

Rural Urban Articulation in a Tea garden Setting of South Assam

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Dichotomous constructions of human society are as old as the social sciences. In this characterization of societal types the two worlds have been viewed as systems with distinctive and often contra- distinctive elements. There are a number of familiar distinctions between 'primitive' and 'civilised' society in terms of number and diversity of the social groups within them. The classifications of Tönnies's '*Gemeinschaft*' and '*Gesellschaft*'; Durkheim's 'Mechanical' and 'Organic' solidarity; Maine's 'Status' and 'Contract'; Spencer's 'Militant' and 'Industrial' societies contribute important dichotomies of social characteristics (Bottomore, 1971). Redfield's scheme of folk-urban continuum was the first systematic and conscious attempt to unfold the inadequacy of the notion of dichotomy calling attention to the fact that societies can be arranged based on their increasing or decreasing complexity and barring structural levels (Redfield, 1956). Redfield scheme defines an ideal type, the folk society, which is the polar opposite of urban society. Folk type society is characterized as "*small, isolated, non-literate and homogenous with a strong sense of group solidarity. The ways of living are conventionalized into that coherent system which is called culture. Behaviour is traditional, spontaneous, uncritical and personal, there is no legislation or habit of experiment of reflection for intellectual ends. Kinship, its relationship and institutions are the type of category of experience and the familial group is unit of action; the sacred prevails over secular; the economy is one of status rather than of the market*" (Redfield 1956). Redfield concerns himself largely with folk pole of the continuum. It is the characteristic of folk society, which receive the descriptive attention. The definitive qualities of the urban type than left as the logically opposite one's to those, which characterize the folk. Urban society is never actually discussed here as an ideal type and is not explicitly named, Redfield usually refers to it as 'modern urbanized' society or some variant of the phrase. Implicit in the use of this pole is an ideal type, however, is the idea that it stands for urbanized society in general and that modern western society represents the specific case most closely approximately the polar category. In his studies of Tepoztlan and Yucatan (Redfield 1956). He concluded that increase of contacts, bringing about heterogeneity and disorganization of culture, constitute one sufficient cause of secularization and individualism. The folk-urban continuum deals with the problems of relative degree of presence or absence of polar characteristics, which vary not only between cultures but also within them. Thus the folk society and urban society can be conceptualized into two polar categories and the real societies fall between them with varying

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degrees of their constituting elements and form a continuum. Sorokin and Zimmerman (1929) revealed the decisive difference between rural and urban worlds on the basis of occupational differences, environmental differences, differences in sizes of the communities, differences in the density of population, differences in the homogeneity and heterogeneity of population, differences of social mobility, the direction of migration, the social differentiation and stratification and the system of social interaction. The dichotomous classification of the societies into two major types- the rural and urban led the sociologists to confine their research studies into two water-tight branches of sociology viz., rural sociology and urban sociology and they conceptualized rural and urban communities as they represent to two polar types and there are no actual linkages between the two. This trend can be observed in earlier studies of village communities in India during the British period and in the decades of 1950's and 1960's after independence (C. Metcalfe 1832; Dube 1955; Opler 1956; Srinivas 1960). A shift can be observed in the field of rural studies in the works of sociologists who emphasized on the processes which bridge the gap between rural and urban communities. Chauhan (1967) observed and identified the areas of rural and urban interaction in his path breaking study *A Rajasthan Village*. This type of trend is also reflected in the work of Srinivas (1955) and Marriot (1955). The empirical study of rural-urban articulations was conducted by Chauhan (1989) in three villages of western Uttar Pradesh. He organized his data along three dimensions of rural urban articulations, namely, cultural dimension, political-administrative dimension and economic dimensions. The present paper examines this conceptual framework in understanding the patterns of rural and urban articulations in a tea garden setting of south Assam focussing on Silcoorie village of Cachar district.

The Village

Silcoorie is a multi-caste village. Inter-caste relations can be seen in terms of the traditional hierarchy, economic inter-dependence and respective roles of various castes in rituals. In Silcoorie, the Brahmins have occupied the highest status, followed by Kayasthas, Vaishyas and Sudras respectively. The area is inhabited by migrated people came from various parts of Bangladesh. As they migrated from different districts of Bangladesh their language pattern, life style, ritual behaviours differ from each other in some respect. Silcoorie, predominantly is inhabited by Kaivarta Samaj (Scheduled Caste) people.

The villagers can be classified into four strata: Brahmins, Kayastha, Baishyas and Sudras. Among the Brahmins, four major caste titles, namely, Chakraborty, Goswami, Bhattacharjee and Acharjee were found. they constitute 4.12 per cent of the total households in the village. Among the Kayastha, 15 caste titles, namely, Roy, Dey, Sarkar, Das Choudhury, Das Gupta, Dutta, Baidya, Nag, Biswas, Raout, Gupta, Mitra, Dhar and Choudhury, were found. They together constitute 8.82 per cent of the total households in the village. Baishyas who have seven caste titles (Paul, Banik, Saha, Kangsa Banik, Modak, Sahaji, Razoar) are 5.68 per cent of the total households in the village. Among them, Sahaji and Razoar are Non-Bangali titles, each having one household in the village. Sudras who constitute the lowest stratum have 14 caste titles (Das, Sutradhar, Chanda, Suklavaidya, Mallik, Debnath, Nath, Tarat, Baishnab, Hazam, Mal, Rikiason, Gour, Kuri) are 83.33 percent of the total households in the village. Of them, Kaivarta who use Das as their title alone constitute 69.61 percent of the total households in the village. Among the Sudras, Hazam, Mal, Rikiason, Gour, and Kuri are Non-Bangali caste titles. Among them, Kuri have highest number with 37 households. Thus, most of the population of the village belong to the lowest stratum of the caste hierarchy in the village.

Cultural Dimension

One of the important dimensions of rural-urban articulations is cultural sphere of life. It may be analysed in terms of religion, education, health and communication.

Religion

One of the important religious institutions in the village is Barambaba Temple. It plays a significant role in the religious life of the people of this area and provides an opportunity to extend the relations beyond the boundary of the village.

