



**XTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS  
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**INDIAN CENSUS  
AND  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

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## PREFACE

The Indian Census has been associated with Anthropological Investigations from the very beginning with an emphasis on the study of castes and tribes. It would, to a large extent, be valid to suggest that many of these studies have been pathfinders and have been acknowledged by scholars the world over as such. The Ethnological studies and Anthropological studies have been a continuing feature of the Indian Census and the trail blazed by former Census Commissioners of India among whom one must mention Bains, Risley and Hutton, continued till about the 1931 Census. After a pause of about three decades this tradition was revived from 1961 Census in a new perspective by Dr. Mitra, the Census Commissioner of 1961. The large number of studies and the vast mass of data thrown up by the Indian Census has been a matter of abiding interest to scholars and experts and can scarcely be detailed in a small compass. However, what is offered in this brochure is a synoptic view of the panorama unfolded by the Indian Census in the field of anthropological investigations and we do hope that this publication will be of interest and use to the distinguished participants in the X<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences which is being held in India.

The brochure, for convenience, has been divided into two parts. Part I attempts a description of the anthropological and ethnological content in the Indian Census while Part II presents a bibliography which we hope will evoke further interest in the reader.

What has been described here in this brochure is essentially the work of those stalwarts who have contributed to the Indian Census in increasing degree and what is presented here is a synoptic view. To the extent that it informs the reader of the contribution made by the Indian Census in the field of anthropological investigations and evokes in him a further interest in the vast data available in the Indian Census we would feel our labours more than rewarded.

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## **Indian Census and Anthropological Investigations**

Any organization can be justifiably proud of having achieved the distinction of carrying on studies over a span of hundred years. This milestone has been reached by the Census of India, which celebrated its centenary in 1972. It is well known that the Census organization, which has a fascinating history, is the premier organization for providing population statistics over a period of time and has laid the foundations of demographic research in India. But what is perhaps not so widely known is that it is also one of the pioneering organizations in India in the field of anthropological studies throwing light on economic, social and cultural life of the peoples comprising a spectrum of ethnic groups. In fact, it will not be wrong to say that the Indian Census has made a significant contribution to the anthropological and ethnological studies and scholars have paid rich tribute to such studies. Referring to the earlier census coverage of anthropological enquiries, Dr. A. Mitra, the Commissioner for 1961 Census observed that the chapters on castes and tribes in census reports were some of the most readable and enduring contribution to the study of the people of our country.

No doubt, the Indian Census has paid a good deal of attention to investigations on anthropological nature. Infact, much has been made out by some critics of its 'preoccupation' with castes and tribes and cognate anthropological enquiries in the earlier decades. But the Census balanced demographic studies and anthropological enquiries in a happy manner. The Indian Census has always been conscious of meeting the data needs and has accordingly always attempted to project such data as would meet the requirement of the times for administration, planning and development. During the late nineteenth century, when the Indian Census began its operations, the then Government felt that for proper administration of the country it was imperative for it to understand the social structure of the country, its people, their religious beliefs, and their ethnic affiliations, besides their customs and manners. The erstwhile rulers were particularly intrigued by the institution of caste and its role in the Indian polity and economy. Not surprisingly, therefore, they paid their largest attention to this institution as its ramifications could be seen in the various spheres of life. Further, they wished to exploit the natural skill of the traditional craftsmen for furthering their interest in the world trade, particularly in view of the competition posed by the French, the Portuguese and the Dutch in Asia and the Far East. This prompted them to study the traditional occupations, crafts, fairs and festivals of the 'natives'. Just before the first all-India census in the 1870s, a memorandum presented on the need of census requirements emphasised the necessity of studying the social customs of the subjects of Her Majesty's Government. Accordingly, the British Government commissioned a number of researchers and administrators to write accounts of the customs and manners of the people. The studies by Wilson, Dalton and Risley are a result of this decision. The period also coincided with the period of anthropological researches characterised by

intellectual liberalism in the wake of findings of the studies of Darwin and Spencer. This was the formative period of anthropological studies all over the world and the historical school of anthropology - the evolutionary as well as the diffusionist - was riding the crest of the wave. In the absence of any agency to take on such investigations, particularly organized field work at all-India level, the Indian Census with its network was found eminently suited to make forays in the new arena. Whether by accident or by design, most of the earlier Census Commissioners happened to be anthropologists in their own right and, in fact, a few were anthropologists par excellence, to wit, Bains (1891), Risley(1901) and Hutton (1931). Hutton was an Oxford-trained anthropologist whose professional training enabled him to make a mark not only in the Census Organization but also in the academic world. His studies of racial and ethnic distributions of the peoples of the sub-continent and the tribes of Assam, Nagaland and north-east India are acknowledged as monumental, particularly as he was among the first to write full-scale monographs on the tribes.

It is, therefore, apparent that the early history of anthropological investigations in the country is also the history of such investigations by the Census organisation. A number of scholars, like Majumdar (1950), Dube (1962), Roy Burman (1969) and Vidyarthi (1977), have traced the stages of development of such studies in India. Majumdar has categorised anthropological studies in India into three phases, namely, formulatory (1774-1911), constructive (1912-1937) and critical (1938 onwards). Vidyarthi has also classified the history of such studies into three periods, namely (a) formative period (1774-1919), (b) constructive period (1920-1949) and (c) analytical period (1950 onwards). These classifications are more or less identical with slight difference in terminology of two of the three phases and the period of all the three phases, especially the third phase. It may be observed here that in India not many investigations were carried out in the first part of the earliest phase, particularly during 1774-1874, because there were hardly any relevant institutions equipped to do so. What-ever was done was mostly due to the pioneering but sporadic efforts of bodies like the Asiatic Society of Bengal set up by Sir William Jones and the contributions in its journal and subsequently in the journal 'Indian Antiquary'. Anthropological investigations in the real sense began in the post-1860 era, particularly with the Indian Census entering the field. The pre-independence phase of the census investigations in the field of anthropological and ethnological investigations referred to in the subsequent account coincides with the later half of the formulatory phase of Majumdar or the formative period of Vidyarthi and their constructive period. The analytical period of Vidyarthi or the critical phase of Majumdar would coincide with the post-independence era of such research by the Indian Census.

