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AGRARIAN CHANGE AND WOMEN: EXPLORATIONS FROM THE FIELD

The nature of agrarian change in India has been a subject of much debate. In the 21st century agrarian change coupled with livelihood issues have stirred significant debates in India's rural economy. While there has been a transformation in the agrarian economy of the country there has not been much change in terms of the nature of its relationships. While land is central to agricultural production, the nature of access of the people engaged in agriculture to land as manifested through landownership and land tenure varied. Such relationships define the agrarian relations of a society. Apart from the primitive or simple societies, agrarian social relations are invariably hierarchical in nature underscoring differential access of people to land. Thus, based on caste, class and gender the individual access would vary. In the recent decades, the issues of land have raised many questions among the policy makers and academics. While agrarian question took the front stage in the discourse of agrarian studies the issue of 'women' remained out of the same. Notwithstanding women's contribution at different capacities to agriculture her involvement in the process remained insulated.

The question of women and land rights has a recent history in South Asia. Two grass root movements have surfaced in India in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the form of Bodhgaya Movement in Bihar and the Sethkari Sangathans Movement for farmers' rights in Maharashtra. These were the fire starters of women's land rights in India. Both these movements have raised the issue of women's rights in land (Agarwal, 1994). These movements were also followed by few movements questioning the position of women in the grass root democratic processes. Thus, the long due issues of women and their rights surfaced but could not continue the impetus for long. Over the years voices of women and advocates of women's individual rights started taking a back seat.

Women indisputably have been contributing to the agrarian economy in myriad ways. In this regard locating women's agency in terms of decision making in the agrarian economy becomes a substantial entry point. Land

becomes an important indicator of asset and security for both men and women. While men by practice have claim over land women are conditioned socio-culturally not to raise their voice and demand a share on ancestral property more so on land. There are several accounts mapping the trajectory of agrarian change in Indian villages. Jodhka(2004), Gupta (2005), have put a contemporary portrait of Indian villages. The transformation of Indian villages with various developmental projects, new state initiatives, and populist policies of neo liberalism and the burgeoning crisis of rural employment, emerging caste consciousness, new categories of land ownership have been few of the issues brought out by these scholars. While, men were constantly moving out of rural farming to nonfarm activities there has been a growing 'feminisation of agriculture' mushrooming in the rural landscape. Scholars like Gough (1993), Agarwal (2003) and many others have raised their concerns over the same. The recent accounts of farmer's suicides, indebtedness and the vicious cycle of odds add to the continuing crisis of the rural landscape in general and women in particular. Fighting the tentacles of patriarchy, moving beyond the norms of 'biradari' women have been continuously fighting the ordeals at different levels as indicated in the accounts of Padhi(2012). The tussle of women amid male migration in search of better employment and making the ends meet (for those who were left behind) have further added to their everyday existential crisis. While there have been a handful of such accounts in the Indian context there is a dearth of such accounts across regions in India. While new employment opportunities may complement the existing crisis in livelihood but cannot be sufficient to substitute land. On the one hand there have been transformations mostly modernisation in the Indian agrarian economy on the other there is a continuation of the long-established reliance of the rural populace on the traditional land based livelihood choices (Agarwal, 1998).

One can say that Indian women particularly in the 21st century is at a crucial juncture as they constantly negotiate between the socio-cultural practices and the neo-liberal state agenda. The traditional hegemony of 'caste' and the patriarchal values continue to overshadow the new state agenda and she often oscillates between the two. The study thus focuses on the everyday stories of three lower caste women negotiating their livelihood choices in a changing agrarian economy. Further women's misrepresentation from the decision-making bodies like the Satra, family and the Gram Sabha has raised several concerns. While their challenges vary but they never seem to fathom the boundaries of family honour, caste. While the constitutional safeguards and the participation of women in democratic process have added some voice to them but they are rather inconsequential. Women have to undertake the burden of male migration, feminisation of agriculture, lack of emotional and financial support from the family members, fighting the existential crisis and so on. While the neo liberal state has also reduced the traditional bonds of camaraderie in different forms. The proliferation of the material culture has further added to the breaking up of traditional social networks for livelihood

generation which the women claim as 'sisterhood' (the term is used to symbolize a sense of emotional support among the women in the village).