Barambaba temple is a very old and well-known temple in the region. It has a great attraction for outside people as well. Everyday a number of urban settlers also visit the temple. The temple is surrounded by a beautiful lake which attracts travelers. It was established by Hindi speaking community of tea garden area who were brought here in later part of nineteenth century by British tea planters from different parts of India. The temple was established at least eighty years ago, when the tea garden started its functioning.. The tea garden authorities called a Brahmin from U.P. to perform the rituals for the migrated population in the tea garden area. He was a young, literate *Vaidic* Brahmin and very soon became popular in the tea garden area and attained the status of a saint. The people were used to follow him. In an early age his soul left his body. The people in the locality started to worship him after his death. The temple was constructed under a 'bat-tree' where a '*asthi*' of his dead body was put by the villagers. In its early stage, it was in a poor condition. But gradually the temple gained popularity and people started to donate money for the construction of the temple. A huge amount of money was donated by the business class for the construction of the temple. The local politicians of the area also contributed in order to gain popularity among the people of the tea garden area. Now a temple complex has emerged at this place with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 8,00,000 with all kinds of facilities.

The Head priest of the temple is permanent. He appoints some junior priests who perform the routine activities in the temple. their salary is paid by the head priest. The head priest belong to Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh but he is permanently settled down here. The junior priests are also drawn from his native place.

The temple is now standing in a very well constructed posture. The tea garden authorities and other local leaders not only donated money in establishment of this religious complex but also help in various ways for the maintenance of the temple. This is also a fact that after the establishment of Assam University the number of urban visitors to the temple has increased in a significant manner as the students, teachers and non-teaching staff of the university pass the temple complex daily while going to the university. The students like to spend some of their time in the temple area. The buses also stop for a while in front of the temple and passengers show their respect in a symbolic manner while remain sitting in the bus and donate some amount of money to the assistant priest of the temple who in turn offer them '*prasad*' through windows. The temple is a major place of worship and a center of the religious activities in the area. It plays a significant role in the religious life of the villagers. It organizes discourses and collective social and religious functions and serves people in performing major rituals of life cycle like marriage, *annaprashan* (first food of child) ceremony, *Upnayan* ceremony (holding of sacred thread by Brahmins etc.). The temple celebrates at various occasions *Yagna*, *Hom*, for the welfare of the society. People from outside visit the temple to fulfill their desire (Mannat) by a performing puja and tying a thread in the '*Bat Tree*' in front of the temple. The priest plays an important role in the celebration of the festivals like *Sivaratri*, *Hanuman Jayanti*, *Barambabas Mela* and *Bhabani Puja*. The head priest of the temple stays at Borjalanga in a house with all modern facilities like, electricity, telephone and other modern equipments and also maintains a car. He usually visits the temple only at special religious occasions. There are a number of priests in the temple complex who perform the religious activities in the temple. This priestly group exercise a powerful influence over the religious life of the rural people.

Occasion like Hanuman Jayanti is celebrated in a big way. At this occasion, whole non-Bengali community of Silcoorie and Silchar town area intermingled. The religious processions start

from various points in Silchar early in the morning. In every procession the role of Ram, Lakshman, Sita and Hanuman are played by the children. They move in a procession in the streets of the town on trucks, cars, vans and the pedestrians and finally arrive at the Silcoorie temple. It is an occasion when rural-urban articulation take place. The temple also plays an important role in the economic life of the village. The temple is at the midway point between Silchar town and Dargakona (where the University is located). Buses, trucks, cars, etc., passes the temple every day. The mela which is organized every year is the only occasion when the people of both the rural and urban areas assemble at this place. Barambaba Mela is a famous fair in Barak Valley. The Barambabar Mela is organised every year in the Rash Purnima Tithi. In this fair people from outside the district also come. The mela starts with the inaugural function. distinguished guest usually a minister cut the red ribbon and delivers lecture at this occasion. It is followed by the lectures of other distinguished personalities of the area present there. The shops come from different towns with products of Ludhiana, U.P., Delhi etc. In mela market shopkeepers come from different places like Hailakandi, Halflong, Tripura, Siliguri, Guwahati and from the nearby towns of the region. The interaction between the villagers and the people coming from other states can also be seen.. The shops have a variety of items like, utensil, clothes, garments, shoes, jewellery shops, different delicious food (rice, sweets, Chowmin etc.). The local people make themselves familiar with these food items during the mela. They also prefer to buy different ornaments which are used by urban people. Girls have the great opportunity to buy latest dresses, ornaments, cosmetics etc. People also come from outside to see fair. Some of them are invited by the local people at this occasion. The invited people are treated as *athithi* (guest). They have an '*athithi shala*' (guest-house) near the temple. As it is the only road to reach university, and Dwarband commuters and other passengers face problem on such occasion. University teachers and students have to go on foot through the mela area. The rural people also observe the behaviour of the students, their language and their dress patterns at this occasion. The temple has extended the facility of a tin shed so that people coming from out side may stay there on auspicious days. *Homs* and *yagnas* are also performed in the temple for welfare of society on a special day (on Purnima) during the mela every year. Siva Ratri, Hanuman Jayanti, Barambabar Mela and Bhabani puja are celebrated in a very colourful way in the temple complex. Sanyasis (saints) from different places also used to visit the temple from time to time. Members of all castes generally worships at Barambaba Temple Complex in Lord Siva, Parvati, Lakshmi Narayan, and Hanumana temples. All members in the locality are exhorted to regularly offer prayers to the deity, a god, or a goddess. Further, prayers and pujas of Lord Satnarayana is also performed. In recent times, the members of the depressed classes like SC community also offer prayers to deities inside the temple. In the temple, a variety of sacred acts can be observed ranging from the sprinkling of some drop of water, scattering of leaves or grains in front of various deities to the offering of animals (as sacrifice of animals like pigeons, goats etc., is not permitted in the temple, some of the people mainly from Bengali community who had a tradition of animal sacrifice bring such animal to the temple and after *puja* leave it free near the temple in the name of God).

The temple has been a place of attraction for the leaders of various political parties in order to attract the people of tea gardens to their side. A number of political leaders like Indira Gandhi, Lokenath Mishra, Gopinath Bardoloi, Pranab Mukherjee, Mahendra Mohan Choudhury visited the temple at the time of their visit to this area and offered prayer in the temple complex. All of them delivered their speeches near the temple complex. Lokenath Mishra inaugurated the 'Mahavishnu Jagya' and stayed here throughout the day. Mrs. Gandhi also worshiped here for the victory of her party in the election. Vishwa Shanti Jagya have also been performed in this temple at different points of time. Vishwa Shanti Maha Jagya was performed by the Acharya Bamadeb Mishra (HOD,

Sanskreet & Veda, Kashi Vidya Pith, Varanasi) along with a Bengali Bhattacharjee Brahmin, 12 Brahmins from Kashi and 45 local priests. Other worships starting from 1942 (Sata Chandi Maha Jagya in 1961 & 1962, Vishnu Jagya in 1995 etc.) are the occasions which are still in the memory of the local people. They also remember the visit of a Brahmin (Kashyaupji) came from Maritius for the Jagya.

