiva Priest and a Muslim Mendicant, who, on account of their religious position, were supposed to remain celibate and not to enter the life of a householder. Among the remaining six, three were each composed of a Patidar, two each of a Koli, and one of a Senwa. Furthermore, four households, three among Patidars and one of the Blacksmith's, were each composed of two men, most presumably a widower and his unmarried son or two unmarried brothers. There were thus thirteen households composed only of men. There were two main reasons for such household composition. Firstly, such a household was

composed of a widower or a bachelor, or of a widower father and a bachelor son, or of two unmarried or widower brothers. Secondly the man or men in the household might have migrated to Radhvanaj leaving their wife, children, parents, etc. behind in their original village. It has already been noted that a number of Patidars had come to settle in Radhvanaj by the invitation of the Desai of Nadiad, which seems to be the main reason why there were as many as six households composed only of men among the Patidars.

Among the remaining 139 households each composed of members of both sexes and headed by an adult man, twelve households were each composed of one man and one woman, mostly a husband and his wife or a widower father and his unmarried daughter. The households were distributed almost evenly among all the castes in the village. Twelve households were each composed of an adult man and two women, the latter being most presumably the former's wife and an unmarried daughter, or his wife and his widow mother. Twenty-four households were each composed of one woman and two or more men; a majority of them must be composed of an adult man, his wife and one or more unmarried sons. Twelve households were each composed of one man and three or more women; a large number of them must be composed of an adult man, his wife and unmarried daughters.

The point I want to make is that a very large majority of the 80 households (52.28% of the total) I have considered above were each composed of either a complete elementary

family (i.e. a man, his wife and unmarried children) or an incomplete elementary family. A considerable proportion of the remaining 79 households, composed of two or more men and two or more women, must also be complete elementary families with a larger number of unmarried children of both sexes. My own estimate is that there were not more than 60 joint family households (i.e. nearly  $1/3$  of the total) in 1825. All this goes to show that the widely prevalent idea, among both sociologists and historians, that all Indians in the past lived in joint family households is, to say the least, very doubtful.

What was the composition of these joint family households? Let us assume that the ideal model of the joint family was either a group composed of a man, his wife and two or more married sons and their wives and unmarried children, or a group composed of two or more brothers and their wives and unmarried children living together after the death of their (the brothers') parents. The common element in the two types was the co-residence of two or more married brothers during or after their father's lifetime. If we take the elementary family as one extreme and the ideal joint family of these two types as the other extreme, it is possible to conceive of a number of types of joint family in between these two extremes. Two most important of these types, which we may term 'incomplete joint families', were: (i) the joint family composed of a man (Ego), his wife, and one or both of his parents, with or without Ego's unmarried children, and with or without Ego's unmarried brother(s) and/or sister(s), and (ii) the joint family composed of a man (Ego), his wife, with or without



unmarried children, plus Ego's unmarried brother(s) and/or sister(s). An incomplete joint family of the first type would come into existence due to three main factors: (i) the parents might have only one son, (ii) the parents might have more than one son, but only one of them was married and he stayed with them, and (iii) the parents might have more than one married son, but only one of them lived with the parents, while the other married son(s) lived in separate household(s). The households of the second type of incomplete joint family would come into existence generally when both the parents died leaving one married son and other unmarried children. The point I want to make is that a large proportion of the estimated 60 joint family households in Radhvanaj must have belonged to the two types mentioned above. My estimate is that the households of the ideal type formed between 15 and 20 per cent of the total number of joint family households in the village.

The low proportion of the households of the ideal type is confirmed by the higher incidence of what may be called the negative instances. In a positive instance, all the members of a male sibling group would live in the same household; in a negative instance, some or all of the members of a male sibling group would live in separate households. The Census Register records sixteen dispersed male sibling units, fourteen each of two brothers, one of three brothers, and one of four brothers, in all thirty-five brothers. It is not possible to know for all these cases whether the brothers of a fraternal unit were living in separate households during or after the lifetime of parents. As against sixteen dispersed fraternal units, there

was no case of the only married son of his parents living separately from his parents.

