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Geographical Analysis Of Agricultural Development Of Girasia Tribe Of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

A geographical study has been done on Girasia tribals living in the southern Aravalli region of Rajasthan. The agricultural patterns of this region are influenced by physical, social, cultural, financial, and political factors. The study emphasizes providing solutions for the hurdles in the development of agriculture, social, and economic development of the tribals. After independence, the tribals of the southern Aravalli region have benefited from many tribal development programs initiated by the Government of India. But, unfortunately, the non-tribal people have settled in tribal territories and have exploited the tribesmen by taking advantage of the laws framed by the government itself. Therefore, the growth centers should be fixed among the tribal villages instead of the non-tribal villages.

The paper is based on the data obtained through primary as well as secondary sources. The primary data has been collected by using a questionnaire in sample villages during the survey. Secondary data was collected from various government offices, libraries, and institutes related to tribal development.

The Southern Aravali Region is constituted and delimited administratively by the eleven tehsils of three districts, which are mainly inhabited by the tribal population, where Girasia are dominant. The region is bordered by Pali district, Sirohi district, and Udaipur district. The Girasia form a significant part and play a major role in the region.

Key Words : Cropping pattern, Land reform, Shifting cultivation, Subsistence farming, Co Operative Society, Southern Aravali Region.

Physio-graphically, Girasia belt of the country is associated with the Southern Aravali Region, particularly in the South part of Rajasthan and the North part of Gujarat. Geographically, the Girasia landscape is located in the extreme southern part of Rajasthan between $24^{\circ}28' N$ and $24^{\circ}58' N$ Latitude and $72^{\circ}30' E$ and $73^{\circ}15' E$ Longitude comprising the districts of Udaipur, Pali and Sirohi.

The Southern Aravali Region is constituted and delimited administratively by the eleven tehsil of three districts, which are mainly inhabited by the tribal population, where Girasia are dominant. The region is bordered by the Bali and Desuri tehsil of Pali district, Sheoganj, Sirohi, Revdar, Abu Road and Pindwara tehsil of Sirohi district and Gogunda, Kotra, Jhadol, Kherwara tehsil of Udaipur district. The Girasia form a significant part and play a major role in the region.

“The tribals, by tradition are cultivators, but the tribal agriculture being still in a backward stage is low productive. In general, agricultural practices are very poor due to unfavorable and small land holdings, poor cropping pattern, crude agricultural implements, absence of irrigation facilities, and above all, ignorance and primitive lifestyle. Tribal agriculture is principally a subsistence sector of Indian agriculture. In the present situation, like other primitive tribes involved is a wide variety of economic pursuits such as hunting,

collecting forest products, fishing, and many other primitive activities”¹. Depending upon the geographical conditions, demand of produce, labor and level of technology, farming in the Girasia landscape can be classified into two main types.

1. Primitive Farming
2. Subsistence Farming

1. Primitive Farming:

This type of farming is still practiced in few pockets of India. Primitive subsistence agriculture is practiced on small patches of land with the help of primitive tools and family/ community labor. The Girasia were mainly agriculturists the dwellings were found on small rugged hills and the agricultural fields on the lower slopes. Therefore, the distribution of dwellings and agricultural fields were influenced and delimited by the availability of fertile soil and the nearness of the river or nallahs. Shifting cultivation is practiced in the thickly forested areas. The shifting cultivation is a distinct type of agricultural practice, generally practiced in the hill slope after sacrificing the forest cover standing over it. It is known by different names in different parts of the country. ‘Valre’ or ‘Waltre’ in South-eastern Rajasthan. This type of farming depends upon monsoon, natural fertility of the soil and suitability of other environmental conditions to the crops grown. In this type of agriculture, production is low as the farmer does not use fertilizers or other modern techniques. It is a ‘slash and burn’ agriculture. Farmers clear a patch of land and produce cereals and other food crops to sustain their family. When the soil fertility decreases, the farmers shift and clear a fresh patch of land for cultivation. This type of shifting allows nature to replenish the fertility of the soil through natural processes, land productivity inputs.

