

**The Dimensions of Economy and
Stigma among the Peripatetic
Bahurupi: An Anthropological Study**

A thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad, in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In

Anthropology

By

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April 2023



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**The Dimensions of Economy and Stigma among the Bahurupi: An Anthropological Study**” Submitted by **Mr. Khandagale Pravin Shankarrao** bearing registration number **14SAPH02** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Social Sciences is a bonafide work carried out by his under my supervision and guidance.

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DECLARATION

I, Khandagale Pravin Shankarrao, hereby declare that this thesis entitled “**The Dimensions of Economy and Stigma among the Peripatetic Bahurupi: An Anthropological Study**” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of **Prof. R. Siva Prasad and Dr. Alok Kumar Pandey** is an original research work which is free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this university or any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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Abbreviation

DNT	Denotified Tribe
VJNT	Vimukt Jati and Nomadic Tribe
NT	Nomadic Tribe
SNT	Semi Nomadic Tribe
OBC	Other Backward Classes
BC	Backward Classes
SBC	Special Backward Classes
CTA	Criminal Tribe Act
SA	Salvation Army
SSESZ	Special Socio-Economic Settlement Zones
NBCFDC	National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation
VNVJNTDC	Vasantrao Naik Vimukt Jati Nomadic Tribe Development Corporation

Chapter 1

Introduction

In all societies, the economy plays an important role in providing material requirements and supporting subsistence activities. For survival societies have their different ways and means of subsistence, some seek it from their surrounding environment while others are from people who are clients. For pastoral communities, their livelihood comes from the livestock they own. On the other hand, peripatetic communities which are also known as commercial nomads, subsist by selling goods and services, produced by them. Their clients in most cases are sedentary populations and in some cases can be nomads as well. Therefore, for peripatetic communities' client groups consist of settled and nomadic communities.

Nomads have different strategies to find their means of subsistence for instance migration and mobility give them more access to clients. These strategies of movement not only assure their survival but also ensure their livelihoods. Peripatetic people have traditional knowledge which helps them to carry forward their efforts in finding their subsistence. The term peripatetic itself is an economic categorisation of nomadic communities (Rao, 1987). In the Indian context, when nomads have been part of its society is a question worth exploring (Misra and Misra, 1982). The term economy from an anthropological point of view, particularly in its sub-branch of economic anthropology describes and analyzes economic life (Carrier, 2012). The economic perspective studies the interrelations between an individual, groups and society. Economic anthropology approaches the connection between social and economic life.

Economy

There are two traditions to understanding the economy in economic anthropology. It was Karl Polanyi who distinguished between the substantive and formalist approaches to the study of economic aspects of society. There have (at least) been two economic sciences since the late nineteenth century. One is the Substantive and the other is the Formalist tradition. (Polanyi, 1944). The "substantive tradition in economic science, focussing on the study of the economy: those segments of the society that ensure production, consumption and distribution of goods and services" (Maseland, 2009, p.10). In substantive tradition, culture has a major role to play, whereas the formalists perceive the economy as a type of rationality that weighs trade-offs between limited resources by weighing costs, benefits, and means and means

(Spencer, 1980). These two schools of thought or traditions gained much attention towards applying conventional economic theories while studying preliterate societies. However, this led to controversies during the 1960s between both the traditions of studying economic life.

In 1965, Manning Nash's review of economic anthropology was published in the *Biennial Review of Anthropology*. Since that moment there has been a series of writings by different scholars like Dalton, Firth, Leclair and Schneider presenting their arguments on the controversy between formalists and substantivists (Salisbury, 1973). The formalist approach emphasized the conventional economic theories which came into existence during the 19th century (Dalton, 1969). Different economists like Malthus, Ricardo, Marshall, etc., contributed to conventional economic theories, the aim behind conventional theories was to understand the industrial market economy. This has also influenced economic anthropology where, some claim that the main principles, terminology, and concepts of conventional economic theory (economizing, maximizing, elasticity, supply, demand, capital, etc.) apply to non-advanced economies (1969). However, there are different views by contemporary scholars, according to Lie (1991) a different epistemology from the positivism of neoclassical economic theory is implicitly adopted by Polanyi. However, positivists seek to find relationships among variables, for instance, supply and demand, which are given universal categories. The psychology of marginal utility, scarcity, business savvy, and market buying and selling make up formal economics study. Here, the issue is to what extent these ideas apply to the majority of global economic history, in which the market plays some kind of role or no role at all in the lives of people.

Polanyi proposed forms of integration for empirical analysis, i.e., reciprocity¹, redistribution² and exchange³. According to Polanyi, “reciprocity and redistribution act as integrating organizational principles of land and labour allocation, work organization, and produce disposition” (1969, p. 65). He further says that forms of integration designate the institutionalized movements through which the elements of the economic process from material resources and labour to transportation, storage, and distribution of goods are connected (Lie, 1991). According to Polanyi, the first two integration strategies reciprocity and redistribution are inextricably linked to the underlying social relations (Polanyi, 1944).

¹A mode of exchange in which transactions take place between individuals who are symmetrically placed, i.e., they are exchanging as equals, neither being in a dominant position.

²A mechanism whereby a politically or economically powerful individual (or group) collects goods and services from the members of society and reallocates them among the society's members.

³The distribution of goods and services among members of a society.

For instance, in traditional societies, there is no separate existence of economy. A group's political, religious, or kinship obligations which are characterized as its moral obligations have historically been expressed in the distribution of goods and services, the organization of work, and the allocation of labor. In traditional society, one can observe social ties which are framed in terms of family obligations, religious duty, and honor. It is important to note that all social obligations are reciprocal. The elimination of open economic self-interest is constantly under social pressure. By directing both the provision of needs and their distribution, reciprocity safeguards the family. Conversely, redistribution requires a broker who is a reputable person that the other members of the group trust; this person receives, stores, and disperses the supply as necessary. This storage and distribution system's economy is socially defined and not driven by only financial considerations (Francisconi, 2006). On the other hand, Polanyi's third pattern of integration is that of exchange, market exchange⁴, which remains disembedded from social relationships. According to Polanyi, a market economy is one in which the production and distribution of goods are controlled, regulated, and directed solely by the markets (1957). According to Polanyi, using conventional economic theories to analyze non-market economies would be just as misleading as using Christian concepts to study non-Christian religions (Cited in Dalton, 1969).

Polanyi's argument was adopted by anthropologists like G. Dalton, and Marshall Sahlins and enthusiastically opposed by mainstream economic anthropologists like Raymond Firth. However, over time, the substantive school⁵ lost its significance.

Formal economics theory lacks sociology and it cannot explain historical changes which have occurred with time in different areas such as political domination, ideology, or culture. There is a need to study the difference between capitalist economies and local economies based on social relationships. In this direction, purely economic categorisation cannot help in studying these interactions (Francisconi, 2006). According to Stanfield (1980), Polanyi's work can be said to have been motivated by two factors, one concerned with methodology and the other with a historical problem of political economy.

There is also another perspective on the economy is that of Marx. He comes from the substantive view of political economy. Marx analyses the capitalist market economy

⁴A mode of exchange which implies both a specific location for transactions and the sort of social relations where bargaining can occur it usually involves a system of price-making through negotiation.

⁵ It was Polanyi views caused a new thinking in economic anthropology, many anthropologists like Paul Bohannan, Pedro Carrasco, Louis Dumont, Maurice Godelier, Marshall Sahlins and so on scholars had similar views on the substantive economy.

comprehensively from a historical point of view (Jong, 2009). Jong noted that Marx claimed that the accumulation of capital is the foundation of the capitalist system. This happens as a result of labour exploitation, which is made possible by capitalism's monopoly on the means of production. Workers are required to forfeit some of the value they produce in exchange for the privilege to use capitalist factories, machines, and tools. The conflict between workers and capitalists results from the way the capitalist system is structured (2009). According to Marx, it is the base, which is also known as infrastructure⁶, that influences the superstructure⁷. This argument of Marx influenced other scholars like Gramsci, who took over the Marxist notion that ideas and beliefs were reflecting and are supportive of the political and economic structures in society. According to Gramsci, intellectual thought and ideology were contaminated by the economic oppression of the capitalist classes, which led intellectuals to create a discourse that defended and legitimized capitalism (2009). As a result, the violent class struggle could be averted and dominance by capitalist classes could be maintained. It is in this context that, to Gramsci, Intellectuals played a key role in the system of capitalist exploitation; Gramsci called the entire system of dominance - including the economic, political, and intellectual spheres - hegemony.

The above discussion on Marx's economic determinism has influenced anthropology. Additionally, there are some concepts which have been borrowed from Marxism like mode of production (used by Sahlins, Wolf, Meillassoux) and determinism, i.e., infrastructure and superstructure. Marxist anthropology is the outcome of dissatisfaction with the existing theories. It questioned the wisdom of treating small-scale societies as outliers, suspended in time and space, as opposed to as components of the colonial and post-colonial world, perhaps most importantly (Layton, 1997). According to structural Marxists, people's ideas cannot be entirely determined by their environment. In the same environment, different cognitive systems can emerge that can respond to environmental conditions. For instance, kinship creates lines of descent. They make it possible for kin to work together and share rights to productive resources. It appears in Friedman's writings (1975) and Godelier (1977) that kinship is simultaneously part of the infrastructure of material relationships, and the superstructure of ideology (cited in Layton, 1997). Godelier, for example, argued that in non-capitalist societies (or 'social formations') religion or kinship could 'function' as the infrastructure (Spencer, 1980). Godelier does not see infrastructure and superstructure as

⁶ Means of production

⁷ Ideology, religion, kinship etc.

identical. Of course, superstructures are infrastructure only when they function as relations of production. According to Godelier, kinship relationships in prehistoric society serve as relationships for both the production of goods and services as well as for political, religious, and other relationships. Religion may serve as the relation of production in a class society. Similarly, any superstructure may serve as a direct conduit for relations of production; when this occurs, it transforms into infrastructure and becomes dominant (1980).

The conceptual understanding laid out in the earlier paragraphs is applied in studying a peripatetic community the Bahurupi, in Maharashtra, India. The Bahurupi, live on the margins of Indian Society as they are landless and lack support from the state. The reasons for the same can be traced back to colonial rule in India. Therefore, the significance of historical processes in creating the marginality of both people and the economy is addressed by analysing the Bahurupi case.

Peripatetic Peoples, Economy and Social Relationships

Peripatetic is a term used to denote a particular kind of nomad. Peripatetics can also be called service nomads. Historically peripatetic nomads provided services both economic and social like transporting goods, selling petty items, iron smithery, and entertainment (acrobats, puppet shows) to settled populations.

There are various reasons why the term peripatetic came into use. What are the various aspects contributing to making a nomadic community follow a peripatetic way of life? What factors play a significant role in sustaining the lives of many peripatetic communities in places like villages, towns and cities? Some anthropologists and historians have studied peripatetic communities in South Asia, in particular, they tried to study the economy of peripatetic communities. It was not a simple task for a social scientist to study these nomadic communities' whatever studies are available are systematically done for a short period. Consequently, it is difficult for social scientists to study these communities in all aspects because peripatetic nomads are always mobile.

Peripatetic communities have contributed their service, in different forms, to the settled communities for a long time. However, as far as the word peripatetic is concerned, there is some clarification made by various scholars. According to Rao and Casimir (2003), peripatetic is an economic categorisation of nomads who are also known as commercial nomads, service nomads, traders, etc. Peripatetics provide their service through economic interaction with sedentary or other nomadic communities. They performed economic links

between towns and villages. Some studies have found that many tribes were connected with the outside world through the barter system with peripatetic traders, for example, the Banjara community. Rao and Casimir (2003) note a very significant point that as part of the entertainment, peripatetics contributed to the spread of tradition and also helped in the intermeshing of regional cultures by narrating myths and singing folk songs or performing epics. The role of nomads in creating a civilisation cannot be overlooked. Peripatetic communities, since time immemorial, are part of Indian history, there are shreds of evidence, such as the paintings preserved by the nobles that depict snake charmers and other specialised entertainers. On the other hand, in the analysis of Tamil literature from the first to sixth centuries, references have been found towards wandering musicians, jugglers, acrobats, fortune tellers, and beggars (Misra and Misra, 1982). Through historical evidence, it is evident that, before the introduction of roads and other means of communication, service nomads catered to the needs of the settled population in India. There is also a debate on the evolution and development of the peripatetic communities, Rao has reported that today's peripatetic has evolved from different nomadic traits, such as hunter-gatherers or pastoralists, some were peasants or sedentary craftsmen. Today, modernity-led political, economic and social changes have resulted in many of these nomads to the margins of society. Many of them bear the brunt of the most marginalised amongst the marginalised.

Caste as clients, village, peripatetic communities, economy and change

Traditionally, peripatetic communities eke out their livelihood by providing services to various castes in the villages. In the present context, there are changes the nomads continue to perform and provide services in the villages. The peripatetic nomad continues to provide services to the villages with an assurance of food supply and monetary support. Based on this guaranteed support and assurance many peripatetics became dependent on the village caste system. The fulfilment of the necessities and material requirements of peripatetic communities was linked to the Indian caste system. In the scholarly review caste is always a unit of production which was connected with a particular occupational group.

Before looking at peripatetic communities it is imperative to understand the caste and Varna systems. According to Dumont (1970) in the Varna at the top are the Brahman (priest), then Shatriyas (soldiers), and Vaishyas (traders). These three were considered as Dwija or twice-born. The Shudras or low castes were treated below the twice-born. Besides this fourfold division, the Dalits or outcastes are considered untouchable and treated outside the division.

Bougle (1958), Ghurye (1950), Leach (1969), Marriot (1976), Beck (1970), Milner (1994) Moffot (1979). These social scientists believed in the ranking of the caste-based hierarchy. For Dumont hierarchy in the caste system is a state of mind and members of the caste system are willing to accept it. Caste was always connected with occupation and this tradition was based on purity and pollution principal (Marriot, 1976). According to Dumont, economics and politics can only exist covertly and at the interstitial levels in a pure hierarchy. (Dumont, 1988, p.197). If not, the hierarchy is immovable because its two poles are in opposition to one another. The untouchables (who are positively polluting) are at the other end of this hierarchy from the Brahman (or most pure) (Gupta, 2005).

On the other hand, Senart (1930) asserted that castes should be viewed as units rather than being immediately organized into hierarchies (Cited in Gupta, 2005). About caste status Dipankar Gupta (2005) opined that even those who were regarded as lower impure in the ritual order would believe their position to be just and beneficial to their status in terms of the hierarchy of purity and pollution if traditional scholarship on the caste were to be accepted (Gupta, 2005, p.411). The caste is known as Jati. People often use the term Jati to define their group at the same time the term gaon (gram, village) is also used. A village consists of many Jatis some of which have hereditary relations of interdependence, for which the term used after Wiser (1936) is the Jajmani (or patron-clients) system. A Jati is a group of people who are expected to have a common name, expertise in one or more occupations, share a common origin story (or myth), marry within their community, have face-to-face relationships with their fellow members, eat together, and have their council where issues and disagreements of their groups are discussed and resolved (Srivastava, 2016). “Each Jati is cultural whole: has its own words and marks of intonation in a common shared dialect; its culinary characteristics; own style of dress and preference for a particular type of cloth; distinct homestead, interns of its architectural design, use of space, the kind and number of utensils and the other material cultural objects” (Galantar, 1984; Cited in Srivastava, 2016). Caste is sometimes viewed as a “closed system”, almost immutable, but in reality, it has allowed both upward and downward mobility (Srinivas, 1952; Srivastava, 1963 (2016)). Although caste is primarily seen as a feature of Hinduism, Srivastava (2016) discussed the existence of castes in various non-Hindu religions, such as Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Jew and Zorostrian Jatis (Ahmad, 1973; Singh, 1977; Srivastava, 2016). According to Wiser (1936), a social structure like the Hindu caste system, which assigns each occupational group a fixed standing within the community, must by necessity have certain behavioural patterns that

allow each caste to uphold its status and engage in relationships with others satisfactorily. Marriage, social interactions regarding eating, drinking, and smoking, untouchability and approachability norms, and service (Jajmani) relationships are a few of these behavioural patterns (Cited in Gould, 1986).

As far as the traditional economy of the village is concerned it is necessary to understand the village Jajmani system. The Jajmani system of traditional economic relationships is a prominent aspect of India's peasant village culture (Gould, 1986). According to older functionalist interpretation, it was held to provide supportive relationships which balanced the disruptive caste system (Wiser, 1936). The Jajmani system is often depicted as being almost identical to the village-level economic structure based on patron-client relationships (Miller, 1986). Caste was seen to split the village into units which were rendered cohesive again by the Jajmani system (Miller, 1986). The Jajman was the wealthy patron who used the system to procure the services he required, exploiting the division of labour represented by the caste system (Miller, 1986). In the Jajmani system, the Brahmans could be the leaders of society and in a position of privilege (Tandon, 1997: 40). In the past, agriculture was the main economic activity; the upper castes who owned land were at the centre of the Jajmani order; low caste workers were expected to serve their high caste patrons following the caste-based division of labour; and the rights and compensation of workers were defined by unwritten norms that were primarily determined by the upper caste. The Jajmani order operated as a moral economy in which a clear distinction between economic and non-economic values is hardly possible because the mechanism of exchange has so little detached itself from the normative context (Scott, 1976; Habermas, 1987; Sayer, 2004, Weinberger and Wallendorf, 2012; Cited in Vikas et al., 2015).

Though Indian society is highly structured in terms of Varna and Jati it allowed a good deal of internal autonomy. The mode of production was localized and catered to a region. Each caste had a monopoly over its occupation. The goods and services were distributed through the Jajmani relationship, weekly markets, periodical fairs, pilgrimage and symbiotic nomads played a variety of roles in the larger Indian peasantry network. They kept communication channels open among the various communities. They had some autonomy, which enabled them to cultivate their art, knowledge, and skill, preserving their identity and enhancing Indian culture (Misra, 1982).

Peripatetic Peoples and the Caste System

Referring to the relations between peripatetic communities and their clients some scholars have termed peripatetics ‘caste’ or ‘clients’ (Toupet, 1963; Van Bruinessen, 1978, p. 140; Bollig, Rao, 1987). Digard (1978), like others before him, asks whether in the absence of a caste system in the region, peripatetics can be legitimately called castes, or whether it would be more appropriate to speak of a patron-client system complementary to a class society. The presupposition of “caste ideology...that the separation between named castes is absolute and intrinsic” (Leach, 1971, p. 7) is partially, but not entirely, applicable to all peripatetic communities, however, it can be asserted that all peripatetic attached to their customers entertain Jajmani types relations with them, Jajmani being defined as “...durable relations...essentially those between a food producing family and the families that supply them with goods and services...” (Mandelbaum, 1972, p. 161).

Even between peripatetics and their contiguous customers, the relation may be analogous to those of Jajmani (Hayden, Misra, 1969; Berland, 1982; Wiser, 1969, p.43-44), although even in India they may not always be recognised as such, especially since a group must reside in a given village to be officially part of this system (Wiser, 1969, p. 44). “It is clear that before rapid means of transportation and communication became available, service nomad provided necessary resources that the settled populations would otherwise not have had available to them. Yet the plethora of these nomadic groups cannot be explained solely on economic grounds. Several special features of the Indian social environment have combined to facilitate the proliferation of groups of specialized service nomads” (Hayden, 1979, p. 320-305).

Indian social environment supported peripatetic communities despite its complex characteristics. Literature available on peripatetic communities suggests a framework to understand the peripatetic economy using the following three factors which are significant, according to Hayden.

1) Indian society is based on endogamous castes, each of which is usually identified with a specific occupation, in a sense, hereditary occupation defines the caste and to a large extent determines its status (Davis, 1976). The providers of specific goods or services make distinctions between their endogamous group and others in the same line of work to maintain their claim to superior status to the other groups. Misra observed this group's identity concerning its occupation (1977: b:1) in his 1969 survey of nomadic groups in Karnataka. He claimed that each group's specialization in an activity served as its unique identity marker.

2) The presence of a well-organized system of hereditary, exclusive economic relationships, into which members of occupational castes enter, constitutes the second factor (Jajmani and its variants; see (Wiser, 1936). Once established, these ties are typically guarded against invasion by rivals, ensuring the survival of the provider of goods or services, who is analogous to a provider of food (Cited in Rao, 1987). Once established, these ties are typically guarded against invasion by rivals, ensuring the survival of the provider of goods or services, who is analogous to a provider of food (Hayden, 1987).

3) The third factor is the general Hindu attitude that giving alms to beggars finds its sanction in Hindu scriptures. Since it results in a reasonable assurance of alms even from people with whom continuing relations have not been established, the existence of this attitude is advantageous to service nomads. These observations are key to understanding the present economic aspects of peripatetic existence in villages.

Regarding diversity and unity in the case of nomads, Misra (1982) reported that this type (Peripatetic nomadism) of nomadism combined various aspects of rural life in a way that allowed India to retain its identity despite its many differences by fostering a complex web of connections while also fostering a certain amount of autonomy. Additionally, this system gave some of the lowest castes the satisfaction of having a group to look out for them. This point is extremely important because, despite their large numbers, the lowest castes in the highly organized, hierarchical caste society should typically not be involved in the system. The system gave them some room to feel superior to some groups, which allowed them to develop a vested interest in the system. On the one hand, given the circumstances, they had no choice but to be a part of the system.

The Changing Indian Village and Peripatetic Peoples

Peripatetic clientele groups belonging to various social groups, whether it is caste or class, reside in villages. Beteille (1980) marks the beginning of rural studies in India via a study of villages which have been called peasant communities in India (Balyan, 2019). Beteille also reported that there are certain features to be an ideal-typical village in India which witnessed change through conquests, wars, migration, colonization, land revenue and other policy systems and it probably changed the village structure (Balyan, 2019). It is interesting to note that villages have undergone a sea change, one cannot ignore this phenomenon as it also has impacted the peripatetic economy severely. The changes in the traditional village economy can be understood in the following ways:

At the social level, the age-old Jajmani system was widely criticised, for instance, some scholars noted that the normative outline that encouraged the Jajmani system is considered repressive and unfair by the lower castes (Dirks, 2002; Omvedt, 1995). Over some time, after the breakdown of the Jajmani system, the caste system, which was a core of the Jajmani system, has undergone a sea change. Even though the system is fixed, the symbolic power represented by the caste system has undergone conflicts, contests, and changes (Fuller, 1991). Because the caste system had its dynamics that allowed groups to change in power over time, the occupational classification was not completely ossified. Gupta (1991) has further argued that there were several vertical hierarchies within the caste system and that some outcasts and low-caste individuals claimed exalted origins (Beteille, 1991). Srinivas (1991) adds that the nation saw many caste-based movements, including a fierce anti-caste struggle led by Bhimrao Ambedkar to undermine the power of the upper castes (see also Jaffrelot, 2003; Omvedt, 1995). Because of the struggle, some of the earlier status positions cannot be taken for granted, and in many regions of the country, lower castes are more assertive and free to oppose upper castes. Additionally, over time, some old castes have vanished, and merged, and new ones have emerged (Teltumbde, 2010). The clientele of peripatetic communities has also been impacted by the change in the village caste system.

There was a transformation in the Indian caste and village and its traditional resources such as land. According to Lal (1982) Zamindari, Ryotwari, and Mahalwari were the three main types of land tenure systems that existed before the introduction of formal methods of land organization. These systems gradually paved the way for institutional measures through five-year plans in which agriculture was given top priority. The country's initial five plan periods were designed by the government of the time to be structured. These focused primarily on eliminating middlemen, setting a holding cap, and reorganizing agriculture through holding consolidation, fragmentation prevention, and the growth of cooperatives (Lal, 1982; cited in Balyan, 2019).

“Along with land reforms, state-led initiatives to increase the productivity of land in the form of green revolution also brought in changes in the structure of Indian society at the level of agrarian class structure and the conquest agrarian relations among those classes, soon after independence, when the state-led factors of change were not introduced, Danial Thorner tried to comply with the diverse class structure present in a rural context. Despite the diversity of social arrangements on land in different parts of India, he formulated three criteria to develop a class model which were about 1) the type of income obtained from soil, 2) the nature of

rights, and 3) the extent of fieldwork performed. Subsequently, based on these criteria, he came up with three important classes, i.e., Malik, Kissan and Mazdoor which were further bifurcated into various categories within, depending on the context in which they were discussed” (Dhanagare, 1983, p.14, Cited in Balyan, 2019). However, since then, there have been large debates about assigning a proper class structure to agricultural communities. For example, John Mencher proposed a six-fold classification consisting of 1) the landless 2) the poor peasants 3) the middle peasants 4) rich farmers 5) traditional landlords (rich farmers and capitalist farmers), and 6) inter determinate class of large landholders. Similarly, Utsa Patnayak argued for a three-fold classification depending upon the “concentration of the means of production” containing 1) a small minority of households that had an abundance of land, 2) a large minority of households with the scarcity of land and 3) the middle range petty producers. There is also Ashok Rudra’s propagated existence of only two ground classes of big landlords and landless labourers. Pranab Bardhan stressed threefold classification based upon the intermixing of class and caste dynamics which includes 1) top peasantry containing upper castes, 2) middle and poor middle peasantry containing middle castes Hindus, and 3) agricultural labourers containing scheduled class and scheduled tribes, etc., represent those few models among many within Indian context in post-independent phase which tried to delineate a class structure for rural India (Thorner, 1982, 1993-1999; Cited in Balyan, 2019). It seems that these newly formed classes also became the clientele of the peripatetic communities but brought with it lots of difficulties for them to continue with their traditional livelihoods, hence, it may be possible that peripatetic communities have found new ways of eking out their livelihood.

The patterns of relationships between the agrarian classes were also impacted by these complex class structures. For example, Jan Breman discussed in his book "Patronage and Exploitation" how the breakdown of the Jajmani system patronage increased inequality, which led to significant changes in the economy and the rise of a category of labourers that were primarily landless. Bondage existed in various degrees in traditional colonial society, with the landlord having complete control over the socially and economically underprivileged class, the majority of whom belonged to the untouchable or tribal castes (Breman, 1974, p.7; Cited in Balyan, 2019).

However, as far as the village classes are concerned, Misra has noted that the modern symbiotic nomads typically serve lower-class or, at best, middle-class peasants. They do not exist for the upper classes or castes either. Such people, whose purchasing power is very low,

accept whatever services and goods they have to offer, leaving them with no choice but to move to be able to make at least their subsistence (1982, p. 21). People who were pushed out of villages due to a lack of work opportunities in agriculture turn to the nomadic way of life. On the same, Misra (1982) reported, that, once they adopt the nomadic lifestyle, they hone, organize, and elaborate their skills and knowledge and relate them to the culture of the larger Indian civilization (1982, p. 21). On the other hand, all this can be considered as a strategy to earn their subsistence.

When we look at Misra's (1982) economic perspective it is clear that the Indian economy has been stagnant and has been severely exploited by both the Mughals and much more systematically by the British colonial power. The severity of the exploitation is directly linked with the growth of the state apparatus maintaining centralized administration, there has been hardly any diversification for several centuries. Even now an overwhelming majority of people remain dependent upon agriculture. Agricultural production has also been more or less stagnating except in the last decade or so. According to the World Bank Report, agricultural growth during 1990 and 2000 slowed down, averaging about 3.5% per annum⁸ and agriculture's share in India's economy has progressively declined to less than 15% due to high growth rates of the Industrial and service sector. Under this situation, one visualizes that now and then a good number of people were pushed out of the villages. These were the people to whom no work could be provided in the village and who could not earn enough by living in one village alone. The pushed-out people can migrate to urban or plantation areas or perform such services or supply such goods which were not locally available and eke out their living, and ultimately turn into habitual nomads. Misra (1982) further emphasizes that this is what he meant by the nomads for historical reasons. This formulation needs evidence to document how in each case people took to nomadic life. It seems that the change in the traditional village economy has compelled certain communities to adopt the nomadic way of life but now the question is what happens when these nomadic communities become sedentary? There may be various factors which need investigation. It is also interesting to know what happens with nomadic communities after they sedentarize in the villages when the villages themselves have undergone various changes in their social and economic condition.

⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/05/17/india-agriculture-issues-priorities>

Regarding the depletion of villages' traditional economic system and its impact on employment, Balyan noted that, from the outside, the traditional village economic system looks repressive but still some amount of security was granted by the patron to the client. However, he further noted that "with the coming of capital-technologically-intensive framing not only the class structure got altered but the relations also got changed. Now the labourer is free but he is still landless without any surety of employment. Therefore, since colonial times to the post-independence phase, the agrarian structure in India has experienced huge amount of change and the process is still on" (Balyan, 2019, p. 84). Based on the above observation, it seems that the landless labourers were provided security in the traditional economic situation and must have started leaving the villages in terms of searching for new livelihood activities in different places except for their villages.

Accepting the fact that the Indian village is going through significant changes on both an economic and cultural level is met with some resistance. The intellectually widespread notion that the Indian village is timeless and unchanging and that the Indian villager enjoys nothing more than living in a rural environment accounts for a large part of the resistance to accepting this reality. Not only for the sake of factual accuracy but also due to the requirements of the planning and development process, these ideas need to be revised. If the village is the backbone of India's economy, then specific policy recommendations that would centralize agriculture would be necessary (Gupta, 2005:751).

About changes in villages, Gupta noted that the most important outside influence on the village is not always urbanization. Due to the village landholding structure, there aren't many jobs in the fields that can sustain the rural population, albeit on a less-than-ideal basis. In addition to more electrified villages, more motorized vehicles, and better roads connecting rural and urban areas than there were a few decades ago, the availability of urban jobs has indeed had an impact. However, it cannot be said that the village's internal transformation is solely due to urban inputs. People are being forced to look elsewhere for a living and respect because of the agrarian economy's sheer inertia, which hardly allows for any optimism (2005: 751). This significant observation of Gupta is important in terms of peripatetic communities as when the agrarian economy is not creating economic opportunities for their village lower castes, then under these circumstances what hope is left for the peripatetic communities those who have established their settlement in the villages? This needs serious investigation.

Uncertain statistics indicate the declining rates of agricultural growth and the rising exodus from rural to urban areas. The phenomenon of non-farm employment, whose scope has grown dramatically over time, is added to this. Today, it is thought that about 24% of villagers work in non-agricultural fields. This is not a negligible sum, and most likely it is a conservative estimate (Gupta, 2005, p. 752). It is another major challenge for social science researchers regarding peripatetics that have settled in the village, as they would also be creating a competing situation for the existing impoverished village lower castes. There is also another serious issue that peripatetic communities might have a conflict with other groups after settling in the villages.

The nuclear family is disintegrating. The much-romanticized harmony of village life is now revealed for the embarrassment that it may have always been, and the rural caste hierarchy is losing its tenacity. The analysis of the Indian village by B.R. Ambedkar, if anything, rings the most true of all. Ambedkar was the one who described the village as a cesspool of ugliness, corruption, and worse. Because most people, rich or poor, had few options outside the boundaries of the rural area, the village media was able to continue despite all of this in the past (Gupta, 2005).

P. K. Misra and R. Misra (1982) noted that poverty has been growing in the Indian countryside which can be correlated with uneven economic growth. At the same time, this uneven economic growth is accompanied by growth in the population which has been acting as a push factor in the Indian rural scene, compelling people to move out of the villages for earning a livelihood in various ways, the dominant forms of which are migrant and industrial labour. In any case, the modern developments in the country are making the nomads superfluous. Gupta also noted that rural India's social structures, in addition to the lack of economic opportunities, are what drive many of the lower castes and classes out of the villages.

It is important to investigate the peripatetic communities settling in the villages. Despite settling in the villages, they will also be moving to places where more economic opportunities exist. The space they acquire will entitle them to apply for government-issued documents. Until and unless they have a permanent address, local authorities' formal approval for considering them as residents of the village plays a vital role and is one of the major reasons in attracting more peripatetic communities towards villages.

Misra and Misra (1982) further argued that the presence of nomads itself is complex and it is quite rare that groups might have opted for a nomadic way of life in the Indian context. They further say that we must focus on individual cases which need to be examined historically to determine their presence as nomads in different time scales. They argued that the push factor theory however is supported by indirect evidence like the role of nomadic people being mostly marginal and most of the nomadic people, barring a few exceptions, being extremely poor. Many of them can earn their livelihood because of the agricultural production in the country which has not become completely capitalistic. Thus it is still possible for nomads to acquire grains from the villagers.

Gupta has further pointed out that “in terms of many diacritics of village life a lot seems to be changing in rural culture. Old taboos against holding certain types of jobs are disappearing. The caste system does not operate though, there is a strong assertion of caste pride and caste identity. Untouchability is not practised widely, though there are pockets of upper-caste intransigence. On the economic front, even prosperous landowners seek a future outside the village or in non-farm enterprises” (Gupta, 2005, p.757). It appears that peripatetic communities may have created their caste-like identity in the village set-up as they also claim OBC status like the other existing OBCs in the villages.

Livelihood and Change among the Peripatetic

The above literature demonstrates the changes in the age-old ‘Jajmani system’, caste, agrarian relations and various other changes in the societal level that occurred in due course of time in the village. It has also played a vital role in the lives of peripatetic communities. However, it also becomes necessary to see how existing literature has recorded the changes that occurred among peripatetic communities. Some studies have documented changes in the traditional livelihood of different peripatetic communities in different places. These studies shed light on the many factors which were responsible for the changes in the socio-economic life of peripatetic communities. Changes have left them with problems and issues, not only economic but also socio-cultural.

The study on peripatetic Humli-Khyampa, living in the Nepal region, by H.R. Schweizer (2003) found that the traditional livelihood of salt barter in the remote valleys of west Nepal was severely affected by international policies between India and Nepal. The building of new economic and political relations between these two countries led to the destruction of the Humli-Khyampa traditional economy. Consequently, the Humli-Khyampa shifted to new

livelihood options and settled on their traditional trading routes. In another study by Childers (2003), the peripatetic Banjara traditionally earned through pack bullock transport, but they lost their livelihood due to new emerging transport facilities like roads and railways, as a result, Banjaras had to find new modes of employment.

The two studies which were undertaken on peripatetic communities in the Middle East portray a contrasting picture. A study by Emanuel Marx on Bedouin in South Sinai found that due to economic and political change, there is a response by the peripatetic communities (2002). Marx (2004) observed major changes occurred between 1972 and 1982 and that the changing political and economic conditions affected the Bedouin's economic pursuits, gender relations, and patterns of consumption. This implies that when there is a change in the political and economic factors it also alters the culture of peripatetic communities.

The study by Frank Meyer (2004) looks into the sea changes which have taken place among the peripatetic Nawar in Syria. Today they are living a sedentarized lifestyle. Regarding pastoral and peripatetic communities, Meyer clarified that when the boundary of a particular region changes it aggravates change among the peripatetic and pastoral communities too. This not only affects their entire subsistence activity but their sociocultural aspects too. This kind of transition from one stage to another has been discussed in one biographical text of a Syrian Nawar Chief by Meyer (2004). This change in the livelihood highlights a very basic question and that is the survival of peripatetic communities. The above literature demonstrates the change in livelihood and its further adverse consequences on the lives of peripatetic communities in different countries as well. When it comes to India it is necessary to see the change occurring in the livelihood of peripatetic communities. What are the new livelihood options available for the peripatetic communities and is it also necessary to look at what is the role of market economy in the lives of peripatetic, especially those involved in providing entertainment service?

The Peripatetic as a Stranger

Considering the relations of nomads with sedentary and other nomadic populations, a question arises after getting sedentarized, what is the current status of these relationships, especially in the case of peripatetic communities which are involved in different services? It was found in a study on Dombari that after settling in a village, they started providing

seasonal labour to village fields. It was also found that villagers did not support the settlement of Dombari (Khandagale, 2014).

According to Hyden (2003), there is a factor in the relationship between peripatetic groups and the wider society in South Asia, which is that many of the peripatetic communities have a 'home village', to which they frequently return. He also notes that peripatetic communities spend most of their time 'on the road', where they move from one place to another and try to market their particular goods and services. On the interaction of peripatetic with villagers, Berland (1977) and Misra (1977) reported that there is very less information available on peripatetic interactions with villagers when they are on the road than in their home village. They also reported that much of the available work on peripatetic communities was done when they were in their home village (cited in Hyden, 2003). The study on '*Nandiwalla*' by Hyden reported that there are corporate relations between *Nandiwalla* and villagers, they are oppositional if not adversarial (Hyden, 2003). Another study by Childers (2003) on Banjara reported that there was a special request by the villagers to Laman⁹ to stop in a suggested place where villagers received some benefit, such as manure of their bullocks. Considering the relationship of peripatetic communities with the villagers, what kinds of relations exist between peripatetic communities and villagers when they are on the move? And what is the condition of these relations at present when they are settled?

Bollig opined about reasons for migration by peripatetic communities that "competition among themselves and availability of customers determine the frequency, speed and direction of migration" (2004, p. 222-223). Hayden (2003) has noted a very significant point on the migration of peripatetic communities that they follow well-established routes on their migrations, and they often have regularised ties of service and friendship with particular villagers in their territories. The friendship ties were observed by Morab (1977) about the *Killekyatha* who are folk puppeteers that move to areas where they are identified as individuals, where they often receive help from villagers in times of stress (cited in Rao and Casimir, 2003). However, on ties, Hyden (2003) noted that the assessment of the nomads thus varied, depending on the ties they had with respondents and the services they provided. The change in the traditional migration route is discussed by Schweizer (2003) in her study on Humli-Khyampa where due to changing economic context Humli-Khyampa changed their migration routes. According to Rao (2003), the migration pattern of nomads depends upon the customer's specific demands. However, it is clear that the migration route has played a

⁹ Also known as Banjara, a nomadic community

crucial role in the lives of peripatetic communities in terms of friendship and support but when there is a change in the economy of peripatetic communities, the migration route is a major concern. Here various questions arise what kinds of established routes are used while on the migration of peripatetic communities? What is the present status of these migration routes? What is the present status of ties peripatetic communities have with villagers? Under the influence of change in the occupation, what is the present status of services provided by peripatetic communities, in the past?

It is apparent that the economy of the peripatetic is changing due to various reasons and it is affecting their whole culture. In a study on nomads, it was found that when there is a change in the traditional livelihood, it harms the community; they lose their traditional knowledge (Siva Prasad and Pandey, 2008). However, when peripatetic communities lose their traditional livelihood, they search for new livelihoods which involves different strategies. The sedentarisation of peripatetic communities was seen as a strategy for new livelihood (Khandagale, 2014).

There is a significant observation on the settlement process by P.K. Misra, “it has been noted that as their interaction with other population increases, they progressively become less and less nomadic. I hurriedly add here that it is not the interaction itself but the nature of relationship which the settled population establishes with the hunter and food gatherer, that settles them” (Misra, 1982, p. 17). The same applies to peripatetic communities as well. It is in this context when a peripatetic community settles, their position becomes an issue. Berland and Rao use the concept of “The stranger” which helps us to understand the position of peripatetic communities when they settle.

Regarding the position of the peripatetic communities, the theoretical debate is observed in the work of Berland and Rao, they have used the concept called “the stranger” which has been offered by the German sociologist George Simmel. Simmel’s “Stranger” is offered as a social type or sociological form. According to him, “the world consist of innumerable contents which are given determinate identity, structure and meaning through the imposition of forms which man has created in the case of his experience particular position in an intersectional structure” (2004, p. 6). Berland and Rao’s main aim is to explore the usefulness of George Simmel’s paradigm of “The stranger” as a conceptual tool for broadening our understanding of the positions of peripatetic people. They also have tried to explore the peripatetics niche and the nature of their subsistence strategies. But Berland and Rao have

raised a very significant point, i.e., the content and processes of transactions between peripatetic specialists and client communities determine their position and inform mutual perception and expectations of the other. Berland and Rao further suggest that the notion of “customary stranger” shed light on the temporal, social, and economic context of their various transactions which contributes to disparate levels of knowledge and experience, and these habits and process of interaction shape their situations, identities, and relationships both within and between communities (2004, p. 2). Here the stranger perspective gives us a direction towards a social form which is different from a sedentary society and it also helps us to explore different dimensions of the peripatetic community.

There are few studies which used the stranger concept, for instance, Park used Simmel’s idea of “the stranger” in the context of marginality, social distance and isolation where his focus was on social relationships. On the other hand, Wood (1934), Schuetz (1944), and Meyer (1951) showed the stranger's position as a newcomer or immigrant where they found that conditions related to their reception led to ultimate incorporation or rejection by the group (cited in Berland and Rao, 2004). However, Berland and Rao clarified that for Simmel “The stranger” is a relationship – a positive manifestation of a specific form of interaction (2004).

About the appropriate use of the term “the stranger” Berland and Rao have made a very significant clarification by discussing the need of a trader in society, they found that “there is a relation between goods and a trader”. They note that “as long as production for one’s own needs is the general rule or products are exchanged within a relatively small circle, there is no need for a middleman within the group. A trader is required only for goods produced outside the group. The trader must be a stranger: there is no opportunity for anyone else to make a living at it” (2004, p. 9). Through this one thing is clear the production of certain goods matters when it comes to defining the exact trader. It is apparent in the context that peripatetic communities provide their specialised goods and services to sedentary and other nomadic groups, hence it shows their trader status.

Casimir (2004) uses the “stranger” concept to understand peripatetic communities' use of origin myths and related legends. The study found that myths and legends are a major part of peripatetics ethos and social identity. Interestingly, peripatetics use these traditions to profitably influence their interactions with client communities as middlemen, traders, and or customary strangers. Casimir discusses the motives behind using myths and legends by peripatetics. He says that it is “a common way of ameliorating the negative aspects of their

“strangeness” is to reinforce those aspects of their identity that may encourage positive, or at least sympathetic, perceptions of their position” (2004, p. 33). Casimir (2004) found that guilty feelings and shame emerge from wrongdoings and the legends and myths among the various peripatetics are a result of that feeling. He also says that peripatetics legends and myths also to some extent determine their low and high status. This study shows that existing myths play a major role in building positive perceptions of other communities and towards one’s community.

However, based on the binary opposition in the context of peripatetic communities, Berland and Rao argued that “the qualities of nearness and remoteness, landlessness and rootlessness, powerlessness, mobility, objectivity, freedom, flexibility, and resourcefulness may positively enable the position of the stranger”. They further believed that “these same characteristics also engender negative, detrimental, even dangerous consequences in their relationships with client communities” (2004, p. 10).

There are various studies which show the weaker status of nomadic communities in their relations with villagers. It was reported that if a nomadic community has to earn a livelihood, then they cannot have disputes openly with village power holders (Berland, 2003). In his study on Nandiwalla in Maharashtra Hayden (2003) observed that disputes reveal the relationships of power between the people involved in them. Hayden gives an example of Wadapuri to show how at the time of economic scarcity and ritual practices were a reason for the dispute between villagers. This study observed that the dispute shows the weakest and strongest position of the communities, but in the case of the peripatetic communities position they are always at the weaker end because they are on the road and the sedentary society is strongest. According to Berland and Rao, “both these possibilities are embedded in the essentially asymmetrical relations of power that exist everywhere between peripatetics and their host communities. Indeed, most documented information on the history of peripatetics attests to this asymmetrical archival material consists entirely of the dominant discourse” (2004, p. 10).

Is it possible to employ the concept of ‘stranger’ as a tool to understand peripatetic Bahurupi in the current study? What are the perilous consequences of stranger status for the Bahurupi, and their relationships with clients/ villagers after getting settled in the village?

Development Programmes, Marginality and Integration of Peripatetic

One thing is clear through the above discussion that a trader needs to be outside of a group, but, when the same trader or a stranger gets settled due to change in the wider socio-economic aspects then new societal dynamics takes shape. Some studies leniently explored factors of integration, the stigma associated with nomadism, etc. There is a concern about the social integration of peripatetic communities in the village set-up (Rao and Casimir, 2003; Bokil, 2002). Social integration was one of the three main agendas for the world summit organised by the United Nations General Assembly, held in 1995 in Copenhagen. According to Alcantara, “there are at least three different ways of understanding the concept of social integration. For some, it is an inclusionary goal, implying equal opportunities and rights for all human beings. In this case, becoming more integrated implies improving life chances. To others, however, increasing integration has a negative connotation, conjuring up the image of an unwanted imposition of uniformity. And, to still others, the term does not necessarily imply either a positive or a negative state” (1995, p. 61). For Alcantara, social integration is simply a way of describing the established patterns of human relations in any given society. However, the studies on peripatetic communities have brought out a new paradigm that is a stranger’s position in the village which is most of the time shown as weaker. Consequently, because of this lower and weaker position peripatetic communities are getting further marginalised.

Here a very significant point in the discussion is that peripatetic communities were never permanent residents of village life. Of course, they had clients in villages but there were certain obligations on them, such as before setting up their camp nearby the village they were supposed to take permission from village key authorities, such as the village “Sarpanch” and “Police Patil”. In the context of Maharashtra, the Police Patil played a crucial role in regulating the affairs of the nomads. Traditionally, the Patil were heads of the villages. During the colonial period, they were linked with the British administration and controlled the affairs of the village. In Maharashtra, The Maharashtra Village Police Act 1967, gives Police Patil an official status. They are assigned several significant duties and responsibilities in any case of offence or accident taking place in the village. As Police Patil, he is responsible for maintaining village law and order. He is responsible to provide the first information to the nearest Police station officer about any offence and suspicious death that occurs in the village. He works under the jurisdiction of the district magistrate and assists the Police Station in searching the evidence related to any offences happening in the village.

Police Patil, on certain grounds, can suspect any person's involvement in an offence and can take him into custody. The several powers of the state government vested in Police Patil make him extremely powerful at the village level. Historically, Police Patil also kept a record of village offences and was constantly in contact with the nearest Police station. Even during colonial times, under draconian laws, such as the Criminal Tribes Act, of 1871, they were recognized as significant officials at the village level and were part of the surveillance system monitoring 'strangers' entering the village. Due to the colonial surveillance mechanism, it was mandatory for any nomadic community visiting the village to report to the Police Patil and provide details of their arrival and departure into the village. The Bahurupi of Maharashtra were constantly in contact with the Police Patil of any village as taking permission was necessary before setting up a temporary stay in the village. Based on certain conditions the permissions were granted to peripatetic communities.

Rao notes that "As a complement to their social and political marginality non-pastoral nomadic communities¹⁰ are often ascribed certain neutrality in their dealings with customers" (Rao, 1987, p. 7-10). There is evidence that a "head Tax" on "the strangers" was imposed for getting access to resources and clients. The peripatetic communities were supposed to pay taxes to nobility or other local, regional, or state authorities. Berland and Rao note that such taxes were official assessments, such as license or camping fees (2004, p.10). Considering the tax on peripatetic communities, one question arises what is the present status of tax in the context of a peripatetic community when they sedentarise? This phenomenon is discussed in a study by Hyden (2003). However, what happens when nomadic peripatetic communities get settled in the village, what kinds of social dynamics play a key role in determining new positions of peripatetic people in a village in the present context? It is apparent that the societal dimension, i.e., social integration, puts light on the very existence of the peripatetic community in the village.

When it comes to marginal communities, such as Dalits, tribes and their counterpart nomadic peripatetic communities in the village set-up, Dalits have space wherein they are integrated, but when it comes to peripatetic communities, or for that matter any nomadic community, they remain not integrated. As a result of this lack of integration, studies have found that there is opposition to the peripatetic existence in the village set-up. In a study on Dombari, Khandagale (2014) also witnessed opposition by villagers to the Dombari settlement. On Indian society, Thorat noted that "the stratified and hierarchical nature of Indian society

¹⁰Peripatetic communities are also known as non-pastoral community

involves institutional processes that economically and socially exclude, isolate, and deprive some groups on the basis of characteristics like caste, ethnicity, or religious background. These groups constitute a vast section of India's population and include low caste untouchables, tribes, nomadic, semi-nomadic, and de-notified tribes, (or ex-criminal tribes)" (2013, p.70). In light of this, to understand the integration of the peripatetic in the village set up it is imperative to study the stigma associated with nomadism. This stigma is a major hurdle for peripatetic communities' integration into the village community.

