

THE SAMANTHAS OF
ANDHRA PRADESH

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MONOGRAPHIC SERIES-I

THE SAMANTHAS OF ANDHRA PRADESH



TRIBAL CULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE
TRIBAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT,
ANDHRA PRADESH,
HYDERABAD.

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Editor's Note.

This Monograph was prepared when the Cultural Research Institute was attached to Andhra University, Waltair. The field work and drafting of the monograph were completed between 1959-1961. The monograph was prepared by Shri K. Ranga Rao, M.A., Lecturer in Sociology, with the assistance of Shri N.S. R. Krishna Murthy, Investigator under the guidance of Prof. B. Sarweswara Rao and Professor K. Subrahmanyam Naidu. After establishment of a fullfledged Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute at Hyderabad the monograph was handed over to the Institute for favour of publication. A scrutiny of monograph showed necessity for a thorough editing of both expression and content of the original draft. Consequently the monograph was edited and the original chapters on Trends in Culture Change and Impact of the Community Development Activities were clubbed together after a thorough revision and added to the monograph with the title "Culture Change" without disturbing the contents and theme of the original monograph.

The views expressed in the foreword, preface and text of the monograph are not necessarily those of the Institute or of the Government.

D. R. PRATAP,

*Director in-charge, Tribal Cultural'
Research and Training Institute, Hyderabad*



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PREFACE.

It is generally the case that, whatever might be the degree of isolation of a tribe or community, it would hardly remain static for ever. Either through innovations or cultural contacts, it would change over a period of time. History proves this. It is important then to ensure that change takes place smoothly and gradually. At present, Government are trying to improve the social and economic conditions of the tribals through various schemes, and the community development programme is undoubtedly a very important scheme in this direction. It is the policy of the Government that while trying to improve the social and economic conditions of the tribals, care is taken to see that such of the traditional institutions as are conducive to social and economic growth, are encouraged and preserved and those which are not conducive, are eliminated gradually through a change in their attitudes and beliefs. This approach, therefore, makes it obligatory on the part of Government to promote ethnological studies of the tribes in order that the total culture of each and every tribe is ascertained and the functions of each of the institutions therein are recorded. This is not to deny the importance of problem studies, but it is necessary to note that the study of any single aspect will be rewarding only if comprehensive studies are available on various aspects of the tribe or the community concerned. In the absence of any idea of the basic social, economic, political and religious structure of a tribe, an agent of change would find it difficult to appreciate its social institutions and devise appropriate methods and techniques of social change.

Andhra Pradesh is one of the States in India which is inhabited by a good number of tribal groups of various social, economic and technological levels. But no comprehensive account of their culture was available except some notes written by a few writers like Thurston, Schulze, and the Census Commissioners, before Dr. Christoph Von Furer Haimendorf wrote his three monographs on the Hill Reddis of Bison Hills, the Chenchus of Nallamalai Hills and the Raj Gonds of Adilabad. The present monograph, therefore, aims at giving a comprehensive account of the total culture of the Samanths (or Khonds or Jatapus) tribes spread over the agency areas of Visakhapatnam and

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Srikakulam districts. The monograph is the outcome of an intensive field study conducted by the Cultural Research Institute, Andhra University and financed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

It was originally planned to make a detailed study of the language and folk-lore and of the social, economic, political and religious organisations of two tribes viz, the Samantha and the Gadaba, inhabiting the districts of Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam. As Dr. Bh. Krishnamurthy who is a linguist, left for the United States of America, the study of the first part i.e., language and folk-lore could not be undertaken. This monograph, therefore, covers only the social, economic, political and religious aspects of the Samanta tribe.

For the collection of data, an Investigator was appointed and field work was started in the month of September 1959. The field work was continued till the end of December, 1960. During this period the Investigator stayed in a group of the Samanta villages in the interior of the agency area for about eight months with occasional visits to the University. Later, he toured, for about six months, various places in the agency areas to check up and supplement the material already collected, with intermittent visits to the first group of villages and also to the head-quarters. I myself had also undertaken an extensive tour of the agency areas and visited a number of the Samanta villages for doing field work. The material documented in the monograph is based mainly on observation and interviews. Genealogies and case histories were also collected apart from filling up schedules meant for eliciting data on the basic social and economic condition of the tribe. No sampling method was adopted, but care was taken to cover the Samantas living in the interior as well as the plains, and also those who were converted to Christianity.

I am highly grateful to professor B. Sarveswara Rao, Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology for giving me an opportunity to work in this scheme. I am indebted to Dr. S.C. Dube, Professor in Anthropology for giving me valuable suggestions on the method of approach. I was fortunate enough to have come into contact with the Rev. Dr. A. C. Bouquet of the Cambridge University who visited the Andhra University during the months of December, 1960 and January, 1961 and who

showed great interest in this study. He was kind enough to go through the draft monograph and make valuable suggestions. He has also kindly agreed to write a foreword for which I am deeply grateful to him. Professor. B. Sarveswara Rao, Professor K. Subrahmanyam Nayudu, Head of the Department of Rural studies, Co-operation and Social Work and Shri S.L. Dube, Assistant Commissioner, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Hyderabad went through the draft monograph and gave me the benefit of their suggestions and remarks. I am highly thankful to all of them. Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti was the Officer-in-Charge of the Cultural Research Institute till 21st August, 1960. When he fer left the United States, Professor K. Subrahmanyam Nayudu then became the Officer-in-Charge. I am grateful to both Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti and I rofessor K. Subrahmanyam Nayudu for the facilities they have provided me for conducting this investigation and for the preparation of this monograph.

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CULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
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FOREWORD

It is both a pleasure and an honour to be invited to contribute this foreword to the long and careful report which my friend Mr. Ranga Rao has compiled upon the Samantas of the Paderu area of Andhra Pradesh.

I have for many years heard a good deal about the hill-peoples of this part of India. As far back as 1916, I used to listen to that great pioneer in field anthropology, Alfred Haddon talking about them, although his own particular area happened to be New Guinea. Later on, I enjoyed reading the works of Grigson, Verrier Elwin, and Furet Haimendorf, and also had the privilege of close association in Cambridge, U.K., with Professor J.H. Hutton, who, although he spent most of his life among the Nagas, knew a great deal about all the hill and jungle tribes. Finally, in 1946, when Prince Bhanj Deo was studying in Cambridge, he used to tell me about the various tribes in his own State of Baster.

Now, at last I have been able, through the kindness of Mr. Mahammed Habibullah Khan of the Multipurpose Pilot Project at Paderu, and of Mr. Ranga Rao, himself, to see with my own eyes one local section of this multifarious group of peoples; and none too soon, for the perfectly just policy of the Government of India is to endeavour gently and persuasively to bring these "backward" tribes (if that is what we must call them) to abandon their wasteful practice of "podu" cultivation, and to get used to the kind of tools, clothing, and tile-roofed houses which the modern world thinks the—ought to have. Although many Samanta villages, on account of their situation near hill-tops, are still inaccessible except by using rough tracks, and going on foot, roads are being run into the interior in all directions. There are, however, as yet, not as many bridges as the nature of the countryside demands, so that without employing a jeep with a four-wheeled drive, it was impossible for us to get about freely, and to penetrate to the places we wished to visit. Our journey were rough, and some times a little hazardous.

And now, what impression is left on my mind, after what I have seen, and after the perusal of the very interesting report which Mr. Ranga Rao has written ?

Beyond all else, a very big query. Who actually are the Samantas? To call them "Khonds" evades the issue, since that only seems to mean "Hill-people". If I may put the problem in the form of a syllogism: "All Samantas are "Khonds", but not all "Khonds" are Samantas". Up in the Paderu area we have Gadabas who are indignant because the Samantas come and occupy their land, Bhagatas who are clearly not Samantas, Konda-doras who resemble Samantas, and Khonda Kapus who are really plains people who came up in the old days of the Maharajahs of Jeypore for trading purposes, but who have now settled down to cultivating the soil and have become assimilated to the hill-tribesmen. Anyhow, as Mr. Ranga Rao has I think established, Kond, Kodulu, Samanta, and Jotapu are all names used for one and the same tribes.

Most of the Samantas I saw looked as though they had kept their stock pretty pure. Although by tradition rather than rule each village practises exogamy, there are enough Samanta villages for their men to be able to choose wives without miscegenation.

I am told that people resembling Samantas physically occur over a pretty wide area, e.g., right up into Madhya Pradesh; and all the ones I saw were quite different in appearance and habits from the Dravidian Plains people (among whom I have now lived three times in recent years for periods varying from three to seven months) especially in the set of the eyes, and the shape of the nose. It seems to me therefore, as an outside observer, that it is doubtful whether we should follow Grierson in calling the Samantas a Dravidian tribe unless 'Dravidian' is used in a very much wider sense. Moreover, there is the question of language. Although they use a number of Telugu words and some are virtually bi-lingual, the Samantas have a language which seems to be separate from Telugu. Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti regards it as a "Dravidian" dialect, but that again raises the question as to what in this case "Dravidian" denotes. Again, the Samantas, even if we call them an "aboriginal" tribe, are clearly neither australoid nor negrito, and compared with the very degraded types to be seen among the australoid coastal tribes of fisher-folk, they are real aristocrats.

I should like to concentrate on three points :—

(1) The Samanta males have wonderful manes of black glossy hair, which they sometimes allow to hang down at the back, but more usually do up into a sort of 'bun' on the nape of the neck. Where else do we find people with manes of hair similar to these? Certainly, at least, among the land Dayaks of Sarawak.

(2) *The Samantas have a distinctive way of building their huts.* Unlike the neighbouring tribes, they build 'long-houses', with a platform or terrace in front, and subdivisions, the two central ones being called the Baheri Illu or entrance hall, and the Bitri Illu or Kitchen room, with living rooms to the right and left of these. Again, I seem to recall that this sort of 'long-house' is typical of the land-dayaks and of some Nagas. (3) The inhabitants of the most remote and untouched Samanta village which I was taken to visit said that they used to have a practice which they had now given up, of building separate dormitories for male and female adolescents. I understand that this practice prevails among other hill-tribes in India, e.g., the Maria Gonds in Bastar, and some of the Naga Tribes in Assam. But again, I am conscious of having been told that it is a habit among the land-Dayaks.

Have we then in the Samantas a detached fragment of a race neither australoid nor negro, yet perhaps pre-Dravidian, which at some period in the distant past ranged extensively over an area extending from the mainland of India to the greater islands of the Malay archipelago? It is not for me to judge. I would suggest however that recent researches that have been made into various blood-group affinities (e.g. the study of the various groups with sickle-shaped corpuscles) may furnish a good reason for studying the affinities of the Samantas with other groups in Asia, by using the same technique.

The Saoras, a tribe living further to the north-west in Orissa, were studied and photographed two years ago by a Canadian, Mr. Sam France, and I persuaded him to show some of his colour-films last spring in the Department of Anthropology at Cambridge. There seemed to be some feeling that the Saoras were rather like Nagas.

...I suppose the real question should be not simply: Who are the Samantas? but: Who were the various peoples

that have been lumped together as "Dravidians"? Do we perhaps need to split them up, with a fresh set of labels?

The above points may not arouse interest among those whose chief concern is social anthropology, and who want to find out what social customs a comparatively backward people may be able to retain, or may have to relinquish in adjusting itself to modern conditions. But, they are surely matters with which the pre-historian is concerned, and it is clear that they are related to the activities of pure anthropological science.

I would like to conclude with a few observations upon the religious beliefs and practices of the Samantas, since these are topics with which I am more personally involved.

The Samantas are pluralists or polydaemonists, like most of the country folk in South India, but their deities differ from those of the plain people not only in having no affinities at all with any of the Great deities of Hinduism, but also in their names. Whereas almost all the village gods of South India are female, and have names ending in "Amma", the Samanta divinities have names ending in "penu", and though possibly female, are rather ambiguous as to sex, Bhima Penu the rain-god, an important supernatural figure, being definitely male. They are departmental numina, but not quite so excessively departmentalised as is the case down in the plains, where the division of functions between *Sondergotter* is almost as complete as it was in ancient Italy. At the same time, the Ultimate Deity would seem to be maternal in attributes. A Samanta, when he was asked how the world began, replied 'Oh, there was once a great Earth-Mother, and every thing sprang out of her?'

No doubt some assimilation to plains Hinduism has been going on in places for a long time; but then, how much of plains Hinduism of the village sort is derived from pre-Dravidian inhabitants? One would be tempted to say 'A good deal'.

It is worthy of note that in ancient days one propitiatory sacrifice to Takeri Penu, had to be of a human being. Dr. Verrier Elwin, writing of the Baigas, reports that they had one festival which was surrounded with mystery, and though not quite respectable, and which seemed to be

connected with human sacrifice. Macpherson, writing long ago about the Khonds, reported the practice on occasions of sacrificing a child. Only this year I seemed to detect among the rites of the Jalaris (fisher-folk on the Bay of Bengal) vestigial traces of child-sacrifice. But there is nothing peculiar in this. At one stage, all the world over, man seems to have thought that he ought to give the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul.

I should be interested to know whether any evidence is to be found among these tribal people of the practice of divination by Hepatoscopy. We know that it exists among the Dayaks and Nagas, and that it was practised by the Sumerians and the Etruscans. It would be useful if we could fill up gaps in the distribution of this sort of divination, which is quite different from the blade-bone divination of the ancient Chinese.

I think one of the most interesting features of Samanta religion is the great authority given to the Pejjeni, or female pujari. Of course, there are the other sacred individuals as mentioned by Mr. Ranga Rao; but the Pejjeni or priestess comes in on every occasion, and her services are clearly indispensable. I had the privilege of meeting one of these functionaries, and she was quite a dignified old woman, though somewhat shy; and not prepared to display any of her occult powers, or to give away professional secrets! On the whole, I should say that the position of women is a bit higher among the Samantas than among the plains' people. I fancy that the Pejjeni is a respectable person, but there are clearly some other functionaries of a more disreputable character; for we once found our tract barred by a curious erection which we were told was a device of black magic, aimed at invoking a bad spirit to do wome body an injury, and that some one else had also been at work trying to neutralise the device by introducing some white magic on the top of it!