The forces of modernization and advancements in communication and transportation have given the fair a new look and its popularity has also been increased over past years. The mela, a traditional institution, has not only religious significance for the people of this area but also adds the elements of modern culture by introducing new items of household consumption to the villagers.

The temple authorities raise Rs. 40 from each shop from the mela ground. The outsiders also donate large amount of money on this occasion. Local political leaders play an important role in managing the activities of mela, and thus create an impression upon the local people. The outside people who stay at this place create new job opportunities for the rural people. People in this area get jobs for three days as shop assistants. They are also exposed to different types of occupations at this occasion and are inspired to engage in such occupations. Although, the temple is owned by non-Bengali community, but at this occasion the Bengali, non-Bengali and even Muslims also participate in the activities of mela with equal enthusiasm. Different types of shops attracts the local people.

Festivals

The calender of the festivals celebrated by the villagers of Silcoorie Camp is given below:

Table 1 : Festivals Celebrated in Silcoorie

Months	Festivals
Baishakh (April-May)	Bengali New year
Jaistha (May-June)	Akshay Tritiya
Asharh (June-July)	Jamai Shasthi
Sravan (July-Aug.)	Rath Yatra.
	Nag-Panchami
	(Manasa Puja)
	Jhulan Yatra
Vadro (Aug.-Sept.)	Viswakarma Puja
Asshin (Sept-Oct.)	Durga Puja
	Vijya Dashmi
	Lakshmi Puja
Kartik (Oct.-Nov.)	Kali Puja (Deepavali)
	Bhatri-Dwitiya (Bhai-Phota)
Agrahayan (Nov.-Dec.)	Jagadhatri Puja
Paush (Dec.-Jan.)	Paush-Sankranti
Magh (Jan.-Feb.)	Saraswati Puja
Falgun (Feb.-March)	Shiv-ratri
	DoI-Yatra (Holi)
Chaitra (March-April)	Charak Puja
	Chaitra Sankranti

Education

In Silcoorie there are three school, two Lower Primary Schools and one M.E. School. L.P. Schools are upto 4th standard. Durgabari L.P. School has two female and one male teacher with about 50 students in every class (Chakma Tilla). While 914 No. Silcoorie L.P., School has three teachers. One female teacher and one male teacher commute from Silchar while one female teacher comes from Chota Jalenga. In M.E school i.e., Lakshmi Narayan M.E.School has 9 male and 2 female teachers are local. One female science teacher commutes from Silchar. The strength of the students in a class is between 30-40. As there is no school after seventh standard here the students go outside for further education. They have the two options for further studies either to join Vorachai High School, or Irongmara High School. Both are located within the radius of five kilometers.

Management of the School

The school is managed by a school committee consists of a president, a secretary, one teacher's representative, and two guardian representatives and an ex-officio member, The ME school was established at 1971 with one room. In 1985, the school was rebuilt from the cyclone damage fund and the grants received from DRDA under NREP and from G.P for the construction and maintainance of school building. They have constructed toilets in the school very recently from the funds collected from the villagers. The school building is also used for conducting meetings and cultural programmes etc.by the villagers during holidays.

In the M. E. School, there are four graduate teachers and five non graduate teachers while in L.P. School there is only one graduate teacher. All other teachers are matric pass. In the village, four students have passed out graduate level examination and thirty students have passed out High School and H.S.L.C examination. In the Lower Primary School Building one Music School has also been opened very recently. The music classes are held on every Sunday. A music teacher used to come from the district town to take classes particularly for classical music. The Music School is affiliated with the Bhatkhande University, Lucknow for graduate level course in classical music and with the the Bangiya Parisad University of Calcutta for other graduate and upper graduate level courses. The Rajib Gandhi Open Institute has opened up a study center under CAPART scheme mainly for the children of fisherman community.

In the local school, the majority of the students belong to the schedule castes community. But at the level of seventh and tenth standard the drop out children number is highest among the scheduled castes community students because of the poor economic condition of their parents. The members of higher castes, however, send their children to the district town further education.

The school observes the occasions like the birth anniversary of Rabindra Nath Tagor, Republic day, Independence day, Saradiya Utsab, Saraswati Puja etc. The shool also organizes cultural programmes and competitions for the children.

Health

Traditionally, the villagers were used to take care of their health through the indegenious systems of medicine – Homeopathic & Ayurvedic. But recently some Registered Medical Practitioners (RMP) have started their practice in the village. Ram Krishna Mission has also exteded its health services to the villagers through a mobile medical unit. The state government has opened a Health Sub-centre in 1987 for family planning by deputing two nurses visiting the village twice a week for routine check up of cases of maternity & child care from the district town. It created the scope of opening some pharmacies in the village which provide a vital link between the villagers and personnels of modern system of medicine. Medical representatives visit these pharmacies regularly from the district town. The nurses of the health sub-centre visits the village regularly but the doctor is seen very rarely in the centre. In the locality now a sort of competition among the homeopathic and

allopathic self proclaimed medical practitioners can be seen. In addition, the doctors of the Ramakrishna Seva Unit enables the people to keep contacts with the professionals both at the district and the state levels under certain circumstances. The local Homeopathic doctor T. Das has been awarded by the District authorities as one of the best practitioners of the area with a silver medal and a certificate. He used to visit various places of India and tries to collect the best medicines from various Homeopathic stores of the country. The medical college is about ten kilometer away from the village. The local residents prefer to go for their check up in the medical college. The wealthy people of the village, however, prefer to go in the private nursing homes instead of medical college. Some people prefer to visit a private practitioner in the district town. The anganwadi workers distribute bread, *chana* (gram) in their centre. At present two female anganwadi workers are performing this task. Both are paid a sum of Rs. 400 per month for this job. Both the workers are graduate, they have joined this job as they could not get any other job. The facility for medical care to the animals is extended through *Bistrita Goan Unnaon Parikalpona* by the Assam Govt. The Veterinary personnels visit their center regularly. A doctor and a Veterinary assistant is there to look after the centre. The doctor comes from the district town twice a week. The local people visit the centre with their pat animals suffering from various diseases.

Communication

The village is coming out in contact with the modern world through newspapers, radio and television. Modern forces enter the village and villagers get linked to the neighbouring urban center in an increasing manner with the construction of metalled road and good availability of means of transportation. Newspapers reach the villagers daily but only some literate people subscribe the paper. Earlier local people were used to subscribe newspapers published from Calcutta, namely, *Ananda Bazar*, *Jugantar*, *Ajkal*, etc. But now local newspapers like, *Sonar Kachar*, *Dainik Jugasankha* are also attracting the villagers. Only one high school teacher subscribes *The Telegraph* which usually reaches one day after its publication.