“Remaining for two or three years in one place, they were the rude pioneers of civilization, clearing the wilder and more unhealthy regions of wood and forest, bringing the land in to use, and preparing it for the occupation later, of the more advanced races. At present time, they are cultivators, herdsman and guides, and formerly great plunderers, who seldom give any trouble. Their dwellings are scattered about on the slopes of hills and in the richer valleys, their irregular fields extend. As agriculturist, they are on par with the Bhils and like the later use to practice the walra system of cultivation”². The Girasia were cultivators herdsman and seldom gave any trouble. Group agriculture in Girasia is known as Haari Bhaawari and shifting cultivation is known as “BAALRU”.

The hilly and forest regions left about 15% of the total land in Girasia landscape as cultivable for agriculture. The Girasia come to attach great value of cultivable land and started reclaiming agricultural land by clearing forests once a year in the winter season. They practiced controlled forest burning so that grass and minor forest produce were not destroyed recklessly and developed it as part of their ritual offering to magra vasi (mountain god). The Girasia believed that by offering fire both to the magra vasi, they would appease the forest god who would reward them by producing bumper crops. It was also their belief that walra made the land soft, increased fertility of the soil, helping proper germination of seeds, elimination of weeds and udai (pests) the burnt ash acted as manure. They firmly believed that burning of forest not only retained moisture in the soil but also facilitated quicker growth of the crop and also of the forest”³. Forest burning has also been found essential for photo synthesis suggesting greater biological activity of the trees in the region. The Girasia knew the quality of soil and developed the practice of keeping the land fallow every third year to allow it to recover fertility. They obtained new fields every third year by practicing walra which is now gradually dying off.

The Girasia developed agricultural practices which utilized soil of the gorges and slopes of hills by embanking successive terraces. The making of embankments and terraces has been interwoven with their belief system. Today we can justify it on rational grounds as suitable to the topography of Bhakar hilly area. The successive terraces helped in the proper retention of rain water and reduce soil erosion. Terraces also prevented the formation of streamlets, which in a heavy rain, may prove destructive on slopes. The Girasia though uneducated adopted contour ploughing to utilize every available space for agriculture practice which has been found to be very scientific.

¹ L.N.Soni(1992) “Sahariya Tribe Under Economic Environment Transformation”, Page 185, Volume Agriculture and Economic Environment In Tribal Landscape (ed) G.P.Gupta, Arihant Publication, Jaipur.

² B.N.Dhoundiyal (1967) “Rajasthan District Gazetteer, Sirohi”, Government Central Press, Jaipur, page 103

³ B.L.Meharda (1985) “History and Culture of Girasia”, Adi Prakashan, Jaipur, Page 45.

2. Subsistence Farming:

This type of farming is practiced to meet the needs of the farmer's family. Traditionally, low levels of technology and household labor are used to produce on small output. Subsistence farming can be further classified as intensive subsistence and primitive subsistence farming. In intensive subsistence agriculture, the farmer cultivates a small plot of land crops including wheat, maize, pulses and using simple tools and more labor. Climate with large number of days with sunshine and fertile soils permits growing of more than one crop annually on the same plot.

The Girasia are mainly agriculturists. The nature of their agriculture is traditional. The villages which are situated in the interior hilly terrain have only 20% cultivated land of their total area. Therefore pressure on cultivated land is increasing and due to the fragmented nature of cultivated land, intensive agriculture is not possible. The subsistence type of agriculture is not able to provide them sufficient food grains.

In the Girasia region where the Girasia are highly concentrated, the agricultural practices are very simple and traditional. The Girasia generally grow monsoon crops and mainly cultivate food crops. All of them grow maize which is the commonest crop and a staple food of the Girasia. Some inferior millets and pulses are also grown during the dry season. Rapeseed and gram are common crops coupled with wheat in this region. In this hilly region, where the water level is very low and the land is uneven, it is mostly irrigated through wells. Water from these wells has to be lifted by the traditional method rahat, pavti and koyta*. Another source of irrigation is the Indigenous canals taken out from rivers and nallahs in the areas where the Girasia are residing, they are called saran.

