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Traditional Neighbourhood in Modern Ahmedabad: The Pol

HARISH DOSHI

The particular tradition under enquiry in the present work is that of neighbourhood living institutionalized in the form of *pol* living. The tradition implies the carrying out of mutual give and take among members. The type of relationships and the occasions on which they are established and maintained required to be stated specifically. The tradition of *pol* living is a specialized case of neighbourhood living and its characteristics will be examined here in detail. The material for this discussion has been drawn from enquiries conducted by the author in 11 *pols* of the city. These *pols* bear the following names: *Nagji Bhudar-ni-Pol*, *Shri Ramji-ni-Pol*, *Hanuman-ni-Pol*, *Amali-ni-Pol*, *Kadava-Pol*, *Ganchi-ni-Pol*, *Rangila-Pol*, *Vad-ni-Pol*, *Garnala-ni-Pol*, *Wagan-Pol* and *Shantinath-ni-Pol*.

The Patel-*Pol* with a population of 917 consisting of 472 males and 445 females, and the Jain-*Pol* with a population of 713 persons — 382 males and 331 females — are located in the heart of the old city of Ahmedabad. The Patel-*Pol* is in Dariapur Ward II and the Jain-*Pol* in Jamalpur Ward II of the Municipal Corporation wards of the city. Both the *pols* are strictly residential streets, though for the convenience of the *Pol*-dwellers, a dhobi has been given accommodation to run his minor laundry at the main entrance of both the *pols*. In Section 1 of this paper, the tradition of *pol* living as it operated at the beginning of the century has been described and in Section 2 the groupings as they emerge in day-to-day living have been identified. Sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 deal with the housing pattern, caste-composition, norms of the *pols* selected for intensive studies, and the problem of safety and security. Finally Section 7 deals with the changes in terms of dispersal of *pol* families due to the emergence of new housing societies.

1

The Traditional form of Pol Living

The tradition of *pol* living at the beginning of the twentieth century is outlined here. Ecologically, a *pol* is a residential street. It has well-defined boundaries demarcated through a main gateway, sub-gates and a cluster of houses. It has a defined area of jurisdiction spread over continuous houses binding the families in them under certain rules and regulations and creating a sense of belonging among its inhabitants. If the rules were slighted, the offender used to be fined and in former times, till he paid up, he was not allowed to light a lamp in his house or to give a feast. Locally, this punishment was called *Devo-Devata-Bandh*.

Generally, a *pol* has its council called *Pol-nu-panch* which regulates the behaviour of the members and manages local affairs. Sometimes, a *pol* is further divided into smaller identifiable units each having its own *panch* or council. The size of these *pols* and the units varies. When the units are very small, some of them come together and form a common council. The councils of the small units are called *nanhu-panch* and of the entire *pol-motun-panch* meaning thereby the small and the big council. However, the smaller units cannot be regarded as distinct entities. Their members have a sense of unity extending beyond the bounds of their particular street spread over the *pol* as a whole. The population composition of these streets and the *pol* used to be homogeneous along caste lines having only a limited number of families from other serving groups such as priests, carpenters (Suthar) and barber (Nai). In some cases *pols* have also had a multi-caste composition with the dominance of one caste (Table 1).

The membership of the *pol*-council is decided on the basis of residence in the *pol* and the payment of the 'tax' of the council. Two types of membership exist: membership for owners and the membership for tenants. The tenants may be said to be members of a second class in the sense that they are not given any right in *pol* property and decision making in the affairs of the *pol*-council. They are, however, considered fellow members and cooperation is extended to them as neighbours both in day-to-day living and on special occasions like death, marriage and birth and such other occasions when a family requires the help of the collective unit. In turn, they are also expected to fulfil their obligations and conform

The Pol

to the rules and regulations of *Pol* council.

TABLE 1
Dominant Caste-Group in the 11 Pols

Pols	Dominant Caste or Group	Number of other Castes
1. Nagji-Bhudar-Ni-Pol	Jain	2
2. Shriramji-Ni-Pol	Patel	7
3. Hanuman-Ni-Pol	Kadava	2
4. Amali-Ni-Pol	Patel	11
5. Patel-Pol	Kadava	2
6. Jain-Pol	Jain	7
7. Vad-Ni-Pol	Patel	14
8. Garnala-Ni-Pol	Kadava	13
9. Wagan-Pol	Suthar	1
10. Rangila-Pol	Jain	7
11. Shantinath-Ni-Pol	Patel-Lewa	6

2

The Life in Pol

Everyone knows everyone else in the *pol* and a stranger is easily located by the *pol*-dwellers. No sooner does the stranger enter the *pol*, he is quickly surrounded by a group of young boys and children who crowd round him asking '*Kone-Malvun-che*' meaning 'whom do you want to meet?'. If the stranger has entered the right *pol*, he is soon taken to the family he wants to visit. In some cases, the children may not be familiar with the first name of the person or if there happens to be more than one person of the same name, they ask for the surname and thereby make every possible effort to locate the identity of the person the stranger wants to visit. These groups of the children and young boys play a vital role in the life of *pol*. In the morning and late in the evening, elderly persons also form similar groups. The groups of children and the young boys generally exist for the longer part of the day while the elders get together for shorter periods. The elders usually discuss various *pol*

matters while brushing their teeth with a locally made brush called 'datan'. These include matters related to caste and happenings at the wider level i.e. the city, the state and the country. The morning papers provide the stimulus for such informal discussions. In the evening hours, as in the morning, they pay a visit to the temple. Many domestic affairs relating to *pol* families are discussed and untoward actions are condemned by women in the *pol* during noon hours (when male members are generally out at work, children at school and they are free from domestic work). It is this group which most effectively probes into an event connected with any family in the *pol* or of their caste even outside the *pol* at the level of personal conversations and gossip. Often criticisms in such groups serve as the functional mechanisms for resolving conflicts.

Observations on the sports-groups of the *pols* have revealed that the children of the same age group play within their own group. The games they generally play are local while some foreign games such as cricket could also become very popular in the *pols*. This has happened to an extent that even a seven-year-old child is familiar with the names of the players in the 'Indian cricket team' as well as of the foreign team. During test matches these play-groups understandably discuss the game being played either in the country or overseas with the help of the running commentary on the radio. The young children while playing cricket try to follow the rules of the game though the rules are locally reinterpreted and are decided by mutual agreement after some heated discussion. Quarrels take place when the agreement is not finalised and the game is discontinued. Children of about eight years and above play within the group of their own sex. These groups are seen very frequently at the place providing some room to sit and talk leisurely, particularly, at the point near road-crossing in the *pol*, light-pole or near the main gateway of the *pol*. Girls generally meet at the doors of the houses in the *pol* and the topics of their discussions are films, college or school matters, games and sometimes matters not intelligible to an outsider. This is the usual manner in which *pol*-dwellers spend their leisure time during the week days.