### ***Pre-Independence Period***

In view of the interest taken by the British administrators in the subject of ethnicity and the institution of caste, it was not surprising that the first universal census questionnaire adopted for the census of the 1870s included separate items on 'religion' and 'caste or class', besides 'race or nationality or country of birth'. In 1881, a separate item on 'mother-tongue' was added and the question on caste was modified to read

'caste, if Hindu, sect, if of other religion'. The question on caste, in fact, received more attention in 1891, as there were attempts to get more details by providing for a separate item on the sub-division of caste or race in addition to the question on the main caste or race. The schedule adopted for 1901 Census, in addition to items like 'religion, and language ordinarily used', provided for the first time recording of 'tribe' and the relevant question was amplified to read 'caste of Hindus and Jains, tribe or race of others'.

The investigations of anthropological nature during the pre-independence phase of the Indian Census can be grouped into three broad categories, namely, (i) population statistics and fertility data, (ii) occupational classification of caste/ethnic groups and caste ranking and (iii) ethnology including racial classification of the Indian people.

### ***Population Statistics and Fertility Data***

***Population Statistics:*** The Census provided state-wise data in the distribution of castes and tribes as part of the general population statistics. The scope of the statistical series was extended to cover distribution by religion and sect. The economic tables from 1881 onwards presented such important data as the traditional and actual occupations of important castes and tribes. The social, cultural and migration tables inter alia provided data on mother-tongue and education by selected castes, tribes or races, civil condition by age for selected castes and even infirmities by selected castes.

In 1921 Census, for 'low castes', the term 'depressed classes' was used for the first time, but no standard list of such classes was available for want of an adequate definition. Population data were collected and published for each individual castes and tribes separately at the state and district levels. In 1931 Census, these figures were confined to exterior castes and primitive tribes, besides all other castes except those whose number fell short of four per thousand of the total population; and for those whose figures were considered unnecessary by the then local government. The 1941 Census data on population of tribes were presented on a somewhat modest scale since their compilation was restricted due to World War II. It was also felt by the then Census Commissioner, Mr. Yeatts, that in the then prevailing circumstances, the scope of enquiries on castes and tribes could be dissociated from the Census. The group totals for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Anglo-Indians were, however, brought out for all the states. Figures were also compiled at the district level for 62 Scheduled Castes and 14 Scheduled Tribes, included in the Scheduled Castes Order, 1936, and 56 other castes and three non-specified tribes. The term 'primitive' tribe was given up during this Census.

***Fertility Data:*** Apart from population statistics, the Indian Census has also attempted to present data on fertility. A special feature of the 1931 Census was sample survey undertaken along with the census enumeration which yielded data in respect of tribals and religious groups on the average number of children born per couple according to the duration of marriage. The maximum span of duration of marriage considered was 33 years and over by which time the women were expected to have completed their child-bearing capacity (Hutton, 1933:209). In addition to the tribals, for

whom data were presented as a separate religious group, separate figures of fertility were provided in respect of the Bhil tribe. Likewise, data on tribals and other religious groups on average number of children in relation to the age at marriage of the wife were also presented (ibid:210). Davis (1951:80) computed average child-woman ratio from the census data of 1911, 1921 and 1931 for tribals and other religious groups to provide data on another measure of fertility.

### ***Occupational Classification of Castes/Ethnic Groups and Caste Ranking***

As mentioned earlier, the British administration was particularly attracted by the institution of caste, partly for political reasons and partly for the scientific interest evoked by its ubiquity and uniqueness. On the basis of census data, Risley, the Commissioner for 1901 Census, classified castes into seven main categories according to their social standing. Actually, in 1891, his predecessor, Plowden, had already taken up the monumental task of indexing and classifying castes, races and ethnic groups, etc., under sixty major groups, like military and agricultural castes, land-holders, cattle breeders and grazers, agricultural labourers, genealogists, singers and dancers, traders, silver and goldsmiths, barbers, blacksmiths, carpenters and masons, tailors, weavers and dyers, washermen, fishermen and palki-bearers, forest tribes, etc. along with the population and territorial distribution of each.

Risley went a step further and ranked the '*jatis*' in the local hierarchy and '*varna*' affiliation of each. The ranking of '*jatis*' and castes by the census created an unprecedented situation. Whatever their de facto status, most of the communities at the lower rung of the caste ladder felt that it was a good opportunity for social climbing by laying claims to higher status and registering a higher ranking in the census documents to have an official stamp, indicative of their higher social origin. Thus was set in motion a process of social mobility whereby a caste claimed a higher social status by '*sanskritising*' its religious beliefs and rituals, if necessary. A number of caste associations were formed and overnight honorific caste names were adopted, showing descent from Brahmins or Rajputs etc. In this regard Ghurye observed, "Various ambitious castes quickly perceived the chances of raising their status. They convened conferences of their members and formed councils to take steps to see that their status was recorded in the way they thought was honorable to them. Others could not but resent this 'stealthy' procedure to advance and equally eagerly began to controvert their claims. Thus, a campaign of mutual recrimination was set on foot. The leaders of all but the highest castes frankly looked upon the Census as an opportunity for pressing, and perhaps obtaining some recognition of social gains which were otherwise denied by persons of castes higher than their own" (Ghurye, 1924:169).

This movement became so strong that during 1911 Census, particularly in Bengal, many people thought that the purpose of the census was to rank the castes rather than enumerate the people.

Risley's decision to present data on caste ranking, no doubt, evoked some controversy. How much of a troublesome legacy he left by his action and whether he

did 'sow the dragon's tooth of depressed and Scheduled Castes by his action', as claimed by some of his successors like Hutton (1933), is debatable. But there is no doubt that the Census data on caste have been useful in more than one ways, as illustrated in the following account.

The detailed particulars on castes, sub-castes etc., recorded in the earlier censuses have been of great help to the Census organization in establishing the ethnic identify of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as discussed in detail in the subsequent account. On the basis of demographic data on the size of household by caste or ethnic groups a few studies on trends among castes and tribes have been attempted. Aiyappan (1972) has analysed the census data on households to study changes in family size from 1871 to 1961 in Kerala, particularly drawing interesting conclusions on the basis of data contained in the 1891 Census report. Damle and Kulhali (1972) have assessed changes in the condition of Scheduled Castes by comparing the census data of 1961 with that of 1931, particularly with respect to urbanization, education, prevalence of child marriage and occupation, which give a good idea of social mobility among these groups. Majumdar (1944) and Hutton (1946) interpreted census data to throw light on the caste functioning and caste dynamics. More recently, Schwartzberg (1968:81-114) has analysed the 1931 Census data and demarcated five major caste regions and fifteen sub-regions by first establishing distinct regional variations in the structure and composition of caste in India on the basis of these data.