Among the fifty houses conncted with electricity line, fifteen families own both transistor and television sets. Eighteen families have telephone sets. The (transitor) radio act as principal mass medium for the villagers. Silchar Radio station situated in the district town relay 12 hours schedule programme entailing local news items, agricultural programme, and music like non-filmy and filmy funda. The youth participate in the programmes like -Hello Gitmala, Surer- Vela, and also express their views and choices of different programmes through letters. They also have great interest in Hindi film songs and tune Nepal, Guwahati, Calcutta stations on their radio sets. The literate people often tune their radio sets to radio stations like B.B.C, Voice of Americas (Bengali Programme), Bangladesh and Calcutta's news items and discussion based programme transmitted at night only. However, the local Akashbani Silchar Kendra and Doordarshan Silchar are quite popular among the vilagers. The local news broadcasted twice (in the morning and in the evening) and programmes based on agricultual information are popular among the villagers. The artists from the village also participate in folk-song programmes of local radio and T.V. centre located at the district town. The villagers are regular viewers of the pr4ogrammes like *Kajer Khobar*, *Krishi Barta* and other youth progrmme like *Juba-Jagaat*, *Hello Campus* and agricultural programme like *Gram Jagat* relayed from the Silchar T.V. Centre between 6 p.m.to 8 p.m.programme schedule. The young generation lean more towards to Hindi pop-song and western song and sports like footbal (to see World Cup some people purchased T.V.,set), cricket and have keen interest in western culture based serials and films. While, elderly persons prefer to watch religious and traditional serials. But, due to frequent power failures they face problems in watching television programmes.

After setting up of Telephone Exchange at Silcoorie, thenumber of telephone connection has increased. But, for payment of telephone bills, they have to go district town. For the payment

of Electricity Bill also they have to go to Medical College Electricity Board in the district town. So, any defect in the electric line they have to contact the main office which is again situated in the district town.

The patterns of rural-urban articulation in cultural sphere of life of the villagers of Silcoorie Camp may now be summarised as follows:

1. The Barambaba Temple complex is one of the centres where rural-urban articulations take place. Barambaba's temple has great significance in the religious life of the villages. The temple celebrates various religious activities throughout the year. Sivaratri, Hanuman Jayanti, Mela, Bhabani Puja, rituals like marriage, upanayan etc all are organised by the temple. Mela provides an occasion for rural-urban articulations every year by the Mela Committee near the temple complex.
2. The temple play an important role in the economic life of the village as it at the midway point between Silchar and Dargakona where university is located. The mela play an important role in the economic life of the village as it is the when lots of local people take part in the mela market shops, local people get employment in different shops. The shopkeepers come from various part of North-East India and have variety of items. People also come from outside to see fair. So, this is the great occasion when rural urban people intermingled.
3. Health problems in Silcoorie are taken care of by Homeopathic & Ayurvedic medical practioners. There are four pharmacy and two allopathic self proclaimed doctors (RMP) and three Homeopathic /Ayurvedic doctors have a degree in medicine. The village is visited regularly by a team of health workers comes from the district town in a medical van offered by Ramkrishna Seva Samiti. The doctors check up the patients and distribute free medicine. The van comes once every week. Check up of 40-50 patients by doctors. One vatenary dispensary is also located near the village to look after the health of the pet animals.
4. The village has three schools, two are L.P. school and one is M.E. School. The village has entered into links with other centre for sending students to higher centre. Modern forces enter the village through the extension of educational institutions in the area. Modern system of education provides villagers get linked to the neighboring urban centre through metalled road. After the set up of Assam University the communication gap with the area is reduced as education of metalled road and transport facilities have improved. The management of local school is done by school committee of their own.

Thus, it can be concluded that rural-urban articulation has increased in recent past in the cultural life of the people. They depend more and more on the urban areas to fulfil their cultural needs. Religious activities, ritual of life cycle, celebration of fairs and festivals demands an increase interaction with urban areas. For health, communication and education they increasingly depend on urban people and adopt elements of urban culture in their style of life. One sub-post office is established where people deposit their savings. The post office personnel who are coming from district town advice the local rural people to deposit. People in this area also deposit their money in nationalised Banks located in the town. One telephone Exchange has changed the life of rural people to some extent. They can also take the telephone in reasonable price in their requirement place.

Economic Dimension

The traditional economy of a village is generally based on agriculture. The village under study is a typical one mainly inhabited by those displaced from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and rehabilitated at this place in a refugee camp but later on settled permanently when a piece of cultivable land was granted each displaced family. This is the reason why it

called *Silcoorie Camp* as provides it a distinct identity in Silcoorie Tea Garden area is which mainly inhabited by tea garden labourers. Most of the people in the village belong to Bangali community. The majority of the people are fishermen living in a stagnant economic condition and struggling very hard for their survival.

People in Silcoorie are largely engaged in business activities. The fishermen are in majority and they constitute dominant caste of the village. They are further divided into two groups (1) those who sell dry fishes and (2) those who sell fresh fishes. The area has different kinds of fisheries. Some wealthy fishermen have their own fishery while the others take it from the farmers whose cultivated land is submerged in the water during the rainy season. However, in the winter season when it is dried off, it is used for cultivation of paddy by the farmers.

The whole area has a hillock type structures. In the lower side of these hillocks are some patches of plain land. The plain land is used for the cultivation of paddy, but in a very limited area. In majority of cases, the land owners cultivate the land by themselves. A number of villagers in this area are wage earners. They work in the fields of farmers of the neighbouring villages. They go by bus/truck for work and come back late in the evening.

Table 2 : Economic Activities of the Villagers in Different Seasons

Class	Seasons		
	Rainy	Summer	Winter
Fisherman	Fish catching & selling in local market	Fish catching & purchasing from district town market and selling in streets as hawkers	Purchasing and selling fish in the district town
Non-fisherman Agriculturists	Skilled Semi skilled & unskilled workers	Agriculture & wage labourer	Agriculture & wage labourer
Landless families	Wage labourers	wage labourers	wage labourers
Other families	business & other activities	business & other activities	business & other activities

They sell the 'Seddha Chawal' in the district town market in the winter season. As they are marginal farmers, they always hunt for a better job. They have a large chulha in their courtyard which they made in the winter season in open air. They boiled their paddy in a large vessel on this chulha and after cooling it they processed it in a local rice mill. Later on, they sell this boiled rice in the district town.