Voluntary agencies are at work among the hill-people; and their personnel aim at making some of them Christians. No obstacle to this work is opposed by the Government, which in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic rightly adopts a neutral attitude, neither aiding nor hindering it; and I found that some of the best cultural activities were in the hands of staff members who were themselves Christians,

It may well be that these hill-folk will in course of time tend to become members of the South India United Church ; but I feel it is right to strike a warning note. Religion of even the crudest kind is an attempt on man's part to integrate his life around the Sacred, as he himself conceives it. It should therefore be treated with respect. Even if he progresses in course of time from a crude to a more spiritual belief or practice, care should be taken that he does not come to feel ashamed of his past. There may even be innocent practices which he may be allowed to retain, though perhaps with a changed meaning. But whatever changes may inevitably come, these should not be allowed to impoverish his life, or destroy its art, its music, or any folk-crafts it may possess. Thus a sober reformed truly Catholic type of Christianity may in the end be better for these people than a type which reflects out-worn controversies, and maintains a somewhat negative attitude towards the whole of ethnic religion, and a verbal inspirationist attitude to the Bible which can only be called superstitious. This of course is a purely personal opinion, but I feel it would be cowardly on my part not to give utterance to it.

I sincerely hope that everyone of these interesting hill-tribes will have its story and institutions recorded while there is yet time, and before the acids of modernity have eaten too far and too relentlessly into its traditional life.

In conclusion I should like to express my great admiration for the work Mr. Ranga Rao has been and still is doing, and to wish him every success in its continuation and extension. He is making a permanent record which should prove of immense value not only to those who have the task of guiding the hill-tribes into the changed conditions of the modern world, but also to those engaged in the purely scientific study of anthropology.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION—PLACE AND PEOPLE

The State of Andhra Pradesh consists of a good number of tribes spread over a vast area from Srikakulam District in the north-east to Mahaboobnagar District in the west. The tribes in the Telangana area of Andhra Pradesh are Koyas, Konda Reddis, Raj Gonds, Chenchus, Pradhans, etc. The tribes of the other part viz., Andhra are Koyas, Konda Reddis, Kammari, Bhagata, Valmiki, Konda Dora, Nooka Dora, Konda Kapu, Savara and Khonds (or Jatapus or Smantas, etc.). The tribes of the latter area are mainly on the top of the Eastern—Ghats and also at the foot of these ghats that are lying between Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Telangana. The area in Andhra inhabited by the tribals, referred to as the Agency area—that is administered through the Agent—can be divided into two distinct portions ; One is the upper agency with elevations of 2,000 ft. and above upto 5,000 ft. and the other is the lower agency with elevations below 2,000 ft. Rainfall varies from 35 or 40 inches in lower Agency to as high as above 70 inches in some parts. The Agency area is full of forests which provide plenty of timber, bamboo and minor forest produce. Wild stock like sambar, bear, deer, antelope, boar and cheeta are in plenty. Tigers are also seen in some thick forests. All kinds of soils from deep black to gravelly are found. The upper agency is quite suitable for coffee plantation, citrus fruits, potatoes etc. Perennial hill streams provide opportunities for constructing dams for irrigational facilities.

The name of the tribe :—

A good number of reports, official and unofficial, contain references to the tribe under discussion, viz., the Samanta. But, there is some confusion with regard to the name of this tribe.

Shri H. V. Stuart, Superintendent of Census Operations, Madras in 1891 wrote in the Census Report that the people of this tribe, "call themselves Kui, a name identical with the Koi or Koya of the Godavari Agency and the south of the Jeypore Zamindari. The Telugu people call themselves Kothuvandulu. The origin of the name Khond is doubtful but Macpherson is, I think, right in deriving it from Telugu Konda, a hill. There is a tribe in Vizagapatam called

Konda dora or Kondakapu and these people who are allied to the Khonds are also frequently called Kotu-vandulu. All these names are derivatives of the root Ko or Ku, a mountain ”.

Prof. A. Aiyappan in his “Report on the socio-economic conditions of the Aboriginal tribes of the Province of Madras, 1948”, points out that “the Khonds reside in Gangarajula Madugole, Ginnelakota, Kileguda, Rudhakota, Gomiti, Kangani, Minimaluru, Bakaru, Kodapalli, Sukuru, Uppa, Burja and Gattermu Muttahs in the northern half of Gudem taluk”, and “the Kodulus are found in Gangaraju Madugole, Ginnelakota, Kilagada, Rudhakota, Gemili, Kanijari, Minumaluru, Bakkuru, Kondapalli, Sukuru, Uppa Burja and Gattumu Muttahs of Upper Agency—Their mother-tongue is Kodulu which has no script. They all speak Telugu”. With regard to Jatapus he writes that “the Agency portion of Salur, Parvatipur and Palakonda taluks in Vizagapatam district—are inhabited by Jatapus—”. Thus, Prof. Aiyappan comes to the conclusion that Jatapus, Kodulu and Khonds are different from one another.

The report submitted in the year 1952 by the Special Agency Development Officer, Madras, also records Khonds, Jatapus and Samantas as being distinct tribes.

But an intensive survey undertaken in the Agency area for the preparation of this monograph reveals beyond doubt that Khonds, Kodulu, Samantas and Jatapus are different names for one and the same tribe. They have the same social and religious organisations with minor local variations. In Paderu area, this tribe is known as Kodulu, Kondulu, Khonds or Samantulu. The people of this tribe themselves rather prefer to be called ‘Samantas’¹. Around Parvatipuram the tribe is called Khonds or Jatapu Khond. Nowhere in the Agency area are the tribes other than that of Khond called Kotuvandulu as referred to by H. V. Stuart. At the same time Kodulu and Khonds are not different tribes living side by side in the same ‘Mutthas’ (administrative units) as pointed out by Prof. Aiyappan. It seems that the original name of this tribe was ‘Konda Jatapu Doralu’. The words ‘Khond’ and ‘Jatapu’ are the short forms of Konda Jatapu Doralu.

* 1 As the Khonds in Visakhapatnam district who would like to be called ‘Samantas’ are more in number the name is adopted as a title to this monograph,

* 2 Vide Volume IX, No. 22, Jan. 1839—P.19.

This point of view is also supported by a few other reports. The Madras Journal of Literature and Science,² came to the conclusion that "The Conduvandulu are also termed Jatapu doralu ; and it is immaterial whichsoever of the two names is used. They are one and the same people". The District Gazetteer of Vizagapatam also records with regard to the use of the word Jatapu that "the Khonds in the Palakonda hills call themselves by this name and it is supposed to be short for Khond Jatapu doralu or lords of the Khond caste".

Language and Habitat :

G. A. Grierson in his Linguistic Survey of India states that "the Kandhs or Khonds are a Dravidian tribe in the hill of Orissa and neighbouring districts. The tribe is commonly known under the name of Khond. The Oriyas call them Kandhs, and the Telugu people Gonds and Kods. The name by which they call themselves is Ku, and their language should accordingly be denominated Kui".

Rev. W. W. Winfield in the introductory chapter of his book "A Grammar of the Kui Language", (1924) writes that "the people who speak the Kui Language are generally known as KONDS, KHONDS, or KANDHS, though they call themselves KUNGA. They dwell mainly in and around the mountainous country that lies between the river, Mahanadi, in Orissa and the northern parts of the Vizagapatnam District, forming an important section of the population in the following political divisions :— Dasapalla, Bod (Baud), Khond Mals (Phulbani) and Kalahandi in Orissa ; Gumsur—Udayagiri Taluk and Chinakimedi in Ganjam district ; Bissamkatak Taluk and Gunupur Taluk in Vizagapatam District. Scattered numbers of the tribe are also found in other parts of Orissa and Ganjam, and some have emigrated to the tea plantations of Assam.

There are Konds also in the Vizagapatnam Agency tracts and in Jeypur and Palakonda of the Vizagapatam District. The language of these south-western Konds is called Kuvi and has received separate study in the works of the Rev. F.V.P. Schulze. Kui and Kuvi, though essentially the same tongue, are now sufficiently different to warrant this separation".

2. Vide Volume IX, No. 22, Jan. 1880-P. 19.

Sri A. G. Fitzgerald in the introductory note of his book 'Kuvinga Bassa' points out that 'The Khond Language is not a uniform one, and that different dialects of the language are spoken in the different districts inhabited by Khonds. For all practical purposes the language may be divided into two distinct groups (1) Eastern Khonds : that spoken by the Khonds of the Ganjam Agencies, Angul, Khondmahals, and the Tributary States of Orissa, Bod, Dasapalla, and Nayagarh, (2) and Western Khonds : that spoken by the Parja Khonds (and other Khond tribes) of Kallabandi and the adjoining agencies of Vizagapatam.

Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti in his essay 'Proto—Dravidian' published in Indian Linguistics—Turner Jubilee Volume I, 1958 and also in his recent monograph on KONDA or KUBI-A DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGE (unpublished) states that Kuvi, Kui and Kubi belong to the proto-Kui division of the Central Dravidian group. It is also said that there is a close resemblance between Proto-Kui group and 10th Century A.D.—Inscriptional Telugu. Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti is also of the opinion that the Khond tribe living in the Andhra Agency area do speak Kuvi language. In his recent monograph on 'KONDA or KUBI' Dr. Bh. Krishnamurti writes that "the language of the 'kubi' (*i.e.* Konda Dora) is very closely related to the language Kuvi and Kui, and the similarity in the three native names suggest their original identity as a single speech community. . . ." The people of the tribe under study, when enquired, admitted the fact that they call themselves 'Kuvinga' after their language. But while in Visakhapatnam district only men can speak Telugu that too not fluently, in Srikakulam district both men and women speak Telugu with good command.

Population :

Dr. Grierson in his Linguistic Survey of India, ¹ estimates, the total population of Khond speaking people at 4,94,099, including those emigrated to Assam. Mr. Schulze² estimates the number of Kuve speaking people in Palakonda Vizagapatam Agency and Jeypore at 3,07,300, According to the Census of 1901 the Khond of Kallahandi, and the adjoining Agencies of Vizagapatam number 190, 695.

1 Linguistic Survey of India, Vol IV.

The Census of India, 1951 (Languages) enumerates the population of this tribe as follows :—

<i>For India.</i>	
Khod or Khond ..	280,561
Kubb ..	206,509
Jatapu or Khond ..	37,518
Total Khonds ..	524,588
<i>For Orissa :</i>	
Khond. ..	280,316
Kui ..	206,509
Jatapu (Koraput) ..	8,204
	495,029
<i>For West Bengal :</i>	
Khond ..	245
<i>For Madras and Coorg :</i>	
Srikakulam.. ..	23,972 (Agency 13,068 Plains 10,905).
Visakhapatnam ..	5,340 (Agency : 4,009 Plains : 1,331).
	29,314

As the Khonds shown in Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam form mainly a subject for our present study, the same figure *i.e.*, 29,314, may be adopted for the Agency area of Andhra Pradesh.

Immigrations :

Dr. Christoph Von Furer—Haimendorf writing about the Samantas inhabiting the Agency area of Andhra Pradesh says that "the main area of their distribution is

further north and north-east, and according to their own tradition as well as to that of their neighbours, they are new comers in the country. Gadabas and Parengas tell of invasions of Konds, who settled for a few years in their country and then moved on leaving soil and forest exhausted". In the mythological stories of these tribes (*e.g.*, continuity of human race) we come across references made to the river—Vamsadhara and crossing the same while coming into the Agency area from further north in Orissa. When asked about their original habitat, they claimed Koraput, Narayanapatnam, Nandapur, etc. of Orissa as their original country. Since these people are nomadic and shifting cultivators, they have come from Orissa to the Agency area shifting from one place to the other in search of 'podu' fields.

Physical features :

The Samantas are by no means degenerate. They are a powerful people, of fine physique, with good skins—not particularly dark; and they have, on the whole, fine features and attractive faces. Their eyes are set level, not of a Mongolian type, but different from those of the plains people, and of other tribes in the hills. The great feature of the men is their splendid mane of glossy black hair. The men are mostly tall and athletic.

Dress :

The Samanta children put on no dress till they attain the age of three or four. At this age, boys and girls begin to wear 'Ghochi'—a narrow strip of cloth of about four inches wide and twenty-five inches in length and drawn in between the legs and looped both in the front and back over an 'adda' twined cord which is wound round the waist. Girls at the age of seven or eight wear a small piece of cloth round the waist and another small piece of cloth over the chest.

The dress of Samanta women consists of two strips of coarse white cotton cloth with light coloured borders. One piece is wrapped round the waist which hangs down to the knees. Another piece of cloth is drawn underneath the left from pit, and the two ends are tied over the right shoulders so as to cover the breasts and the back. For this purpose they buy a piece of cloth of about five yards and cut it into pieces of required sizes.

Another small strip of cloth is worn inside the loin cloth with the edges tucked over the waistband to cover the private part. Thus, the dress of Samanta women differs from that of the other tribal women in Araku area who wear a whole piece of saree instead. Of late, however, young Samanta women have taken to wearing blouses and sarees on shandy days and festive occasions.

Adult men and young boys wear only a '*Gochi*'. A small narrow piece of cloth or a towel is generally used as a turban and also as an upper garment. During winter they wrap a thick cotton sheet round their shoulders. Of late, they are taking to the practice of wearing shirts or second hand coats purchased at shandies. They do not put on a shirt while at work or at home.

Ornaments :

The following are the ornaments generally used by the Samanta tribe.

1. *Pusuanga (Bead Necklaces)*.—Beads of various colours are made into necklaces of various sizes. Some necklaces are worn lightly round the neck ; others are allowed to hang down to the breast. The Samanta women when compared to other tribes, profusely wear them. Male children wear the bead-necklaces made of glass, till they attain the age of four or five. Afterwards, they stop wearing them and instead, they begin wearing necklaces made of bamboo beads. All these are purchased at a weekly shandy.
2. '*Teddelamada*' (*Waist-band made of beads*).—Children only use them. A very few male youths also wear them, which are purchased at a weekly shandy.
3. '*Pajanga*' (*Bangles*).—These bangles are either made of aluminium or plastic or glass. Aluminium and plastic bangles are comparatively broad. Female children and women wear them which are available at a weekly shandy.
4. '*Kadavenga*' (*Anklets*).—These are made of aluminium. Female children begin wearing them from the age of eight or ten and they are purchased at a weekly shandy.

5. '*Batanga*' (*Bracelet*).—It is a kind of bracelet made of aluminium worn on the biceps. Young girls of about fifteen years old start wearing them and continue to wear them till they attain the age of forty years or so.