All I want to point out is that the widely prevalent assumption that all joint families in the past included two or more married brothers is, to say the least, very doubtful.

The existence of dispersed male sibling groups raises a terminological problem. If two or more brothers live in the same household, they are said to constitute a joint family household, or briefly, joint household. The residence of brothers in separate households, however, did not mean that they were separated in every other respect. We shall see a considerable number of cases in which brothers lived in separate households but continued to own and manage property jointly. And even if the property was divided, they must be bound by ritual and ceremonial ties and by other customary rights and duties. To describe such dispersed male sibling groups I will use such terms as 'joint property unit,' and 'joint ritual unit,' and consider all such joint activities as forming part of 'joint family system.' When joint activities are found to occur between patrilineal relatives beyond those related by brotherhood, I will consider those activities as lineage activities.

#### IV: Descent Groups

As regards the nine castes with only one household in the village, namely Bhoi, Tailor, Blacksmith, Shoemaker, Carpenter, Rabari Shepherd, Rama Priest, Shiva Priest and Muslim Mendicant, there is no question of kinship relations

between households of the same caste within the village. It should however be noted that the non-existence of kinsman in the village does not mean absolute non-existence of kinsman. As regards castes composed of more than one household, the bardic genealogies and government records provide information about kinship relations among households in a caste. It should be noted that the sources provide information only about agnatic relationship between male heads of households and dead husbands of widow heads.

It has already been noted that the Rajputs were divided into exogamous patrilineal clans and that each clan was dispersed in a number of villages. Out of twenty-six Rajput households in Radhvanaj, twenty belonged to the Rathod clan, four to the Parmar, and two to the Solanki. I do not have any genealogies of the Parmars and the Solankis, as they have not left any descendants in the village. However, it is quite clear that other members of their clans and lineages must be living in other villages.

One Rathod domiciled in Radhvanaj was residing in 1825 in a village about ten miles from Radhvanaj. He had left the village only a little before the survey of 1825, and owned considerable land and a house in Radhvanaj. The Census Register therefore shows him in the list of Rajputs in the village. As he was an active member of the Rathod lineage in the village, I shall consider him as one more member of the lineage.

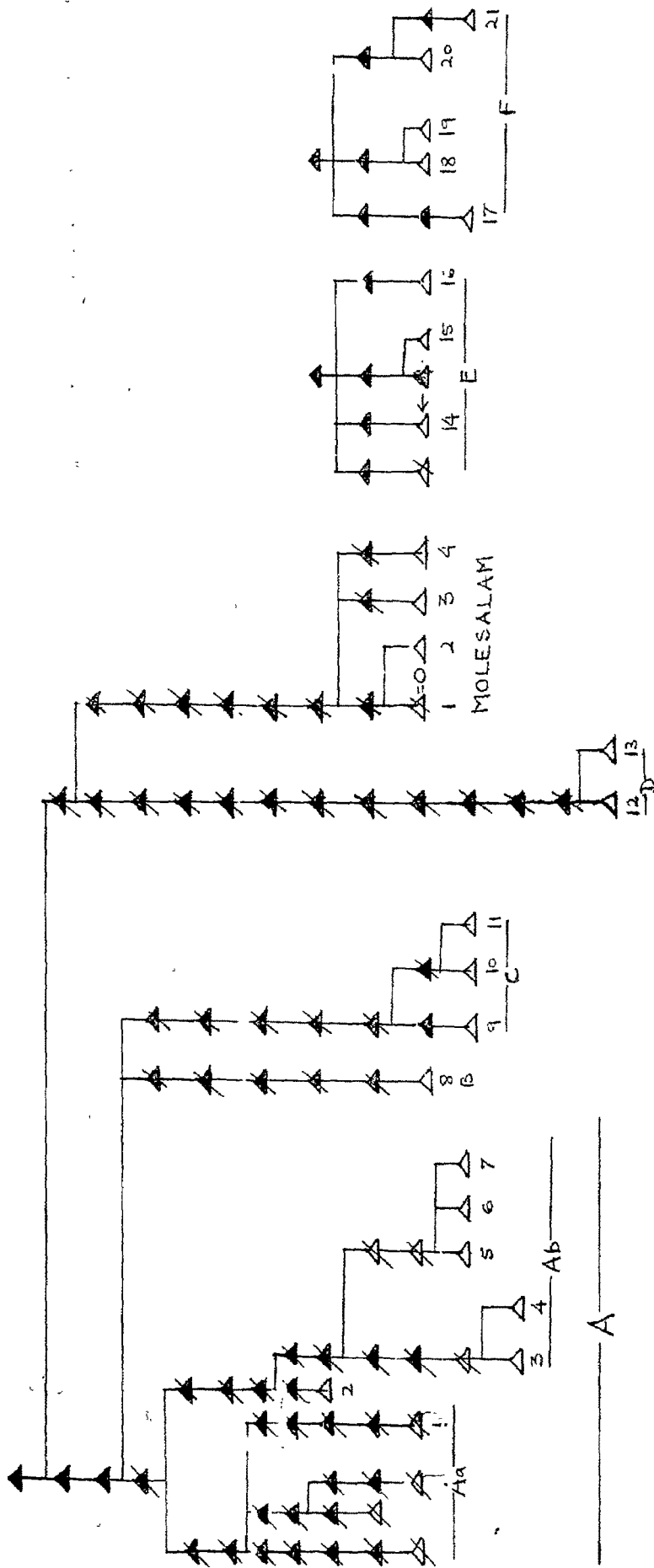
The twenty-one Rathod households formed a single lineage group believed to have descended from Jagdev, the Rathod chief