Land situated in a large plain is mainly used for paddy cultivation. People are using some how modern power tiller machine. The local people usually buy power tiller machine which provides subsidy to SC farmers from Assam Agro-industries Development Corporation. Some farmers have purchased the machine from Guwahati which costs at least 1 lac 20 thousand. Farmers also apply

for loan in the Nationalised Bank in the district town for the power tiller machine. Some of the farmers take power tiller on rental basis. As the machine is not available in the local market they go to state capital to purchase the machine. The female folks also work in the paddy fields. The agricultural labourer have their large vessels for boiling rice. In the district town in Agriculture Department Office, some specialists provide them consultancy to use better seeds and insecticides and pesticides in order to take care before attack of different insects. Farmers are also aware about the under loans, under different scheme and programme offered by the govt. They always try to take help from such plans and programmes offered by the govt. They contact the Bank officers through some intermediaries to take loans. Traditionally, cultivators do not know how to cultivate the land scientifically, they follow the method of tilling the land with a plough and a pair of oxen. But with the exposure to modern media of mass communication like T.V., Radio, improved rail-road communication in the area, and advancement in production capacity in neighbouring villages and the helping attitude of the district town agricultural offices, people are now more conscious about their economic condition and some of the traditional cultivators are shifting to some other occupations because of huge loss in cultivation activity. Women have started to learn handicrafts work, such as spinning, weaving, to earn some money and to supplement their income. The cultivators are now getting more facilities to grow more food. All India Radio broadcast a programme for the cultivators, it is called 'Krishi Kathar Asar'. It is very useful for the cultivators as they learn many things about modern methods of cultivation. The farmer used to send their query to the programme organisers, and in the programme one representative from the farmer group also participate in the programme. It helps them resolve their problems.

In the rainy season, every member of the family help in fish catching. In rainy season water is logged in low lying areas which provide them ample scope for fishing. They have indigenous fishing equipments which can be settled even in a narrow drainage system. The fishing is also done even by a little boy or girl of 4 to 5 years of age. They carry tiny fishes in 2/3 big vessels by bus or truck either to Silchar or to a neighbouring town. They usually sell these tiny fishes in big fisheries or to owners of small ponds in Silchar.

Chatla Lake is the place where fishermen catch fishes in the rainy season. But in the winter season when chatla dries off, the fishermen have to go for alternative economic pursuits. Usually, during the lean season, they buy fishes from district market and sell it in the town. In the district market the fishes are imported from Karimganj, Andhra Pradesh and even from Bangladesh. In the district town people prefer to purchase fresh fishes from these local fish sellers. The fish sellers go to district town daily for selling their fishes. Every fish seller has a net and different type of fishing equipments. They use these equipments to catch fishes in different seasons. A number of villagers work as street hawker in the district town.

As street hawker they sell many articles to urban settlers at their door step and save urban settlers from the trouble of going to a market or shop. Thus, they render good services to urban citizens. These hawkers sell a variety of articles such as newspaper, vegetables, fruits, eggs, sweets, other confectioneries, chops, chanachur, fried ground nuts, ghoognee, ice cream etc. They also sell clothes, garments, bed sheets, napkins, handkerchiefs, towels etc. Some hawkers sell utensil of plastic, brass, aluminum and stainless steel. Others sell toys and balloons for children. Newspapers, vegetables, fruit, bread, biscuit etc., are generally sold in the morning. Drapers and hawkers of utensils generally go in the noon. Where as the hawkers of chanachur, ghoognee, chops, fried ground nuts, ice cream etc. are great attraction for the school and college students and their customers are generally young boys and girls. These hawkers go everyday to urban areas by bus early in the morning to sell their products. Daily hawkers also develop relations with the urban people as they visit there everyday or twice or thrice in a week.

They also rear cows to supply milk in urban areas. About ten to fifteen families in Silcoorie have immigrated from Silchar and settled down when they lost every thing in their business and trying again to start some business. One resident of Silcoorie had left for Mizoram with a thrust to earn huge money and succeeded. Now, he sends money every month to his family living in Silcoorie.

One co-operative society was established in 1980 by Silcoorie G. P. located near R. E. C. It is managed by a managing committee whose office bearers are elected by its members. People buy commodities like rice, sugar, kerosene at reasonable price.

In Silcoorie, there is fair price shop whose dealerships is given by Food & Civil Supply Department, Silchar. They are given essential commodities at a controlled rate fixed by government. The officers of the Food & Civil Supply Department visit inspect the shop periodically.

Recently a resident of Silcoorie has started a project, namely, Manju Steel Engineering, in partnership of his friend who is settled in district town. They are planning to establish an utensil equipment factory under this project. This will provide employment to the local people. They are trying to get loan from United Bank. But they are not very confident about the success of the project.

There are some families of Dholi community who earn their livelihood mainly by beating drums particularly at the occasions of marriage, first rice ceremony of the child, upanayan etc. They have also go to district town to render their services to urban settlers. In the off-season they go to the town in the search of some other jobs.

The farmers require credit not only for agricultural operation but also for other purposes. The financial requirements of the farmers can be classified on the basis of the purpose and period of loans, for example, the farmers require funds for short periods of less than 15 months for the purpose of purchasing seeds, fertilizers, fodder, and for domestic purposes. They require medium term credit for a period ranging between 15 months to 5 years for purchasing cattles and agricultural implements etc.

Money lenders - There are two types of money lenders. In the first category are those people who combine farming with money lending. They are primarily agriculturalists but they also carry money lending activity as a subsidiary occupation. In the second category are professional money lenders who are fully engaged in money lending activities. These two types of money lenders occupied an important place in the rural finance in the past, but their business has now declined as their terms and conditions of lending money have been of exploitative nature. Their number is not more than 10 in the village.

Traders - Some traders also advance money to the farmers on the condition that the borrower must sell his produce to them after the harvest. This source of finance is particularly important in connection with cash crops like tobacco and battlenut. This type of lenders also charge a very high rate of interest and also adopt some malpractices to cheat the borrowers. About 7 such persons are operating in Silcoorie. The importance of such traders has also been declined over the years.

Relative and friends- This is an important source of rural credit as people take loans in kind from their relatives as well as in cash in order to tide over temporary difficulties. This carry usually no interest. (villagers are fond of such practises).

Public Sector Financial Institutions - The government has extended the facility of different kinds of loans to the villagers under various schemes through a number of financial institutions such as banks, cooperative societies etc. in the recent past. It has been an important source of rural finance for short-term as well as for long-term loans at a low rate of interest. The conditions of repayment are also easy.