6. '*Muddinga*' or *Bondunga* (*Toe-ring*).—It is a ring made of aluminium or copper worn on the forefinger by women.

7. '*Gunusu*' (*ear-ring with a chain*).—An ear-ring with an attached chain is of about an inch and a half. Generally, such an ear-ring is worn by women at the upper rim of pinnae so that the chain hangs down to the lobe. It is made of aluminium and purchased at a weekly shandy.

8. '*Bavlenga*'.—Three or four aluminium chains are put together. One end of the chain is locked to the top ear-ring. The other end is taken over the braid and tucked to the top ear-ring of the other ear. The chain thus rests on the braid. It is made of aluminium and purchased at weekly shandy.

9. '*Kaggudi*'.—An aluminium ring worn round the neck by girls and women. It is generally purchased at a weekly shandy.

10. '*Gunlinga*' (*Ear-rings*).—These are made of copper. Small rings are pierced in the ear-lobes of the children of both sexes at the age of one week. For female children these rings are pierced not only in the ear-lobes but throughout the rim also. For male children the ear lobes only are pierced.

11. '*Nagunga*'.—This is an aluminium ear-ring made in the shape of a snake, which worn by women only in their ear-lobes.

12. '*Murpka*' (*Nose-rings*).—These are rings made of copper which are pierced to the two sides and the septum of the nose for women. Men wear only one ring on any one side of the nose.

13. '*Muyyanga*' (*Tinkling ornaments*).—A tinkling ornament made of bronze used as anklet. Worn by the children of both sexes till they attain the age of four or five years. Purchased at a weekly shandy.

14. '*Muddinga*' (*Finger-rings*).—These are finger-rings made of aluminium or copper. Worn by both the sexes to all the fingers or to some.

15. '*Siringi*'—It is a copper ring with an oval shaped plate on it. It is worn by women to the forefinger of the leg.

16. *Necklaces made of rupee and half-rupee coins.*—Rupee or half-rupee coins are made into necklaces which are worn by women.

17. '*Kuppanga*' (*Siya*).—It is a special type of decorative set of hair pins made of aluminium. It is worn by Samanta women tucked in their braids. Gradually it is becoming out of date.

18. '*Pajju*' (*Wrist band*).—Worn by males. Made of silver or gold.

Chapter II

THE SAMANTA SETTLEMENT

A Samanta settlement is usually situated either on the top of a hill on a flat piece of land or at the foot of a hill. On the hill-tops mostly we come across villages exclusively inhabited by Samantas. At the foot of the hills, however, they are seen residing in a village side by side with other tribals. But even here the Samantas build their houses on one side in a compact area. Each settlement of the Samantas consists of 10 to 20 households.

Building A New Settlement :

The Samantas are more nomadic than any other tribe of the Araku area. Their movements are influenced both by natural and supernatural factors. They may leave a village when the surrounding hill-slopes are no more useful for 'podu' cultivation after a continuous cultivation for years together or a considerable number of people die (as a result of epidemic) within a short span of time. In the latter case, it is believed that the place of settlement is haunted by evil spirits. In such cases the settlement is moved to a nearby place.

When the Samantas intend to build a new settlement the heads of the families go out in the month of December or January in search of a suitable site. The selection of a site for a new settlement is determined by two important factors *viz.*, the availability of good and cultivable hill-slopes and the availability of water allround the year. For this, the Samantas prefer an area near the bank of a perennial stream. Another factor, though important, but not a deciding factor, is a flat and slopy place for the construction of a village. This is to ensure that the settlement is free from water-logging and stagnation.

After the preliminary selection is made, the 'Havnta' *1 and a few elder members approach the Muttadar² and the 'Mutta Pujara' ³ of the area in which they intend to settle

*1. 'Havnta' : Village Head. 2. 'Muttadar' : Head of a group of villages called 'Mutta'. 3. 'Mutta pujara'. Priest of the 'Mutta'. 4. 'Disari' : A Samantha priest.

down. They fix up a day for formal negotiations. On the day fixed, the 'Havnta' and some others visit the 'Muttadar' with a bottle of liquor in which 'Mutta puja' also participates. The 'Muttadar', 'Mutta Pujara' and the 'Havnta' drink the liquor. They may also share it with others that are present. Then they resume their negotiations either at the house of the 'Muttadar' or at some other place in the village. Normally before giving his consent for laying a new settlement, the 'Muttadar' lays down certain conditions, viz., that the prospective immigrants should be honest and hard-working people, and in case in future anyone of them were to be involved in any theft or other unsocial activities, they would be forced to vacate the settlement. A promise will be made to that effect by the visitors.

Before the settlement is built, it is made sure that the site is also good for a prosperous living and is free from the influence of evil spirits. There is a procedure to test the desirability of occupying a particular spot. On the evening of an auspicious day, the 'Havnta' or the 'Disari' along with some others goes to the selected site. He cleans a small piece of land of about five inches in diameter and plasters it with cowdung. Then he places on it five or seven grains of rice in a line, one grain touching the other. He puts a dry leaf on the grains, places small pieces of wood on the leaf to keep the leaf from moving away on account of wind, and then leaves for the village.

Next morning he goes to the place and removes the pieces of wood and the leaf. After removing the leaf, if he finds the grains in the arranged order, the site is believed to be good for a settlement and is free from evil spirits. If the order of the grains is found disturbed, or one or more of them are broken, the site is not selected for settlement. At the time of arranging the grain in the order also, if a grain breaks into two, a new settlement will be built on that side. Thus, both at the time of abandoning a village, and at the time of building a settlement, natural as well as supernatural considerations play a role. If the order of the grains remains intact, the 'Havnta' normally erects a pole on the same place. Later on, all of them jointly work in erecting long-thatched sheds to be partitioned into rooms. The erection of houses takes about five days. Necessary house building material will be brought from the jungle. After completing

the construction work, on an auspicious day, all the women and children of the migrating families arrive in the new settlement. They bring their belongings along with them. Some of them request for the help of their relatives, if necessary, to carry the belongings. When the construction of the house is completed, the Disari is consulted as to an auspicious 'sogu' for the house warming ceremony. The ritual takes place on the slightly raised altar meant for keeping the water-pots. The head of the family burns castor oil as incense and he throws rice soaked in turmeric solution to all sides of the house. Then he makes a fowl to peck rice and prays as follows: 'O!, Maqrabo, Earth God! Sky God! I am entering the house with my wife and children to live in. Before entering, I am offering the fowl to you. Guard us from evils and difficulties'. The fowl is then sacrificed. It is only after the occupation of the houses, that women plaster the walls and floor with mud. Unlike the construction of the houses, plastering is a family affair. In case the new settlement is to be raised on a site belonging to any individual, his permission is sought for the same to use the plot. The owner, is however, remunerated with small quantities of chillies, tobacco, and grain.

Admitting New Families into a Village :

Sometimes owing to economic reasons, instead of the whole village, a few families may migrate to another village. Generally, they migrate to a village in which they have relatives. The immigrants consult their relatives before hand in order to seek the permission of the village 'Havnta'. If the 'Havnta' shows his willingness to admit new families in his village, the intending immigrants pay a visit to the village 'Havnta' and present him a bottle of liquor. The liquor is shared by all the members present. As a matter of tradition, the 'Havnta' expresses his willingness to admit them, provided they do not have any known bad record. The day of migration is also fixed then in consultation with the 'Disari', provided then 'Havnta' gives his consent.

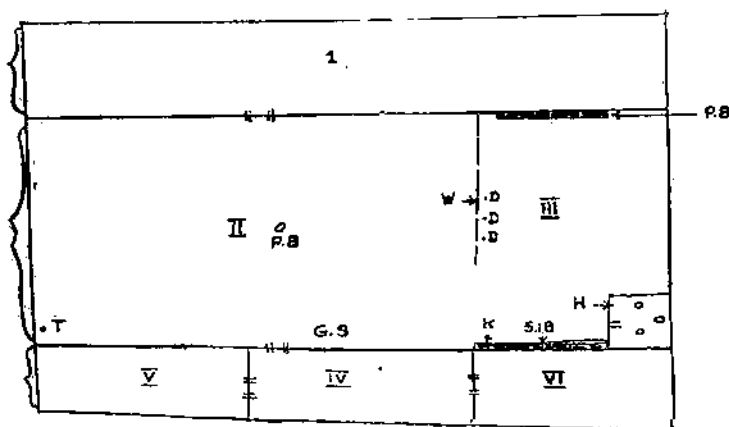
On the auspicious day fixed, the men accompanied by their women and children arrive with their belongings. Temporarily they put up with their relatives. Subsequently, on an auspicious day the immigrants construct their own thatched sheds either adjacent or on any side of the previous ones.

Within a week of their arrival they build their houses and move into them. In case the number of families admitted is only two or three, normally they build their houses as additions to the already existing rows of houses. If the number of families admitted is large they jointly build a long-thatched shed and partition it.

Housing :

The Samanta settlement can be easily distinguished from any other tribal settlement in the Agency area. A long-thatched shed is partitioned into five or six rooms separated by wattle walls plastered with mud or only mud walls. Each room is occupied by one family. Generally, three such rows of houses on three sides of a rectangular site constitute the settlement. Two rows of houses are built parallel and opposite to one another. The other row is built at the third side facing the ends of the two rows. The roof of the shed is slopy and is thatched with grass available in the jungle. The roof is supported by vertical wooden posts and beams laid across the posts.

The ground plan of a Samanta house will be as follows :



- I. *Anga Pada Dooku*.—Front street Verandah.
- II. *Bahri Illu*.
- III. *Bithri Illu*.
- IV. *Vakkapada Dooku*.—Back Street Verandha.
- V. *Vetta Gorringa Gadi*.
- VI. *Menda Gorringa Gadi*.

II—II. Entrance door, *Dara*.

P. B. Pounding block—*Henni*.

T. *Tera*.

G. S. Grinding Stone, *Jatta*.

K. *Kuduru*.

S. I. B. *Sippanga Ittini Balla*.

Hollu—Oven, hearth.

P. B. *Pettenga Balla*.

D. *Dokka*.

W. Wattle Wall.



This type of Samanta house, as is evident from the plan, consists of one central hall and two verandahs. The front verandah is kept open without any enclosure and the back verandah is divided into two rooms on the sides, leaving an open place in between. These two rooms are used for keeping goats, sheep and also pigs. The central hall and the other rooms in the back verandah are enclosed with mud walls leaving space for entrance doors.

The central hall is divided into two halves, one is called "Bahri Illu" and the other "Bitri Illu". The "Bahri Illu" is the entrance room used for keeping agricultural implements and other things apart from sleeping. In the middle of this room, the Samantas place one pounding block embedded in the ground and near the wall a grinding stone. In the corner of the room one stick of about 3 to 4 feet long is erected. This stick (tera) is chipped into a triad at the top to place a basket on it for keeping the fowls. In a few households instead of 'tera', we find sling with a basket in it tied to the rafters of the roof or attic for the same purpose.

The "Bahri Illu" is separated from "Bitri Illu" by a wattle wall. The "Bitri Illu" is mainly the kitchen room, where, in a corner, a large sized oven is constructed. The 'hollu', i.e., oven is made of mud and stones with three openings for placing 3 utensils one on each. Among the three openings one is exclusively used for heating water. Hence one pot is fixed on it. The other two openings are

used for cooking purposes. The 'hollu' is so constructed that an opening is left for putting in fire-wood in the hearth. The 'hollu' is essentially constructed facing the entrance of the kitchen. By the side of the wall in the same room a wooden stand (Sippanga Ithini Balla) is erected for keeping vessels. This stand is composed of a long thick wooden plank fixed horizontally at the height of four feet over the vertical wooden posts planted on the ground. Just below this 'sippanga ithini balla' i.e., vessel stand, a platform of earth is also raised to a height of one to one and a half feet for placing drinking and other utensils. Over the 'hollu' one big basket called 'dangeri' is placed at the height of 4 to 5 feet supported by wooden sticks fixed in the wall horizontally. The basket is used for storing and keeping grain dry. In the kitchen room by the side of another wall a wooden stand is raised for placing boxes, if any. This stand is called 'Pettenga Balla'. By the side of the wattle wall, pots for keeping water are placed.

Each Samanta House invariably has one attick, supported by wooden posts planted in the central hall at the height of about 6 feet. The attic is made of thick wooden planks. A small place called 'Atu Duveri' is kept open in the attic for climbing on it with the support of a ladder. The attic is useful for storing grain and other important things. This actually serves as a store house for these people.

The second and common type of house is only less spacious having no back verandah. Such a type of house normally does not have any door at the back. In other details it is not different from the first type of house.

It is also observed among certain households that there is no wattle wall or mud wall to separate 'Bahri Illu' and 'Bithri Illu' from one another. In some cases the pounding block is embedded in the ground of the verandah instead of the central hall.

Usually, every house has a plinth raised by earth about 1 to 2 feet high from the ground. The walls are plastered now and then with mud and dung as that of the floor of the house. A few houses have wooden doors but others have only doors made of bamboo mat.

Kondinga Halla' or cattle shed:

In case a family owns 'garuvu' land and possesses a few draught cattle or cows and other livestock it constructs

a separate shed for keeping them. This shed has a sloping roof thatched with jungle grass supported by wooden posts. It is enclosed by wooden sticks from all sides leaving some entrance to let the cattle enter it. The "Bidathai Sogu" is considered auspicious for the construction of a cow pen; so in consultation with the 'Disari', the first pole of the cow pen will be erected when the 'Bidathai Sogu' is on.

House-hold Articles:

The household articles used by the Samantas are of various types. The articles made of wood, stone, and bamboo are mainly manufactured by the people themselves and the others, made of metal, are purchased mainly at the weekly shandies.

The articles grouped under various heads are as follows:

I. FURNITURE:

(1) 'Katteli' (cot):—A rectangular wooden frame with four legs at the corners and webbing of 'Paidoika'. The Samantas themselves manufacture the cots.

II. GRINDING AND POUNDING:

(1) 'Jattanga' (Grinder).—A mortar made either of wood or stone. It consists of two round pieces of wood or stone and is used for grinding ragi, sama, etc., into flour. It is manufactured by the Samantas themselves.