### ***Ethnology Including Racial Classification of the Indian People***

Ethnographic Accounts of Castes and Tribes: Even from the earliest census of 1870s the census reports have provided short ethnographic accounts of castes and tribes and one finds in such notes for the first time an introduction to the life of the most primitive people and ethnic groups living in isolation in inaccessible areas in remote parts of the country. But the Census of 1901 by all accounts is the first organized attempt to provide anthropological and ethnological data on the castes and tribes embracing the important aspects. It was fortuitous that the census operations were in the hands of an eminent scholar and anthropologist like Risley. The events during that period also took a turn in a manner, which was conducive to all-round anthropological investigations in the country by the Indian Census. In 1900, the British Association for the Advancement of Science, through Sir Michael Foster, took up with Her Majesty's Government the question of making ethnographic investigations a part of the Indian Census of 1901. The proposal called for (i) 'ethnography or the systematic description of the history, structure, traditions and religious and social usages of the various tribes and castes in India', with photographs of typical individuals, and, if possible, of archaic industries and (ii) anthropometry directed to determining the physical types characteristic of particular tribes and castes. The government of India while expressing agreement with the view of the British Association in its letter to the Secretary of the State, observed, "India is a vast store-house of social and physical data which only need to be recorded in order to contribute to the solution of the problems which are being approached in Europe..." with much inferior and less trustworthy material than

found in India; "...extensive use...has been made by Ethnologists of data collected in India;" and the "various social movements, aided by the extension of railways, are beginning...to modify primitive beliefs, and usages in India..." which is "...all the more reason for attempting to record them before they are entirely destroyed or transformed" (Natarajan, 1973 : 545-550).

Thus, the 1901 Census launched upon an ambitious programme of anthropological and ethnological investigations with Risley and Gait at the helm of affairs. The results of the studies were published in the ethnographic appendices as part of Census of India, 1901 (Risley and Gait: 1903). As a result of the efforts of the Indian Census in the field of ethnology it was possible to bring out for the first time short ethnographic accounts on some of the most primitive societies or tribes living in the interior areas like Lushai Hills (Mizoram), North Eastern Frontier Agency (Arunachal Pradesh), Nagaland and the Andaman Islands. The 1901 Census enumeration in the Andaman Islands brought to light a tribe hitherto unknown, the Tabo of North Andaman Island. In explanation of their small numbers it was recorded that when a contagious disease appeared among them, they proceeded to kill all those who were attacked until very few of the tribe were left. The report of Richard Temple, the Commissioner of Andaman and Nicobar Islands on the Census of the Territory, contains a mass of interesting information regarding the history and ethnography of the Islands. The census was conducted by special parties of the settlement officials, at some risk to themselves, in a series of tours by steamer and boat in imperfectly chartered waters. They were attacked by the implacably hostile Jarawas of South Andamans (a Negrito tribe) and were obliged to fire on their assailants, one Jarawa being killed on the spot (Risley and Gait: *ibid*).

The ethnographic studies of castes and tribes continued with full vigor in 1911 Census with Gait in charge of the operations. In fact, the 1901 and 1911 Census reports were considered largely anthropological and their chapters on castes and tribes came to be regarded as 'anthropological classics'. The Census of 1921 seemed to have paused for breath and laid stress on economic aspects, but the following Census 'burst forth into brilliant scholarship of Hutton', who was in charge of the 1931 Census operations. He made lasting contribution in the field of Indian anthropology in general and Indian ethnography in particular. He along with Mills during 1922-1936 and Furer-Haimendorf during 1936-39 and 1944-1945, was responsible for the study of a number of Naga tribes in the early twentieth century and in bringing out full-scale monographs on these for the first time. Among Hutton's more popular works 'Angami Nagas' (1921 a) and 'Sema Nagas' (1921 b) deserve special mention. Hutton modeled his monographs on the historical school of anthropology of the times. But these monographs are valued more for the analytical approach and discussions on agricultural operations, including *jhum* (shifting cultivation), and kinship studies based on genealogical tables recorded for the first time. Another important feature of his monographs was that the anthropometric measurements and blood groups were taken into consideration in his ethnological studies. He also introduced for the first time the study of the land tenure system which, in the Indian context, is a contribution of far-reaching importance. In 1931 Census, a special ethnographic volume was brought out

in two parts (Hutton and Guha, 1935), the Part B of the volume containing interesting material on important tribes by way of contribution from Scholars and census superintendents, besides data on physical anthropology. Hodson (1937) made a review of the ethnographic studies conducted by the Indian Census during the 1901-31 period in the publication, "Census Ethnography-1901-31".

***Racial Classification of the Indian People:*** The 1901 and 1931 Census reports made far-reaching contribution in the field of ethnology including physical anthropology by providing data on physical and racial types based on anthropometric measurements and somatoscopic observations. Of the seven important racial classifications of the people of India attempted before independence, Risley's classification is the pioneer. This was subsequently revised and published as a separate volume in 1908 under the title, 'The Peoples of India'. The 1901 Census study was really an extension of his earlier work 'the Castes and Tribes of Bengal', undertaken at the behest of Sir Rivers Thomson, the then Lt. Governor of Bengal, and published in four volumes. Reacting to the proposal of the British Association for Advancement of Science to make ethnographic investigations a part of the Indian Census of 1901 the then government of India in its communication to the Secretary of the State had stated, 'As regards anthropometry, we may observe that it yields peculiarly good results in India by reason of the caste system which prevails among Hindus and the divisions, often closely resembling castes, which are recognized by Muhammadans. Marriages take place only within a limited circle; the disturbing element of crossing is to a great extent excluded; and the differences of physical type, which measurement is intended to establish, are more marked and more persistent than anywhere else in the world" (Natarajan, op. cit.). It further suggested enlisting the services of Lt. Col. Waddell and E. Thurston who had already done anthropological work in Assam and Madras provinces respectively. Risley prepared a scheme based on Topinard's standard work on anthropology which he tried first in Rangpur on an experimental basis before finally putting it in operation at all India level. His classification made a systematic attempt to isolate the physical types and lends support to racial affiliation or the racial basis of castes.