According to Erving Goffman (1963), there are three types of stigma such as the body, psychological and tribal. In the case of the body, for example, a disability of a certain kind also has been considered a stigma. On the other hand, in case of the psychological stigma, if there are certain mental defects in the individual he/she is considered by large groups as unusual and deviant and may face some sort of stigma. When it comes to tribal, which may manifest in race or colour, people are stigmatized based on their features. About stigma Goffman uses the word "spoiled identity" wherein a person differs from others based on his characteristics, it creates inferiority. Further, Haslam (2009), notes that there are consequences of those personal characteristics. He also notes that "the stigma of belonging to a particular group typically refers to the feelings (e.g., of shame or embarrassment) that this engenders rather than to the group membership itself" (2009, p. 1004). The issue of stigma is also been dealt with in the recently published report of the National Commission on the Nomadic, Semi-nomadic and Denotified Tribes (under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment), also known as Renke Commission Report. The report has documented well the menace of stigma faced by the DNTs¹¹ due to their criminal and nomadic background. They face this not only from the villagers but also from the police, local self-governments, municipal corporation, and others.

As far as the development of the peripatetic community is concerned, at the national level they are categorised under the other backward castes, and in the state of Maharashtra, nomadic tribe NT (B). However, empirical study has shown that peripatetic communities in Maharashtra are not beneficiary of any government scheme (Khandagale, 2014).

After examining the above literature, a few facts highlight the issue of marginalization of peripatetics and its relevance for nomads today.

¹¹DNT are known as Denotified tribes in the state of Maharashtra as Vimukt Jati, and are also known as ex-criminal tribes. Most of the peripatetic were also categorized as ex-criminal tribes.

Since the early days, peripatetic communities were a major source of providing goods and services for sedentary and other nomadic communities. There are historical evidences. The whole peripatetic culture has revolved around their traditional means of subsistence. The introduction of modern industry and technology has brought immense changes into the lives of many and peripatetic communities are no exception. After the change is witnessed, new dimensions started taking shape before peripatetic, i.e., sedentarization for new occupation became imperative. Getting sedentarised is not easy for peripatetics as they have to face the village dynamics, which due to the stigma associated with nomadism, many people may be against them. It is in this context imperative to study the aspects which contribute to the marginalization of peripatetic communities, i.e., their changing economy, stigmatization and further marginalization.

The available literature also raised certain questions relevant to the present study of the Bahurupi. What was the traditional means of subsistence of the Bahurupi in Maharashtra? What is the current situation of traditional means of subsistence? What was the migration pattern of Bahurupi and what is its current situation? What is the impact of sedentarization on the stigma, identity and culture of Bahurupi? What is the implication of stigma in the context of sedentarization?

Statement of Problem

Most of the anthropological studies are undertaken on pastoral communities. As a result, the available literature on peripatetic communities is scanty and whatever is available, most of it deals with change in livelihood. Very less data are available on the economy of the peripatetic communities in India. There are very few studies undertaken by scholars like Hyden (2003), Rao and Casimir (2003), Berland (2004), etc.

Now in the changing global context, the market economy is becoming dominant and is influencing many economies of local people and peripatetic communities. Under such circumstances, it is imperative to look at the influence of the market economy. Hence this study applies an economic anthropological perspective to study the peripatetic economy. Besides, the life of peripatetic communities has always been difficult, and now due to change, they are trying to settle in the villages, cities and towns in search of new subsistence. The available studies have shown that the life of peripatetic communities in the village is in jeopardy. It is in this context, the present study focuses on the peripatetic Bahurupi in Maharashtra. They are folk performers, mimicry artists and masters in the art of disguise.

They provide entertainment to sedentary and other nomadic communities. Based on the empirical data the researcher found that the Bahurupi continue their traditional livelihood with some modifications. Through providing entertainment services, they receive cash or goods which are necessary for survival. In the changing economic scenario, studying the economy of Bahurupi (actors/mimickers) is a major challenge today. Social scientists have raised certain questions about studying peripatetic communities from an economic point of view; some opine that it is very difficult to predict the economy of peripatetic nomads. Modernisation has brought sea changes in the lives of many, but Bahurupi still is involved in their traditional occupation of folk theatre and entertainment. Bahurupi has begun sedentarisation due to government policy pushes and social factors. Even though Bahurupi have begun settling down, the social stigma attached to their occupations and social status continues. Hence, there is a need to better understand the peripatetic Bahurupi economy.

Major factors curbing the development of peripatetic communities are the stigma associated with nomadism and strangeness in the village. Today, the major problem before peripatetic communities is that many of them have settled but still do not have any land ownership. Consequently, they could not get any benefit from the government. The existing stigma associated with nomadism deteriorated the lives of many peripatetic communities. Similarly, the change in their traditional livelihood has made them more vulnerable and they are further marginalized. It is in this context the study of sedentarization and its impact on the communities' economy, identity and culture is needed. It is also necessary to understand the implication of stigma in the context of sedentarization. So far there are no studies available on peripatetic Bahurupi in India. This thesis is an attempt to study Bahurupi of Yavatmal, Nanded and Washim districts in Maharashtra. The present land on which the settlement of Bahurupi is established is not owned by the community. Till now they are not getting the benefits of many schemes of the government. Due to modern entertainment, their acting and mimicry are in danger. Due to various reasons, their socio-economic life has been impacted.

Conceptual Framework

There are very few studies available on nomadic communities in India, most of the studies are focused on pastoral communities and have used nature and culture perspective to study them. On the other hand, there are very few studies by anthropologists on peripatetic communities which have primarily used perspectives drawn from ecological studies like the optimal foraging model (Rao, 1987) to understand the profit maximization process among the

peripatetic people. However, this approach does not provide discrete nature of peripatetic communities, because the same approach applies to pastoral as well as foragers.

The study by Berland (2004) used Georg Simmel's stranger perspective to understand peripatetic as a prototype of a trader. Berland used Stranger to show peripatetic as a discrete group. Milind Bokil (2010) in the article "De-notified and Nomadic Tribes: A Perspective" has noted and emphasized the need for a study on peripatetic communities with economic anthropology and historical perspective. He found that these perspectives would be more influential as far as their development is concerned. Rao (1987) suggested that "peripateticism, like pastoralism, should not be regarded as a specific mode of production, but rather as a mode of subsistence" (1987, p. 3). Based on this suggestion of Rao it seems that to understand the economy of peripatetic communities Karl Polanyi's substantive perspective would be useful. At the same time, Simmel's concept of "stranger" would also be helpful to understand peripatetics as a trader and their position in the village after sedentarization and the stigma they face.

In the present changing economic context, peripatetic communities are changing in terms of various aspects, such as social, economic, political, etc. Hence, it needs a new perspective to study them. At present, peripatetics are getting sedentarized and are changing their day-to-day life. However, empirical findings show that peripatetics' new means of subsistence is similar to traditional vocations as has been reported by Rao and Casimir (2003). On the other hand, after getting sedentarized the stigma associated with nomadism and their occupation continues to impact their lives. According to Fredrik Barth, "in Asia and Africa, the symbolic rejection of peripatetics seems more often caste in idioms of pollution and danger than morality, and we are in need of closer examination and comparison of the forms of stigmatization" (1987, p. IX). The issue of stigmatization is leading to further marginalization of peripatetics in the village. Hence, under these circumstances, it would be significant to study peripatetic Bahurupi in Yavatmal, Nanded and Washim Districts in Maharashtra.

Objectives of the study

1. To document the livelihood practices that constitute the economic organisation of the Bahurupi people in Maharashtra.
2. To evaluate the implications of colonial and post-colonial laws on the livelihoods and nomadism of the Bahurupi.

3. To understand the consequence of stigma on the life of the community.
4. To analyse the consequences of sedentarisation on the livelihoods of the community.
5. To examine the recommendations of commissions and development programmes for the Bahurupi.

Methodology

The present study is exploratory and employed qualitative and quantitative approaches to study the peripatetic Bahurupi people. The study was carried out using different anthropological methods, such as participant observation, non-participant observation, unstructured interviews, and informal discussions with community members belonging to different age groups and sex. The study also used the case study method to understand the relations between Bahurupi and others. Primary data were collected through fieldwork and administering household schedules. Secondary data were gathered from the published reports, books, articles, monographs and gazetteer.

Fieldwork was conducted between 2017 to 2019 over 2.5 years in different phases. Fieldwork was carried out in three villages, located in the districts of Yavatmal, Washim and Nanded. The initial phases of the fieldwork began in Kalapur village in Yavatmal district in Maharashtra. The initial phase of fieldwork helped the researcher to establish rapport and respondents of the village gave him contacts and references of Bahurupi members in other districts of Maharashtra. This led him to adopt a snowball sampling method to gather data from Bahurupi respondents. Snowballing sampling led him to conduct fieldwork in Bahirpur village in the Nanded district and Raghojiwadi village in the Washim district. The researcher periodically visited different settlements during the Diwali season to get information about their entertainment services provided to villagers. During Ramzan month, Bahurupi entertainers visited Muslim localities to receive donations made during the Ramzan month. The researcher accompanied the Bahurupi to major marketplaces and pilgrimages like Gurudwaras to observe their economic activities. In these markets around pilgrimage places, they sell objects made by stringing lemon and chillies together. These objects serve as evil eye warders. These evil eye warders are purchased by people visiting these markets and pilgrimage sites. Temporary settlements in Umarkhed in the Yavatmal district were also covered during their seasonal migration for three months in 2018. Mashivrathri festival of the Hindus allowed covering the Ragoji Maharaj yatra in 2018 in the Washim district, which the Bahurupi attend.

To know the traditional economy of Bahurupi, in-depth interviews with old age men and women were conducted and at the same time, life histories were also collected from them. Men and women who are involved in present livelihood were interviewed to understand their present economy. Villagers were also interviewed to know their opinions about the peripatetic existence in the village. To understand the stigma associated with nomadism narratives were recorded by prior consent of peripatetic individuals. In the writing-up of this thesis, pseudonyms have been used for villages and participants. This is done to protect the identity of the Bahurupi.

The Bahurupi

Bahurupi are also known as Bahurupi, Baharupia, Bahurupia, Beherupia. The meaning of Bahurupi takes on many forms or characters by masking different roles. Some of them play music in the Kala Kendra (place for Performance of dance). Women's role is managing household chores and working as daily wage labour in the nearest farms in the village. K. S. Singh has noted that they are a small group of people who are from different classes; they trace their descent from a Rajput. They are mentioned as Bahrupia by Russell and Hiralal (1916). According to Ibbetson (1881), the name is derived from the Sanskrit word bahu, meaning many and rupa, meaning form, and denotes an actor, a mimic or one who assumes many forms or characters. They continue to earn their livelihood by mimicry, and acting in folk theatre (nautanki) and are mainly concentrated in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Panjab. According to the 1931 census, the population of the Bahurupi was 184. To a large extent, they are mendicants and quick-change actors.

In Maharashtra, the Bahurupi are specialists in the art of disguise to entertain people. Earlier they disguised themselves as Lord Shiva, Lord Hanuman, Nandi Bull, a pregnant woman, animals and legendary tribal revolutionary like Tantia Bhil, etc. Today they disguise themselves as Policemen (*Rayandar*) and collect food and money from villages. The Bahurupi community comes under the nomadic 'B' category in the state of Maharashtra. They speak Marathi at home but are also conversant with Punjabi, Marwari, Telugu, and Hindi. The Devanagari script is used. They are known differently in different areas. In western Vidarbha are called Bahurupi, in Jhadi (Bhandara) they are known as Bhingi, in Marathwada as Rairung and Bombay they are known by the name Bhorpi (Singh 1998). Singh (1998) noted that in Vidarbha till recently, they were a nomadic people who subsisted on begging in different garbs. They are non-vegetarian. There has been much diversification

of occupation among the Bahurupi. They are experts in making masks of the elephant, horses, bulls, several gods and goddesses and human faces, which are generally used for plays. This was not found during the fieldwork.

Gaining Entry and Access into the Bahurupi Community for Fieldwork

Finding peripatetic nomads in Maharashtra is not a simple task. The researcher started an internet search but could not get any clue on these peripatetic communities in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, except the name of an activist of nomads, Madhukar, in the Washim District of Maharashtra. To get his contact details, the researcher approached the staff of the NT DNT development project of TISS. He inquired about the name that was sighted on the internet. Mr. Rahul and the project staff of TISS told the researcher that during 2010-11 they had conducted a workshop with various leaders and activists of the nomadic communities in the state of Maharashtra. The motive behind the workshop was to know the current settlements of the nomadic communities and also prepare them for the caste census which was planned by the then government in India. The leaders and activists were made aware of the necessity for the communities to be included in the census and they were also asked to plan proper strategies for the nomadic communities which are always mobile. TISS had conducted workshops in various places in Maharashtra. In the case of Vidarbha, various activists were invited from the Amravati district where Madhukar also attended the workshop. Madhukar himself belonged to Banjara, a DNT. He has his organization known as Tanda Biradari in Washim District in Maharashtra. The researcher asked NT DNT project staff to give the contact details of Madhukar, which he received.

The researcher was confident and happy that he will get more clarity and information about various settlements in the Yeotmal district. With this curiosity, he called Madhukar and enquired about the nomadic communities in the Yavatmal district. The researcher made it clear that he wanted to study one community from Yavatmal and needed his help in finding the settlement. After fixing up an appointment with Madhukar, the researcher reached Digrajs taluka of Yavatmal and met him at Shivaji Chowk. After exchanging initial greetings, the researcher made it clear to Madhukar that as a part of his Ph.D he wanted to study nomadic communities from the Yavatmal district. Madhukar responded by saying that he knows many settlements in Yavatmal and Washim districts, and wanted to know which community specifically the researcher wanted to study. The researcher made it clear that he wanted to study a peripatetic nomad who is engaged in entertainment service and asked Mr. Madhukar whether it is possible to visit first some settlements and then which community to study can

be decided. Madhukar assured all possible support in settling. We both went to Manora, which is a taluka in the Washim district, by bus.

Near the bus stop, we took an auto and went to Tara, a village where Madhukar stays. After an overnight stay at Madhukar's place, early in the morning, we visited Pardhi, Nath Jogi, Kaikadi, and Bahurupi peripatetic nomads' settlements. The Bahurupi settlement was 7 km away from Digras. Among the peripatetic community settlement visited the researcher decided to select the peripatetic Bahurupi community engaged in entertainment service.

We went to the Bahurupi settlement in Kalapur village. This village was a settlement of the project-affected people who were relocated in the 1980s due to the construction of a dam. Both sides of the road had pakka houses. Initially, houses of the Banjara community were seen on the right side and Muslim houses on the opposite side, then there were Matang and Mahar community houses on both sides and in the end, we reached a Bahurupi settlement. Madhukar asked Rupesh Shinde a Bahurupi person, whom he had informed that he is visiting the settlement with the researcher. Rupesh was wearing a police uniform which was old with no nameplate on it. Usually Police uniform has a nameplate on the left side of the shirt. The researcher greeted him and went to his house where a cot (Bajj) was offered to sit. Rupesh offered water in a jug to both. Rupesh was asking Madhukar about any visit to the office of the collector as they have put up a file for getting benefits under Vasantao Naik Mukht Vasahat Yojana to which Madhukar replied that not yet planned a visit. It was clear to me that Madhukar is not from an economically sound family and he has to manage many things, such as farming, children, and then taking time for social service. But for Madhukar, Rupesh had a lot of respect as Madhukar had helped them in getting their caste certificates and also the ration and voter cards. This work made him famous among nomadic people in the area. Madhukar had an organization called Biradari which is not functioning now due to a lack of funds. Madhukar requested the researcher to help him in starting a new organization. Meanwhile, Rupesh asked the researcher what he is going to do with the research on the Bahurupi. What Bahurupi are going to get from his research? Will they get any benefits? Madhukar clarified that the researcher is a student who came from the University in Hyderabad and wanted to study the Bahurupi. The researcher explained to Rupesh the motive behind selecting the Bahurupi community as no documentary evidence is available about them.

It was decided that for a few days, the researcher will be staying in Digras and travelling to Kalapur. The researcher informed Rupesh that he will come to the settlement and will stay there. The researcher along with Madhukar and Rupesh went to meet Mr. Sapre who is a police patil and Sarpanch Mr. Jadhav and explained the motive of the researcher's stay in the village and that he is going to study the communities in the village. It is imperative to take permission from the village key persons before conducting ethnographic research. The researcher did not say that he wants to study Bahurupi particularly, since he was worried that it should not create any conflict between the Sarpanch and Bahurupi, and mentioned to him that in terms of development, all communities will be studied. Sarpanch told me that the village was resettled during the 1980s to this place. He conveyed that he was going to attend a public open house meeting (Janta Darbar) in Digras where he is going to raise certain issue that families were not getting housing benefits after resettlement. It was surprising that 35 years old issues of settlement and compensation were still pending. The Sarpanch extended all possible help and support to the researcher.

After meeting Sarpanch, the researcher went to meet Mr. Sapre, a police patil of Kalapur and explained to him the purpose of his studying the village communities in terms of development. Police Patil asked the researcher what the people are going to get out of this. Are there new schemes of the Modi government to be launched in the villages? The researcher clarified to him that he is a University student from Hyderabad.

The researcher met five young Bahurupi who asked questions about the interest of the researcher in Bahurupi and what they are going to get out of this. The researcher made it clear to them that he is a student like them and studying. When the Bahurupi youth were asked about their future target and how are they studying to get to that? When asked this question, there was silence from them. However, one was interested in state competitive examinations and said he frequently visits his teacher of 12th class in Digras and he has asked him to get admission to an open university after his intermediate and focus on preparation for public service commission, and other competitive exams. The Bahurupi youth were a little worried about their future and were ready to do something new in life. None of them were interested in their old occupation of entertainment.

The researcher felt that Bahurupi youth should have a library in the village (there was no library for the students to study). Hence, the researcher decided to buy books which are recommended by the academies which are conducting training in competitive examinations.

When this information was shared with Bahurupi youth, everyone started becoming friendly with the researcher. This created a positive image of the researcher among the Bahurupi youth. Apart from the library, the researcher also conducted English classes for Bahurupi youth who are studying. This has helped the researcher immensely in gaining their confidence which helped immensely in data collection. A 70-year-old Bahurupi woman was eager to know the caste, marital status and family details of the researcher. Besides Kalapur, the researcher visited two other Bahurupi settlements, one in Raghojiwadi Washim District and another in Nanded, that were taken for this study.

The researcher during fieldwork came to know about one more Bahurupi settlement in the neighbouring Nanded district through Bahurupi of Kalapur. The settlement was 110 KM away from Kalapur village and has a good number of Bahurupi households. Thus, another Bahurupi village called Bahirpur in Nanded district was also selected for the study. After completing the Kalapur village, the researcher moved to Bahirpur village in Bokar block of Nanded district. Many Bahurupi of Kalapur have relatives in Bahirpur, which is a small village 1 KM away from Bhokar block. In the Bahurupi settlement, the researcher met a Bahurupi leader who was making evil eye warders with lemon and chillies. The warders are usually tied in the front part of vehicles or shops, to sell in the market. After getting introduced to him the researcher clarified the objective of the study and also gave reference to Bahurupi contacts from Kalapur village. The Bahurupi leader, who is a member of the village gram panchayat, welcomed the researcher. He recalled one person from Pune who had visited the settlement three years back to survey nomadic people in the village.

It is obvious that whenever one goes for fieldwork in the community and when the interest is in their culture, people also show interest in the fieldworker. Gaining the people's confidence takes time and this is the period when the researcher will be in the process of building a relationship with the community and people. It is not always easy to study people as they will not share their opinions and information until and unless one builds a good rapport with people. The researcher too experienced difficulties in establishing rapport to carry out the field study.

Limitation of the Study

Every study has its limitations and this study is no exception. Since the Bahurupi belong to three different village settlements that were selected based on snowball sampling, the villages could not be studied simultaneously. There is a methodological problem. The study required

extensive travelling in various villages and towns hence reaching all the places was not possible for the researcher.

Considering, the seasonal movement of Bahurupi to the different locations covering all of them was not possible due to long distances. Building trust with nomadic communities took time as they did not open up so easily to share information about their life and experience. Hence, rapport building took a long time for fieldwork.

There are multiple livelihoods of the Bahurupi. There are Bahurupi who play musical instruments and work in the theatre, when approached the theatre for the study, permission was denied. It was very difficult to find the government officials' views about Bahurupi despite my claim of being a researcher from a University. Hence, this study cannot claim an in-depth study of all the aspects of the diverse livelihoods adopted by the Bahurupi.

Chapter Scheme

The first chapter is 'Introduction' which consists of a review of literature which focuses on various concepts i.e., the economy from an anthropological point of view, Stigma and Stranger. Further, the literature is reviewed on existing studies on peripatetic communities. The research problem was highlighted based on the gap in the literature review. The objectives are framed to fulfil the research gap. The methodology consists of various techniques used for data collection during the fieldwork. The study's limitations are highlighted and the chapter scheme is given in the end.

The second chapter 'Ethnographic Profile' is about the peripatetic Bahurupi community's ethnographic profile, geographical distribution, district climate, and topography. The chapter also describes the demographic, socioeconomic, and educational profile of the three villages covered in this study. The community's social organisation related to clans and marriage is discussed in this chapter. The present food habits and various essential religious rituals the community follows are described.

The third chapter 'Changing Livelihoods and Economic Organisation' provides the details of changing livelihoods and economic organisation of the community. Multiple livelihoods adopted by the community are explained in detail i.e., Rayandar, making and selling evil eye warders (Lemon-chilly), labour, waiter, and drivers are discussed. Narratives of Bahurupi entertainers who are experts in playing musical instruments and their present and past experiences are highlighted. This chapter discusses women's involvement in rug stitching (Godadi). This chapter also discusses the alcohol drinking problem that the community faces.

The fourth chapter ‘Stranger, Stigma and Surveillance’ explains the concept of the ‘Panopticon’ given by Michel Foucault. During the colonial period, the Criminal Tribes Act (1871) led to the surveillance mechanism to keep watch on the nomadic communities and “criminal Tribes”. This act had long-term repercussions on the Bahurupi. An effort is made to understand the impact of stigma on the lives of Bahurupi by using the ‘stranger’ concept which was proposed by Berland (2004) to study nomadic communities. Further, this chapter explains the outcome of Stigma and Stranger that resulted in cases of abuse, harassment, and atrocities faced by Bahaurupi.

The fifth chapter analyses sedentarisation and change. Nomadic sedentarization during the colonial times of “ the Criminal Tribes” was executed by the Salvation Army. In post-colonial times, development projects have led to the settlement of nomads. This has impacted the traditional livelihoods and economy of the Bahurupi as well. Such factors of change in the livelihoods of the Bahurupi have been discussed in detail in this chapter.

The sixth chapter discusses various Constitutional Safe Guards, Commissions, Committees and Development programmes meant for nomads in India. The existing developmental programmes created in the State of Maharashtra for improving the lives of nomads are analysed in this chapter. Further, the programmes' loopholes are also discussed in this chapter.

The last chapter ‘Summary and Conclusion’ provides an overview of the thesis. It begins by highlighting the important findings of each chapter. It elaborates on the relevance of the conceptual framework to the thesis and the study of the Bahurupi. It ends by offering suggestions to improve the status of nomads.

Chapter 2

Ethnographic Profile

The present chapter provides an ethnographic description of the peripatetic Bahurupi people. It describes the location and geographical setting, the districts, in which the Bahurupi are distributed in Maharashtra. Further, the chapter describes their culture, food, dress patterns kinship structure and religious rituals. This chapter is based on primary data gathered through fieldwork and socio-economic data gathered by using a schedule.

Yavatmal District

Yavatmal is a well-known district in the state of Maharashtra and is in the Vidarbha region. It is found in the records of Ain-i-Akbari that the district derived its name from 'Yot Lohara', Yot being an Urdu corruption of Yavata the original name of the town and Lohara, the name of the nearest village around 5 km from its west. Following the merger of the village Lohara it came to be known as Yavatmal from Yavat and Mal is a corruption of Mahal or Pargana town. There is also another claim that the word Mali in Marathi means a plain and Yavatmal is the plains of Yavat (Kunte, 1974, 2016)

The geographical area of Yavatmal is 13,517.00 square km. It is located between 19° 26` and 20° 42` north latitude and 77° 18` and 79° 9` east longitude. Varied and rich in its land-form features, the district consists of masses of a hilly country broken by broad valleys and interspersed by gentle sloping plains. On its top, there are Ajanta ranges and plateaus. However, the northern sections form part of the Payanghat or the Berar plains. Most of the land of the district is a high-level plateau at an average elevation of 350 to 450 meters sloping gently eastwards with average gradients of 2 meters per kilometre¹².

The main rivers of the districts are the Penganga and the Wardha both of which flow dodging the district and forming the district boundaries. Though, the district is well drained by a large number of tributaries of the two rivers, i.e., Bembla nadi, a right bank tributary of the Wardha river, the Pus, the Adan-Arunavati, the Waghadi, the Khuni, the Vidarbha and the Nirguda. Interesting regional and local distinctions within the districts are brought about due to differences in terrain, slope and water supply on one hand and cultural impacts from the area

¹² [The Gazetteers Department - YEOTMAL \(maharashtra.gov.in\)](http://TheGazetteersDepartment-YEOTMAL.maharashtra.gov.in) (Accessed on 27.4.2023).

to the southeast and from the plains to the north. In the district there are the following natural divisions:

1. The Wardha Valley lowlands comprise a) the lowlands over the traps in the rest of Wani Tehsil, and b) the lowlands in the rest of Wani Tehsil formed over earlier geological formations.
2. The plateau region, comprising a) the Yavatmal Plateau, b) the Adan-Arunavati Basin and c) the Pus Valley, and
3. The Penganga lowlands in Pusad tehsil.

Climatic condition

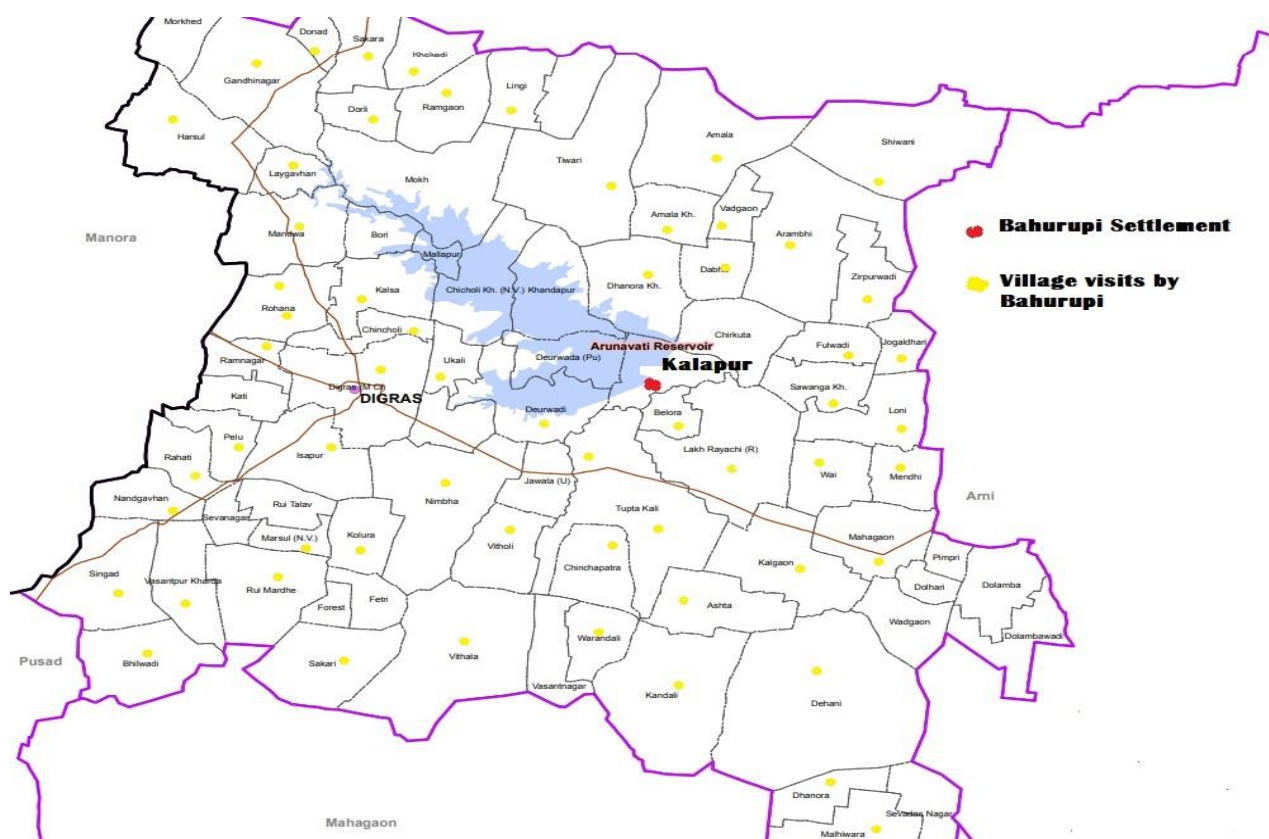
The climate of the district is characterized by hot summer and general dryness, except during the southwest monsoon. The cold season from December to February is followed by the hot season from March to May. June to September is the southwest monsoon season and October and November are the post-monsoon periods.

The average rainfall of the district is 890 to 991 mm in different places. The district experiences an average maximum and minimum temperature of 41.8°C and 28.3°C, respectively. Summer months are the driest and the relative humidity range is about 25% in the afternoon. Winds are generally light to moderate with some strengthening during the period from May to August. In the post-monsoon and cold seasons, the winds generally blow from the east or northeast.

Flora

The district forest is classified into four categories: 1) Good quality teak forest: the teak species found are in varying proportion, like *ain* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), *karam* (*stephegyne parvifolia*), *bel* (*Aegle marmelos*), *tiwas* (*Ougeniadalbergioides*), etc., 2) Poor quality teak forest 3) Mixed Forest: occurs in small blocks in the eastern portion of east Yavatmal district. Verities like *ain*, *lendia*, *dhwada*, *tendu*, *char*, *bija*, etc., are found, and 4) Unstocked and blank areas: such areas are common and comprise about 50 per cent of the forest area and lie interspersed all over. Bamboo: Bamboo does not occur as a separate type but is found along the nallah banks, valleys and easy slopes of the hills. The Bamboo crop because of its usefulness and demand from the cultivators, has been planted successfully in the Umarda reserved forest of the east Yavatmal division.

Map 2.1: Kalapur Settlement in Yavatmal District



(Map source: <https://mrsac.gov.in/>)

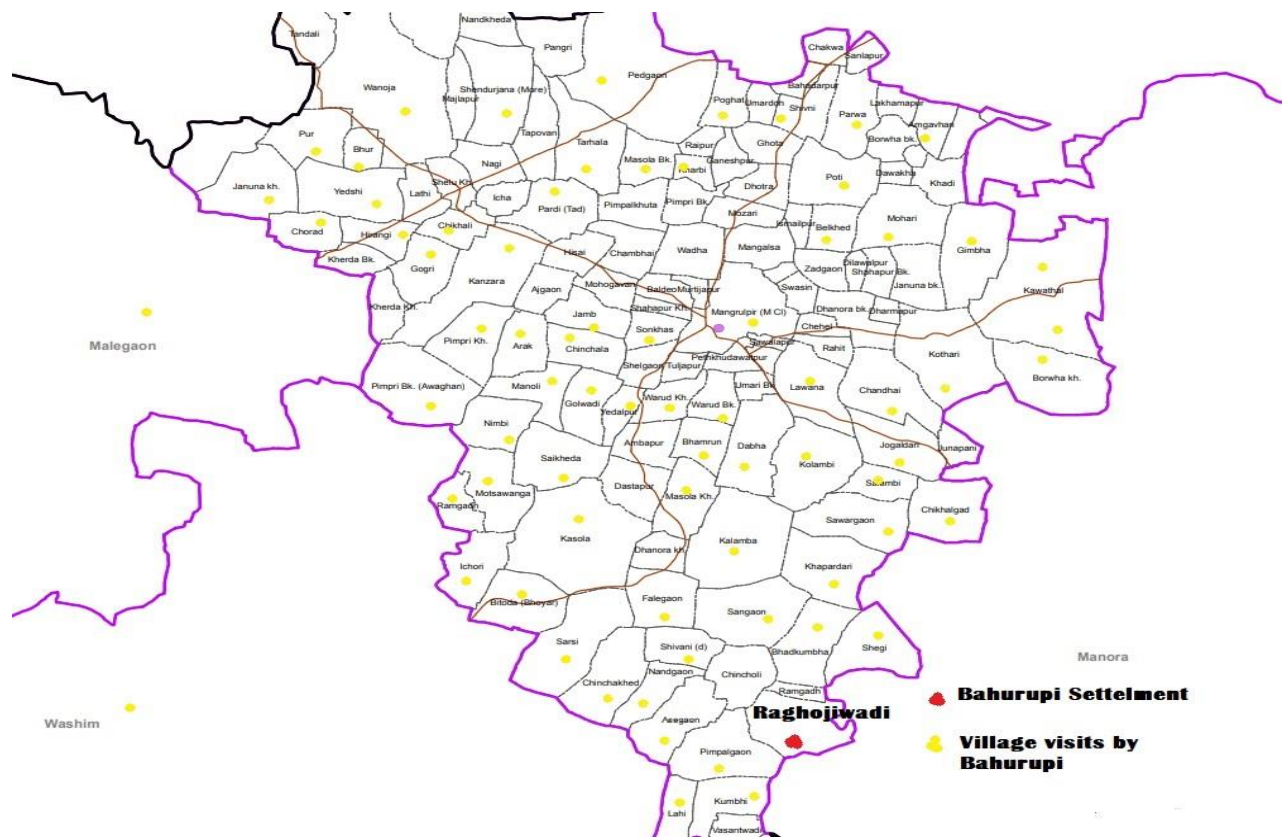
Bahurupi

Secondary literature describes the Bahurupia as a small class of mendicants actors and quick-change artists, i.e., they quickly can change costumes or roles when performing an entertainment act. They are recruited from all classes of the population, and though a distinct caste of Bahurupias appears to exist, people of various castes also call themselves Bahurupia when they take up this occupation. In other words, they are a caste as well as a group pursuing an occupation. In Berar, the Mahar, Mang and Maratha divisions of the Bahurupias are the most common. The Mahar and Mang beg from the castes from which they derive their names. In Gujrat, they appear to be primarily Muslims (Russels and Hiralal, 1916).

Commenting on the nomenclature of Bahurupi, Sir D. Ibbetson observes that “the name is derived from the Sanskrit Bahu, many, and rupa, form, and denotes an actor, a mimic or one who assumes many forms or characters. One of their favourite devices is to ask for money, and when it is refused to ask that it may be given if the Bahurupia succeeds in deceiving the person who refused it. Some days later the Bahurupia will again visit the house in the

disguise of a peddler, a milkman or what not, sell his goods without being detected, throw off his disguise and claim the stipulated record”(Russels and Hiralal, 1916, p. 344). In Gujrat “they are ventriloquists and actors with a special skill of dressing one side of their face like a man the other side like a woman, and moving their head about so sharply that they seem to be two persons”(Russels and Hiralal, 1916, p. 344). Mr. Kitts states that “the men are by profession story tellers and mimics, imitating the voices of men and the notes of animals; their male children are also trained to dance. In payment of their entertainment, they are frequently content with cast-off clothes, which will of course be of use to them in assuming other characters”(Russels and Hiralal, 1916, p. 344). Occasionally they also dress up in European clothes and can successfully assume the character of a Eurasian.

Map 2.2: Raghojiwadi Settlement in Washim District



(Map source: <https://mrsac.gov.in/>)

Demography of the Bahurupi

The details given below are based on the household survey data gathered through fieldwork among the Bahurupi in the three districts of Yavatmal, Washim and Nanded. The study

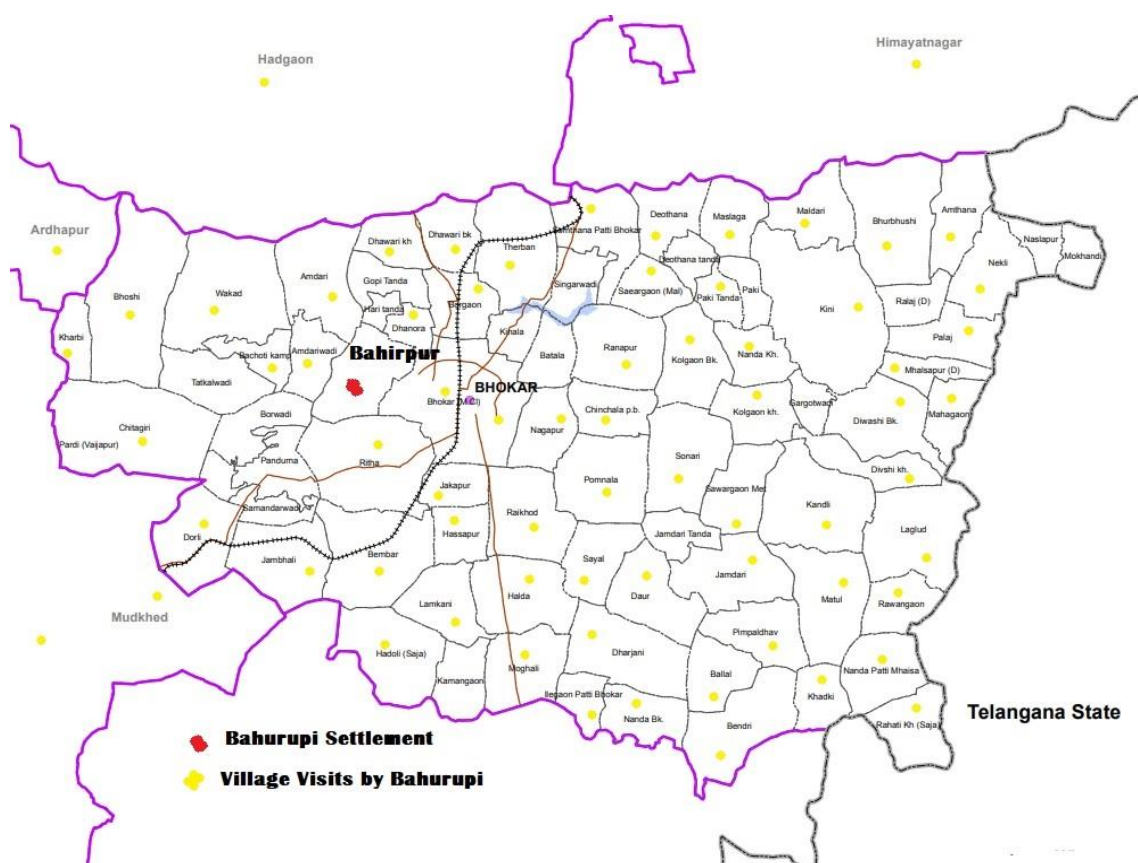
covered the maximum number of households in Bahirpur village of Nanded district, followed by Kalapur village in Yavatmal and the smallest number of households in the Washim district.

Table 2.1: Households Surveyed in Three Districts of Maharashtra

Village	No. of households	Location
Kalapur	33	Yavatmal
Raghojiwadi	07	Washim
Bahirpur	58	Nanded
Total	98	

Overall, the percentage of males is higher compared to the females in the three study villages, though in Kalapur the male and female population is not too wide.

Map 2.3. Bahirpur Settlement in Nanded District



(Map source: <https://mrsac.gov.in/>)

Table 2.2: Sex-wise population of Bahurupi household

Sex	Kalapur Vasti N (110)		Raghojiwadi Vasti N (30)		Bahirpur N (224)	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Male	60	54.55	21	70	119	53.13
Female	50	45.45	09	30	105	46.88
Total	110	100	30	100	224	100

Social Organisation of Bahurupi

Kinship relationships are organised around clans among the Bahurupi. During the fieldwork, it was found that the Bahurupi have organised themselves into clans and they are divided into eight clans, namely, Sakhare, Chaupare, Karale, Gire, Jadhav, Pawar, Shinde, and Sirsath. The clan follows strict patrilineal descent. Each Bahurupi person belongs to a family (ghar) that belongs to one of the clans (Bhauki). Based on the sample villages it was observed that Sakhare clan members are comparatively higher than the other clans of Bahurupi (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Sample of different households

		No. of households		
Sr. No	Clan	Kalapur	Raghojiwadi	Bahirpur
01	Sakhare	11	03	20
02	Chaupare	00	00	11
03	Karale	00	00	09
04	Gire	01	00	07
05	Jadhav	00	00	01
06	Pawar	00	00	01
07	Shinde	10	04	05
08	Sirsath	11	00	01
Total		33	07	58

About the place of origin of the Bahurupi, they claim that earlier they were from Rajna Bhandari a village based in the Yavatmal district which is now underwater because of the Isapur dam. They refer to themselves as Bahurupi “Vegvegale Rup Dharan Karnare” (One who takes different forms), and make people laugh (Lokanna Hasawatat) with their art,

‘Kala’. Bahurupi were nomadic while they were practising their traditional livelihood. Now they have established their settlement in different villages. In the case of occupation, the men carry on the skills of mimics and have adopted Bahurupi police clothing (Rayandar) for entertaining the villagers. They wear a uniform impersonating the police. These Bahurupi practice their mimicry art and storytelling in different villages and return to their settlements in the evening. The majority of the Bahurupi have kaccha or temporary houses on the village pasture lands (*gairan*) but some of them purchased a piece of land.

Bahurupi follow the principle of patrilineal descent, inheritance of property is passed on from father to son. The members cannot reproduce social relations or material requirements without seeking help from the other members of the family. However, it was found that Bahurupi’s clans (*Pariwar*) practice clan exogamous marriages. A member seeks his bride from another clan “*Pariwar*”, as a Bahurupi man cannot marry a woman from the same clan “*Pariwar*” which they call “*Bhauki*” that they belong to, as it is taboo. “This interdependence is imposed, in the first place, by the universal existence of the incest prohibition and the rule of exogamy which accompanies it, whatever it forms or the range of its application may be” (Godelier, 1975: 3). There are relations between the clans which are the social relations of production. It was noted that the clans exchange women in marriage which is necessary for the propagation of the clan, “*Pariwar*”. The social rules followed by the family determine the division of labour that prescribes activities for men and women. Women are recruited through marriage into a “*Pariwar*” and contribute their labour in the household’s domestic duties and social relations.

It is difficult to discover the ethnic history of the Bahurupi. However, membership in the “*Pariwar*” is an ascribed status. One cannot change their “*Pariwar*”. Their culture is similar to the Hindu castes Jati. According to Bahurupi, they do not remember their Gotra. It would be appropriate to identify “*Pariwar*” as a clan. The clans are further divided into patrilineages (*Chulat*).

The social relationships among the Bahurupi may be classified into two groups, i.e., “*Bhauki*” (consanguineal) and another is “*Soyare*” (*Affinal*). However, the observed clan system of the Bahurupi is different from the ones mentioned in the historical record. Therefore, it raises lots of questions regarding the origin of the Bahurupi. Interestingly historical observations about Bahurupi were in the writings of Russel and Hiralal which are significant to highlight here.

Russel and Hiralal noted that “Bahurupi are recruited from all classes of the population, and though a distinct caste of Bahurupi’s appears to exist, people of various castes also call themselves Bahurupia when they take this occupation. In the Berar province, the Mahar, Mang and Maratha divisions of the Bahurupias are the most common the former two begging only from the castes from which they take their name (1916: 344). Based on Russel and Hiralal’s suggestion that the Bahurupi are recruited from all classes of the population, this aspect of recruitment from various classes was not found during the fieldwork.

Marriage among the Bahurupi

Bahurupi marriage is called “Lagna”. They follow monogamous marriage, where marriage takes place with only one partner. Cross-cousin marriage is practised “Mamachya Porisobat Lagna”. Bahurupi is economically weaker as compared to their counterpart Hindu castes but even so, there is a tradition of taking dowry by the bridegroom and his kinsmen. It may be a gold ring “Sonyachi Anguthi” at least one gram or clothes. If the bridegroom is not economically well to do, he would not get anything in dowry. The wedding ritual expenditure is borne by the bride’s father. Marriages are arranged between different exogamous clans and elders from the family play a vital role in deciding the partners. Divorce is a political process where the “Jaat Panchayat” plays a major role. However, fixing the marriage is called “Soyrik” where elders from both clans and other relatives take part and decide on an amount of the dowry (Hunda), the number of clothes for both sides, the place of the ritual to be performed and the number of people going to attend the same. The “Soyrik” is also called “Sakharpuda” the same as in the Hindu caste. There will be a formal announcement offering sugar between people. The “Soyrik” marriage fixing event usually takes place in the home of the bride. Those that are economically stronger usually organise large gatherings.

Table 2.4: Marital status of Bahurupi

Status/Village	Kalapur		Raghojiwadi		Bahirpur	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Married	54	49.09	16	53.33	118	52.68
Unmarried	50	45.46	14	46.67	97	43.31
Widow	06	05.45	00	00	09	04.01
Total	110	100	30	100	224	100

Before marriage, there is a ritual called “Halad”. In this ritual, turmeric is applied to the body of the both bridegroom and the bride. The bridegroom arrives at the home of the bride and there the ritual of “Halad” takes place. During the “Halad” the bridegroom’s sister, father’s sister, mother’s brother and sisters will be present. Halad is turmeric in a raw form known as kande, are ground using the traditional stone grinder (Khalbatta). Then the Halad is filtered using a cloth. During the ritual, the bride and bridegroom will be accompanied by Sakonya and Karvali. Sakonya comprises of usually two male members who are close consanguine. Karvali are female relatives accompanying the bride. They help the bride and bridegroom with any material requirements during the Halad and marriage Lagna.

For the Halad ritual, a green tent, known as “Hirva Mandav”, is erected in front of the house under which a bath will be offered to both the bride and the bridegroom. The Hirva Mandav green tent will be made of four wooden poles and leaves of mango (Ambyachi Pane). The poles will be applied with halad and vermilion. After the Halad is applied to their bodies both are brought under the green tent Hirva Mandav.

Here women members play a key role in giving baths to both the bride and the bridegroom. Women from both sides sing songs and hold the water vessel *called* Tambya and bathe the bride and bridegroom. After the bath, the bride and bridegroom are offered sweet, Shewalya, a kind of noodle made of wheat flour. On the day of marriage, Lagna, in the morning, the bridegroom and bride are taken to the makeup process. There will be beauty products, i.e., powder, bindiya, tikali, Bashing and Kajal sourced from the market. Sakonya and Karvali play a role in adorning the face of the bride and the bridegroom. After the makeup is done, the bridegroom is taken to the nearest Maroti (Hanuman) Temple for taking blessings. Music is played with Dhol Tasha (traditional musical instruments) there will be a procession where all the relatives of the bridegroom will accompany him. In the temple Maroti is offered vermilion, shendur and camphor are lit following the breaking of the coconut. The bridegroom offers Maroti some Dakshina in the form of money. During the whole process of the marriage event, the bridegroom (Navardev) will carry a knife that is pierced into a lemon. After visiting the temple, the bridegroom is taken to the marriage tent, Lagna Mandap, and offered a dress (Shevanti) which will be worn by the bridegroom during the marriage. All invited relatives and friends will be witnessing the event. The priest (Maharaj) who is sometimes a Brahman is called to say the verse Mangalashtaka. On the stage both the bride and bridegroom will stand facing each other and there will be a piece of cloth held by two

people on either side in between the bride and the bridegroom. There will be five magalashtaka sacred verses wherein the names of major rivers in India are spoken. At the end of the fifth Mangalashtaka, music with Dhol Tashe is played and a formal announcement is made to all attendees for having the marriage meal (Sneha Bhojan). The offered food is based on the economic condition of the bride's father. If he is economically weak he would cook Labade made of Wheat flour and daal (pulses). Some cook Bhaji and Puri, and Shira, sweet. Guests come with gifts containing domestic goods such as vessels (Bhandi) and things like watches which are used in daily life. The newly married couple is offered a cot, mattress, Gadi, and Kapat but these items are offered by Bahurupi who are economically stronger.