(2) 'Kolu' (Pounding Pestle).—A cylindrical pole of about four feet in length with or without an iron ferule fitted in the bottom of it. It is used for pounding or removing the husk of grains like ragi, sama, etc., and in pounding holes and blocks. It is made by Samantas themselves.

(3) 'Henni' (Pounding Block).—A wooden or stone piece flattened on all sides, measuring about 12" × 12" × 12" with a hole of about 3 inches diameter and 4 inches depth in the centre. The block is firmly embedded in the floor with its surface just equivalent to that of the floor. It is used for pounding or husking ragi, sama, etc. The Samantas themselves manufacture it.

(4). '*Hingapata*'.—A stone roller for grinding substances on a flat stone and is made by the Samantas themselves.

III. VESSELS USED FOR COOKING:

(1). *Earthen Pot and Metal Pots*—(a) *Earthen Pot (Dokka)*.—It is made of earth and baked in fire. Each family possesses a number of earthen pots of various sizes for purposes of cooking, fetching and storing water etc. Pots are purchased at weekly shandy. An earthen or aluminium pot solely used for cooking rice or preparing gruel (porridge) is called '*Randa Dokka*'. An earthen or aluminium pot used to cook curry and soup is called '*Jai Pidita*'.

(b) '*Gariya*' (*Water Pot*).—It is a big brass pot with a wide mouth used for storing water and it is purchased at weekly shandy. A very few families possess them.

(c) '*Nokki*' (*Cooking utensil*).—A cooking utensil made of aluminium is called '*Nokki*' and it is purchased at a weekly shandy.

IV. VESSELS USED FOR WASHING:

(1). (*Dabbi Tin*).—This is a two-gallon tin. Used for boiling unclean clothes before washing. Some use it for storing grains, and it is purchased at weekly shandy.

V. VESSELS USED FOR DRINKING.

(1). *Dunga (Bamboo Tumbler)*.—It is a bamboo tumbler used for drinking water, measuring grain, storing provisions like salt, chillies, oils, etc., and also for keeping papers, if any. The Samantas themselves make it.

(2). '*Mutta*' is a tumbler made of either aluminium or brass or copper, used for drinking water. A very few families possess them.

(3). '*Jachu*' (*Goud Ladle*).—is made of dry goud and used for drinking water, serving gruel, soup etc. it is made by the Samantas themselves.

VI OTHER VESSELS:

(1) *Sina (Bowl)*.—It is an aluminium or bronze bowl used for taking meals. It is purchased at a weekly shandy.

VII. ARTICLES MADE OF BAMBOO.

(1). *'Hechi'*.—is a bamboo winnowing fan, used for winnowing grain and it is purchased at a weekly shandy.

(2). *Baskets of various sizes*.—(Small baskets: 'Tippini', Big ones:—'Hangoni', very big:—'Dalli')—Bamboo baskets used for carrying, storing grain, etc., are purchased at a weekly shandy.

(3). *Gera' (Leader)*.—It is a bamboo of ladder of about 12 feet length, used for climbing up the attic. It is made by the Samantas themselves.

(4). *'Tudunga Badga' (Hanger stick)*.—This bamboo stick of about five or six feet is hung horizontally from the roof for keeping clothes on it.

(5). *Flat rectangular or square baskets of various sizes—(Dangeri)*.—Bamboo basket of about four or five feet square bottom with an edge raised by 3 inches only and used for drying grain, chillies etc. It is also hung above the hearth.

(6). *'Hichuvi Hakkani Danga' (Bamboo pipe)*.—This bamboo pipe is used for blowing air through it to kindle fire in earth and is manufactured by Samantas themselves.

(7). *'Panniya Pippeli' (Double edged knife)*.—This is a double edged iron knife of two to three inches in length with one edge having teeth like a saw and the other sharpened into blade and it is generally purchased at a weekly shandy. Some make it for themselves. It is used for making wooden combs.

(8). *'Didippa' (Razor)*.—This is an iron razor of two to three inches in length with one sharpened end which is used for shaving the hair on the head. Whenever necessary it is sharpened on a stone. purchased at a weekly shandy.

VIII. OTHERS.

(1). *Combs* (a) *Kireni Panniya* (*Wooden Comb*).—This wooden comb is of about five inches in length with teeth of about three inches which is used for taking out lice from the hair by both sexes. Men use it for plucking out the hair from the beard and the moustache. Made by the Samantas themselves.

(b). '*Panniya*' (*Comb*).—This is a flattened piece of wood of '*Panniya Marunu*' 1 1/2 inches or one inch in length with 15 to 20 teeth at one end and is used for combing hair by both sexes. The Samantha youth of both sexes keep it in their '*chignon*' (Coil of hair). It is made by the Samantas themselves.

(2). '*Hikumada*' (*Sling*).—This sling is made of '*Paidorka*' fibre is tied to the rafters of roof or attic. Pots are put into the sling, made by the Samantas themselves.

(3). *Boxes*.—Made of steel or wood. Samantas purchase them.

Chapter III.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

Division of the Tribe.

The Census of India, 1951* records "that there are four classes of Konds, namely, Kutia, Dungria, Desai and Jatapu". It goes to say that "The Jatapu Konds are the most advanced among them, having assimilated to an extent the culture and civilization of the Aryan neighbours. But the Kutia Konds are the most primitive among them, occupying the most inaccessible hills and remotest of forest, living on what they can secure with their bows and arrows."

The District Gazetteer of Visakhapatnam (1911) also records that "the really primitive Khonds in Vizagapatnam are the Dongria (Jungle) Khonds.....The Desiya Khonds.....and the Kuttia (Hill) Khonds".

During the course of our field work, we were told by the Samantas that there are no groups as such around Paderu and Araku. One Mallu Samanta of Pukkili, member of the Legislative assembly, Orissa, denied the existence of such divisions. The Samantas living in Srikakulam district call themselves Jatapu Khonds and they are a little more acculturated than those residing around Paderu and Araku area. But, they do not feel that they are different from or superior to the Samantas living around Paderu and Araku.

Division into Clans.

The Samanta tribe is divided into a number of unilateral groups. Each such unilateral group consists of all the blood relatives near and distant that are believed to be related through common descent. The descent of such unilateral groups, i.e., clans is traced through a common male ancestor.

Each clan has its own distinct name and also its own 'Illu Fenu', i.e., house deity. On various important

*Vol. XI, Orissa

occasions each clan worships its deity. The names of a few clans with their 'Illu Penu' are given below.

Serial No. and name of the clan.	Name of the Deity, i.e., Illu Penu.
(1)	(2)
(1) <i>Melleka</i>	<i>Ganga Penu</i>
(2) <i>Mandinga</i>	<i>Sannulu Penu</i>
(3) <i>Sirika</i>	<i>Ganga Penu</i>
(4) <i>Hooika</i>	<i>Donga Penu</i>
(5) <i>Vingoda</i>	<i>Ganga Penu</i>
(6) <i>Hareka</i>	<i>Ganga Penu</i>
(7) <i>Praska</i>	<i>Ganga Penu</i>
(8) <i>Killeka</i>	<i>Dodi Penu</i>
(9) <i>Holka</i>	<i>Sita Penu</i>
(10) <i>Mutaka</i>	<i>Sita Penu</i>
(11) <i>Boikinga</i>	<i>Hollu Penu</i>
(12) <i>Kumrika</i>	<i>Sita Penu</i>
(13) <i>Limmaka</i>	<i>Sita Penu</i>
(14) <i>Miniyeka</i>	<i>Donga Penu</i>
(15) <i>Niska</i>	<i>Sita Penu</i>

The clans being patrilineal ones only the male members adopt the name of a clan which is used as a prefix to the name of an individual. For instance, if the name of one individual is Ruppa and if he belongs to Tadinga clan he is referred to as Tadinga Ruppa. A woman adopts the name of a clan of her birth till she is married and the surname of her husband after marriage.

Each Clan an exogamous group. A member of a clan has necessarily to marry from among the clans other than his own. It is quite possible that two clans have one and the same house deity and may maintain matrimonial

alliances between themselves. For example, Niska, Mutka, and Limmaka, have the same house deity, viz., Sita-penu and yet they maintain marital relations among themselves. Hence, the house deities have nothing to do with marital relations.

In spite of this tribe being divided into a number of exogamous clans, matrimonial alliances are prohibited between certain groups of clans and permitted with others. The clans between whom matrimonial alliances are not allowed are called 'Tainga' or brother clans. The other clans between whom such relations are not allowed are called 'Tone Tainga' clans of friends' brothers clans. Such clans between whom matrimonial alliances are permitted are called 'Samdinga' clans.

It is significant to note that the 'Tainga' clans do not form into a phratry. The Tainga clans do not have marital contacts between themselves but with regard to contacts with those outside the group all of them do not follow the same regulations. It is observed from the genealogies collected that the Mooska clan treats Sirika, Minyeka, Tadinga and Hareka clans as 'Samdinga' clans and Malleka, Vingoda, Mandinga clans as 'Thainga'. But, Melteka clan which happens to be 'Thainga' for Mooska is treated as 'Samdinga' for Vingoda. Similarly, while Sirika maintains marital relations with Mooska and Milleka, Milleka does not maintain marital relations with Mooska. The explanation for such a practice is evident only from the fact that the Samantas prohibit marital relations between children of two sisters. Hence, it is quite probable that the clans between whom matrimonial alliances were prohibited were those belonging to the children of the sisters.

Matrimonial alliances between 'Tone-Tainga' clans are prohibited not because they belong to one common ancestor or to two sisters but because they were once friends and used to look after one another in times of need. For example, marital relations are prohibited between (a) Sirika and Mooska, (b) Praska and Sirika. It is told by Hareka Sanyasi of Antriguda that Hareka and Tadinga are 'Tone Tainga' clans. He further observed that a few decades ago when an alliance was established between one Harek women and Tadinga man, the woman became crippled and later died. But Tadinga Ruppa of Sindhiput a village two miles away from Antriguda, was trying at the time of our

visit to bring a girl for his son from a Hareka of clan of a distant village. Ruppa, however had no knowledge whatsoever of this prohibited relationship between the two clans concerned and hence he was not hesitating to fix up the match.

An analysis of the names of the clans reveals the fact that most of them derive their names from some animal, bird or plant. Thus, Milleka means Peacock, Mandinga means Tiger, Sirikka stands for fly, mooska for ape and Naccika for tortoise. Hence, it seems quite possible that the clans were totemic in origin. However, at present it seems that none of the clans shows any reverence towards its totemic object as normally would happen. Even food taboos are not observed by these tribals.

There is no evidence to exemplify that the clans had at any time separate territories of their own. Further, no traces of superiority or inferiority between the clans were found out. However certain stigmas are attributed to a few clans. For example, Sirika clan is referred to as one that had eaten the flesh of the horse (prohibited by Samantas) and Vingoda that had eaten night-soil (when they were once starving).

It may be said in this connection that it is very difficult to get an exhaustive list of the various clans and the names of the corresponding deities. These people know only the names of the clans belonging to Tainga, Tone Tainga and 'Samdinga' groups with whom they most often come into contact and those who live in the immediate vicinity.

The names of the clans that are recorded around Paderu, Araku and Parvatipuram are as follows.

Malleka, Mandinga, Sririkka, Muska, Nachika, Huika, Vingoda, Tadinga, Hareka, Praska, Hobika, Drepeka, Niska, Jambeka, Pidikka, Buika, Killeka, Holka, Mutaka, Pokinga, Kumrika, Limmaka and Miniyaka.

ORIGIN OF THE CLANS AND THEIR NAMES.

It was rather difficult to obtain any comprehensive account of the mythological stories of this tribe in the Andhra Agency area. With regard to the origin of the names of the clans only a few legends could be collected.

(1) *Hooika Clan*.—Once there occurred a huge deluge. People climbed up trees to save their lives. After some days water gradually receded but the earth did not become hard and it was slushy. So it was impossible for the people to get down the trees and settle down. They were helpless. At last one young man thought of praying and sacrificing a fowl to Jakeri. He prayed Jakeri to bless them with hardened earth. When the chicken was sacrificed, the soft slushy mud disappeared and the earth became hard, suitable for human settlement. Since the young man was responsible for this change, he was given 'Hooika' one who made the earth hard ('Bhumi buyi kitatai Hooikanga') as his surname.

(2) *Miniyeka Clan*.—When there was a deluge and people were flooded by the water, 'Miniyeka', *i.e.*, fish saved one group. Since then fish has been respected by the group and it is called after the fish as Miniyeka clan. One Miniyeka Samantu observed that the members of this clan used to respect the fish by not eating it, but of late, no such taboo is observed.

(3) *Mooska Clan*.—Once upon a time, a Samanta girl married a 'Mooska' *i.e.*, ape. Since then the children born to the couple were given Mooska surname.

The Family.

The family, among the Samantas, is the primary group and the fundamental unit of society. A family functions at four important stages of the individual's life. In the formative stage the individual as a child is looked after by the parents till he is six or seven years old. Later, the children begin to get training by imitation in various domestic and field activities appropriate to their sex. In the second pre-nuptial stage the boy or girl gets training in all the activities of adulthood and he or she gradually begins to participate in all social and economical activities as a full participant. During this stage, no special training in sex activities is given to the adults even though pre-marital sexual relations are not generally looked down upon with any special contempt. During the post-nuptial stage, the individual becomes entirely responsible for looking after his children, and sets up a separate household for himself independent of the parental family. In the final stage, when the individual reaches old age, he is looked after by his sons and is dependent on them.

Among the Samantas, we come across mostly elementary families consisting of husband and wife or wives with their unmarried children. A girl after marriage is not considered any more a member of the family into which she was born. Extending families are very few in number and these too are those which grow round the nuclear family. Hence, the families are generally small in size, the average size being not more than six members. The less number of extended families can be explained by the fact that sons often get separated from parents within a short period after their marriages. When there is only one son, troubles, do not normally arise between the parents and the son. But, whenever there is more than one son, the parents prefer to stay with anyone who is obedient to them.

The causes for separation as explained by various people are inamicable relations between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law and also between wives of brothers.