Risley's classification subsequently came up for criticism on various grounds but its contribution has to be appreciated in the light of the fact that it was indisputably the first racial classification of the people of India covering a vast sub-continent, including the present India, Pakistan, Ceylone and Burma. The main criticism of his classification was that (i) it took into consideration only a limited number of characteristics, (ii) used linguistic terminology like 'Aryan' and 'Dravidian' in a racial classification and (iii) had no place for such important tribal groups as 'Australoids' or 'Kolarians' which were covered by the term 'Dravidian', the latter term covering more than two physical types, like Negroid (?), Proto-australoid and Mediterranean. Besides, he was also criticised for his attributed source for brachycephally in India and Mongoloid strain in Bengal's population.

The 1931 Census could be regarded as a landmark in the history of ethnological studies as it provided the basis of the present racial classification of the people of the sub-continent, including the present India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma and Ceylon.

Hutton, the Census Commissioner for the 1931 Census, enlisted the services of Dr. B. S. Guha, who subsequently took over as the first Director of the Anthropological Survey of India. The latter carried out a survey in the entire sub-continent on the basis of anthropometric and somatoscopic observations. Guha measured in all 3,771 persons belonging to 51 racial strains and took measurements on 18 different characteristics, besides recording a number of somatoscopic observations on skin, eye and hair colours for isolating the racial types. The survey covered the aboriginal population as well as the so-called lowest castes to throw light on (a) the racial types present among the tribals and the lower classes of Indian population and (b) the extent to which intermixture might have occurred between (i) the Brahmin and upper stratum of the rest of the population and (ii) between the latter and the aboriginal population.

### ***Linguistic Anthropology***

As in the case of ethnography much of the pioneering work in the case of the languages of India has been done in connection with the decennial censuses which are the basic source of data on languages and source material for anthropo-linguistic research in the country.

Innumerable languages/dialects get returned at a census as mother tongues. The concept of mother tongue has not been uniform in the different censuses. For instance, there was no question on mother tongue as such in the census of 1870s. In subsequent censuses, various terms and concepts were used such as 'mother-tongue', 'parent-tongue', 'language ordinarily used' and 'language ordinarily spoken in the household'. But apparently this lack of uniformity in concepts did not vitiate the data on language as is evidenced from the language returns in the successive censuses which show fair consistency.

In conjunction with ethnographic survey, a linguistic survey of India was started in 1896. Grierson was put in charge of this survey, as he possessed special qualifications for dealing with this subject. He wrote the chapter on language for the 1901 Census report. The language tables of the Indian Census were prepared on a scheme based on the linguistic survey of Grierson, which was conducted, with the aid of the language returns of the Indian Census as well as local surveys. Under this scheme of classification, innumerable languages and dialects returned at the census were grouped under a comparatively smaller number of families, branches, etc., on the basis of linguistic affinities. The scheme of classification of Grierson was followed for the preparation of the language tables for 1901 and 1931 Censuses. Grierson himself made modifications from time to time in his scheme in view of the fresh facts brought to light during the survey. The survey was completed in 1927. No language report was brought out for 1941 Census due to the Second World War.

### ***Post-Independence Period***

After the independence of India in 1947, the orientation of census data underwent considerable change to meet the new requirements of social planning and

development. The shift from the needs of administration of a colonial government to that of a national government for economic re-construction and welfare measures brought in its wake changes in data requirement. This change in data needs also necessitated evolution of new concepts relevant to the new requirements. The end of British rule was accompanied by partition of India, resulting in large-scale international migrations and displacement of people in the sub-continent whose rehabilitation itself was a colossal task. In the light of these developments and accompanying economic upheavals the data relevant to policies for the re-construction of economy naturally received the first priority during the 1951 Census which was the first census after independence.

In pursuance of the national government's policy to discourage community distinctions based on caste, race, etc., the 1951 Census gave up the questions on these aspects, which were earlier given priority. The only relevant question on this aspect incorporated in the 1951 Census schedule confined itself to 'Special groups', viz., whether a person belonged to a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe or a Backward Class or the Anglo-Indian community, so as to meet the requirement of the Constitution for the weaker sections of the society. The Census of India Paper No.4 of 1953 on 'Special Groups' provided data on the distribution by livelihood classes, and rural-urban and sex-wise break-up separately for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For the category of Anglo-Indians, a table was provided giving their population at national, zonal, State/Union Territory level with sex-wise break-up.

With the concept of village level or 'grass root' planning assuming importance, besides the usual run of empirical data at macro-level, the Indian Census turned its attention more and more to presentation of data at micro-level, particularly on village statistics included in the new series of census publications called 'District Census Handbooks'. It was realised that the exigencies of the situation and the need for nation-building required not only statistical data gathered during the census operations but also data based on socio-economic surveys of villages, ethnographic studies on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, traditional crafts, and fairs and festivals. This was necessary as it was increasingly appreciated by planners, administrators and social scientists that economic development was not an isolated phenomenon as it could not be viewed as merely economic investment but had ramifications which necessitated an understanding of the social structure of the society in its full perspective. It was important to see in what direction and wind of change was blowing and how fast. Further, which aspects were amenable to change and human engineering' and which elements of social structure acted as barriers or impediments to change and development. In other words, it was realised that economic development was concomitant with social development.

The 1961 Census, therefore, embarked upon a massive programme of social studies which resumed not only the traditional anthropological studies in the changed context but also tackled the requirements of development planning to help in the process of nation-building and rural reconstruction. A separate cell, known as Social Studies and Handicrafts Unit (now Social Studies Division) was set up for the first time

in the Registrar General's office to undertake anthropological investigations and provide technical know-how for conducting such studies to the Census Directorates in the states. The 1961 Census, therefore, can be considered as epoch-making as it made a large contribution to anthropological investigations in the traditional areas as well as in the new areas by undertaking studies in such important and vital fields as ethnography of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, traditional crafts, fairs and festivals, besides the socio-economic surveys of about five hundred villages all over the country.

### ***Village Surveys***

The main objective of the village surveys, as Dr. Asok Mitra, the Census Commissioner for 1961 has said, was "to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change". The villages were selected on a purposive basis to cover adequately geographical, occupational and ethnic diversity. Some villages are of medium size with multi-ethnic population and having variegated occupations though primarily dependent on agriculture while others had one dominant community with one predominant occupation, like, fishing, pottery, etc., or were primarily inhabited by a Scheduled Tribe. About 400 monographs based on surveys of selected villages all over the country were published.