However, the traditional marriage *Lagna* was completely different from the present one of Bahurupi. When they were full-time nomadic, their marriage Lagna used to take place on the roadside, in the fields, or under the tree by installing the temporary green tents - Hirva Mandav. At that time their economic condition was not that good so only Labde made of wheat flour was served to very few relatives attending the event. It was also noted that their marriages in the traditional form used to get fixed during childhood.

After the marriage, in the evening at the home of the bridegroom, the ritual of the Gaadi is performed where a doll made of cloth is prepared and songs are sung by a few women. On the next day, the bride and bridegroom take the blessings of the elders from the Pariwar and the bride and bridegroom also visit nearby temples to take the blessings of deities as well as Kuldevata.

Bahurupi ties with Bahirji Naik

It was observed during the fieldwork that all the Bahurupi claim that the historical personality Bahirji Naik belonged to the Bahurupi community. Bahirji Naik, originally Bhairavnath Jadhav was a Maratha spy in the army of Chhatrapati Shivaji during the 17th century. His contribution to the army earned him the title of Naik (Chief). Bahurupi take pride in tracing their linkage with Bahirji Naik.

During the fieldwork, Sharad, one of the Key informants, narrated that "*I searched the history of the Bahirji Naik online internet, my friends also helped to search the history of our great hero. We found that our search clue was right. When we are Bahurupi and why we hide our past is the major question and this always disturbs me*". Further, Sharad says that "*Since*

my childhood, I only used to listen to the name Bahirji Naik that's it. And old people also used to tell us that Bahirji Naik is from our community. He belonged to our community and he had the unique skill of changing his attire. He went to the Fort of King Shivaji Maharaj and never returned. I had listened to this much only". Sharad gives further reference to their secret language called *Farsi*, in which they say that *"we have a dialect Pot Bhasha in that people used to tell that a spy known as Gupt is the third eye of King Shivaji Maharaj"*. Regarding Bahirji Naik's birthplace and death Sharad says that *"he was born in Solapur in Maharashtra. And Bahurupi means one who does not belong to any one village as they are nomadic and roam always. There is no written evidence about his birthplace"*. However, Bahurupi Sharad strongly believes Bahirji Naik belongs to the Bahurupi community. Sharad says that *"Bahirji died in one village in Solapur, but when he died that also we don't know. During the war, Bahirji Naik got injured and stayed in one place but he died after the death of Shivaji Maharaj. It is been written in a village called Khanapur in Solapur"*. Sharad also added a source of evidence from the 10th class chapter from the Maharashtra state board syllabus, he says that *"Bahirji Naik was mostly trusted person for Shivaji Maharaj. There was a chapter in the 10th std. textbook but that has been removed now"*. During the fieldwork, all Bahurupi celebrated Bahirji Naik as one of them in Bahirpur village. Sharad says that *"After searching all these facts about Bahirji Naik and his links to our community, we organized a gathering of nomadic people here in Bahirpur village"*.

The aspect on the work performed by Bahirji Naik, Kantak (1978-79) notes that there was a separate intelligence department in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's army which was under the control of Bahirji Jadhav Naik (Kantak, 1978, p. 52). Based on the historical record it is clear that Bahirji Naik was an intellectual specializing in spying. Kantak writes that Bahirji furnished accurate information about the town of Surat. All the credit for the efficiency of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's espionage department goes to Bahirji, and Bahirji saved the life of the Maharaj during the plunder of Jalanpur in 1679 (1978-79, p.52).

Kantak (1978-79) further notes that Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj moulded the caste-ridden society into a cohesive unit where it can be said that there were people from poor and low-caste backgrounds in the Maratha army. He also mentions that Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was successful in making his people recognize certain moral principals coupled with material interests as common to them all, thus creating among them general oneness of aim and life in his political struggle against the Muslim rule and the foreign powers. This general sense of

unity began to operate for the people's good even while caste distinctions and sectarian differences continued to be observed in the Maratha Society of the 17th century (Kantak, 1978-79). Why was preference given to low-caste people in the intelligence and spying department in the Maratha army? Following this, Kantak (1978-79) further noted that the Ramoshis and Mahars, whose services were used for watch and ward duties in the village and fort administration in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's period, also had the potential of becoming excellent spies and messengers. One can speculate that the exceptional spying capability displayed by Bahirji Naik comes from one who belongs to a community traditionally involved in keeping guard or spying.

There is another scholar Patrick Cadell also noted the involvement of the low-caste people in the Maratha army. He noted that "while the bulk of men were naturally Marathas, they included not only the allied castes of Dhangars and Gowalas, Shepherds and herdsmen but many who had no claim to kinship" (1938: 12).

Considering the involvement of the low caste in the Maratha army it can be said that due to their exceptional ability to spy and carry messages, they were with the army in the kingdom of Shivaji. And it appears that those involved in the spying may have adopted the act of entertaining communities as they come into contact with communities in different guises. This required one to be mobile and nomadic as well. Bahurupi proudly claim that Bahirji Naik belonged to the Bahurupi community. Bahirji was our man (*Amcha Manus hota*). They say that he used to take different forms (*Vegvegle rupa ghyaychaa*) and with that skill, he used to spy in the enemy's territory.

Education

Education levels among Nomads are generally low. The Bahurupi are no exception to the low levels of education. Many Bahurupi never went to school and illiteracy is high among them. There are 143 illiterates among the 364 of the sample surveyed (Table 2.6). There are 69 Bahurupi children between the age of 7 and 18 attending the school (Table 2.5).

During the fieldwork it was found that it was after the establishment of the settlement in the village, Bahurupi children started going to school. In the traditional nomadic lifestyle, they were always on the move and had no chance to attend full-time formal day school. 13 Bahurupi children are out of school and have dropped out due to various reasons, such as

family economic condition and lack of interest in the study, some children visit the nearest pond near the village and do fishing, though their parents ask them to attend the school.

The mid-day meal is offered to the Bahurupi children attending the school with the motive of decreasing the drop-out rate. In the mid-day meal, they serve Khichadi made of Tandul rice. Once a week bananas and eggs are also given to each child.

Table 2.5: Education levels in the Study Villages

Class	Kalapur		Raghojiwadi		Bahirpur	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1-4	04	03	01	00	10	10
5-8	03	03	03	01	09	11
9-10	03	00	00	00	03	00
11-12	02	00	00	00	02	00
Diploma	00	00	01	00	00	00
Total	12	06	05	01	24	21

Children below 6 years are attending Anganwadi (ICDS) centres in the village (59 of them). There they are offered preschool education as well as meal items packets; Chanadaal (Chickpeas), Gahu (Wheat), Tandul (Rice), Mirchi (Chilly), Mith (Salt), Tel (Oil), Sakhar (Sugar) all items in 1 K.G. except chilly, 250 gram. Apart from the nutritional supplements, children are also offered vaccinations of different kinds during their life stages in childhood.

Table 2.6: Sex-wise Illiteracy Status among Bahurupi

Sex	Kalapur		Raghojiwadi		Bahirpur	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Male	16	42.11	06	60	44	46.31
Female	22	57.89	04	40	51	53.69
Total	38	100	10	100	95	100

Social Unit and Dwelling

Bahurupi wearing a police uniform (impersonating a policeman) are also known as Rayandar. The Bahurupi can be identified based on *Raoti* tent, a temporary shelter. It is while they are

on the move in distant places like Umarkhed, Balapur, Varanga, Nanded, Parbhani and Hingoli. *Raoti* and village house, also known as *ghar*, has a different meaning for Bahurupi. A household or a family is the basic social unit of the Bahurupi Rayandar community in Kalapur village. The house is represented by a male member as a member of the ‘unit of production’ in the family. It is observed that the head of the family holds right over moveable – *Raoti* and immovable – a *Katcha* house property. A permanent house or for that matter sedentarisation in a particular village has become a basic necessity for Bahurupi, due to various extraneous factors. Hence, Bahurupi established their houses in Kalapur village. The major feature of the house is that it is constructed with the same material as other villagers, such as black stones, known as *chire*, soil, known as *chicken mati*, and tin sheets for the roof along with iron wire tied with big stones to protect the tin sheets from flying away due to wind.

Plate 2.1: Bahurupi House and Baaj at home village



However, on the front side of the house, there will be a temporary room made of wooden poles facing the entrance of the house. People will attach small sticks horizontally to the wooden poles and the stems of the pigeon peas (*paratya*), are kept; they collect these from nearby villages after the harvest and the rainy season. It will be used as the roof of the front entrance room for the Bahurupi house in the village. This front room will be cool and air can easily pass inside. Also, the shade gives some relief from the heat. The main room is kept neat and clean, and the size of the room is approximately 15 feet wide and height around 6 to 7 feet. Only Bahurupi adds colour to their houses, the rest of the houses of Bahurupi are

simple and the walls are kutcha needing sarwan wiping once a year with the use of water and soil mixture.

Every house of Bahurupi has a cot (*Baaj*), also known as (*Khaat*), made of a wooden pole with a length of 5 feet and width of 3 feet and a height from the ground will be of 2 feet. It is observed that the settlement of Bahurupi in Kalapur is very close to fields and many a time they have experienced the presence of reptiles like snakes, scorpions and insects. Hence, the cot (*Baaj*) keeps them safe in case a snake or scorpion comes during the night. For buying a cot (*Baaj*), 600 rupees is needed and also need small size rope (*sumb*) made of *Lavhalya* grass plants found around the rivers. Nowadays Bahurupi is buying small-size ropes from the nearest market from Digrass. The cot (*Baaj*) needs maintenance like making the rope tight, stretching and tying it so that it will not be loose and be a hindrance while sleeping on it.

Apart from a house in the village whenever Bahurupi is on the move, they stay for a particular duration in certain areas and establish their tent (*Raoti*) in certain places with prior permissions from the land owner. It was found that they stay in a particular place for 15 to 20 days and then shift to a new place. The tent (*Raoti*) will be semi-circular or triangular with a height of 5 feet and a width of 7 feet. Husband, wife and children can easily be accommodated in the tent (*Raoti*). The major feature of the tent (*Raoti*) is that it is very flexible, easy to move from place to place and takes only a few hours to build. It is built with bamboo sticks and small wooden poles, along with a thread (*stutali*), plastic covers and old banners. Old sacks and plastic covers are also used to cover the tent (*Raoti*) as walls and only need weaving and binding with sticks. Both ends of the bamboo sticks are pierced deep inside the ground which gives a temporary foundation to the tent (*Raoti*) and secures it from the wind. The plastic cover, bamboo sticks, and threads (*sutali*) Bahurupi have to buy from the nearest market. These materials are useful for not more than one year. Bahurupi reported that it takes around 60 to 100 rupees per meter for the plastic cover from the market but the rate of the plastic cover also depends upon the quality of the cover as well, so the better the quality more money it costs. Old sacks which are completely plastic are stitched in a manner that they can be used as a mat and wall cloths. Men and women both have an equal role in building the tent (*Raoti*), however, the piercing poles and wooden, bamboo sticks are the men do. The floor of the tent (*Raoti*) would be cleaned with the help of water and cow dung paste this process known as *sarwan* keeps the tent (*Raoti*) not only free from insects but dust as well. Women have to clean and wipe the floor daily. The Bahurupi believe that keeping Raoti or Ghar clean will bring prosperity and wealth (*Lakshmi*).

Plate: 2.2 Bahurupi Vasti a group of Raotis



Whenever they go to a new place and plan to establish their tent (Raotis) in a certain place they have to have to take permission from village headmen, i.e., Sarpanch and Police Patil, and it is the rule among the Bahurupi that the family heads together to go and seek permissions from village headmen. They always inform village headmen about their plan of stay, that is, how many days they are going to stay at a particular place. The case of Shinde illustrates the permission of the headman from an owner of farmland which was close to the national highway running between Nanded to Nagpur. The place is very close to the water facility on the farm well and the owner also gives them access to it. This place was chosen as its radius covers many other villages that the Bahurupi visit for their livelihood. Shinde went to meet a headman named Deshmukh and requested that he want to stay for a while. Headman is also the owner of the land where the Raoti were supposed to be installed and he gave permission. Shinde always stays here and they have friendly ties with the owner of the land. The owner knows that these people do not harm anyone. The familiarity with the owner is not new as Shinde's father also used to establish his Raoti in the same place and so the relationship with the land owner is old.

The place for installing the Raoti will always be close to some water sources. Sources of water could be public taps, hand pumps, wells and private borewells. Bahurupi also requests for permission to use the water. Of water sources, it was also observed in Umarkhed Yavatmal that the open water valves of public water supply pipeline, leaking water is also preferred by Bahurupi to meet their water requirements.

Plate: 2.3 The open water valves of the public water supply pipeline



It was observed that during summer the fabric used as a wall for the tent (*Raoti*) is removed and it will be left open and tied back again during the evening time. It was also observed that water is sprinkled around the floor so that it would make the floor cool as during the day time the floor gets very hot and the Bahurupi say it makes them sweat. Women primarily perform this duty. When it is very hot in the afternoon, family members may lie under a shady tree to escape the heat. In a village near to Umarkhed it was observed that Bahurupi children were taking baths in the village water pond as many of them know how to swim. The same was also observed during the fair in the village of Raghojiwadi. During the winter season it was observed that the tent entrance is closed with a fabric that acts as a wall, it helps prevent cold air from getting inside the tent.

It is also seen that Bahurupi children while sleeping during the day do so in a cradle made by tying clothes and sarees. Sometimes the cradle is tied to the wood supporting the *Raoti* or it may be tied to a tree.

It was observed that the space inside the tent (*Raoti*) will be utilised systematically so that all goods are kept properly and there is still space for members. Small vessels, cooking pots and plates, and earthenware water storage (*Madke*) are kept in the corner of the tent (*Raoti*). Purchased food items like grains and rice are placed properly in one corner. Other food items like dal, sugar and tea are kept in a carry bag and hung on a bamboo stick inside the tent

(*Raoti*), these items are kept above the surface so that insects, i.e., ants (*Mugi va mungle*), do not reach them. Many a time Bahurupi women have experienced insects eating food items. After eating a meal, women have to make sure that any small pieces of food have not fallen inside or surrounding the *Raoti* area, they say that street dogs, cats and rats come and disturb otherwise.

Near the entrance of the tent (*Raoti*) there will be a cooking hearth (*chulah*), mostly three big stones arranged in a triangle space in which fire is lit. But in their home back in the village, the cooking hearth (*chulah*) will be a properly made earthenware on the corner of the front open room of the house. Women during their stay in the tent (*Raoti*) have to perform certain duties like cooking food and bringing firewood, i.e., parched stems, and sticks of babul tree (*sarkari babbhul*) – thorny bushes, that are sourced from the fields which are very close to road and bridges. Bahurupi women say they do not enter private farmland because villagers do not like it.

Plate: 2.4 Bahurupi women in the afternoon sitting under the shade of a tree



Generally, the Bahurupi family is very small in size, i.e., husband, wife, and children. In some cases, aged members generally stay in the home village along with youth who are studying as they cannot bear the pain of walking any more due to old age. Some Bahurupi young boys are pursuing their education. Bahurupi now have realised the significance of education and are allowing their young children to study and aged members take care of them

and guide them about life. They also train youth on traditional skills which are useful for carrying on traditional work. It was observed that Bahurupi young boys intermittently visit their parents and bring rations, i.e., grain bags, lentils (*daal*) and cash which has been collected during the Bahurupi performance.

It was observed that the Bahurupi family headman has both the responsibility of the tent (*Raoti*) and his house in his home village and both places survive on his income. It is observed that each house in the home village and tent (*Raoti*) are separate 'units of consumption', family members are well aware of their care and they take care of each other. But nobody can challenge the family head's decisions as he is the breadwinner of the family. All young boys and girls strictly follow the orders of the head who is their father. However, it is becoming very difficult for Bahurupi to survive in their traditional occupation. It was observed that Bahurupi in all three settlements, especially women, go to village fields and engage in work, such as cutting grass with a curved knife (*Veela*). Sometimes male members of Bahurupi also do the same work. It is observed that the kind of work in the agricultural fields is only season specific, like plucking oranges, chilly (*Mirchya*), and tomatoes. These kinds of activities some Bahurupi do attend. It has been observed that this kind of work gives them very less wages, around Rs. 250, a day for males or females, and with this, they support their family during their stay at the home village.

While Bahurupi are mobile, changing places and shifting to a new village is not a simple task at all. Their major responsibilities are to carry the whole materials, there are various tasks, i.e., systematically folding tents (*Raoti*) wall clothes, binding together sticks, keeping food items in a bag, keeping vessels for cooking and eating in one sack, folding rug properly (*ghongadi*) old clothes made rugs (*godadi*) and keeping them in a sack, and storing clothes in a sack. All items will be properly packed so that it would be easy for them to carry to a new place. Bahurupi men and women both carry the weight and take the help of some private loading auto. Bahurupi families shifting together share the expense of transportation. It can sometimes cost them around 200 rupees per family to shift luggage from Kalapur to Umarkhed where the distance is 40 km, and for other places, fares depend upon distance.

It was observed that mobile phones have created a special space in Bahurupi life as people can easily contact each other and, hence, Bahurupi cares for their mobiles and relevant mobile accessories, i.e., charger, headphone, etc. It was observed that Bahurupi inform their

kin members about any emergencies, i.e., hospitalization, deaths and birth. It was found that news is spread through mobile communication easily. Modern communication devices have brought a massive change in the lives of the peripatetic Bahurupi community. Daily updates on the fields such as any experiences with clients whether funny or bad are shared in the evening time with close friends of Bahurupi.

In a family, the work responsibilities are distributed as per age and sex. Men are seen as the head of the family and they provide economic support for the family and other members depending on their earnings. Women do domestic chores such as cooking food and carrying firewood. As part of cooking, women are responsible for a few things, such as keeping the Chula clean, wiping the surfaces every day using cow dung mixed with water and applying the liquid on the surfaces of the floor (*sarvan*). Women will gather firewood by going to fields and nearby roads; they collect small sticks and branches, bind them together and walk back carrying these bundles on their heads.

Plate 2.5: Women Collecting Firewood



The collecting of firewood is an important part of Bahurupi women's contribution to the economic strength of the household, as it saves the families from having to buy expensive gas for cooking. Although Bahurupi women typically gather enough firewood at one time to cook 4-5 meals, they still will go daily to collect firewood, saying that ensuring the family always has enough firewood stocked is a daily duty which they must perform. Even so, there are some drawbacks to this cooking method. During the rainy season, the wood gets wet which makes it harder to use for cooking. And without proper ventilation, smoke from the stove can cause the women's eyes to tear as well as potentially cause other respiratory problems.

It was observed that places for securing firewood have been already decided that it will always be on the front side of the house so that they can keep watch on it.

Plate 2.6: Firewood Storage



As part of their cooking, women make chapattis from jawar or wheat flour. Bahurupi women believe that if chapatti is cooked raw it may cause stomach pain. Hence, much care is taken while cooking chapatti. The Bahurupi women also make a curry of vegetables (*Bhaji*) if available or a lentil (*daal*) of pigeon peas (*tur*), chickpeas or red gram. It was observed that the Bahurupi are frequently purchasing food items from the shops in the village daily. They buy small amounts of items like lentils (Daal), oil and masala, and small sachets of turmeric powder (*halad*). They say that they cannot buy these items in bulk as they always run short of money. Bahurupi women say that small items like turmeric powder (*halad*), chilli powder, and salt (*meeth*) have always been purchased from the market as their clients only used to give grains, and rice and sometimes a rich person may donate lentils.

Apart from daal they also use onion (*kanda*), lasun (garlic) for making a bhaji (curry), and they say it gives taste to their vegetable dish. But many a time it was observed that Bahurupi women add a spoon of oil to the bhaji due to lack of money, and most of the time they cook only daal without adding any material items like chilly, onion, garlic, or ginger, as it is not always available. They simply fry the daal and eat it with bread made of wheat flour (*chapatti*) or bread made of jowar flour (*bhakri*).

Bahurupis eat non-vegetarian food, such as mutton and chicken. However, mostly due to the cost of mutton, they buy broiler chicken. It was observed that once in fifteen days they eat meat. Whenever it has been brought the family is happy. What may be a regular food item in many households in India, it's a special occasion for the peripatetic Bahurupi to eat meat. After the cooking activities are finished the women must wash all cooking vessels and utensils using ash (*rakh*) from the cooking hearth (*chula*), though they will sometimes also use soil to clean the pot. A small piece of brick (*vitkar*) is used to clean the iron-made cooking vessel, especially for baking bread (*tavaa*), washing it with water afterwards. It was also observed that Bahurupi women mostly apply a wet mixture of soil on the outer surface of the cooking vessel such as a pot (*bhagone*) to cook the lentil (*daal*) and curry. They say that it keeps their pot (*bhagone*) from getting black due to soot from the smoke of the hearth. When asked why they do not buy soap for cleaning cooking utensils, the Bahurupi simply say they don't have money and they cannot afford the costlier item for washing cooking utensils. It was also observed that Bahurupi women use a small piece of used polythene carry bag as a scrubber to wash the cooking utensils and sometimes use coconut fibre (*naralachya jatta*).

Plate 2.7: Bahurupi woman cooking on *Chulah*



On the other hand, apart from cooking, women are also responsible for cleaning the grain items, such as wheat, jowar, and rice (*tandul*). They typically clean the wheat, jowar or rice in the afternoon when they return from collecting firewood. Many women say that if these food items are not cleaned properly, the men in the family will complain that it disturbs them

while eating and may start quarrels. So, to avoid such situations they clean the food items. Most of these items which are bought are very low in quality and need more effort to sort and clean properly. The burden of this responsibility falls solely on the women. After these grains are sorted and cleaned, the women must put them in the sack (*potte*) and keep them in the corner of the room away from moisture and insects. But food storage is made for a limited period as the items are brought in very limited quantities and are used up quickly. Either these items are given by clients or are bought in the market. It was found that Bahurupi prefer minimum-priced items and ultimately will compromise with the quality of the food item. It was found that many Bahurupi say that they cannot complain about the taste of food. They say that it feeds their stomach and it also beat their hunger. Therefore, one should not complain about food.

Women also are responsible for making sure that the items required to sleep are available while sleeping, such as a rug made of old cloth they make themselves using a needle and thread (*godadi*). Weaving this cloth may take a week or two as they have many other responsibilities as well. Some Bahurupi bought a blanket from the market to keep them safe from the intense winter chill. But many Bahurupi says that they cannot buy costly sleeping clothes as it requires a lot of money, so they prefer *godadi*. Bahurupi say that *godadi* is very good and keeps them safe during winter and are durable.

During fieldwork, it was observed that in the village Kalapur gram panchayat, Bahurupi women have a major duty to fill water and store it for drinking purposes in a steel or earthen pot. A 200-litre water tank is used to store water for bathing, washing clothes and utensils. It was observed that when some families are away from the home village and are staying in a tent (*Raoti*) they have very limited storage for water as it is not an easy task to find water. Therefore, a tent (*Raoti*) is established in a place close to any water source. In the tent (*Raoti*) there will be a small 5-litre pot (*Bhande*) available to store the drinking water and a small bucket of plastic will be available so whenever they need water for use, they go and fetch either from the hand pump or well, depending upon the source of water. As the tent (*Raoti*) in Umarkehd was established near a leaking valve (the point of collecting water for the Bahurupi), there were ladies from 5 to 6 tents (*Raotis*) collecting water. They say it is very difficult for them to get sufficient water from this source as it takes a lot of time to fill our water container (*bhande*) for storing water and because of it our life has become difficult. Private bore well owners do not offer water as it requires an electric supply that costs the bore

owner money to keep the motor running. Bahurupi face mental stress due to not getting water from private owners as the public water supply is limited and untimely during the summer.

Religious Rituals

Raghojiwadi Yatra

The holy occasion of Mahashivrathri is significant in the lives of Bahurupi. To celebrate this occasion majority of Bahurupi from across Maharashtra gather in a village called Raghojiwadi which is situated in the Washim district of Maharashtra. There is a temple of Raghoji Maharaj and on the occasion of Mahashivratri, Raghoji Maharaj Yatra is conducted with full of enthusiasm. The Yatra is very significant for Bahurupi as they come and pay their reverence to Raghoji Maharaj, they do make vows to come true and follow the Raghoji Maharaj.

Bahurupi believe that there are many hardships and problems in their lives, such as family member health issues, financial hardships, various desired needs and wants, etc. They believe that if they have to be fulfilled and if their wishes have to become true, they should pray Raghoji Maharaj. They strongly believe that Maharaj is alive (*Jagrut*) and, hence, they have a deep reverence for him. Bahurupi believe that if one has to overcome all problems in life one has to worship Raghoji Maharaj.

For Bahurupi when it comes to Raghoji Maharaj Yatra, they have to make many plans, preparations and arrangements. The first and foremost is saving an ample amount of money for the celebration of this festival. At the same time, those who vowed have to make preparations for the upcoming rite and for that the males have to buy new white shirts, pants, traditional white caps (*topi*), and handkerchiefs (*rumal*). Females have to buy a green or red sari. There are other items as well, i.e., flower garland (*Fulacha Haar*) and Puja items called (*Vatichhe Saman*), vermilion (*Kunku*), turmeric (*Halad*), rice (*tandul*), oil (*tel*), wheat flour for making lamp using wheat flour dough (*pithache dive*), and plate and copper pot called (*kalash*). For these preparations, both males and females together go to the market and make sure that all the things are ready for the rite they perform in return for the vow. One day before going to the fair (*Yatra*) place, Bahurupi men and women do fasting (*Upavas*). They believe that it gives them a lot of peace (*shanti*), which also gratifies Raghoji Maharaj. Bahurupi believe that when God keeps us happy then what is wrong with fasting? They break

fasting (Upavas) on the day of *Mahaprasad*, the major day of food distribution, conducted by the temple (*Mandir*) trust in the village.

For attending the fair (*Yatra*) Bahurupi also have to prepare their minds. They have to travel by different modes. Bahurupi who are coming from Mumbai, Pune, Aurangabad, and Nagpur take a train or bus to reach their destination. On the other hand, those who are coming from the nearest locations book autos, Jeep black and yellow colour local four-wheelers (*Kali Piwli*), and few of them come with their motorcycle. For travelling, it is common for many families to spend a good amount of money. While travelling towards Raghojiwadi it was observed that there was a lot of excitement and happiness on the faces of the Bahurupi people. There will be a lot of enthusiasm among them as they are going to meet all their near and dear ones, kin and distant relatives (*Natewaik aptsambandha*), those who are staying in a different part of Maharashtra, and the Raghoji Maharaj event create an opportunity for Bahurupi to come together. It was observed that Bahurupi youths were feeling very happy as they were going to meet their close friends. Their daily wage labour work helped them to purchase clothes for the festival. The happiness and enthusiasm can be seen in the Bahurupis' planning and preparations for attending the Raghoji Maharaj Yatra in Raghojiwadi.

After reaching Raghojiwadi all Bahurupi families go to the houses of their relatives (*pahune*) who are residents of Raghojiwadi village. There are five Bahurupi houses. Each house has guests. Meeting after one year gives them a lot of opportunities for fun and connection. The Bahurupi of Raghojiwadi take all necessary care of the guests. In doing that there is no worry about food arrangement for guests as everyone would be fasting due to fair (*Yatra*), but despite having fasting they need a light fasting diet called *Faral*. It includes fasting food made of tapioca (*SabudanaKhichadi*), roasted peanuts (*Shengdaane*), barnyard millet recipes (*Bhagar*), fried and baked sweet potato (*Rataale*), and tea will be served to everyone two times a day. The major attraction of the Raghojiwadi fair (*Yatra*) is the rites which are followed during this event. There are two types of rites performed by those who vowed to Raghoji Maharaj. One is made for men called *Gaade* and another is *Naade* for women. These rites are performed by people of different castes and Bahurupi are among them.

Gaade: This ritual involves men who have made a vow to Raghoji Maharaj and will pull bullock carts using their hair. Before this ritual, a person has to go through certain procedures. First, he has to shave his head, leaving only a small portion of hair at the top and

centre of his head. Then he has to wear white clothes like a shirt, a pant, a white cap (*topi*), and a handkerchief (*rumaal*). Then his sisters will apply turmeric on his face and legs, they also apply vermilion (*Kunku*), on the forehead and apply some rice (*tandul*) by adding some water to it, it is called *malwaat bharne*.

Plate 2.8: Bahurupi man's sisters are applying vermilion and turmeric on his leg and forehead



Afterwards, the rope made of white cloth applying turmeric to it is tied on the shaved head and the hair tail is joined with the rope. The rope is tightened on the head in a circle mode so that it would hold the head of the person tightly.

Plate 2.9: Tying Rope on the Head



The tied rope later will be joined with the yoke (*Ju*) of the bullock carts, hence the tightness of the rope with the head is a major challenge for the person. After tying the rope properly, a

knife known as *Kattyar* is given to hold in hand which will be covered with red cloth and a lemon is pierced from the upside of the knife. It is believed that holding Knife (*Katyaar*) in hand would save the person from the evil eye.

Plate 2.10: Visit to *Maroti (Hanuman)* temple before (*gaade*) ritual a Bahurupi man taking blessings



Before going to pull the bullock cart, the Bahurupi person has to visit the *Maroti (Hanuman)* temple (*Mandir*) in the village. It was observed that while going to the temple they beat drums (*Dol-Tasha*), a special-order pre-booking (*supari*) is given to musicians from the village beating the drums and for that, they pay 600 to 700 rupees. Before visiting the *Maroti* temple they carry certain worship (*Puja*) items such as Camphor (*Kapur*), coconut (*Narel*), vermilion (*kunku*), turmeric (*halad*), rice (*tandul*), a white cap (*topi*), and a flower garland (*fulacha haar*).

They also take a copper pot with fresh water fetched from the borewell or hand pump. When they reach the *Maroti* temple first of all the person vowed to offer fresh water to *Maroti*. Then apply some vermilion (*kunku*) and turmeric (*halad*), then they light five lamps known as *pithache dive* made of wheat flour dough, camphor is lit up and coconut is smashed in front of *Maroti*. They prey *Maroti* for giving extra strength while pulling the bullock carts (*gaade*) and ask for success in the same. At the end of the worship (*puja*), Money (*Dakshina*) is offered in front of the *Maroti*.

Plate 2.11: Rounds to the *Maroti (Hanuman)* temple



The vowed person makes five rounds around the *Maroti* temple. Meanwhile, all family members, as well as relatives, will be together at the *Maroti* temple they also pray for success for the person going to pull bullock carts (*gaade*).

Plate 2.12: Bahurupi family guest gathers in front of the *Maroti (Hanuman)* temple



To perform the rite, the person will pull five bullock carts using the rope attached to his remaining hair. The bullock carts will be full, with people sitting inside, making the task even more challenging. Interestingly, the person pulling the bullock carts will have to observe fasting so this major feat must be performed with even less energy from the simple fasting diet.

**Plate 2.13: Bahurupi couple husband and wife circulate plate containing a lamp
(*Divā*)(*Ovalni*) at temple place**



Afterwards, in front of the *Maroti* temple, a person who has taken a vow along with his wife sits down and one of the Bahurupi women circulates a plate with a lamp in it lit up (*Ovalni*) and vermillion and a piece of cloth is offered to them.

Plate 2.14: Bahurupi man along with family and guests approaching Raghoji temple



Then the person will visit the Raghoji temple with family and relatives and take darshan, worship there and pray for success during *gaade*.

Plate 2.15: People who wave waiting for their turn in bullock carts in a crowd



After taking the Darshan at Raghoji Baba Mandir they move to the place nearby the temple where the *Gaade* (five bullock carts) are parked. The place will be crowded as everyone is there to see the strength demonstration by different devotees during the bullock carts pulling.

Plate:2.16 People taking positions for *Gaade* ritual



In *Gaade* there will be five bullock carts which will be connected and fully loaded with people inside. Pulling this kind of heavy bullock cart is the most challenging task. It was observed that on the front side of the *Gaade*, there will be a yoke (Ju) which is the main part of the bullock carts where two oxen will be tied during the ploughing time, but during this time there will be no oxen five persons will be holding the yoke (ju) on their head as they balance the bullock carts preventing it from falling.

Plate 2.17: A Bahurupi man supported with the forehead of another man before pulling *Gaade*



Now the event starts with thanking Raghoji Maharaj for fulfilling the wishes and loudly saying praising *Jai Raghoji Maharaj*, the person will pull the bullock carts with all his strength five steps forward. This very movement of pulling is the striking movement which creates a lot of sensation and excitement among the people witnessing the event seeing such energy and power in the person who pulls the bullock carts is appreciated loudly and for that everyone thanks with reverence to Raghoji Maharaj. After the successful bullock carts pulling event, the person is offered fresh water and his close relatives will be holding him, praising him for demonstrating such a powerful performance for Raghoji Maharaj. This mere event creates a strong belief among other Bahurupi regarding the Raghoji Maharaj as they believe that their strength and power automatically come from the Raghoji Maharaj and pulling such heavyweight bullock carts while fasting seems impossible for a normal person.

***Naade*:** This rite is for woman devotees. This is another way of expressing love towards Raghiji Maharaj and is performed as promised in the temple premise of the Raghoji Maharaj. Women devotees of Raghoji Maharaj perform a rite called *Naade* where they believe their vows come true. Bahurupi women are concerned about their family's condition whether it is related to the health of the family members or the weak economic condition of the family. They say they get the confidence and energy to deal with the problems in their day-to-day life by following Raghoji Maharaj. The devotee Bahurupi woman who wants to perform *naade* rite for her vow is supposed to follow certain conditions. They have to wear a sari with either

red or green colour. The woman applies wet vermilion (*kukum*) on the forehead and applies some rice (*tandul*) poured in water and vermilion together on it, known as (*Malwat bharne*). They keep baskets made of bamboo on their head which hold items such as rice (*tandul*), turmeric (*halad*), and betel leaves (*Panacha Veeda*). Then the woman performing the ritual has to pierce a needle through her stomach with thread (*Sui Dora*), initially while piercing it is painful but they do it, on the other hand, some women had pierced the needle in their tongue. Then they have to make five rounds of the Raghoji temple as the place is inside the premise of the temple and the researcher was not allowed to take pictures of the event. On completing each round the temple priest (*Maharaj*) offers the women one (*Veeda*) betel leaf folded. Women devotees make five rounds to complete the promise of performing the *naade* rite.

Mass distribution of food to devotees of Raghoji Maharaj (*Mahaprasad*)

After the performance of important rites, Bahurupi focus on the food distribution (*Mahaprasad*) event where Raghoji Maharaj Temple trust organises mass feeding of food. It was observed that on the third day of the Raghoji Maharaj fair (*Yatra*) a mass food distribution (*Mahaprasad*) Programme is celebrated where thousands of people come from nearby villages and cities. During the (*Mahaprasad*) brinjal curry (*Vangyachi bhaji*) and potato curry (*Aluchi bhaji*), both mixed equally, along with *Puri*, a fried bread of wheat flour, is served on a green colour paper plate.

It was seen that many individuals from each house of Raghojiwadi participate in the Prasad-making process. They volunteer and participate in the event of distribution of food to gathered devotees of the Raghoji Maharaj (*shramdaan*) for making this event possible. Bahurupi also participate in the cooking (*Mahaprasad*) process in the Raghoji Maharaj temple premise. They say they get happiness and peace (*Shanti*). Bahurupi youths are mainly seen volunteering during the event of taking fried *Puri* in a basket (steel container) and drying them on the mat which is been spread on the front floor of the *Mandir* premise. The other work will be cutting the vegetable items, such as brinjal (*Vangi*) and potato (*Alu*). The Bahurupi say that they like to offer their service (*seva*) to Raghoji Maharaj who takes care of their life during difficulties. One can see the beaming Bahurupi devotee face during the Raghoji Maharaj fair (*Yatra*) event. Some Bahurupi says that the mass distribution of the food (*Mahaprasad*) is also called the *Nagar Bhojan*. During the food distribution (*Mahaprasad*) event, care is taken that no one from Raghojiwadi village should remain

hungry, even animals, ants, or birds. On the day of food (*Mahaprasad*) distribution there will be a lot of arrangements done by the villagers and volunteers. Many activities are noted for the arrangements, such as the whole village being cleaned and the place where the food distribution happens it is farmland which is close to the Raghoji Maharaj temple. On that farmland (*Wakharni*) ploughing is conducted to make the ground plain, then water is sprinkled around, and the farmland gets converted into a huge ground. Then the marking is made with the help of lime (*Choona*) Powder. One can observe *Rangoli*, a design drawn on the door of every household, and the main entry points of the village from different directions are also marked with lime (*Choona*) powder. Queues of people sit in a way that one big tractor with a trolley can run in between which will serve two queues and this arrangement will be helpful for the distribution of the food (*Mahaprasad*).

Plate 2.18: Flag indicating the number of queue and lane



On the ground, it was observed that everywhere flag poles with white flags displaying the name of Raghoji Maharaj. To instruct the public and volunteers the loudspeakers were also been installed in various places on the ground. During making the food distribution (*Mahaprasad*) on the premise of the Raghoji Maharaj temple there were continuous religious lecture preaching (*Parayan*) and *Bhajan* going on (devotees sings and praise god and recite its name). It was observed that many villagers and guests from outside villages, even Bahurupi, were present in the Raghoji Maharaj temple premise. One can see the enthusiasm among the villagers of Raghojiwadi in conducting such an auspicious event which pulls in thousands of pilgrims.

Thousands of people from across villages visit the Raghojiwadi village for taking food (*Mahaprasad*). It was observed that four Bahurupi youths participated as volunteers. They were given IDs as volunteers for the food (*Mahaprasad*) distribution. It was observed that Bahurupi men and women gathered in the Raghojiwadi village for Raghoji Maharaj fair (*Yatra*) and were also sitting in queues. There were 10 to 12 tractors with trollies with full of food items (*Mahaprasad*) in it, all volunteers were taking food (*prasad*) from the trolley. The food (*Mahaprasad*) distribution ended in just 20 minutes as the involvement of tractors and huge volunteers (*sevadharis*) made it possible to do it quickly.

Plate 2.19: Ques of pilgrims seating for Mahaprasad and distribution of Prasad using tractors



Few people were taking the food (*prasad*) to home for their family members who failed to visit the Raghojiwadi village for the food distribution (*Mahaprasad*) event. The food distribution (*Mahaprasad*) event of Raghojiwadi symbolizes the unity and equality of different caste groups in the village as everyone participates, and many devotees believe in Raghoji Maharaj. Every year there will be the same gathering of Bahurupi people in Raghojiwadi where they perform their rites. Huge money is donated for the event of mass distribution which makes the event possible where the redistribution of the collection is done in the form of food.

Dahi Handi

On the last day of Raghoji Maharaj fair (*Yatra*) there will be a celebration of *Dahi Handi* event. In this, an earthenware Jar is filled with curd and a small statue of *Krishna* is also placed in it. There will be a group of youths from the village participating and the Bahurupi youths will also take part in the event. They all stand in a circle and balance on each other and on the very top a boy will be dressed like Krishna. He will first of all search for the Krishna statue inside the earthenware jar and then he breaks the earthenware jar with a stone. During this event, there will be the music of drums (*Dhol*) and *tasha* as well. People enjoy the Raghoji Maharaj fair (*Yatra*) and they conduct a lot of activities like this to make this event happy and joyful.

The Raghoji Maharaj event is significant for Bahurupi in Maharashtra as they come together to celebrate their rites. Bahurupi also use this event for planning marital alliances within the community.

Bahurupi man Suryabhan explained the history of Raghoji Maharaj. He was born into a SC caste, *Buddhist*. People say that there are still relatives of Raghoji Maharaj in Raghojiwadi village. His uncle and his family stay there. *Rahghoji* at the age of 13-14 were doing penance (*tapscharya*) and was infamous for his strange behaviour with people. But *Raghoji* wanted to show people something different. There is a story that there was a well in the Raghojiwadi village which was full of water and there was no need for any water-fetching vessel (*Phohara*) for fetching water. People could easily remove water from the well with their bare hands. One day *Raghoji* sat on the side wall of the well and put his legs in the water of the well. Observing his legs dipping in the water, people of the village objected to his wrong behaviour saying that “should we shouldn’t have to drink the water which is touched by the legs of *Raghoji*”. Then they started abusing him and stoning him, but when people started abusing and stoning, *Raghoji* removed his legs from the well and a miracle happened where the water level began to go down very quickly. Then people started requesting *Raghoji* to not remove legs from the well.

For Suryabhan “Raghoji Maharaj was a deity man (*Dev Manus*), a godly figure. This must have happened 100-150 years ago; he was born and died in Raghojiwadi. It is not known whether he has taken penance (*Samadhi*) or died there, and still, no one knows. His tomb is two and a half Kilometres away from the temple of Raghoji Maharaj. There is a stone in the

Raghoji temple if you desire or make a wish with a one-rupee coin in your palm and if the stone moves in the right direction your wish will come true.

Suryabhan further says that “Every year 20-25 Bahurupi individuals go to Raghojiwadi to attend the Raghoji Maharaj Yatra. We do have only two godmen (Dev): they are Raghoji Maharaj and Shirdi Sai Baba. In Raghojiwadi people are served food and huge crowds of people come to attend the yatra. All people, regardless of their caste, volunteer in the activity of the temple duty and make the *Prasaad* for serving the devotees. There would also be chanting (*bhajan*) and no sleeping at night (*Jagaraan*) during the night time” .

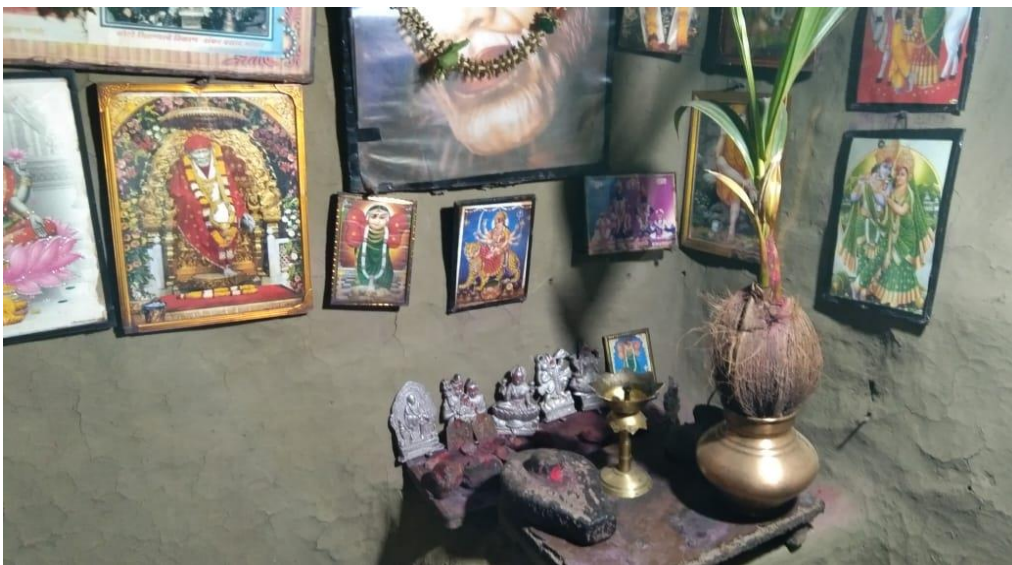
About money and food, Suryabhan says that “We do not need money in that temple. We do get lots of food to eat. When we had been to Raghojiwadi that day there was a *Nagar Bhojan*, a huge food distribution programme for people staying in the whole village. It means that no one from Raghojiwadi village will remain hungry on Nagar Bhojan day, right from small children to old age people, and all animals will be offered fodder and birds will get grains (*Dane*) within the boundary of Raghojiwadi, all of them will be served. There is not a single day when there is no food distribution (*Prasaad bhojan*) for people. All villagers of Raghojiwadi volunteer in the temple work. We have a holy month *Shravan Mass*, a Marathi month, and no villager eats any non-vegetarian food, i.e., fish or meat (*Masoli or Matan*) for the whole month. When we were there in Raghojiwadi we saw that committee and villagers of Raghojiwadi were planning 1500 food distribution programmes (*Nagar bhojan*) which is been proposed and were planning how to organise the same. Many people are offering donations and monetary support for the event of *Nagar Bhojan*. Committee and villagers from nearby villages decided that the food distribution (*Nagar bhojan*) should be arranged in such a way that in a single day, 4 to 5 devotees who wish to offer the food (*Nagar Bhojan*) should come together and organize the event (*nagar Bhojan*) extending 25 per cent share in the whole expenditure. The motive behind this meeting was to complete the task where 1500 devotees’ of Raghoji Maharaj who want to offer food distribution at the mass level and gathered villagers were planning to finish the task within the term of one year offering food (*Nagar Bhojan*). It was told that the number of people coming forward to offer the *Nagar Bhojan* is increasing day by day we cannot predict it. The *Nagar Bhojan* is not organized on the day of the *Chaturthi* event. There is the *Mandir* temple trust where everyone adheres to the rules and regulations levied by the Raghoji Maharaj Mandir trust”.

Many Bahurupi during the Raghoji Maharaj Yatra do visit Dabhad once a year. They believe that Raghoji Maharaj makes your wishes true and people have faith (*Shradhaa*) in Raghoji Maharaj, and many say that have experienced a miracle in their life.

Lifecycle Rituals

Madarsavali: If asked about the deity (*Kuldevata*) to Bahurupi most of them say *Madarsavali* deity, which is *Kuldevata* (community deity). They have strong belief and faith in *Madarsavali*.

Plate 2.20: Bahurupi worship place



They worship *Madarsavali* and many of them have an aluminium-made idol of the Horse god kept in the small temple of the house *Devhara*, a place where all deities are placed in the house of the Bahurupi. Bahurupi offer fresh water and flowers to *Madarsavali* every day without fail and start their daily activities then. They strongly believe that if they pray every day to *Madarsavali* he would take care of their hardships and other problems in life. Every day, early in the morning they take Darshan of *Madarsavali*.

Vowing to please *Madarsavali*

It was observed that there is the significance of *Madarsavali* in many Bahurupis' life. *Navas*, a vow is made during the various life cycle events like the birth of a child in the family, marriage, etc., and Lamb (*Bokad*) is offered to *Madarsavali*. The event is called *Kandori*, an event when a lamb is sacrificed. The kin group gathers in the house of the person offering

Kandori at home. Before conducting this event the Bahurupi family has to earn a good amount of money so that they could make certain arrangements for making the *Kandori* event successful. They spend money on purchasing new clothes, lamb, and masala food items for the event. It was observed that two to three days before the *Kandori* a butcher (*Khatik*) is fixed and is invited to the event at a given time, for that he is offered money of around 200 rupees. The butcher (*Khatik*) will come to the event with his family.

On the day of *Kandori*, there is a special worship (*Puja*) of *Madarsavali* at the home of the person who is conducting the *Kandori*. *Madarsavali* is given a bath with fresh water then flowers are offered, incensed sticks are lit up and smoke is created on burning coal with the use of a substance after putting on the burning coal releases smoke with incense (*Oud*). After the *Puja*, the Lamb is made to stand in front of the *Madarsavali* where vermilion (*kunku*), and turmeric (*Halad*) are applied on it. *Chonge Ghode*, the small shaped dough which is made with the use of wheat flour and rice, is cooked by adding some turmeric in it. Then it is offered to *Madarsavali* and also fed to the lamb. A thread of seven colours is tied to the neck of the sacrificial lamb. After feeding the holy food (*Nivad*) to the lamb, it is made sure that it walks into the whole house and then everyone takes blessings (*Darshan*) of it. When the lamb shivers a little (*Jhadati*) it is fed water and then the butcher (*Khatik*) says some sacrificial verse (*Duva*) and cut on the downside of the neck of the lamb. The blood is sprinkled on the *Madarsavali*, as it is considered to be sacred. Then butcher (*Khatik*) prepares for cutting the mutton pieces so that it is used for cooking. The head of the lamb is kept in front of the *Madarsavali*. Then the meat is cooked adding some masala and some part of the kidney is offered to *Madarsavali* as sacred food (*Nivad*). Meanwhile, Bahurupi women prepare Jowar *roti* on the cooking hearths (*Chulas*) and iron top (*Tava*). The vessel like a big container was sourced from *Digrass* City for making the curry. It was observed that all kin members take part in making the *Kandori* event successful. Queues are made to sit properly and are served with a meat curry and Jowar *roti*. Bahurupi youths serve food to queues. If the economic condition of the family is good, then they may cook rice as well. The sacrificial lamb is offered to *Madarsavali* when something good ritual happens at home like marriage or the birth of a child. Bahurupi work hard to make these rituals possible.