mentioned in the thirteenth century epigraph. The Vahivancha Bard of the Rathods has a book of the genealogies of the Rathods, which he allowed us to copy and analyse. I have presented in Genealogical Chart 1 the genealogical relations among the Rathod households in 1825 as shown by the Bard's book. The twenty-one households were divided into six lineage segments, indicated as A, B, C, D, E and F in the chart. At the present moment all the Rathods in Radhvanaj believe that they are descendants of a single ancestor, and consider the Rathods living in Nepad and Demi, about twenty miles from Radhvanaj, as two distinct lineage groups descended from two other ancestors. The three lineages have a common Bard and a single book of genealogies and myths. This book records a myth that the original ancestors of the three lineages descended from a single ancestor. Moreover, the Rathods of the three lineages themselves always stress that they should not intermarry, and certainly no such marriage has ever taken place. That is to say, the Rathod clan is an exogamous unit, and the exogamy is supported, in Malinowski's words, by a 'mythical charter.' The Rathods of the three villages have practically no active social relations at the present time, but the Barot records show that the Rathods of the three villages had come together for a common dispute against a Vahivancha Bard, which suggests that there must be more active relations during the early nineteenth century, though much less than in the thirteenth century.

I have so far stuck to the conventional anthropological definition of patrilineal clan that it is a patrilineal

88.

# Genealogical chart 1: Hindu and Molesalam Rethod Poggul: of Radhuvany



- △ Head of Household in 1825 A.D.
- △ Died a little before 1825
- ▲ Died long before 1825
- A, B, etc. Number of Hindu Rethod
- Lineage Segment
- 1, 2, etc. Number of Household

group composed of two or more lineages the genealogical links between which are fictional or mythical. This does not however mean that all the genealogical links within the Radhvanaj lineage of the Rathods were real, or if real, were correctly and unambiguously recorded. I have been able to discover genealogical links only between Segments A, B, C and D, and none between Segments E and F and between them and A, B, C and D. The links shown between A, B, C and D also do not seem to be true—the Bard's book is a very complex document, and I do not claim to have understood it perfectly—but the facts to be noted are, firstly, the existence of six segments, and secondly, their behaviour as parts of a single lineage group. The relations shown among households in a segment, excepting in Segment A, seem to be true. I have shown my doubt about Segment A by considering it as divided into two sub-segments Aa and Ab. There is a strong tradition among the members of Segments E and F today that they formerly formed a single segment and had a common ancestor. As there is no indication of this belief in the Bard's book I have not shown the two segments as sub-segments as in the case of Segment A, but we will see at a later stage that there was close cooperation among the two segments.