Area of Study

The study was conducted in a multi caste village of central Assam. The village, Dakhinpat Satra is situated in the Nagaon district in central Assam. The village lies along the banks of the river Kolong (a distributary of the Brahmaputra). In popular parlance, the village is also recognized as Dakhinpat.

Being on the banks of the river Kolong, the village has a fertile bed, rich for agricultural productivity. The narratives suggest that apart from agriculture the villagers were also engaged in supplementary sources of income within the village. Traditionally income was more through kind than cash. Thus, some would go and work as a daily wage earner (*kamla*) within the village, few would also go out to fish. Thus, besides the river the common spaces mostly, the wetlands came handy in supplementing their source of income.

Narratives suggest that the village was formed out of a processes of land donation by the Kachari king (a tribal chieftain) to *satradhikar* (abbot) of the *satra* (neo-vaishnavite monastery). Therefore, the village formed out of the two processes of *sanskritization* and *detrribalization*². With such allegiance, the village grew as a satra village. Thus, the neo-vaishnavite monastery grew as the nerve centre of the village and the *satradhikar* became the fountain head of all decisions in the village. Till then, all decisions including 'who will till the land' and 'for how long' were taken up the satra. All villagers (men and women) were traditionally under the control of the satra as the religious institution had the power to generate livelihood avenues in the village. Over the years' land relations in the village became feudal and a relationship of domination and subordination grew. The agrarian cycle of the village revolved around a chain of relationships reflected by dominance and subordination between the satra and the villagers. The agrarian economy traditionally was of subsistence, but the *neophytes* had to surrender a part of their produce to the satra. The surplus was thus collected and accumulated as *guru kar* (tithe) for the *satradhikar* (who would visit on certain occasions). Further the village has always been divided into different residential pockets called *chuks* in the popular parlance. Such segregations were based on the everyday activities of the satra. Unlike the land and wetland, the satra did not exercise any control over the river. It is to be noted that in the absence of the *satradhikar*(who resided in Majuli) there was a Satra Parichalona Samity (satra management committee, whose members belonged to the upper and influential castes) which looked after the management of the satra and took various decisions on behalf of the satra.

As the *gaonburah* (village headman) says:

The satra was a dynamic space. Villagers participated at different levels in the activities of the satra. In many religious discourses of the satra the villagers had equal access. However, when it came to taking major decisions such access was limited to the members of the *Satra Parichalana Samity*. For example, no villager apart from the members were ever consulted while taking any decision on the land and engagement of people.

Methodology

The study is ethnographic in nature and relies primarily on women's narrative. For a comprehensive understanding, the study focused on three women from three different socio-economic backgrounds and their everyday decision making. The study also focused on the secondary sources like books, journals, official records to substantiate the arguments put forth in this work.

Trajectory of Agrarian Change in the village

The village had witnessed notable agrarian changes. There were significant state interventions in the village, one came in the form of land reform. These reforms were followed by the land redistribution amongst the landless peasant families in the village. This has had a positive impact upon the villagers. It not only provided land to the landless but also led to the breaking up of the traditional authority of the satra which dominated the social and economic life of the villagers owing to its control over all land in the village. But it did not improve the condition of women in the village.

The second state intervention came in the form of blocking the river Kolong at its mouth at Hatimura. The river was the lifeline for the village. The river was blocked to prevent the inflow of water in the downstream areas of Nagaon city, the district headquarters. This was allegedly done by the government under pressure from the urban elites from Nagaon city with scant regard for the agrarian economy of the floodplains of the river resulting in devastating effect on the socio-economic life of many villagers. The river today is but a pale shadow of its original self in the village.

The blockade of the river Kolong stopped the natural source of flood water as well as fertile silt carried by the flood water to the agricultural fields of the village. In the absence of irrigation facilities, traditional agriculture turned into an expensive, if not unproductive, economic activity. However, villagers had no other alternative but to continue with agriculture. Moreover, although the agrarian economy of the village traditionally was consumption oriented, some villagers were also engaged in commercial production of sugarcane, mustard and some pulses and have been earning extra income. Sugarcane cultivation survived the closure of the sugar mill at Kampur in 1990 as the villagers continued to produce and sell jaggery (*gur*). Although

the village was going through a process of agrarian crisis and poverty, they still adhered to their small scale agricultural economy.