Co-operatives- This is the cheapest and the best source of rural finance. Co-operative credit societies are organized in rural areas to provide credit for the development of rural sector. Since the

rate of interest is very low, conditions of repayment are also easy and loans are easily available to meet the credit needs of the villagers. The importance of this source of credit is increasing day by day.

Banks- Nationalised banks are also source of credit in the village. UCO Bank, United Bank and other banks have extended credit to the rural people of the area in recent past. It has now one of the popular source of taking loans in the village.

The region has a post office. The people deposit money under saving scheme in the post office which they earlier lost in playing cards etc. Now, they save their money for future need. There is no bank in the village. This sub-post office is established just three years ago on the demand of the people. The office staff in the post office is local except the post master who commutes from Silchar. After the commencement of post office in Silcoorie, the habit of poor people has changed. The elites of the society have good amount of money in the post office. They also have their account in Nationalised Bank in the district town.

Occupation

Traditional occupational structure continues to exist to a great extent along with the emergent economic role structure. The present occupational structure in the Silcoorie is a conglomeration of the two structure, e.g., Caste based and non-caste based. Today, the majority of the castes do not exclusively carryout either the traditional occupations or the non-caste based occupations. However, as the land is inhabited by immigrant people of different castes and the majority of the people are from the SC community of Kaivarta Samaj, they have not discarded their traditional occupation of fish catching and selling.

The upper castes have adopted new secular occupations more than the lower castes. The land does not provide employment to all the members who were in the traditional occupations and consequently a few of them had to seek alternatives either in the village or outside it. Some persons are willing to discard the traditional occupations but did not find suitable remunerative jobs and therefore continue to their traditional occupations.

The prestigious occupations are being virtually monopolized by the privileged castes. This is because the earlier privileged positions of the upper castes enable them to acquire the new bases of higher social position. But one interesting thing is that in this area the non-privileged castes of SC community are able to acquire the new bases of prestige and power as they are numerically powerful, they were able to hold the office of the Panch and the Sar-Panch. But, non-privileged castes are unable to afford the cost of acquiring higher education and therefore were not able to move to white collar jobs.

The data presented in table show that among the lower castes the occupational mobility is restricted to the small tea shop/ pan shop (8), shop assistants (21), Grocery shop (7), Peon (3), postmen (2) and police/armymen (2). In case of the intermediate castes (Baishyas) the range of mobility has gone to the white collar jobs such as teaching (11) and clerical jobs (2). However, in case of upper castes (Brahmins and Kayasthas) the occupational mobility is confined to white While, growth of economic dependency upon the urban sector claims to identify those factors crucial for economic development such as achievement motivation and a decline in the significance of intended family relationship. Substantial economic growth cannot occur without changes in the level of capital investment and market demand, technology. In the modern days, the society develops an forward looking attitudes and healthy economic motivation is found in the desire of some people. So, people are now changing their attitude and where credit goes to mass media which changes the mind of the people. The development of economic condition of a particular family effects political life & it suggests that policies of collar and clean jobs. Thus the patterns of occupational mobility in the village reflects that the basic ethos of the caste have been maintained by the upper caste

people. The intermediate castes and lower caste could not move very far in the occupational ladder as they did not have sufficient economic resources and lack of education. However, they were able to capture power resources being in the majority in the village.

Table 5 : Caste and Occupational Mobility

Occupation	Upper Castes	Middle Order Castes	Lower Castes
Ex-govt. officer	04	-	-
Teacher	06	11	-
Clerk	03	02	-
Contractor	02	-	-
Police / armyman	-	-	02
Postman	-	-	02
Bus conductor	-	-	03
Patwari	02	-	-
Peon	-	04	03
Priest	05	-	-
Baidya	02	-	-
Grossery	-	-	07
Shop assistant	-	08	21
Fishseller	-	-	350
Goldsmith & Carpenter	-	03	-
Barbar	-	-	03
Tea Shop/ Panshop	-	02	08
Daily Labour & hawker	-	05	100
Total	24	35	499

The majority people are fishermen and living in a stagnant economic condition struggling with daily labour of catching fish and selling it. The fishermen community are dominant group in the locality. Chatlalake is the place where fishermen catch fishes in summer but in winter season when it is driven off they have to go for some alternative pursuit. Agriculture is done by a small group (1%). In plain areas people cultivate paddy, but in a very limited area. The female member of the family also participate in cultivation. The area mainly produces 'Boiled Rice' (Seddha Chawal) and sell it in district town. Cultivators rarely use modern equipment in cultivation because majority of them are poor. A number of villagers work as street hawkers in the distinct towns. Street hawker sell many articles to urban settler's door for sale, and save urban settler's trouble of going to a market or shop, these hawkers sell varieties of articles like newspaper, vegetables, fruit, bread, biscuit etc. The street hawkers are poor economically and they do very hard work throughout the old day to earn their bread.

Near Silcoorie, there is a Co-operative society where, commodities like rice, sugar, kerosene are available at a reasonable price. One steel manufacturing factory is going to start where local people will be given first preference for employment.

Traditional occupational structure continues to exist to a great extent along with the emergent modern occupational structure. The land is inhabited by immigrant people of different castes. The majority among them belong to the SC community of Kaivarita Samaj have not discarded their traditional occupation of fish catching and selling. The present occupational structure is

a conglomeration of caste-based, and non-caste based occupations. The upper castes have adopted newer occupations more than the lower castes. The land does not provide employment to all the members consequently, a few of them had to seek alternatives either in the village or outside it. The prestigious occupations are being virtually monopolised by the privileged castes such as Brahmin, or Kayastha. This is because the earlier privileged positions of the upper castes enable them to acquire the new bases of higher social position. However, the non-privileged castes of SC Community are also able to acquire the new bases of prestige and power of formal offices like the Panch and the Sar Panch in the Gaon Panchayat.

Political Dimension

Silcoorie is a multi-caste village. The members of different castes stay together and participate in various activities. Inter-caste relations can be seen in terms of the traditional hierarchy, economic interdependence and respective roles of various castes in rituals. After the partition in 1947, large number of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan had accommodated in the camps like Silcoorie. They came here from different districts of Bangladesh. Therefore, their language, life style patterns, ritual behaviour differ from each other in many respect.

Silcoorie camp has population of about 3, 600. The area is under Bhorachai Gaon Panchayat. The land was acquired by the government by 1964 and it was Rehabilitated in 1975. The people of this area have suffered with various problem in initial phase. The village has great importance politically from the beginning. As its inhabitants are refugee, so different political leaders always promise to solve their problem during their election campaign for national, state and local level Panchayat Elections. The village is located in tea garden area where a number of tea garden labourer have settled in the mid part of nineteenth century. These labourers are very much used to receive cash money, liquor etc. from the political leaders at the time of political campaigning for their election. Every party tries to influence the people in their favour.