The agricultural implements used are of a simple type. The plough and other implements are manufactured and repaired by the village blacksmith. As described earlier, agriculture is the mainstay of Girasia. As most of them are poor, they are not in a position to introduce new methods of cultivation. Also, as they are residing in hilly areas, most of the cultivated land is undulating. At places terracing is done. Agricultural land is very little, whereas on the other hand, vast land is lying as rocky, barren, fallow and pasture land. It shows that people still follow the traditional agricultural pattern of ploughing the field and well irrigation. They are not very much benefited by new technology, fertilized hybrid seeds and agro-forestry etc.

India has three cropping seasons — Rabi, Kharif and Zaid.

1. Rabi Crops:

Rabi crops are sown in winter from October to November and harvested in summer from March to April. Some of the important rabi crops are wheat, barley, peas, gram and mustard. Though, these crops are grown in large parts of India, states from the north and north-western parts are important for the production of wheat and other rabi crops. The availability of precipitation during winter months due to the western temperate cyclones helps in the success of these crops. "Important Rabi or the Unalu (spring) crops, which are mainly irrigated and are sown in October to November, and harvested in February to March, are wheat, barley, gram and rape or mustard"⁴.

The principal Rabi crops are wheat, barley and gram cash crops like rapeseed (rye) and mustard (sarson) are mainly grown in dry season. The Rabi crop covers rest one third share of total crops. This is due to the fact that the irrigation facilities are limited and restrict them to grow crops during Rabi season.

2. Kharif Crops:

Kharif crops are grown with the onset of monsoon in different parts of the country and these are harvested in September to October. "Kharif crops locally known as sawanu (autumn) are primarily rain fed sown in June-July with the fall of first rains and harvested in October-November. The more important of kharif crops are jawar, bajra, maize among food grains, besides chillies, groundnut, til or sesame and cotton. The more important kharif pulses grown are moong, moth, kultha and chonwla."⁵

The Kharif or the summer/ rainy season, during which crops needing more water are grown. The kharif crops are grown as soon as the south-west monsoon commences. The sowing made in rains leads to the harvest in September to November. Before rains start, they clean their fields in June. After the first shower which occur generally by the end of June or beginning of July, ploughing starts. The Girasia are not very serious about manuring their fields, when the rains start in fully swing, seeds are sown. The principal Kharif crops are maize, Jawar, bajra, rice, moong, tur, urad and Chonwla and inferior grain like Kuri (*panicum miliaceum*), Kodra (*paspalum sroviulatum*), Bati (*paspalum crusgalli*), Kultha (*dolichos viflorus*) etc. During these days Girasia are sowing cash crops like Til (*Sesamum indicum*) and cotton in monsoon season.

⁴ K.K.Sehgal (1976) "Rajasthan District Gazetteer, Pali", Mahaveer Printing Press, Jaipur, Page 83.

⁵ K.K.Sehgal (1976) "Rajasthan District Gazetteer, Pali", Mahaveer Printing Press, Jaipur, Page 83.

Other cash crops like ginger, turmeric and sugarcane are mainly grown in some parts in Jhadol tehsil of Udaipur district growing region. "Paddy cultivation is undertaken on a small scale in the Udaipur district in the valleys and slopes of hills. The land is given summer cultivation followed by puddling and tillage. The soil preparation proceeds actual sowing from mid-July to first week of August"⁶. Paddy is also grown only in small patches in Jhadol and Kherwara tehsil of Udaipur district. The southern Aravali is primarily a maize growing region.

3. Zaid Crops:

In between the rabi and the kharif seasons, there is a short season during the summer months known as the Zaid season.

Some of the crops produced during 'zaid' are watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber, vegetables and fodder crops. Sugarcane takes almost a year to grow. In recent years, due to the increase in well irrigation facilities, the Girasia are growing crops like til and cotton in monsoon season, rapeseed, rye and mustard in dry season and other cash crops like ginger, turmeric and sugarcane.