The reality of the Rathod lineage was to be seen mainly in its corporate activities. We shall see that the lineage owned as its corporate property a considerable area of land in both Radhvanaj and Vansar, one building in Radhvanaj and another in Vansar for the work of the lineage council, and possibly some other property as at the present time. The lineage had a single tutelary deity and a fairly big shrine

owned and managed by the lineage council. The lineage had a council of elders to manage its corporate affairs.

The internal arrangement of segments became manifest in the lineage activities. Its most visible manifestation was the method of apportioning the income from the jointly owned land. The income was divided among the households of the lineage according to the position of each household in the genealogical structure of the lineage. For example, the total income was divided first into five equal shares for the five segments, and the share of each segment was then divided into its sub-segments according to its internal genealogical structure. It can be seen from the genealogical chart that the number of households in a segment ranged from one in B to seven in A. A household having the fortune of being the only household in a segment received far more than the households forming part of a large segment.

As the genealogical relations among the founders of the five segments are not known, it is not possible to know whether the five segments owed their five equal shares to the founder of the lineage having five sons, but within a segment the right to a man's share in the corporate property of the lineage, like any other corporeal property, was divided equally among his sons.

I have just now stated that the number of households in a segment ranged from one in Segment B to six in Segment A. The Census Register shows that the one household in Segment B was an elementary family and it can be seen from

the genealogical chart that the Segment D was composed of a male sibling group. There is no inconsistency in calling a single group as both a family and a lineage segment, or a sibling group and a lineage segment. A family or a sibling group was a family or a sibling group only in the context of the system of families and sibling groups respectively, and it was a lineage segment in the context of the system of lineage segments and lineage. I shall soon distinguish between a lineage segment or lineage and a line of descent.

The Molesalam Rajputs were divided into exogamous patrilineal clans in the same way as the Hindu Rajputs. Among their eight households, four belonged to the Rathod clan, and four to the Mahida. I have no genealogies of the Mahidas, as they have left no descendants in the village. The four Rathod households were descendants of the same original ancestor as that of the Hindu Rathods, but one of the later ancestors was converted to Islam during the fifteenth or sixteenth century and his descendants were separated from the Hindu Rathods (see Genealogical Chart 1). The Hindu and the Muslim Rathods had a common Bard, a common book of genealogies, and, as we shall see, several other common social institutions. It can also be seen in the genealogical chart that Segment D of the Hindu Rathod lineage and the Molesalam Rathods had a common ancestor. Even today the members of Segment D and the Molesalam Rathods say that they are descendants of a single ancestor apart from the other Hindu Rathods. They say, "We are divided by religion but not by ancestry." They live in the same ward and are bound