During his life time the father is the generally recognised head of the family. His voice prevails in all the social and economic matters. When the sons grow normally the eldest one or else the most intelligent of the all begins to manage the affairs of the family under the supervision of the father and gradually takes over all the responsibilities on himself. During the course of transition of the authority, if misunderstandings arise between brothers or between the father and the sons, the family gets disintegrated and sons set up their own house-holds, having shared the property held by their father among themselves equally. When the parents attain old age every son has the obligation of looking after them. Even step mothers are expected to be looked after by their deceased husband's sons. As this tribe practises widow re-marriage, a widow who does not have any issue from the deceased husband would prefer to stay, however, with the children, if any, born to her previous husband.

The Samanta tribe does not encourage polygynous families, though a few cases have been found out. It is reported that the wife herself in certain cases goes to the extent of pressing her husband to get married to some other woman so that the second wife may actively assist her in domestic and field activities. The man also sometime may marry a second woman with whom he falls in love.

Nevertheless, it is said by the male population that such polygynous families are not generally worth encouraging, in view of the conflict that is likely to arise between the wives. The polygynous families, they say, can be successful only when the husband marries a second woman with the consent of the first wife. In order to avoid any evil that is likely to befall the family because of such practices, this tribe observes a peculiar ritual called Kadata Meddinai'. According to this ritual on an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari', the man goes to the stream accompanied by his first wife, newly-wed girl and the 'Pejjeni'. The second wife, the man and his first wife are made to stand one behind the other in the stream with their legs wide apart, letting the water flow underneath. On the bank of the stream, the 'Pejjeni' plasters the earth with cow dung, draws lines with ragi power, and offers a chicken to the ancestral spirits after chanting certain hymns. After the chicken's head is severed with a knife, the same is thrown in the water to flow along with the current underneath the tree that stood in the river. Then, the first wife is asked to beat her husband on his legs with a broomstick and then a bamboo stick, one end of which is chipped into a triad. After the performance of this ritual it is supposed that any evil will not befall the family. However, for a man with some property, marrying more than one wife seems quite helpful in the sense that he can set himself free from the various minor activities of the field as they can be attended to by his wives. Hence, those who want to roam about, take active part in village affairs and those who are the heads of village with considerable property are normally prone to plural marriages.

The Samanta family is mainly patriarchal. Hence, the inheritance of property and the house-name is traced through the father. Sporadically matrilineal families are also seen, because a man without any male issue will keep the daughter with him. Descent is reckoned even in this case through father.

Social interaction between members of the family at various levels and on different occasions depends on the accepted division of labour between the sexes. Interaction between pairs of son and father, mother and daughter normally do take place at the field and house respectively. Sisters and brothers co-operative with one another in tending cattle and also in caring the younger brothers and

sisters. Co-operative interaction also takes place between a set of people that is between father, mother and children at the field and home. Based on this nature of close association between mother and daughter, the mother exerts influence on her daughter. In spite of this, as a rule, it is the father who dominates in the house over all the members of his family. The close association of the children with their parents gives them opportunities to be conversant with all domestic and field activities and be independent after marriage when they set up their own house. Apart from that, the primary relations developed out of such close association keep the children alive to the various family customs and traditions in the absence of any oral or written instructions as such.

Status of Woman :

The status of woman in the Samanta tribe from the stand-point of actual treatment, legal status, opportunity for social participation and character and extent of work does not seem deplorable, even if not equal with that of man.

In the family the woman certainly does not have much say in matters of policy ; but usually in all social occasions like marriage of children and the maintenance of household affairs, she is consulted by her husband. The woman has an equal right with man in selecting a life-partner and also giving divorce. With regard to disabilities, she may be manhandled by a cruel husband, she is not allowed to sit on the cot in the presence of her husband and other elder male members, and also to drink as the men do, except on festive and ceremonial occasions. A woman, that ill-treats her husband, is looked down upon and if she goes to the extent of beating him, she will be punished by the community by imposing a fine.

The other important point with regard to her status is that she is treated as commodity that is purchased by the husband and also by his brothers real or collateral. When a widow marries a man other than the nearest collateral brothers of her deceased husband, they demand compensation from the man who married her. Even though it is obligatory on the part of a widow's deceased husband's brother to look after her and give her protection, it amounts to accepting her as a commodity useful

for household duties or to make money by selling her. The institution of bride-price places a woman in such a position. As a matter of fact, a Samanta man says that he had 'purchased a wife'.

In certain cases a widow is given a little property by her sons but usually she is completely dependent on the mercy of her children, having no special rights in the property left behind by her deceased husband. Despite this the Samantas give importance to the property of a woman that is given to her by her parents either in the form of jewellery or cattle. It is said that she has full rights over that property and can dispose of it as she likes, but in usual practice, the husband dominates the woman even in such affairs. After her death, however, the property must be duly returned to her parents by her husband or any other members that are alive on the day of 'Sudhi', a ceremony of purification that is observed as a last ritual performed after one's death. Among the Samantas, in case of adultery only the man is punished but not the woman, though she is strongly looked down upon with contempt.

As regards opportunities for social participation, it is observed that a Samanta woman does not suffer from any taboos that prohibit her from taking active part on various occasions except during the periods of menstruation, pregnancy and child-birth. She is allowed to participate in all activities as the man. In fact, agricultural operations start with the woman of the house by putting 'bottu' on the forehead of the husband and also by smearing turmeric solution on the oxen and the plough. More important than this among the Samantas is the office of the 'Pejjeni', a woman priest. She occupies a very important position in the socio-religious life. This institution definitely indicates superior status of Samanta woman when compared to the social status enjoyed by women of other tribal groups living in their vicinity.

As for the extent and character of her work, a Samanta woman does undertake all the responsibilities, both household and agricultural, expected of a woman in any other community. She does work side by side with the man in the field and still attends her domestic chores. She, however, does certain functions customarily assigned to her. This makes her mainly responsible for domestic work like house-keeping, bearing and rearing of children.

The Kinship System :

Next to clan the kinship system of the Samantas is important in regulating social behaviour and marital relations between various members. The nomenclature as given below explains the nature of relationship among the kins and affines and the resulting social practices.

<i>Term of reference in Kuvi language.</i>	<i>Term of address in Kuvi.</i>	<i>English equivalent.</i>
I. SPEAKER'S OWN GENERATION		
<i>Tayyi</i>	.. <i>Va Dada</i>	.. Brother.
<i>Kaza Tayyi, Dada</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Elder brother.
<i>Bova</i>	.. by name	.. Younger brother.
<i>Tayyi</i> <i>Kaza Tayyi.</i>	.. <i>Va Dada</i>	.. Father's brother's son If elder.
<i>Bova</i>	.. by name	.. If younger.
<i>Mehana</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Father's sister's son, if elder.
<i>Mehana</i>	.. by name	.. If younger.
<i>Dada</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Mother's sister's son if elder.
<i>Bova</i>	.. by name	.. If younger.
<i>Mehana</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Mother's brother's son if elder.
<i>Bova</i>	.. by name	.. If younger.
<i>Dada</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Husband's elder sister's husband.
<i>Tayyi Potilisi</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Husband's elder brother.
<i>Marandesi</i>	.. by other name	.. Husband's younger brother.
<i>Sagila</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Wife's elder sister's husband.
<i>Bova</i>	.. by name	.. Husband's younger sister's husband.
<i>Bato</i>	.... <i>Dada</i>	.. Elder sister's husband.
<i>Honnesi</i>	.. by other name	.. Younger sister's husband.

<i>Term of reference in Kuvī language</i>	<i>Term of address in Kuvī.</i>	<i>English equivalent</i>
SPEAKER'S OWN GENERATION		
<i>Mrandesi</i>	.. by name	.. Wife's younger brother.
<i>Tayyi Potilesi</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Wife's elder brother.
<i>Dada</i>	.. <i>Dada</i>	.. Mother's sister's son if elder.
<i>Bova</i>	.. by name	.. If younger.
<i>Sagila</i>	.. by name or <i>Dada</i> or <i>Bova</i>	.. Wife's younger sister's husband.
<i>Dokra</i>	..	.. Husband.
<i>Samdhi</i>	.. <i>Famdhi</i> by name or <i>Bato</i> .	.. Son's wife's father Man's Woman's.
	.. <i>Dada, Gova.</i>	.. Daughter's husband's father.
<i>Samdhi</i>	.. <i>Dada, Gova</i>	.. Man speaking.
<i>Samdhi</i>	.. <i>Dada, Bora, Gova.</i>	.. Woman speaking.
<i>Dokri</i>	.. <i>Wife's name</i>	.. Vaka.
<i>Kaza Tarradi Tangi.</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Husband's elder Brother's wife.
<i>Nana</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Elder sister.
<i>Tangi, Boppi</i>	.. <i>Alla</i>	.. Younger sister. Mother's brother's daughter.
<i>Mahane Tangi</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Elder.
<i>Mahane Tangi</i>	.. <i>Boppi,</i> by name.	.. Younger. Mother's sister's daughter.
<i>Nana</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Elder.
<i>Boppi</i>	.... <i>Boppi</i> , by name	.. Younger.
<i>Tangi Poyya</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Husband's elder sister.
<i>Nanjo</i>	.. Other name	.. Younger.
<i>Ichi Javvadi Tangi</i>	.. <i>Alla</i>	.. Husband's younger brother's wife.

<i>Term of reference in Kuvī language.</i>	<i>Term of address in Kuvī.</i>	<i>English equivalent.</i>
SPEAKERS OWN GENERATION		
<i>Mehana Tangi</i>	.. Father's sister's daughter.	.. Father's sister's daughter.
<i>Mehana Tangi</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Elder.
<i>Mehana Tangi</i>	.. <i>Boppi</i>	.. Younger.
<i>Nana</i>	.. <i>Nanā</i>	.. Father's brother's daughter.
<i>Tangi</i>	.. <i>Boppi</i>	.. elder.
	.. by name	.. younger.
<i>Tangi Poyya</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Wife's elder sister.
<i>Nanjo</i>	.. Other name by the same name.	.. Younger.
<i>Avva</i>	.. <i>Nana</i>	.. Elder brother's wife.
<i>Kudiyā</i>	.. No term of address	.. Younger brother's wife.
<i>Samdhini</i>	.. <i>Tangi, Nana</i>	.. Son's wife's mother.
<i>Samdhini</i>	.. <i>Tangi</i>	.. Daughter's husband's mother.
<i>Mehna</i>	.. by name or <i>Tangi</i>	.. Sister's husband's sister.
<i>Dada</i>	.. <i>Va Dada</i>	.. Husband's sister's husband, If elder.
<i>Gora</i>	.. <i>Va Dada</i>	.. If younger.
II. SECOND GENERATION ABOVE THE SPEAKER		
<i>Aba</i>	.. <i>Aba</i>	.. Father.
<i>Kaja Aba</i>	.. <i>Anba</i>	.. Father's elder's brother
<i>Ichi Aba</i>	.. <i>Pabu</i>	.. Father's younger brother.
<i>Taja Mama</i>	.. <i>Mama</i>	.. Father's elder sister's husband.
<i>Ichi Mama</i>	.. <i>Mama</i>	.. Father's younger sister's husband.

<i>Term of reference in Kuvī language</i>	<i>Term of address in Kuvī</i>	<i>English equivalent</i>	(1)
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II. SECOND GENERATION ABOVE THE SPEAKER—(Contd.)

<i>Ichī Mama</i>	.. <i>Mama</i>	.. Father's younger brother.	
<i>Potilesi</i>	.. <i>Aba or Mama</i>	.. Husband's Father.	
<i>Potilesi</i>	.. <i>Aba or Mama</i>	.. Wife's father.	
<i>Eyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya</i>	.. Mother	
	.. <i>Iyya</i>	.. Step mother.	nyaw
<i>Kaja Iyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya</i>	.. Father's elder brother's wife.	
<i>Ichī Iyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya</i>	.. Father's younger brother's wife.	
<i>Ama</i>	.. <i>Ama</i>	.. Mother's elder brother's wife.	
<i>Kaja Iyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya</i>	.. Mother's elder sister.	nyaw
<i>Ichī Iyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya</i>	.. Mother's younger sister.	nyaw
<i>Kaja Ama</i>	.. <i>Ama</i>	.. Father's elder sister.	
<i>Ichī Ama</i>	.. <i>Ama</i>	.. Father's younger sister.	
<i>Poyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya, Ama</i>	.. Wife's mother.	
<i>Poyya</i>	.. <i>Iyya, Ama</i>	.. Husband's mother.	

III. SECOND GENERATION BELOW THE SPEAKER

<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. by name	.. Son.	
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. by name	.. Brother's son.	
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. by name	.. Wife's elder sister's son.	nyaw
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. <i>Eh Mriyesi</i>	.. Husband's elder brother's son.	
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. by name	.. Wife's younger sister's son.	
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. <i>Eh Mriyesi</i>	.. Husband's younger brother's son.	
<i>Banja</i>	.. <i>Eh Banja</i>	.. Husband's sister's son.	
<i>Banja</i>	.. by name	.. Women's elder brother's son.	
<i>Banja</i>	.. by name	.. (Man's) sister's son.	

(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. by name	.. Wife's brother's son.
<i>Mriyesi</i>	.. by name	.. (Woman's) sister's son.
<i>Honnesi</i>	.. <i>Eh Honnesi</i> or by another name.	.. Daughter's husband.
<i>Manga</i>	.. by name	.. Brother's daughter (Man speaking).
<i>Manga</i>	.. <i>Eh Manga</i> or by name.	.. Husband's brother's daughter.
<i>Banneju</i>	.. by name	.. Brother's daughter (Woman speaking).
<i>Banneji</i>	.. <i>Eh Banneji</i>	.. Husband's sister's daughter.
<i>Banneji</i>	.. by name	.. (Man's) sister's daughter.
<i>Manga</i>	.. by name	.. (Woman's) sister's daughter.
<i>Banneji</i>	.. by name	.. Wife, 's brother daughter.
<i>Manga</i>	.. by name	.. Wife's sister's daughter.
<i>Kudiya</i>	.. <i>Kudiya</i> or by her name or <i>Manga</i> .	.. Son's wife.

IV. THIRD GENERATION BELOW SPEAKER.

<i>Tanga Mireysi</i>	.. by name	.. Son's son.
<i>Tanga Mireysi</i>	.. by name	.. Daughter's son.
<i>Tanga Mireysi</i>	.. by name	.. Son's daughter's husband.
<i>Tanga Manga</i>	.. by name	.. Son's daughter.