Currently, cycles, motor-cars, scooters and a well run municipal city bus service make it easier for the *pol*-dwellers to move out with ease to the gardens, restaurants, theatres and other meeting places. Sunday is a day of joy and pleasure in the *pol*. The children and the youth do not have to attend schools and colleges nor do the elders go to work. That gives them an opportunity to remain in

the *pol* and relax in the informal company of their own fellows after a week's hard work.

3

The Housing Pattern

A careful look at the arrangement of the houses in these *pols* reveals that the pattern is that of a curious mixture of approach and defence with dead walls at the end of the street. Most of these houses are more than three-storeyed and a few four-storeyed. They are pucca houses with massive walls and made of good timber. Some of them, especially those about 100 years old, have ornamental wooden carvings. The upper storeys of the old houses often jutt out so far that they almost meet across the roadway. Inside most of these two or more storeyed houses there is a yard, and under the yard there is a covered reservoir which was used in the past for storing rain-water for drinking purposes. In the Patel-*pol* three houses were found still using the reservoirs for collecting rain-water as they believed that this helped them to keep the house cool during the summer season. The pumps installed to draw water from these reservoirs have still not been removed from many houses. Locally, these reservoirs are called 'tanka'. They are now used as store rooms. In addition to the reservoir, the houses had secret underground cellars with carefully built inside entrances having airshafts running through the walls, so that they could be used as retreats for men in hiding (Bombay Gazetteer: 1879). Having been constituted with such curiously arranged houses, the main street of the *pol* is frequently divided into narrow and uneven smaller streets which narrow and divide to such an extent that in the innermost corners of the *pol*, making it very difficult for even a cow to negotiate or for a bicycle to turn.

THE PATEL POL

The main gateway of the Patel-*pol* faces south and opens on Dabagarh Wad Road in Dariapur Ward II of the city. It covers 99 houses occupied by different families. The main gateway of the *pol* is furnished with old wooden shutters and a small window over the face of the left shutter. As soon as one goes through this gate,

there is a room on the left formerly occupied by the *Polio* (the watchman); now occupied by a *Dhobi* (the washerman). On the right, one finds two small streets furnished with small entrance gates. One of these two streets has residential houses. From the main gateway after walking ten steps, one has to take a left turn. This path covers only 20 steps. To the left of it is located the community-hall of the *pol* and on the right an imposing four-storied building renovated in 1939. Reaching this point one has to turn right and walk about 25 steps to approach the central open-space of the *pol* called *Pol-nu-chokhtun*. It is named after a young member of the *pol* who died in the national freedom movement in 1942. The road here is divided into streams one of which connects the regular path with a sequence of nine houses on its right and a dead wall of the houses on its left. At the end of this path there is the *pol*-temple and a well in the corner. On the right of the temple, there are two gates: one, which is smaller ($4' \times 2 \frac{1}{2}'$), connects the *pol* with another neighbouring *pol*, and, the other, which is bigger ($8' \times 6'$), leads into the street. After a walk of five steps, the street bifurcates into two sub-streets or lanes one of which goes up to three further divisions, and the other closes at the end. This entire street covers 21 houses. From the central place the other path is connected with another street of the *pol* which is very narrow and where houses on both the sides face each other. At the end of this street is the residence of the hereditary head of the *pol*-council.

THE JAIN POL

The Jain-*pol* facing the east opens on the road which connects Manek-chowk and Astodia Darwaja in Jamalpur ward. The *pol* on this road is located very close to Manek-chowk. The main gateway of the *pol* is furnished with old, wooden shutters of which one has a small window over its face. A room is erected on this gate which was in the past occupied by the *Polio* — the watchman of the *pol*. It is now used to house the library. Inside the *pol* on the left is a long street with some uneven curves and 13 houses. On the right there is another street having seven houses. These two streets lie at a distance of 25 steps from the main gateway of the *pol*. As soon as we pass this street and proceed further, we find on our left the *Derasar* — a large hall used for religious gatherings and to accommodate Jain-saints visiting the *pol*, particularly during the

rainy season. The other lane has nine houses. The office of the *pol*-council is located in this street. Just opposite the *Derasar* there is another street covered with a small gate and six houses. From the *Derasar* within 25 steps there is an open place used for large gatherings, sports, film-shows and similar collective activities. From this place to the right, a narrow path takes us to the temple of the *pol* and its inner corner is connected with the street from the point opposite the *Derasar*. There are five houses in this street. Another road from this open place is further divided into three small streets of which one is formed of extremely narrow curves. There are 15 houses in these three small streets. This is the narrowest part of the *pol*. On the left side of the road is another street covered with a small gateway and 14 houses.

4

The Caste-Composition of the Pols

The caste-composition of the two *pols* reveals a predominance of a single caste. The Patel-*pol* is predominantly occupied by Kadava-Patels while the Jain-*pol* is occupied by the Jain-Swetamber group. Each of the *pols* may be described separately.

THE PATEL-POL

Of the total population of 917 persons living in the *pol*, 856 are Kadava-Patels while 61 are Brahmans. Table 2 gives the picture of caste-composition of the Patel-*pol*.

The Kadava Patel: Traditionally, the Kadava Patels were cultivators but today a large number of the members of this caste are leading politicians, officials, industrialists, businessmen and are engaged in private and government institutions. There are a total of 118 earning members of this caste in the *pol* of which 35 are engaged in business on their own, two are running their factories, 79 are serving in government and private institutions and two have agriculture as their main source of income.

As the Kadava Patels happen to be the dominant group in the *pol*, it would be useful to note the traditions associated with this caste, and to briefly specify the place it occupies in the social milieu.

TABLE 2
The Caste-composition of the Patel-Pol, 1966

Caste	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Kadava Patel	442	414	856	93.4
Brahmani Group	30	31	61	6.6
Total:	472	445	917	100.0

Source: Enumerated by the Investigator.