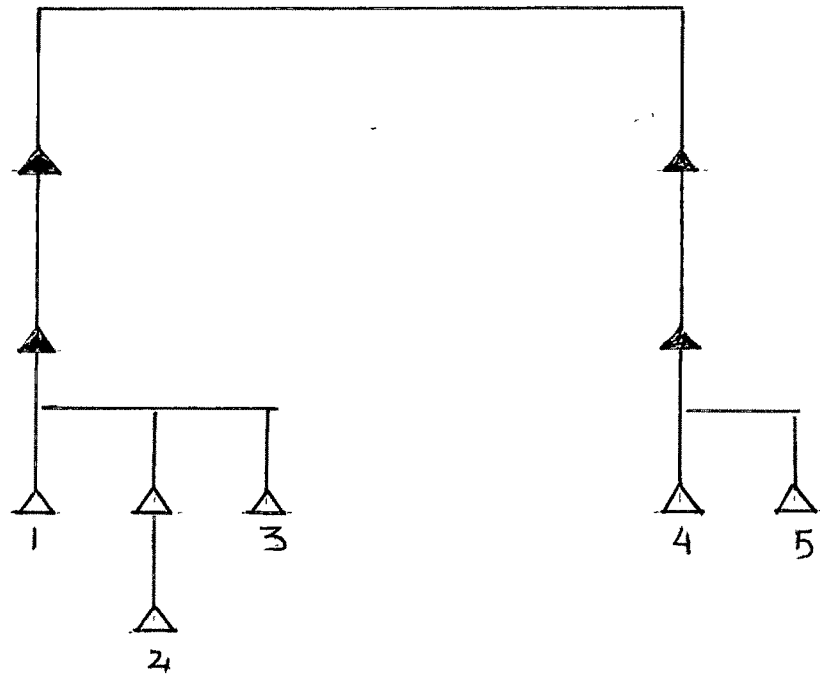
by close collaboration in several activities. One may legitimately consider the Molesalam Rathods as forming one of the segments of the Rathod lineage for certain activities and as not forming a segment for certain other activities. The Hindu and the Molesalam Rathods taken together had a total number of twenty-four households and a total population of 144. That is to say, the descendants of Jagdev, all taken together, formed 20 per cent of the total population of Radhvanaj in 1825.

#### b. Patidars

The Patidars have never had clans like those found among the Rajputs, but as I have shown in my paper on the Vahivancha Bards, they do and did have lineages, particularly among the narwardars. In Radhvanaj, there was one lineage composed of five households (see Genealogical Chart 2). Their original ancestor, as the Bard's book shows, had migrated from Nar, a village about fifteen miles from Radhvanaj, and consequently this lineage has been known as the Nariya lineage. Although it is not possible to know the date of migration, it is quite certain that this was one of the oldest lineages, if not the oldest lineage, among the Patidars in Radhvanaj. Two of the three hereditary Matadars of the village belonged to two segments of this lineage. There is no information as to whether the lineage owned any corporate property in 1825 as it does today, but it seems it did have a tutelary deity with a shrine in a field on the outskirts of the village.

Two households, with surname Desai, belonged to two different Desai lineages of Nadiad. It seems they had settled in the village not long before the Survey of 1825. This shows

Genealogical Chart 2: Nariya Lineage among the Patidars  
of Radhvanaj



there could be migration from a town to a village. It seems both the Desais were active members of their lineages in Nadiad, and may be considered as domiciled in Nadiad but residents of Radhvanaj.

The household of the village headman and third Matadar was certainly very important, but his line has died out and consequently I do not have his genealogy. The government records indicate that his household was the only one belonging to his line of descent.

As regards the remaining twenty-four households, it may be recalled that the Desai of Nadiad pargana had invited Patidars from other villages to settle in Radhvanaj and bring its waste land under plough. The Census Register shows the original villages of eight households. They came from seven different villages, the distance of which from Radhvanaj ranged from about four to about twenty miles. Each of these households must have belonged to a separate line of descent. I have no genealogical information about the remaining sixteen households. It seems each of them belonged to a separate line of descent; there were not even any dispersed male sibling units among them. We shall see that only three of these sixteen households owned some land coming down to them from their ancestors, which indicates that they were old established, but the remaining thirteen households were immigrants. None of the twenty-one immigrant households owned much land in the village, nor did they leave any descendants in the village. It seems most immigrant Patidars either went back to their original villages or died in Radhvanaj without leaving any descendants. As we

have seen, six immigrant households did not include any woman; it is very likely that they had left their women in their original villages.