Moharam Savari

Among the Bahurupi of *Kalapur* village *Moharam* is celebrated with full of enthusiasm. In the village *Moharam* celebration, one of the Bahurupi man named Dilip Sakhre become a

priest (*Munja*) and get possessed. There are Muslim neighbours to Bahurupi in Kalapur village, and Muslims of the village initiate the *Moharam* procession. In Kalapur village *Moharam* is celebrated for three days. On the first day of the *Moharam*, all devotees reach in front of the mosque, *Masjid*, located in Kalapur village, dig a pit in a quadrangle shape and fill the pit with burning red coal. Here the main priest (*Mothe Nalsaheb*), walks first on the burning coal and sprinkles milk on everyone while walking at the same time he also gets possessed. Then allied priest (*Chote Nalsaheb*) stands and walks on the burning coals, milk is also sprinkled on his body. Afterwards, another subordinate priest (*Munje*) starts walking on the same, and he also gets possessed. One of the subordinate priests' (*Munje*) role is played by Bahurupi man Dilip. They dance near the fire pit full of burning coal (*Alhava*). This time sarees are tied on the bamboo pole and are held on the front side of the stomach of the priest (*Mothe Nalsaheb*), Bahurupi call this wooden pole *Savari*. There will be two people who carry the *Savari*. All participant devotees start a procession in the village from the place of the fire pit (*Alhava*). It was observed that many devotees come during the procession to take the blessing of the pole (*savari*), as it is believed that it resolves various problems of people who are suffering from them in their lives. People with problems, such as those trying for a child, those who are unsuccessful in life, economic hardships, etc., believe that they get resolved once blessings are taken here. The main priest (*Mothe Nalsaheb*) will ask people looking for blessings to do visits (*Waari*) around five to seven times and gives a lemon by chanting something holding it in hand (*Bharun*) asks devotees to tie the lemon to the frame of the door at home. It is believed that it will solve the problems of people going through difficult times in life. On the second day of the *Moharm* everyone visits the Place where the burning coal fire is filled (*Avhal*) and there everyone makes five rounds around the pit. On the third day, there will be immersion of the event of the pole (*Savari*), there is a place of immersion near the mosque (*Masjid*), under a tree, a mat is spread and, on this place, every devotee starts falling on each other on the mat and main priest (*Mothe Nalsaheb*) blows some sacred verse and sprinkles some water on everyone, everyone says chanting words worshipping the god. Then the (*Savari*) wooden pole on which the saris are tied is untied and the half-iron moon is also removed and kept in the basket and tied on the branch of the tree.

On the day of food distribution (*prasad*), it is cooked in the house of a subordinate priest (*Munjewar*) when pieces of shaped dough (*Chonge Ghpode*) are made out of wheat flour and jaggery, and rice is cooked (*khichadi*) and served to everyone who participated in the event.

During this time all Bahurupi of Kalapur will be present to celebrate the event. There is the significance of Moharam in the lives of Bahurupi.

Bahirji Naik Jayanti a birth anniversary celebration

The 7th of August is the birth anniversary celebration (*Jayanti Karyakram*) day for Bahurupi who are staying in Bahirpur. It is just like a festival for them like others who celebrate Ambedkar and Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti. In the field, it was noted that Bahurupi have started celebrating the event from 2016 onwards as they came to know that Bahirji Naik was a Bahurupi Man. Bahirji Naik was the head of the Department of Intelligence in the army of Shivaji Maharaj. He along with his team used to enter the territory of the enemies, by changing attire and taking different forms they used to bring the secrets of the enemies to Shivaji Maharaj. Based on the information gathered from the intelligence department, Shivaji Maharaj's army was instructed to attack certain territories of the enemies. Bahurupi of Bahirpur says that it was because of Bahirji that Shivaji Maharaj could defeat many enemies then. Many Bahurupi from Kalapur and Raghojiwadi also do visit the Bahirpur village and become part of the Bahirji Naik Jayanti event.

The event is celebrated by Bahurupi men, women and children with full enthusiasm. The Bahurupi plan the event by coming together and discussing the implementation of the event. In the meeting, they decide that they are going to celebrate the event and each Bahurupi family has to contribute (*Denagi*) money. It was noted that there is no such hard and fast rule that families have to contribute a big amount. It has been kept flexible for the families and they can contribute according to their wishes. The collected amount contributed by the members is spent on the expenditures incurred during the celebration. Bahurupi starts contributing to the event in July month and till one day before the event. The Bahurupi men form a group and visit each house of the Bahurupi in Bahirpur village and collect the contribution. The leader Suryabhan is active in terms of taking responsibility for implementing the *Jayanti* event in Bahirpur. The Bahurupi while planning for the *Jayanti* event decide on the invitations for different people and officials of the village it will mainly comprise of Sarpanch, Police Patil, village dispute resolution committee member (*Tanta mukti Adhakshya*), village revenue officer (*Talathi*), village secretary (*Gramsevak*) and other people with prestige in the village. The invitation to the village officials is given informally by visiting their Gram Panchayat office. There are 58 houses of Bahurupi in Bahirpur village and hence many village community leaders and village officials compulsorily visit the birth

anniversary (*Jayanti*) event of the Bahirji Naik. Gopal says that they have purchased the photo of Bahirji Naik from Nanded. There is also another photo of Shivaji Maharaj taking a sword (*Talwar*) in hand and receiving it from a deity (*Tulja Bhavani Mata* of Tuljapur).

Plate 2.21: Board Installed at Bahirji Naik Chauk in 2017 by the Bahurupi



Bahurupi of Bahirpur have installed a board naming Bahirji Naik Circle point (*Chauk*) in Bahurupi settlement. They installed the board on the 7th of August 2017 by conducting an event. On the board, there are different things written along with the painting of the photo of the Bahirji Naik. On the upper side of the board, the three slogans are written, i.e., praising Bahirji (*Jay Bahirji!*) Praising of nomadic communities (*Jay Bhatke!*) And praising Jay Bharat! Then in blue line head of the Intelligence Department (*Gupt Her Pramukh*). Then the name is written of Bahirji Naik in red colour as (*Vir Bahirji Naik*). In the mid of the board the photo is drawn where Bahirji Naik has worn a turban is displayed. On the lower side of the board on both sides, the address is mentioned as *Chauk Bahirpur, Taluka Bhokar and Jilha* (Dist) Nanded. The board is made of iron angles and plain iron sheets (*Patra*). The board is painted using oil paint so that it would keep it rust-free. Bahurupi say that at the time of installing the board, a special celebration event was organised where a lot of people from various nomadic communities gathered.

Now every year right in front of the circle board the Bahirji Naik's Jayanti is celebrated. One day before the Jayanti the chauk (Circle) is cleaned and many Bahurupi men and women participate in that. They sweep the place with a broom (*Jhadu*, a broom made of toddy leaves available in the local market).

The place is decorated using sand powder of various colours (*Ragiberangi Rangoli*). Women do the decoration part by using the coloured sand powder to make a design of flowers and write the name of (*Vir Bahirji Naik*). The Rangoli (design) is drawn in front of the board. They keep two chairs as well. Meanwhile, other men groups of Bahurupi visit the market in Bhokar and purchase items required for the celebration of the Jayanti event. The market is just one kilometre away from Bahirpur. Now on top of the two chairs which are kept before the board, they spread a shawl on one chair and keep a photo of Bahiurji Naik and on the other chair, they spread a saffron-coloured piece of cloth (*Kapda*) and keep a photo of Shivaji Maharaj.

Plate 2.22: Celebration of Bahirji Naik Jayanti by Bahurupi in the settlement



The program would start at 10:30 AM and all guests who are invited would be present. Suryabhan, a youth of Bahurupi, would start addressing the gathering by raising the slogans like *Jai Bahirji!* *Jai Bhatke!* And *Jai Bharat!* Then the chief guest of the event usually the Sarpanch will be asked to garland (*Haar*) the photos and light the incensed sticks (*Agarbatti*) and smash the coconut (*Naral*). Everyone will also apply the vermilion on the photos and will express their respect in front of the photo. Bahurupi feel proud of Bahirji Naik as he was a Bahurupi as well. Thereafter Suryabhan would announce to every guest to have breakfast and tea which was prepared for the event. Breakfast would be snacks made of flattened rice (*Chivda*) and one Sweet (*Son Papadi*). The event concluded by raising slogans. Among the guests, there were other nomadic people as well belonging to Wadar, Nathjogi, and Jhinga Bhoi.

The celebration of Bahirji Naik Jayanti is the Bahurupi's way of making claims to a state-level social identity. The naming of the pathway as Bahirji Naik Chauk, celebrating Bahirji Naik Jayanti and tracing kinship ties with Bahirji Naik is the Bahurupi way of contesting their marginal and stigmatised identity. They are asserting themselves and claiming that they have been part of Maharashtrian society for a very long time. Even though there is a stigma associated with nomadism, the Bahurupi through these celebrations are challenging their marginal status. Due to the sedentarisation in the villages, the Bahurupi have begun contesting elections and consolidating support for candidates that will benefit them (as discussed in chapter five- Sedentarisation and Change). This may be viewed as part of larger political assertions and identity claims made by the Bahurupi.

Celebration of other festivals by Bahurupi youths in Kalapur village

There are various religious festivals which are celebrated in the village throughout the year. It was observed that Bahurupi youth of Kalapur takes initiatives on their own and have started celebrating such events in the village. The festivals initiated are Ganpati, Durga Nawratra, and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti. Bahurupi had contributed themselves and made 2500 rupees contribution and celebrated the “Shiv Jayanti” in Sanvanga village. They claim that it was the first time in the village when the “Shiv Jayanti” was celebrated. For conducting the event they purchased some tags (*Bille*) of red colour for 20 rupees, they took a print of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj from the nearest town Digras and arranged one tractor with a trolley to carry the photo banner during the procession in the village. For music, they had fixed Dhol Tashe during the procession event in the village. They say the initiative was widely praised in the village, especially by Sarpanch and the Police Patil.

There is a youth group in the Kalapur villages known as Shivtej. They celebrate events like Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga puja during the Navratra. During those events, Bahurupi youths take the initiative in decorating the place. And they also take active participation during the immersion of the idols in the Kalapur village.

The ethnographic details show that there is a close relationship between the economy with the everyday life of the Bahurupi. Bahurupis settlements presented in the three villages support Bahurupi households in terms of providing necessities of housing, while on the traditional seasonal migration, they live in temporary housing in a tent (*raoti*). Subclans have major exchanges with each other in terms of women and food which shows economic transactions

between Bahurupi. In their lifecycle rituals reciprocity and exchange have a major role to play. On the other hand, the various religious rituals have played a vital role in the lives of Bahurupi in terms of bringing economic stability. As it is also observed that the major income of Bahurupi is used to perform various rituals. There is also redistribution in some festivals and rituals.

Chapter 3

Changing Livelihoods and Economic Organisation

This chapter provides details of the economic aspects of Bahurupi. Traditionally, the Bahurupi are entertainers and artists that specialised in disguising. These master artisans may deceive the onlooker with their appearance. They entertain people by disguising themselves in various characters or forms. This includes gods such as Lord Shiva (Mahadev) or other Hindu gods. They sometimes enact the role of mythological characters. Though many have discontinued their traditional livelihood, there are more than half of them in the three study villages continue their traditional occupations. Today, they disguise themselves as ‘Policemen’, commonly known as Rayandar by villagers and entertain them. In return for the performance, they receive grains, food or money. The ones that have discontinued their traditional occupation have done so more than forty years ago. In Raghojiwadi village a significant proportion of Bahurupi (46.66%) have adopted new livelihoods, and in Bahirpur village majority have shifted to new livelihoods. The place of settlement has implications for the livelihood of the Bahurupi. New locations offer different economic opportunities for the Bahurupi that are different from the ones who were on the move. Though many have moved to new livelihood pursuits, data from the fieldwork points out that the majority of the Bahurupi are still dependent on their traditional livelihoods (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Status of Livelihood Traditional and Entertainment

Sl. No	Settlement	Sample of Households	Continued Entertainment Livelihood	Stopped Traditional Livelihood	Years Since they stopped Traditional Livelihood		
					1-10	11-20	21-30
1.	Bahirpur	90	48 (53.33%)	42 (46.66%)	-	42	-
2.	Kalapur	31	25 (80.64%)	6 (19.35%)	-	06	-
3.	Raghojiwadi	12	02 (16.66%)	10 (83.33%)	-	10	-
Total		133	75 (56.39%)	58 (43.61%)	-	58	-

Of the Bahurupi who are involved in the Bahurupi Rayandar entertainment in Kalapur village, twenty of them moved to Pune for six months and worked there in a brick factory as labourers. After six months they returned to Kalapur and started performing their traditional Rayandar entertainment by visiting various villages in the surrounding villages. However, it was noted by an increasing number of Bahurupi that entertainment does not provide them with enough earnings. Hence, many of them have opted for migration to different cities in Maharashtra. However, they return home during the time of elections as they have voting rights.

Based on the household data, it was found that the Bahurupi pursue various livelihoods that include both traditional as well as new ones. In the three study villages, the Bahurupi continue to largely depend on their traditional livelihood of Rayandar (seeking alms as an artiste of disguise). The Bahurupi speak of the Rayandar who seeks alms after their entertaining performances. Though the traditional source of livelihood is predominant, the emergent livelihood is daily wage labour. This is indicative of the change in the traditional livelihood pattern among the Bahurupi.

Table 3.2: Distribution of different occupational activities among Bahurupis

Sr.no	Occupational activities	No. of persons involved			Total
		Kalapur	Raghojiwadi	Bahirpur	
1	Bahurupi (Bhiksha)	25	2	48	75
2	Musicians	0	0	10	10
3	Daily wage labour	6	4	10	20
4	Waiter	0	2	6	08
5	Coconut water selling	0	0	1	01
6	Auto Rikshaw Driver	0	0	5	5
7	Limbu Mirchi Selling	0	0	10	10
8	Bhaat (keepers of genealogy)	04	01	0	05
9	Painter	0	03	0	03
	Total	35	12	90	137

Bahurupi Rayandar:

Bahurupi is also known as (*Rayandar*) and they disguise themselves and entertain others. It is common that the Bahurupi to disguise themselves as policemen and seek alms from the villagers. Many villagers receive them with respect and enjoy their short presence and comedy.

Plate 3.1 Bahurupi Rayandar dressed as policemen



It was observed that the act of Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) is an opportunity for some villagers to entertain one another with the help of the Bahurupi. As the Bahurupi are disguised in a police uniform, it is common for villagers to ask the Bahurupi to take another villager or child into their custody as they are the ‘Police’. The mere perfection by which the Bahurupi disguise themselves, people not knowing about the impersonation results in many of them fleeing the spot out of fear of being taken into the custody of the police. This is done primarily to make one’s friends in the village laugh. Sometimes Bahurupi are treated with respect and sometimes they are mocked for not ‘working’. The act of entertaining people is viewed by some as disrespectful and an act of being jobless. They are given suggestions by the village people to go and work for daily wages in the agricultural fields. Some of the Bahurupi reply citing their lack of time, while some simply ignore the comments. Bahurupi are scoffed at saying, ‘early morning don’t you have any work’ (*sakali sakli kahi kaam nahi kaa re tula*). However, most Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) entertainers say that they do not reply with anger as

their stay is for a short duration and are dependent on the villagers for their livelihood. Villagers sometimes stereotype the skill of the Bahurupi and call them lazy and jobless as they seek something in return for their performance. These are pointers to the stigma associated with Bahurupi entertainment.

Shyam, a Bahurupi man, aged around 50, received an old police uniform from his police friend who is on duty in Manora police station, under Washim district. Shyam claims that he has a very good friendship with a police constable named S. Saheb. Whenever they meet, they will chat, also make jokes, and drink tea at the tea stall near the police station. Sakhre pays for the tea. S. Saheb is a kind-hearted person and because of his old clothes, his (*Rayandar*) entertainment survives.

Bahurupi consider their police uniform as sacred as they earn their livelihood through it. It was observed that much care is taken to keep the uniform clean. It was observed that due to extensive walking and sweating, the dress gets dirty and women have major work to wash it by using washing powder which costs them 2 rupees. Washing of the uniform takes place once a week. Mostly it is observed that the police dress is not ironed. When asked about why they do not iron many replied that it is not possible and they want to keep their dress simple. For ironing electricity is required or if it is heated using coal it has to be purchased, both involve costs. Hence, Bahurupi prefer not to iron the clothes.

The police uniform is a combination of a modern *khaki* colour shirt, pant, belt, cap and shoes along with a whistle as well. However, there is a difference between the police uniform and the one that the Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) wears (Plate No 3.1). The Bahurupi dress does not have any stars on the shoulder ends, whereas the police uniform has stars. The Bahurupi *Rayandar* dress will not have a nameplate printed on the right-side front pocket, unlike the police uniform that has the name plate too. However, the dress is an investment for Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) and a one-time investment cost is involved, i.e., transportation while bringing it from its earlier owner's place. Shyam had brought an old police dress from Washim and it costed him transport charges of around 40 rupees, up and down ticket fares.

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter traditionally the Bahurupi would disguise themselves as Hindu gods. The shift in dressing as Policeman (*Rayandar*) occurred after the 1980s when the Bahurupi were sedentarised. Bahurupi claim that when they first started dressing up as policemen villagers used to flee away due to fear. Initially, Bahurupi had to

tell people that it is their new attire for entertainment. The reason for the shift can be attributed to settling down as they had fixed villages to visit now, unlike being constantly on the move. Many of these villages they now visit are multi-religious and multi-caste, dressing up as Hindu gods does not attract donations. While dressing up as Policeman is ‘neutral’ compared to religious forms. Hence, the Bahurupi can access many more clients. The Police attire also draws the attention of people as the Police are representatives of the State in the village. People out of fear may end up giving alms. This shift to Rayandar Entertainment has helped them to get more returns (money or food) as they can reach out to clients belonging to various social identities.

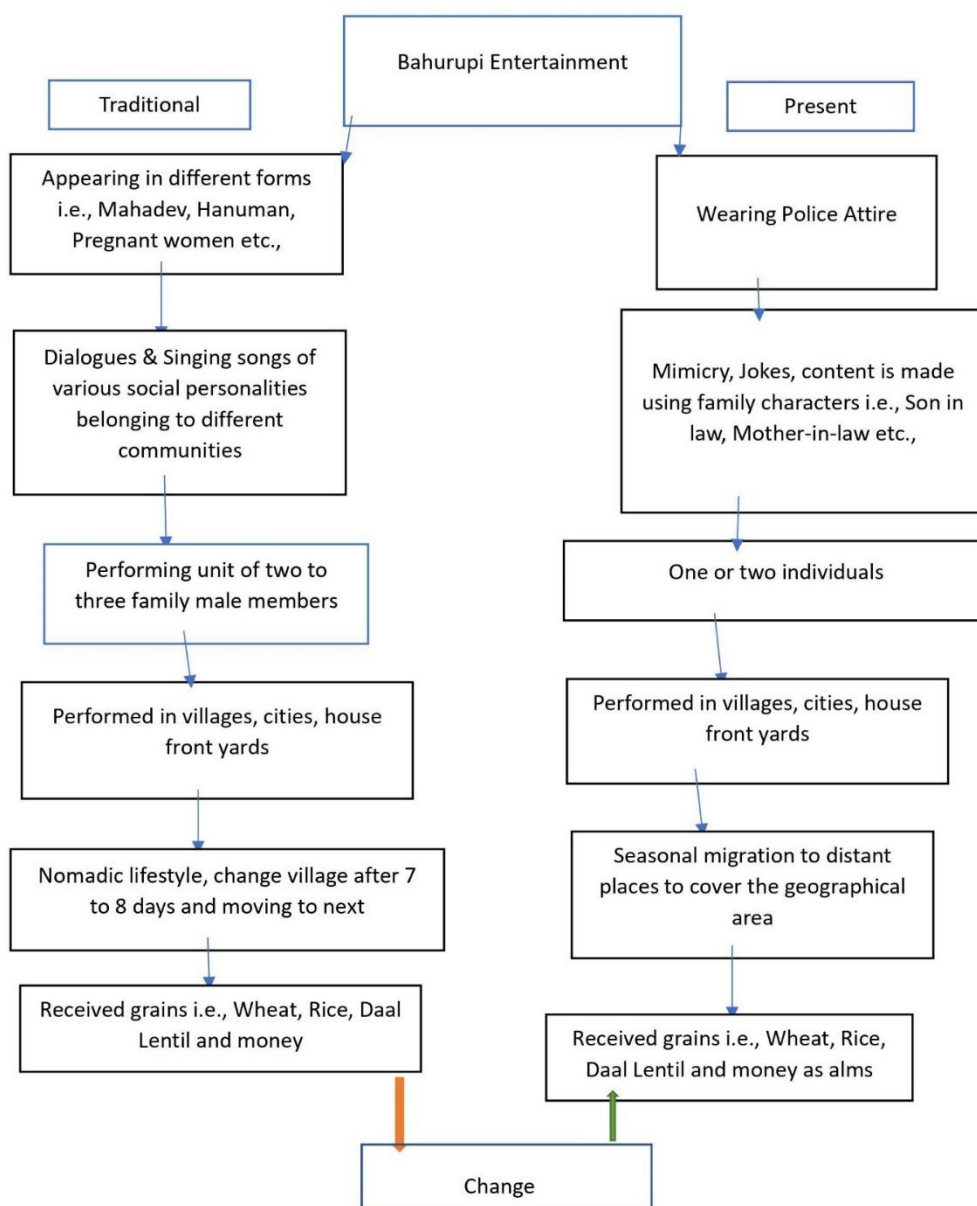
Plate 3.2: Bahurupi *Rayandar* carrying food grains in the bags they received as alms



Makeup as Disguise

Makeup is a habit among Bahurupi men involved in *Rayandar* activity. All of them have a box which contains items like scissors along with a comb, blade, sachet, powder and coconut oil bottle, which they buy from the nearest market in Digrass. After using these items, Bahurupi Rayandar look clean-shaven and some with the help of scissors cut their moustache which is a necessary thing for police attire. The powder is also applied on the face to prevent unnecessary sweating on face.

Diagram3.1: Depicting the traditional and contemporary livelihood activities of the Bahurupi



Daily Schedule of *Rayandar*

The work schedule for Bahurupi entertainers of Bahirpur is hectic. In an Interview Datta, another Bahurupi entertainer stated that “people at my age, 35, wake up at 7 to 8 am, but Bahurupi at age of around 50 years wakes up early at 4 AM. It doesn’t matter whether there are roosters to wake them up, they never fail to wake up. Waking up at 4 AM getting fresh, having a bath and having tea at 5 AM, then thinking of the villages to visit for the day is an everyday affair”.

It was observed that all Bahurupi who are involved in the *Rayandar* work start their day early in the morning, waking up in the morning, taking baths and wearing police attire, combing hair and applying makeup and leaving early to the targeted villages. They believe that if they visit the village late, all men and women in the village will go to their respective fields. So the schedule is usually maintained by Bahurupi *Rayandar*:

Wake up: 5.00 to 5.30 AM

Fresh up: 5.30 am to 6 AM

Leave for visiting the targeted villages: 6.30 AM

By 7.00 AM Bahurupi *Rayandar* reach their targeted village and start entertaining the villagers, i.e., men and women across ages are their clients.

Early morning, villages located in different directions are prime for Bahurupi entertainers in terms of selecting village routes. It was observed that Bahurupi entertainers from Bahirpur select four routes from the nearest block town, Bhokar, and from there they move to *Kinvat*, *Tamsa*, and *Nanded*. At crossroads in Bhokar, Bahurupi entertainers take a share auto rickshaw or state transport to reach their destination villages. However, thinking about directions is the daily plan of any Bahurupi. Out of these four routes, they select the route where they get a vehicle first. Then get down at a particular village and begin roaming throughout the village.

There are certain practices followed by Bahurupi entertainers in their day-to-day life. There is a taboo of not visiting the village where a death has occurred. It was found that if in case there is any death in the village, they suddenly change the village as there is sorrow (*Dukh*) and they say *it doesn't look good* "*Yogya watat nahi*". However, avoiding a visit to the village where mourning may be happening demonstrates Bahurupi entertainers' compassion and the respect they give to sedentary villagers. It was found that the same rule is common for all Bahurupi involved in entertainment. Whenever there are any deaths in villages Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) decide not to visit the village as it is considered by them that villagers would not be in a mood to laugh at this time as everyone would be in deep sorrow. Bahurupi believe that certain events like deaths disturb the whole village and during such times it is not good to visit the village. They also say by way of comparison that if there is any festival and on that particular day if someone dies, nobody in the village will celebrate the festival.

There is a Bahurupi man from Bahirpur, Pankaj, who explained his daily routine as a Bahurupi entertainer “*Rayandar*” and the side business of selling Lemon and Chilly (*limbu* and *mirchi*). Lemon and Chilly are strung together to make a kit used to ward away the evil eye. This kit may be called an ‘evil eye warder’. Pankaj says that “I wear the dress of a police and go to entertain people, apart from this I also have a business (*Dhandaa*). I sell *Limboo and Mirchi*, Lemon and Chilli. People like shopkeepers and vendors with 4-wheel vehicles tie the *Limboo Mirchi* in front of their vehicles or their shops. I sell it during Saturday (*shaniwaar*), No-Moon Day (*Amawasya*) and Full-moon day (*Purnima*)” .

Entertainment as service by the Bahurupi Rayandar

It was found that the real entertainment of Bahurupi is very interesting and it was widely loved in the olden days in villages where modern entertainment had not arrived yet. The composition of the joke is unique for clients but usually common for Bahurupi involved with entertainment service, the same jokes are repeated by each Bahurupi entertainer, but one thing was noted that the jokes are cracked taking into consideration the age group and sex composition of the clients. All Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) do visit the village, and entertain sedentary clients by visiting from house to house. They crack jokes and do mimicry of certain roles and characters of people in daily life. The creation of each dialogue during the joke creates humour and causes the clients to laugh. Sarjerao explains that “*if we see a person like you, we salute him and inform him that officer (Saheb), you have been transferred to your father-in-law’s place (Sasarwadi. We use Hindi as well as Marathi to convey the joke by creating a fake event (afra tafri), resulting in people offering 5 to 10 rupees for the act. On the other hand, we do mimicry of women by saying that (Sarja Bai, Sakhu Bai, Girija Bai) come we have to go to attend the wedding (Lagna) ceremony of Grandmother (ajjiche), Naming ceremony (Barase) of Father (Baap), today. Food would be served after one month, and we have to eat food in full smoke (Dhuptanat), asking people to tie (Bandha) children (Poranna) to polls (Khanbalaa) and take dogs (Kutre) with them (Kadila), come for the wedding. As a result of this, all women laugh loudly (Khadkad Hastat) at the contradiction in our statements and how we mock the characters. Depending on the person we crack the jokes*”. Therefore, the entertainment of Bahurupi is unique since in each village it makes references to certain characters from families in the villages as well as referring to people and situations which are common for all sedentary villagers.

It was noted that once the village is covered by one Bahurupi he would return to the same village after five months again. The case of Mahesh explains that. *“Our term in that village comes after the five months, till then in that same village my maternal uncle (Mama), paternal uncle (Chulta), and brother (Bhau) will visit (chakkar maril). If anyone asks that someone has already come here from your village then politely (namratene) tell them that I don’t know (mala mahit nahi)”*. Certain villagers do ask Bahurupi regarding the recent arrival of another man in the village but such claims are politely dealt with by simply neglecting it and not having many discussions on the same.

Regarding Bahurupi's knowledge of entertainment, it was found that there is no such kind of training conducted for young Bahurupi youths wanting to learn the art of entertainment. One Bahurupi Man, Vishwanath, explained that *“We were not trained by parents. We learnt that skill by observing each other. My father never took me with him to the villages”*.

Bahurupi identify their clients and behave with them accordingly. One Bahurupi Man, Arjun, said that *“We also observe people and greet them as (Raam Raam), (Jai Bheem), (Adab), (Saalam), (Sharnaath), we understand people by looking and observing their appearance and their behaviour and where the person is from”*.

Bahurupi entertainment skills adapt to changing times. These entertainers have added different styles and techniques to their traditional occupations. Certain variations were seen in the case of one Bahurupi man, Kachru, who narrates how he became a religious mendicant, *“when I was young nobody took me with them to the villages. What I did is I took a photo of Lord Ganesh (Gajanan Maharaj) and went to a village and asked for alms (bhiksha). I did the same for a few days. After saving some money, purchased a piece of plain white colour cloth to rap my body (Jhoryaa), and head (Neru) and tied a turban like Fakir Sai Baba. I also used to say a few words, I did this work for a few days and left it. Then I started wearing saffron colour cloth and applying white vermilion Kunku on my forehead and used to go for asking Bhiksha, I did this for a few days and left it as well, and started singing”*. Today, Kachru is an auto driver. He tried many attempts at entertaining people by adopting different forms but was not successful. As a result, he switched over to driving to earn his livelihood.

Social Opportunities

Opportunities provided in social spaces support the livelihood of the Bahurupi entertainers. These social opportunities are the driving forces of the traditional occupation of nomadic entertainers. Berland (2004) noted that it is social opportunities involved in the diversified client groups which played a vital role in peripatetic communities' economy. He noted that "cultural diversity of the whole, especially Hindu, Jain, Sikh, and other opportunities such as temples and shrines, and a plethora of holidays and rites de passage where entertainment is anticipated" (Berland, 2004, p. 240). The same was observed with Bahurupi. The cultural diversity available in Yavatmal, Nanded and Washim districts has created social opportunities for Bahurupi. Berland further emphasises this since their (peripatetic involved in the entertainment service) subsistence base is mostly comprised of social opportunities, rather than natural resources (Berland, 2004).

The various religious festivals and ceremonies performed by Hindus, Muslims, Jains and others have always attracted economically weaker sections of society. These festive spaces attract large crowds that are opportunities for the peripatetic Bahurupi to exhibit their skill by disguising themselves as god-like figures to earn a livelihood. Peripatetic Bahurupi have eked out their livelihood based on this diversity and their culture also revolves around these festivals and religious ceremonies of the clientele population.

Bahurupi staying in Kalapur, Raghojiwadi, and Bahirpur have designed their occupation as per these social opportunities available in their surrounding areas. Bahurupi know that for Hindus Diwali is a special occasion which will be widely celebrated by all sections of Hindus and at that time all villages create economic opportunities for them. They say that during Diwali many activities take place in villages, i.e., a newlywed Bride returns to her natal place (*Navi Navari*), and relatives or families who had migrated to the cities and other places in Maharashtra return to their village. Bahurupi know that Diwali is a full one-month holiday season where people have plenty of leisure time and they do spend money during this time. Bahurupi also claim that during Diwali all houses, which usually look empty, look full of family members. Bahurupi say that during Diwali all houses in the village serve special food items like *faraal*, a combination of sweets made of wheat flour (*laddu*) and flattened rice (*chivda*) which is prepared and served to any guest who arrives at home. Bahurupi say that they receive lots of food items (*faral*) in the villages during Diwali time. They also say that people also offer good money, 10 or 20 rupees (*daha, vees rupaye*). Diwali time in the

villages and cities will be full of joy and happiness for people which helps Bahurupi in eking out their livelihood. It was observed that during the Diwali festival, Bahurupi visit various places and houses and perform their mimic art in the front yard of the house where people are sitting usually, people call Bahurupi “*Rayandar ala*” which means a *Rayandar* has arrived. Bahurupi make people laugh (*hasawatat*). It was also observed that many people donate (*daan kartat*) to the Bahurupi, they offer items, i.e., Jowar, rice and other food grains. It was observed that by the time of Diwali, one harvesting time was completed and most of the farmers (*Shetkari*) in the village have grains stored in their houses. Those households that are economically sound do give alms to Bahurupi, while the poor in the villages neglect them. During Diwali, many people offer Bahurupi to eat some food (*faral*) but they know that if they eat, it will make them lazy (*Alas yeto*). Bahurupi have controlled their diet strictly while going to entertainment performances.

During Diwali Bahurupi (*Rayandar*) try to reach more and more villages as this is the time when they get more food items and money as well. On the arrival of Bahurupi, people sitting in different places in the village easily differentiate between Bahurupi and the real police as the Bahurupi are frequent visitors to the village. Many Bahurupi from Kalapur, Raghojiwadi, and Bahirpur do migrate to different places like *Vasmat, Hingoli, Parbhani, Aurangabad, Dongarkada, Balapur, Waranga Phata, Hadgaon*, etc., in the district and the neighbouring district as well. They establish their temporary tents (*Raoti*) there and perform their Bahurupi occupation. After one month of Diwali, all of them return to their place, which is called by Robert Hyden (2003) their home village.

How the occasion of Diwali contributes economically is illustrated by the case of Vinayak of Bahirpur village. He says that during Diwali he will visit Nanded City. Vinayak says that he visits rich people who consist of many officers and members of the legislative assembly as well. He says that during Diwali they offer him good (*bakshis*) tips (*paise detat*) and give him money. It was observed that Bahurupi clientele group not only involve villagers but also people with special status and their economic and political background attracts them, as it assures them good returns for the entertainment service provided. Hindu Diwali has played a vital role in the occupational activities of Bahurupis in the study villages.

Besides, Hinduism, another religion that has played a vital role in driving the occupational activities of Bahurupis is Islam. Muslims celebrate *Ramzan, Eid, Bakri Eid* and *Moharam*.

During these festivals, the Bahurupi visit Muslim areas to seek alms. They visit Muslims' houses and entertain them with their mimicry in Hindi and Urdu, in return they get food items such as Wheat (*Gahu*), rice (*Tandul*), Jowar, etc., and some offer them money as well. According to Muslims, Ramzan is a very sacred month for them during this period they do fasting and pray to Allah. They believe that it would be great if they donate to poor people during *Ramzan* month. Muslims strongly believe that if they donate alms (*Khairat dene se Dava Kabul hoti hai*) their prayer will be accepted by Allah. During the whole month of Ramzan, Muslims do donate alms (*Khairat*) to poor people and Bahurupi are among the poor who receive these alms that support their livelihoods.

After the Hindu and Muslim religions, Buddhists also played a vital role in driving the Bahurupi economy. It was observed that many Dalit people converted to Buddhism under the inspiration of Dr B. R. Ambedkar, they all celebrate the birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar in villages, and cities in Yavatmal, Washim and Nanded. The event is called Ambedkar Jayanti. During this time all Buddhists enthusiastically celebrate it and organise many public processions and gatherings. These events in various places do tempt Bahurupis in terms of good economic gain. Many Bahurupi say that they get a lot of money during Ambedkar Jayanti. They say that people will be very happy and they do offer 50 to 100 rupees, and, if someone is rich, they may get 500 rupees as well. Some Bahurupi individuals who are involved in the music profession do visits the gatherings and procession events during the Ambedkar Jayanti in different villages. They carry with them their musical instruments, such as the harmonium and the small drum-type musical instrument (*Khanjeri*), with them. In most places, they are asked to sing the songs of Dr B. R. Ambedkar. In an event they sing two to three songs, there they get good tips (*Nazraana Bakshis*) as money in a single day they might get two to three thousand rupees. Bahurupi Dhondiba takes his harmonium and one person with him and visits various Viharas in villages in Nanded. There they sing the songs of Babasaheb and earn money. In another case of Vinayak being a Bahurupi performer, during Ambedkar Jayanti visits various places in Nanded, i.e., Chaitanya Nagar, Bhim Nagar, and Taroda Naka where he gets alms *bhikshas*. He says many people offer 50 to 60 rupees. On the 14th of April, Ambedkar Jayanti plays a vital role in the economy of Bahurupi belonging to Bahirpur, Kalapur and Raghojiwadi.

It is imperative to look at the trend among the young Bahurupi youths towards opting for entertainment as an occupation. It was found that many young Bahurupi, especially youths,

do have a negative view of entertainment as a livelihood as it entails many difficulties. The case of Pradeep explains that. He stated that *“Once I had been to the village along with my uncle. I roamed a lot with him till afternoon at 1:0 clock, we could get around 500 rupees but the thing is that we had not eaten any food until that time. Many of our people going to villages have a single meal in the evening after returning from their visits to other villages. And they also have a habit of consuming liquor. I cannot remain hungry without food hence I don’t do that work”*.

However, there were certain reasons for only eating one meal a day by the Bahurupi. The case Venkati explains that *“The Bahurupi visiting villages in police attire eat only once a day. We usually do not take the food when we are in the village, if suppose somebody offers food like flattened rice on a plate (Pohe plate bhar) we take only half plate. Because we look for covering as many as houses in the village and taking food might make us tired. The morning food is not in our fortune. But we take a lot of tea”*. These habits of skipping meals among entertaining Bahurupi discourage many young Bahurupi youths from opting for traditional entertainment.

Folk Artisans

Few Bahurupi men are involved in Kalakendra, a folk theatre, famous for *Lavani*, a traditional folk dance by a group of women. In the olden days, *Lavani* theatre was known as *Lavani faad* and they used to move from place to place covering village fairs in different locations. They would install a tent in a place near the temple where the crowd gathered and used to perform folk dance there. However, over time, they have permanently established a permanent art theatre known as *Kala Kendra*. The two Bahurupi men were engaged in Bahurupi *Rayandar* entertainment but did not like it and chose instead to play music. They play the harmonium and tabla and earn around Rs. 4,000/- a month working as musicians. Whenever there is any reunion of all Bahurupi they come and visit their home village.

Making and Selling ‘Evil Eye Warders’

From Bahirpur village, the youth are engaged in making and selling Lemon (*Limbu*), Chilly (*Mirchi*) and marking nut *Bibba*, in various markets in the vicinity of Nanded. Kashinath (38 years) has been selling *Limbu Mirchi* (Lemon and chilly) for 15 years in Nanded. Kashinath’s family comprises five members, his wife, one daughter, one son and his mother. The family is completely dependent upon the *Limbu Mirchi* (Lemon and Chilly) business carried out by

Kashinath. Kashinath said that it was 15 years back in 2005 when he was a religious mendicant begging with a plate and an image of *Shani Maharaj*. He was in Nanded and saw some people selling lemon and chilly, observing that Kashinath also thought that he should also try to sell lemon and chilly. From then onwards Kashinath along with others started selling lemon and chilly as a full-time business. They explored the available market and the various businesses carried out by others in the market. They realized that carrying any business may require a lot of capital (*Bhandwal*) and their Bahurupi traditional occupation does not support them to generate that much income where they can invest in any business. When he thought to establish the shop (*Dukan*) it may cost him one lakhs rupees (*Lakh rupaye*) and felt that he cannot carry out such kind of business.

Plate 3.3: Bahurupi man making lemon chilly ‘Evil Eye Warder’for Sale



Kashinath and the other Bahurupi friends of his age went to Nanded and visited the wholesale vegetable market (*Bit*). They found that they have very limited money to start the business. They purchased Lemon 10 kg, Chilly 10 kg and Bibba 3 kg. They also purchased thread (*Dora*) and needle (*Sui*) and came to Bahirpur and they started sewing together the Bibba, Chilly and Lemon to prepare the product *Limbu Mirchi*. They decided that they should go to Nanded City and sell it in different areas (*Vegveglya Galli madhe vikayache*). They also decided that they should sell the Limbu and Mirchi on *Saturday, Purnima, and Amavasya* days. The day on which they had been to Nanded for sale was Saturday. Kashinath says that he had visited *Tarachand* Market in Nanded along with *Limbu and Mirchi* carrying in *Pote* (Sack) he took out some *Limbu Mirchi* in his hand and started visiting the shops in the market one by one. He says people were purchasing *Limbu Mirchi* for 5 rupees each. Kashinath says

that he could sell all the Limbu Mirchi in just one hour (*Eka Ghantyat sagle vikun takle*). Kashinath stated that he was very happy that he had received around 1000 for selling 200 *Limbu Mirchi*. He and his friends decided to carry on with selling *Limbu Mirchi* as a business activity on the special occasions of Saturday, *Pournima* and *Amavasya* (*Full moon and new moon*) days.

This case shows the evidence that the selling of *Limbu Mirchi* by Bahurupi is completely dependent upon the social opportunity involved in the diverse group of clientele groups, i.e., Hindu communities use it in their shop or the house as they want their property to be free from any evil eye. This has immensely benefited the Bahurupi in carrying out selling the *Limbu Mirchi*. This example shows that peripatetic communities are comfortable doing business by taking advantage of the social opportunities which are available in their surrounding. The diversity of their clients helps them to sustain their business successfully. Based on the opportunity, they change their livelihood to benefit by catering to the requirements of the settled communities. This emphasizes the entrepreneurial capability within the community. Stradling between their traditional livelihood and adopting new opportunities makes them highly innovative.

The present status of selling *Limbu Mirchi* business is that Bahurupi who are involved in this business have started purchasing lemon and chilly from the nearest market Bhokar merely one kilometre away from their village. It does not cost them much, except to take a shared auto where they pay 10 rupees to bring the lemon.

Kashinath says that he purchases around 15 kg of chilly and 700 lemons and 5 kg of *Bibba*, which is marking nuts. He brings it in a sack on his shoulder from the market and brings it to his house by a shared auto from the village main road to his house. He purchases the material (*Bhandawal*) in large quantities as there are other Bahurupi individuals as well who are also involved in this business and, then, they distribute among themselves (*Vatun Ghetat*). Kashinath says he purchases the item one day before Saturday as he needs to prepare the *Limbu Mirchi* and the raw material will be fresh (*Maal fresh rahato*). After bringing the raw material to his home Kashinath and his wife spread a mat (*Faari*) in the kitchen nearby the cooking hearth, *Chulla*, and put the material separately. Kashinath and his wife prepare the *Limbu Mirchi*. First of all, they take a needle (*Sui*) and weave a thread in it then they take one *Bibba* and pierce the needle in it and pull the thread till the tied end of the thread reaches the

bottom of the *Bibba*. Then they put one lemon and four to five *chillies*. Then they keep some thread to hold and make it easy to bind and put the finished pieces in one plastic sack (*Potte*).

Plate:3.4 Raw material required to make Evil Eye Warder



They make around 650 *Limbu Mirchi*. They spend the entire day making the *Limbu Mirchi* and fill them all in a sack and keep it ready for the next day. On the day of delivery, whether it may be Saturday or *Purnima* or *Amavasya*, they have to deliver the product to the end user, *Grahak* (Customer). For reaching the end user Kashinath has to walk a lot, carrying the sack which weighs about 20kgs. He has arranged the *Limbu Mirchi* carefully so that one piece can be removed without disturbing the others. He, first of all, takes a shared auto which would take him to Nanded and he has to pay extra 20 rupees for taking the sack, Kashinath gets down at *Hingoli Naka* early in the morning around 6:30 AM. Then he starts finding customers by visiting four different areas in Nanded. Those are *Shivajinagar*, *Anand Nagar*, *Tarasing Market* and *Bhagyanagar* areas, roughly 10 kilometres in radius from each other. There is a customer base (*grahak*) for *Limbu Mirchi* business, it mainly comprises Houses, Shops, four-wheeler drivers, and two-wheeler drivers do purchase the *Limbu Mirchi* from Bahrupi.

Kashinath, whenever reaches a customer (*Grahak*) ties the *Limboo Mirchi* on the place, like the door upper side, and the customer (*Grahak*) just by looking at him offers him a 10 rupees note. Kashinath says that in 2005 when they started the business then its price was 3 to 4 rupees and since 2015 they are charging 10 rupees for a single lemon and a chilly bunch. It

was observed that the seller of the *Limbu Mirchi* need not speak a single word while distributing the *Limbu Mirchi*. Kashinath may sell to around 400 customers (*Grahaks*) in four different areas. Kashinath finishes his distribution work by 11 AM. In a single day, Kashinath earns around 4000 rupees. The amount invested in purchasing the material to make Lemon and Chilly evil eye warder is 1500 rupees plus a transportation cost of 250 rupees. Kashinath says that the *Limbu Mirchi* business is very profitable.

Table 3.3: List of Markets where Evil Eye Warders are sold

Sr. No	List of Markets where Lemon and Chilli are sold	No. of persons selling
1	Nanded: Bhagyanagar, Anandnagar, Tarasing Market, Shivaji Nagar, etc.	05
2	Bhokar	2
3	Himayat Nagar	1
4	Purna	1
5	Hadgaon	1
Total		10

There are around 10 Bahurupi from Bahirpur who are engaged in selling the *Limbu Mirchi* objects, some of them do it as part-time as they are also Bahurupi entertainers. The areas for selling the Lemon-Chilly objects are divided among the Bahurupi sellers. According to Vinayak, Nanded, Bhokar, Himayat Nagar, Vasmata, Hingoli, Purna, Ardhapur, Loha, and Kandhar are the marketplaces where they distribute the *Limbu Mirchi*. However, if a new Bahurupi individual wants to join the selling, he needs to find his market area which will be far from the villages since the nearest markets are already covered by existing Bahurupi individuals. Bahurupi Jat Panchayat distributed the above marketplaces to Bahurupi. *Limbu Mirchi* business has become a very good livelihood option for Bahurupi of Bahirpur making it an attractive alternative or supplement to the income from traditional activities. The case of Sahebrao explains that “Now, since from last 7 to 8 years I have stopped taking attire of Police but it is our occupation (*Vyavsay*) we can do it any time. And doing business in *Limbu Mirchi*, I have concentrated on a place called Purna 60 kilometres away from this place where I get a good amount after selling the *Limbu* and *Mirchi*. I carry big sacks full of lemon and chilly. Women also help us in preparing the lemon and chilly”.

Plate 3.5: Bahurupi man tying the lemon chilly to the motorcycle



Traditional Bahurupi entertainment, Musicians, Tamasha and Fishing as subsistence

Bahurupi of Kalapur, Bahirpur and Raghojiwadi have observed the change in their traditional occupation. They say that in the olden days, they used to disguise themselves as different Hindu Gods, Hanuman also known as *Bajrangbali*, *Mahadev*, *Ram*, etc., and used to entertain people in various villages. However, with traditional entertainment, there was a special wing of Bahurupi who were specially trained in playing music, i.e., with various instruments, like the Harmonium (*Tabla Peti*). Their performances were accompanied by music. But Bahurupi say that over time, musicians parted from other performers. Bahurupi became *Rayandar* taking the attire of police and visiting villages. On the other hand, musicians joined traditional *folk artists*, *Tamboo* (a group of folk artists), tent and used to visit different villages during the village fairs and used to perform the *Tamasha*. Tamasha is a traditional folk theatre where women dance and villagers are its audience.

Many Bahurupi say that they used to do fishing, during their traditional entertainment while they were on the move. Munjaji explains that “*if the mood is not there to visit the village, we used to visit the water streams (Vholala) for catching the fish (Masolya Dharaylaa). Our men used to catch fish using Lugade and Dhotar, men's and women's clothes. We used to visit village rivers (Nadi), streams (Nalla), and ponds (Talav). We never went hunting*”. It depicts that Bahurupi found their subsistence in fishing. However, their option of fishing as subsistence is no more practised now and present state laws don't even allow them to do that.

Bahurupi Musicians, cultural content in music and their relations with sedentary villagers

Folk dance (*Tamasha*) attracted some Bahurupi towards it. Their exceptional ability to play traditional instruments was a major factor for few Bahurupi men involved in playing instruments. Bahurupi men involved in the music also played a role in the folk dance while performing in rural areas as traditional mass media with different songs based on various personalities. It is noted that the use of traditional mass media can be observed in Indian rural areas (Hartman *et al.* 1989). About mass media, Hartman writes that “Indigenous mass media disseminates ideas and information among people in rural areas. Folk drama, folk songs, folk tales, the repertoire of itinerant minstrels and musicians at festivals all serves as media of mass communication. Here jatra (a folk drama performed in the open) is still prevalent and very popular ... it runs on non-commercial lines, and is open to everyone without any barriers of class, caste, religion, age or sex. A Jatra ... serves as a reflector of traditional or existing social norms. There are three drama clubs in Ranabanda (village) ...”(Hartman *et al.* 1989 cited in Barnard and Spencer, 355).