Agricultural Patterns in the Girasia landscape are governed by following natural & socio-economic factors:

1. RELIEF:

The Girasia reside in hilly and forest areas and have to depend for their livelihood mainly on agriculture and forest. Most of the cultivated land is undulating or at places, terracing is done, and agricultural land is very little, whereas on the other hand, vast land is laying as rocky, barren, fallow, and pasture land. Forests have been a natural abode of Girasia. Earlier this entire area was covered with forest but the shifting cultivation, uncontrolled grazing, and reckless cutting of trees have resulted in a decline in forest area.

"Aravali range runs diagonally across the state of Rajasthan from north-east near Khetri to south-west up to Kherbrahma for a length of about 550 km. The area under study lies in the southern Aravali where they form an unbroken range"⁷. The southern part of the Udaipur district is mostly covered with rocks, hills, and fairly dense jungles. The western portion of the district better known as the hilly tracts of Mewar, is composed of the Aravali range. There are passes in the Aravali range viz. Desuri Nal and Sadri Pass, which cross into the Jodhpur division. The slopes are covered with forest, stones, and jungles affording shelter to big game. The Aravali which runs from south-west to north-east throughout Bali and Desuri tehsil, there are no hills of any significant height in the Pali district. It is broken up by hills and rocky ranges. The main feature is the almost isolated mountain of Abu which is situated near the southern border. It is separated by a narrow pass from an adjacent range of narrow hills, which runs in a north-easterly direction, almost as for Sheoganj and divides the district into not very unequal parts. Most of the area in tehsil Reodar, Sirohi, and Sheoganj lies in the western part of these hills. It is comparatively open and level, and consequently more populous and better cultivated.

2. SOILS IN THE REGION:

"Soil is a basic resource which is formed by the disintegration and movement of parent material through the natural agencies like climate, water, vegetal cover etc. It has a profound effect on human activities through its relative fertility"⁸.

On the basis of their occurrence, chief characteristics and suitability for cultivation, the soils of this region have been divided into the following groups:

(i) Grey and Brown Soil:

This soil occupies the largest area of this region. This group of soils occurs in the districts of Sirohi and Pali. It is primarily alluvial and calcareous and also contains gravel. The texture is medium to heavy. The whole of this area lies west of the Aravali axis and is characterized by vast stretches of sandy plane including hillocks and rock outcrops.

(ii) Red and Yellow Soil:

This soil occurs in the western part of Udaipur and Pali. Red and yellow soil occur together in this area. The yellow color is probably due to a higher degree of hydration of ferric oxide. Silty loams and

⁶ B.D. Agarwal (1979) "Rajasthan District Gazetteer, Udaipur", Mahaveer Printing Press, Jaipur, Page 108.

⁷ A.M Heron (1953) "The Geology of Central Rajputana, Mem. Geological Survey of India", Vol 79, Page 35.

⁸ Alok Kumar Singh (1985) "Population and settlement in U.P, Geographical analysis", published-

silty clay loams are common. This soil has good moisture-holding capacity. The soils are poorer in carbonate and humus content. The salt content is very low in this soil.

(iii) Ferruginous Red Soil:

This soil occurs in the Central and southern parts of Udaipur district. The red soil has been formed from ancient crystalline and metamorphic rocks. The soil is poorer in nitrogen, phosphorous, and humus content”⁹.

3. UNDERGROUND WATER:

The surface flow is ephemeral and limited to a few hours of days in general and a few months in such basins as that of the Luni and its tributaries and the water table shows significant bearing of these limited features. In the Luni basin nearer the Aravali, the water table is within 50 m of the surface and is suitable for drinking and irrigation of winter crops from wells. The average depth of water varies from place to place.

4. CLIMATE:

The Aravali stretching from northeast to south-west are the most conspicuous physiographic feature in the state and influence the climate of the region. “The region presents a transition between two major climatic regions of India, the humid east and the arid west. It may be designated as Semi-arid marked by extremes of temperatures and great variability and uncertainty of rainfall”¹⁰. The extreme climatic conditions may be attributed to its inland location and vicinity to the tropic of cancer, lack of vegetal cover, nature of soil, and bare rocks. “People’s ways of life, as well as other physio-cultural activities are governed by the climate in one way or the other way”¹¹.