These village studies had their operational limitations, which are part of any vast exercise. They were not always conducted on the basis of a universal frame, which would permit attempting cross-regional and cross-cultural comparisons throughout the country. These studies were also modest in the sense that since they had to cover a large ground spatially and on a wide range of socio-economic aspects these could not consider in depth specific social and economic processes. But being more or less synchronous they provided a cross-cultural and cross-sectional perspective of the socio-economic and cultural profiles of the rural folk of the country which formed the bulk of the Indian Population (80 percent) and belonged to a number of religious and ethnic groups. These surveys also covered villages in inaccessible and remote areas for which hitherto hardly any information, leave aside anthropological data worth the name, was available. Among these mention may be made of the survey of Tandi village of Lahaul and Spiti district of erstwhile Punjab (now in Himachal Pradesh) (Anand, 1963), Kanum and Nachaar villages of Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh (Pal Singh, 1966), Chetlat Island in the Arabian Sea (Roy Burman, 1970) and Chaura in the Nichobar group of islands (Joshi, 1975). The village monographs on most such villages are even today the only source of socio-economic data on communities residing there.

Besides, the 1961 village survey data have been analysed by scholars in India and abroad for testing the validity of concepts like 'sanskritization', 'great tradition' and 'little traditions', in different parts of the country. On the basis of comparative analysis of data on fairs and festivals contained in village survey monographs of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, Agrawal (1972) comes to the conclusion, that there is no one 'great tradition' found all over India. Earlier, Adelman and Dalton (1971:492) carried on a cross-regional and cross-sectional analysis of 108 villages throughout the country to

identify the economic and social processes that were transforming the rural society and identified areas of 'quick' transformation and stagnation.

Besides portraying the profiles of little-known communities, the village studies provide a diachronic perspective to similar studies undertaken by others. A few of the villages surveyed during 1961 Census had been studied earlier by scholars or administrators and these 1961 series studies thus throw light on the socio-economic processes and changes in these villages during the last few decades. Even if some of the village survey monographs have not presented analysis in depth for obvious reasons, they, in any case, provide an excellent source material in the nature of 'benchmark' data for undertaking diachronic studies either in their totality or in regard to in-depth analysis of one of the many aspects covered in these monographs. In fact, as ancillary to 1971 Census, the Census organization itself attempted a restudy of some of these villages aimed at not only recording the actual change during the decade but the process of change as well to throw light on the dynamics of social change.

The restudy tries in a general manner to determine the distinct identity of the village, its urban look, if any, factors helping or hindering full utilization of its infrastructure, existence of cohesion or conflict in it, and the village polity vis-a-vis the eco-system, social organisation, technology, etc.

The focus of analysis is on the process in the village society concomitant to industrialization, urbanization and changes in the agrarian structure. The main criterion for selection of the villages is the proximity to or distance from an effective urban centre. On the suggestion of the Planning Commission, however, the location of the villages in a dry belt or Integrated Agricultural Development Programme area or areas with small irrigation and rural electrification or areas with adequate facilities of institutional financing for agriculture has been also kept in mind while selecting the villages.

It is too early to evaluate the results of the 1971 time-series project of re-study of the villages. So far, only a couple of reports have come out and a few others are in press. But there cannot be any doubt that even if they do not achieve great heights in analysis of social processes and dynamics of change, they hold promise for the future by providing a 'basket-full' of time-series socio-economic data whose analysis in terms of regional perspective and in the light of the role of different variables can yield useful insight into the social processes involved in the transformation of the rural societies in India.

### ***Fairs and Festivals Surveys***

The investigations on traditional fairs and festivals had assumed special significance and an element of urgency as the cause of indigenous crafts and fairs and festivals had suffered as a result of the British Government's policy of discouraging them. The native crafts and trade were closely inter-linked with the fairs and festivals, which inter alia provided the main market for the local products. Even today in many

parts of the country, though divested of much of their glory, the fairs and festivals still provide the occasional markets for food grains, livestock and handicrafts from far and near. The integrated nature of the rural society has to be appreciated in the importance of fairs and festivals, which are the meeting ground of many religions, cultures and not merely the markets for sale of commodities and crafts. When the task of nation-building was taken up after independence it was realised that for rejuvenation of economy it was also necessary to revive as many of the traditional fairs and festivals as possible. A study of such fairs and festivals was important not only to achieve this objective but also for recording them for posterity before these are completely lost. In fact, before studying the fairs and festivals at the all-India level during 1961 Census, a slim volume of the list of fairs and festivals of West Bengal was compiled following the 1951 Census operations in that State. The scope of the 1961 Census studies was, however, wider as the fairs and festivals were not only listed but were studied in some detail for collection of first-hand sociological and other materials in relation to the ethnic groups involved. The information gathered with the aid of suitable questionnaires related to the village, villagers and their occupations, the nature of the festival, the worship of deities and the close nexus between socio-religious and economic life, besides the amusements and the actual economic activities associated with the festival. Generally, in each State one volume was brought out covering all the important fairs and festivals of the state. In states like Andhra Pradesh, district-wise volumes on fairs and festivals were brought out. In the Social Studies Division at the Centre, in-depth studies in respect of some of the major festivals like, Ugadi (Ed: Roy Burman, 1971) and Moharram in Two Cities (ibid., 1966) were taken up. About fifty volumes on fairs and festivals were published.

It would seem that these surveys succeeded in more than one respect. They threw some light on the religious centres and festivals, inland trade and commerce, art motifs and designs, circuits of trade and their ancient routes, etc. They also provided valuable insight into the history of organization of markets, which were inter-linked, with the socio-religious life of the people. Secondly, they showed what an extensive network of seasonal and perennial markets the village fairs still provided to indigenous craftsmanship and industry. Further, they helped to link economic streams with social and religious movements, besides indicating how a succession of small fairs in a time series culminate in a large fair, almost always in the heart of a particular cultural area, and how this event gradually subsides to another time-series of small fairs to keep on the endless cycle of trade, social and religious inter-action in motion. Again, their role in the village economy, particularly in terms of labour participation and domestic use of the products, had shown their importance in economic development. They had also demonstrated their contribution to the socio-economic and cultural life of the people, besides reconstructing ancient and not so ancient trade routes in the country, as in the case of Lavi Fair at Rampur Bushar in Himachal Pradesh which attracted tradesmen from a number of neighboring countries and provided the setting for manifold social and cultural activities of some import.

How the data on distribution of fairs and festivals contained in the census volumes have been analysed to study the relevancy of the concepts, like the 'great

traditions' and 'little traditions' at national and regional levels has already been discussed while describing village studies.