Kadava-Patel is one of the four divisions of Kunbis who formed 14.26 per cent of the Hindus of Gujarat, according to Census of 1901 (Campbell 1901: p. 154-166). The other three divisions are Anjana, Lewa and Matia. Of the total Kunbis with a strength of 1,410,422 in 1901, 400,295 were Kadavas (ibid. p. 164). They were distributed over all the five districts of what then constituted Gujarat and were found chiefly in Ahmedabad and Kadi. The major population of Kadavas was concentrated in Kadi *taluka* of Mehsana district. In 1901, of the total population of 175,570 persons of Kadava Kunbis in the then Baroda State 164,593 were in Kadi, according to a publication entitled *Patidar Gnyati-na Sanskrit Rit Rivaju nu Akikaran*, released from Baroda in 1910. Of the four divisions referred to above the Kadava and Lewa are considered higher and they are traditionally husbandmen. They are well-versed in the properties of every kind of soil and intimately acquainted with the wants of every crop (Campbell 1901, p. 166).

Unlike the Vanias and other high classes, they belong to many sects, Bijmargis, Dadypantis, Kabirpantis, Madhavgarnis, Pranamis, Ramanandis, Shaivs, Svaminarayans and Vallabhacharyas. According to one story they have sprung from clay figures fashioned by Uma or Parvati the wife of Shiva. They worship *Umia-mata* and consider Unja, about forty miles north of Ahmedabad, as a place of pilgrimage. It is believed that Lord Shiva at Uma's request imbued the figures with life and founded for them the village (Ibid. p. 157).

In the past the Kadava Patels of Ahmedabad city being the aristocracy of the caste had a peculiar marriage custom. Children about a month old, and sometimes even unborn children were married on the hypothesis that sexes will prove correct. For the enforcement of the rules they had their caste organization in Ahmedabad city where social disputes were settled at meetings of the castemen (Census of India 1931, p. 281). In the present circumstances the

organization is much weakened in this regard and its role has merely been to provide some social service to the members of the caste.

In the field of occupation, members of this caste have now moved from their traditional occupation of cultivation to other fields. A large number of them are now leading politicians, officials, industrialists, businessmen and engaged as trained personnel in private and government institutions. In the present Ministry of the State, of the total of nine Ministers, two and the leader of the opposition in the State Assembly are Patels, and for the period of 1961 to 1965 the Mayor of the city came from the same caste. Their emerging pre-eminence in industry would be illustrated by the fact that the Board of Directors of Ahmedabad Mills Association is headed by a leading Patel industrialist and of the 30 members of the executive committee of the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industries, nine are Patels and the committee is also headed by a Patel. The President of the Rotary Club of Ahmedabad was a Patel in the year 1966-67.

The Brahmans: Originally, the Brahman families in the *pol* were three in number. They lived in the *pol* for the purposes of temple worship, and for assisting *pol*-members on occasions like births, marriages, deaths and other social and religious performances. They were considered members of the *pol*. In due course of time, these three families have expanded into 11 families. The traditional rights of serving the *pol* are now shared by them. All the 10 earning members of this group in the *pol* are engaged in service with the government or private institutions.

THE JAIN-POL

The Jain-*pol* is predominantly occupied by the Jain-Svetamber group. They constitute 93.1 per cent of the total population. The remaining 6.9 per cent of the population is covered by seven other castes as indicated in Table 3.

In the composition of the *pol* according to caste, we find the Brahmans conspicuously absent. The *pol* has a temple in which the deity is worshipped twice a day with elaborate ritual. Puja takes place during Paryushandays and on other religious occasions. Then there are certain rituals related to birth, marriage and death at the family level. For all these purposes, a priest is necessary. Unlike

the Patel-pol, we do not find any family fulfilling the priestly function. The *pol* acquires the services of a priest from outside. However, for the purposes of worship in the temple, they have employed one Brahman who draws a monthly salary in cash and is allowed to stay in the temple itself.

TABLE 3
Caste-composition of the Jain-Pol, 1966

Caste	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1. Jain	404	323	727	93.1
2. Lewa Patel	5	5	10	1.3
3. Vania	1	2	3	.4
4. Soni	14	8	22	2.8
5. Suthar	3	1	4	.5
6. Kumbhar	3	2	5	.6
7. Rami	2	2	4	.5
8. Mochi	4	2	6	.8
Total	436	345	781	100.0

Source: Enumerated by the Investigator.

The Jain: The *pol* is dominated by the Jains of Svetamber sect. Originally they were not supposed to be an occupational caste. The followers of the Jain religion were allowed freedom to follow any occupation they liked. Later on when some members followed a particular occupation, divisions or sub-castes named after that occupation were formed. Among the Dasa Shrimalis there is a division by name Chanapahua, which suggests that its members might have sold grains and parched rice as an occupation in the past (Sangave 1959, p. 84). Now the Jains are predominantly traders. Weber believed that they, at least Svetamber Jains, became traders due to purely ritualistic reasons. The practice of *ahimsa* led to the exclusion of the Jains from all trades which made use of fire, involved work with sharp instruments (wood or stone work), from masonry, and in general, from the majority of industrial callings. Agriculture was completely excluded: ploughing, especially, always endangers the lives of worms and insects. Only in the trade could one truly practise *ahimsa* (Weber 1958, p. 199). It is actually their proficiency in trading activities that has now become associated with their name.

The Jains are the third most urbanized religious group, the third

most literate, and the second or third most prosperous (Davis 1951, p. 184). In the city of Ahmedabad according to the Census of 1961 numerically they rank third with a population of 64,341 or 5.60 per cent of the total population (Census 1961: City volume: 202). Of the 153 total earning members in the *pol*, 114 are Jains of whom 86 are engaged in trading activities while 29 are serving in government and private institutions in the city. The Jain-pol, in contrast with the Patel, is essentially a *pol* of traders; the Patel-pol being that of the service-class.

Lewa-Patel (Kunbis): The Lewa-Patels constitute one of the four endogamous divisions of Kunbis traditionally engaged in cultivation. Traditionally, the Lewa-Kunbis of Ahmedabad city used to settle their social disputes at meetings of leading members of the caste presided over by a particular hereditary headman. Offenders were generally punished by fines and excommunication. The money so collected was spent on caste dinners, building *vadis* (houses) for the caste and other purposes (Census: 1931). In the *pol* under study there are only 10 persons of this caste. Their main earnings are derived from business.

The Sonis: The Soni families in the *pol* number four. They are goldsmiths and are traditionally engaged in making ornaments of gold and silver. In Ahmedabad city they had a permanent body of twenty-five hereditary members, one from each *pol* or street, and a hereditary headman. Social and moral questions were settled by this body and offenders were punished (Census 1931: p. 304). All the four families of Soni caste in the *pol* run jewellery shops.