Folk songs and lyrics are powerful means of propagating the ideas and experiences of the wise and learned to village people who cannot read and write” (Hartman *et al.* 1989:190-2, Cited in Spencer). According to Peacock (1968), “traditional forms of media are used to express established norms and ideals and to challenge the established” (Peacock 1968 Cited in Barnard and Spencer: 536).

Those Bahurupi involved with music playing were liked by certain village caste people. They used to invite them to play in religious chantings (*Bhajans*) and sing in their settlement. Gangadhar, an old Bahurupi man, explains that “*In some villages, SC caste people used to become happy about our arrival that some of them used to visit our Birhad Rauti and used to request us to offer any entertainment at their mohalla in the village. We never denied and accepted the invitation and used to go there in the village to perform an entertainment programme called Bhajan two to four persons from their side and four to five from our side used to sit and sing Bhajans right from children to adults all were audience then. During the old days, we had no loudspeakers. The space of the performance was always a square point in the lanes or near the statue (Putla). We used to sing 10 to 20 daha vees Gane, songs. On the next day, people used to offer us adli bhar Jawari (2.5 Kgs. of Jowar). Some of them also used to offer adli bhar Gahu (2.5 Kg of wheat). Some used to offer money 2 to 4 don chaar*

rupaye cash. We used to distribute all the collected food items, dhanya, and money between all Birhad families". It appears that, in the traditional context, the arrival of Bahurupi musicians in villages was celebrated by certain caste groups in the village.

Entertainment Forms

It is important to note that Bahurupi's art form can be divided into three types of entertainment: comedy, singing and the skill of playing different traditional musical instruments, i.e., *Tabla, Peti, Khanjeri, and Dholki*. The art and different skills that persist among the Bahurupi not only helped them in finding their livelihood but have played a vital role in shaping their identity in the village folk culture domain.

Bahurupi through their performing art form performed in the public domain, and the same is applied to their traditional and present entertainment service which they provide to villagers. Apart from entertainment, they also have played a crucial role in spreading cultural values through their songs. Their songs are not only a cherished part of the folk culture of Maharashtra but have also played a crucial role in spreading cultural values through various songs. The Bahurupi also have spread awareness and reminded villagers, especially the downtrodden Dalits and other nomadic communities like Banjara, about their historical reformers like Dr Ambedkar and Vansatrao Naik. Audiences also cherished the art of the Bahurupi and the Bahurupi became successful in capturing the attention and influencing the emotions of the villagers through their skill of entertainment which can be seen through the following case studies.

Bahurupi Munjaji Sakhre says that "art, Kala, has emerged from Bahurupi only, whatever is displayed on the screen emerges from Bahurupi only". The love of Bahurupi music entertainers is explained by Munjaji Sakhre, a Bahurupi old man. According to him "*In olden days when there were no pictures theatres, our Dadarao Master, and his brother were well known for their art of playing the Tabla. They had a huge fan following in the Mangarulpur area and they were very famous there. Once their hand touches Tabla it literally would move like fishes (Masolyawani Chalaycha). If somebody would say that Bahurupi from Shegi have arrived then people from around 40 villages used to gather. The audience used to come by walking through lanes, and fields surrounded by hills, they usually used to come during the nighttime with homemade lanterns (Kandil) lamps made of a glass bottle (Shishi). I have seen that moment with my own eyes during my childhood. The moment our artists (Kalakaar)*

approached the stage there used to be huge applause and the blowing of endless whistles. The crowd gathers now to listen to PM Modi. Similarly, the crowd used to be there for our artists as well. There was a huge crowd for us. Our people working in tents (Tamboo) became famous during those days. I strongly feel that (Mala ase watate) today's art form has also emerged from our art. Now there are movies, Serials, actors, etc., which have changed our whole life".

It is pertinent to note here that the content involved in the music of Bahurupi musicians is related to well-known personalities who have played a vital role in the religious and social reformation in Maharashtra. Bahurupi musicians, through their art of music and singing, have helped to spread information about important personalities and their work and showed their role as traditional mass media. It attracted many clients, including people who have moved from villages to cities. The case of Satish explains how singing about Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar attracted certain clients. He says that "We sang songs of Babasaheb. Our songs have words which are loved by the audience. He further says that "Once I had been to Hingoli with one of my relatives. We arrived near a bungalow and were singing a song on *Babasaheb*. The building was so big and we were outside on the road, the big bungalow (*motha bangla*) had a gate and we had no courage (*himmat*) to enter inside. While listening to our song one lady came out and invited us inside the bungalow. I was scared then for a moment, there were sofas and a lot of chairs. The lady gave us a mat to sit on. My relative sang a song of Babasaheb, about his childhood memories, that song had words filled with emotions. Listening to the song, the lady's eyes became tearful. They loved the song, and the owner of the bungalow must be some officer who gave us 501 rupees (*Nazraana*). The song was created by another person (*dusryache*) called *Vamanrao Kardak*. we are not poets (*Kavikaar or Gitkaar*) or Scriptwriters. But we have our add songs (*Jod Gite*) and performance"

The above case shows that the songs sung by Bahurupi were directly connected with their emotions. It means their songs impacted listeners. It was also found that customers' religion and beliefs were a factor in selecting the songs for performances. These social opportunities created the ultimate livelihood for Bahurupi entertainment activities.

Rohidas of Bahirpur narrates his singing songs about Vasanttrao Naik, the personality belonging to Banjara, denotified community. Rohidas says that "Once we had been to Bhokar

with my distant brother (Saadbhau) and maternal cousin (Mehune). My brother Dada Saheb was a singer and a very well-known expert in singing the songs of Vasantrao Naik. My maternal cousin was drunk, he sang a single verse song of Vasantrao Naik. Listening to the song, one person offered 100 rupees as a gift for the Deepavali festival. Pointing to his bizarre singing of one verse by my maternal cousin, Dada Saheb, who started singing with the harmonium. He sang a song which was full of sorrow". Rohidas further say that "I could see with my eyes that Banjara community people were listening to the song with tearful eyes and full of emotions completely mesmerized. On the other hand, I could also feel the emotions in the singing and was crying listening to it. Dada saheb sang around three songs which had attracted a lot of cash near the harmonium and we had received money (Nazraana) around 950 rupees". Bahurupi musicians have played a key role in spreading the local culture among clients belonging to various castes. They influenced the emotions and feelings of people from certain castes and groups through their musical art. Besides that, they have played a role in spreading awareness about important social reformers and keeping history alive through oral performances.

There are certain instances in the village which may have discouraged some Bahurupi from musical entertainment and even caused them to take up another occupation. The case of Raju explains that. He stated that "I started singing songs to the tune of Khanjiri (a small drum-type musical instrument). I used to sing a few songs from a famous movie in Maharashtra during those time known as (Maherchi Saadi). And I also used to sing Khana Naralachi and two or three other songs. And then I stopped going with Dada brother on the pretext that one woman had appreciated my singing and kept her hand on my head and had mumbled something which caused serious illness for me. Then I was in Kanergaon but somehow, I was saved. Then I started asking for (Bhiksha) by taking attire of police and entertaining people by visiting various villages but after a few days that also I left, then shifted to playing the harmonium the work which lasted for two to three years". These kinds of experiences have affected the occupational choices of the Bahurupi.

Plate 3.6: Bahurupi playing music using traditional instruments



Bahurupi musician in Tamasha

Tamasha is a travelling folk theatre of Maharashtra. According to Paik (2017), the term "Tamasha" has evolved to denote enjoyment, play, or even uproar and disturbance. It is crucial to remember, too, that throughout history, Tamasha players have conserved and modified Tamasha and Lavani through the turbulent changes of time, mostly for consumption by low- and middle-class castes in modern Maharashtra. Maharashtra has a long and illustrious history in the theatre. In Maharashtra, secular theatre combines skits, music, dance, mime, poetry, and farce, just like in other Asian countries. The Arabic origins of the word "tamasha" translate to "show," "spectacle," or even "a kind of theatrical entertainment." Tamasha is a kind of entertainment that demonstrates the linkages between Marathi, Persian, and Arab societies and cultures going back to the Middle Ages. It wasn't until the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries that it was connected to being a low-caste folk form. It is clear that there is a long history of these kinds of entertainment and different social groups preferred it as entertainment. There are a few Bahurupi who are also involved in the Tamash or were part of Tamasha folk theatre in the past which was their livelihood and formed the economic base of their household economy.

There are 10 Bahurupi musicians, and 7 of them are working in different theatres. Some of them visit the settlement every day and some come after six months. They play various musical instruments, such as Harmonium, *Khanjeri*, *Dholaki*, and *Tabla*. However, it was found that many Bahurupi musicians were earlier part of Tambu, a traditional form of

Tamasha where a group of dancers and musicians used to visit fairs in various villages in Maharashtra. But over time that form of mobile Tambu tamasha was no more practised as there are now permanent theatres established in various places. Even the audience to these kinds of entertainment is much less than what it once was.

The following case of Janrao illustrates the Tamasha entertainment of Bahurupi:

A person belonging to Bhaat Janrao joined the Tamasha folk theatre as a professional musician, by the time he joined the profession he was merely 16 years old. Before joining Tamasha, he used to play the harmonium in the *Bhajans*, religious chantings. That's how he was recognised by one person from Tamasha who offered him a full-time job playing the harmonium in the Tamasha. He accepted the offer as it was well-paid and says he almost spent more than 30 years performing music in the Tamasha folk theatre. He says that Tamasha had earlier two different forms where in the initial form of Tamasha they were always on the move visiting different villages and towns, during village fairs and performing their entertainment by installing temporary Tambu tents. While the other form of Tamasha is a permanent building beside highways and roadsides which he called Tamasha Theatre, known as *Kalakendra*.

Janrao says that when he was playing the harmonium in the Tambu they had different party groups. At each party, they had 5-6 women who were dancers and 5-6 men who were musicians and for each party, there was an owner, basically a manager who oversees the artists. The owner always claimed a half share of their total earnings and the remaining half was equally distributed among the remaining artists. The programme used to run for an hour if we earn 5 thousand rupees, we used to share half with the owner and the rest with other artists in *tambu* but when came to the theatre my wage was fixed. In the permanent theatre, he used to get around 7000 rupees per month .

Janrao says that earlier there were women dancers in Tamasha belonging to the Kolhati community, but now it is no longer so (*Bhesal jhali ahe*). It is also pertinent to see that the tamasha is a hub of various experts in entertainment who belong to various castes and communities. "Historically, Tamasha constructed close communities of mixed castes as well as religions. It is one of the important Lokakalas, the cultures of the (Bahujan) people of Maharashtra. Traditionally, travelling Tamasha artists largely belonged to nomadic (Kolhati, Asvalwale, Bahurupi, Vasudev), low caste, and Dalit bara balutedars, (various artisanal

castes) who performed different services for the village, such as Dhobi (Washerman), Kumbhar (potter), Mahar, Mang, Sutar (carpenter), Teli (Oil presser) and so on, and belonged to both Hindu and Muslim religious communities. Some Bramhan men like Ram Joshi and Pathe Bapurao also performed in Tamasha” (Cited in Paik, 2017, p. 173).

On different geographical areas covered in the Tamasha, Ramrao says that they visited various village fairs in *Darvha, Digras, Washim, Hingoli Dasra and Jenpur Pimpal*. He worked in various places, such as *Madhya Pradesh, Bhirampur, Itharasi, Amravati, Nagpur, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Ardhapur Urus, Parbhani Urus, Malegaon Yatra, Vidarbha Wani, Ghatanji*.

Regarding the transportation in olden days, Janrao says that earlier the roads were in raw form, *katcha (Gittiche hote)*. The group had two to three trucks, in one they used to keep all the luggage (Saman) and in the other they used to sit. While in the Tamasha, they were supposed to inform the police about their arrival in a particular village, and they also had a license issued in Mumbai. Janrao says that they also paid taxes, *Pawati*, to village Panchayats. They used to receive police protection as well. Janrao worked in different parties spending two years in one and two in another. Of earning, Janrao says that he used to receive around seven hundred rupees a day. They used to stay at the *Chandrapur Fair (Yatra)* continuously for two months, there they used to install their *Tambu* tent around the *Mahakali temple*. They had around 10-12 people working in their party. Janrao says that at present, the place where they used to install their *Tambu* tent is now a private plot. He also says that earlier there was very less charge for a ticket for watching the dance in Tamasha as it was very cheap. As support, the *Mandir* (temple) committee used to assign them a contract in return for donations which they paid to temples.

Janrao remembers when they were in Chandrapur near a temple. There was acute water scarcity. They, being a part of *Tambu*, planned a meeting and decided to organise the matinee shows and gave the money collected to the villagers on an instalment basis. Janrao says that *‘We helped villagers for installing three handpumps and gave some donations to the temple as well’*. Tamasha helped villages in getting their basic problems fixed by collecting money through social gatherings during the fairs where their entertainment played a key role in maximizing the profit beneficial for themselves as well as villagers.

However, traditional entertainment has witnessed change. According to Ramrao, the audience watching the show has reduced drastically. Earlier huge numbers of people used to gather for watching the music and dance at the theatre, but now they don't come. Now they come for sitting in a small room based on the facilities provided and watching the dance performance (*Baithaki*) and, in return for this entertainment, they have to pay charges as per the facilities available in the rooms, AC non-AC charges.

Hari says different types of clientele group visits the Tamasha. "Now the theatre is not for poor, *Garib*, and some leaders do come and do *Dadagiri* as well. Some big people used to visit us, such as *Patils*, who are very rich, MLAs, MPs, and some *Marwadis* who have a passion for watching tamasha. There was a *Seth*, a rich person, who was looted by thieves while coming to watch Tamasha, even then he used to come. Those who had an interest in watching (*Hause Gavse*) used to come. But earlier, there were thousands of people used to come to watch our shows. Many drink a lot and come for watching our show. But our business is running on their support what else we can do".

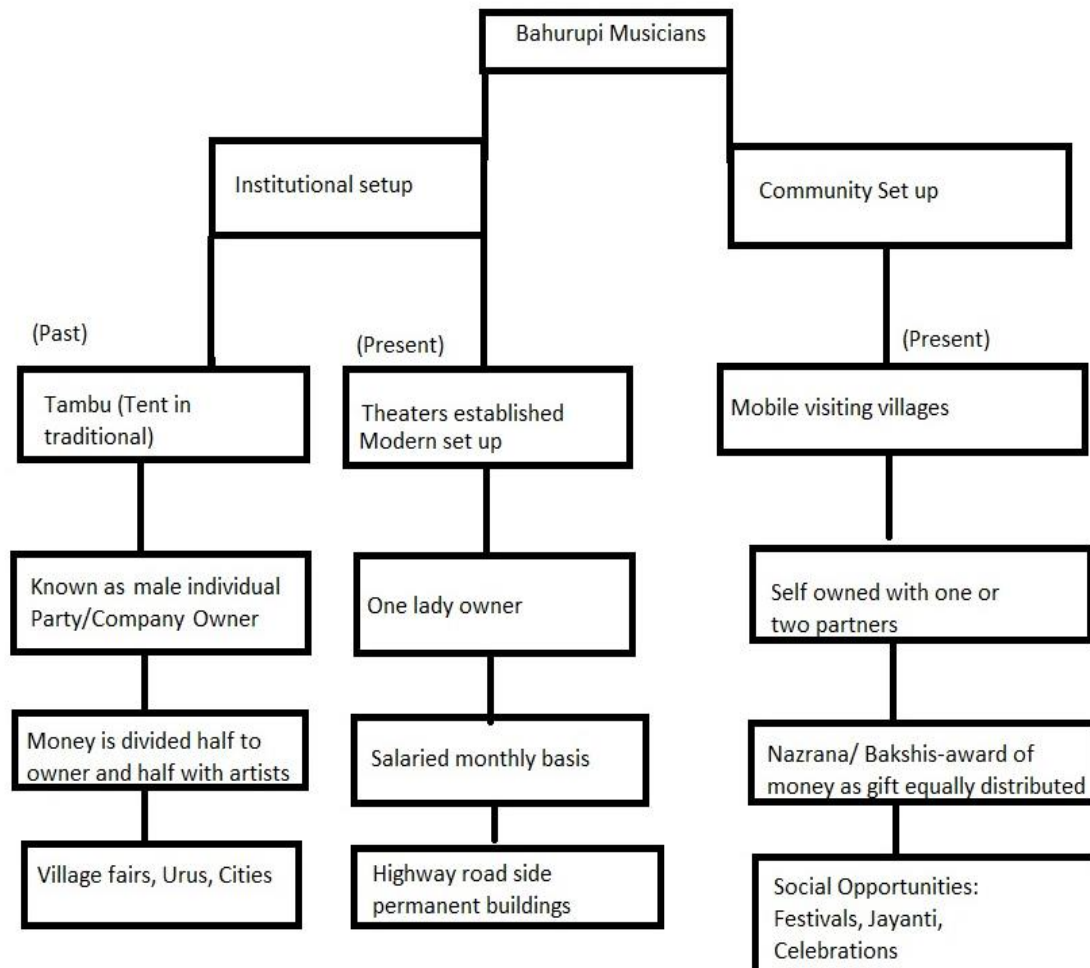
The traditional Tamasha *Tambu* form has been sedentarized and those who used to move to various places in the past are now completely settled near the highway roads in buildings. Hari says that now there are many permanent theatres in various places, such as *Ambajogai*, *Renapur*, *Waranga*, *Beed*, *Kej*, *Pune*, *Mumbai*, *Zamkhed*, etc. Ramrao further says that earlier also had their permanent theatres in *Barshi*, *Narayangaon in Pune*, and *Lalbag in Mumbai*. There was a party known as the *Khobragade* party belonging to the *Budhaa community*. Hari claims that he also worked in *Ambejogai*.

It was found that Santram has left performing harmonium music in the *Tamasha*. He does not get any aid from the government but others get. He had submitted relevant documents to the government office in Bhokar but nothing happened. The government official had conducted some tests before giving the aid to musicians but they did not inform Santram and didn't give him any benefit. He says that "*Why should I appear for the test when I have spent my whole life in music, I bet there would be no one as good a player as me*".

Narayan says, "*Sometimes I feel that I have done nothing in my life. Though I have supported my brother-in-law in getting his daughters married, I spent 40 thousand rupees for a lavish wedding for his daughter in Viadarbha. Now my situation is like a beggar left with nothing.*"

Whatever two plots I had purchased I gave free of cost to my brother as I do not have any children. I stay with my wife but no children. I have drunk a lot, drunk all types of wines and now I am suffering from asthma (Dama). What will happen to me?”.

Diagram 3.2: Types of entertainment services: Past and Present



Alcohol

It was found that many Bahurupi men do take alcohol in their day-to-day life after they return from completing livelihood tasks at the end of the day. There are various reasons for this present alcohol consumption. Some of the Bahurupi *Rayandar* have a habit of drinking alcohol made locally, called *desi* liquor. The case of Sakhre illustrates the stress he gets while searching for water in Umarkhed town. He went visiting three villages, Pimpalgaon, Budki and Hanegaon and he returned home around 5 pm. On his arrival, he wanted to take a bath and went to see if there was water in the public valve of the water pipeline, ad it was not

working on that day. He went to a nearby colony and saw a house which was privately owned and requested the owner lady to offer some water to him. He was asking for a bucket of water, and on his request a lady got angry and said *tula kay kam dhandha hay ka amhala bill bharave lagate dusrikadun ghe* (do you have any work or not we have to pay the bill, go and search somewhere else). After hearing the reply from the lady, Sakhre was feeling very bad that he could not get the water. He was very angry and came to his tent (*Raoti*) and went straight to drink alcohol. It was observed that due to stress Bahurupi Rayandar do consume alcohol.

Many of the Bahurupi reported drinking alcohol due to both heavy economic stress and, especially, when clients or potential clients were rude or dismissive of their performances. In another incident, one-day Sakhre went to perform his daily entertainment in the village Sonala and went to a house to perform, a lady came outside and said you are looking very young why don't you go to some other work, *sakali sakali tond wari karun alas magayla*, which means in the early morning you have come to ask for something keeping your head high. Similarly, Sakhre experienced 15 times the same incidences where he was denied any money and all of them who denied did not even listen to his entertaining performance. On return from the field that day he consumed alcohol. In addition to the physical harm to the drinker, there is economic harm to the family when the men spend money on alcohol rather than on daily survival needs for the family.

Daily wage labour

There are 10 labourers in Bahirpur, 6 in Kalapur and 4 in Raghojiwadi. Bahurupi labourers in Bahirpur are involved in the construction work which is available in the nearest town Bhokar block. However, during the turmeric (*Halad*) season if they get agricultural labour opportunities they go for it. They also go along with Bahurupi women for cutting the grass (*Nindayla*) using a curved knife (*Vila*). But it was found that Bahurupi men lack the knowledge of ploughing and other agricultural skills

Apart from traditional livelihood, the younger generation of Bahurupis has developed an interest in doing daily wage activities to fulfilling their necessities. The case of Kalapur youth illustrates this: The local municipal council of Digrass initiated constructing the cement road and nallah in the town, and a tender was offered to a private contractor. This event created lots of labour opportunities for poor people in the town and people doing daily wage labour in

the surrounding villages of Digrass town. This also created opportunities for Bahurupi young boys, Chetan and Pavan, who went to Digrass as they came to know from their school friend who also worked as daily wage labour. The work used to start early at 7 am and Chetan and Pavan used to start early at 6 AM from Kalapur to reach Digrass and join the work. It was observed that they were simply running and were not opting for any public transport or an auto to reach Digrass, as they were worried about the unnecessary wastage of money if they took an auto or bus.

Plate 3.7: T-shirts and Jeans with Money earned through Daily Wages



The young boys planned to buy a T-shirt and jeans and their parents were opposing them as it is very expensive. Chetan and Pavan worked for a week as daily wage labour by carrying a container of cement and stone mixed with water (*topale*) and they were supplying it to a mason who was filling the material in the drainage lane, called *nallah*, and cement road. It was observed that in the morning Chetan and Pavan were eating stale bread, *bhakar*, and lentils, *daal*, leftovers from the night before going to work. They cannot afford food in the hotel in Digrass as it is too expensive. After a week Chetan and Pavan collected 2000 rupees together and had given some amount to their family for buying food items like lentils (*daal*) and rice and both of them bought T-shirts and jeans. Chetan and Pavan both are studying in the school but sometimes take leave to do this sort of daily wage labour.

There are 21 Bahurupi women involved in daily wage in agricultural farms in Bahirpur. Every day in the morning they carry a curved knife in their hand and cut the grass in the fields. In return, they receive 150 rupees per day. However, the work is available on a

seasonal basis, only during harvesting time (*sugichya divasat*) when the grass is grown with the crops.

Other occupational activities by Bahurupi

The new generation has adopted a variety of employment activities not undertaken by previous generations of Bahurupi, such as waiter, auto driver, and painter. The Bahirpur village is located on the highway which has many hotels, and it has created a livelihood opportunity for six Bahurupi men from Bahirpur and two from Raghojiwadi, who are working in different hotels. They are salaried and get five to six thousand rupees in a month along with food. They commute daily from the village to the hotel.

Learning driving skills has created a livelihood opportunity for five Bahurupi men from Bahirpur. They do not have their auto but they drive for local auto rikshaw owners. They earn Rs.250-300 a day. In the case of Raghojiwadi, three Bahurupi men are involved full-time in painting which they provide in Manglurpir and Washim districts. They also have to daily commute from their village.

Bahurupi women in support of the household economy

It is observed that 31 Bahurupi women from Bahirpur support their families by doing two types of work. One is to do *Nindayche* kaam (cutting the grass) in local agricultural fields in Bahirpur and the other is visiting different villages and stitching the old cloth mattress, known as *Godadi*.

Godadi stitching

Godadi is a mattress, which can be spread on a floor and can be used as a mat. It is made of old clothes. It is warm during the winter and people in the villages use them widely in their day-to-day life. Stitching a *Godadi* is very tiring work as it requires hand stitching and a lot of patience and stitching ability. On the other hand, every year villagers do purchase new clothes for different occasions, and they do not throw away the old clothes, rather they use them for making the *Gaodadi*. There is a demand for *Godadi* stitching in the village and there are some Bahurupi women who have adopted *Godadi* stitching work by travelling to various villages in groups with other Bahurupi women.

Ten Bahurupi women in Bahirpur are involved in stitching *Godadi* and helping their families by earning a small wage in return. These women travel to different villages every day and come back home by sunset. The case of Gangabai Chaupare illustrates the *Godadi* stitching work carried out by Bahurupi women. Gangabai is a 55-year-old Bahurupi woman, who stitches *Godadi* for her livelihood. Her husband is a Bahurupi *Rayandar*. Every day she visits different villages like Wadis and Adivasi villages. Sometimes she goes to villages located in Kalamnuri block in the Nanded district. She along with other two to three Bahurupi women go to villages and never goes alone. In a single day, they get 4-5 *Goadadi* to stitch but sometimes they come back empty hand. At a time two-three women work on a single *Godadi* working with pieces of *Chindhya bundhya*, a collection of old clothes received from the owner. Earlier they used to charge ten to fifteen rupees per *Godadi*, but now due to inflation, *Mahagai*, charge sixty to seventy rupees, and they also get food to eat. Gangabai says sometimes they do not get anything and they return empty-handed. But sometimes they get 4-5 *Gadadi* for stitching. They complete a single village in 5-6 days.

Conclusion

Bahurupi's household economy is supported by various economic activities. There are differences between various activities, in the case of entertainment mimicry or taking different attire and performance is not the only economic activity. Some musicians are part of theatres and they too have witnessed a change over the period. It was also found that Bahurupi Jat Panchayat plays a vital role in the distribution of the villages and places of doing business same is observed with lemon chilly selling. There are certain features of the entertainment provided by Bahurupi which consist of emotional content which directly affects audiences from villages and cities and makes them offer a good return for the entertainment provided. There are various problems among Bahurupi where the household economy is contributed by men, women and youths, studying, and extending their labour.

Chapter 4

Stranger, Stigma and Surveillance

There are diverse communities and religions, each having its own culture and practices in India. The cultural features not only show the difference from one community to another but determine their status and position in the society within which they reside. If there are certain features of a community which are viewed negatively by other communities that may create a stigma in the larger society. Stigma has led to a difference in the interaction between nomadic and settled communities. Nomadic and Denotified communities have been at the receiving end of the stigma that has been perpetuated against them because of their livelihood and cultural practices. Nomads have been viewed as outsiders by sedentary groups. In recent Indian history, nomadic communities have faced not only social stigma but also codified legal stigma that labelled them as criminals under the colonial administration's Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Central and State governments have attempted to sedentarize nomadic communities to improve their lives and perhaps remove some of this stigma. However, empirical findings show that at present the life of the nomadic communities which are sedentarized in different places like villages and cities is not good. There are many problems that Nomadic communities face while living a sedentary life. In many cases, the difficulties that Nomads face are deep-rooted in history. The communities' cultural characteristics and historical background have shaped the identity of nomadic communities in village life. Although there has been much written about the stigmas and prejudices faced by nomadic communities, the Bahurupi have not been widely studied through this lens.

Before attempting to understand the stigma that exists in the lives of peripatetic communities like the Bahurupi, it is imperative to look at the concept of stigma and its practice. Many scholars tried to understand stigma in societal dimensions. Brakel (2006) noted that Many chronic health illnesses are accompanied by the phenomena of stigma, which results in significant suffering for those who experience it and has adverse effects on public health initiatives aimed at eradicating the diseases or conditions in question.

Brakel (2006) went on to describe the negative effects of stigma on those who are affected, such as increased risk, disability or advanced disease, mental stress, sadness, fear, and other prohibitions on participation. He adds that although there have been several studies on the

effects of stigma and prejudice, there has been little progress in addressing these issues in the context of public health initiatives.

According to Brakel (2006), who discussed the potential causes of stigma, it is a process with social nature and related to the individual experience that is full of various features, such as elimination, denial, culpability, or devaluing, that become experience or a rational anticipator of an unfavourable social judgement about an individual or collection of individuals. In contrast, stigma about health is based on a continuing character of identity that may be a result of a health problem or health-related situation.

A form of stigma is enacted stigma, in this type of stigma there is the experience of discrimination (UNAIDS, 2000; cited in Brakel, 2006). There is another type of stigma that is perceived (or felt) stigma (Siyam 'Kela, 2003). In felt stigma, there will be a fear of being discriminated against (Cited in Brakel, 2006). Wrrigan (1998) Writes about internalized stigma, which is when one applies negative stereotypes to themselves and experiences devaluation, embarrassment, privacy, and removal (Valencia, 1989; cited in Brakel, 2006).

On the other hand, in the context of social stigma, Lanata (2020) argued that various academic disciplines have distinct ways of operationalizing social stigma. However, at their heart, all operational definitions of social stigma provide a sense of a cascade of independent actions, starting with cognitive emotional processes and concluding with damaging attitudes and behaviours towards persons who are stigmatised. The first step in stigmatisation is to mentally "mark" an individual or group of individuals as distinct from others based on socially elusive traits. Then, unfavourable stereotypical views about the stigmatised person or group start to spread among dominant groups, resulting in a generalised sense of "us" vs. "them" and a feeling of othering. Last but not least, dominant groups adopt these stereotypes as fact, which encourages and justifies exclusionary, avoidant, violent, or other behaviours (Lanata, 2020: 375).

When discussing more serious repercussions of the stigma some write that Ostracism or marginalisation of those who possess or display socially unfavourable traits or qualities is referred to as stigma (Cited in Choi & Kruis, 2020: 321).

It is important to know about discrimination since it has been mentioned in the above definition of stigma. Discrimination is unjustifiable behaviour with different individuals or people, in addition to common occurrences like discrimination based on race or religion. An example could be any measure involving a difference between persons depending on their confirmed or suspicious health position (Carael et al., 2000). As relates to stigma in health, there is another term, participation restriction, in which an individual may experience certain problems during different times in life it was defined by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (World Health Organisation, 2001).

Another term related to stigma is a stereotype. In this, there will be a belief that all members of a group carrying similar features appear in some individuals belonging to that group (Brakel, 2006). Brakel (2006) in his writing on health discusses five ways to evaluate stigma:

- 1) Attitudes regarding the suffering individuals belonging to the community or particular groups (such as professionals working in the care field) are asked about attitudes they or others have towards members with a specific health-related condition.
- 2) Discriminatory and stigmatising practices, services, legislation, and materials; discriminatory or disrespectful behaviour in public, the house, or the place of work as recorded; health facilities are verified to see various provisions practices that may be ostracizing or result in stigma. To determine whether anti-discrimination laws are in place and to look for legislation that might cause stigma or result in discrimination, statutes are reviewed. A systematic examination of news coverage from a certain period is conducted to identify pieces or shows that promote stigmatising or discriminatory messages. Educational syllabi utilized in schools, colleges or universities that deal with stigma conditions can be systematically looked at to see whether they are communicating stigma or discrimination.

The real discriminating, participation limits that the impacted person has encountered. People who may have a stigmatised medical condition are asked about any discrimination they, in reality, have faced.

- 3) People facing stigma in the case of health conditions or members of the community are questioned about any stigma and prejudice they fear or believe to be pervasive in their community or society when there is perceived or felt stigma.

People with stigmatised medical conditions are questioned about their feelings of losing dignity, fear, humiliation, remorse, etc.

W.H. Van Brakel (2006) suggested many study techniques for evaluating the aforementioned five factors; these could include:

- 1) Surveys might be closed, open, or guided interviewing. These frequently include questionnaires to gather information on knowledge, attitudes and reported practices (KAP).
- 2) interviews of key persons, focus groups, detailed interviews, and participant observations might be used in qualitative methods assessment.

The above literature supports the assessment methods adopted focusing on the studies conducted in the field of public health. The role of stigma in nomadic people has not been explored extensively. There is scanty research done to study the stigma that nomadic people face. Yet the literature on stigma in the health field may help to better understand the stigma that nomadic communities may face.

The Stranger

Another concept that may help in studying nomadic stigma is Joseph Berland's idea of "the stranger". Berland and Rao have used the concept called "the stranger" which was first offered by George Simmel. Berland and Rao's main aim was to explore the usefulness of George Simmel's elaborate paradigm of "The stranger" as a conceptual tool for broadening our understanding of the positions of peripatetic people, as well as the nature of their subsistence strategies. Berland and Rao have raised a very significant point, i.e., how the content and processes of transactions between peripatetic specialists and client communities determine their position and inform mutual perception and expectations of the other. Berland and Rao further suggest that the notion of "customary stranger" will shed light on how the temporal, social, and economic context of their various transactions contributes to disparate levels of knowledge and experience, and how these habits and process of interaction shape their situations, identities, and relationships both within and between communities (2004, p. 2).

Simmel tried to decipher the term stranger where he observed that the stranger word is not considered in the usual sense of the word "Potential travelers still enjoy the freedom to come and go in the form of the wanderer who arrives today and departs tomorrow, but they prefer the person who arrives today and stays tomorrow. He is fixed within a particular special circle within a group whose boundaries are comparable to special boundaries, but his position

within it is fundamentally affected by the fact that he does not initially belong in it and that he brings qualities into it that are not, and cannot be, indigenous to it” (Simmel cited in Berland and Rao, 2004, p. 8).

According to Wood (1934), Schutz (1944), and Meyer (1951), there are certain arguments about the positions of peripatetic communities which are inclined to forecast the position of the stranger to that of the newcomer or immigrant, and conditions related to their reception and ultimate incorporation or rejection by the group (2004, p. 6).

On the outlook and trust towards strangers by society, Frembgen observed that the travelling salesmen depicted by George Simmel in 1950 are "Strangers," but they are a special kind because they continue to be socially disliked and held in the lowest regard, frequently sticking out due to their peculiar or distinctive attire. He goes on to say that the religious auspiciousness assigned to the dervish and incense-bearer helps to alleviate this depressing "strangeness" (2004, p. 258).

Berland and Rao (2004) observed that in primary goods production and trade, it is very difficult to accommodate more men in the activity but trade is something which can always absorb more men. Further, they believe the stranger, who, so to speak, intrudes as a supernumerary into a group in which all the economic positions are already occupied, is best suited for that trade. Whereas, Levine tries to define the position of Simmel's stranger that it is a closeness and remoteness, "repulsion and distance," and a position in the group that requires "both being outside of it and confronting it", are all examples of a union based on interaction (Cited in Berland and Rao, 2004).

According to Berland and Rao peripatetic individuals appear to have a poor social status worldwide, dating back to the time of the ancient Greeks. One important factor for this is that their way of life seems to contradict and go against the values and customs of their host communities (2004, p.15).

Origin myths and other legends offer some insight into how peripatetic peoples understand and explain their position of being both “inside” and “confronting” social systems of client communities.

Casimir has observed that peripatetic communities relate and use elaborate origin myths and other legends to rationalize their own social and cultural habits, tradition, values and identities but also as tools for manipulating others' perceptions of their status and roles as customary strangers.

Casimir discusses the motives behind using myths and other legends by peripatetic communities. He says it is reinforcing components of their identity that can promote favourable, or at least sympathetic, impressions of their position as a typical strategy for reducing the negative aspects of their "strangeness" (2004: 33).

- 1) Casimir has produced important observations about many aspects of human cognition, learning, and experience, including every event can be explained by its genesis, which can be found in natural or supernatural sources.
- 2) Every action that may be linked to the standards and principles of a certain society affects the actor's standing.
- 3) When social norms are broken, the offender may experience feelings of guilt or shame. The latter may then take responsibility for his actions on his own by making amends or by agreeing to pay a price.
- 4) Self-serving prejudice that upholds self-esteem is a trait shared by all people.
- 5) Unpleasant deeds or circumstances typically constitute atonement and expiation.

Casimir further says that in many communities, myths or tales serve as informal justifications for the difficulties of modern life by referring to one or more particular historical occurrences (2004).

Meyer, Rao, Rasmussen and Villasante Cervello analysed the complexity, conditions and various perceptions of the low social status of peripatetic communities in the context of such norms and values and discuss their powerlessness in the social and political schema of diverse client communities (cited in Berland and Rao, 2004).

- The three key characteristics of this lifestyle contribute to their low status. Their low status is because they are “no owners of soil”, due to their “alien” or “ambiguous origin”, and the “despicable” nature of their subsistence activities.

Casimir (2004) has observed that a crime or sin that was done, either purposefully or unintentionally, is the root of a group's current misfortune or low position. According to Casimir, the myth and origin of many Dalits and other "low" caste people in India frequently refer to contact with or "mishandling" of cow's meat as a result of an oversight or misunderstanding: -milk and blood and meat feature prominently in many myths. Dalits throughout India say that they were originally people who were respectable and whose present condition is because of misunderstanding.

Casimir (2004) observed that in most, if not all, cultures perceived physical or mental suffering is often interpreted as punishment for one or more acts of transgression. He (2004) argued that when misfortune strikes an individual or an entire community, its cause is seen in past wrongdoings. Pocock (1964, p.18) Peasants in Gujrat would concur with the untouchables' assertion that they were once kings and fell to their current status due to some failure to uphold kingly virtue or sin (Cited in Casimir, 2004).

Casimir found that transgression, guilt, and punishment as reasons for low status or suffering are common explanatory themes which he found in many communities. The term guilt will be used here to signify a specific negative emotion caused by violations of norms related to culture-specific values. Casimir distinguishes between feelings of guilt and shame. According to him, guilt feeling arises when reciprocal relations are not respected in a social or religious context (2004). On the other hand, Lebra asserts that guilt and shame can be exchanged on a social market, for instance, when the offender apologizes in front of others and pays the price of humiliation to be absolved of responsibility (1971, cited in Casimir, 2004). She also makes connections between asymmetrical social structures and the feeling of shame. Anything that raises the possibility of exposing something—no matter how minor—about the claimant that conflicts with the status results in shame. When a person publicly admits his wrongdoings, guilt feelings can change into feelings of shame.

Consequences of distinct characteristics of Peripatetics

Berland and Rao claim that the qualities of nearness and remoteness, landlessness and rootlessness, powerlessness, mobility, objectivity, freedom, flexibility, and resourcefulness may positively enable the position of the stranger. They further believed that these same characteristics also engender negative, detrimental, and even dangerous consequences in their relationships with client communities. According to Berland and Rao both of these possibilities are entwined in the fundamentally unequal power relationships that exist

between Peripatetics and their host communities everywhere. The majority of information that has been recorded on the history of Peripatetics attests to the asymmetry of the archival materials, which only contain the dominating discourse (2004).

The discourses of host societies, which tend to be manifested in police records in the West, and colonial records in the rest of the world, dealt with Peripatetics almost exclusively in criminal terms. Discussions of entire impoverished communities idling away their days and living off crime gained popularity in 18th and 19th century Europe. In Europe, vagrancy had come to be associated with nomadism. Because of the criminalization of the poor, this was conceptually linked to poverty, which gave rise to the notion of "the dangerous classes" (Monkkonen, 1975, see also Yang, 1985 a). This is reflected in the colonial legislation on nomadic communities and is an illustration of treating them as dangerous classes.

Nomadism and Stigma

The present stigma amongst peripatetic communities has its long roots in the history of the colonial administration's draconian policies and legislation as well as sedentary communities' views against them. Peripatetic communities were indeed useful for sedentary communities as they were providing certain goods and services which were scarcely available locally. When society started transforming due to various reasons, such as industrialization, roads and so on, it brought massive change and affected the traditional livelihood of the peripatetic communities. Consequently, they had nowhere to go and were helpless. Peripatetic people who served various Indian communities were left with no options for their survival. There were cases of a few individuals from these communities being criminals but then the whole community was blamed and held responsible for the crime of some individuals. The age-old suspicious attitude towards these mobile communities seems to be continuing and can be seen in how governments branded some peripatetic communities as criminals. It is pertinent to note here that the colonial revenue and the tax collection policy were difficult to apply to the peripatetic communities due to their constant mobility. So colonial governments had designed surveillance methods to keep a watch on peripatetic and other nomadic communities.

Surveillance

Before going to understand the surveillance system designed by the colonial government under CTA 1871, it is significant to understand surveillance itself through a conceptual point

of view which involves certain mechanisms where power and discipline play vital roles in controlling the people.

In the history of surveillance, it is found that the surveillance system has evolved during certain historical events, like widespread epidemics of diseases which were more fatal and dangerous to human survival. To try and control these deadly diseases, like the plague, systems were developed that not only quarantined people but led to the emergence of a system where everyone was closely monitored. To curb the disease, surveillance was designed. The detailed history of surveillance was discussed by Michel Foucault in his writings. There are certain concepts which were used by Foucault who studied Bentham's Panopticon¹³ with a critical view. Bentham's architectural understanding of surveillance emerged as a mechanism of surveillance (Sheridan, 1995).

Michel Foucault (Sheridan, 1995) argued on the principles on which Bentham's Panopticon, the composition's architectural centrepiece, was built. The building's perimeter is divided into cells, each of which spans the entire width of the structure. They each have two views, one on the inside that matches the tower's windows and the other on the outside that lets light pass from end to end of the cell. A tower serves as the centre and is pierced throughout by large windows that open onto the inner side of the ring. The only thing left to do is to place a supervisor in a central tower and lock up a mentally ill person, a patient, a condemned man, a worker, or a schoolboy in each cell. By the effect of lights, the small captive shadows in the perimeter's cell can be seen from the tower and stand out opposite the light perfectly. They resemble many cages and small places of performance where each actor performs in complete isolation before a spectator. With the help of the Panoptic mechanism, ongoing and sudden vision can be made probable (1995).

Here Michel Foucault also discusses the invisible power which plays a vital role in the Panopticon. According to him, the objective is to induce a sense of consciousness in the inmates that they are being watched constantly through which power is maintained (1995: 201). The implication of surveillance becomes long-term through the apparatus that has been

¹³ Panopticon is a framework recommended by Michel Foucault for understanding the surveillance mechanism where we can understand the overall structure of the surveillance that where the power is exercised for keeping a watch on suspected people having negative characteristics such as criminal or so on.

set up, wherein a situation in which they are the ones wielding the power. The prisoner must be aware that he is being watched, regardless of whether the jail's administrator is keeping an eye on him. A mechanism called the Panopticon divides the see/be seen dyad: inside the outer circle, one is solely viewed without ever seeing, whereas inside the inner tower, one sees everything without ever being seen (1995).

About surveillance and industrialization Toni Weller (2012) notes that the concept of the surveillance state has been ingrained in political and popular discourse, and some observers argue that it is the very essence of modernity, inextricably related to industrialization and the advent of the nation-state (Cited in Weller, 2012: 57).

However, the above literature demonstrates that the very concept of Foucault's, i.e., Panopticon, helps in understanding the mechanism of surveillance which became a potential tool for controlling the masses. The same can be applied to understanding the control mechanism designed by the colonial government which took various measures to control nomadic communities. The CTA 1871 allowed certain powers to employees of the colonial government and headmen of the villages to control and detain the "criminal" tribes.

CTA and Surveillance System

The CTA 1871 gave the police administration power to bring large numbers of people under its control. It is in this context it became compulsory for an individual who is declared a criminal and his family to register with the police. Licenses were issued to families and several restrictions were imposed on them, without the permission of the police they were not allowed to move. Their movement was restricted within certain geographical demarcations within the district. Their absence in the village or not carrying licences was penalised rigorously. Radhakrishna (2001) in her writing on surveillance under CTA discussed the system of enforcement of the draconian laws involving local prestigious and high caste headmen. It shows that the British were well aware of the local social dimensions of Indian castes and communities. It also shows that they were aware of the multitude of the dynamic of the caste system, including the upper dominant castes playing a vital role in village politics as well as the involvement of local powerful landowning men.

To understand the surveillance designed for tracking and notifying nomads following points are significant:

- 1) CTA had given certain significant rights to the local village headmen where they could make recommendations to the colonial administration about the notification of certain communities without providing any reason. It was a rule that if any member of a nomadic community committed any non-bailable offence their information had to be reported to the nearest police station by the village headmen. Once the report was submitted, the notification of certain identified communities was done by the local first-class magistrate or district collector (Radhakrishna, 2001).
- 2) It is clear that the British administration was completely reliant on the village headmen for the identification of certain nomadic communities. Involving local powerful persons from the village can be seen as the British administration's prime method to identify communities in the notification process. The Indian police commission advised the government to increase the powers of the village headmen, many were village landlords whose increased prestige allowed them to enter politics as a headman (Radhakrishna, 2001).
- 3) As part of their increased power, the British government assigned the headman various duties such as that of village revenue officer, police officer and magistrate at the local level. On this increased power of the headmen, On the other hand, the aim behind increasing headmen's power was to dispose of the local petty criminal cases speedily (Radhakrishna, 2001).
- 4) The British government strongly believed that they had no other options except to involve prestigious and reputed village landlords and headmen in the notification process. During the colonial period, the majority of reports received in the police station were submitted by the village headmen since village headmen were also performing the duty of the magistrate. Headmen and landlords from Madras presidency were responsible for the administrative work at the local level on top of dealing with the matters of deciding the criminal and civil cases. The Indian police commission was aware of the fact that village headmen were performing different assigned duties satisfactorily as they were well-known and influential in their local areas. As a result of this, the Indian Police Commission recommended the strengthening of powers of the village headmen, and also directed the police department to establish a cooperative approach with local headmen and asked them to take help in their work (Radhakrishna, 2001).
- 5) In the enforcement of the CTA many stringent rules were made to control the movements of nomadic peripatetic communities. Among these, some rules were so strict that if any member of a nomadic community mistakenly fails to report to the village headmen, he

could be registered under a new offence since leaving a village without informing the headman shows an intention of committing a crime. However, it was a mandatory rule that whenever any nomadic community was visiting a village, they must report their arrival, departure, the number of days of stay in the village, and details of family members were given to the local headmen (Radhakrishna, 2001).

- 6) It is also noted by Radhakrishna (2001) that village headmen misused the CTA for personal gains. It was based on information provided by the headmen about the nomadic communities' criminal involvement that they were added to the list of criminal tribes. The headmen could impact the rights and freedoms of these nomadic communities. Therefore these communities would be compelled to visit the headman frequently and ensure a good relationship to avoid any allegations. Radhakrishna (2001) also writes that there were efforts undertaken by the headmen to use nomadic communities for their gains, such as forcing these communities to work on their farms. Refusing this forced labour could result in a negative report by the village headman, drastically impacting their livelihoods and freedom of movement. This system of surveillance, controlling the movements of the nomadic communities, not only restricted where nomadic communities could go but on a larger scale impacted their freedom to roam freely. It is also noted that nomadic communities, to seek work, became dependent on the headmen's favour (Radhakrishna, 2001).
- 7) Radhakrishna (2001) explains that CTA 1871 could be seen as a tool of caste exploitation, she illustrates the case of Korava. If the Korava did not fulfil any desire of the headmen, criminal cases were registered against them, sending them to one-month imprisonment.

Before the introduction of the CTA in 1871, the British government considered nomadic and peripatetic communities as dangerous and a potential threat to law and order. To control and suppress these communities, the colonial government successfully spread wrong information about these communities. The repercussions of these efforts were profound and long-lasting, as nomadic communities could not find work and by the 20th century, most nomadic communities had been forced to abandon their traditional livelihoods. There were many consequences including harassment or vandalising of their property by police or villagers as well as the fear and anxiety such actions created.

It seems that The Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), however, was born out of political control measures rather than a societal concern for rising crime, and its conceptual roots were in local institutions and organisations (Radhakrishna, 2001: 4).

Zamindars also came under the ambit of the Act and they were given certain responsibilities, such as looking at registration criteria and suggesting whether a particular group should be declared criminal. They were also responsible for keeping an eye on the members who were registered. As far as the local government was concerned, the village headmen and watchmen were also appointed and were made responsible for watching the movements of Criminal tribes and reporting the offences committed by them. The local police were authorised to an inspection of the residences of criminal tribes (Radhakrishna, 2001; Gandhi, 2008). The above surveillance system was designed by the colonial administration. Many inhuman measures were adopted against groups who were branded criminals by the Police, village headmen and landlords. These include the abuse of women and holding a son responsible for crimes committed by his father.