V. THIRD GENERATION ABOVE THE SPEAKER.

<i>Akku Soyvi Dada</i>	.. <i>Duda ba</i>	.. Father's father.
<i>Akku Soyvi Iyya</i> <i>Aba.</i>	.. <i>Dudaba</i>	.. Mother's father.
<i>Auttu Bayyi</i>	.. <i>Budiyya</i>	.. Father's mother.
<i>Auttu Bayyi</i>	.. <i>Budiyya</i>	.. Mother's mother.

The above lists bring home the following main features of Samanta kinship and social structure :—

(1) The Samantas use two distinct groups of terms to express relationship with one another. The terms used for referring to relatives and addressing them are different from one another. For example, the term of reference for elder brother is 'Kaja tayyi' but the same is actually addressed as 'Dada'.

(2) The terms of address are different for blood relatives and relatives through marriage. But both of them are addressed by the same terms as brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers:

(3) There are certain relatives who are addressed by relationship terms, others who are addressed by name, and still others who should not be addressed by names. The general practice is to address all those younger to oneself by names and all those elder to one by kinship terms. But, certain relatives such as wife's younger sister, wife's younger brother and daughter's husband are addressed by a name other than the original one, even though they are younger ones.

(4) In broad essentials, the relationship system follows the classificatory order, for a group of relatives belonging to the same generation and sex of the speaker, the same relationship term is used. For instance, the term 'tayyi' is used for brothers, real or collateral. The term 'mama' is used for father's sister's husband and also for mother's brother.

(5) In addressing relatives, no clear cut distinction is made between the consanguinous and affinal relatives, even though this tribe differentiates between these two groups for various purposes. The term 'Dada' is used to address elder sister's husband, husband's sister's husband, elder brother, father's sister's son and also wife's elder brother. The term 'Nana' is used for addressing husbands elder brother's wife, elder sister, mother's brother's daughter, mother's sister's daughter etc.

(6) The same terms are applied by wife and husband to certain relatives either from the former or the latter's side. A man refers to his sister's son as 'banja' and his wife also refers to him by the same term 'banja'.

(7) The relationship term of speaking changes with matrimonial relations. For example, one addresses his father's sister's husband as 'Mama' but when he marries the latter's daughter, he (Mama) is referred to as 'Potilesi'.

Marital Relations allowed Between Members :

As discussed above, the kinship structure regulates marital relations. Marriage between a man and a woman can take place and become valid only in accordance with the prescribed relationships. Marital relations are allowed between the following :

- (1) Between children of brother and sister, i.e., between a man and his father's sister's daughter or his mother's brother's daughter.
- (2) Between a man and his deceased elder brother's wife.
- (3) Between a man and his wife's younger sister.
- (4) Between a man and his sister's husband's sister, and
- (5) Between a man and his sister's daughter.

The above relationship system allows us to infer that the Samanta tribe practises 'a' cross-cousin marriage, 'b' levirate, 'c' junior sororate, 'd' marriage by exchange, and also 'e' marriage between maternal uncle and niece.

Prohibited relations :

The Samantas strictly prohibit Thayyi-Tangi i.e., brother-sister and iyya-miryesi, i.e., mother-son, and also aba-manga, i.e., father-daughter marital relationship. The children of two sisters as well as the children of two brothers are prohibited from establishing marital relationship even if the two sisters belong to different clans by marriage.

Joking Relations :

As a matter of fact joking relations between the members of 'Samdinga' clans are allowed. Men and women are allowed normally to indulge in jests and jokes with members belonging to the family of "Samdinga" clan and also with cross-cousins. Usually, such relations are permitted

between members of the same generation except between grand-parents and grand-daughters. However, this tribe grants special privilege only to certain relatives (who are entitled) to indulge often in bantering mode of conversation. Thus, joking relations are allowed particularly between the following :—

- (1) A man and his mother's brother's daughter (Mehana Mehana Tangi).
- (2) A man and his father's sister's daughter (Mehana Tangi).
- (3) A man and his wife's younger sister (Bato-Nanjo)
- (4) A man and his wife's younger brother. (Bato-Mnandes).
- (5) A man and his sister's husband's sister (Mayyi-Pottilesi) (Bato-Mehana Tang).
- (6) A woman and her husband's younger sister (Kaja Aya-Nanjo).
- (7) A man or woman with his or her grand daughters (Akku Soyvi-Tanga Manga-and Auttu Bayyi-Tanga Miryesi).

The above joking relationships suggest that the relatives of opposite sex who are permitted to joke with each other are also permitted to enter into matrimonial alliances, with the exception of grand-father-grand-daughter and grand mother-grand-son. A man or woman can indulge in jovial talk with his or her sons's daughters but is not allowed to talk about matrimonial alliances. A man however, theoretically speaking, can indulge in any type bantering conversation with his daughter's daughter.

Even though all potential husbands and wives are allowed to maintain joking relationships, a woman and her husband's younger brother are prohibited from such relationship. Further, it is significant to note that even the relatives between whom joking relationships are allowed, are not expected to address one another by proper names. The elder one in age is addressed by the addressing relationship term by the younger, and the younger one is addressed by the elder by a name other than the origin. Thus, a man cannot address his wife's younger brother by name ; instead, the latter is given a new name. Addressing

by proper names in case of such a relative is regarded as insulting the person concerned. Hence, it can be inferred that indulging in jokes should not go to the extent of belittling the status and respect of a person.

Relationship Taboos :

The Samanta tribe also recognises a certain group of relatives between whom close contacts in any form are avoided. Such rules of mutual avoidance are observed between the following relatives :—

- (1) Father-in-law and daughter-in-law (Potilesi-Kudiya).
- (2) Mother-in-law and son-in-law (Poyya-Honnesi)
- (3) A man and his younger brother's wife (Toyyi Potilesi-Kudiya).
- (4) A man and his wife's elder sister (Bato-Tang Poyya).

Between these relatives no intimate talks are allowed and bantering mode of conversation is strictly prohibited. It is to be noted further that the term father-in-law includes all the real or collateral brothers of the father-in-law, while the term mother-in-law includes all her real or collateral sisters. These groups of relatives should never sit together on the same cot, utter the name of each other, and never be seen talking intimately. Of the above four groups of relatives, any slightest intimacy between the first two groups of relatives is not at all tolerated.

Village as a Local Unit :

Among the Samantas the village plays a very important role. A village normally consists of 15 to 25 households. Usually, a village is dominated by one or two clans. For instance, in Antriguda, village there are seven households; of which five are from the Hareka-clan and the remaining two are from the Malleka and Mooska. The village Gangagudi comprises 18 Samanta households of whom those belonging to Hooika clan alone are 10. If there are 'Samdinga' clans in a village, marital relations will be preferred among them. The house-holds belonging to the same clan are those of brothers, real or collateral. Thus, the village is a local unit which also combines in itself the web of kinship relations. This goes a long way towards

explaining the reason why the Samanta village functions as a social unit for all purposes, and a greater degree of co-operation is found between the house-holds. Hence, it can be said that while the family is a unit of social interaction between parents and children, the village is a unit of social inter-action between various families.

Village Co-operation :

The households in the village co-operate with one another in carrying out various activities of common interest and also in helping an individual family at the time of need. The various spheres and occasions of co-operation are as follows :—

Construction of a New Settlement :

As described earlier, the selection of a new site for construction of a village is made with the joint efforts of all the villagers. Construction of the houses is also undertaken on a reciprocal basis.

Covering the Roof of One's House :

When the roof of Samanta house needs re-thatching he seeks the help of the villagers. The villagers readily respond to the request, and assist him in this task. For the services rendered by them, the villagers are served with a mid-day meal and are also paid some amount at the rate of 0.36 P. per individual, or at any other rate as fixed by mutual consultation. Normally, the task of thatching the houses goes on one by one, and every house owner serves the others who helped him with mid-day meal, and pays some amount in cash.

If the villagers select a new hill-slope for 'podu' cultivation all the villagers work for one day on each family's plot and do the work of clearing the forest and other wild growth. The remuneration will also be paid.

Whenever agricultural operations are to be completed, by one family, they may seek the help of others. The helpers are treated to a mid-day meal and are paid at the rate of Rs. 0.36 P. a day or as it will be decided.

Village festivals are observed by the whole village collectively and every household contributes its share in accordance with the decisions arrived at the meeting of the village elders.

Apart from these cooperative efforts, village solidarity becomes evident in the following spheres :

⁹ Whenever a ceremony takes place in any one's house, all the villagers are expected to help him, and all of them are invited for a feast.

Whenever a member of a family dies, not only the bereaved family but also the whole village gets polluted and the bereaved family is helped by others.

¹⁰ If a married woman elopes with a man of another village all the villagers together go to the village of the man with whom the woman eloped and demand compensation.

Whenever a man breaks the tribal customs and laws the whole village becomes one against the violator:

¹⁰ All important ceremonies and festivals are observed collectively for the good of the village.

Even when a few families go out for hunting or fishing, the catch will be distributed among all the villagers, the share of the non-participants being, however, half of that of the participants.

The Village Fund :

Every Samanta village maintains a common fund. Pooling to the fund takes place by way of :—

(1) Payments made by the household to the villagers in lieu of their services rendered to it. It is important to note that whenever the villagers help one family they are remunerated in the form of mid-day meal and also cash payments. The cash payments are to be handed over to 'Havanta' who in turn credits to the common village fund.

(2) Contributions made by the villagers for conducting festivals and other activities for the good of the whole village.

(3) The payments made by the violators of codes of conduct towards fines imposed on them by the tribal council.

The fund thus pooled is spent for celebrating village festivals and other activities of local interest.

The Importance of Berunivalli :

Any visitor to a Samanta village will be impressed by the community life they enjoy apart from the co-operative activities described earlier. Every village invariably has one wide flat piece of stone called 'BERUNIVALLI' placed in the middle of the open area lying in between the rows of linear houses. During nights all the elderly male folk of the village sit around the fire on the stone and chit chat. On this occasion, they narrate stories and discuss informally any event of common interest. At this time a man may narrate the experience that he had in the jungle on that day or the strange experiences that he had during the course of a previous journey or about a man or official whom he happened to meet. Thus, this occasion provides an opportunity for the people to narrate their experiences to others and also to discuss them informally.

Property :

In view of the limited sources of livelihood available and meagre production from land, in general, the Samantas do not have property worth mentioning. The immovable property consists of only a small piece of compartment in the linear house. The movable property would be in the form of cattle, agricultural implements and rarely jewellery.

The Samantas consider land as government property. A hill-slope belongs to one who has selected it for 'podu' cultivation till he leaves it fallow without any intention of resuming cultivation again. Originally, the same custom was followed in regard to 'garuvu' and other types of land, but with the award of 'patta' rights such lands are treated as individual property.

All kinds of plants and trees that are useful in any way either in the surrounding jungle or on the common roads and other places, are treated as common property of the whole village. Even a tree in the 'podu' field which has grown up before one has cleared the hill-slope belongs to the whole community except a jack-fruit tree, which has a food value. In short, all plants and trees that are not specifically grown by individual efforts are treated as common property, and those that are grown in one's 'patta' land are treated as individual property.

Coming to the property of all types owned by one individual, and the distribution of the same among his children, it is observed, generally speaking, that only male members are entitled to inherit. An individual has full rights over his property. He may or may not divide his property during his life time among his sons. But, as it is a usual practice among the Samantas for the sons to get separated from their parents after marriage, normally the father divides the property equally among his sons, keeping for himself one equal share. If the elder son gets separated from his father when the latter is still begetting children, the father has the right to give his son a share in his property as he thinks fit. However, it is generally customary on the part of a father to give a major share to his elder son all forms of his property, or in any one form, if the division of property takes place when he has become old. This kind of institution of primogeniture is explained by the fact that the eldest son helps his father by sharing responsibility in family affairs both economic and social, and also helps the younger ones as they grow.

When the owner of the property takes a share for himself at the time of division, and lives independently with his wife, after his death the property is shared by all his sons equally. If he stays with anyone of his sons, the latter will inherit that property after the father's death.

Even though women do not possess any right to the property of the father, yet in practice the parents, if well-off, would give a part of the immovable property. It is also possible in certain cases that a father who dislikes his son may try to dispose off the immovable property and give his daughter a present in cash, or he may ask his daughter and son-in-law to stay with him to share his property. In the absence of sons the property of the deceased would devolve on his real brothers and in their absence, on collateral brothers. In any case, the woman is not entitled to the whole property of her husband, or to a share equal to that of her sons. After inheriting whatever property she is entitled to, a widow is not expected to marry any member. If she violates this principle, she will be debarred from taking the property or any benefit thereof. If the marriage takes place with any member,

inside or outside, her husband's clan, with the consent of all her husband's brothers and her sons, she is allowed to hold the property.

After the death of the father the sons inherit his property in equal shares. If there is only one house, of the father, the eldest son would stay in and the other brothers construct houses for themselves by joint efforts. The eldest brother may contribute something towards the construction of the houses for his brothers.

Status and Rank :

The Samanta society does not have any elaborate status and rank system but it is not altogether without any stratification. The 'Havnta', by virtue of the authority vested in him, is considered superior and is respected by the villagers. The whole population is divided into different age-groups, even though this tribe does not observe any initiation ceremonies as such, in order to mark the event of passing of an individual from one age-group to the other. Each age group however has its prescribed ways of behaviour and the consequent duties and rights. Every age-group is respected by the other below to it. Old people have definitely a higher social status in view of their experience in handling various family and group affairs. But, the status given to the female adolescents is a unique feature of the Samanta social structure. Girls before reaching the age of puberty are expected to fetch water from a stream on festive and ceremonial occasions, for use in various rituals.

Apart from the ascribed forms of status, the Samanta society also sanctions special status to individuals on the basis of their achievements. The members of the village council, mostly aged are considered superior to others in intelligence. Sometimes even youngsters who are intelligent are also selected as members of the village council. There are some intelligent persons in certain villages who command more respect and influence than the 'Havnta'. In the village Sindhiput, the traditional 'Havnta' is Tadinga Sanyasi but Tadinga Ruppa is consulted by the villagers for all practical purposes. Any man or woman who is well versed in the tribal rituals, astrology and hymns can become a 'Disari' and 'Pijjini' (Priestess) respectively. Similarly individuals having special skill in magic, narrating tribal stories, hunting and singing are duly respected.