The Vanias: The Vanias are a trading caste by tradition. They are divided into a number of sub-castes of which Ahmedabad had Modha Nagar, Porvad, Dasashrimali and Shrivak vanias. The family in the *pol* belongs to the Deshaval sub-caste. In the past they had a permanent *panchayat* (council) consisting of five selected members with a hereditary headman whose control extended over the city. Meetings of the *panchayat* were summoned through the caste-priest. Breaches of caste rules were punished by fines or excommunication and the money so collected was spent on caste-dinners (Census 1931: p. 308). The family in the *pol* has retained its traditional occupation and runs a shop in the city.

The Kumbhars: Traditionally, the chief occupation of the Kumbhar caste was the making of tiles, bricks, earthen pots and toys. They were divided into sixteen groups in the city and also there were further territorial endogamous groups such as Ahmedabadi, Surati, etc. (Census 1931, p. 277). The family of this case in the Jain *pol* is residing over last 40 years and has moved from its traditional occupation to that of running betel shops.

The Suthars: There is only one Suthar family in the *pol*. It has been residing there for the last 15 years. The Suthars claim their origin from Vishvakarma, the divine architect. They have five principal endogamous divisions viz. Gujara, Mewada, Pancholi, Marvadi and the Vaisha. Of these the Mewadas and Marvadis have migrated from Mewad and the Marwar part of the present state of Rajasthan. The Vaishas rank the highest and the Pancholis the lowest because they built ships and did other work in wood involving loss of animal life (Census 1931, p. 304-5).

The Ramis: The Rami caste had flower-selling as its traditional occupation. There is one family of this caste in the *pol*. The head of the family is the only earning member and is employed as a peon in a bank in the city.

The Mochis: The Mochis make shoes and leather goods. In the *pol* there is only one family of this caste. They reside in the *pol* in a very low-lying place — dark, dirty and unelectrified. The family has left its traditional occupation and its earning member now works as a labourer in a cotton factory.

The presence of the three castes, viz. Kumbhars, Ramis and Mochis, is considered as a matter of mere occupancy of some accommodation in the *pol*. None of these families has been given any right or share in the *pol*-properties and no social interaction of formal type has been initiated with them. Their insignificance becomes apparent when a young graduate informant of the *pol* tried to hide the presence of the Mochi family in the *pol*. They are not invited on the occasions of marriage or for other social and religious performances. They do not visit the temple in the *pol*, nor do they possess membership of *pol*-council. How could they then enter the *pol*? We are told by the secretary of the *pol*-council that they were not given membership of the *pol*-council and secondly they have occupied a very insignificant place in the *pol* and their presence

did not disturb the social organization of the *pol*.

Compared to the three lower castes, the Lewa Patel, Vania and Soni enjoy a dignified status. They are invited to take part in collective activities. They are reciprocated by the members of the *pol* through co-operation on the occasions of death, marriage and socio-religious performances and also allowed to make use of the amenities provided by the *pol*. However, they, too, like the Kumbhar, Mochi, and Rami families cannot exercise any right in the affairs of the *pol*-council.

The facts related to the caste-composition of the two *pol*s reveal that the social structure of the *pol* is built strongly under the dominance of one group. The others are admitted in small proportions, as 'second class citizens' as it were, and in some cases even ignored for purposes of collective life. Change of occupation on the part of the lower castes has not helped them to acquire a better status in the *pol*. Occupational links have been given some concession in the sense that the Patel, Vania and Soni have been given some recognition; but the caste-group or the sect still holds sway over the affairs of the *pol*. Others are considered as insignificant minorities. What makes a sect or a caste dominate a *pol* is its say in organizational matters. It is from this power that others are excluded. The nature of the *pol*-council and its meaning for the members will now be considered.

5

The Pol-Panch

The *pol* as a social entity has its social organization which distributes rights and obligations among the members of the *pol* and regulates their behaviour according to set norms. Thus, a sense of loyalty to one organization is created among the *pol*-dwellers which in turn results in a feeling of brotherhood and harmony in living together in the *pol*. Organizational responsibilities in the Patel-*pol* are distributed in two ways: (i) Functions exercised by the *pol* and (ii) Functions allotted to smaller units. The *pol* has three sub-councils, each of which is confined to the main streets in the *pol*. Two such streets being small possess a common sub-council. The functions of these small councils are to look after sanitation and street lighting, to provide an alternative to a family which due to its limited economic resources was unable to invite the entire *pol* to a customary feast

on the occasion of death, marriage or religious pilgrimage, to carry out the instructions relating to social boycott of any family in the *pol* or arising from other decisions taken by the *pol*-council and to organize small-dinners, excursion-trips, locally called *Ujjani*, performances of *Garba-dance* on *Navaratra-festival* and distribution of *lahni* (gifts of refreshments or other items among the members of the street). These are the main functions assigned to these sub-councils. They are a part of the larger council of the *pol* and every street provides a unit for assisting the *pol* in the exercise of its functions with the social jurisdiction of the *pol*. A family socially boycotted by the *pol*-council was necessarily given the same treatment by these sub-councils. Payment of the 'tax' of these sub-councils is not considered sufficient for even the membership of that particular street, and in the case of use of the *pol* community-hall, temple, utensils etc. treatment is given on the *pol*-basis. In their turn, the members of these streets show their loyalty beyond the bounds of street, extending over the entire *pol*. Outside the *pol* they refer to the *pol* when they have occasions to identify their residence. Residents receive their mail on the address of the *pol* rather than in the name of any street in the *pol*.

The nature of inter-relationships among these streets and sub-councils is marked by mutual adjustments. The present head of the *pol*-council who has been in this position for the last 25 years said that there has not been any case of conflict between the two councils of these streets. In the sports-groups of the children, however, one finds that the teams are formed on the basis of these streets. In regard to the membership of these small councils, a shift is not possible without fulfilling certain formalities. A change of residence from one street to another requires payment of a 'tax' of Rs. 501 in the case of an owner of a house, and Rs. 301 in the case of a tenant.

In the Jain-*pol*, the entire *pol* is governed by the one council of the *pol*. Though there are six main streets within it, none of them possesses the organization of a sub-council for its own affairs.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE POL-COUNCIL

The membership of the *pol*-council requires the possession of a house in the *pol* either in the capacity of an owner or a tenant and the payment of a 'tax' according to the rules laid down. Once

membership is so acquired, it could be continued in conformity with the rules and regulations of the *pol* and satisfying the expected obligations. These obligations are:

1. To send one male and one female member of the family to help other member-family during events like deaths and marriages.
2. To make contributions to funds raised by the *pol*-council.
3. To extend a formal invitation even to the family with which a family under consideration may not be on good terms when it is organizing any socio-religious function on *pol*-basis.
4. To terminate the social interaction with the family socially boycotted by the *pol*-council.
5. To render cooperation in the collective activities organized by the *pol*-council.