The village had also witnessed lower caste assertions in early 1970s which also had a substantial role in the agrarian economy of the village. The lower caste assertions in the village were also emboldened by the land reform which took place around the same time. The assertions of the lower caste in the village received the support of the *Ek Saran Bhagawati Samaj* (a splinter neo-vaishnavite group of the lower castes which came into being in 1973 and which had a strong following in the Nagaon district). The association with the Bhagawati Samaj paved the way for the segregation of the lower caste villagers from the control of the satra. The lower castes have set up their own *naamghars* and have stopped celebrating most of the festivals (e.g. holi) and rituals patronized by the satra which they traditionally celebrated with much funfair. Thus, there is a break in the traditional relationship of the villagers with the satra at social and cultural level. But at the same time the incorporation of the 'sanskritic' values in their lives have pushed them from the egalitarian gender relations (Deshpande, 2002). Today women are restricted in terms of their associability and mobility.

Being such diverse in its composition the women in the village had extensive personal anecdotes on their agricultural choices hinged on their caste hierarchy. Spatially ghettoized into three distinct pockets of Satra *chuk*, Besimara and Dakhinpat, the satra *chuk* comprised of all the upper caste groups in the village which included the Brahmins, Kalitas (a middle caste in Assam) and few houses of Koch (officially an OBC category but dominant in the state). Besimari comprised of the Kaibartas and Heeras (officially scheduled castes in Assam). The third is Dakhinpat which is a Kaibarta settlement, caste settlements are further divided into *jaluwa* (fishing) and *haluwa* (ploughing) Kaibartas. Such segregations are further manifested through the *naamghars* (sacred spaces dedicated for community service) in the village. Each residential pocket which is further divided into a sub pocket has its own devoted sacred space.

Being an agrarian economy the villagers were traditionally engaged in cultivation of paddy, sugarcane and mustard. Both men and women traditionally worked at different capacities in the process.

While women like in most villages across India would be more active during the planting and harvesting seasons. As 'nimble fingers' make cheap workers (Elson and Pearson, 1981) they would be especially hired during the peak sessions. The men on the other hand would work throughout the agricultural session. The women who would work in the *khatopathar* (agricultural fields of the satra) belonged to the lower caste. A Brahmin woman on the other hand was not seen working out in the paddy fields. She had to confine herself to the family and the activities which would not require her to

move out of home. Such confinements not only did limit her chances of employment but also at the same time restricted them to their individual spaces. Apart from working in the paddy fields the lower caste women were also engaged in the activities of fishing. They would go out in groups and fish in the wetlands which were traditionally under the control of the satra. This would give them a sense of accomplishment as they could in a very small way contribute to the household economy. The women would engage the traditional indigenous methods of fishing and would use the indigenous tools like *khaloi*, *jakoi* etc. They would also pass on their technical knowhow to the succeeding generations. Thus, for the women who knew such home-grown methods had an upper hand they could transfer the knowledge to the next generation and were looked up with a lot of respect. Few women would also go and exchange their catch with cash/ kind in the upper caste household. Most of the times the catch would not be enough to trade in the market and hence this informal transaction seemed fitting for them.

Like any other agrarian economy, women and land right has been a problematic issue. Women were far from any control of land. Further the sprawl of migration only amplified the ironies of women. Meena and Moina's narratives encapsulates the process of male migration and the crisis of women

Encountering Everyday Lives

Meena, a devout wife, mother of four, a mother in law, is also the grandmother of three. She is a free and strong lady. Besides managing her household chores, she finds absolute peace when she goes out of the kitchen and contributes in her own way towards the income of the family. She has an opinion and makes it a point to present her opinion. In some sense, she considered herself 'empowered' yet in many ways she had many constraints. Three of her children two daughters and a son are married. her other son had migrated out of the village to Hyderabad and worked in a plastic company, she recalls. Today, her younger son has returned to the village and has bought an auto van. He usually drives it on his own and rents it out to people. He charges Rs. 300- 350/- per trip. Meena expresses that somehow, he is being able to repay the loan that he took to purchase the van. But so far is not being able to contribute much to the income of the family. He husband is bedridden for the past seven years as he had a stroke which was followed by a paralytic attack. She does not seem to have any idea of his age but roughly he would be in his 70's. Besides her it is her elder son who contributes to the family's income.

She recalls working in the paddy fields throughout the harvest season.

This was an annual affair but was highly seasonal. Sometimes we were paid in cash and most often given a share from the produce.