### c. Brahmins

I have shown in my paper on the Vahivancha Bards that the Brahmins have not patronized the Vahivanchas, and it is therefore not possible to get bardic genealogies of the Brahmins of Radhvanaj. I have, however, reconstructed a few genealogies on the basis of government records and oral information provided by the present-day Brahmins. Among their thirteen households, three were each headed by a woman. In two of the three cases the husband's name is mentioned, whereas in one case neither the husband's nor the father's name is mentioned, so that it is difficult to associate the widow with any line of descent. Among the remaining twelve households, about which genealogical information could be gathered, there was one lineage group of five households who were priests to the two higher castes in the village, namely Rajputs and Patidars, and there was one lineage group of two households who were priests to the people of the adjoining village Antroli. It has not been possible to find the exact genealogical relations between the members of either of these lineage groups. The remaining five households belonged to five different lines of descent, and were priests to lower castes in the village and also perhaps in a few adjoining villages. The Brahmins were divided into exogamous gotras and it seems each lineage and line of descent belonged to a separate gotra, but I have no information about the interrelation among the members of a gotra.

#### d. Talapada Kolis

Among the Talapada Kolis, three surnames were very common, Kotwal, Pagi and Baraiya. It should be emphasised that these were only patronymics; they were not names of clans or sub-castes as considered in many ethnographic and census reports on Gujarat. Even a recent anthropological work has mistaken them as sub-caste names.<sup>(7)</sup> Literally, 'Kotwal' meant watchman of a fort. During the Mughal and Later Mughal periods it was the name for the head of city police, and in villages the Kotwal was a village watchman or an escort. In Central Gujarat the village Kotwal was usually a Talapada Koli. The Kotwal's office was not a hereditary one—the records of Radhvanaj show that the Kotwal of Radhvanaj used to change almost every year. + However, even though a man ceased to hold the office of Kotwal he and his descendants retained the surname Kotwal, as the name signified prestige in the Talapada Koli caste. This does not, however, mean that all Kotwals belonged to the same lineage or clan. Sometimes a Pardeshi Koli also held the office of Kotwal, but the word was rarely used as a surname in their caste.

'Pagi' originally meant a man specialized in tracking foot-prints of thieves (pag = foot). When a theft took place in a village the Pagi of the village was supposed to trace the footsteps of the thief to another village. This institution seems to be an ancient one in Western India.<sup>(8)</sup> Every village in Central Gujarat used to have a Pagi and, as we shall see, rules were laid down regarding his work. He, like the Kotwal, was usually a Talapada Koli. His

office was non-hereditary, but the name became hereditary. Although sometimes a Pardeshi Koli worked as a Pagi, the name was rarely used as surname among them.

The etymology of 'Baraiya' is not known. It, however, indicated certain prestige and is now used by the Talapadas as their caste name.

Among the eighteen Talapada households in the village, nine were Kotwals, six Pagis, two Baraiyas, and one without surname. Among the nine Kotwal households there was one lineage group of four households, divided into two segments, each composed of two households. The exact genealogical relationship between the two segments is not known but there is a strong tradition that they descended from a single common ancestor. There is also no direct evidence of any corporate activity of the whole lineage in 1825, but the present members say that formerly the entire lineage was living on the same street and worshipped at the same lineage shrine. Among the remaining five Kotwal households there were two dispersed sibling groups, each composed of two households of two brothers, and one household belonged to a separate line of descent.

Among the six Pagi households there was one dispersed sibling group of two households, and the remaining four belonged to four different lines of descent. The two Baraiya households formed a dispersed sibling group. The eighteen Talapada households were thus divided into eleven lines of descent.

e. Pardeshi Kolis

Among the nineteen Pardeshi Koli households there was not a single lineage group. There was one dispersed sibling group of five households and two sibling groups each of two households. There was also one group composed of one household of a father and two households of his two sons—the only instance of sons having separate households during the father's lifetime. The remaining seven households belonged to seven different lines of descent.

f. Minor Castes with more than one household

The two households of Charan Bards belonged to a single line of descent, but their common ancestor was far removed from them and there was practically no active collective activity between them so that they cannot be called as forming a lineage group in the sense in which there were lineage groups among Rajputs, Brahmans, Talapada Kolis and Patidars. Among the three Potter households, two were of two brothers and the third belonged to a different line of descent. In the same way, two of the three Barber households were of two brothers, and the third belonged to a different line of descent. I have no information about kinship relations among Jogis, Bharwad Shepherds, Dheds, Leather-workers, Senwas, and Sepoys.