As a matter of fact most of the Smantas are very poor. Only those who possess 'Garuvu' lands are in a position to get more produce and they are economically sound. A few, with considerable plain land and also paddy fields engage labourers for the whole year. There are also a few labour families that are attached to certain families for a few years continuously. Such labourers are those who have borrowed money on the understanding that they will work with the money lenders till the amount is repaid. In these cases their wages are deducted towards the payment of loans. It is also observed that normally the wives and children of such labourers work in the fields of the money lenders to earn their livelihood. Thus, along with the development of settled agriculture, the tribe is experiencing class differences.

Chapter IV

ECONOMY

I. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

Of all the tribes living in the Agency area, the Samanta tribe alone prefers to build its settlements on the top of *the hills and in the interior forests and consequently they depend mainly on the forest produce of various types—roots, tubers, leaves and fruits.* However, 'podu' (shifting) cultivation is the major source of their livelihood. *Those who own flat lands at the bottom of the hills or in the valleys adopt settled plough cultivation.* When compared to the other tribes in the Agency area, this tribe practises more 'podu' cultivation than settled cultivation.

The Samanta tribe was once famous for its skill in hunting and fishing. But due to restrictions on hunting in the forest, gradually their skill in hunting is diminishing and becoming a negligible source of livelihood. At present the Samantas resort to hunting as a ceremonial and recreational practice. During 'Hirei Lenju' virtually every Samanta male member goes out for hunting with his bows and arrows. The fast flowing hill streams do not provide a good source for fishing, but in small ponds where water is stagnant, they resort to fishing. In view of the scarcity of fish, the tribal people purchase the dry fish from the plains businessmen in the shandies.

Besides, forest officials and contractors engage them for cutting and felling trees and also laying roads. With the advent of the community development activities and schemes like control of soil erosion, they also get an opportunity to work and earn their livelihood during the lean months.

Basket making, carpentry, oil crushing are the crafts known to this tribe. But these are not carried on a commercial basis. They manufacture these articles for their personal use.

The following calendar depicts various economic activities and different sources of livelihood available to the tribe throughout the year.

Sl. No.	Name of month (Kuvi).	Approximate corresponding month in English calendar.	ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	Hirci Lenju .. April	.. April	.. Burning the felled forest on ' Podu ' ; making new ploughs ; ploughing and sowing ; Retaching of houses ; collection of roots like ' Nappanga ' , Hirukunna ' , Baklinga ' , and herbs like ' pulla-kucca ' , ' Govvedi kucca ' , ' Garsi kucca ' and ' Sidi manu ti kucca ' and fishing and manual labour.
2.	Besiki Lenju .. May	.. May	.. Modest beginning of agricultural operations ; ploughing and digging of ' garuva ' and (Podu) fields ; sowing ' sama ' , ' arka ' ragi , Maize , dry paddy , castor seed , red-gram (dibbling ' Nangelikunna , ginger , ' Rop-panga ' and pumpkin ; raising seed beds for wet paddy , chillies and brinjals ; collection of roots , specially ' Hirukunna ; herbs like ' Kopa kucca , Manyunenduri kucca ' ' Hitti Kucca ' and ' Garsi kucca ' an fishing Collection of ' adda ' leaves and casual labour.
3.	Landi Lenju .. June	.. June	.. Sowing ' Kajja mandya ' (ragi) ' Kajja Kunda ' (sama) , collection of ripe mangoes , jack fruits ; and herbs like ' kopakucca ' ' Kidenisi kucca ' ' Mattakucca ' transplantation of wet paddy in the last week . A modest beginning of weeding in ragi and paddy crops , collection of ' adda ' leaves and ' pairi dori ' (adda brnk) in large quantities.
4.	Ratta Lenju .. July	.. July	.. Agricultural operations like sowing ' Dongrudi ' , ' gouyanga ' Gucca kanga ' (French beans) and oliselu , transplanting chillies , brinjals and paddy ; raising seed beds of tobacco ,

- harvesting (early varieties) of 'sama' ragi and maize. Dibbling 'Mulukunnayya'; weeding.
5. Banda Pana .. August .. Weeding and harvesting maize; collection of 'odorrikka'.
 6. Barsi Lenju .. September .. Weeding in paddy fields, harvesting of maize; marketing of green chillies and mangoes; collection of 'Hirukunna' 'Kumda kucca' 'Rai-kucca' collection of 'adda' leaves.
 7. Dasara .. October .. Harvesting 'Kajja kuhda' (Sama) and dry paddy, marketing vegetables like green chillies and brinjals oranges and lemons collection of 'adda' leaves, casual labour. French beans, and pumpkins are available during this month.
 8. Diveli Lenju .. November .. Harvesting 'kajja Mandy'a' (ragi) and paddy and manual labour.
 9. Paṇḍa Lenju .. December .. Harvesting 'ragi' and paddy; threshing paddy, manual labour.
 10. Pusu Lenju .. January .. Harvesting Niger seed, French beans 'Dongrudi' and tobacco, collection of 'adda' seed; threshing ragi; collection of roots like 'Mulukunnagna', ginger, 'Hoppanga', 'Nangelikunna' and green tamarind; casual labour.
 11. Maga Lenju .. February .. Threshing ragi and Niger crops; selection of a hill slope to fall trees preparing for construction of new houses and rethatching old roofs.
 12. Gundi Lenju .. March .. Clearing the jungle on a hill-slope for a new podu; construction of new houses; collection and storing of firewood.

Food Gathering :

Samantas collect varieties of edible and herbal roots, tubers and creepers throughout the year both for the household consumption and commercial purposes. The food gathered by the Samanta tribe can be classified as follows :

(1) *Collection of roots, tubers and herbs.*—A number of edible roots, tubers and herbs are available during the months of June, July, August, September and October. A few tubers and herbs are also available during the months

of January, February and April. Among the herbs which they grow are 'Kumda', 'Aku', 'Rai Kucha', 'Mutta Kucha' and 'Mirsi Kucha'. 'Garsikucha', 'Kambelikucha', 'Hitti Kucha' and 'Pulla Kucha' are some of the principal herbs gathered in the forests. Edible roots and tubers like 'Hoppanga', 'Nangelikunna', 'Hirukunna', 'Odorka', 'Nappanga', 'Daklikunna' and 'Malukunna' constitute important items of the Samanta diet.

The collection of herbs does not require much effort. The herbs are collected by women and children and are brought home in baskets. The collection of tubers and roots is difficult and it takes much time and energy. Generally, women accompanied by children go to the jungles and hills with crow-bar and baskets. It is not, however, uncommon to see men accompanying women to dig out the roots. The crow-bar is used for digging out the roots. Generally children help women by collecting roots from the ground after removing the earth. The collected roots are put into baskets. On the way home, women clean the roots in a hill stream.

(2) *Caryota Palm Products*.—In addition to these herbs, roots and tubers, the Samanta food includes the products of caryota palm. Caryota palms (Heka Marau) occur moderately in the Araku region. They are found on the mountain slopes. The Samantas do not fell the trees on the hill slopes when they clear for 'Podu' cultivation. In order to tap the sap of the caryota palm, the Samanta waits for a new bud and the spadix to curve earth-wards. He then climbs the top of the tree with the help of two bamboos tied to the tree and cuts the head with a sharp knife. The stem is then bent down and its end is put into an earthen pot which is tied to a leaf and suspended in such a way that the cozing sap flows into it. The Samanta climbs the tree and brings down the sap in another pot or gourd vessel both morning and evening. He pares the spadix every time by one tenth of an inch to keep the end fresh so that the sap oozes freely. In the beginning the yield is insignificant but increases later gradually. The highest yield per day is about two gallons. Each spadix yields sap for about three months. Generally fresh caryota juice is sweet and is not intoxicating. In order to make it bitter and intoxicating, half burnt barks of 'odijambu marnu' and 'Hinduri marnu' (Marnu means tree) are put in the pot. To make it slightly bitter two

types of roots, i.e., 'Sindhi Kucha' and 'Hiru Kucha' are added. In winter and rainy seasons, the toddy is boiled before it is drunk, as unboiled sap upsets the stomach during these seasons. However, they drink raw sap in summer. Even when the toddy is abundantly available the Samanta drinks only a small quantity of Caryota toddy in the morning and goes to the field. He drinks heavily the evening before going to bed. Normally, women are not allowed to drink toddy except in small quantities on festive occasions. If a Samanta gets a large quantity of the wine, he either sells or barter it for grain or fowl either to men of his own tribe or others. The trunk of a caryota tree which yields a white solid substance called pith has more food value than the sap. This pith is relished very much. Generally, in summer, particularly in the months of April and May, the Samantas fell caryota palms but the tree which yields sap is not felled as the pith of its trunk will not be tasty. The felling of a caryota palm is a joint effort of all the villagers. They select a tree and request the owner for permission to fell it. The owner usually obliges. One member from each family goes to the field to fell the tree with an axe. The tree is cut into logs of about one and a half feet in length and the logs are divided equally among themselves. The owner of the tree gets extra share. Then the bark of the log is removed until the pith is exposed. It is kept on the attic for about ten days to dry up. Men and women beat the dry pith with sticks into coarse powder. Then the powder is pounded and strained by women. Straining is done through the cloth. This flour is used for preparing gruel and also 'roti'. Sometimes it is mixed up with ragi flour to prepare gruel.

The caryota flour of a log of about one and a half feet long is sufficient for a family of five for about five days.

(3) *Mango, Jack and 'Adda' fruits.*—Mango, Jack and 'Adda' fruits are also important constituents of the Samanta diet during the months of February, March, April, May and June.

Mango trees are found in large numbers in the Araku region. Before the fruit is eaten either green or ripe, a ceremony called 'Maha Parbu' in the month of 'Gundi Lenju' (March) is performed. The Samanta do not consume mangoes either green or ripe until the celebration of 'Maha parbu'. However, after the 'maha

parbu' the green mangoes are hooked down in small quantities whenever necessary. The ripe mangoes are never hooked down. During the season, early in the morning, children and women go out with baskets for collection of wind-falls. Green mangoes are sliced and cooked as curry or soup. Ripe mangoes are eaten in large quantities many use them as even substitute for a meal or as a good supplement to their regular meal during the season. The mango kernels also have a food value for the Samantas. Every Samanta family during the season tries to collect and store as many kernels as possible. Every family generally collects about two or three bags of kernels. The kernels have a disquieting odour and are not edible. In order to make them edible and tasty, the Samantas soak them in the stream for about a day. Then they dry and pound them into flour. They mix it with ragi flour and prepare gruel or 'roti'.

Besides mangoes, Jack ('Panha') fruits, both ripe and unripe, including their seeds, constitute an important part of the Samanta diet during the months of April, May and June. They slice unripe Jack fruits into small pieces and prepare curry. The seeds are also cooked as curry separately.

The tamarind tree has both a dietary and commercial value for the Samantas. Both unripe and ripe tamarind are used for preparing soup. Ripe tamarind is stripped of its shell and stored in baskets for use throughout the year. They also sell and make money out of it. During the season, every Samanta family collects and stores tamarind seed ('Pulla Pidakka'). The shell of the seed is taken out either after frying or boiling. The seed is then cooked as curry. The seed is also pounded into flour which is used for preparing gruel and unleavened bread. Tender tamarind leaves are dried, pounded and used for preparing soup.

'Adda' tree also plays an important role in the economy of the Samantas. The 'Adda' seeds are eaten in the form of curry after the celebration of 'First-eating ceremony in 'Pusu Lenju'. The seeds are also dried and stored for future use. The Adda seed are available in the months of January and February. The 'Adda' leaves have a commercial value. During the slack seasons, men, women and children go to the jungle to collect 'adda' leaves. They dry the leaves, tie them into bundles and sell the same at weekly shandies.

Podu Cultivation (Nela) :

The Samantas cultivate hill-slope for about six or seven years and then the site is shifted to a new hill-slope. Generally, the selection of a new plot takes place in the month of December. The Samanta man observes certain customs in selecting plot for cultivation. He goes out at dawn on an auspicious day to the spot which he has in mind and strikes his axe so powerfully that it cuts into the tree and rests on the tree itself. Leaving it there in the same condition, the Samanta leaves for home and returns to the same spot the next day. If he finds the axe intact he believes that the place is free from evil spirits and profitable for cultivation. After selecting the site, he informs the same to the villagers. On an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari', he starts felling the trees. The Samanta man accompanied by the male members of his family, leaves for the hill-slope at dawn for felling the trees. They work till about 9-00 a.m. and return home for breakfast. After breakfast, the entire family goes again to the hill-slope. This time they take with them 'ragi' gruel in an earthen pot and water in a gourd vessel to the field and resume the felling of trees. Women and children clear off the shrubs with a bill-hook and a small axe. At about 1-00 p.m. they have their mid-day meal and rest for a while. They return home early in the evening.

The large trees are cut by men with axe by leaving stump of about three feet height. Both men and women lop off the small growth and small branches with bill-hook. Except mango, jack and caryota palm trees, the other trees are felled. If there are many big trees in the plot the Samanta man who can afford to contribute Rs. 2 for village fund, takes the help of the other villagers for felling by contributing Rs. 2 towards village common fund. He also serves ragi-gruel to all the people who helped him. Sometimes as an alternative, he may also gather his relatives—generally, brothers or brothers-in-law—for clearing a large hill-slope. They will divide the area cleared among the participants in equal proportion. This practice of co-operative effort is extended to cultivation. For instance, in Sindhiput village, Sirikka Ranju and Sirikka Sivvu who are cousin-brothers cleared the hill-slope and cultivated the field together and shared the produce. In the same village, Miniyeka Jambu and his brother Rama who lived separately, cultivated the 'podu' jointly and shared the produce.

The felled trees are cut into logs of six to eight feet in length and they are left to dry. In 'Gundi Lenju' (Feb.-March) the dried logs are collected into heaps and burnt. Half-burnt logs are again collected into heaps and burnt. The ashes are left undisturbed and they take no special care to destroy the pollarded stumps. The stalks of ragi or 'sama' which are left out after harvesting the crop are collected in the month of February along with the undergrowth, if any. These are spread over the entire 'podu' field and are burnt in the month of March. Spreading over of the stalks on the entire 'podu' field ensures even distribution of the ashes which will serve as a natural fertiliser.

A few Samantas demarcate their 'podu' fields by growing 'Arka' crop (Korra) throughout the boundary line.