She speaks that they had fixed houses where they would go every harvest season. Besides the economic relationship she remembers that there was also a relationship of dependence. However, the income generated from such activities could not suffice their families throughout the year.

As the income generated was seasonal and erratic. She would work for others whenever needed to meet up the expenses of her family. She expresses that other activities in the village like fishing were more empowering as it guarantees employment throughout the year.

She speaks:

Fishing was always considered as one of the much-anticipated activity of the day among the women in the village. Apart from adding to the income, it also gave us a break from the tedious household chores. We went out fishing in groups and mostly we used *jakoi*, *khaloi* (traditional fishing equipment's) to fish. Walking up to the wet-lands, fishing there, coming back gave us some space which was strictly ours. We could talk about our mother's in law, husbands and the other issues on which we otherwise could not raise an opinion. This also helped us bond with each other and feel a kind of sisterhood.

Meena rues that the binaries of honour and shame have today pushed the young women out of such traditional sources of income. While Meena continues fishing, she misses the company of other women, who no longer go out for fishing. She adds that the young generation is not interested in any such activity. None of her daughters (who are now married) were interested in fishing neither her daughter in law. The whole idea of 'better lives' in the village was measured in terms of possession of tangible assets and possessing a mobile phone is one of the basic yet significant marker of 'better life'. She adds that her younger son who had once been a migrant is today very apprehensive about her going out to work. He feels its disrespectful as both the brothers are earning well. She should not go out and fish. Her younger son also objects the way she dresses when she goes out to fish. This also came as a rejoinder from the younger women in the village. The younger women also find the *methoni* (the traditional loin cloth off shoulder wrap, above the knees) disgraceful. To this Meena recounts that the traditional dress were designed as per the working conditions in the *pitoni* (marshy waters) and other wet lands. She finds it extremely strange that women today are ashamed off wearing the comfortable dress.

For people belonging to the lower castes life has always been work oriented and hence they had very little time to be conscious of the way they look and dress. However, today they have become conscious as they have started moving up the social ladder. As individuals and families move up in their status hierarchy the less their women are being allowed to go out and work (Bereman 1993, Dreze and Sen 1995, Jeffery 2000) similar accounts were visible in case of the village.

Meena further adds that girls enjoy 'wasting' their time on the phone; they do not understand the importance of the skill or the kind of satisfaction that one gets from such community activity like fishing. She was also displeased with the withering of such traditional bonds which revolved around community fishing and women. She laments that the women from the neighbouring Lalung Gaon continue such community activities and it has been productive both economically and socially. But the new consciousness amongst the women and men from the lower castes coerces them to abandon most of their traditional practices uncritically. This was something unknown to Meena and the women from her generation. The growth of this consciousness is a reflection of the emerging 'caste-class' consciousness among the villagers. This is more so when it comes to women and her work while the men can scout other alternatives and work towards financial stability the women are put under scrutiny. Thus, one can see that as the social status improves the 'sanskritic' values are added and the values of equality lessen from the lower caste families (Deshpande 2002, Pillai-Vetschera 1999).

Moina a young Kaibarta women, in her early 30s is married into the village from a distant village of 30kms away. She has been married for the past ten years to Putuli. She recalls her marriage and her apprehension about the marriage. She was not interested in the wedding and but like any women in the village she had no authority to persuade her family members of her choice. Soon after her marriage with Putuli, she was told that her husband would be going to Gujarat. She felt completely at a loss in her new home. She could not go back to her own home as such an act would bring in shame and disrespect to her own family. She had no choice but to fight it out on her own. His sudden absence made her insecure. To add to her insecurity was the fact that Putuli belonged to the first group of migrants to move out of the village for work added to her anxiety. The village till then did not any young migrants going out of the village.

Moina narrates

I had never seen or known anyone in person who had gone out of the village to work. I only had heard stories on migration, how men would go out of the villages and would never return to their wives. While I never believed in those stories, there was a constant fear in my mind.

She further adds that while her husband went out of the village in search of livelihood and to improve their economic status, the wage he received was not enough to send any remittance back home. He could visit his family only when he could accumulate enough leave for the journey. But often such leaves would not coincide with the family functions like marriages and other rituals. Therefore, his absence was being constantly felt at different occasions.