The colonial government initially thought of settling nomadic communities before their notification on the same line. Radhakrishna writes that the CTA of 1871 prohibited official notification and registration of communities until after they had been settled and given a means of subsistence. Later, it was decided that this clause wasn't essential, and the 1911 ACT did away with it. As a result, there was no longer a fixed limit on the number of notifications, and CTA action could be performed considerably more freely (2001:45).

Rules regarding surveillance under the CTA stipulated that a nomadic community member without first obtaining a certificate from the headman was not permitted to leave the village, either temporarily or permanently. He was required to introduce himself to the headman of that village upon arrival and display the certificate as identification. Failure to do so would constitute yet another violation of the CTA. It was noted that the person in question can also be charged with fleeing to commit a crime. Thus, it is simple to envisage the unrestricted authority that the village headmen held, particularly in the case of migrating groups that were required to travel from village to village regularly to continue practising what was left of their trade. They had to inform the headmen (or the police) of every hamlet they travelled through of their change of address and make a report (Cited in Radhakrishna, 2001: 47).

The same case of surveillance practices has affected the Bahurupi, failing to report their arrival or departure to different villages might attract criminal allegations against them. The fear of this strict surveillance can be seen among the Bahurupi as well, in the following case a Bahurupi old man describes the case of seeking permissions from village headmen in the olden days.

Case 1-Surveillance experience

Ganpatrao, a 68-year-old Bahurupi man, explains the reporting system under the surveillance of CTA. Now we do not take any permissions as we used to take long back when we used to roam in different villages. In the olden days we used to stay at a particular village for up to 8 to 10 days and halting there we used to cover the nearby villages where we provided entertainment services. After receiving the food items and money from the villagers we used to come back to the temporary tent (Raoti) place. On completing the nearby villages in the area we had to move our family (Birhad) to another place of stay to cover more villages for our performances. For instance, we stayed at Pimpalgaon for 8 to 10 days, thereafter shifting to another village. We had a group of families called *Birhad*, consisting of 4 to 5 families, after reaching the village our first and foremost work was to inform and take permission from the village *Police Patil* about our arrival. We used to give the *Police Patil* minor details of the family, such as the names of the male and female family members and children. For instance, myself, my wife and three children, two daughters and one son. Details of all the families who are together were also mandatory. For instance, Ganpatrao's family consists of two sons, one daughter-in-law and one daughter. All this information was recorded by the *Police Patil* in the village. *Police Patil* also used to ask us how many days we are going to stay in this village, we always took permission to stay for 4 to 8 days, *chaar aath divas*, and then move to another village.

Whenever we planned to shift, two of us used to visit again the Police Patil and inform him about our departure to another village. The motive behind informing Police Patil about our arrival and departure was to avoid any criminal allegations by locals and avoid doubt of possible criminal community in the village.

The above case shows that Bahurupi were always scared of getting criminal allegations and routinely visited the village headman, and Police Patil to report minor details of family

composition, male-female, children, and the number of days to stay in the village, their arrival and departure.

Case 2- Surveillance Experience

There is another narrative of a Bahurupi old man which explains the fear of surveillance among the Bahurupi even after the Criminal Tribes Act was repealed. Kachru, an 80-year-old Bahurupi, says, “When I was young, whenever our people used to go for seeking permission to stay at a village, some of them were so scared. They were scared of merely standing before the *police Patil*. They used to describe the physical feature of the *Police Patil* saying that he was tall as a giant, sporting a lengthy moustache. The people were terrified of the Police Patil and stand at a distance from him. I have witnessed this in *Chondhi Amba* village. On the Market day, I remember, I was too young then. I used to go with my father there holding his hand, then my ticket was never paid for as it was the half ticket for the children. Our family was very much big then. *Kailas Anna, Babasaheb Nana, Vithal Mama, Shyam Kaka, and Sahebrao Kaka*, were very clever elder people. They used to tell each other that you take the lead for seeking permission to stay from the Police Patil. They used to force each other to lead first for taking permission to praise each other’s effective speaking skills. I saw there, the Police Patil belonged to the *Dhangar* community. He spoke very harshly and was very angry (*ragit*). Our people were soft and behaved meekly in front of him. I do remember there is a railway route (*patri*) near that village. We had walked from *Borda* village to *Shirad Shahapur*, and we had gone there from *Balapur* on a walk”.

There are serious repercussions of this old surveillance system on the Bahurupi. Many Bahurupi report a fear among them of outsiders. Even in the present day, many Bahurupi behave very humbly while talking to any sedentary member. The above case shows the particular fear of the village headman due to both their power and physical strength. Such fear compelled the Bahurupi to follow the surveillance schedule strictly to avoid any criminal case.

Settlements, CTA

The British never appreciated nomadism and pastoralism as a way of life. For the British, the nomadic lifestyle was first and foremost seen as a law-and-order problem. There were certain nomadic communities which constantly used to move to different places like villages, towns and cities for selling their goods and rendering services. They were always suspicious of

peripatetic communities. They took efforts to sedentarise them by establishing the settlements. The inhuman attitude of the British government towards nomadic communities was largely responsible for branding them as criminals. These communities were forced to settle, and many communities were used as labourers in British-owned industries, and they were also exploited by the landlords for their agricultural activities (Bhukya, 2007; Renke, 2008).

Heredia (2007) described the intent of the CTA. He pointed out that the historical need for the Act was driven more by the need for labour to reclaim agricultural land and later to supply textile mills and industrial establishments than it was by the need to reduce crime. Salvation Army settlements were able to keep going and operating for welcoming the financial gain from such labour as their marketing strategy. The fact that the settlements worked as places for forced labour was occasionally objected to in court but to no avail. (2012, p.11). Malli Gandhi (2008) discussed some criteria for branding communities as ‘criminal’, such as some social practices, their consuming alcohol, poorer type of food, laziness, and not being willing to work. Many efforts were made by the British to forcefully settle these communities. There were many settlements which were run by Salvation Army, and the aim behind running these settlements was to prevent these communities from committing a crime. The settlement like Stuartpuram, where a sizable number of members of these communities were relocated, kept in a single area and employed as labourers in various industries, including the construction of roads and dams (Renke *ibid.*).

As Renke Commission on ‘Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes’ suitably put it, during the period of notification the communities were labelled as criminals, and efforts were made to relocate them as sizable groups across the nation in different places. In the nation, more than fifty such settlements were constructed (Renke, 2008, p. 9). These figures were lower than the actual, as no figures were available for the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, which were the first to repeal the CTA before the Ayyangar Committee of 1952 (Renke *ibid.*).

Criminal Tribes Act 1871 is an example of the draconian policy of the British government due to which many nomadic communities were declared as criminal. It not only brought them under the purview of law but also has extremely changed their whole life. Many nomadic communities, like traders, entertainers, pastoralists, artisans, mendicants and nomadic

individuals who subsisted on charity, etc., were branded as criminals (Renke, 2008, Gandhi, 2014). During the independence, there were around three million notified tribes members in India (Schwarz, 2010) from two hundred DNTs (Gandhi, 2014). DNTs are found in many states in the country. For instance, TN, AP, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujrat, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh. According to Dandekar (2006), these tribes today are located in terms of their association with the rest of the Indian caste and tribes and their integration within that society.

As aptly summed up by Renke Commission, the term "Denotified Tribes" refers to all groups of people who were "notified" during the Criminal Tribes Acts, which were in place in various forms between 1871 and 1947 while India was ruled by the British regime, and the same Acts were repealed following India's independence (Renke, 2008, p.10).

Possibly, India was the only country in the world that considered a crime as an inherited quality and the majority number of males and females are documented and imposed stigma as criminals by birth (D.N. Majumdar, 1990). Following independence, the police and those in positions of political and non-political power forced them into criminal activity. They had no option but to opt for stealing and robbing (Mahasveta Devi, 2002).

To understand the stigma and suspicious views by sedentary communities and the colonial state against peripatetic communities, it is imperative to shed light on the various reasons that contributed to the enactment of the Criminal Tribe Act of 1871.

The Imperial Commission of 1863 acknowledge community rights, but later the Forest Act of 1865 demarcated community reserves for their needs (R.C. Heredia and A. Dandekar, 2000). Forest Acts have deprived many tribes of traditional livelihood (Shereen Ratnagar 2003). It was their livelihood ultimately was taken away by the privatization of this trade (Rudolf C. Heredia, 2002). At the same time, it is discovered that the loss of open access to grazing lands and forests has a significant negative effect on the livelihoods of pastoralists and hunter-gatherers. The specific causes of the effect on their way of life are as follows: a) complete loss of natural resources in terms of both quality and quantity; b) rise in competitive use patterns between different users; c) rising privatization and commercialization of resources; and d) prohibition on access to and control over natural resources (Milind Bokil, 2002).

Of the colonial legislation it was noted that the British National Forest Policy caused conflict over using forest resources by the tribal and other rural communities. As a result, many communities like the Berad got involved in dacoities, thefts and plunder, as they were deprived of their traditional livelihoods. Besides, there were many communities involved in the fight against the British during the 1857 revolt for Independence alongside many Indian kings. As a result, certain communities which were involved in this revolt were also registered as 'criminals' under CTA 1871 (Draxe, 2005; Renke, 2008). As far as forest regulation is concerned, it prevented many other peripatetic communities from sourcing forest produce. For instance, Koravas were unable to gather forest produce, a crucial form of exchange in their commerce, due to the legislation of the 1880s. Additionally, the regulations forbade them from gathering bamboo and leaves, which they used to make mats, baskets, brooms, and other items. Their livestock could no longer access the common pasture land and grazing places since they were blocked off. Additionally, the government's revised salt policy of the 1880s, which permitted big trading firms to enter the salt trade, had a significant impact on them (Radhakrishna, 2001: 8).

Various types of wild species, such as horses, donkeys, camels, bull-locks, cows, sheep, dogs, monkeys and bears, were reared, trained and involved in the livelihood by the nomads. They also found, traded and used different wild animals, such as foxes, pigs, lizards, mongooses, snakes, hares, etc. Nomads also have a connection with flora and they get from the forest and sold many vegetative products (Milind Bokil, 2002). The Forest Acts also prohibited these communities from using certain wild animals in their traditional livelihoods like bears and monkeys.

Milind Bokil (2002) sheds light on the issue of how certain nomadic communities began doing criminal activity due to the loss of their traditional livelihoods. He writes that the Banjaras were in the transport business of the Mughal Armies but after the collapse of the army, they lost their traditional livelihood. Similar circumstances can be observed with the "Shikalgars," who produced metal weapons by forging and hammering metal. For their communities, the fall of one kingdom or loss of patronage caused displacement. On the other hand, certain communities like the 'Berads' or 'Ramoshis' were very influential in south Maharashtra and North Karnataka. In some areas, they were the local rulers but they largely lost their eminence during the British regime. The British administrative reforms and

subsequent land settlements hastened the displacement of these communities, which is another reason why some of these communities took to crime (Milind Bokil, 2002).

However, amongst these communities, some members were specifically involved in entertainment services, i.e., various performers including acrobats, tightrope walkers, singers, etc. Street entertainment provided by peripatetic communities was increasingly seen as an obstacle to public order. The colonial government viewed a group of performers themselves as a potential threat, even more so when their performances tended to draw large crowds, which almost always made the local authorities nervous. The British administration was more inclined to favour forms of recreation which could be supervised by themselves, and would not precipitate what they called disorderly and riotous behaviour on the part of the audiences (Radhakrishna, 2001).

Due to the loss of traditional livelihood, these communities sometimes became involved in 'criminal activities. After the initial investigation by the British administrators, it was found that these communities are involved in several 'criminal' activities and they need to be brought under control.

The very first attempt to legally declare some communities as a criminal was made in Punjab and the North Western Provinces. Local governments observed that the wandering communities were increasingly taking part in criminal activities. Hence, in these provinces, the police administration attempted to limit the movements of certain communities. The police implemented this system widely and found it useful in controlling crime, but in 1860, the Chief Court declared this system illegal. Following the court's ruling, the Provincial governments of Punjab and North Western Provinces approached the colonial government and demanded legislation that would allow them to continue these practices. A special bill was proposed by the council that would make registration of all nomadic communities mandatory. There were many debates about the usefulness of the Act. Critics of the bill argued that many nomadic communities benefitted society and should not automatically be registered as criminals under such a bill. However, the colonial government ultimately passed the bill on the recommendation of local authorities and the CTA, 1871 was enacted in three provinces, Punjab, North Western Province and Oudh. An expanded version of this act was passed in 1897 which allowed local governments to establish and maintain permanent settlements for criminal tribes, in particular claiming such actions for the benefit of the

children of such communities that they would not be raised as criminals. The settlement was a major feature of the first CTA (1871) as it did not allow registration or notification of the communities until they were settled and provided with a livelihood. The CTA of 1911 allowed for the notification of criminal tribes across all of British India but also removed the stipulation that the community must first be properly settled.

The major task of the British government was to identify communities to be notified. The administration adopted very arbitrary criteria towards wandering tribes. Communities that were to be notified were chosen based on 1) the consanguineal relationship of members with those criminal tribes who had convictions in their names, and 2) the consanguineal relationship with those already notified. The administration designed these criteria in such a way that once one notification is done, it would automatically attract fresh notification from those who are in a relationship with the notified. The administration had prepared two categories for scrutiny of notification under CTA, one found a wandering group by its fixed temporary settlement place and another groups present livelihood (Radhakrishna, 2001). Bhukya reported that If it was discovered that the gang did not have a set job or place of abode, the CTA would notify it as a criminal tribe or caste (2007: 182).

Branding Communities as criminal

According to Berland and Rao, the British believed nomads were unpredictable and so possibly criminal (Casimir and Rao 2003), and these notions paired with ideas of imperial administration took on an orientalist persona as the Criminal Tribes Act (2004, p.11).

About gipsies, Berland and Rao reported that in the famous report on the census of Panjab, Ibbetson (1882, p.307) writes that there is no clear distinction between the wandering and criminal tribes and the gipsy tribes because they are so similar (2004: 11).

The political elite of many post-colonial states have internalized the stereotype of nomads that was ingrained in the body of colonial "knowledge," and they continue to view nomadic peoples as a "law and order Problem." Thus, for instance, the Indian government repealed the CTA in 1952 (Rao and Casimir, 2003) and framed another law, the Habitual Offenders Act.

Ostensibly applicable to any member, it was applied principally to members of the one twenty-seven communities totalling sixty million nomadic or seminomadic individuals, very

many of whom are Peripatetics listed in the CTA Enquiry Committee (1949-1950) and have been since 1952, “denotified”, in practice, the Habitual Offenders Act gave the police illogical powers to even killing the members.

However, even the British did not automatically categorize all peripatetic communities as “criminal”. Categorizing and labelling are always signs of organisation and, hence, intimately related to beliefs in the context of states, they may be acts of policies.

Recognizing the usefulness of peripatetic trading communities, who were practically the only viable channel for the sale of taxed goods in the interior regions of South Asia, the colonial administration first declared that such groups were “exceedingly useful members of society” (Radhakrishna, 1989: 272). Shortly thereafter, when roads and railways were built in these regions, the same communities were declared to be “amongst the most criminal sections of society” (2004: 273).

The state constituted the Renke Commission (2008: 19) to put forward its review of certain draconian laws. The Commission noted that it is significant to mention that the Denotified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic communities' way of life has been impacted by many Acts passed by the Indian government. For example, the CTA was later repealed in 1952 but got replaced by the Habitual Offenders Act, the Indian Forest Act, Anti beggary Act, of 1959, the Drugs & Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, passed in 1954, the Excise Act of 1944, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act of 1999, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, passed in 1960, etc. In fact, without providing them with any viable choices, it turned them into criminals overnight.

Regarding social stigma Renke Commission (2008: 19) further noted that “nomads are carriers of social stigma”. The label of ‘criminal’, ‘beggar’, and ‘untouchable’, is attached to them. The peasant villages consider pastoral nomads as a ‘nuisance’.

In the case of peripatetic communities which are categorized as denotified, their stigma of criminality is more frightening. As Renke Commission (2008: 34-35) noted, a sympathetic view of their history reveals that the invasions from outside their region, which resulted in the appropriation of their livelihood requirements and an invasion of their life support system are what motivated these individuals to choose a life of crime. Their position and reputation have

been diminished by the stigma of criminality, which has also hindered their attempts to get employment and support themselves. They frequently face police harassment, are detained, and have pitifully poor self-esteem. Because of these conditions, they have developed an insatiable need to migrate, which has severely harmed their familial ties and community cohesion and contributed to an atomistic (or individualistic) way of life.

Regarding atrocities, Renke Commission (2008: 96) noted very crucial findings that there are several reasons why these groups (nomadic communities) continue to experience atrocities, but colonial rule is by far the main one. Because of the cautious arrangement of falsehood by the ruling groups, and motives, they are in some ways the victims without the help of both the unjust past and the present. The main perpetrators and accomplices in the ongoing atrocities and breaches of these communities' human rights today are law enforcement, taxation, and civic administration. These criminals have an arrogant attitude and show disregard for the law and moral principles. This is especially true for lower-level employees of the government's many agencies, including the courts, who are rife with corruption and possess low moral standards.

The consequences enumerated above display how the stigma of criminality caused major suffering for such communities and some such effects have continued to linger even after the act was repealed. According to the Renke Commission (2008: 12), the stigma of NT and DNT continues and manifests in various forms, such as discrimination, harassment, humiliation and punishments.

Case 1

Srinivas, a 38-year-old Bahurupi man, says that “there are some people in the village who try to show their power. They try to create terror in the village. They abuse our people and they know that these people cannot do anything. Some people try to seek publicity by showing their power. Some of us get beaten”.

The Bahurupi face many such cases of abuse, Srinivas says that “in many places (*khup thikani*) our people have faced such dire incidences among a group of more than four men, or friends, for the sake of publicity and creating terror, beat our men. These types of treatment are given by people with a low mind” .

Case 2

Another Bahurupi man, 41 years old Vasant, says that there are plenty of incidences. “I have seen that before my eyes, those of us who drink liquor and eat non-vegetarian (*Pinaare Khanaare*), get beaten, but I do not interfere with them. I have seen them with my own eyes. Our men come home with a lot of stress in full of drunken state. Now I can tell you their names as well they are of the Bahurupi community. These incidences (*Ghatna*) occurred in front of me. Many of our Bahurupi are in fear and sometimes there are cases of being hit on the head (*Doke Fodafodi*). If some other people (*par lok*) come to us our people will not come out of their houses, rather they will hide (*Lapatet*) somewhere. Nobody comes out.”

Case 3

The case of Praful, a 35-year-old Bahurupi man, shows how such incidences created fear among the Bahurupi. He says that “Our community people are so timid one cannot deny it. People of Bahurupi who are staying in other villages now also are in a fearful state of mind (*te layi bhitat*). They would receive a slap from others but will not say anything”

This case shows how many Bahurupi are hesitant to complain about such incidents and show fear of discussing them with others. It was observed that Bahurupi maintain silence under fear and do not discuss anything about their atrocity incidences.

Case 4 Politeness is maintained while dealing with outsiders

Vikram, a 45-year-old Bahurupi man, demonstrates how the Bahurupi strive to maintain politeness when dealing with outsiders for fear of retaliation. He says that “our people have a quality of dealing calmly with other community people, if someone from another community comes with anger, our Bahurupi will greet him with very respectfully and bring down their anger. If someone is a drunken person from another community comes then also we greet him like Namaskar Saheb after listening to this he must be thinking that someone below our status has spoken then he will not do anything to you. We call people Patil because giving them respect will bring down their anger”.

Case 5

The case of Janardhan, a 37-year-old Bahurupi man, shows the community’s taboos against taking anything without explicit permission so that they will not be accused of stealing. He says that “We never enter in the houses of others, not doing any wrong (*Agavu kahi karayche*

nahi). If you have fruit trees in your yard, we, without asking never touch the fruit rather we take permission for seeking fruits for our children even if it is fallen we ask (*vicharun*) for it with the owner (*Malkaala*) of the tree. If our child is crying for the fruit, we used to request the owner saying that please can you give some to eat? They believe that after taking permission, the owner used to come and offer the fruits to them” .

The case of Samadhan shows the experiences of Bahurupi with the local auto rikshaw drivers in the village. “Our majority of men always drink liquor. Most of the time they take different modes for travelling towards their destinations. The drivers of auto Rikshaw from the local area do beat our men who are drunk. They slap them and beat them. This has happened with most of our Bahurupi men, and I have seen with my own eyes, but they will never tell you this” .

The case of Karbhari who shared an incident that took place in the Bahurupi colony. He stated that “Considering the dire incidences, even this has happened with me (*Majhyasobat*) in this village (*Ya Gawat*). Once, one man unnecessarily quarrelled with me. He had beaten me with a belt without any reason. I lodged a police complaint against that man. The incident took place when they were playing cards in our lane, and while playing he was speaking in very abusive language. Listening to his abusive words, I replied saying our women, and daughters are here why are you talking about such things? Why don’t you go somewhere else and play there? On my questioning and suggestion, he attacked me with a belt, I directly went to the nearest Police station and complained about that man. Consequently, he had to visit the court again and again on different dates .

The case of Rahul shows disturbance by a neighbour. He says “Once the incident took place with one of our Bahurupi houses. A person belonging to the Maratha caste had demolished the fencing of the house. There was our one *Jhopadi* Jhuggi, and around the jhuggi, we had installed fencing made of small sticks. The land on which the Jhuggi was located was a plot purchased by us. And we installed the fencing, and seeing this one person going to the farm objected to the fencing and asked to leave some space from outside. In response to the objection raised by that man, we left some space from the outside and shifted the fencing a little inside. That man again started quarrelling with us objecting that it is disturbing his vehicle while going on the road. I replied to him saying that we left some space as you complained and even though you are pointing out the disturbance occurring due to small

sticks which are coming out of the fencing. I asked him why I cannot install any fencing around my house, and what is wrong with that. I questioned him. I told him the real reason behind fencing the Jhuggi was that our women sit for bath and toilet. If I install fencing what is wrong with that then? I also said that some sticks will come out without disturbing other passersby as nobody complained except him. However, he did not even stop there, he started constantly parking his vehicle very close to our fencing deliberately. And one day he took one wooden pole *Bandati* and demolished our whole fencing, and abused our women. Knowing this incident, one Bahurupi man Vinod, who was an angry man, straightaway went to wada (A traditional house constructed with stones having a lot of space) and asked that man, why he abused our women. This led to a quarrel and physical altercation along with the exchange of slaps. Later, after six months, he sent a group of men and asked them to beat my brother. They beat my brother. I jumped off from the tin shed and ran towards him, I beat those who were holding and beating my brother”.

In the case of Shashikant a Bahurupi man whose mobile was stolen by one villager, he says “It was the first time when I had purchased the mobile, it was a Nokia brand with plastic buttons for 2800 rupees. At that time having a mobile was very rare and I was the first person from Bahurupi who had purchased one. One day I went to defecate in the nearby fields in our village in the evening. I kept the mobile close to a tree there with the light on and went to defecate. While defecating I saw a snake moving. I was frightened and went towards the tree to pick up the mobile and was shocked that it was no longer there. After three days I came to know from a few people that there is an Adivasi person in the village who is carrying the same model mobile. I along with the mobile charger and the bill for the same went to that person and requested him to return the mobile. In response to my request, that man pretended that he doesn’t have a mobile with him and hid the mobile in the house somewhere. After 15 days I again went there and saw that the person is carrying my mobile and he threw my sim card away. I asked him where he got the mobile. That person replied that I have found the mobile in the village and it belonged to him now and claimed that he is the owner now. Despite my constant request for a return, and looking at his strange behaviour, I literally, forcefully snatched my mobile back from his hand and asked him to find the mobile now in the village. He had lifted my mobile while going to the fields since he was a farmer. I replied to him that that mobile belongs to me and I will take it back. That man brought 4-5 men along to beat me up, they came and asked for the mobile. They literally were trying to attack me, beat me, I straight away went to the police station and lodged a police complaint against that

man for attacking me and bringing men to beat me. Later, to settle the case, he had to visit the court many times. Now that person comes to me and speaks nicely”.

The case of Bahurupi leader Sandip explained his inability in bringing developmental schemes to the Bahurupi colony. He says that “Many times I requested our Gramsevak to arrange drinking water through taps in our lane. But despite having membership in the Gram Panchayat, we cannot think of ourselves, we need to think about the whole village. With the same thought and support of our Bahurupi, we could organise three programmes in this village, but there are certain people here who mislead and misguide our people against us. Till today we had no right to sit in the village. We support upper-caste people in the village they also support us in return. That’s why I could win the Gram Panchayat election. I received more votes in the election among the seven members contesting in the Gram Panchayat elections.

The case of Kashinath, a 34-year Bahurupi man, shows the respectfulness with which the Bahurupi address outsiders. He says that “our beggar (*Bhikshuk*) Bahurupi who begged money (*Magun anlele Paise*) go to buy at the grocery shop, our people use to request the shop owner with very politely saying give 1 Kg. sugar (*re Baba, Dada Ek kilo sakhar dya ho*), and while paying money they give it very obediently (*Lavatine dyayche*). This was the common behaviour of our men”.

Regarding the abysmal situation of women, especially in denotified and nomadic communities, the Renke Commission (2008: 102) reported that the females of this community were sexually molested by powerful members of nearby communities. The locals were nomadic homeless people who had migrated four times in the previous fifteen years. For any theft robberies in the region, their men were routinely harassed. The residents of the hamlet were compelled to comply with the wants of their wealthy neighbours, including requiring their women to consent to the outsiders' sexual favours. They were aware that if they didn't, they have to leave their current home. The community had bad circumstances around them and a hazy image of its future.

The following case illustrates the harassment incidents that Bahurupi women have experienced:

Ramdas, a 35-year-old Bahurupi man, says that “I tell you the incidence occurred here 15 to 20 years ago, I have witnessed. The person was from our village only, with much more atrocious behaviour against the women of our community. They behave with the women as if they are their wives and seeing this behaviour makes us uncomfortable. I have seen such incidences in this village and Bhokar as well.” (Filed Notes, 2019).

The above case shows that Bahurupi women are more vulnerable than men. When asked about who harasses the Bahurupi women, Ramdas says that “they were belonging to another caste *Par Jatiche*. Everyone knows this even Mama Uncle knows it, but now nothing like that happens”. He could not particularly name any one sedentary community and he was hesitant to take their names as it can cause him harm.

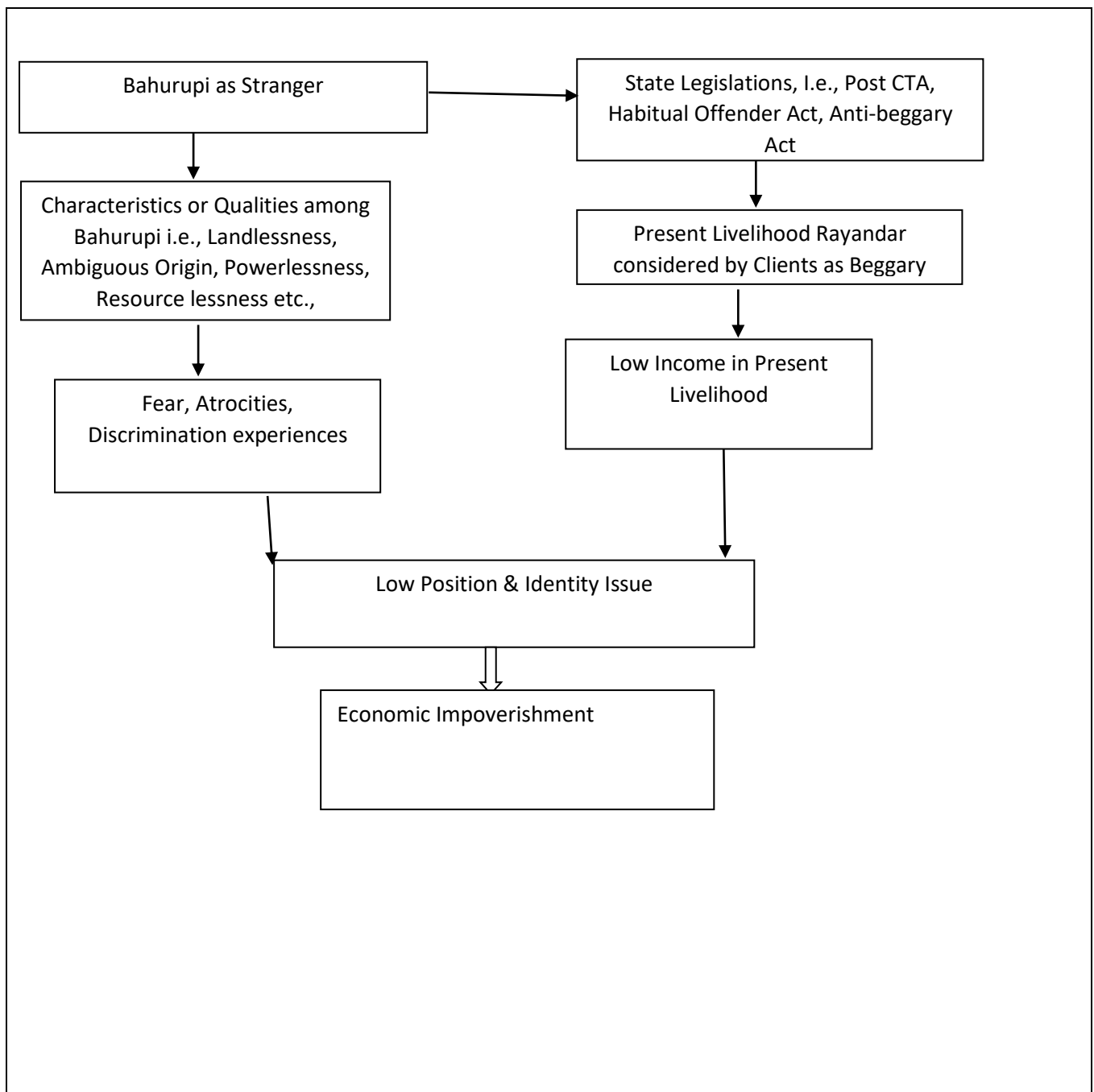
Begging *Bhiksha*

Here one of the significant observations about the livelihood of nomadic communities is that due to fewer resources and opportunities, they mostly rely on begging. The Renke Commission (2008: 31) noted that some of them (nomadic communities) eked out their livelihood from begging. This livelihood from begging creates many potential issues since states often view begging as an offence. Most of the Bahurupi who are involved in entertainment and performance also may be seen by the state as begging. The first and foremost issue is in understanding the begging definition. Idate Commission (2016) noted very significantly that the begging prevention laws implemented by different states define begging as soliciting or accepting alms while wandering or loitering in public places, even though they are singers, dancers, telling fortunes, performing acts, or offering any item for sale. Entertainment and other types of performances provided by the broadcasting industry through television or radio are not considered begging. One can then ask how the same entertainment provided on the street by nomadic communities become an offence.

Regarding begging, Pande (1986) noted that although self-respect and hard labour are widely praised as virtues, each community must deal to varying degrees with idlers and social parasites who live off the labour and earnings of others. Such a parasitic way of existence can take many different shapes. Social parasitism typically stems from one of three reasons: One, by economic necessity brought on by extreme poverty and destitution; two, by the altruistic

spirit based on religious or traditional considerations, as in the case of sadhus, sanyasis, darvesh, and fakir; and three, by hedonistic considerations intended to escape the drudgery of industry and hard work (Pande, 1986: 117).

Diagram 4.1: Long-term Repercussions of Stranger and Stigma among Peripatetic Communities



The above flow diagram discusses the long-term outcomes of nomadic communities due to multiple factors that entangle them in a continuous cycle of impoverishment. Upon closely looking at the factors they reveal a long-term repercussion of the stigma in the lives of the peripatetic community, like the Bahurupi. Various legislations like CTA 1871 also had equal long-term effects on the lives of Bahurupi. They were supposed to report to the village headmen. Even after the repeal of the CTA, surveillance was still very prevalent in the villages. Bahurupi had a fear of getting criminal allegations by the village headmen and never broke the schedule of visiting the village authority and registering their arrival and departure details to the headmen. Apart from CTA surveillance fear, the Anti-Beggary Act, clearly define that giving alms or receiving alms is a punishable offence.

Today Bahurupi *Rayandar's* livelihood is no longer considered a livelihood by the villagers as they call them beggars (*Bhikshuk, Bhikari*). It was observed that they also insult the Bahurupi and recommend that they need to do hard labour. This mere labelling of a beggar (*Bhikshaa*) contributes to the impoverishment of the Bahurupi as their livelihood has lost its significance and whatever alms they receive are 5 rupees or 10 rupees and sometimes food items or sometimes nothing.

The monthly income of the Bahurupi is not enough (an average of 5-6 thousand rupees for all 98 households) for survival. Low income equally contributes to Bahurupi's low purchasing capacity. They cannot purchase land from private owners. On the other hand, the present settlement where Bahurupi are staying is agricultural land and they do not possess any land ownership document. This makes them landless in the village. Apart from low income and the impact of legislation, and the beggary label by sedentary, Bahurupi in the present settlement have experienced incidences of atrocities and harassment which denigrate their position in the village settlement. Bahurupi's lack of information about their origin contributes to their rootlessness status in the village.

Overall, all these factors contribute to the economic and social impoverishment of the Bahurupi today. The stranger concept helps in finding the qualities of the Bahurupi like landlessness and rootlessness which have contributed to their low position.

Regarding criminal and nomadic stigma, the Renke Commission (2008: 72) reported that the stigma of criminality and nomadism affects both denotified and nomadic societies. The

general public holds them in low regard, though they had previously lived with honour and dignity, because of the authorities during the colonial and after independence, they have come to be stigmatised. Not only the sedentary communities but also the departments like revenue, police, local government and municipal office authorities, pursue or drive out the denotified and nomadic groups. They don't belong to either the rural or urban areas. Instead, they are painted as "nowhere people" by all segments of society as well as by the government apparatus. They lack ration cards, voting privileges, certificates like caste and identity, and residential permits as a result.

Hardship in obtaining caste certificates

The Renke Commission (2008: 62, Vol-2) reported that the majority if not all, lack the caste credentials required to apply for the nation's benefits for underprivileged caste groups. Even if the majority of them are aware of or claim to be members of the Scheduled Caste, tribes or other backward classes, they are not qualified for reservations or development advantages. These communities encounter many difficulties in obtaining caste certificates due to the unavailability of a permanent residence, residency proof, birth certificates, the stigma associated with their castes, low social status, ignorance of the procedures for getting caste certificates as well as benefits under the scheme, and lack of political support.

The following case illustrates the difficulties in getting caste certificates by peripatetic Bahurupi:

Case 1: Seeking a caste certificate is a challenge

Nagesh, a 39-year-old Bahurupi man, says that “We were in a difficult situation that we were not getting the caste certificate. In our Bhokar block, we had *Chondhe Saheb*, a government official from the revenue department, had asked us to bring the evidence from the village where we used to stay earlier. I said to Officer Saheb we do not have any proof or evidence in the previous village. I also said that his father-in-law was born in some other village, and his children are in the same state as all of us. I further said that our situation was so worst that if our woman deliver a child in the village or anyone of us died in the village, we were forced to leave villages (*Tabadtob Uthvun Takayche*) on the pretext that it may lead to an epidemic of Diarrhoea, or vomiting (*Haag-Wak*). Villagers strongly used to believe that it may cause dirt and impurity (*Vitaal Chandaal*) in the village. I also said that leaving aside the record of our existence, we were not allowed to stay in our difficult times in the village. Today I am 39 years old I know that I have faced hardship (*papad jhelalet*) in life” .

Although in the above case, the officer was convinced to assist with providing the documentation, many other officials will refuse to assist due to prejudice and ignorance around the condition of peripatetic communities and their nomadic lifestyle.

Case 2: Nomads not issued birth certificates

Bhimrao, a 32 years old Bahurupi man, says that “previously our people used to stay in this village for 10 days and in another 10 days each they stay in the other villages. This was a continuous process and if somebody was born or died in this village no evidence or certificate (*Pramanpatra*) was granted to us”.

The above case shows that it was because of nomadic communities’ mobile nature that it was not always possible for them to get documents.

Case 3: The music profession doesn’t get certificates as well

Sanjay, a 30-year-old Bahurupi man, says that “In the Tehsil of Bhokar there are many Bahurupi individuals involved in the musical profession but only two of them received the government aid of rupees 1800 every month, but all do not get the aid. Our Mama beats drum *Dholki*, Kaka, uncle, plays *Khanjiri* but they do not get anything.”

He further says that officers of the Tehsil office say that for getting the benefits a person should have participated in a public programme event and there should be a proper certificate from *Pramanpatra* of the event. The scheme name is *Kalakaar Mandhan Yojana* (Please refer govt of the Maharashtra scheme document for the artists on the same). “There is a huge list of the documents required for getting the benefit of the scheme that we do not possess. The documents required to avail of the schemes are domicile certificates, Bank passbooks, ration cards, Adhaar, and PAN. Besides this, the musicians should be below fifty years to receive the scheme from the government. Many of the nomadic musicians do not have the required documents or birth certificates. This prevents them from receiving the paltry amount of rupees 1800 from the government of Maharashtra.

The above case shows that getting government benefits from various schemes is not as simple as fulfilling the criterion. The difficulty of these tasks will further contribute to their economic impoverishment.

The Renke Commission (2008: 5-6) in its report quoted Luis R. Naik Due to the stigma associated with nomadism, depressed backward classes' integration into Indian society was either rejected, forbade, or even segregated, leading to their shockingly low social standing. For the most part, they consist of ex-criminal tribes, nomadic and wandering tribes, earth-diggers, fishermen, boatmen, palanquin-bearers, salt-makers, washermen, shepherds, barbers, scavengers, basket makers, furriers, tanners, as well as landless agricultural labourers, watermen, toddy tappers, camel herdsman, pig-keepers, pack bullock carriers.

The Renke Commission (2008: 17) highlighted the issue of the stigma of nomadism closely. Communities that may have favoured a nomadic lifestyle are increasingly settling down, and soon, nomadism may become a thing of the past. From this, it shouldn't be inferred that once the nomadic populations settle down, their economic situation will also improve and they will become respectful members of society. On the contrary, the stigma associated with nomadism still exists. Even after physically sedentarizing, communities are still seen as being mobile.

One such incidence was recorded in Bahirpur where a burial ground was rejected by the villagers, then after the interference of the Tehsil office Block Revenue Officer addressed the issue and granted the land from the agricultural land in Bahirpur village .

The Renke Commission (2008: 93) noted how stigma became a hurdle as far as developmental initiatives are concerned. It noted that along with the loss of the viability and relevance of their traditional occupations, the Denotified and nomadic communities also suffer from stigma. These communities are evicted from their customary places of residence and employment whenever any development projects such as the building of dams, industries, mining, etc., that require rehabilitation are undertaken, but they never receive any benefits because they have no documentation of their rights or rights of residence. These things affect their livelihood and knock their life out of balance.

The same can be observed in the case of Bahurupi in Kalapur village which has been resettled but no Bahurupi household received any rehabilitative benefit under the project.

Regarding income and stigma, Renke Commission (2008) reported that it is stigma and discrimination which has adversely affected NT DNTs' earning capabilities (p. 39). In

addition, it also noted that poverty, uncertain income, illiteracy, inappropriate skills, etc., have limited livelihood options for the communities.

Renke Commission (2008: 44) regarding microcredit reported that having limited or no source of income, mobile life, staying in city/ village fringes and facing suspicion from other villagers result in stigma. These are various obstacles which are raising challenges for integrating NT, DNTs into existing micro-credit.

Regarding access to basic amenities like health services, Renke Commission (2008: 49) noted that two-thirds of denotified groups and more than half of nomadic communities said that they lacked sufficient access to medical care. Utilization of currently available health care services is caused by poverty, ignorance, travel distance to medical facilities, stigma, and discrimination. The Renke Commission (2008) considered that media can be an enhancer of stigma in the case of denotified and nomadic communities. It noted that the human rights circumstances of denotified and nomadic tribes are dreadful and deplorable, to put it mildly—more so in the former's case. Every day, the police, the civic and administration of the revenue department, and civil society carry atrocities against them. Many of these crimes go undiscovered because they are either not recorded at all or are reported incorrectly. Unintentionally, the media plays a significant role in the stigma that is incorrectly associated with them due to their constant assault against these helpless communities. While covering crime in their daily sections, they note that various Pardhis, Sansi, Bavaria, etc., groups are responsible for the crimes. The readers are led to conclude that these neighbourhoods are criminal.

The above discussion on stigma and nomadic communities demonstrates that the state-appointed commissions highlighted the seriousness of the stigma and how it is harming the overall development of the peripatetic communities.

The existing stigma among the peripatetic communities led to the low social position of Bahurupi in Kalapur and Bahirpur villages where the settlements of the Bahurupi exists. It is also observed that the same stigma has contributed to difficulties in getting the various documentary evidence which proves an individual for being eligible for various government schemes and policies. Therefore, these groups become more impoverished and removed from the mainstream settled society. The cycle of poverty and stigma continues.

Chapter 5

Sedentarization and Change

Much of the literature on nomadic sedentarisation focuses on pastoral communities and thus pays particular attention to nature and cultural relations. But when a commercial nomadic community is sedentarized, there are additional dynamics that must be studied and understood. The traditional Bahurupi entertainment was not merely a source of entertainment for sedentary communities, it was also a medium of education about the cultural and civilisation dimensions of India. Traditionally, one can argue that nomads played a central role in uniting the nation by moving from one place to another and imparting moral and religious messages to the populations. Today, nomads sing and perform about social reformers and make the masses aware of the contribution of such reformers. Contemporary times have made it difficult for nomads to continue their traditional forms of livelihood as governments are keen on settling nomads as a policy of improving and developing their status. Though nomads are not inimical to sedentarisation, the outcome of sedentarisation has discouraged nomads from accepting a settled way of life. In most cases, development programmes do not reach the nomads or they are unable to alter the socioeconomic conditions of nomads. It is becoming difficult to sedentarise nomads. Once they are settled, they often end up receiving the negative outcomes and ill-treatment of the dominant settled castes. Often they are viewed as strangers and are victims of social stigma.

Sedentarization and Change

Before trying to understand the various challenges of the sedentarization of the Bahurupi, it is necessary to look at sedentarization from a conceptual point of view. According to Salzman (1980), sedentarization is a change from a more nomadic to a less nomadic way of life. He further added that sedentarization is not merely the physical act of settling in one place but is also a change in point of view, a process of socio-cultural change. Salzman says that There are several different perspectives on what sedentarization is all about. While these perspectives are frequently grounded in reliable historical and ethnographic data, they can be distorted and thus misleading if we elevate particular instances into a model of sedentarization that applies to all instances (1980: 12). Salzman (1980: 12) also says that there are models of sedentarization which demonstrate this danger, such as “drought and decline”, “Defeat and degradation”, and “failure and fall away”.

In the first model of “drought and decline” models, nomadic pastoral communities who keep their mobile animals in pastures are more prone to the effects of climatic conditions, such as rising temperatures, fewer water resources, etc. In more extreme circumstances, such conditions may cause the pastoralists to lose or no longer be able to support their animals. Without the economic base that the animals provide, a pastoral community would no longer be able to continue a nomadic life and may be forced to sedentarize and settle in agricultural villages.

There is another model of sedentarization which is the “defeat and degradation model”. In this model, state power (often in the form of police or military) forces the nomadic pastoral communities to abandon a nomadic lifestyle. It was observed that state powers will forcibly settle the nomadic groups as they are considered to be a political threat. There have also been cases where a scarcity of pasture will cause conflict between several nomadic pastoral communities or tribes. The winner of such a conflict would control the pasture territory and the loser will be forced to settle in villages and do agricultural labour (Salzman, 1980: 12).

In a “failure and fall away” model, individual pastoralists who are not able to create a feasible household productive unit, thus are not able to support their families and themselves through pastoralism, may choose to sedentarize. On the opposite end of that spectrum is the model of “succeed and surpass”. In these cases, individual pastoralists or family units may be so successful in pastoralism, amassing a huge number of animals, that they may convert the wealth of their herds into the land. They chose to leave their pastoral livelihood to live as a rich person in a settled community.

Sedentarisation of nomads in the colonial and post-colonial era

Through the literature on sedentarization, it is clear that there are some factors which compel nomadic communities to settle. In colonial India, nomadic communities were almost always settled using the second model of the “defeat and degradation model”. This was done by implementing the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 (CTA 1871) under which the colonial government viewed particularly tribes as inherently criminal and sedentarization as the only method of controlling those tribes they saw as a threat to law and order. As we saw in the previous chapter, the colonial government used appointed officials and local administrators to closely monitor and control nomadic movements through villages and cities. The British also

took steps to sedentarize these communities through settlements with the help of the Salvation Army. Before discussing the present situation of settlements, we will examine how nomads during the colonial period responded to forced settlement policies of the then government.

If we look at the history of settlements in India, it is briefly discussed by Radhakrishna (2001, 2008) in her book “Dishonoured by History” that in 1910, under the supervision of Salvation Army (SA), the first CT settlements (CTS) was established for *Yerukulas* in the Madras Presidency. During this time, nomadic communities faced many prejudices, with many sedentary communities believing them to be lazy and dishonest. Nomadic communities were frequently considered a problem and the solution the colonial government sought was to settle them, as they believed such communities would be less dangerous to law and order and easier to control if they were no longer nomadic.

In the previous chapter we have already seen that under the CTA 1871, the colonial government aided by local officials used strict surveillance to keep watch on the whereabouts and movement of the nomadic communities. Many nomadic communities were viewed as inherently criminal and forced into settlements. It was documented that in the 1920s in British India, there were near about sixty-one official settlements set up for the inmates. It was the Salvation Army which had taken all the responsibility for setting up the settlements and its day-to-day administration. According to the Idate Commission Report (2017: 36), in Bombay in 1882, the Salvation Army first began working with criminal tribes. By educating the youth, it sought to combat the alleged criminal propensities of religiously affiliated communities. Officer of the Salvation Army Fredrick Booth-Tucker, an Anglo-Indian, was a leading proponent of working with criminal tribes. One of the Army's primary tasks was to establish separate settlements for rehabilitation. When faced with harassment by police and government officials, there were members of these nomadic communities that chose to live in a settlement instead. Those who chose to remain nomadic faced immense pressure from the colonial government which forced nomadic communities to report their locations and movements, creating much fear in these communities. If any member of these nomadic communities designated as criminal tribes committed any offence not only that individual but also their whole family could be forced into settlements and considered criminals.

These settlements during the colonial state were also compared with jails because once any tribal member enters the settlement there was no scope for any escape from there. In one settlement it was observed that they were completely fenced in with stout barbed wire fences and guards controlling the exit of the settlement. These settlements were set up to effectively supervise the inmates and even amenities such as electric lights were provided to curb the ‘vicious tendencies’ of the inmates in the settlement (Radhakrishna 2001, 2008). Life in the settlement was tightly controlled and forced labour was mandatory. Strict discipline was maintained through meticulous documentation of behaviour and harsh punishments to those who refused to work and tried to leave (Radhakrishna, 2001, 2008).

The International Labour Conference (1930) proposed to stop forced and compulsory labour. This influenced some factions of the colonial government while others worried that they may lose the benefit of labour through the CTS. The Salvation Army claimed that the inmates of the settlement were grateful to the government for both housing and employment. However, in reality, this was not the situation. The CTS were equal to prisoners, with the inmates being punished for minor infractions and not allowed to leave. Not just international bodies but also local forces were against the labour in CTS, there were protests against it in the Madras presidency (Radhakrishna, 2001; 2008: 88)

Criminal Tribes and Land issues

During the colonial period, many nomadic groups and tribes began to move away from their traditional livelihoods. For some groups, a changing social and economic reality drove the need for a new livelihood while other groups were specifically targeted and suppressed under the CTA. Regardless to settle these groups, the government needed physical land on which these people could begin working towards their new, largely agriculturally based livelihood. The Salvation Army strongly influenced this move, encouraging the colonial government to create a rehabilitative and revenue generation scheme through agriculture. The government proposed settling these communities on wasteland, hoping to reap the additional benefit of reclaiming such land into cultivable land. The colonial government would force these formerly nomadic groups into living on the wasteland and creating agricultural settlements. If local administrations believed members showed good conduct and were making progress with cultivating the land, they might be rewarded with the official *patta* (title deed) to the land. Those who did not show the same progress might be forced to do much harder work, such as breaking stones.