### ***Handicrafts Surveys***

It was necessary to give priority to the development of household industry as it was realised that next to agriculture, small-scale village industries and handicrafts required special attention to improve the economic lot of the Indian masses who were mostly rural-dwellers. The 1961 and 1971 Censuses, therefore, asked a series of questions on the nature of household industry, input of family and hired labour, production and the period over which these were carried out, etc. It was, however, felt that though useful, such information had some what limited relevance unless accompanied, at least once, by detailed particulars about the rural crafts and craftsmen. This required a study of caste-based occupation, social and economic stratification and the limitations under which the native craftsmen operated. The degree of isolation in which the artisan worked and the relative strengths of various communities in the village afforded some clue to the social inter-dependence. The demographic perspective of the craftsman also required to be examined by compilation of information on the ethnic groups engaged in traditional crafts, the number of families involved and the persons engaged by sex, etc. The primary aim of the craft surveys undertaken as part of the 1961 Census programme was as much to obtain a picture of the artisan himself as of his craft, the extent to which tradition bound the craftsman and the manner in which he adjusted himself to the changed conditions, such as competition posed by modern technology and money economy, etc. In the light of the social structure of the rural societies, the ramifications of the various processes were to be understood in terms of dependence on socially pre-ordained clientele and their regulation under seemingly unalterable laws of social customs. At the same time there was full realisation of the fact that the social structure of the rural societies was undergoing change, though at varying pace. The change in the jajmani (patron-client) relationship and the social stratification had a direct impact on the traditional crafts and an understanding of this relationship was a pre-requisite for attempt at revival of the dying crafts. The impact of education and consequent occupational mobility resulting in giving up of traditional crafts was also an aspect that merited consideration.

It was realised that the traditional crafts could not be revived or strengthened unless they were geared to the needs of modern times and technology and also adjusted to social and cultural changes. The organizations like the All India Handicrafts Board and the Handloom Board also gave attention to the handicrafts industry. They provided the necessary institutional support for promotion of sales, particularly of export-oriented crafts and consequent development of skills of the craftsmen, improvement of designs and supply of raw materials, etc. The craft surveys undertaken by the Census organization also went into these issues in some detail but, as mentioned earlier, they mainly sought to examine the close nexus between the artisan and the craft and thereby considered the social and ethnic perspective in relation to the ancientness of the craft and associated legends.

The craft surveys were carried out with twin objectives. On the one hand these were related to the frame-work of census questionnaire designed to provide data to help in the planning and development of traditional crafts and household industry and, on the other, for studying the craftsman in relation to his social setting and inter-relationship which bound the artisan castes with agricultural and other consumer castes within the broad net-work of sanctified relations on the model of anthropological investigations.

Under the 1961 Census series on crafts surveys a number of volumes were brought out at the state level and about 150 traditional crafts received intensive coverage. Among these mention may be made of 'Wood Carving in Gujarat' (Trivedi, 1965), 'Brass and Copper Art Ware of Delhi' (Ed: Baldev Raj, 1966) and 'Textile Dyeing and Hand printing in Madhya Pradesh' (Jadhav, 1970) some of these craft surveys exclusively related to the tribal societies, like the small brochure 'Tribal Wood-Carving in India' (Pal, 1974).

### ***Studies on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes***

The 1961 Census attempted, in a comprehensive manner, generation of demographic data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It also resumed the tradition of conducting ethnographic studies on castes and tribes, though these were confined only to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

***Statistical Data:*** For providing the basic data required for planning the development schemes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, for whom special provision has been made in the Constitution, a series of special tables were generated to provide social, economic, demographic and educational data on the individual Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at state and district levels. These included tables on industrial classification of persons at work and non-workers by sex, sample households engaged in cultivation classified by interest in cultivated land and size of holding in rural areas, age and marital status by sex, level of education by sex (separately for rural and urban areas), religion by sex, and persons not at work classified by sex and type activity. In addition, a table on mother-tongue and bilingualism was compiled for Scheduled Tribes only. The table on industrial classification of workers among Scheduled Castes also separately showed the number of persons engaged in "unclean" occupations of (i) tanning and currying of hides and (ii) scavenging and sweeping, to give an idea of the demographic perspective of these traditional occupations and the need for welfare measures among persons engaged in such occupations. The statistical data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were found extremely useful in the interpretation of trends among these groups. These data were published at the district level under the state series, while a special volume brought out at all-India level provided these data at the state level (Mitra, 1966).

***Fertility Studies:*** The Census organisation also conducted fertility surveys along with 1961 Census in some states. These gave information on average number of children born to ever-married women who had crossed the child-bearing age to provide

data on completed fertility. In these surveys, data in respect of Scheduled Tribes were given by treating them as a distinct category, as in the case of religious groups, like the Hindu, Muslim and Christian. It may be incidentally mentioned here that these data did not indicate any systematic difference in the completed fertility of the Scheduled Tribes and the others.

Likewise, data on completed fertility were also made available on the basis of the fertility surveys conducted during 1961 Census in the above states. The measure of incomplete fertility was taken as the average number of children born to ever-married women of all ages. The data indicated that the average number of children born to ever-married women among the Scheduled Tribes was somewhat lower in comparison with Hindu, Muslim or Christian communities.

The 1971 Census continued the publication of special series of demographic data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with a few minor variations. For instance, the table on religion of Scheduled Castes was dropped in view of its somewhat limited use, being relevant for Hindus and Sikhs only and that too in a few northern states like Haryana and Punjab. Likewise, in the case of Scheduled Tribes the table on mother-tongue and bilingualism was not prepared as it was not possible to provide data on sample Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes households engaged in cultivation classified by interest in cultivated land and size of holding. The 1971 Census, however, provided additional tables on literacy cross-classified with industrial category of persons at work and non-workers according to the main activity among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The scope of fertility data was enlarged in view of the enhanced importance of the subject and a number of tables were generated on the basis of responses to questions 6(a) and (b) of the individual slip which recorded the age at marriage and any child born in the last year in respect of currently married women. On the basis of the data gathered, a special volume, "Fertility Tables, 1971" (Chari, 1977) was brought out. This inter alia contained a few tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, including distribution of currently married women and the related births during the last year by present age and age at marriage separately for rural and urban areas and distribution of currently married women and related births during the last year by duration of marriage and age at marriage (separately for rural and urban areas). These data, based on one per cent sample were presented at the national level.