Once a migrant begins to work, his life becomes completely dependent on the company policies. The companies have erratic leave cycles and provide incentives for extra time. The demand for labour is usually high during the festival seasons when many migrant workers visit their homes. This allows the remaining workers to earn extra income. This situation puts many migrant workers in a dilemma – whether to come home or earn some extra income. After all, coming home is an expensive affair from those distant places where they work. The expenses pertaining to travel and buying gifts for the family members require some savings. Sometimes, even if there are savings with a migrant worker, he may not be granted leave. Gulati (1987) also map out the plight of women resulting from male migration.

Most of the young women³ from the village whose husbands/brothers have moved out of the village are generally unhappy with their absence. There are many instances where there is a split in the *chauka* (hearth) and ancestral land. Family members do settle in the same compound but have different hearths. Fragmentation of land among the lower caste usually catches them uninformed about the future. Lack of adequate agricultural land and more so returns pushes individual to a look out for alternatives to agriculture. To this out migration comes up as an alternative.

Over the years Moina managed her everyday household chores. Besides, she is also an active member of a *got* (self-help group) in the village. She claims that her membership to this group has made her financially independent to some extent. The members of the *got* meet once a week and take stock of the various activities undertaken by the *got*. They also collect money and give loan to the members without interest whenever needed. She feels compared to many *gots* theirs is more organised, as it has a bank account and takes serious interest in generation of income. Moina further adds that today she can take a decision because she has some financial freedom. However, she shares her distress when she narrates her experiences. She speaks that when her husband left she was told by many women that he would be marrying someone else in Gujrat and would not return. She was young and was new in her matrimonial home for which she could not share such anxieties to anyone.

Migration can also be witnessed as a strategy of different groups for remittance generation (De Haan, 2002). The village under study also is not an exception to this pattern of income generation. The youths see the process of moving out of the village as a strategy, security, however, whether the incomes generated from such processes have been enough for their security remains a substantial question. While the upper caste migrations are organised the pattern of lower caste migration is cyclical and sporadic.

In such cases it becomes extremely difficult for the wife to generate the resources. Moina explicates that she had difficult time managing her children. As the remittances send back were not enough to sustain their family

of seven members. She and her mother in law used to go and work in the paddy fields of an upper caste family from Satra *chuk*. This went on for the initial years but once she gave birth her husband started protesting. She remembers how her husband would constantly complain about her working in other people's houses.

Further Moina adds that along with her husband his brothers too did not approve of their association with the upper caste household. The brothers consider it as a matter of 'dishonour' that their mother and sister in law work for others. A sense of self-esteem has hit the family and specially the men. They do not wish to see their women working for others in the village. As witnessed by many scholars (Berreman 1993, Deliege 1997, Searle Chatterjee 1981, Gough 1993) at the top of the social scale, gender relations are unequal while, at the bottom the relations are egalitarian. Thus, the further the families move up the ladder the more conservative and reserve do they become.

Bina, in her mid-30's is a lower caste woman, apart from being educated, outspoken and one of the influential women in the village she is a member of the Gram Sabha. She narrates that her husband supported her in all her political endeavours. He is dynamic in most activities of the village. His good connections with the government officials makes him a sought-after man in the village. The villagers also claim that he can persuade the officials in distribution of BPL (below poverty line) cards. He would escort her to various meetings and without a fail would also accompany her to different government offices. But his involvement was limited to her public life he would not help her in the domestic chores.

Initially a member of Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) a regional political party in Assam she shifted her allegiance to Congress. For many women in the village she symbolised empowerment. But she claims that she is far from being empowered. She speaks that she was married into the village at the age of 19 years. Her husband who has been engaged with the people in the village was very supportive of her. She strongly believes that it was because of his commitment to people and enthusiasm to work for people that she got attracted to politics. Her initial days in politics were hectic as she had to manage both home and outside at the same time. During this phase, her husband helped her unabated and supported her.

But over the years as she got elected the nature of work changed. It became an arduous task for her when she had to call political assemblies, gaon sabha meetings. She narrates when Gram Sabha meetings are held, there is hardly any foot fall. Most people either do not turn up or at times when they do, they simply argue about issues which are irrelevant to the meetings agendas.