There were some common problems with the colonial government's plan to settle formerly nomadic communities in the above manner. Many of these tribes had no experience or knowledge of farming, the tools they were provided were of poor quality, the wages too low to support themselves and as mentioned above they were often settled on wasteland. However, there were larger structural reasons why the resettlement plans often failed. Radhakrishna (2001; 2008) noted that there was strong opposition by village landlords to the settlement of nomadic and designated criminal tribes on nearby land. Particularly the option of granting ultimate ownership of the land often set off protests against these policies.

Culture and Bahurupi

Any definition of culture must inevitably include many complex and interconnected facets. According to Edward Tylor, the complex whole which comprises belief, art, knowledge, custom, law, morals, and any other capabilities and habits learnt by man being a member of society is known as culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense (1958; 1871). There is also an understanding of culture in terms of knowledge of people. About culture Geertz noted that a system of inherited conceptions showed in symbolic methods in which men transfer, spread, and advance their information and attitudes regarding life (1993). There are also things which are qualities of human beings and they are subjective. Kluckhohn (1951: 86, n5) perceives a culture which involves thinking where there are ways of patterns, sensation and responding, developed and conveyed by using symbols, consisting of the major accomplishments of humans, involving their embodiments in artefacts. The important centres of culture contain traditional (e.g. historically resulting and selected) ideas and particularly their close values. Groups of individuals can be differentiated based on culture. As per Hofstede (2001), culture is the collective mental programming that sets one group or category of people apart from another. Culture is also considered an adaptation strategy. according to Spradley (1972), culture can be understood based on behaviour and cognition. One can observe, culture, in the behavioural patterns of a social group, whereas, in cognition, ideas, beliefs and knowledge are major concerns. As per Sperber and Hirschfeld (2004), it is considered as mass circulation of knowledge and its appearance in people's minds as an outcome of it which can be observed in terms of various expressions by people's behaviours and their interactions (Cited in Pandey, 2012). Regarding the rules of culture, Spradley (1972) says that in opposition to the notion that man can be an active agent, he also regards that culture uses man.

The above definitions of culture include art and Bahurupi entertainment is certainly one type of art form. However, the Bahurupi performance is connected to not just the Bahurupi economy but has influenced almost every other aspect of Bahurupi culture. The Bahurupi deities, such as Raghoji Baha and Sakalati Baba, are related to this traditional livelihood. Eating habits, such as the men of the community only eating one meal while performing, show how traditional entertainment has influenced the food culture. Many Bahurupi believe that eating more than one meal is a sign of laziness and will affect their performance. The particular dress has also been influenced by their art, such as the Bahurupi *Rayandar* who will only wear the clothes of policemen while doing their performances.

Outside forces reacting to their traditional entertainment have also affected Bahurupi culture. During the colonial period, nomadic communities as a whole were discouraged or outright prevented from partaking in their traditional livelihoods. This included nomadic entertainers who were often targets of the surveillance systems and forced settlement. There is a persistent fear amongst the Bahurupi as well as other nomadic communities of facing allegations of criminal behaviour. Past negative experiences dealing with sedentary communities have impacted their thoughts and behaviour when dealing with outsiders. This often results in “humble and polite” behaviour when talking to outsiders. This is a self-protecting tendency developed over time which gives the Bahurupi a feeling of safety.

Entertainment and Bahurupi

As per the Oxford English Dictionary, entertainment has been a part of all cultures," and to entertain is to hold jointly; to hold entwined (Bates and Ferri, 2010, p.1). Entertainment as a word come from *Latin*, where *inter* means among, and *tenere* means to hold. It can be understood that hold can be a focus with full of attention (Cited in Bates and Ferri, 2010, p.1). Zillman and Bryant (1994) roughly define entertainment as an activity which is performed to delight, lesser degree inform, with the help of an exhibition of the misfortunes or fortunes, but it also shows, particular skills of one or others. There might be any kind of play or game, sometimes athletic, competitive, or seen with participation in, or can be performed individually, there may be performances, such as musical, by one or the other. According to Barnouw and Kirkland (1992), large and diverse audiences can purchase and take pleasure in entertainment, especially if it falls under a certain category of marketed goods. According to Bosshart and Macconi (1998), to get entertained one must identify with

fictional people and actions. Shusterman (2003) says that entertainment is a distraction and it is also necessary to maintain, renew, and even deepen one's focus; otherwise, focus tires out and becomes dull through repetition. These lessons, so to speak, are engraved in the structure of our vision: by focusing both inwardly and outwardly, we are successful in securing our physical sustenance and refreshment. As per Klimmt and Vorderer (2009) in entertainment one can be informed at the same time one can be amused.

Compared to earlier times, Bahurupi entertainers are increasingly struggling as their entertainment is no longer sought by villagers in the same way it once was. Many villagers see what the Bahurupi do as tantamount to begging, and criticise Bahurupi youth for not earning wages through manual labour (*ang mehanat*). Other villagers say that the Bahurupi have simply become habituated (*savay*) to begging (*bhik*). As a result of these prejudices, many Bahurupi youths report feeling uncomfortable continuing with the traditional livelihood of performance. Those that have continued with entertainment say that even with doing such work around many different villages they are barely earning five thousand rupees a month. They will earn more money by selling evil-eye warders made with lemon and chilly or even working as daily wage labour. Additionally, the Bahurupi report that villagers are increasingly preferring their entertainment through television and mobile phones. This researcher consistently found in the course of fieldwork that the wide availability of modern technology had major effects on the Bahurupi's traditional entertainment livelihoods.

Technology and Change

Modern technology has brought both benefits and problems to different sectors of society. Though it has provided relief from difficult labour or even monetary benefits to some, it has also rendered some traditional livelihoods difficult to perform or even obsolete. Technology has brought rapid change in many sectors as the revolutionary new face of it not only replaced the established ways of providing entertainment but also has produced new markets. (Bakker, 2012). In the case of the Bahurupi, modern entertainment technologies like mobile phones and televisions have caused many people to no longer show the same interest in their performances.

Barnard and Spencer (2002) highlight the ways the electronic media has changed the cultures around communication, and with the improvement in electronic media, for instance, films, phones, radio, TV, and visual, communication over time and space was made possible, as

well as low-cost and effective diffusion using the same human speech and body language skills that characterize direct communication. Electronic media ignore the requirement of abilities, such as specialized communication and literacy, permitting communication with those who cannot use print media due to literacy obstacles. Even the value of this type of media is cost-effective as compared to print media, as portable radios and audio tape players cost not much more than one or two books, and in most places, the price for the whole year comes around similar to the newspapers or a dozen books will enable to buy a cost-effective TV set (Barnard and Spencer, 2002).

On the outreach of modern entertainment, some scholars noted that people from across the globe, whether they are from the most remote densely forest areas, desert, or mountain settlements, are growingly able to get communication with the help of electronic media and regularly see radio and TV broadcasts from many sources. These sorts of sources are both different and to some extent similar at the same time. They are diverse due to media broadcasting, comprise of shows like soap operas and comedies, cinemas, musical shows, and news documentaries, across cultural lines and are spread from one country to another and between various ethnic groups. At the same time, these sources are comparable due to their origin from industrial to nonindustrial, larger to smaller, cities to village areas, and from manufacturing countries to nonmanufacturing countries and geographical regions for revenue and technological motives. As a result, the content that is listened to or seen is each time different from the situations and norms of the audience's life, at the same time there is a continuous resemblance in the broadcast content due to harmonies of the city, manufactured sources of creation (Barnard and Spencer, 2002).

Schumacher (1973) raised the very pertinent question that wherever the issue seems to be spreading more speedily than the solutions, it is somewhat depressing to consider where the turbulent progress of global industry over the past twenty-five years has brought us. This looks to be true for both wealthy and developing nations. Nothing in the last two and half decades of experience shows that modern technology can in reality assist us to bring down global impoverishment, let alone the problem of unemployment, which reached levels of thirty per cent in many developing nations and is now in danger of spreading to many rich nations.

Regarding the impact of Technology and the Condition of the poor, Schumacher (1973) writes that what is the typical state of poverty in the majority of the so-called developing nations? Their employment options are so limitedly available that they are not able to work their way out of impoverishment. When they do seasonally find work, it is either less paid or they are completely left without employment. Few of them have land, but often too less. Many have no land and no possibility of getting it. They drift into the big cities while underemployed or completely jobless. But out of housing, there is no work for them in big places like cities. They swarm into the cities because it seems like there are more job opportunities there than in the villages where there are none. However, village unemployment leads to a huge exodus towards towns and cities, causing a rate of city development which would tax the resources of even the richest communities, village unemployment converts into city unemployment.

Regarding marginalization from the social and economic mainstream, the Renke Commission (2008) has reported that the worldwide economy, services, and commodities have raised the bar of standardization and operated from one place by multinationals, etc. The recently upcoming worldwide economic system does not permit nomadic communities to live traditional life. Consequently, these communities lost their occupations and freedom, entertainers like performers who were the folk artist in the past are left in impoverishment; petty artisans provided farming tools or weapons are brought down to alms seekers; those who had huge herds are now labourers or marginal agriculturists.

As observed earlier, technology has brought massive changes in many different fields and entertainment is no exception. As the type of entertainment society prefers and their method of accessing it changes, the Bahurupi have seen a marked downturn in their traditional livelihood. The fact that the Bahurupi have been primarily nomadic only makes their situation more complex. As sedentarisation has become more common among the Bahurupi, this community must grapple with not only their changing livelihood but their entire nomadic way of life coming to an end.

There is a discussion about ‘nomadism’ and ‘sedentism’. Rao and Casimir (2003) using Zadeh’s (1965) classical definition, argued that “both these concepts are uncertain sets, basically considered as ‘sorted concepts are a theory that holds that everything is relative or, to put it the other way, flexible” (Cited in Rao and Casimir, 2003: 3). This uncertainty

seems to be related to the general phenomenon of nomadism and sedentism universally being the end of a theoretical continuum, along which entire communities or parts thereof transit, or oscillate in both directions, at different point of time.

Rao and Casimir further say that despite the fuzziness of uncertainty, nomadism and sedentism are terms we require for analytical purposes, how does one translate or at least gloss the terms 'nomad' and 'sedentist' in South Asian languages? In search of terms cognate to 'nomad' in Mysore city, Misra et al. (1971-72) came up with a large, descriptive variety, ranging from 'outsiders', 'one who has no base', 'people from hills', to 'beggar' and 'ascetic'. A cognitive distinction – however vague – has, it seems, long been made in South Asia on the continuum between nomadism and sedentism, between nomad (also known as *ghumkar*, *khanbadosh* in some places) and degrees of non-sedentist. Rao and Casimir (2003) further argued that not all migration is equated with nomadism. They (2003) illustrate this with a case from the Himalayan region. According to Bengali mythology, Durga travels from her Himalayan home once a year to see her parents in the plains; every year, agamani songs are sung about her return, and every year she goes back to her snowy fastness (p. 3). In another case, every year, say legends of the agro-pastoralist Gaddi, Lord Shiva also migrates between his summer residence in Mount Kailash and his winter home in Pujaipur. Rao and Casimir (2003) argued that, despite these annual seasonal migrations, neither Durga nor Shiva is perceived as nomadic rather they are sedentist.

The above literature shows that the lines between nomadism and sedentism are not always so firm, and many scholars have viewed them from various perspectives. One thing is clear when nomadic communities are settled in villages, they require land for living and often for agriculture as well. In the next section, we will examine how the politics of land affect nomadic communities and their sedentarization.

Land

According to the Renke Commission (2008) when the land was readily available and the idea of private property had not fully developed, communities had the advantage of moving to different places, depending upon what seemed to be a healthier and lush environment in terms of the economic resources best required to meet the needs of the people. Over the period, of ten thousand B.C., when the discovery of settled agriculture and its implements, i.e., plough, etc., few nomadic communities initiated sedentarization, at the same time others

still were involved with their old ways of mobile living (2008). According to Schumacher (1973, 1993), land is without any doubt the most abundant resource worldwide. He further argued that the land covers the topsoil, and the topsoil covers a different variety of living beings, among them men as well.

The politics of land, where to settle and how to obtain land, plays a major role in the sedentarization of nomadic communities, including the Bahurupi. When a nomadic community settles in a village they have a choice to buy a piece of land from a local person or settle on the *gairan*, communal village land. As many of the Bahurupi lack funds, an average of those interviewed made only rupees five thousand a month and buying even a small piece of land is often impossible for a family. Therefore, most families will have to settle on the *gairan*, village land, which presents its challenges.

Gairan Land as a Common Property Resource and Bahurupi Settlement

Gairan, village land, is a community property resource and it is imperative to understand the term. In the National Sample Survey Report, 1999, it is defined that common property resources are those that are available to and jointly owned, held, and managed by communities and on which no one individual possesses property rights (Sastry, 1999, p. 4). So, *gairan* is one type of common property resource because it is held formally and legally by the village panchayat or community within the village's boundaries. A lot of villages have land set aside for permanent grazing and pasture. Different names for this type of land include *Gauchar*, *Gochar*, *Gairan*, and *Gomol*, among others. Most importantly, villages have legal rights to use permanent pastures (Sastry, 1999). About *gairan* land, as per the Village Panchayat ACT, 1959, certain powers and duties have been assigned to village gram panchayat and gram sabha¹⁴

As the Bahurupi transitioned from their nomadic life to their present settlements, many underwent a transition phase where they spent some time staying on *gairan land*. The *gairan* land is primarily established as a resource for villagers to graze their cattle. In the village referenced in the above cases, there are a total of 250 acres of *gairan* land of which only one

¹⁴ The Maharashtra Village Panchayats ACT, 1959, has given certain rights and duties to village gram panchayat and gram sabha. In the case of village land, certain sections like Section 8AA sub sec iii) gives power to Gram Sabha,. In addition, under section 54 B sub sec. b) certain powers and duties are assigned to Gram Panchayat. It gives them right to convey its remark to the land acquisition authority, on the land which comes in its jurisdiction and which is to be acquired, for the government use. Retrieved from [https://rdd.maharashtra.gov.in/Site/Upload/GR/The Maharashtra village Panchayas Act.pdf](https://rdd.maharashtra.gov.in/Site/Upload/GR/The_Maharashtra_village_Panchayas_Act.pdf)

acre has been encroached by the Bahurupi for their settlement. In most cases of the Bahurupi settling on the Gairan, it was the Police Patil who permitted the Bahurupi to settle on the village Gairan land. In the case of village Bahirpur Mr. Jhade was the then Police Patil who permitted Bahurupi to settle and suggested the place for settlement which comes under the village *gairan*. The same is with Kalapur, the then Police Patil Mr. Mahale permitted and suggested *gairan* land to Bahurupi for the settlement the same applies to Raghojiwadi village as well. As the size of Bahurupi families increases, they express a need for more land but many are fearful of the backlash of villagers and so are hesitant to encroach upon the *gairan* land further. There were many issues and dynamics around the utilization of this land, as illustrated in the cases below.

On the unavailability of *gairan* land, Dilip, a 45-year Bahurupi, explained that “now wherever there is our Bahurupi community there is no *gairan* land remained any more. Because now the forest department has entered that field. Here also earlier there was Gairan land but that was already encroached on, *Kabjyaat kele*, by the SC and ST communities. In Digras Jogi community has established their settlement and they named it Raam Nagar”.

The above case shows that the forest department has restricted access to the available land. Also, not only the Bahurupi but the sedentary communities as well have encroached on the *gairan*. It was observed that some Bahurupi are not willing to encroach on *gairan* land, preferring to stay in a smaller group of four or five families.

Prabhakar, a 45-year Bahurupi, explained further that “We should be given a settlement Vasti on any *gairan* land over here. Now the Sarpanch says that there are 250 acres of *gairan* land here but all that is barren land and surrounded by hills. Many times, I have requested those who are without the house saying that you should shift to a location of *gairan* and establish a Jhuggi there you might have a few good and few bad days there but these people say yes and nobody comes out. They are not ready to go there. Now there is a land of some organization where other nomadic people, such as Ghisadi and Gondhali, are already staying there but nobody takes the initiative to move there, despite my constant encouragement. Now whatever old families are there they have become the hub of four-four families and they stay in a small space only. They should have understood that when we have a *gairan* land, a government land, we should shift there and settle but they come back within two to three years. I feel that they should have enough courage and should make a strong mind to stay there. I do guide other Bahurupi but they should understand that”.

Ponting to the available amenities on *gairan* land Prabhakar says that “There is land near the old road it is known as old Bahirpur, there is good land and have water facility as well and in future there would be the construction of good roads as well. If I told some Bahurupi to go there they say who is this person to tell us to go there, in fact, he is staying in a well-constructed house and trying to teach us. They also say that why should we go there. Anyone can speak but whatever good constructed houses are there they are all the result of their hard work and who have shown their courage” .

Bahurupi in Transition

Before settling in villages like Kalapur or Bahirpur, the Bahurupi transitioned through many different places, sometimes spending a considerable amount of time in one place. The following cases discuss some of these settlements and movements.

Raghojiwadi village settlement

Shankar a 40-year-old Bahurupi man, explained how their residence changed over the period and later settled in Raghojiwadi. He said that “We have always heard that our Bahurupi had a base location village known as *Rajna Bhandari* and it was drowned now in *Isapur Dharan* dam in Yavatmal and it happened in 1962. After that Bahurupi scattered in different places in search of a livelihood. People ran here and there during the *Rajakari Nizam* period. Many Bahurupi with all their belongings, known as *Chavdi Birhad*, settled there in Raghojiwadi, and Shegi villages in Washim District. Some of us were safe at Raghojiwadi and other community people also started cooperating. Other communities used to say how many days are you going to roam here and there why don’t you stay at one place and set up your temporary shelter (*Paal*), and somehow, they settled there forever”.

Bahirpur village settlement

Bhaurao, a 40-year-old Bahurupi man, says that “in Bahirpur, our *Namdev Mama*, *Hari Bhau*, our old age, *Bujurg*, people had no space for the settlement, they were staying in a temporary settlement on the other side of the village where *Jhade Saheb’s Khaari* was situated where our people regularly used to set up their temporary settlement then. Thereafter, the Adivasi tribes of this village advised our Bahurupi people like *Bhagwanrao* saying that how many days people are going to roam, and why don’t you settle here and also suggested spending 4-8 days in the fields and coming back again. Keep all your children and wives, *Bayka*, *pore*,

here. Adivasis also offered some *gairan* land, sufficient for installing a *Jhopdi*, and, as a result of this, our people got settled here. For the last 40 to 50 years, Bahurupi of this village, are settled here.”

The above cases demonstrate how a present settlement in Bahirpur was developed. The *gairan* land was made available by the villagers and how they assisted the Bahurupi in settling there. There are cases which also have contributed to a settlement, such as the marriage alliances formed between settled and nomadic Bahurupi, which led to some of them settling in the relatives' villages.

Change of locations and settlement

Prashant, a 40-year-old Bahurupi man, discussed various places where they had stayed. He said that “My father became orphaned. His uncle was worried that what will happen to my father. My father stayed with one of his uncles. They were mobile and moved from one village to the other, they stayed for a few days in one village in *Vidharbha*. From that village, they went to *Girgaon* and stayed there for 4 to 5 years. After that, they shifted from that place and came to a small village *Shegi* located in *Mangrulpir*. My father stayed in *Shegi*, another uncle stayed in *Aajgaon* and one more uncle stayed in *Malegaon*. My father had three brothers who all got split due to their weddings, *Lagnakarya*. My birth is in *Shegi* village we were 4 brothers and 4 sisters. Before our birth, our parents were in *Raghojiwadi* for a few years as well. After *Raghojiwadi* they shifted to *Shegi*”.

The above case shows that before settling in the present village Bahurupi stayed in various places and then again shifted to multiple locations.

Shyam Sundar, another 30-year-old Bahurupi man, said that “My elder brother got married by finding his bride in Bahirpur village. Then he got a job in *Kalakendra* as *Peti* Master. Slowly, he purchased a plot from *Mama* here and then all of us shifted to Bahirpur and settled here with our parents”. He also added that some of the Bahurupi have purchased land to establish their house here. The following case of Rajesh Sakhre explains it.

Bahurupi Rajesh, a 36-year-old person, stated that “My mama purchased a plot for one thousand and five hundred rupees that was very cheap. Then, once he had money, another half of plot size 40/70 was purchased for 3 thousand and registered under our name as well”.

He also said that in 1997, they came here and got settled .The above case shows that those Bahurupi who came late had no option but to buy land to settle in the present settlement.

Road accessibility from present settlements

When choosing settlement locations, ease of movement and access to transport are important considerations. The Bahurupi who are practising both their traditional livelihood and those who have transitioned to selling or manual labour require adequate road connectivity, with a good number of private transportation options, such as jeep and auto. Bahirpur and Kalapur Digras are five kilometres away from a taluka block with good transport facilities and a substantial market; many Bahurupi households are in these two locations. On the other hand, Raghojiwadi is more remotely located and less well connected to local transport, and only five Bahurupi families live there.

Plate 5.1: Bahurupi Settlement open tin shed



Bahurupi and village politics

In the state of Maharashtra, the Bahurupi are OBCs and NTs, and as more families are sedentarised, they began interacting more with other caste groups, such as Maratha, Banjara and Dalits. Such interactions go beyond economic relationships to invitations to marriages, family functions and other festivals or ceremonies. As a result, some political alliances have also emerged from these relationships. In Kalapur and Bahirpur villages, the Bahurupi population has become a vote bank that powerful leaders attempt to gain their support during elections. Some Bahurupi have even contested elections under the nomadic B category.

Currently, there are three gram panchayat members from the Bahurupi community, two in Bahirpur and one in Kalapur.

Case 1 Village Politics

The Bahurupi have started to take part in village politics with some attaining leadership positions. Their current population size has helped them to become an adequate base for contesting and influencing local elections. Below are some of the challenges that have emerged as the Bahurupi have become involved in politics.

Suresh, a 45-year-old Bahurupi man, explains how the Bahurupi have changed their involvement in elections and the politics of the village. “Many people have insisted that I contest the election but I know it is a very difficult task (*Papad Jhelave Lagtat*). It is not that simple (*sope nahi*). Let it be any kind of election, whether Gram Panchayat or Zillha Parishad, our people participate actively in the election, but at the Gram Panchayat level, my maternal uncle (Mama) was a Sarpanch in 2010. Now also Karhale’s wife is a Gram Panchayat member. And one more, my nephew is a member of Gram Panchayat. We have a good population in Bahirpur village so two seats will be contested compulsorily by Bahurupi only”.

Opportunities for the Bahurupi to enter politics have influenced their daily existence and position in the village. And for the few who have found leadership positions it benefitted not only the individual but also the community as a whole.

A Bahurupi leader, Kishan, aged 35, explained his experience as a member of the *gram panchayat* and in decision-making. He said that “Many a time I requested our Gramsevak to arrange drinking water through taps in our lane. But despite having membership in the Gram Panchayat, we cannot think of ourselves, we need to think about the whole village. With the same thought and support of our Bahurupi, we could organise three programmes in this village, but there are certain people here who mislead and misguide our people against us. Till today we had no right to sit in the village. We support upper-caste people in the village they also support us in return. That’s the way I could win the Gram Panchayat election. I received more votes in the election among the all other seven members of the Gram Panchayat body”. Though there are Bahurupi members in the Gram Panchayat they cannot

take decisions on their own. Their decisions are always influenced by powerful dominant groups of the village, as reported by Suresh who is a Gram Panchayat member in Bahirpur.

Housing Scheme benefits

In 2006, a Bahurupi man was appointed Sarpanch of Bahirpur village, Many Bahurupi pointed to this as a moment that helped many members of the communities. For example, some Bahurupi families were able to get assistance in building houses under the Indira Awas Yojana housing scheme.

Babanrao , a Bahurupi man, explained about the Gharkul scheme and its effects, saying that “Let me tell you that during 1984 some Bahurupi who had jhuggi *Jhopadi* have received the benefit of the *Gharkul* scheme and the house is registered under father’s name and there were people who were orphan and were without any house they received *Gharkul* during 2010 and 2015. But for those Bahurupi who received the houses in 1984 their family size has increased. Each family became a group of five families and they have limited space. Now also many of them have applied for the *Gharkul* scheme but nothing has happened to date”.

Plate 5.2: Bahurupi settlement closed tin shed



Bahurupi as agricultural labour

It was observed the Bahurupi are largely not participating in agricultural labour in the villages. Ganesh, a 35-year-old Bahurupi man, explains that part of the reason is the Bahurupi do not have the knowledge or expertise to do much of the important agricultural work, such

as ploughing and sowing. The Bahurupi who do agricultural work are usually restricted to picking produce, such as tomatoes, chillies, oranges or custard apples from nearby farms. For this work, they are paid Rs. 250/- a day; men and women are both paid the same. Some men will be hired to cut the grass but they are required to come with their tools, a curved iron sickle. Therefore, most Bahurupi choose to either continue their traditional livelihoods, such as the *Rayandar* or similar performing work like musicians. As discussed in chapter three, many Bahurupi are also pursuing other works, such as selling lemon-chilly evil warders or coconut selling or working as waiters in hotels.

The Bahurupi have largely been forced into sedentarization due to economic factors. As their traditional livelihood becomes less desirable due to the stigma and prejudice, and the increase of entertainment on electronic media. Settlement and housing require land, which has brought the Bahurupi into conflict with villagers over communal land, while in other cases the villagers have encouraged the Bahurupi to settle and began the process of integration through social and political life.

To understand the nature of settlement a comparison is been made between forced settlement during the colonial era and self-motivated settlement established by Bahurupi in present villages. Various features are discussed in the above table which helps understand the nature of the settlement. The present settlement came into existence for the last 33 years. It is completely self-motivated, whereas colonial settlements came into existence 100 years ago which was forced on them. The place of present settlement is the place where Bahurupi traditionally used to have their temporary settlement by setting up tents (*Raotis*).

These settlements are established on the traditional migration routes which were used by Bahurupi in the past. According to Bahurupi, there are three types of routes which they followed during their traditional livelihood, i.e., Katcha road (*Panand raste*), small foot routes through fields (*Paul wat Vavarane*), routes through small rivers and water streams (*nadadane raste*), and tar roads (*dambar raste*).

Table No:5.1: Comparison of Features between Criminal Tribes (CT) settlement and Bahurupi Settlement

Sr.No	Feature	CT Settlement	Bahurupi Settlement
1	Period	From 1910 onwards started setting up managed by the colonial government and Salvation Army	1980 onwards started settling in different villages some of them are Kalapur in Yavatmal district, Raghojiwadi in Washim district and Bahirpur in Nanded district.
2	Driving force for the establishment of a settlement	CTA and Colonial policies against nomadic communities.	Changing economic conditions, modern technology, and increasing population compelled families to search for more villages to find a more customer base.
3	Land resource ownership	Colonial government-owned land was utilised for the settlement but land ownership was under the control of settlers	A gairan land of villages was offered to set up settlements, gairan land is village common pasture land with no ownership with Bahurupi.
4	Control and Discipline	Discipline is governed to control the nomadic CT members with strict punishments, no movement is allowed	Have self-discipline and control autonomous status
5	Economic compulsion	Agricultural and factory-based forced labour force and correctional measure	Nearest villages and markets are targets where entertainment service is provided, Lemon-chilly sold etc.,
6	Development	No scope for the development	Have scope for development but existing policies and programmes are not yet reached them or they are not suitable for nomadic communities
7	Freedom	No freedom like prison inmates CT members were not allowed to flee out	Freedom can carry out occupation anywhere they want in the vicinity of the present settlement.

It was observed that the present settlements are close to the nearest towns and blocks where good transportation is available which connects all villages and towns which come in the same blocks and it helps Bahurupi to reach various places.

Bahurupi's present settlement does not give a land ownership certificate to the Bahurupi as it is a *gairan* which comes under the jurisdiction of the local Gram Panchayat and takes various decisions regarding village development on the same *gairan*, whereas in the case of colonial settlements lands were belonging to the government and ownership was with the state. When the then colonial government with a revenue generation motive tried to allot land for CT members and there was a protest by village landlords and headmen to this policy of the government.

In the present settlement, Bahurupi have discipline and control over themselves and have the autonomous status of taking their own decisions. Whereas during the colonial time, CT settlements were controlled by Salvation Army or settlers.

There is economic compulsion in the present settlement of the Bahurupi where they cover the various villages that comes in the vicinity and find their livelihood opportunities nearby. But in the case of the colonial CT settlements CT members were forced to work in the factories or the agricultural lands owned by the settlers.

As far as the development in the settlement is concerned in the present settlement, there is a need for more housing and other amenities which facilitate and assure comfortable lives for Bahurupi. But during the CT settlement, though there was little motive to develop CT members without taking their consent, there was no scope for the development of the CT members.

There is freedom in the present settlement to the Bahurupi there are no restrictions on their movements they come and go to their customer base whenever they want, but in the case of the CT, settlements were started in terms of controlling the movements of the nomadic communities. The present settlements of the Bahurupi need their present livelihood activities and the other citizenship documents which are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Committees and Commissions, Constitutional Safeguards and Development Programmes

Post-independence, to develop certain marginalized communities, various developmental initiatives were taken up in India. Different welfare programmes have been implemented aiming at the socio-economic development of marginalized communities. Some initiatives were undertaken at the state level for the development of the DNTs, NT and SNTs. It is observed that, in Maharashtra nomadic communities have been the focus of special affirmative action. There are few developmental schemes and programmes framed to provide some relief to nomadic communities. These are the outcomes of the recommendations of various Committees and Commissions which contributed to establishing the development milestones of the nomadic communities.

Role of Various Commissions and Committees

A) The Criminal Tribes Inquiry Committee

Post-independence, there was a strong notion of freedom, unity, equality, etc., among the intellectuals in India. They criticised certain draconian colonial legislations and also raised questions regarding the existence of the Criminal Tribes Act 1924, in independent India. Following that, between 1946 and 1949, two bills were presented in the central legislative assembly to ultimately dismantle the unjust parts of the Criminal Tribes Act. The government agreed to set up a committee to determine if the CTA should be modified or simply repealed outright. It is important to note here that the various recommendations of this committee suggested that there should be effort taken towards the sedentarisation of the nomadic communities (Renke 2008).

B) Ayyangar Committee

On August 31, 1952, the Government of India repealed the law in response to the committee's findings and suggestions. The Habitual Offenders Act was, however, introduced to maintain control over the criminals. The committee also advocated for the need to allocate adequate funds and welfare and rehabilitation programmes for the growth of nomadic communities (Renke 2008).

C) The Kalelkar Commission

The Kalelkar Commission came into effect on 29th January 1953. It is important to note that this commission introduced the term 'Denotified Communities' instead of 'Criminal Tribe' or 'Tribe' and the grouping of backward communities into the categories of nomadic and settled, based on their distinct characteristics. Considering the nomadic nature and vulnerability of the nomadic communities this commission suggested government to sedentarise them (Renke 2008).

D) Lokur Committee

In 1965, the Indian government established an advisory panel, whose chairman was Mr B.N. Lokur. The Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe lists were intended to be updated by this committee. It is interesting to note how the Nomadic Tribes and Denotified Tribes were handled differently by this Committee. The Committee was aware that nomadic communities were inconsistently listed as ST in one State and SC in another (as well as OBC in another). The Committee took note of the crucial finding that the Denotified or Nomadic tribes have not significantly benefited from the kinds of development programmes typically designed for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, despite their relatively small numbers and propensity to live nomadic lifestyles after being included in the SC/ST list. The nomadic and denotified tribes' distinguishing characteristics were known to the Lokur Committee. The Committee wrote in its report that it would be preferable for the communities if they were taken off the list of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and handled just as a separate entity.

The Lokur Committee was aware of the distinctive traits of the nomadic and denotified tribes. In its report, the Committee stated that it would be better for the groups if they were removed from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list and treated only as a separate entity. However, in reality, the state of nomadic communities at the country level is different, since at the national level there is no special categorization of nomadic communities. They are categorized in existing categories like SC/ST or OBCs. Various commissions constituted by the government in recent decades have observed the various issues and problems of nomadic communities and also given a picture of various distinct characteristics of these communities. It not only helps us in understanding the seriousness of the issues and problems that nomadic communities face in their day-to-day life but also guides state and civil society to come forward and initiate reformatory steps for the

holistic development of the nomadic communities. The Renke Commission (2008) and Idate Commission (2017) were pivotal to understanding the present condition of nomadic communities hence it is imperative to see their few findings as follows:

E) Renke Commission

The National Commission for the De-Notified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes was established by the Government of India on March 14, 2005, with Mr Balkrishna Sidaram Renke serving as its chairman.

Renke Commission noted that nomadic communities are not able to take the benefits of various developmental schemes which are designed under these categories. The Commission further expressed a need for separate and suitable developmental schemes for NTs, DNTs and SNTs (Renke 2008). The commission was aware of the pathetic condition of the nomadic communities those seeking the caste certificates found that for communities it is a tedious procedure. Hence, it recommended that the governments hold special camps in the areas where the nomadic communities stay to better facilitate this process. They also raised objections on the Caste Validity committee constituted in the state of Maharashtra which worsens the process for seeking the certificate for the nomadic communities. The Commission has challenged the existence of such a committee which it said is creating hurdles for nomadic communities at large.

The Commission pointed out the various sub-committees under a well-known countrywide implemented project namely “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan”. The Commission said that these committees do not address the many concerns about nomadic (DNT) children, a vital part of any community development programme. It also identified the need for providing skilled and technical education to nomadic youths which would create an opportunity for them in the areas they live.

The commissions had an innovative demand for establishing Special Socio-Economic Settlement Zones (SSESZ) for nomadic tribes at suitable locations. It also asked the government to provide a space for building houses with the availability of basic amenities so that it may help the nomadic communities to earn their livelihood in the vicinity. Regarding petty business, significant observation was recorded by the Commission that nomadic communities, busy selling articles as street vendors/ hawkers and peddlers,

should be given licences and local bodies should issue the same. It also recommended special market zones be created for the petty businesses of nomadic communities. There are various vital recommendations of the Renke Commission where the exact ground-level problems have been highlighted and instant relief is recommended. The Renke Commission was constituted during the UPA government.

F) Idate Commission

During the NDA administration, the National Commission for De-Notified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes was established in January 2015 under the Chairmanship of Bhiku Ramji Idate. In June 2017, the Commission submitted its report to the Government of India. It consists of recommendations which delineated the need to provide nomadic communities with access to education, housing and infrastructure, access to health facilities, microfinance, opportunities for skill development, etc.

Bhiku Ramji Idate remarked in the Foreward of the report concerning the appropriate policies and programmes for NT DNTs very aptly that *“The Commission has faced lot of difficulties, including the denial of the required funds, for carrying out the socio-economic survey of these communities. As a result, we could not conduct the nation-wide survey which would have been very helpful in designing appropriate policies and programmes for the DNT/NT/SNT. I, therefore, recommend that a detailed survey of these communities should be conducted at the earliest to assess their socio-economic status and understand their problems”* (Idate, 2017).

It is significant to observe the state's efforts to investigate the state of the nation's nomadic communities in light of the recent development of these groups. These committees' recommendations go into great detail and may show that the nation's nomadic communities require urgent developmental action.

Apart from the above various Committees and Commissions which were set up at the country level are significant but it is also observed that there are also committees that the states constituted following which measures were taken to ameliorate the conditions of the nomadic communities. In this regard, Maharashtra is the pioneering state which has secured special reservations for nomadic communities following the recommendations of the committees that the state has formed. The same cannot be observed at the national level. Therefore, it is

pertinent to look into the role played by the committees appointed by the Government of Maharashtra in the lives of nomadic communities in Maharashtra, more notably the Deshmukh Committee.

G) B. D. Deshmukh Committee

In 1961, Mr. B.D. Deshmukh chaired the committee constituted by the Government of Maharashtra. The Committee made significant contributions towards the NT, DNT and SNT communities, and submitted its report in 1964. It proposed that backward classes should be grouped into Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribes, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes and other backward classes. Following that in 1990, the then government included the nomadic or wandering communities in the list of Nomadic Tribes with 3.5% reservation (Yadav 2009:623-627)

The above literature demonstrates that commissions were constituted at different points in time and their various suggestions and recommendations have a key role in the present developmental policies and programmes which are framed for nomadic communities. The above Deshmukh committee is significant in the state of Maharashtra.

Constitutional safeguards and various rights for all the weaker sections

Constitutional safeguards¹⁵ protect the poor in the country. There are existing safeguards in the constitution which are divided into five.

First and foremost is social safeguard: Under this, there are certain Articles which are significant in terms of removing social evils disturbing the lives of poor communities like SCs and STs. Article 17 talks about the abolition of untouchability. This article also directed the state to take certain legislative measures, i.e., the Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989. This law protects scheduled castes and scheduled tribes from all forms of untouchability they may face in their lives. Similarly, article 23 prohibits traffic among human beings and beggars and all forms of forced labour. Article 24 directs the state to prevent children under the age of 14 from working in hazardous places, factories and mines. The aforementioned Articles under the constitution are significant in terms of the social development of the weaker communities.

¹⁵ <http://ncsc.nic.in/files/ncsc/new3/201.pdf>

Economic safeguards: Article 46 is significant which directs states to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker section.

Educational and Cultural safeguards: Article 15 (4) directs states to provide facilities for the development of weaker sections involving them in educational institutions.

Political safeguard: Under this, Article 243 (D) is more significant and focuses on the political involvement of the weaker section in the major institutions, i.e., at higher level legislative assemblies, Parliament and local level representation in the Panchayat level. There is a reservation recommended based on the population of people belonging to certain weaker sections.

Service safeguards: Under this safeguard, persons belonging to certain weaker sections are given special provisions in government services and during the times of their promotions to the higher post in the services. This mere involvement of the weaker section in the government service has brought a massive positive change in the lives of many belonging to the weaker sections, but nomadic communities living in poor economical condition needs special care and protection from the state.

All the above safeguards play a vital role in the lives of the weaker sections living in the country. Various Articles framed in the Constitution speak and directs the state to act accordingly for the development of certain weaker sections of society. Without mentioning nomadic communities makes it difficult to consider them as weaker sections of society. But the only major concern is nowhere there is any mention of nomadic communities. Today, nomadic communities are weaker and facing various issues and problems due to various changes in their livelihoods. Providing them protection through certain legislations, care and protection is the need of the hour.

In the social sector efforts are made to implement various schemes and programmes to improve the standards of living of those lagging. Among the many groups, nomads perform low on all development indicators, be it education, health, livelihoods, etc. Since colonial times, nomads were pushed to the margins of society due to the implementation of colonial laws. In post-colonial India, though nomads are free from colonial laws they are still treated as third-class citizens in the country. They are yet to enjoy freedom in the true sense of the

word as they are living a life of impoverishment. Further, Nomadic communities are experiencing rapid change in their livelihoods due to various factors. Due to the disappearance of their traditional knowledge and livelihoods, their social ties with local communities are snapped.

Maharashtra is one of the States that is socially conscious about the conditions of nomads and it made provisions, development programmes, policies and Acts to better their lives. Despite these efforts not much has changed for the nomads in their living standards. They still struggle to gain access to basic resources like water, shelter and food, while education, health and better livelihoods are a distant dream. Policymakers see a strong and positive relationship between the development and sedentarisation of nomadic communities. In other words, if the social and economic condition of nomads has to be improved, it can be done only by sedentarising nomads. For nomads to settle, owning land becomes essential. Though governments are providing lands for nomads to settle, the social stigma attached to the behaviour of nomadism prevents them from being accepted locally by the sedentary population. Many of their family members continue to remain nomadic. Many of them are still branded as criminals and they face atrocities by the people and the State. The stigma of ‘thief’, ‘beggar’, and ‘polluting’ keeps these communities excluded from society. For them to be included as citizens of the nation much more needs to be done. The conditions described above generally apply to nomads in the country and the Bahurupi are no exception to it.

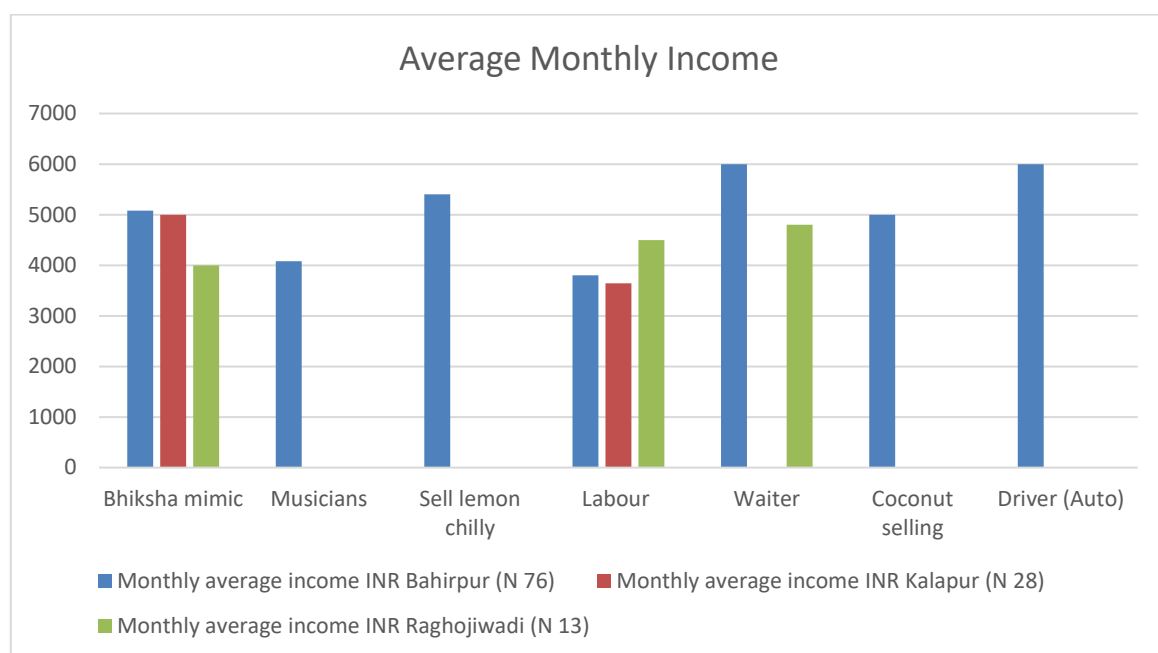
Traditionally, Bahurupi did not own any resources like land or moveable assets though this slowly is changing. These days, a motorcycle is seen as a desirable asset for the Bahurupi as they can use it to commute daily instead of by private or public transport. This is true both for those continuing their traditional livelihood and those pursuing new ones. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, many Bahurupi have started to acquire land and houses and have given up a nomadic lifestyle.

As mentioned earlier, one way the Bahurupi have begun settling down is by accessing village pastures (*gairan*). The village leaders permitted the nomads to settle and use the land for constructing temporary houses. In the sample of 98 households across three settlements, there was an average of 350 square feet of land available per family. This has implications for the increasing family size and also as more families settle down. This may further create pressure on limited land. The Bahurupi who can access this *gairaan* land continues to face problems

as other communities are vying to access the land, as the Bahurupi do not have ownership titles in the *gairan*.

Aside from utilising *gairan* land, the only other option is purchasing private land. However, private land ownership is largely out of the reach of most Bahurupi families. An average rate for a small plot, 600 square feet, would cost 4 to 5 lakhs (Refer to Graph 6.1). The average monthly income for a Bahurupi family is around Rs.5000 (Rs. 60,000 annually) so Bahurupi for the Bahurupi land is unaffordable.

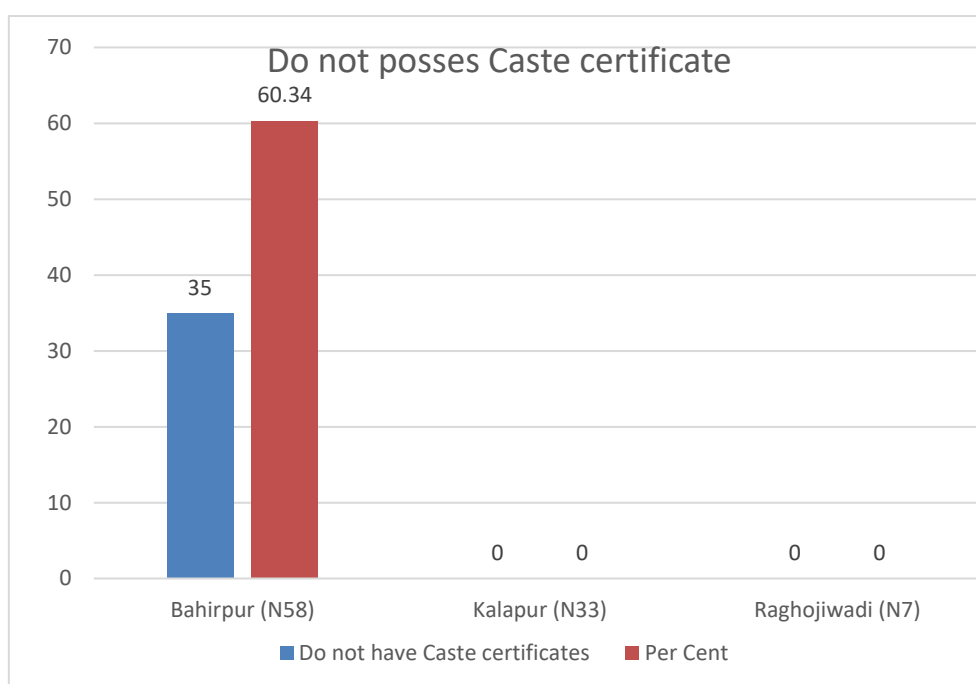
Graph 6.1: Livelihood-wise Average Monthly Income



Two primary reasons for the Bahurupi choosing to settle down are interconnected. First, is the waning interest and reduction in profits from the traditional livelihood of performances. Other works, such as waiters, labour, and selling items like coconut and *Limbu-Mirchi* are more conducive to a sedentarised lifestyle rather than a nomadic one. The second reason is that as Bahurupi move away from their traditional livelihoods they want to apply for various government schemes and benefits. To do this, they must produce documentary evidence, such as residential proof/domicile certificates, school certificates/documents, or other certificates issued by local village officials like police Patil and sarpanch. These certificates often state that a person belongs to a particular caste and has stayed in a village for a set number of years. Many Bahurupi lack even basic identity proof such as birth certificates and school

certificates and without these, they struggle and beg officials to issue important documents on their behalf. Many of the Bahurupi narrate incidences of visiting government offices several times to get certificates issued in their name. They struggle to convince officials that being nomadic they have not been issued basic identity documents by the government. Their births were not registered officially nor do people attend any schools to produce school transfer certificates. One Bahurupi respondent claimed that to get the required document proofs from the village officials some Bahurupi had to pay around 50 to 60 thousand rupees as a bribe just for a piece of paper which prove their caste identity and residence. The Nomads in Maharashtra are issued a caste certificate titled NT(B). This certificate recognises their nomadic status and mentions the community of the nomad.

Graph 6.2: Bahurupi Families who do not possess caste certificate



Above graph 6.2 shows there are still 35 (60%) Bahurupi families who are struggling to get their caste certificate. By not possessing caste certificates they are ineligible to avail government assistance and benefits. The major reason for not getting the caste certificate was not possessing a birth certificate certified by the educational institution. Fulfilling the criteria of seeking proof has become a major issue for 35 families residing in Bahirpur village today.