The region is very conscious about the ups and downs in national politics. The elites of literate class only show interest in national and regional politics. They are well informed about the nation's positions and activities in international field. The people are very much aware about Pakistan's and America's activities in the continent particularly in Afghanistan. People are eager to choose right person and right party in the election. The people have been exposed to politics and political leaders from the very beginning as a number of giant political figures visited the place since independence. Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi visited the place twice before election while Indira Gandhi visited the place and delivered her speech in front of the villagers. It is still remembered by the older generation of the village. People of educated family remember her speech, and the poor illiterate remember her beautiful posture like goddess, her dress-up is a unforgettable memory in their mind.

As it is at the midway of University and Hailakandi road, various renowned persons visited through this place. The visits of Governor of Assam and Chief Minister of Assam are in the sweet memory of the villagers. Whereas local leaders like Santos Mohan Deb (Ex-Steel Minister and seating M. P.), Gautam Roy (State Sports Minister), Dinesh Prasad Goala (Ex-P.H.E. Minister), Kabindra Purkayasta (Ex-Telecome Minister), Said-ul-alam Laskar (Minister of Rural Development) frequently visited the village at different occasions particularly at the time of election.

The Panchayat elections are of specific importance in the region for the political leadership of the region. Each election creates great enthusiasm in everybody. People of different castes, different languages living in this region. There is great tension in election period and considerations based on caste, linguistic identity and religion make the selection of the candidate a problem for the people as well as for the political leadership of different political parties and create tension

among the people. The Bengali and non-Bengali group people are always eager for the nomination of the candidate of their choice.

The local elites who are active and have done some work or have helping attitude towards people are the first choice of the people in election. One businessman came from Bangladesh as a refugee was in very poor condition but was educated upto school level. People of his community (Kaivarta) approached him at the time of need and because of his helping attitude he became popular in the region and respected by the people of every age group. The people of his community decided to select him as a member of G.P. He became president of G.P. in the next election.

The emergence of the Panchayats and the electoral process with the establishment of adult franchise in the region has started a conflict of parties in the local leaders. The party member in the region keeps special attention in the main office of party, which is situated in district town. The persons who are accepted by people as political elite have to do some work to fulfill peoples' desire. They meet the state level and national level leaders in the district town and in the state capital to inform about the burning problems of the locality. The employment problem is one of these problems. Unemployed youth contact local level politicians for getting a government job. These local leaders act as an intermediary between the job seeker and the politicians who have the power to appoint in government jobs. The people believe that without economic transactions it is not possible to get a government job in the state of Assam.

Local Panchayat leaders play the role of a distinguishing member in the community. He has some extra-ordinary power and capacity to influence the people in the region. People obey his directions. People require support and help of the panchayat leaders in solving their personal and impersonal problems.

The G.P. office is looked after by an official who visit the village twice a week. The local people seek information about planning and policies from the media like radio mainly and through T.V. programmes. They come to know about the Prime-Minister Sadak-Yojana, Indira Avas Yojana, about water policies etc. They also know about different schemes of the family planning programme and apply for such programmes in the G.P. Office.

As the Kaivarta Samaj is numerically powerful they are able to elect their candidate in panchayat election. Silcoorie is a sensitive booth centre. Where conflicts between different factions leads to violence during the election and sometimes even policemen are not capable of control the situation and the musclemen capture the voting booth in election.

The Silcoorie is under Ghoongur police station which is located in the district town. The people of the locality have to inform at check post in district town whenever, they require the help of the police. However, during the fair of Baram baba a temporary police check post is created there for three days and about ten policemen are deployed to control law and order situation in the Mela area. Police commissioner and police officers visit the mela at the time of its inauguration and in problematic circumstances. In Silcoorie the water supply scheme was inaugurated by Utpal Dutta, Minister P.H.E. on 11-12-2000. It was most urgent requirement of the region.

Thus, Silcoorie has great importance in the eyes of the politicians and they visit the area regularly in order to keep touch with the local level leaders and the people. The villagers also visit them at the time of need. For administrative purpose they go to the district level officials and they also visit the village time to time. thus the village has high level of political articulation.

Political and Administrative Dimension deals with the conscious political activities of the villagers. The village comes under Bhorachai Gaon Panchayat. The land for this village was acquired by Govt. in 1964, and it was rehabilitated in 1975 by migrated populations. The people of this area have suffered with various problems.

The nation's great political leaders visited the place like Indira Gandhi and other state ministers visit regularly in the time of election campaigning. The political leaders always promise to solve their problem at the time of election campaigning.

The patterns of leadership can be observed at the time of Panchayat election. During the election period great tension prevailed as selection among the villagers of candidate is a problem as there are different linguistic groups in the area.

In administration of the village Panchayat leaders are playing vital role. They have some extra ordinary power and capacity in the region. There are some political elites in the village whose commands is respected by the people obey them and take necessary suggestion from them. The fishermen community is highest in numbers therefore they have the dominant position in political activities. Casting vote to one's own caste and the capability of leadership both are important in the voting. The area is under Ghoongur Police Station in the district town and it takes about half-an-hour to reach by bus.

Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that typically growth of population, urbanisation and education changed the rural style of life. The impact of modern urban society over rural society like silcoorie has changed the mind of rural poor people. The poor people also want to educate their children, and want to get some good job and have desire to go outside for service. The impact of under development and under employment have paralysed the situation and young generation is eager to move to urban areas for better livelihood. The contact of urban and rural society in daily life has raised the level of skill in rural area and is encouraging social mobility.

The politics is playing vital role as it is not limited to what goes on in government, it involves all situations in which one individual or group exercises power over others. To exercise power is to have at one's disposal some resources by which one can control or coerce others, where power may be derived from organisational strength and a monopoly of coercive force value system. Education is given great importance in the locality after the setting up of Assam University. Parents budget reflected consciousness to educate the children. Rural youth now understand the importance of education as it is the provider of basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy, & the most specialised technical knowledge that modern method of production and management demand. In addition, the reward system that school structure offers in educational careers to encourage a strong commitment towards self discipline, hard work and achievement attitudes. Specific direction of education are tried into the occupational demands which is understood by new generation.