g. General Remarks

The data presented in this section shows that patrilineal relationship was the basic principle of the kinship system of the people in the village but its role in the formation of groups based on patrilineal relationship differed from caste to caste. One of the factors affecting these differences was the

size of a caste group resident in the village. There cannot be lineage in small castes. But there were not many lineage groups even among larger castes, Patidars, Brahmans, Talapadas and Pardeshis. It is only the Rajputs who had a highly developed lineage and clan organization. One explanation readily suggests itself, the length of residence, which is only the obverse of lack of spatial mobility. Even the few lineage groups that existed among Patidars, Brahmans and Kolis, were a result of long residence. But to say that length of residence and lineage organisation were related is to make a tautologous statement. We should search for factors affecting length of residence.

My observation of kinship relations in the village at the present time indicates that kinship relations among the wives of the male members of a lineage play an important role in the relations between male members of the lineage. For example, two or more women members of the same lineage of another village may be married to two or more men of the same lineage in Radhvanaj. Relations of several other types also affect the working of the lineage. There is however no data about this aspect of lineage groups in 1825.

An important problem arising out of the analysis of kinship composition of various castes in the village is that of the unity of the caste group in the village in the fact of internal divisions. One of the important factors contributing to the unity of the caste group in the village is the existence of affinal and matrilinear relationships between the different lines of descent, but there is no data on this aspect of



caste organisation in 1825. We shall, however, try to see if there were any economic and political relations among the different lines of descent composing a caste, and also if there was any development of caste as a corporate group in the village.

#### V: The Village-Site

There were in all 179 dwellings on the village-site. The classification of data concerning ownership of dwellings is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Classification of Data concerning Ownership of Dwellings in Radhvanaj in 1825

Caste	:House-: :holds :	No. of households owning				:Total No. :of Houses
		: 0 :	: 1 :	: 2 :	: 3 :	
		: House:	: House:	: Houses:	: Houses:	
i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii
Bania	2	0	2	0	0	2
Barber	3	0	2	1	0	4
Bharwad Shepherd	2	1	1	0	0	1
Bhoi	1	0	1	0	0	1
Blacksmith	1	0	1	0	0	1
Brahman	13	0	10	3	1	19
Carpenter	1	0	0	1	0	2
Charan Bard	2	0	2	0	0	2
Dhed	3	0	3	0	0	3
Jogi	3	0	3	0	0	3
Leather-worker	7	0	7	0	0	7
Molesalam	8	0	8	0	0	8
Pardeshi Koli	19	0	18	1	0	20
Patidar	32	2	29	1	0	31
Potter	3	0	3	0	0	3
Rabari Shepherd	1	0	1	0	0	1
Rajput	26	0	13	11	2	41
Ram Priest	1	0	1	0	0	1

i	: ii	: iii	: iv	: v	: vi	: vii
Senwa	4	0	4	0	0	4
Sepoy	5	0	5	0	0	5
Shoemaker	1	0	1	0	0	1
Tailor	1	0	1	0	0	1
Talapada Koli	18	0	18	0	0	18
Total	157	3	134	18	3	179

Out of 157 households in the village (excluding the households of Shiva Priest and Muslim Mendicant), only three households—one of a Bharwad Shepherd and two of Patidars—did not own any house; they must have lived as tenants in houses belonging to other households. 134 households owned one house each, 18 households owned two houses each, and 3 households owned three houses each. 18 out of 21 households owing more than one house each belonged to three higher castes in the village, Brahman, Rajput and Patidar.

Out of 179 houses, 5 had brick walls and tiled roofs, 90 had mud walls, wooden pillars and beams and tiled roofs, 26 had mud walls, wooden pillars and beams and thatched roofs, and 58 had thatched walls and thatched roofs. The records do not inform what kind of house was owned by each household. It is however reasonable to suppose that the solid buildings were owned by the higher castes.