To this the villagers lament, as compared to other villages under the Dakhinpat Panchayat the village receives less attention in terms of accessing

the social security benefits. They point out that most issues of the village remain largely unheard and unattended at the Panchayat. When enquired about the inefficiency of the Panchayat, Bina points out that often the village level Gram Sabha meetings are not well attended by the villagers therefore, most of the times important issues in the village remain unaddressed. Moreover, the village like the other six villages under the Panchayat have received their share through the schemes of public distribution. Sharing her experiences in holding such meetings she speaks, that the men in the village feel that they know everything and women have no knowledge of governance and therefore, it is a waste of time to attend such meetings.

As I attended one such meeting in the village I found that the meeting had very poor attendance and the members who had come for the meeting were not interested in listening to the representatives. Further her husband whom she was praising so much was more assertive and overpowering her expressions.

Therefore, it remains an issue to be investigated whether representation of women in the electoral process has helped them in the village under study to have an equal access in the decision-making body. The three women were independent and strong could articulate and put across their opinion but were also at the same time had their own limitations. There were hardly any women in the group. Their absence in the group is also an indication of their absence of voice in the whole democratic process.

Bina's husband was also present whenever we had a discussion. There was not even a moment when she was left alone to let out her views. His presence symbolised patronising male self-worth as for every statement Bina had to look up to her husband for an affirmation. This in no sense makes her empowered. When asked about Bina going out and working in the world of politics her husband replied that most of the times he is worried and therefore, to 'protect' her from any disrespect he accompanies her to every possible place.

Village at the crossroads

The study presents a picture of a village in transition. The agrarian economy of the village and the complementary sources of livelihood within the village today face serious confrontations. The accounts of the three women as discussed depict the burgeoning crisis in agriculture, the plight of male out-migration and the lack of farsighted goals of government in the village. All the three women (Meena, Moina and Bina) were strong yet constrained by the social norms.

Growing class consciousness among the villagers, made them perceive 'honour' and 'shame' in a different milieu. The raising class consciousness can be measured as an off shoot of male out migration in the village. The process of out migration has unquestionably changed the lifestyle of the

villagers in terms of the possession of material assets but at the same increased surveillance on women, restricted her choice and decision-making capacities.

The binaries of 'shame' and 'honour' question the position of women in the village. Not only men but women too started restricting their movements in accordance with the standards of 'shame' and 'honour'. Although the lower caste villagers as discussed have moved out of the domination of the *satra*, a new consciousness started to cast its spell especially on women. In case of Meena who had managed her family on her own today must listen to her son's and is being forced to withdraw from activities like fishing which used to give her respite. Moina who never had the power to negotiate all her life too was put under a lot of pressure. The introduction of local self-governance and the 73rd constitutional amendment though provided a platform but has not been successful in enriching women's position in complete sense within the village. This is reflected in case of Bina.

Adding to this the loss of wetlands (as part of the State agenda to stop the floods in urban areas) has not only adversely affected the women's role in the household economy it has also confined them to their respective households. Earlier, many women would also serve in the upper caste households which has been now been restricted by their male members. The latter which at a level is an expression of lower caste assertion vis-à-vis the upper castes, is a manifestation of the patriarchal ideology as these male members think that their women represent the honour of their caste and family and hence must not compromise this by working in an upper caste household where they are not given due respect.

While changing agrarian economy has undoubtedly brought in economic uncertainty across the village it has had its worst effect on women. It is interesting to note that nowhere in the narratives of the villagers or on other accounts of the village did we come across any reference of women as a landholder or women as a member of *Satra Parisalona Samity*. The state has introduced the 73rd constitutional amendment and has also ensured women's participation in grass root democratic activities but its proper implementation becomes conspicuous.

'Shame' and 'honour' appears as the dominant conducts of achieving higher status in the village. But whether all the women subscribe to the idea of 'shame' and 'honour' becomes a point of contestation. The paper while focused on three women also discussed the general idea of 'honour' and 'shame' among the men and women in the village. It was seen that competition between men to prove their status is achieved through controlling their women. Since both men and women work within the same moral economy they seem to be influenced by each other.

NOTES

1. The village was being donated by a tribal chieftain (who is also referred as the Kachahri king) to the neo-vaishnavite abbot of the *satra* and thus, the two processes of *sanskritization* and *detrribalization* went hand in hand. As the villages have put off their traditional practices and have taken up the new religious practices.
2. These women had assembled for a got meeting were asked about the absence of male members from their families. This group consisted of twelve women, aged between 18-29.

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