In the locality the major cause of increase in population is the significant improvement in health care which has raised life expectancy considerably. Birth rates have not appreciably declined which results the new generation is under nourishment, deprivation on and absolute poverty. However, lack of comparable industrial and rural growth in the locality has turned the matters worse, especially for the young who comprise ever larger dependent section of society after an increase in the degree of rural-urban articulation. So at last we can say, the wider connections of the rural area to the urban economy and polity have loosen the traditional milieu of hierarchical relations to a more open urban setting of competitive ethos. The modes of community life and their out look which derive from the differences in the nature of occupations and social interaction, number and nature of social groups as well as the concentration of population can be seen. The rural areas also now depend on a city's complex economic system, consequently their work is specialised, and have hope of promotion of developmental activities.

Education is a crucial factor for development since it promotes economic growth and enable socialisation of new members into dominant political & cultural tion or at least a change of occupation. One's role in social life is no more fixed, so so mobility comes up. Rural society like Silcoorie also

like urban dweller flourish on elaborate division of labour and specialisation. Religious and ritual activities have cut short people are no more self-sufficient. They depend more on urban areas for every activities in life.

So, all this factors, in turn generally result in divergent group norms and values and conflicting social roles. so mobility comes up. Rural society like Silcoorie also like urban dweller flourish on elaborate division of labour and specialisation. Religious and ritual activities have cut short people are no more self-sufficient. They depend more on urban areas for every activities in life. So, all this factors, in turn generally result in divergent group norms and values and conflicting social roles are present.

Srinivas examined the spread of classical, great traditions of the literati and the little traditions of the illiterate folk and spread of these traditions from the national to the regional and then the local levels (1952). He visualized how the upper strata could provide a model of behavior along ritual dimensions to be emulated at lower levels through a process called *sanskritisation* (1956). In his opinion this usually takes place when there is either an improvement in the economic or political position of the group concerned from its contact with a source of the Great Tradition. Srinivas deals with this contemporary phenomenon of *sanskritisation* and its impact on cultural change. It differs from the historical context of *sanskritisation* in the sense that when a caste or sub-caste attempts to move upward in the village 'local hierarchy' it very often faces opposition by the dominant castes in the village or region. The studies show that the concepts like *parochialisation* and *universalisation* have been used to locate the downward and upward movements of influences from the great traditions (Marriott 1955). Marriott (1955) looked into the form which the devolution of the trait underwent in the process he called '*parochialisation*', he also added apparatus for comprehending the way in which a local or lowly tradition could become wider and more sophisticated through a process called '*universalisation*'. According to him, rural system of stratification are, in the first place, closed rather than open. They are composed of known and limited sets of castes, groups, and individuals which can admit and place newcomers only when the identities of the newcomers can be fully established and linked with units in the pre-existing local order. Rural stratification has been called typically 'interactional' rather than 'attributional' (Marriott 1959: 92-107). Assertions have sometimes been made that a shift towards more 'sanskritic' attributes has gained a higher local rank for rural groups, such as some of the Kodagus of rural Coorg, but such assertions are as yet unattested by local evidence. Kodagus in Coorg village occupy high positions as feeders and ritual masters of other castes and as sponsors of temple rituals in which other castes provide the lower services (Srinivas 1952 : 38-45, 185-99). The manner in which cities reflect regional traditions in their most sophisticated form which regard to the specialization of actors, places and themes has been worked out in detail for the city of Madras by Milton Singer (1956: 161-94). Milton Singer conducted a study in the Madras city and argued that the religion and religious activities are still continues there, but not in the traditional form. The intellectual and ritualistic approach has been given up and replaced by devotional approach. The urban people are not in the position to perform all the rituals in traditional manner. The ritualistic attitude has been replaced by devotional attitudes. Devotional songs and recitation of scriptures replace the classical religious songs. Consequently, *Bhajan mandalies* introduced which is suited the urban condition. Moreover, due to the modernization and industrialization, microphone, cinema, automobile etc., are used in promoting religious innovations. According to Milton Singer in the modern urban centers, religion includes culture and culture includes religion. While, the role of religion in the sacred town playing distinguishing feature of the social organization of the town and the manner in which it forms a part of the network of the civilization. So, city has an impact on religious orthodoxy, which has got weaken and flexibility of religious social organization falling great impact on the villages also. Later studies in the sacred complexes

of some of the religious centers have also highlighted the connections between the city's sacred traditions, increasing specializations among performers and diversification among visitors or devotees. L.P.Vidyarthi (1961) studied in the sacred complex of Gaya city. He observed that, the numbers of the temple priest has been decreasing, even though the sacred character of the pilgrim city is being maintained.

However, if the process of social change being considered in the modern urban centers it will be observed that most of the reform movements in India took place in different urban centers. Instead of orthodoxy all these movements propagated the rational aspects. The sacred centers have emerged as the meeting points of urban centers and rural hinterlands along with the development of institutions like *dharmashalas* and professional priests, whose ready knowledge of the geography of the country is evident the moment they get out of a train or bus. Every party from a rural area develops its own counterparts of such expertise for negotiating at these pilgrim centers. Advice is available in most of the rural areas and willingly given on the basis of experiences going into the minutest detail, sacred or secular. Chauhan (1967: 223,226; 1990 14-15) observed that even in an age of less developed transport and communication, pilgrimages provided important occasions for the rural people to move out of the villages and participate in the regional or national stream; with the improved means of communication now available, the process has become quicker and more efficient and the density of pilgrimages has gone up along with the further spread of rural-urban interactions as well as the agencies facilitating them. In the celebrations of the rituals of the life cycle, particularly marriage and death ceremonies, where, lot of persons have to be provided with the dinner and all type of gifts arranged, the villagers enter into multiple interactions with the nearby urban centers. In the value system of the villagers it is being increasingly felt that the greater the urban content in matters relating to menus, gifts, entertainment, the more respectable the ceremony becomes. Urban additions to rural ways of life have become the symbols for status maintenance or even status enhancement in the rural areas. The country and town no longer remain two separate worlds isolated or antagonistic to each other; the actor in the rural situation, even when dealing with his counterpart in the same environment, makes use of the urban ethos in scoring points over the other. Such interactions are particularly evident in the use of film music, the display of fireworks on the recreational side, the introduction of urban dishes. Gifts to bridegroom include cycle, scooter, television set, costly dresses, modern urbanized furniture and other electrical equipment. Gifts to brides include saris of either silk or nylon, ornaments usually obtained from urban jewelers, stainless steel kitchen utensil etc. (Chauhan, 1990). Thus, social network analysis of such articulations is necessary for a proper understanding of economic, political and cultural processes. The works of Barnes (1954), Bott (1971), Mitchell (1969) and Singh (2003) provides leads in this kind of research. There is a need to explore this field of research further.

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