Climatically, the year in this part of India has been divided into the following seasons:

- (i) The cold weather season (December to February)
- (ii) The hot weather season (March to May)
- (iii) The season of general rains (June to September)
- (iv) Retreating southwest monsoon season (October to November)

January is the coldest month of the year in all parts of Udaipur, Pali and Sirohi districts respectively. Mount Abu has the lowest temperature in this region. The minimum temperature of Mount Abu is zero and it is 2° C and 3°C in Udaipur and Pali districts respectively. After March, there is a constant increase in temperature in this region. May and June are the hottest months. During the summer season, the maximum temperature of Udaipur and Pali remains 44°C and 45°C respectively. Sirohi has a relatively low temperature of 35°C during the summer season. Mount Abu has less than 30°C in May or June. The average annual temperature is 19°C in Sirohi district and 25°C – 26°C in Pali and Udaipur district respectively.

HUMIDITY:

“Humidity is generally high in the brief south-west monsoon season. During the rest of the year, the air is dry. The summer months form the direct part of year when humidity is low particularly in the afternoon”¹². The highest mean relative humidity is found in wet months of the year i.e. from July to September where it varies from 55% to 70% between March and May. However, it is lowest varying from 30% to 40% in general. In correspondence with the relative humidity, the mean cloud formation is highest in July and August varying from 2 to 6 (zero indicating a cloud free sky and 10 an overcast sky). October is a cloud free month.

RAINFALL:

Water is probably the most important single determinant of land use in southern Aravali. The area depends for its rainfall on the southwest monsoon which is not only concentrated for a brief period of 3 months but is unevenly distributed both in space and time.

The southern and the western parts of the region receive less rainfall, while parts of Mount Abu and Gogunda receive sufficient rain fall. Therefore, deficiency of water for raising crops is to be met by irrigation. It is required to protect their single-crop agriculture against occasional draught. Many streamlets also flow in the southern and western parts of the region during the rainy season, which helps in irrigation. Agriculture being the prime occupation, has got special significance in the area. Girasia mostly depends on monsoons for growing crops. Most of the rain occurs in the rainy months of July and August in short and stormy showers with a relatively high intensity. The three monsoonal months July to September, however,

⁹ V.C Mishra (1967) “ Geography of Rajasthan”, N.B.T., New Delhi, Page 59-63.

¹⁰ R.L Singh “ India, A Regional Geography”, Page 5, 6.

¹¹ Alok Kumar Singh (1985) “ Population and settlement in U.P. A Geographical Analysis”, Inter India Publication, New Delhi, Page 24.

¹² B.N Dhoundiyal. (1967) “Rajasthan District Gazetteer, Sirohi”, Directorate of District Gazetteer Govt. of Rajasthan, Govt. Central Press, Jaipur, page 40.

provide 75% to 90% of the annual total rainfall. The total rainfall is received during the monsoon period extending from June to September. The average rainfall in the area is between 75 and 80 cm yearly. The only exception is Mount Abu, which is located at the highest peak in a funnel-like shape and thus receives a rainfall of 170 cm.

5. NET SOWN AREA :

Agriculture being the main occupation, land is the hope and valuable asset of the people. "Land is our basic natural resource on which various human activities are dependent; consequently its proper use becomes significant in the economy of any area"¹³.

The overall land use pattern in Aravali Hills differs considerably from the overall state pattern. Here the land use is increasingly dominated by forests and waste lands though net sown area and fallow lands do occupy considerable tracts. The presence of forests is commensurate with the habit and policies of the tribal people who derive their livelihood from the collection of forest products. Net sown area increased in lowland parts of Gogunda, Kotra, Abu road, Pindwara, and Bali tehsil. Kotra tehsil is having least net sown area (7.83%) as its maximum area is covered under forest (67.87%), similarly, Abu Road, Gogunda, Jhadol, and Kherwara also have less net sown areas. Desuri, Sheoganj, and Reodar have the highest land covered under the sown area

6. LAND HOLDINGS:

"Land with the tribal is decreasing day by day, size of land holdings is becoming smaller and smaller. This had resulted in the migration of tribals to the tehsil and district headquarters"¹⁴. Besides, small holdings of Girasia are further constantly fractionalized and fragmented, and thus the land is slipping out of the hands of the Girasia.