A deliberate breach of these obligations is considered serious and the offender is fined or excommunicated. In the Jain-*pol* and in the Patel-*pol* two such families were found (one in each) who had failed to conform to these expectations and were socially boycotted.

When the tax is paid and the membership acquired, and the family leaves the *pol* and starts residing elsewhere, it can continue its membership of the *pol* provided the family keeps the house in its possession and fulfils mutual obligations. In the case of the Patel-*pol* there are 20 families and in the case of the Jain-*pol* 23 such families who have left the *pol* and are yet treated as regular members of the *pol*.

There are 139 members in the council of the Jain-*pol* and 147 in the council of the Patel-*pol*. Of these, 27 in the Patel-*pol* and 41 in the Jain-*pol* are tenants. The tenant-members in both these *pols* do not enjoy any right in the property of the *pol* and the decision-making process of the council. However, they are given necessary cooperation and help in day to day living and other important occasions. They are also allowed to make use of the common amenities and utilities provided by the council of the *pol*. In the Jain-*pol* the position with reference to the membership of the tenants in the *pol* has been defined as one of 'B' class members.

The councils in both the *pols* had a hereditary headman who presided over the meeting of the council. However, in the Jain-*pol* in 1947 the rule regarding a hereditary headman was revised and instead after every five years, an election is held to elect the head of the *pol*-council and a committee of eight members to assist him.

TABLE 4
Common Facilities available in the 11 Pals

S. No. PALS	I Temple	II Utensils	III Medical Equip- ments	IV Library	V Gadi Takia	VI Sports Articles	VII Books to students
1. Nagji-Bhunder Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
2. Shri Ranji-Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
3. Hanuman-Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
4. Amali-Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
5. Patel-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
6. Jain-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
7. Vad-Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
8. Garnala-Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
9. Wagan-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
10. Rangila-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
11. Shantinath-Ni-Pol	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Indicator: + Existence and available to outsiders
- Existence and meant for Pol-members only
— Absent

Three elections have been successfully held since the rules have been enforced. In the Patel-pol the headman still remains a hereditary one. The head of the council has the right to summon the meetings of the council. To do this he is not required to make any prior announcement. In the Jain-pol he is also given the right to spend a sum of money not exceeding Rs. 201 per year without the permission of the committee or its members. Similarly in the Patel-pol he could spend up to Rs. 251 within his discretion. The committee in the Jain-pol could also spend Rs. 501. Beyond that, any expenditure in both the polys required the sanction of the majority of the members of the pol-council.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE POL-COUNCIL

The pol-council being a formal organization on customary lines had certain functions to perform for the members of the pol. On the basis of the study of the written constitution of the Jain-pol and interviews organized for the purpose with the head of the council of the Patel-pol and three other leading persons of whom one is working as a head of a voluntary organization in the city, another practising law and the third teaching in a local college, the following main functions of these councils in their traditional setting can be identified:

1. to enact and revise rules relating to rent and sale of the house in the pol;
2. to organize religious celebrations and common dinners;
3. to own and maintain common properties like temple, utensils for large dinners, a common meeting-place for large gatherings, and the ornaments of the temple (Table 4);
4. to provide facilities and amenities such as common latrines, street lighting, sanitation, well for the purposes of drinking water etc.; and
5. to regulate the behaviour of the members of the pol according to the rules and expectations of the council and punish those who had violated them.

The impact of the modern forces on these traditions and the response of these traditions to these forces will be examined under different heads in the sections that follows.

6

Safety and Security: The Defence-Oriented Pattern of Housing

The physical appearance of the *pol* even at first glance presents a defence-oriented structure. The Jain-*Pol* and the Patel-*Pol* are provided with strong wooden shutters at their main entrance gates. These gates are furnished with a small window over the front of the shutter in both the *pols*. Entrance to the *pol* through this main gateway was provided only during day time under normal conditions in the city. The gate was always closed at night and was again opened early in the morning. Till 1953 as an old informants in the Jain *pol* could remember, the gate of the *pol* continued to be so closed. Later in 1956 there was the Maha-Gujarat Movement in the city and for six days the gate was so closed. The gate was also closed sometimes during the day time under special circumstances, particularly when there were violent occurrences in the city or when a community dinner was arranged in the *pol*. The small window was used as an entrance into the *pol* on such occasions. In addition to the main gateway the *pol* had other smaller gates which connected the *pol* with other neighbouring *pols*. In the Patel-*pol* there is one small gate of this type while the Jain-*pol* is closed at the other end. This small gate was also closed at night. The physical existence of these gateways and certain specifications for the entrance indicate the nature of conscious efforts at preventing indiscriminate entry into the *pol*. It was further strengthened by the checking strangers entering the *pol* by a watchman specially engaged for the purpose by the *pol*-organization.

The way in which the houses are arranged in the two *pols* reflects the *pol*'s defence-oriented structure. The houses are built with great care; the main roads are faced by the dead walls of these houses provided with small entrances. Inside the houses are open courtyards and covered water reservoirs. The courtyard is sometimes raised like a terrace and used as a lounge or for storing grains or other goods for domestic use. A speciality of these houses is the existence of a secret underground cellar with a carefully hidden entrance. Some of these cellars have air shafts running through the walls, so that they can be used as retreats for men in hiding. The price of the houses on the road was cheaper and such houses were easily available while the houses in the interior were not easily available and their prices were very high.

The Pol

The main street of the *pol* is divided into small streets and they continue to subdivide to such an extent that they are left only with a narrow passage to walk.

THE POLIO (WATCHMAN)

The local fortification of the *pol* was well guarded by the *polio*. There were several rules relating to entry into the *pol* for the members of the *pol*. The *polio* was a watchman engaged by the *pol* to discharge the duties of vigilance. He was required to keep constant watch over the *pol* and in turn was paid by the members of the *pol*. The *polio* in the Patel-*pol* and the Jain-*pol* was allowed to work outside the *pol* during day time and supplement his income. However, he had to keep his wife or son readily available for the services of the members of the *pol*. During night hours he had to keep himself awake and move about in the *pol* throughout the night. He was provided with a *lathi*, a knife and a torch while he was on duty. In case he was out of station, or fell ill, the *polio* could temporarily be replaced by a responsible and efficient male member of his family.