***Ethnographic Studies:*** As mentioned elsewhere, it was customary during the pre-independence era to provide some Ethnographic data or the other on castes and tribes. The 1931 Census perhaps made the largest single contribution in this regard. The Ethnographic studies were resumed after a lapse of three decades. These were confined to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and were undertaken to study socio-economic changes and project their cultural profiles as well as to meet the need of administration for their planned development. While the Indian Census had earlier provided short notes on castes and tribes, the anthropologists in general by and large limited their interest to the study of tribal societies to the almost total exclusion of castes in so far as ethnographic studies were concerned. The studies on castes primarily dealt

with the origin, functioning and dynamics of the institution of caste itself. As a result, only a few monographs were attempted by anthropologists, on the model of full-fledged ethnographic studies on castes, like the Chamar (Briggs, 1920) and the Balahi (Fuchs, 1950). The ethnographic monographs brought out by the Census organization from 1961 onwards have paid equal attention to Scheduled Castes. They, however, appropriately focus on their special characteristics, like social status, untouchability, traditional occupation and mobility, within the common broad framework adopted for ethnographic studies. The ethnographic monographs brought out by the Census organization have certain special features. They are geared to meet the requirements of the socio-legal issues relating to ethnic identity. In view of the Constitutional benefits accruing to the members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, a number of claims are staked identifying a group with one of the Scheduled Castes / Tribes on the ground that it is a synonymous name or segment of the latter. The caste indices of 1891 and 1901 Censuses and the detailed particulars available on castes and tribes in previous census reports have been extremely useful in verifying such claims. It is for this reason that the monographs brought out by the Census organization lay stress on social structure in relation to segments and synonyms of a community spatially and otherwise in the light of the social mobility among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In addition, these monographs stress certain other aspects which, apart from their intrinsic value, help in planned development of these groups. These relate to studies of social reform movements, alignments that are taking place among the various sections of the community, the welfare measures and development programmes undertaken during the five-year plans and their impact on the community, besides studying improvement in the level of education, and social and economic mobility. The Census organization is particularly in an advantageous position to consider the question of occupational mobility and improvements in the level of education in respect of each Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in view of the statistical data generated during 1961 and 1971 Censuses on industrial classification of workers and levels of education, etc., referred to earlier. The interpretation of macro-level data collected during the Census operations in the light of field investigations in the representative areas helps in studying the social change and processes at work among the relevant Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

As mentioned earlier, the monographs on Scheduled Castes lay stress on such issues as their present social status and the extent to which these castes suffer from social disabilities, the changes coming in this regard as a result of social legislation and changes in the values of the people in the wake of social mobility, education, and similar factors.

The ethnographic studies, which are continuing from 1961 onwards, have been attempted at two levels, viz., the state level and the central level. The central series monographs are somewhat more detailed studies of individual Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, while the state-series monographs brought out by the Census Directorates generally include shorter ethnographic notes on a number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For instance, in Maharashtra, ethnographic notes on all the Scheduled Tribes of the State have been brought out under one volume entitled,

'Scheduled Tribes of Maharashtra', (Chari, 1972). Likewise, the volume 'Ethnographic Notes on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' of Mysore (now Karnataka) (Padmanabha, 1974) covers some of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes notified in the state. In a few cases, monographs on individual Scheduled Tribes have also been brought out by the State Census Offices, like that on Toda (Nambiar, 1966) and Gond (Avadhany, et al, 1970) by Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh Census offices respectively. So far, ethnographic notes on 225 communities including separate full-length monographs on 30 communities have been published. Some of these ethnographic notes have broken new ground in presentation of data on hitherto lesser known tribes. The monograph on Siddi (Trivedi, 1969), a Scheduled Tribe of Gujarat, is the only full length monograph on a negroid tribe living on the mainland of India. The monographs on tribes like Kadar (Nambiar, 1965) and Toda (op. cit.) present a diachronic perspective of the change among these communities. This is so as earlier the Kadar were investigated by Ehrenfels (1952) and Chenchu (Avadhany, 1972) tribes by the Census Organization in Andhra Pradesh provide time-series data as these were earlier studied by Furer-Haimendorf-Gond in 1948 and Chenchu in 1943 - and thus offered the base-line data for recording the changes.

As regards monographs on Scheduled Castes, apart from state-wise series covering 76 communities, 12 full-length monographs have already been published on the basis of studies undertaken by the Social Studies division at the centre. Among these mention may be made of some interesting communities like the 'Sikligar' (Baldev Raj, et al, 1968), 'Mallah' (Baldev Raj, et al, 1969), 'Pasi' (Nag, et al, 1974) and the 'Tiyar' (Nag, et al, 1974). The study on Sikligar focuses on the shift of the community from a semi-nomadic life to sedentary living in the urban areas. The monograph on Mallah lays stress on the shift from the traditional occupation of boatmen to the occupation of vegetable growers and agricultural labourers in the wake of industrialization. Mallah being a denotified community, the monograph also tackles some of the issues of adjustment made by the community to the changed conditions besides dealing at some length with the issue of Mallah as a distinct ethnic group and Mallah as an occupational term used for a constellation of castes which have been engaged in the occupation of boatmen. In case of Pasi, the monograph particularly examines the role of the traditional panchayat in the present context. The monograph on Tiyar particularly deals with the issue of fluctuating returns of the community in different censuses in the wake of social mobility resulting in the caste adopting the honorific term, 'Rajbanshi', used by other ethnic groups as well.

**Other Studies on Castes and Tribes:** As adjunct to ethnographic studies, a number of relate studies were taken up on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As it was not possible to bring out ethnographic data on each Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes within a short span of time, the Census organization brought out mimeographed glossaries on these, entitled 'A Preliminary Appraisal of Scheduled Tribes of India' in 1968 and 'A Preliminary Appraisal of Scheduled Castes of India' in 1969, providing some minimal information of each Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The other studies cover a number of relate subjects like, 'Demographic and Socio-economic Profiles of the Hill Areas of North-East India' (Roy Burman, 1970),

'Social Labourers' (Roy Burman, 1970), 'Social Mobility Movements Among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India' (Sanyal, 1970) and 'Survey of Polygynous Marriages in India' (Ed: Roy Burman, 1975). These studies provide some insight into the various processes at work among these groups as well as an understanding of some of their special problems, which have been profitably used in drafting monographs on these groups.