The pressure of cultivating families on agricultural land is very high. Man/Land ratio is very low. The per-household cultivable land is also insufficient. The cultivator has scattered fields in two or three fragmented holdings. Generally, on better sites on the field he builds his hutment. Thus, every household keeps more than one fragmented smallholding near its hut or far from it. According to the study of sample villages, the average household has a size of about 3.82 acres. It shows that most of the families of this region have a size of holding below four acres, the uneconomic holding result from hereditary sub-divisions. The problem of holding is not only two fold but also the soil and degree of slopes of the land that restrict the uniform large scale framing. The region is physically and culturally isolated and economically undeveloped. Due to traditional agriculture, the region has multi fact problems. The farmers do not get a fair return of their hard work.

7. AGRICULTURAL LABOUR:

Some Girasia are landless tribals who work on farms of landlords. Usually they are bonded and work as laborers in lieu of money or any other favour granted to them by their clever neighbors. They are engaged in agricultural activities mostly for non-tribal families of village. Male and female workers are engaged in agricultural activities. They are busy during the kharif and Rabi harvesting periods.

8. AGRICULTURAL TOOLS:

"Cultivators of Girasia landscape are still far from adopting mechanical farming, which they can ill afford. They still chiefly use old and indigenous tools like warlen, plough, sickles (for cutting of stalks) and basket (chhaj) for separating the grain from the chaff"¹⁵. Agricultural implements of the Girasia are manufactured by the village blacksmith. Tools and equipment are old and simple type and they have not developed scientific methods of agriculture. The implements are indigenous.

9. IRRIGATION:

Irrigation is an artificial means of watering into agricultural land. Almost all the tribal agricultural landscapes has poor caption of irrigation. Due to cultivation on hill slopes by the irrigation, agriculture has not been possible except on lands near foot hills. Agriculture being the prime occupation has got special significance in the area. Girasia mostly depends on monsoon for growing crops. Though, a number of wells have been constructed but still, irrigated area is quite small in most of the tehsils. This is also reflected in terms of double cropped area which varies between 16% to 21% in the area, except Abu Road where double

¹³ Alok Kumar (1986) "Tribal Culture and Economy", Inter India Publication, New Delhi, Page 42

¹⁴ S.S.Chaudhary (1995) "Electricity and Tribal Economy", Shiva Publishers Distributors,

Udaipur, Page 26

¹⁵ K.K.Sehgal (1976) "Rajasthan District Gazetteer, Pali", Mahaveer Printing Press, Jaipur, Page 89.

cropped area in Abu Road is due to more area (31.8%) under irrigation. This is mainly due to higher rainfall in this tehsil as well as availability of underground water along Banas river. Wells are the main sources of irrigation and the percentage of irrigated area through wells is 93%. Tank irrigation is not popular, and there is canal irrigation in the area. The entire irrigation is through well or tube well”¹⁶.

“The development of irrigation facilities is one of the most important needs of this area. Rainfall is confined only to three months in the year. The terrain being hilly, rainwater gets drained off. The problem is not only to conserve this water but also to irrigate effectively the upper region. Rabi crops like wheat and cotton are introduced, but all this depends on the provision of irrigation facilities”¹⁷.

In this hilly region where the water level is very low and the land is uneven, it is mostly irrigated through wells or tanks and canal irrigation is uncommon in the region. The wells are the major source of domestic water supply and irrigation. They are built near the agriculture fields and are constructed at the foothills or near river beds of nallahs. Seasonal fluctuation in the water level normally occurs. The performance of open wells varies from place to place and from season to season. Generally, the wells are Kuchcha.

10. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND MARKETING:

The main occupation of the villagers is agriculture. The principal crop is that of the kharif which is the main source of livelihood. Rabi Crops are only possible where a good irrigation facility is available. The agriculture is a subsistence type and the return out of it is hardly sufficient to support the entire family. The use of chemical fertilizers and hybrid seeds is limited. Due to a lack of irrigation facilities, most of the Girasia get only a single crop i.e. Kharif. It is also interesting to note that the per hectare production in Kharif is lower than rabi because of natural hazards and crude methods of agriculture. Production is very low and this too is reduced to nothing in periods of drought. In recent years, due to the increase in well irrigation facilities, the Girasia are growing the principal Kharif crops viz maize, jowar, bajra, rice, pulses like moong, tur, urad and chawla and inferior grain like kuri, kodra, tati and kulath. In Rabi, crops grown are wheat, barley and gram. During these days, Girasia are sowing cash crops like til and cotton in the monsoon season, rapeseed, rye, and mustard in the dry season, and other cash crops like ginger, turmeric, and sugarcane. Paddy is also grown only in small patches. Most of the Girasia are growing vegetables at a few places which are situated near the towns and mostly sell them to purchase other commodities like cloth, salt, oil etc.

The money lender collects grain from the villagers in place of the debts outstanding against each and stores it in his grainary and transports the surplus to bigger markets at the nearest towns in his trucks. He assesses its value at a very low rate and sells it to the customers at a higher rate. The villagers either sell or deposit their entire crops with the money lender and obtain their requirements from him throughout the year. The center of marketing in the village is the money lender's shop. The villagers bring wheat, rice, and maize to the shop and obtain their requirements in exchange. The shop meets all the requirements of the villagers. Pulses, gur, bidi, tea, cloths, ornaments, soap, oil, cosmetics, and similar other articles including sweets and medicines are available to them at the money lender's shop. The isolated location of the tribes from the mainstream of life is hindering their economic activities. The illiteracy among the tribals and the rich forest produce tempted the moneylenders and small traders to exploit the tribals. The absence of a monetary system and lack of communication facilities made their work easy to exploit the tribals.

AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:

Under agriculture development programs, following works are undertaken:

1. Land Reform Program:

The land is looked upon by most of the tribes not only as the source of their livelihood but also as the inevitable nexus for their identity. In the present situation, there is a growing feeling among the tribals that the process of development frequently leads to a progressive erosion of their traditional right over their land resources. The average size of land-holding in Girasia tribe is 0.4- 0.5 hectares. This creates difficulties in the application of modern inputs, adoption of scientific and improvement water conservation and plant protection measures, and in introduction of mechanized operations. These measures alone are capable of securing and stabilizing high yields. The tardy progress of land reforms in most states has compounded this problem. Consolidation of land can help improve productivity.

2. Agricultural Co-operative societies:

¹⁶ R.N.Mishra and T. Nancy (2006) "Tribal Culture and Economy", Ritu Publication, Jaipur, Page 76-77.

¹⁷ S.N.Bhattacharya (1995) "The Adivasi - Community Development Program", The Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, Published by Director Publication Division, Delhi, page 142

In Rajasthan, "Rajasthan Tribal Area Development Co-operative Federation Ltd. Udaipur" was established in the year 1976. In the Girasia villages, the government agencies (IRD, LAMPS) have come forward as credit agencies. The Federation has formed LAMPS (Large agricultural multipurpose co-operative societies) in the various panchayat samities of TSP (Tribal Sub Plan) area. The tribals are the members of these societies and get the financial assistance from them for certain economic activities like fisheries and forestry etc. The agencies have also provided advanced loan and subsidy for the purchase of bullocks, pumping sets, Persian wheels, construction of well and for implements. The LAMPS, which are working in TSP area also requires fulfillment of several technicalities as the procedure is difficult for illiterate tribals. . "Cooperative sector has to play major role in tribal development, as it is through these centers that the subsidies, fertilizers, loans etc. are provided to the villagers"¹⁸. Major work of cooperative societies are as follows:

1. Distribution of consumer goods: The co-operative societies purchase forest produce from Girasia for sale and Girasia get a fair price for their forest products in comparison to the price given by the old contractor.
2. Proper distribution of agricultural inputs such as fertilizer seeds and other items.
3. Providing storage capacity for their agricultural products.