In both the *pols* the *polio* and his family were provided free accommodation. This was a part payment in kind for his services. In addition, on ceremonial occasions and festivals like Diwali, Holi and Utrarans he was given some ad-hoc 'gifts' in cash and kind by the families in the *pol* and the *pol*-council. On the occasions of birth and marriage he was served food and offered a dress by the family. Whenever there was a large-scale dinner in the *pol*, he was given a share as other employee groups were given. In both the *pols*, the *polio* family belonged to the *Nai*-caste and hence it could serve the families in the *pol* in other ways also. The following main functions were traditionally carried out by the *polio* in both the *pols*:

1. To keep watch over the *pol* during night hours and check that every house in the *pol* was properly locked up during the night.
2. To clamp down the shutters of the *pol* at the designated hour at night and open them again in the morning.
3. To distribute 'datan' (locally made tooth brush) every morning among the member families of the *pol*-council.
4. To act as a messenger on occasions like death, marriage and birth occurring in a member family.

5. To carry out the instructions of the *pol*-council when it meets and organizes collective activities and programmes.
6. To light the street-lamps at night.

SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE MODERN CONTEXT

The traditional phase of the growth of the city of Ahmedabad is connected with the emergence of a strong Government. The city was a part of the Bombay province till Independence. The period of the last one hundred years has been characterized with efficient police arrangements. The general conditions of law and order improved all over the region. Habitation began to spread outside the city walls, and the industrial area grew prominently in the outer zone. The population also grew fast. These conditions reflect the rise of confidence in the people regarding the maintenance of law and order.

Thus, with the spread of security measures and efficient services of police, C.I.D. departments and over-all disappearance of looting, plundering and violent attacks the traditional dangers to life and property are no longer felt acutely and the services of *polio* have become obsolete. In the Jain-*pol* the wife of the *polio*, after her husband's death lived there till 1955, but has now left the *pol*. In the Patel-*pol* the entire family has gone to the nearby town of Mehsana as the head of the family could find better employment there.

At the organizational level, rules relating to entry into the *pol* premises at night facilitated the enhanced security of the *pol*. Every member of the *pol* conformed to the rules and entered the *pol* before a fixed hour at night, and if one had an occasion to come late at night, he agreed to inform the *polio* of one's late arrival. The rule worked well and the gates of the *pol* could be clamped down regularly. This provided a check on those *pol*-dwellers who were used to remaining outside the *pol* till the late hours of the night. Generally, no quarrel on the point of this local rule of entry occurred in the two *pols*. In turn, it was actively supported by the elders and old persons of the *pol* who could scold young people of the *pol* on their late arrival in the *pol*. I was told by a large number of my informants that while old persons of the *pol* were either sitting near the temple, main gateway or other crucial places in the *pol*, they could not dare go before them. Moreover, no stranger was

allowed to enter the *pol* late at night. If the stranger had a reason for coming to the *pol*, he had to give a satisfactory identity through a member of the *pol* whom he knew. Sometimes when the *polio* was not convinced and was in doubt, he could ask the person to wait outside the *pol* and the person whom he wanted to meet was called out to receive him at the main gateway of the *pol*.

It is now possible to summarise the factors connected with the needs for safety and security and provisions made in that regard, which were responsible for the rise of *pol*-living and its maintenance over a long period in the city. These factors were of two types:

1. The factors in the emergence of the tradition of neighbourhood living in the form of *pol*, and
2. The factors which acted in favour of sustaining the *pol*.

The factors which can be included in the first type were of two sub-types:

- a. Working external to the *pol* at a wider level and beyond the control of a family or a group of families. They were political instabilities, communal riots, frequent attacks of Kolis and Kathis, lootings and plunderings,
- b. The internal organization of the *pol* brought into being through the fortification of the street proved for escaping from the effects of the external dangers.

The behaviour of the *pol*-dwellers in its support was channelized through the social organization of *pol*-council rules relating to entry into the *pol*, the institution of *polio*, and the provision of such common facilities which they needed in their every day life.

The traditional role of providing security to the citizens through the *pol* is no longer regularly continued; however, it is resumed by the *pol* whenever special circumstances arise and the *pol*-members are required to lend their help in the task.

Shri Bhimjibhai, a leading member in the Patel-*pol*, who took active part in the affairs of the national freedom movement narrated to me the manner in which the *pol* reacted towards the dangers that had emerged due to communal riot of 1946 in the city. The entire city during this riot suffered a lot due to the violent activities of the rioters. The happenings in the city were made known to the members of the *pol* through the circulation of news on the notice boards installed on the strategic points in the *pol*. The news reports carried information regarding each development in the riot situation

and necessary instructions for the members of the *pol*. With the active help of young members of the *pol* and enthusiastic support drawn from them, the members of the *pol* created a team which could be found sufficiently efficient and vigilant to look after the security of the *pol* and face the attack, if any took place. The team was of 27 young boys of 18 to 35 years age group. The entire team was divided into three small units and each was assigned specific duties on the occasion. The unit of five men was required to make continuous rounds of the *pol* and see that every corner of the *pol* was given sufficient care. Another unit of seven men was instructed to remain seated at the main gateway of the *pol* to see that no stranger entered the *pol* and any violent mob was prevented from entering the *pol*. The remaining members of the team were placed at the important points in the *pol*. Six of them were posted at the small gate which opened into the other neighbouring *pol*. All these units and their members were so arranged that a person sitting on one turn could see and communicate necessary instructions to the man sitting at the next immediate turn. In this way the person guarding the main gateway was connected with all the persons sitting at the interior corners of the *pol*. This was done in order to see that whenever disturbances develop in any corner of the *pol*, the entire *pol* will be alerted and the necessary help and defensive steps will be mobilized quickly. Members of each family in the *pol* were also instructed to remain ready and face the trouble at any time they were needed rather than leave the house and run away.

Defence equipment was purchased by raising a contribution on the occasion. Lathis, Dharias, soda water bottles, torches and knives were supplied to the team which took over the duties of safeguarding the *pol*. Each family was also provided with a 'lathi' for use if it needed at the time of the trouble. The family was instructed to keep the 'lathi' inside the house on the top of the main gate of the house. Similarly soda water bottles were kept ready at the main gateway at a secret place and a boy was placed in charge of that store. A few bottles were kept ready at other crucial places in the *pol* from where rioting people could have entered and attacked the *pol*. The members of the team were given freedom to take their decision and face the attack in the manner they considered appropriate. However, this was left to the leader of the team rather than to individual members. Elders of the *pol* supported the young boys by giving them sincere advice and suggestions on matters relating to the protection of the *pol*. They also contributed generously

for the purchase of the necessary defence equipment. The young people were served with breakfast and tea when they were on duty.