For conducting the above studies on a large scale a number of innovations had to be made in the basic approaches, research methods, tools and techniques as well as in organisational devices. For this purpose, inter alia, documentation of available information was done by preparing index cards and taking extracts from publications on Scheduled Castes/Tribes, preparation of bibliographies on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as well as on other social studies, etc. Besides, a number of schedules and questionnaires were also devised for compilation and collection of synchronous data in various parts of the country in standard formats for different series of studies.

### ***Linguistic Studies***

Before independence, the last great work on linguistic demography and linguistic classification was done as part of the 1931 Census programme. While Grierson in his Linguistic Survey of India (LSI) identified a large number of such returns, there were many which were spurious and a few others which were not easily identifiable. As in the case of other anthropological studies, the 1961 Census resumed anthropo-linguistic studies and besides recording the demographic data on languages, attempted a classification of mother-tongues on the basis of census returns for making up-to-date the work of Grierson. A separate Language Division was set up in the Census organization to organize and undertake language studies. At the 1961 Census of India as many as 1,652 mother-tongues were recorded. The first task was to identify the dialects which could be grouped or classified under the 14 languages of Schedule VIII of the Constitution. It was also necessary to include under these languages all the mother-tongues that legitimately belonged to these 14 languages. The other task undertaken was to classify the languages according to the number of speakers. The third required presentation of data on residual-mother-tongues according to smaller ranges of number of speakers. The presentation of these data necessitated identification of mother-tongues with the LSI classified list, detection and tentative classification of mother-tongues classified by LSI besides segregation of unclassified mother-tongue returns, etc. The latest extended linguistic survey work involved field investigations in respect of 450 mother-tongues on which no information was available. These covered tribal languages or dialects like Kinnauri, Limbu, Lepcha, Thado-kuki, Halbi, Rabha, Chakma, etc., in the far flung and interior areas in different parts of the country. Studies were also undertaken on a few non-tribal languages like Konkani and Western Pahari having certain special characteristics. The first results of the studies based on 1961 Census data on languages have been brought out in a separate volume at all-India level (Mitra, 1967). This includes a number of tables such as decennial changes in the number of speakers from 1911 to 1961 for numerically important

languages, classification of languages by family, groups, alphabetical list of languages, list of foreign languages, list of tribal languages/dialects, subsidiary languages spoken in addition to the mother-tongues, etc. The data are presented state-wise and, in a few cases, district-wise, separately for males and females, and in some cases with the breakup for rural and urban areas as well. Subsequently, a 'Languages Handbook on mother-tongues in Census' (Nigam, 1972) was brought out to serve as an index book for readily locating the mother-tongues returned at the 1961 Census as well as the total number of speakers of each language, besides furnishing some basic essential linguistic information on each.

The work relating to linguistic studies continued as part of the 1971 Census programme. Appreciating the problems of distinction between language and dialect, this distinction was removed in 1971. In addition to the task of classification of speakers of various mother-tongues returned during the 1971 Census a publication, 'Grammatical Sketches of Indian Languages with Comparative Vocabulary and Texts' (Nigam, 1975) was brought out as part of the extended long term linguistic survey. This volume deals with grammatical sketches of Sanskrit, Bengali, Assamese, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati and Marathi languages. Besides, it also gives a comparative vocabulary and texts and the list of script characters with phonemic symbols of these languages.

### ***Urban Studies***

Until recently the anthropological studies carried out by the Census organization were mostly confined to backward groups and rural societies. As ancillary to 1971 Census, for the first time the Census of India attempted urban studies of small and medium towns as an operational need of the organization to project, as far as possible, a complete picture of the people in their social, cultural and economic setting, besides generating data for planning for rural and urban development. India being at the stage where a breakthrough was imminent in urbanization, the Census organization thought it fit to undertake urban studies to get a deeper insight into the growth of small towns which are likely to play an important role in the life and economy of the country in the near future. Besides, the characteristics of the rural and urban areas are not always sharply defined. On the one hand, there are rural areas with urban ways of life and, on the other, there are pockets in urban areas with folk-ways. It was, therefore, realised that the findings of the socio-economic surveys of villages undertaken during the 1961 Census had to have an idea of not only the close linkages and net-work of relations between the rural and urban areas but also to understand the impact of socio-economic processes generated by urbanization on the rural neighbourhood. These somewhat detailed studies of small and medium towns, distributed all over the country, are in addition to a directory of towns brought out in 1971 Census which gives some minimum basic information about each town.

The towns were selected on the basis of size; demographic features, such as growth rate, density of population and age of town; functional type; ecological factors; growth history; and distance from metropolitan areas. Besides, aspects like concentration of ethnic or religious groups, caste or community and other social and

cultural phenomena were also considered. The study covers among other things the growth history of towns including the infrastructure of growth, and basic and non-basic economy and concomitant changes in the economic and social relations of the region. A number of other issues, like the nature and intensity of linkages with other towns and rural hinterland, inter-action between various segments of the society, persistence of the traditional values and percolation of modern technology, etc. have also been gone into.

Field investigations have been completed in respect of seventy five towns distributed all over the country, and in most cases tabulation, analysis of data and drafting of reports have made good progress. In fact, nine reports have already been published and an equal number is in press. Twelve more studies have been finalised and are in the process of being sent to press. The remaining forty-five are in the various stages of compilation, tabulation and drafting.

### ***Conclusion***

The history of anthropological investigations in India can, with a great degree of justification, be said to be also the history of such investigations by the Census organization. The pre-independence phase of these enquiries was dominated by the Census, which has produced classic reports on castes and tribes in the country. However, the Census organization has continued to play an active role in this field even in the post-independence period. Anthropological curiosity about "Natives" and "Economic motives" of the people necessarily gave place to the need for a socio-economic type of analysis useful for understanding changes in society, with particular reference to the individual castes and tribes in order to provide material for assistance to development planning. Thus, in the post-independence period, the focus of the studies of this organization has changed from an intensive study of ethnology and caste rankings as such to changes in structure of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the context of the process development and social change. Crafts, fairs and festivals, village and urban surveys have also now been undertaken to study socio-economic changes in the Indian society. In this brief report, as has been mentioned earlier, a synoptic view has been presented of the role of this organization in anthropological research in the country and what can be presented here is necessarily restricted. The work of this organization has provided a backdrop in the pre-independence period for such research and its active participation in the post-independence period has ensured the availability of basic data and material for further research in this fascinating field.

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