3. Horticulture Program:

Agricultural extension programs and extensive demonstrations have been conducted to adopt new techniques and improve the per-unit production of oil seeds and pulses. Under this, improved seeds, fertilizer, and sprinklers under various program demonstrations were conducted, packets were distributed under the bio-fertilizer promotion program and farmers benefited under various farmer training programs.

Horticulture and sericulture program in IXth plan period against the amount spent under the horticulture program. Fruits plants were distributed and the area was covered under new vegetables and new orchard. In addition to this, new crop and vegetable demonstrations were conducted.

4..Soil Conservation Program:

The Girasia are residing in hilly and forest areas and have to depend for their livelihood mainly on agriculture and forest. Soil is a precious resource and degradation of soil is a serious problem that leads to depletion of soil fertility. Soil erosion is the main form of degradation that occurs because of deforestation and unscientific agricultural practices like shifting cultivation. A scheme for controlling shifting agriculture was implemented in the tribal area of Rajasthan. Soil conservation and watershed development program in the IXth plan period against forestry work done by the forest department and area covered under National watershed development.

5. Development of Irrigation Facilities:

Multipurpose irrigation projects and medium irrigation projects are under construction in the scheduled area. For the expansion of minor irrigation facilities, wells were depended on through blasting, lift irrigation schemes and anicuts were constructed. There is considerable scope for lift irrigation schemes in scheduled areas which has a number of rivers and nallahs, where there is sufficient water available for irrigation. For the expansion of minor Irrigation facilities, 1446 wells were deepened through blasting, 57 lift irrigation schemes and 20 anicuts were constructed in Girasia landscape.

Diesel Pump sets distribution- This scheme was introduced in the year 2000-2001. It is not possible for an individual family to install a costly diesel pump set, hence assistance of 50% of the cost would be provided to such cultivators who do not have any proper means to draw water from wells, rivers, or nallahs. This program would provide irrigation facilities to needy Girasia cultivators.

CONCLUSION:

The changes in the Girasia culture can be explained concerning the interplay of the factors of technology, economy, and urbanization, which has been going on for quite a long time since independence. The villages having relatively large populations but lying in remote and interior areas have not adopted the modern methods of agriculture and they still depend on the monsoon rains for irrigation, whereas, the villages situated on the roadside and in the plains near the towns are using them and they have been successful in increasing their agriculture production.

After independence, new rules and rights were framed for the protection of the tribals, but unfortunately, the non-tribal people settled in the tribal territories and exploited the tribesmen by taking advantage of the laws framed by the government itself. Therefore, the growth centers should be fixed among the tribal

¹⁸ R.N.Mishra and T.Nancy (2006) "Tribal Culture and Economy", Ritu Publication, Jaipur, Page 87

villages instead of non-tribal villages. The average size of land holding in Girasia tribe is 0.4 to 0.5 hectares. This creates difficulties in the application of modern inputs, adoption of scientific methods, and improvement of water conservation and plant protection measures, and in introducing plant protection measures and in introducing mechanized operations. These measures alone are capable of securing and stabilizing high yields. The tardy progress of land reforms in most states has compounded this problem. Consolidation of land can help improve productivity.

The land is looked upon by most of the tribes not only as the source of their livelihood but also as an inevitable nexus for their identity. In the present situation, there is a growing feeling among the tribals that the process of development frequently leads to a progressive erosion of their traditional right over their land resources. Hence, any further planning and development should concentrate on the conservation of tribal mode of living, and the scope for strengthening the subsidiary occupation sector should be emphasized.

The Girasia, by tradition, are cultivators, but the tribal agriculture being still is in a backward stage with low productivity. In general, agriculture practices are very poor due to unfavorable and small land holdings, poor cropping patterns, crude agriculture implements absence of irrigation facilities, and above all, ignorance and primitive lifestyle. The isolated location of the tribes from the mainstream of life is hindering the economic activities of Girasia. The illiteracy among the tribals and the agricultural produce tempted the moneylenders and small traders to exploit the tribals. The absence of a monetary system and lack of communication facilities made their work easy to exploit the tribals. There is a growing need for systematic classification careful analysis of innumerable facts, and authentic identification of tribal problems, difficulties, and requirements on a scientific basis.

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