During the period of this investigation the *pol's* defensive role could be observed by the present investigator in the year 1965 when the country was under the invasion of Pakistan. The city of Ahmedabad, which was one of the most important industrial centres in the country, was under great danger of being made a military target, specially for air attack. The danger was felt by all. The *pol* also helped in organizing civil defence matters and in order to safeguard the *pol*, a number of steps were taken in both the *pols*. By this time young boys of the *pols* were organized under the 'Yuvak Mandal'. These mandals took over the duties relating to the defence of the *pol*. They also invited other residents of the *pol* who were not members of the Yuvak Mandal. Persons were drawn from the age group of 17 to 35 years. In The Patel-*pol* they numbered 39, divided into six teams, each of six members. (One team was of 9 members.) Each team had to provide watch for the entire night when its turn came. In the Jain-*pol* 14 teams each of 11 young members were organized for this purpose. Each member of the team was given a *lathi* and a torch. The teams were given different dates on which they were required to take over the duties of guarding the *pol*. These dates were announced on the notice boards along with the name of the leader of the team and other members.

In order to meet the expenses, a contribution was raised among the members of both the *pols*. In the Patel-*pol* the minimum amount of contribution was fixed at Rs. 5 and in the Jain-*pol* it was left to the family to pay any amount. In the Patel-*pol*, out of the fund raised through the contributions 12 lathis, seven dharias and seven torches were purchased. A Special Committee was assigned the work of collecting the funds and making the necessary purchases. In both the *pols* the teams on duty were served tea and refreshments twice in the night.

The black-boards in both the *pols* were also used to announce and circulate necessary instructions and informations to the *pol*-dwellers. An analysis of the daily recording of news on these black-boards for a week in both the *pols* shows that following type of instructions were written on these boards:

1. Instructions in detail telling the members of the *pol* 'what to do' when there is 'black-out' and when there is an attack.
2. Information regarding latest developments on war-fronts.
3. Patriotic slogans and inspiring paragraphs from the writings

and speeches of national and religious leaders.

4. A request to the members of the *pol* to contribute liberally to the National Defence Fund and the blood-bank.
5. Names of persons who will take over charge of guarding the *pol* every night and other local items of interest.

The duties of maintaining these black-boards furnished with exact and detailed information were assigned to a young man in both the *pols*.

The activities of the young men of the *pols* did not remain confined to local defence and safeguarding of the *pol* only. They took over other responsibilities of channelizing contribution of the *pol*-members to the National Defence Fund also. A blood-bank was started in the Patel-*pol* by the young men of the *pol*. Each family in the *pol* was approached to donate blood, money, clothes and other articles. On the first day of this programme, 57 members of the *pol* voluntarily agreed to donate blood. The young men of the Jain-*pol* collected Rs. 800 on this occasion and handed over the money to the Chief Minister for the National Defence Fund.

With the rise of effective government ensuring law and order in the normal course of life the traditional role of providing safety and security has become obsolete. The institution of the watchman (*polio*) has been given up and the gates are no longer closed down during the night. But when there are special circumstances, the members of the *pol* mobilize the social organization and resources in order to meet the challenge.

This contingency seems to provide case in which even the obsolete functions re-emerge, and what used to be the normal function for the *pol* in the past, again becomes a relevant function. When the *polio* has to be spared to take up duties elsewhere in national emergencies, the *pol* provides the organizational basis for mobilizing local effort for the purpose, and shows a readiness to resume the function which had in fact been associated with it at its inception but not implemented in the period during which law and order had been fairly established all over the region.

7

Changes: The Old Pol and New Housing Societies

This section is addressed to an examination of the question: how the families who have left the *pol* and gone out to live in modern

housing colonies feel the absence of the *pol* and redefine their relations with their erstwhile group? During the period of last 20 years, 23 families have gone out from the Jain-*pol* and 21 from the Patel-*pol*. Of these, all the 23 Jain families and 20 Patel families have continued their formal membership with the parental *pol*. They have not gone out to the same colony. Most of them have gone to the scattered colonies and the maximum number of families concentrated in the same colony is five in case of the Jain-*pol* and three families in case of the Patel-*pol*. The rest of the families of the Jain-*pol* have gone to 11 colonies and the Patel families to 14 colonies. For the present analysis, responses of the five Jain families and three Patel families going to the same colony have been taken into consideration in order to consider the above mentioned questions.

RENT AND SALE OF HOUSE

The families who have gone out to modern housing colonies are also a part of the respective colonies. The three families who have gone from the Patel-*pol* formed a housing society with 9 other families 15 years ago. They collectively purchased a piece of agricultural land which they divided into 12 plots — eight of which were 800 square yards each, and four of 600 square yards each. The houses were constructed by the individual family and in this process certain rules and regulations relating to rent and sale of house was formulated to act as a 'barrier on individual freedom'. No specifications such as the ones prevailing in the *pol* were enacted. The Jain families with 13 other friends outside the *pol* formed a co-operative housing society 18 years ago and got a piece of land for construction of the houses. Being part of the co-operative society, they are bound by the rules of the government as they secured 60 per cent of the total cost of construction of the bungalow on loan from the government. The rules relating to sale, in this case, emerged: half of whatever profit one makes out of the sale of a house must be credited to the funds of the society. Failure to do this may result in legal processes against the person. The renting of the house or a portion of it does not invite any tax or restriction on the choice of a tenant on the part of society. Neither 'Babusa' — the tax of Patel-*pol* nor *Pol-in-Sakh* of the Jain-*pol* is levied by the society. All the eight heads of the families confessed that in these matters their coming to the society had made their position secure. They

can get a potential buyer and tenant if they want to either sell their house or rent a portion of it which was not so easy in their parental-*pol*. Shri Kantibhai Patel has rented out 2 rooms and one kitchen to a Jain family and gets Rs. 135/-per month as rent of the house. Other families feel a sense of satisfaction at being able to do so if they wish.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Modern housing colonies have been considered more vulnerable compared to the *pol* in matters of safety and security of life and property. All the eight heads of the families expressed the feeling that they could take the risk of leaving their house unlocked and move out while they were living in the *pol* but in the modern housing colony, their being in one portion of the house necessitated keeping the other portion of the house locked up even during the day. A head of the family reported that during night hours when he and his family happened to be out, they kept the lights on in the house in order to make outsiders believe that somebody was inside the house. The *pol* did not require this technique of self-security. Each of the houses occupied by the eight families is provided with a compound-wall which serves two purposes — one that of identifying the area under the ownership of the family and secondly it prevents the entry of unknown persons in the house. However, all the eight families reported that from the point of security they do not feel desperate as thefts and riots are not frequent phenomena these days and security measures are enhanced due to efficient police service.