As the village-site of Radhvanaj was occupied continuously from at least the thirteenth century, new houses and huts went on being constructed on the debris of old ones. Most of the houses and huts at the present time are therefore located at a level higher than that of open streets, and this



MAP 5. A sketch map of the village of Paterwanj in 1925, according to the Kusa Dantia.

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is the reason why the lay out of streets shown in the schematic map of the village in the Kalambandhi book of 1823-24 (see Map 5) conforms to the lay out found at the present time.

The village site was 'fortified' by stockades of thorny bushes. There were narrow passages (called khodibaru) at several places to allow only one or two persons to pass at a time. There were only two places which could be called 'open gates' of the village, one near the village tank in the north and the other in the south-west. The major entrance and exit was in the north. People coming from the outside world—from Nadiad, Matar and Kaira—entered the village generally at this place. Wedding parties, officials and other guests of the village were given ceremonial reception here.

There was a wide street—the main street—from the northern entrance to the pigeon-tower, and a narrow one from the latter to the south-western entrance. Narrow streets and lanes branched from these two streets. As in many villages and towns in Central Gujarat, each street and lane had a dead end. Usually a track wide enough for a cart led to a parallel, rectangular or horse-shoe shaped row of houses. There were narrow passages between some streets to allow one or two persons to pass at a time, but no cart or a large group of persons could pass across a street. Front doors of houses faced the street, while back walls or back yards were 'fortified' with stockades of thorny bushes. The main idea behind this pattern of streets was to keep a watch on the movement of outsiders in the village and that of the people of one street in another street.

The map in the Kalambandhi book indicates roughly the location of the dwellings of major castes. As the location of the dwellings of all the castes is not shown, it is difficult to say how many were single-caste streets, and how many were mixed-caste ones. It is however clear that three Untouchable castes, Leather-workers, Dheds and Senwas, lived on the edge of the village site. As regards the Leather-workers, it is mentioned specifically that they were outside the village.

Besides private houses and huts there were a few public structures, the chief of which were the Shiva temple, the council house (choro), and the pigeon-tower (parabadi or chabutari). The council house, which is now in a ruined state, was a brick and mortar structure. The pigeon-tower was a place where birds came to eat grains. The words parabadi and chabutari are derived from the names of two most common birds in Gujarat, parevadu and kabutar. To keep grains at a pigeon tower was considered an act of punya (religious merit). The pigeon tower in Radhvanaj had a square platform, a circular column, and a dome at the top. Grains were spread on the floor of the dome. The inside walls of the dome were painted with folk-paintings depicting the rasa-lila of god Krishna. The pigeon tower was thus not only a functional but also an ornamental structure. I have not been able to find out who built the pigeon tower. It is however certain that it was an influence of the dominant role of Vaishnavism and Jainism in Gujarat, and consequently of the Banias who formed the bulk of the followers of these two sects.

The village-site was almost contiguous to the village tank. There was a small peninsular projection of the village-site into the tank. The Shiva temple and the principal well of the village were located on the peninsula. The well was built with brick and mortar from top to bottom, and had a platform at the top. The inner edges of the platform were projected into the well to facilitate drawing of water. There was a niche in the inside wall of the well, and an image was placed there. The well was constructed with the money provided by a Brahman of the village. The existence of elaborately constructed dwellings, temples, wells, council house and pigeon-tower in Radhvanaj shows the degree of sophistication in material culture found in the villages in Central Gujarat. We shall later on see that this sophistication had important economic and occupational implications.

In addition to the Shiva temple, there was the ancient shrine of Goddess Mahishmardini on the south-eastern side of the village-site and another shrine of Goddess Amba on the northern side on the way to the Shiva temple. There must also be a few small shrines of lineage deities and village deities, who were mostly mother-goddesses. We shall see that the village as a whole performed an annual sacrifice in propitiation of mother-goddesses in the village. A room in the house of the Rama Priest was the Rama shrine. The village-site was thus not just a piece of land for the habitation of human beings but also a place made sacred by the Habitations of gods and goddesses.