As mentioned above, with a caste certificate a person cannot apply for various government schemes. The following case of Krishna, a Bahurupi man from Bahirpur, illustrated some of

these struggles and difficulties. Krishna stated that he has attempted to apply for an NT (B) caste certificate many times. The department officers say he must apply online, but the online application does not fit his situation and is thus useless. Particularly, Krishna never attended school and so lacks a school leaving certificate which is required as proof. There have been several attempts by the government to help people in Krishna's situation. The state of Maharashtra issued a government resolution that if a person from a nomadic community wants such an identity certificate, block-level tehsil officials should form a committee and investigate if the applicant belongs to the community. This should generally take the form of in-person visits to the applicant's house, interviews with family and other community members and issuing a certificate if found appropriate. However, in Krishna's case, no such committee was ever established. As is often the case there are challenges to implementing helpful policies and government resolutions on the ground. And for every Bahurupi who struggles to take assistance from government schemes, there are many more that are not even aware they have a right to such official help.

Table 6.1: Other documents

Sr. No.	Bahurupi possess other documents	No. of Households	Per cent
1	Voter ID	96	97.96
2	Ration card	95	96.94
3	Aadhar Card	90	91.84

From Table 6.1 we can see that more than 90 per cent of Bahurupi families today from across three settlements possess other documents, such as voter ids, Aadhar cards and ration cards. Possession of NT(B) certificates is pending for many. Interestingly, the Bahurupi have become a major voting group in the present villages where they established their settlements.

Development Programmes and Schemes and Bahurupi

Various governments have introduced welfare and development schemes and programmes at the central and state level for the benefit of nomadic communities. In 2017, the Idate Commission identified welfare and development schemes in Maharashtra, Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh for nomadic communities. As this study focuses on the Bahurupi of Maharashtra, the focus of the analysis

of welfare programmes and schemes will be restricted to Maharashtra state. The Maharashtra government is implementing the following programmes:

- 1) 25 per cent margin money scheme: The scheme focuses majorly on DNTs, NTs and SNTs who receive loans with minimum rates of interest.
- 2) Training of motor driving to VJNT (Vimukt Jati and Nomadic Communities), SBC and OBC: As per this scheme, heavy and light vehicle driving training is provided to the listed communities. Under the scheme, benefits like training, free lodging, licence fees, and boarding are provided.
- 3) Savitri Bai Phule Scholarship for VJNT¹⁶ and SBC girl students: The scheme encourages the enrolment of the girls belonging to the above categories studying in 5th-7th standard. The scheme provides 60 rupees per month.
- 4) Meritorious scholarship to VJNT and SBC students studying in high schools: It provides benefits like free tuition fees, examination fees, and laboratory fees which are paid directly to the concerned schools.
- 5) Stipend to VJNT and Special Backward Classes students studying in Industrial Training Institute.: The scheme provides Rs. 40 to Rs.100 per month to the students for 10 months through the concerned institution.
- 6) Incentives are given to encourage inter-caste marriage: State and central government provide 50:50 basis benefits under the scheme. The objective of implementing the scheme is to abolish the untouchability and support inter-caste weddings between Savarna and Hindus.
- 7) Vasantrao Naik Tanda/Basti development scheme: Under the scheme major provisions are given, such as drinking water, electrification, construction of toilets, and construction of the drainage system and roads.

¹⁶ Nomadic communities known in the state of Vimukt Jati and Nomadic Tribes in the state of Maharashtra. (Indiastat.com)

Table 6.2: Year-wise allocation of funds for OBCs, EBCs and DNTs

Scheme of Assistance for skill development of OBSs, EBCs and DNTs in India in Lakhs INR							
Location		Fund allocation in 2015-16	Fund released	Fund allocation in 2016-17	Fund released	Fund allocation in 2017-18	Fund released
State	Maharashtra		29.21		6.47		0
Country	India	512	502.15	900	879.06	1000	1500

Source: Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 692, dated 23.07.2018.

Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 612, dated 25.06.2019.

Table 6.2 shows that there is fund allocation for the development of the weaker communities in Maharashtra, which also includes nomadic tribes. From Table 6.2 it is clear that there is a decrease in the release of the funds by the Maharashtra government. It is important to note that during the year 2017-2018, there were no funds released in the state. The above-mentioned schemes stipulated by the state of Maharashtra have not reached the Bahurupi in Yavatmal, Washim and Nanded districts. Nomadic Bahurupi are not aware of the various benefits which are available for nomadic communities and other weaker sections.

As their traditional livelihood is no longer sustaining them, the Bahurupi must turn to the government for assistance and relief. At the national level, the Bahurupi come under the category of OBC and there are certain agencies constituted by the government to provide financial assistance to OBCs. Yet many such institutions have failed to reach their beneficiaries and many Bahurupi are unaware of the existence of such benefits. There are financial institutions which assist the nomadic communities in the state of Maharashtra they are discussed as follows:

National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) comes under the purview of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It came into effect in 1992. The institution is supposed to promote various developmental initiatives so that Backward Classes will benefit, particularly those living in poverty. NBCFDC releases monetary support through state-run agencies which are nominated by the state government/Union territories.

NBCFDC funds the programme in the state of Maharashtra through *Vasantrao Naik* Nomadic Tribes Development Corporation, another subsidiary of NBCFDC.

The Corporation was constituted in the state of Maharashtra in 1984. This corporation is registered under the Company Act 1956. NBCFDC sanctions funds on receiving the yearly annual plan of action from the Vasantrao Naik Vimukt Jati Nomadic Tribe Development Corporation (VNVJNTDC), Maharashtra. Table 6.3 shows the year-wise plan sanctioned to this corporation during 2011 and 2013, it shows the increase in the budget sanctioned. The corporation aims at distributing various loan facilities, especially to Denotified and Nomadic Tribes, at concessional interest rates. The corporation offers subsidies, education loans and stipends for the various training programmes as well. Special attention has also been given to women to strengthen them economically.

Table 6.3: Fund Allocation for VNVJNTDC

Year-wise Action Plans Approved by National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (Rs.in Lakh)		
State Corp.	Year	
	2011-12	2012-2013
VNVJNTDC Maharashtra	1000	15000

Source: Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 499, dated 30.04.2013¹⁷.

- 1) Margin money scheme: Under this scheme, the loan is available, i.e., up to rupees 5 lakhs, at an interest rate of 4 %. The period of repayment is 5 years.
- 2) Direct loan scheme: Under this, a loan is sanctioned for the project cost up to 25000/- rupees at an interest rate of 2 %. Under this scheme, small mobile business is given preference.
- 3) Subsidy scheme: The project cost of up to 12000/- rupees is sanctioned and a 50 % subsidy is granted. The corporation has claimed that since 1991-92 they have not received any subsidy from the state government.
- 4) Training scheme: The scheme targets the youths and aims at their welfare, imparting self-employment training skills. The training focuses on different trades, such as

¹⁷ <http://www.indiastat.com/table/socialandwelfareschemes/27/backwardclassesschemes/27905/768716/data.aspx>

driving, typing and shorthand; T.V., Radio and mobile repairing, etc. A stipend of up to 300/- rupees per month is also given to the beneficiary.

- 5) Financial assistance to purchase a share of co-operative societies: Under this scheme, the corporation sanctions a 50% subsidy for the purchase of shares up to rupees 2000/- each of co-operative sugar factories. The subsidy is also sanctioned for the share purchase of cooperative cotton mills and productive cooperative societies.

There are other schemes as well which are supported by National Backward Class Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi; some of these schemes are for education, development and women empowerment.

Criteria framed by the Corporation for getting the Benefits

To get the benefits under the VNVJNTDC scheme there are certain criteria stipulated. The procedures and criteria are burdensome making it difficult for nomadic communities to meet this criterion and take advantage of the benefits. For example, to get a loan an applicant is required to have two guarantors, both must be landowners and one must be a government employee. Given both their nomadic lifestyle and insular family relations, the Bahurupi often do not have any sort of familial or social relation that is land owning and can act as a guarantor. Another criterion is various certificates are required, such as a domicile certificate or caste certificate, that many do not hold. During fieldwork, it was observed that not a single Bahurupi staying in any of the three villages was ever successful in getting the benefits from the various schemes. Many Bahurupi were not even aware that such a corporation has been set up to help them.

Settlement Scheme: Vasantrao Naik Mukh Vasahat Yojana

The scheme was introduced by the Government of Maharashtra in December 2011 (Resolution No.G.N.Y.-2011/Pra.Kra.111.Vi.Ja.Bha-1). The scheme's major objective is to settle Nomadic Communities and DNTs in the state of Maharashtra. The scheme estimates 88.63/- lakhs rupees to be invested each year per settlement. As per the scheme a committee is to be formed at the district and Panchayat level where it will have all the department representations, like Social Welfare, Water, Electricity, etc., and it will be responsible for the implementation of the scheme in the district. The scheme assures 269 square foot land allotment to each family.

The above scheme of the settlement has not reached the Bahurupi. It was found during the fieldwork that there were no applications submitted for getting the benefit of the scheme. This demonstrates that the government has not conveyed information regarding the settlement scheme meant specifically for nomads.

There is an issue in the case of the VJNTs in Maharashtra that some of the communities which are included under this category are sedentary communities and the benefits of the category are usurped by them as they are developed. Here the real benefit which was meant for the nomadic tribe is misused (Bokil 2002). The benefits of the corporation have not reached the Bahurupi. Consequently, it is evident that in the state of Maharashtra the scheme, i.e., VNVJNTDC, which was designed for the Nomadic Communities is not being delivered to the Bahurupi, despite them being placed under the category, i.e., NT(B). The government each year is allocating a lot of financial resources to the scheme but the real target group is out of its sight. In the state of Maharashtra, the reservation of 3.5 per cent has been granted under the DNT NT category, despite the constitutional guarantee the Bahurupi have not received benefits. The push from government organisations or non-governmental organisations is weak in helping change the status of nomads.

Nomadic communities Census data

It has been historically found wanting for the census to properly account for nomadic communities. A caste census was started in 1872, but a more scientific and thorough one was conducted in 1881 (Kumar 2000). On lack of information about nomadic communities in the case of census Bokil (2002) pointed out that some castes and tribes have received constitutional recognition as SCs and STs but in the case of nomadic communities they have not been included yet and it is a matter of seriousness as far as the development of nomadic communities is concerned. Bokil (2002) noted that in the 1931 census, the total nomadic community population in the state of Maharashtra was around six million which comes to around eight per cent as compared with the whole population of the state. It is a fact that whatever methods were followed to enumerate the population, it differs state-wise, a rough estimation of the total population throughout India today came to around 50 million.

Of not including caste in the census, Kumar (2000) further noted that because of the unavailability of data on caste shows ineffective policy measures designed for the powerless and its injustice (p.3100). On the other hand, Omvedt (2010) said that a caste-based census is

very important for formulating relevant legislation to deal with discrimination. There is no present census available about the Bahurupi population in Maharashtra and at the country level, and the same applies to other nomadic communities as well. Therefore, it is pertinent to note that without the population data of nomadic communities, it is very difficult to design development policies and programmes for these communities.

Civil society organisation efforts for the development of nomadic communities

There are very few civil society organisations working for the benefit of nomadic communities. Yet many issues require input and support from both public and private actors, such as people from nomadic communities not receiving important certificates and documents and, therefore, being unable to apply for certain government schemes and development programmes.

During fieldwork in 2016, it was observed that the Bahurupi from Bahirpur village had organized an event for Bahurupi from various places along with other nomadic communities, like the Nath Jogi and Banjara. Many people attended the event and shared their issues on their economy, issues related to development, and issues regarding not getting access to various schemes and policies. The major aim behind organizing this event was to highlight the issues of the Bahurupi community and other nomadic communities in the state. Bahurupi say that there are many problems in their lives which need instant attention from the state. The organizers of the event say that there was only one limitation, and that is monetary support for the event, they were saying that they contributed money whatever they could from their meagre income. Pradeep, a 40-year-old Bahurupi, wants more gatherings of nomadic communities at the state level. He is hopeful that it may bring some pressure on the government so that the government can assist in ameliorating the various socio-economic problems they are facing in their day-to-day life. Pradeep mentioned that “I have a dream that we should invite a Nomadic leader in this village and that even in a helicopter and should organize a state-level gathering of all the nomadic people here. I always convey information about any issue to Dada. There are Nath Jogis here and they also support us a lot. Because this was the first programme (*Karyakram*) we had organized in Bahirpur village and everyone knows it very well. Our leaders had organized a very good programme here. Rajesh is the only person from our community working with the Mumbai Municipal Corporation School in Mumbai. He is a very good person and very talented and he knows everything.

There is the possibility that something will happen for the nomadic community if we organize a big programme”.

There is one thing which plays a vital role in organizing people, and that is leadership. It was observed that due to a lack of educational background, many Bahurupi did not know the best way to communicate with government officials to advocate for themselves. The few Bahurupi who have managed to receive a formal education were sometimes mistrusted by the other members of their community. For example, there was one Bahurupi man who was working as a primary teacher in a municipal corporation in Mumbai. He had the plan to set up an NGO and tried to organise some Bahurupi to agitate for their rights but found little support among the community. There is an effort at the nomadic communities level, to form an action group to deal with various issues and concerns related to the communities. It not only helps Bahurupi in terms of their mobilization but gives them confidence that they have some support from the people to raise their issues at the district level. It was found that Satiba, a Bahurupi leader from Bahirpur, is part of an action group which works at the district level. Under his leadership, while also being employed in a government job, they are trying to organize the Bahurupi people. He finds it difficult to mobilise the Bahurupi as his job takes away a lot of his time. However, he is still dedicated towards the movement to improve the conditions of the Bahurupi.

Conclusion

In this chapter, a review of a few commissions and committees showed that at different points in time, they have made very valuable recommendations and inputs to the state and given the right direction on what kinds of policies and programmes need to be undertaken for the betterment of the nomadic communities in India. It was found that the Renke and Idate Commissions not only highlighted the burning issues of the nomadic communities in the country but also suggested proper guidelines to the government that what kinds of policies and programmes need to be implemented in the case of nomadic communities.

There is also mention of a few Articles in this chapter which guarantee Constitutional protection for the weaker sections. If nomadic communities' development is a major concern then they need to be counted in the Constitutional framework.

Development has been defined in many ways, such as progress, happiness, or mainstreaming the margins. Bahurupi must get settled was the first step of Bahurupi's development. But the issue of not possessing the land for settling is significant. The change in their present livelihood and income from it does not even support them to get access to the resources like land. The other major issue is the documentary evidence. After settlement, many Bahurupi could successfully get important documents like voter ID, Adhar, and ration card but there are still quite a few Bahurupi families which need serious help in terms of obtaining caste certificates, which is the identity marker for them. Lacking any document may result in not getting access to government policies and programmes. On the other hand, the funding for the schemes implemented by the government has been very low. In some cases, the funding every year is decreasing, especially in the case of Maharashtra.

The efforts of civil society in the development of the Bahurupi are important for the development of Bahurupi. The Bahurupi have slowly started coming together and discussing their day-to-day issues faced by them. There is a need for better mobilisation and financial support for nomadic Bahurupi issues getting more attention. The government of India has undertaken many efforts to bring marginal communities into the mainstream by designing various schemes and programmes. Considering the nomadic communities and from the findings of the study it is evident that these communities are still subjugated and placed low in all the development indices. There are various burning issues which need immediate attention. It is the need of the hour and various efforts needed to be taken by the state for the development of the nomadic communities, but, in reality, they have been neglected.

Chapter 7

Summary and Conclusion

In the previous chapters, an attempt was made to understand the many dimensions of the economy and stigma in the lives of the Bahurupi Community. Various social, cultural, and religious aspects were discussed to understand the community. There was also an attempt to understand the traditional culture of the Bahurupi community where the major focus was on extraneous factors which over time have brought immense changes in their livelihoods and economy.

In the introductory chapter, a comprehensive review of the literature was carried out to get an understanding of the peripatetic Bahurupi community, their occupation, and their relations with sedentary communities comprising various caste and nomadic groups. There are different concepts discussed by several scholars and it helped in understanding peripatetic communities. Peripatetic communities are service nomads and they are also known as symbiotic nomads by Misra (1982). These studies have tried to understand the customer base of the entertainment communities. It was noted that the peripatetic economy is influenced by various social and economic factors. There are fewer studies on peripatetic communities and those that exist are limited to certain specialized communities, for example in the case of Maharashtra, i.e., a study on peripatetic communities conducted by Robert Hyden on Nandiwalas who entertain people by using Bulls. Hyden's study sheds light on the conflict situation of Nandiwalas with villagers. But when it comes to the Bahurupi community which is involved in entertainment service, there are no significant studies. The sedentary population staying in the villages and cities is a customer base for the Bahurupi community.

The primary focus of this thesis was to study the dimensions of economy and stigma in the life of the Bahurupis. This study employed a conceptual framework of Stranger and stigma to studying the Bahurupi. The concept of stranger was put forth by George Simmel and the concept of stigma was elaborated upon by Robert Hyden. The study made linkages between different concepts such as economy, stigma, marginality and development programmes and their role in addressing the problems faced by the community. The study attempted to understand the Bahurupi's traditional livelihood, their ethnographic profile, and the impact of

sedentarization and the changes that it ushered. The impact of various developmental initiatives by the state on nomadic communities was also discussed in the later chapters.

In the second chapter, an attempt was made to chronicle the ethnographic profile of the Bahurupi community spread across three villages, i.e., Kalapur, Raghojiwadi and Bahirpur in Maharashtra. The chapter discussed the food habits, their temporary dwelling structures (Raotis), marriage and Kinship and religious rituals. Further, the chapter details the current status of the Bahurupi in these three villages.

Bahurupi are made up of eight clans dispersed in three settlements in three districts Yavatmal, Washim and Nanded of Maharashtra. The reason for selecting these three settlements was the concentration of a greater number of Bahurupi households compared to other settlements and the ritual significance as in the case of Raghojiwadi village. The development status of the Bahurupi can be understood through their current educational attainment, which is very poor. There is a high rate of illiteracy and very few children and youth in the community are attending school. The sex ratio is low. Their various lifecycle rituals, like marriages, and other rituals have a tradition of giving and receiving gifts. Giving gifts is an obligation for close relatives having affinal relations (Soyre). Raghoji Maharaj, a saint, on whose anniversary a fair or yatra event is celebrated each year. This fair is significant for the Bahurupi as all of them gather in one place belonging to various cities and towns. Raghoji Maharaj worship is important for Bahurupi as they interact with each other for renewing their relationships and also for marriage alliances.

In chapter three an attempt was made to describe the traditional as well as the changing livelihoods of the Bahurupi. The livelihood practices form an important feature of the economic organisation. Primary sources also confirmed that Bahurupi from the settlements in their previous livelihood used to deliver entertainment service to the villagers by enacting the roles of the famous Hindu deities like Hanuman, Mahadev, Nandi, etc., accompanied by the instrumental and other players. But over the period Bahurupi entertainment content has changed. Today the Bahurupi appear as a *Rayandar*. The term *Rayandar* is used by sedentary clients to refer to the Bahurupi. Bahurupi entertainment has cultural significance for client groups as it entails humour in casual conversation (Feintuch 1987). Bahurupi *Rayandar* crack jokes to earn their livelihood. Their jokes are humorous for clients. It was observed that Bahurupi never laugh while telling jokes, as joke-telling etiquette forbids them to do so

because doing so would be an impolite acknowledgement of one's cleverness (Descartes 1985). So Bahurupi follow the basic rules of not laughing. Radcliffe Brown (1940) talks about the elements of joking. He says there are times when jokes or teasing are only verbal, other times they involve horseplay, and sometimes they contain obscenities, other times they don't. But in the case of Bahurupi, the content of the joke is made using various aspects of sedentary clients' social life. It comprises of involvement of various characters who play major roles in the family institution, i.e., mother-in-law, son-in-law, children, men and women, cultural objects like cooking hearth smoke, bullock carts, wedding ritual, invitations for eating, animals like dogs, etc., are used in the jokes which creates humour out of them that make clients laugh. To keep themselves alert Bahurupi eat only once a day they believe that it may make them lazy and it will not make their performance effective.

After the performance delivery to the clients, Bahurupi seek something in return and receive food grains, such as wheat, rice, lentils etc., or money. However, Bahurupi cannot bargain for the same as their entertainment service's return completely depends upon the sympathy of the clients. Clients' economic background plays a vital role in the return for the entertainment service provided by Bahurupi. It is pertinent to note that various social opportunities, such as Diwali celebrated by Hindu castes, Ramzan celebrated by Muslims, Ambedkar Jayanti celebrated by Dalits, etc., have benefited Bahurupi in terms of getting food grains and money for meeting their household necessities.

Today many of the peripatetic groups are under pressure from technological innovations, increased education, movies, radio, television and plastic toys (Berland 1983). Expensive tin and aluminium utensils are replacing traditional items made by the peripatetic Iron Smiths and threatening the skills and resources of these peripatetic groups. Similarly, Bahurupi lives have also witnessed change over the period. Their knowledge of entertainment services is losing its importance. Some Bahurupi have completely diverted their attention from traditional entertainment to other livelihoods, such as making and selling *Lemon-Chilly* evil warders, selling coconut water, auto-drivers, waiters in the hotels and daily wage earners, etc.

Chapter four discusses the influence of social stigma in the lives of Bahurupi in the settlements. There is an attempt made to understand the impact of stigma on Bahurupi by using the concept of the stranger. There is a stigma associated with nomadism among Bahurupi (Renke Commission 2008). Today because of stigma, Bahurupi are facing

discrimination in receiving government scheme benefits. There is also perceived or felt stigma among the Bahurupi as the current entertainment service is accompanied by begging for their mere survival. Various incidences of harassment, abuse, and insults have been experienced by the Bahurupi to eke out their livelihood. There is a fear among Bahurupi while interacting with the outside sedentary population. Historically legislations like CTA 1871 had an indirect impact on the Bahurupi. Though they were not listed as Denotified Tribe, under the Criminal Tribes they were expected to report to the Police Patil on their arrival to a village and furnish details of the members visiting and the number of days in the village. The replacement of CTA 1871 with the Anti-Beggary Act had further consequences for the livelihoods of the Bahurupi.

Chapter Five discussed the transition phase of the Bahurupi before their settlements. The present settlement is significant for the Bahurupi in terms of access to various places, as various villages and towns nearby are a major customer base. In the case of *Lemon-Chilly* warder sellers, their market spaces and places are decided by the Jat Panchayat. No other Bahurupi who wants to sell the warders can go to another market space to sell these objects. Nomadism which has played a vital role in the traditional livelihood of peripatetic Bahurupi as a strategy to earn their subsistence has changed. During the traditional livelihood, the premise of the area was not demarcated through certain geographical boundaries because there was a demand for the service, i.e., entertainment, which they provided to the sedentary community. But in new livelihood, the Bahurupi have certain demarcations of market spaces. They move within this boundary and come to a place where they are bound with the groups to which they belong.

Chapter Six delves into the various commissions and committees, which were constituted by the government of India at the state and national levels to address the issues of Nomadic communities. Many recommendations given by these Commissions and Committees have impacted the development policies and programmes that were specially designed for marginalized communities like NTs and DNTs. It is also seen that every year there is some allocation of the fund for the development of the nomadic communities in the country but in the case of Maharashtra, it has been reduced over a few years. This questions the seriousness and concern of the government in addressing problems about the development of Nomadic communities. The chapter also discusses the existing institutions like Vasantao Naik Vimukt Jatis and Nomadic Tribes Development Corporation. Bahurupi are not aware of the existence

of such institutions that address the needs of nomadic communities. There is a demand for the provision of credit facilities to support their current livelihood. There are many schemes designed for the nomadic communities in the case of Maharashtra, but, in reality, no single Bahurupi person from all the settlements is aware of the scheme. Some of the schemes like Vasantryao Naik Mukat Vasahat Yojana (a housing scheme) have not been allotted to the Bahurupi.

In this thesis, the proposed conceptual framework invokes the idea of the stranger and the stigma associated with nomadism. To elaborate the conceptual framework, the Bahurupi community was selected as a case study to understand the concepts of the stranger and stigma. It was seen that there are various characteristics which have brought a major impact on the lives of the Bahurupi. First is the ambiguous origin of Bahurupi. They have not chronicled their origin, but they do mention a village name *Rajna Bhandari*. They claim that they belong to a village but later moved away and adopted a nomadic way of life. Another claim made by Bahurupi is that one of the members named Bahirji Naik from their community served in the Army of Shivaji Maharaj and worked as an expert spy. The skill of changing into different characters is a skill Bahurupi possesses as part of their traditional livelihood of entertainment. Bahurupi have started celebrating the birth anniversary of Bahirji Naik every year on August 7th, and this phenomenon has started since 2016. It shows Bahurupi's struggle in building their own identity as other villagers also have their historical personalities which they celebrate. Further, this can be interpreted as the Bahurupi on settling down are connecting to social and political leaders/icons to claim authenticity and belonging as citizens to the nation of India. This sedentary culture of celebrating the birth anniversary of historical personalities belonging to the Bahurupi has also influenced Bahurupi. Traditionally Bahurupi have lived with ambiguous status which was caused by their stranger status in the village.

Today there are many incidences of harassment and abuse of Bahurupi in the present settlements. These incidences not only depict discrimination but their constant rejection by the sedentary society. Few Bahurupi families are still struggling to get their caste certificates due to a lack of proof, such as birth and domicile certificates. The nomadic lifestyle never permitted Bahurupi to register and get certificates of identity due to their constant movements. There is a need of protecting the nomadic community under the Prevention of

Atrocities Act, so that it may help the community from staying away from harassment, abuse and discrimination.

After the Bahurupi settled down, it seems that the interaction and proximity with settled communities will change the status of the Bahurupi. Sedentarisation would have contributed to the withering away of stigma and the stranger identity associated with the Bahurupi. In the study, it was found that sedentarisation has resulted in the continuation of the stigma attached to the Bahurupi. Their occupation of seeking alms by providing entertainment is stereotyped. Further, the Bahurupi livelihood is treated as lazy and dishonest by the non-Bahurupi. The entertainment occupation and seeking alms in return has been termed as begging by many villagers whom the Bahurupi visit. Hence, the conceptual framework adopted for this study of stigma in the case of the Bahurupi. Settling of nomads should result in better access to education, health, developmental infrastructure and livelihoods. This has not been the case. The Bahurupi are struggling to continue their traditional livelihood. Their way of adaptation to the changed context has been to diversify their livelihoods. As the study found that the majority continue the traditional livelihood of performers in disguise, the rest have turned to daily wage labour or making and selling evil eye warders. Though Maharashtra has the provision of the constitutional safeguard through reservation for nomads. The Bahurupi stand to gain little from it.

There is another characteristic that is landlessness which potentially influences the economic dimension of the Bahurupi lives. It also depicts their extreme impoverishment and economically weaker position living a sedentary life. Historically, due to a nomadic way of life Bahurupi never owned land and the same was required only during the times of their temporary settlement but that even was for a shorter period. Moving to different places kept Bahurupi away from the need of having permanent land, but now when the shift happened due to various reasons Bahurupi started settling on their traditional routes. Settling in the village requires a need for land which is a primary requirement towards the fulfilment of the basic necessity of shelter and this need was fulfilled by using village pasture land, *gairan*. The present settlements are on *gairan* land but they do not have any ownership title provided to them.

There is a serious repercussion of not owning land for the Bahurupi as they cannot apply for any loans offered by the banks or a state institution (i.e., Vasant Rao Naik Development

Corporation). To avail of a loan, the procedure requires ownership proof of the land as collateral security. Similarly, whatever schemes are framed, they are intended to improve the economic status of the nomadic communities. It was noted that under the development schemes, one of the criteria asked by the moneylending institution is the ownership of land, which Bahurupi do not possess. As a result, Bahurupi cannot apply for any loan or seek assistance from a financial scheme. As a result, due to a lack of financial support, Bahurupi not only move towards more impoverishment but also are extremely vulnerable and live a life of drudgery. These criteria are framed by the sedentary policymakers for the development schemes and they do not benefit the Bahurupi who are landless. These only perpetuate Bahurupi's position as a stranger. The so-called developmental schemes are meant for the poor who own land and have government jobs that can provide collateral security to financial institutions. The meagre monthly income of Bahurupi brings down their purchasing capacity to buy privately owned lands necessary for settling down in a village.

The concept of a stranger significantly sheds light on the various dimensions of the stigma as well. Historically the nomads were considered as a potential threat to the colonial government as for them there was no revenue gain at all from them. On the other hand, the then colonial government broke the traditional chain of supply of resource base to the nomadic community. The colonial government never liked nomadic communities and it went ahead and formulated the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. The colonial government labelled nomadic communities as potential criminals. In doing so village headmen of different villages were also made responsible to exercise their full rights under the Act of 1871. However, till the repeal of the CTA 1871, there was a misuse of the power received under the draconian Act. Strict surveillance was carried out on the movements of nomadic communities. This strict practice of surveillance of the nomadic community had a long-term effect on the behaviour and psychological status of the Bahurupi. They have developed a fear of the sedentary population. At present, Bahurupi *Rayandar's* entertainment performance is no more considered entertainment, and most of the clients identify Bahurupi as a beggar or Bhikshuk, their clients also deny any return for their entertainment service. Bahurupi have received the label of beggar which brings them under the purview of anti-Beggary laws where they become potential criminals, as giving and seeking alms is an offence and is prohibited by the law.

The way out of this quagmire of stigma, marginalisation and resourcelessness is that the Bahurupi are making efforts to politically mobilise themselves. The first indication of this is

the tracing of their relationship to Bahirji Naik, the army chief in Shivaji Maharaj's kingdom. This can be read as an effort by the Bahurupi to make claims of authenticity and legitimacy that they have always been part of Maharashtrian society, even though they have been nomads. The Bahurupi have begun celebrating Bahirji Nayak Jayanti and their participation in Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti are indicators of claiming a stronger social identity and a political assertion as they are contesting elections and have a vote bank in the settled villages. The course these processes may take, cannot be determined at this point in time but will reveal itself in due course.

Suggestions

The life of the Bahurupi in the settlements is difficult. There are various issues which need serious attention to ameliorate the condition of the Bahurupi. There is no census information available on them, and due to the lack of demographic data, their exact numbers and need for fund allocation for particular developmental schemes are difficult to predict. There is a need for perception building among the general public regarding the historical significance of the nomadic service in the village economy. Hence, certain syllabi can be incorporated into the educational materials used in schools and colleges.

At the three tier local self-governments, a special cell should be established which would thoroughly deal with the issues and matters of the nomadic communities. They may focus on issues of not getting caste certificates due to lack of evidence, information dissemination of various developmental schemes meant for nomadic communities, and many requisite documents guidelines should be made available which would direct nomadic communities towards seeking benefits under the schemes.

There is a need for land distribution among the nomadic communities that gives proper land ownership certificates which would help them in terms of collateral securities in getting loans from the banks. There is a need for the involvement of nomadic communities in the national skill development programme of the government which may benefit them in getting the required training suitable for certain employment opportunities in the market.

It is also important to note that in today's competitive world nomads need special care and protection in terms of offering suitable livelihood opportunities to them so that it may improve the economic condition of their families.

Today nomadic communities are on the edge of all kinds of exclusions. The alarming and pathetic conditions of nomadic communities certainly need special attention and support on humanitarian grounds. This is possible by designing special developmental programmes and schemes for the extremely poor nomadic communities in this country. If central and state governments continue to neglect the nomads, they will have nowhere to go and no one to turn to. As the nation is aiming to become an economic and political superpower, it does not augur well if its nomadic denizens remain rootless. These stark contrasts are the biggest challenges for a modern democracy. This thesis is an attempt to uncover the plight of the Bharupi nomadic community by highlighting the Stigma that they face and the processes by which they remain a stranger in their land.

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The Dimensions of Economy and Stigma among the Peripatetic Bahurupi: An Anthropological Study

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RELATIONS BETWEEN CASTE AND NOMADIC COMMUNITIES: AN ECONOMICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction:

Peripatetic or commercial nomadic communities eke out their end means by providing services to various castes in the villages. In the traditional as well as present situation, caste multiplicity with its unique characters permitting certain peripatetic communities to come and perform their services in the villages. It not only permitting them for carrying out services in the villages but guarantying the unwritten assurance of food supply and monetary support. Based on this guaranteed sustenance and assurance many peripatetic became dependent on village caste system. The fulfillment of the basic necessities and material prerequisite of peripatetic communities was always a responsibility of Indian caste system. In the scholarly review caste is always a unit of production which was connected with a particular occupational group, and its diversity in various occupational groups for that matter caste has created agrarian economic model. Various unique features of the Indian caste system can be understood in various scholarly writings in this article.

Keywords: Caste, Peripatetic Community, Customers, Occupation

Caste and Jati

Before going understand the relations between caste and nomadic communities the mere concept of caste, Varna system needs to understood, according to Dumont (1970) in the Varna at the highest level Bramhin (priest), then Shatriyas (Soldiers), and Vaishyas (traders), were considered as Dwija or twice borne¹, at the lower-level Shudras or low castes also known as Dalits or outcastes who were considered as untouchable. There are many social science scientists have also believed on the status of the caste-based hierarchy. For Dumont hierarchy in the caste system is a state of mind and members in the caste system ready accept it. Caste was always connected with occupation and this custom was based on purity and pollution principal. However, caste is considered impure depending upon the Brahmanical hierarchy (Gupta 2005). Dumont has argued that a clean hierarchy allows for economics and politics only surreptitiously, but only in the interstitial levels (Dumont 1988 197), otherwise the hierarchy stands firm as its two poles stand in opposition to each other. At one extreme of this hierarchy is the Brahman (or most pure), and at the other stands the untouchables (who are positively polluting) (Gupta 2005:410). On the other hand, Senart argued that castes should be seen as units, and one should not hurry into arranging them into hierarchy (Cited in Gupta 2005).

Pertaining to caste status Dipankar Gupta (2005) opined that “if traditional scholarship on the caste were to be accepted, then even those, who were considered lower impure in the ritual order, would consider their position to be just and benefiting their status in terms of the hierarchy of purity and pollution” (Gupta 2005:411). Caste is identified as Jati. People often use the term Jati to define their particular group at the same time the term gaon (gram, village) is also used. A village consists of many Jatis some of which have hereditary relations of interdependence, for which the term used after Wisner (1936) is Jajmani (or patron-clients) system. By Jati is meant a community of people whose membership is acquired by birth and is theoretically unalterable, who share a common name, the similar story (or myth) of origin, are expected to hold expertise on and perform a specific occupation or more than one occupation, marry within their community, have face to face relations their co-members, who eat together, and have their own council where matters and disputes pertaining to their groups are discussed and resolved (Srivastava 2016).

It is pertinent to note that “Each Jati is cultural whole: has its own words and marks of intonation in a common shared dialect; its culinary characteristics; own style of dress and preference for a particular type of cloth; distinct homestead, interns of its architectural design, use of space, the kind and number of utensils and the other material cultural objects” (Cited in Srivastava 2016). Caste is a “closed system”, almost immutable, in reality it has allowed both upward and



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downward mobility (Srivastava 2016). However as far as the religion is concern Srivastava (2016) discussed the existence of castes in various religions, primarily Hindu religion have numerous castes whereas caste has also been found among non-Hindu for instance Muslim, Christian, Budhist, Jain, Sikh, Jew and Zorostrrian Jatis (Cited in Srivastava 2016). According to Wiser (1936) “A social organizations such as the Hindu caste system, which gives each occupational group a fixed standing within the community, must have of necessity have certain patterns of behaviour which enable each caste to maintain its own status and satisfactorily engage in relationships with others. Among these behaviour patterns are marriage, social intercourse in matters of eating, drinking, smoking, conventions of untouchability and inapproachability, and service (Jajmani) relationships (1986:430 Cited in Gould).

Occupational Ranking and Marginality:

Bataillon and other have noted that social marginality is expressed in a number of ways, the most common being restriction on inter marriage, restrictions on commensality, restrictions on prolonged physical proximity, etc. With this kind of restrictions and local minority status, marginality also contributes to their overwhelming political weakness, as the same is observed with peripatetic communities (Rao 1987). Rao also noted that “ in many societies the moral or religious ideologies of the customers result in certain professions being despised, even though frequently, these professions are extremely important” (1987:8-9). In accordance with marginality David Nemeth cites examples from Islam that it categorically disapproves professional musicians, leather workers, etc., (Nemeth 1987). Rao noted that in Brahmanic India all crafts were generally considered as polluting and the occupations of many non-pastoral nomadic communities in India were and still are considered unclean, and they themselves are often of low caste.

Rao also noted that, “As a complement to their social and political marginality non-pastoral nomadic communities are often ascribed certain neutrality in their dealings with customers” (Rao 1987:7-10). It was also reported that if nomadic community has to earn a livelihood, then they cannot have disputes openly with village power holders (Berland 2003). There are certain debates on the relations between non-pastoral nomadic communities and sedentary society that argue that settled people do not like nomads and do not trust them (Rao and Casimir 2003). Hayden’s (1987) study on Peripatetic Nandiwalla in Maharashtra reported that after increase in pig sacrifice for Ram Mamma ritual led to low status and prestige of Nandiwalla among village society. Consequently, Nadiwalla were boycotted from accessing village well water.

Specialization in Occupation a Demand by Caste:

Pertaining to economic identity there are different theories that give directions towards how a certain group became nomad. Fuchs (1969) has suggested that, it was the specialization demanded by the caste system that forced certain groups to turn into nomadic way of life, whereas Misra (1969) observed that in Karnataka each Peripatetic group specialized in some activity which also acted as identity marker for the group (cited in Rao and Casimir 2003). There are certain arguments pertaining to how the status of nomadic community is determined. Fisher has argued that the degree of economic periphery decides the caste status of a nomadic community, and not vice versa. However, Rao and Casimir (2003) has stated that the existence of peripatetic professions existed for centuries and we can find it in the sources, such as royal chronicles and literary works, etc. They also emphasize on the need for much more anthropological and historical research. On the other hand, in case of socio-economic interaction, which continued over the centuries between various types of nomads and sedentary groups, Rao and Casimir (2003) have noted that some of this is documented in oral history. They give example of peripatetic Bhopa who sing the exploits of Pabuji, the Rathor Rajput hero, who is credited with introducing a certain camel-breed in Marwar. Interestingly, when we geographically differentiate the non-pastoral nomadic communities, there is difference in the nature of communities, for instance, in India where people owning bears are often of a different caste from people with monkeys, actors, or magicians. But Berland observed in Pakistan that they are all of one Qaum¹- Qalander (Berland 2003:104-124). It means that under the same premises of peripatetic there may be different specializations.

¹ According to Joseph C. Berland (1987) Qaum refers to a “people” or in a broader sense it may specify a nation or tribe.



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There are two studies undertaken in Pakistan by Berland, one on Kanjar and another on Qalandar. The study on Kanjar observed that, “Kanjar gain their livelihood and derive their identity among other groups of nomadic artisans and entertainers from their skills and manufacturers of terracotta toys, papier mache horses and paper flowers” (Berland 1987). In the study of Qalandar community in Pakistan, Berland observed some important features of peripatetic community, such as endogamy, separateness, social mobility, moveable possessions and communities innovative economic strategies, flexible structures, fluid levels of social organization and community values, which are essential elements among the nomads of south waste Asia. He also noted that the loss of mobility, freedom, and honour of peripatetic Qalandar are major sources of shame, dishonor, loss of respect, wellbeing and, ultimately loss of individual, group, community, and even identity of a people (Berland 2003). Berland’s study shows that mobility plays a vital role amongst nomadic community in building and sustaining community bonding and togetherness.

Nomadic Communities Customer Base:

Peripatetic nomads derive most of their subsistence from settled communities (Rao 1987). This also results in dependency of sedentary communities on peripatetics for their needs. In social relations, the significant role is played by frequency and regularity of interaction, very seldom have nomads lived in isolation and enjoyed autonomous economic system (Rao and Casimir 2003). The nature of non-pastoral nomadic communities’ traditional livelihood is of different forms, such as food exchanges, trade, transport services, wars, raiding, slavery, hunting, and large spheres of entertainment. These are socio economic spaces in which regular interaction was taking place between nomadic and sedentary groups (Rao and Casimir 2003). In a study on the Nandiwalla it was observed that they are primarily entertainers who provide entertainment to the sedentary community. The special features of their livelihood are that they have trained bulls and they go place to place, perform such tricks with the bulls as acrobats or fortune tellers and receive money as subsistence (Hayden 1987). In the study on the Humly Khyampa of Nepal it was observed that they perform different tactics to attract new customers. The Khyampa households used to offer villagers a goat to be killed for feasting where the participants in the feast will become customers (Schweizer 2003).

There are different observations with regard to relations pertaining to caste system and nomadism. Rao and Casimir (2003) cite an example on types of peripatetics they observed that in Andhra Pradesh there were twenty three different peripatetic groups visiting a village in Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh which could be classified into two groups – those who offered their goods and services to all the villagers, irrespective of caste, and those who served only specific caste. In another study it was observed that nomads probably do not often have proper Jajmani attachments with villagers, but they do maintain close relations with particular villages which may be seen as an analogous relationship (Hayden 1987). Rao and Casimir (2003) have observed that peripatetics survive through economic interaction with the other communities, like the forest tribes who were systematically linked with the outer world through barter relations with peripatetic traders, such as the Banjara.

Conclusion and Discussion:

It is found that nomadic communities have direct relations with caste in the villages. In fact, nomadic communities have provided their services to the village caste groups and found their livelihood. There are certain areas which need serious scholarly attention such as in changing global situation what are the relations between caste and nomadic communities. After the change is witnessed, nomadic communities have an option of getting settle and have to find new economic opportunities. In fact, it is becoming a challenge for their survival to see new occupational opportunities. Their age-old occupational requirement of staying in one place for few days and again moving to other place for searching end means is not in practice now. On the other had it is important to see the villagers and nomadic communities’ relations in present situation.

At the same time, it is pertinent to note that there is huge migration happening from rural to cities in this situation it is important to see whether nomadic communities are also migrating to the cities and staying besides caste groups which was their traditional customer base.



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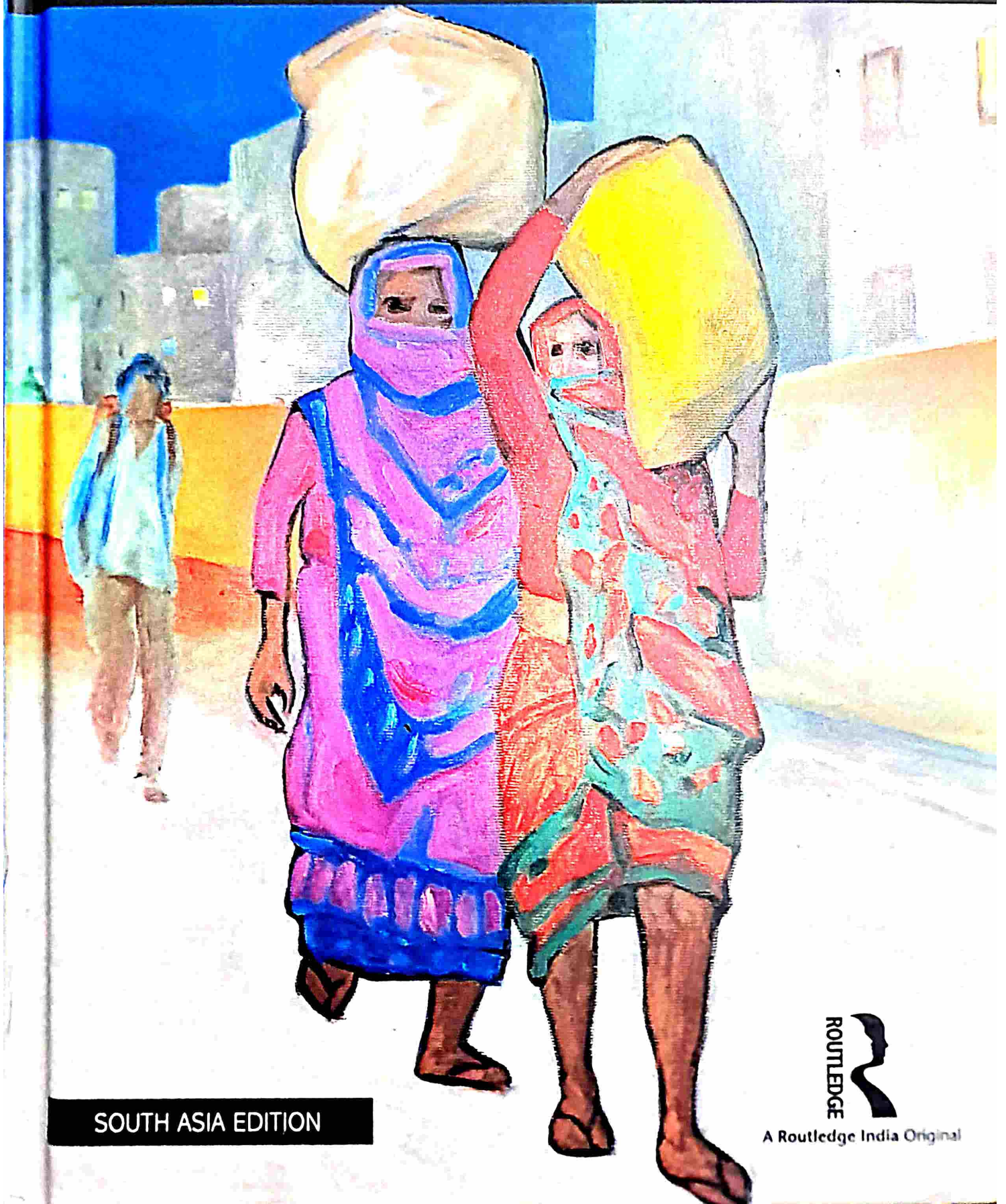
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ⁱ Twice born have a right to wear a sacred thread across their shoulders following a ceremony and become "reborn" ritual is performed by Bramhin based on scriptural guidance. But shudra's and others had no privilege for this ritual.

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13 Struggle for settlement

The case of Nomadic Dombari community in Aurangabad District, Maharashtra

Pravin Shankarrao Khandagale

Nomadic communities can be categorized based on economic criteria such as pastoral, peripatetic, and foragers. There are three categories, which differ from each other- pastoral nomads subsist on their herds, peripatetic nomads are commercial nomads who provide their goods and services to sedentary and other nomadic communities, and foragers are hunters and gatherers (Rao, 1987). The life of a nomadic community is different from that of a sedentary community. The mere identification of nomadic community is their way of nomadic lifestyle – they move from one place to another in search of their livelihood. It has been reported that 7 per cent of India's population is nomadic and there are 500 diverse nomadic communities (Renke, 2008). All nomadic communities are undergoing change due to various factors. It has been noted that due to modernization there is a change in the traditional livelihood of nomadic community (Bokil, 2002). Consequently, nomadic communities are in search of new livelihood, it also involves finding land for settlement which is becoming a necessary requirement for new livelihood. The community called Dombari, which was involved in acrobatic entertainment, is the focus of discussion in this chapter. Dombari established a settlement on their traditional travel route. They lost their traditional acrobatic entertainment and have started seeking new livelihood activities. Since from the time immemorial, nomadic communities are serving sedentary and other nomadic communities. In fact, they have played a significant role in spreading Indian culture through singing, dancing, and other entertainment performance in villages, cities in India. Today, in pursuit of new livelihood, they are facing various challenges. The study attempts to take the case of Dombari as an illustration to highlight their problems pertaining to their settlement, education, and further development.

This chapter is based on the study conducted during February to April 2014, in Kasratwadi (pseudonym) village of Aurangabad District in Maharashtra, and the data were collected in fieldwork tradition using different techniques like participant observation of everyday life, in-depth interviews, life histories, household schedules, and case studies. The data were collected across age and sex.

June 25, 2016

To whom it may concern:

This is to certify that Mr. Pravin S. Khandagale of the University of Hyderabad presented a paper entitled “Acrobatic Entertainment as Traditional Livelihood: A Case of the Peripatetic Dombari Community in India” at the 50th Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast (ASPAC) conference on June 11, 2016. Mr. Khandagale also served as chair of his panel.

The conference was held at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) in Los Angeles, on June 10-12, 2016.

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If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Keiko Hirata
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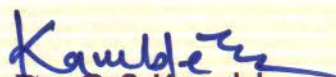
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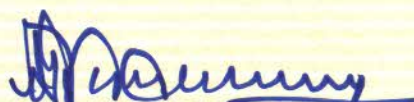
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