In reply to the question, 'What did you feel when there was a black-out for 11 days in the city at the time of the Pakistan invasion?', two of the eight heads said that they found the situation just strange and remained in their houses keeping the lights off as required. One of these two heads said: 'The danger was of an air-attack and the entire city was facing it, therefore no additional steps could have been of much use even if they would have been tried'. Three felt very insecure and they remembered the importance of the *pol* and its organization, while two found the situation dangerous but not unbearable.

When asked why they could not develop self-defence measures as they had done in the *pol*?' six heads said they felt insecure, but drew attention to the following difficulties experienced by these

families in the new housing colony:

1. The number of young persons to form a patrolling troop was too small and the spatial area of the colony was relatively too large for the available young persons compared to the number of young persons in the *pol* and its area.
2. The situation developed almost suddenly and in the absence of a properly established organization of youths as *Seva-Samaj* in the Jain-*pol* and *Yuvak-Mandal* in the Patel-*pol*, no definite organizational steps for this purpose could be taken.
3. It was not considered safe for the young members to remain outside the house for the whole night.
4. The services of police and other voluntary organizations were already enhanced in the city at this time; hence many other fellow-families did not feel the necessity of special security measures.

RITUALS AND FESTIVALS

Rituals and festivals are occasions to which these eight families hark back to the *pol* and participate with other members of their parental-*pol*. They also find themselves bound by social obligations to do so. The five Jain families regularly paid their fee of Rs.3.50 per adult member every year. This was to meet the expenses of daily worship in the temple of their *pol*. In 1967 they sent their male and female representatives twice to the *pol* on the occasion of death and once on the occasion of marriage. They also acquired the help of the members of the *pol* in the same year when a death occurred in one of the families. All the member families from the *pol* sent one male and one female member to the house of the family in the new colony. The Patel families went twice on the occasion of death and twice on the occasion of marriage. In addition to that, one Patel family went to the parental-*pol* in order to celebrate the entire marriage ceremony there and distributed *Chhabadi* — a small box made of bamboo wood full of sweets, among the members of the *pol*. The family sent invitations to six families in the new colony on this occasion and two families attended the ceremony in the *pol*. The two Patel families in addition to their personal relations were also socially obliged to respond.

In matters of religious celebrations on the final day of the *Garba* dance during *Navaratra* and on the day of the annual *Havan*, all the three families went to the Patel-*pol*. They made necessary contributions for the distribution of *Lahni* and *Parsadi* and got their share in all the years of their stay in the modern colony. The children, particularly girls, felt a sense of deprivation at not being able to participate in the group performance of the *Garba-dance* in the *pol*.

The Jain families go to participate in *Paryushan* celebrations and the annual function of the temple. However, their participation during *Paryushan* is restricted. They can only go to the *pol* at night. The distance from the *pol* makes it difficult to go in the morning. On the final day of the celebration every year all the families went to the *pol* and spent the whole day with other members of the *pol*. One of the five heads with whom I had an opportunity to travel from the *pol* to his house in the new colony after the celebration at 11.00 p.m., reported that a visit to the *pol* from his new house cost him nearly Rs. 10 in terms of expenditure on conveyance. He did not miss the celebration as he considered it a matter relating to the *pol*.

ENCOURAGEMENT AND RECOGNITION

Lack of formal organization either on traditional lines or modern lines has resulted in the lack of definite efforts on the part of the two housing colonies to develop a mechanism of encouragement and inspiration for the members to take part in activities outside the colony. Even individual achievements are not given formal attention. A member of Patel families who went to the United Kingdom for further studies in technology was given a warm send-off by the members of the *pol* who came to his new residence in the colony and invited him for the purpose. The children of all the eight families send their mark-sheets every year to their parental-*pol* in order to win the award. During the annual sports period children of the five Jain families go to *pol* every year and take part in the games. Three heads of the families in the year 1967 played cricket to win the running trophy and one young boy of 13 years age took part in the cultural programme and won the first prize in individual singing. The elder persons express their sense of belonging through giving liberal co-operation in the affairs of the *pol*. While this report was being drafted (February 1968) an

elaborate *puja* was being organized in the temple of the *pol* for a week by one of the families in the *pol* in memory of a person who passed away in his youth. The family was supported by the active co-operation of these five families as they went to the *pol* every evening to take part in a *bhajan* programme being held in the temple of the *pol*. One of the members on the second day of the celebration gave Rs. 251 for offering *arati* to the deity. Others participated in singing *bhajans* for three hours daily i.e. 7.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. In the like manner one person made his car available to the family to bring monks from other places in the city.

COMMON PROPERTIES AND AMENITIES

In this regard as the families have continued their membership of the *pol*, they enjoy every right over all the common properties and amenities made available by the *pol*. They have acquired membership of *Seva-Samaj* in case of Jain families and *Yuvak-Mandal* in case of Patel families in order to be benefited by the amenities created by these organizations. However, in practice they miss amenities of daily life for example library, newspaper reading, sending children to the school for religious education and additional coaching in the Jain-*pol*, etc. In their relations with the neighbours, it has been observed that residents of the housing societies feel the need for greater give-and-take in day-to-day living with the immediate neighbours. The physical proximity rather than an institutionalized arrangement works in these societies. The *pol* houses, on the other hand, have lesser give-and-take relations in day-to-day living and the physical proximity in their case does not play as significant a role as it does in new societies. The *pol* acts at the collective level, and co-operation is ensured through group activities both for routine and ritual matters. The amenities required on special occasions made available to members by a *pol* are also utilized by the families that have moved out. One of the five Jain families borrowed medical equipments and used them for one month. Two families borrowed 12 sets of Gadi-Takias, utensils, and electrical equipments, first on the occasion of birth of a son in 1961 and second on a daughter's marriage in 1959. The Patel family went to the *pol* in 1966 and used the common hall, utensils, electrical equipments, Gadi-Takia, and *pattas*.

Thus, going to the modern housing colonies has created a situation

in which the members who have left the *pol* feel a sense of deprivation in matters of frequent contacts with their own fellow-members, and safety and security aspects. They feel relaxed from the rules of *pol* related to rent and sale of house, restricting open choice of potential owner or tenant and some inconveniences of congested living in the *pol*. And finally in the matters related to rituals and festivals they rely on the *pol* along with the use of modern mechanisms of encouragement and recognition. On special occasions like those of crises of life and religious celebrations, they make use of common properties and amenities and thereby, are benefited by the *pol*. In the *pol* they still find a ready-made source of collective co-operation and understanding.

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