Method of Sowing.—There is some difference between the methods of sowing in an old 'podu' and a new one. In the case of an old 'podu', after the commencement of the ceremonial hunting in the month of 'Hire Lenju' (March-April), on an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari', sowing takes place. On that day at dawn, the Samanta man goes to the field with a basket filled with seed of ragi or 'sama'. He also takes along with him a small basket. He fills the small basket with the seed taken out of the big basket, and holds it in his left hand raising it to the level of his chest. He then walks straight from one end of the field to the other taking a handful of seed in the right hand and hurling it against the basket in the left. As the seeds hit the basket they get broadcast all along the route. If he cannot cover the entire field in one morning he spends another morning to finish the work. It is important to note in this connection that the Samantas do not wait for the rains. They prefer sowing on the dry 'podu' itself. An occasional rain helps the seed to sprout. If monsoon sets in only during the month of May, there is every possibility that the seedlings will die out. In such cases, re-sowing is followed by the digging of the field. As such, the practice of sowing seed on old 'podu' fields before the monsoon sets in, results many a time in the loss of seed sown, necessitating re-sowing.

Unlike the sowing on an old 'podu' field, sowing on a new 'podu' field takes place only after the soil gets moist after rains. After the first rain in the month of

April on any day, early in the morning, a Samanta man along with other male members of his family, goes to his new 'podu' field with seed and hoes (kodgi). They begin to dig a portion of the field with the hoes after broadcasting the seed as in the case of the old 'podu'. They work till about 4-30 p.m. with almost one hour interval at about 9-30 a.m. and 12-30 p.m. for breakfast and mid-day meals respectively. Sowing and digging thus go on till the entire field is finished. Women also take part in sowing and digging in the afternoon after they have brought breakfast and mid-day meal consisting of ragi gruel to the field for the male members. A man may also seek the help of his villagers for sowing and digging his field. The villagers will help him in this task provided he is prepared to contribute to the common village fund at the rate of four annas a day per individual, apart from providing the workers with ragi gruel during the period of work.

Broadcasting is employed by the Samantas for sowing 'Sama', ragi, 'tamatamalu', niger seed (oilselu), 'don-gradi' and millets. Maize and red-gram are dibbled into the field. Ragi, millets and red-gram are also grown as mixed crops. After the ragi seed or 'sama' seed have sprouted, red-gram and maize are dibbled into the field. When the crop is about 15 days old, the Samanta farmer goes to the field to re-sow the seed in the barren patches. Since ragi is the main crop on which the Samantas depend, mostly, and since the crop does not grow well after four or five years, on the old 'podu' field, they have to select and clear a new 'podu' field.

Weeding.—When the crop is about six inches high the Samanta man along with his family members starts weeding out the undergrowth. Men and women work together in weeding and the children also assist them. They pull out the weeds with the hand and use bill-hook to take out the deep rooted ones. The weeds are collected in heaps on stores or barren patches in the field. Though they feel that a 'podu' field requires weeding twice a year in the least most of them do it only once on account of the inadequacy of man-power, since some of the family-members are engaged during a part of their time in collecting tubers during the season, they say, that it will not be usually possible for them to do weeding twice a year. However, of late, those who can afford to pay wages to engage labour on daily wages. The prevailing wage-rate

is twenty five paise a day per an adult worker either male or female apart from ragi gruel as a mid-day meal. The wages in cash are deposited with the 'Havnta' as a common village fund.

Guarding the crops.—From the time the ears of the crop come up, the Samantas keep a watch over the crops from the depredations of cattle wild sheep monkeys, etc. Men, women and children are engaged in this work. Men go to the field early in the morning and women accompanied by children set out for the fields at about 10-00 a.m. with breakfast for the men and mid-day meal for the entire family. Usually, women and children watch the fields during day-time.

When the ear-heads begin to ripen, men guard the crops at night against thieves and wild animals. They burn fires during the night and beat drums during the night to frighten the wild beasts. They watch the crops from the temporary sheds built in the fields.

Harvesting.—The first important crop to ripe is 'sama' (Kuhada) which is reaped during the latter half of October. Harvesting is preceded by a ceremony in which the 'Pejjeni' offers the sacrifice of a chicken to 'Horu Penu' (Hill-God). The next crop to ripen is ragi, which is harvested in November. Maize and millets are harvested in September and December respectively. Redgram is reaped in February.

Sama and ragi are reaped by both men and women with sickles ('Konka Dovveli'). They cut the ear heads with stalks of about ten inches in length. These are left in the field to dry up for three or four days in small heaps, and then are tied into bundles. Men and women carry them on their heads and pool them in a heap on a platform raised about one and a half feet from the ground. The platform protects the reaped crop from moisture and field-rats.

The 'olise' crop is cut with sickles about six inches above the ground, The stalks are pooled into a heap. Reaping millets is somewhat different from that of others. Since a millet crop is generally higher than a man or woman, to reap a millet-ear-head, one has to bend the stalk and cut the ear-head with a sickle. The ear-heads are collected into baskets and carried away to the village for threshing.

Green French beans are plucked from the plant. If the beans are ripe, plants are pulled out and taken to the house in order to dry them up on a flat ground in front of the house.

Harvesting is generally the affair of individual families. A few people engage their villagers and remunerate each of them with four seers of grain a day. Relatives also help one another.

Threshing.—Generally, every Samanta farmer will have a permanent threshing ground in his 'podu' field. This is prepared along with new 'podu' field by levelling an area of about ten feet in diameter. It is plastered with cow-dung. If the crop is threshed in small quantities, it is trodden under foot with a grinding movement at the threshing ground or at home. If threshing is done on a large scale, one day before the threshing, the Samanta farmer gets the threshing ground replastered with cow-dung. On the day of work, in the morning, he goes to the threshing ground along with the male members of his family. If there are no male members in his family, he requests the help of his relatives. By about 8-00 a.m. when the dew disappears, he climbs to the top of the heap and throws down a part of the heap. The other man spreads it over the threshing ground to get them dried up in the sun. At intervals of about half an hour, they turn the crop upside down with 'Koti Karra' to ensure uniform drying of ear-heads. About 10-00 a.m. the farmer's wife brings morning and mid-day meals to the field. After two or three hours rest, both men and women start beating up the ear-heads with threshing sticks. Some, however, prefer threshing with cattle. Three or four cows and/or bullocks tied with a rope in a row are made to tread over the crop till the grains get separated from the stalks. If one has no cattle, one hires them for one measure of grain each. After the threshing is over, the stalks are collected and thrown out and the grain is collected into a heap to be beaten up again with threshing sticks to separate the grain completely from earheads.

The grain is then winnowed by men. Women fill the winnowing fans with grain. Men hold the winnowing fan high above the head and gradually drop the grain to the ground so that the wind separates the grain from the chaff. The winnowed grain is then filled in baskets and carried home by women and men.

“Sama”, ragi and millets are threshed in the manner described above.

But the pulled out and ripened French beans are dried in front of the house and are beaten with sticks. The beans are winnowed to separate them from the chaff.

The dried red-gram plants are taken in hand-fuls by both men and women and are beaten on the ground till the grains get separated from the plants. They are then winnowed to separate them from the chaff. The grain is stored in storing baskets which are kept on the attic. On the same week day on which the crop is threshed, the Pejjeni sacrifices chicken to the Gods and Goddesses.

Preserving seed.—Every Samanta family usually preserves seed for the following year. Before harvesting a crops, ripened ear-heads are cut and dried in the sun. They are then trodden under foot with a grinding movement both by men and women. The grain is winnowed and preserved in ‘adda’, leaf baskets in the attic.

Settled Cultivation (Guddiya)

In the addition to the podu ‘fields’ a few Samantas possess also garuvu flat fields. It is mainly used to grow ‘sama’ ragi’ dry paddy and olise’. When the soil gets moist they plough the field two or three times and then broadcast the seed. Later, the cattle are made to tread the field. This is to get the soil hardended. Manuring is done for the ragi crop grown in the garuvu field. Manure is spread over the entire field before it is ploughed. Harvesting, threshing, etc are carried out as described above.

Terrace Cultivation:

Wherever feasible the Samantas have been practising terrace cultivation since a long time. Terrace fields are solely intended for the purpose of growing wet paddy. Wherever there is a small stream or possibility for diverting a small stream, a wall with stones is built and the sloped ground is levelled. Similarly about four or five feet below the levelled plot another plot is levelled. A number of plots are thus levelled, wherever possible, so that water flows from the higher fields to the lower ones.

In the month of May seed-beds of wet paddy are raised. In June or early in July the plots are ploughed twice or thrice and water is allowed to stagnate in the plots for about a week. Once or twice the plots are again ploughed. Then the paddy seedlings taken out from the seed beds are transplanted in the plots.

Some Samantas practise green-manuring. Before water is allowed to stagnate in the plots, green leaves or small plants are brought and spread over the plots. Then the fields are watered. Within a week the green leaves get decomposed.

The Samantas do not take out the weeds from a wet paddy crop. They believe that if people go into the field, to take out the weed, the crop gets trampled under feet and damaged. So they scrupulously avoid weeding in wet paddy fields. They do not manure the wet paddy crop on the plea that manure will not be useful, for, it will flow down with the current of water.

Mixed Crops :

It has been already pointed that the Samantas grow mixed crops. They mix three or four varieties of seeds and sow them simultaneously in the same field. The seeds that are commonly mixed are : Ragi, mustard and red-gram. These are sown mainly on 'podu' fields. The first to ripen among them is ragi crop. Mustard, millets and red-gram ripe on after the other. The seeds of maize and small pieces of ginger are dibbled into the ground in alternative lines. By the time the ginger crop grows about a foot high, the maize crop will be harvested ; thus, the ginger will have sufficient light and air to grow. The Samantas argue that the total yield of mixed crops grown on 'podu' is higher than a single crop apart from producing all the varieties which they need.

Garden Crops :

In addition to 'podu' field every Samanta family owns small piece of land near the village. The plot is generally fenced and used for growing garden crops like chillies, French beans, tobacco, brinjals and other vegetables.

Chillies and brinjals.—In 'Landi Lenju' (June) seed-beds are raised for chillies and brinjals and the seed is sown. The seedlings are watered once in four or five days if there

is no rain. When the seedlings are about six inches high they are transplanted in the field. Either the crow-bar or the hoe is used to dig holes in order to plant the seedlings. Transplantation is done keeping a distance of about one foot between any two seedlings of chillies. Brinjals are planted sporadically in small number. In the month of November, the Samantas begin plucking the green chillies to be used in curry and soup. Green chillies are also sold at weekly shandies. By the month of December the chillies ripen and they are then plucked and dried in flat rectangular baskets. Most of the produce is sold at the weekly shandies keeping a small quantity for house-hold consumption.

'Tamtamalu' (*French Beans*).— 'Tamtamalu' is another crop of considerable commerial value. in the month of September the seeds are dibbled into the ground. Green beans are available in the month of December and are used as curry. During the last week of December and first week of January when the beans are ripe, the plants are pulled out tied into bundles and carried home. They are dried in front of the house for about 2 days and then thrashed with threshing sticks. The beans are then winnowed and stored. The dry beans are eaten either boiled or cooked into curry. They are also sold at weekly shandies

Tobacco.—Smoking is a universal habit among Samantas and most of them grow tobacco in the garden plots. In the month of July or August, tobacco seed is sown in seedbeds. They are regularly watered. When the seedlings are about four inches high they are transplanted in the field with the help of a hoe and watered for about a week regularly. In the month of December the planes are cut with bill-hook and brought home. Four or five plants are tied together and ire hung from the rafts of the roof of the house till they are dried. The dried ones are then brought down and water is sprinkled on them. Afterwards in a corner of the house, dry stalks of paddy are spread and the tobacco plants are arranged on them in a heap. The heaps is also covered with day staiks of paddy. After week the dry plants are taken out of the heap, water is sprinkled on them and they are spred over small mats of dry paddy stalks and rolled into bundles. The bundles are kept on the attic. Tobacco ia used by all the members and no family produces enough to sell it in the market.

Agricultural Implements :

A description of the implements used in agriculture is given below :—

(1) *Nangeli (Plough)*.—This wooden plough is manufactured by the Samantas themselves and is used for ploughing 'garuvu' field.

(2) *Nakku (Plough-Share)*.—It is a pointed flat, iron piece of about seven to eight inches in length and attached to the wooden blade of the plough for better penetration of the plough into the earth. It is purchased at weekly shandy.

3. *Kodgi (Hoe)*.—An iron blade of four to five inches in width with a socket to hold a wooden shaft of four to five feet in length. It is used for digging 'podu' and 'garuvu'. The blade is purchased at a weekly shandy. The Samantas themselves insert a shaft into it.

(4) *Katali (Axe)*.—It is an iron triangular or rectangular piece with a socket at the top. A wooden handle is fitted into the socket. It is used for felling trees and slicing logs into pieces and is generally purchased at a weekly shandy.

(5) *Koncha Dovveli (Sickle)*.—A curved hook like iron blade with a sharpened and toothed edge on the concave side. It is fitted with a wooden handle and used for reaping crops.

6. *Erga Dovveli (Bill hook)*.—The blade is broad and curved with the cutting edge on the concave side and is fitted with a wooden or bamboo handle of one and a half to two feet long. Used for lopping branches, chopping plants, etc. It is a general utility implement used extensively along with the axe for clearing the forests for 'podu'. The blade is made of either iron or steel.

(7) *Barsi (Adze)*.—This is an iron/steel implement used for making plough, sharpening the edge of a piece of wood for comb or for other carpenter's work. It is purchased at weekly shandy.

(8) *Koti Karra*.—A sickle shaped iron piece fixed to a bamboo stick of about six to seven feet in length used for spreading the harvested crop on the threshing ground to day. It is also purchased at weekly shandy.

(9) *Butha Kudimini Duddu* (*Threshing stick*).—It is a strong wooden stick of about one and a half feet in length. Both men and women use it for threshing in a standing position.

(10) *Hutrubadia* (*A bamboo goad stick*).—It is a bamboo stick of about five to six feet in length with a small iron nail at one end and is used by men at the time of ploughing to make the bullocks move speedily.

(11) *Matti Tippuni* (*Sowing Basket*).—It is a small bamboo basket with a hook underneath. The hook enables the man to hold the basket in his left hand at the time of sowing. At the time of sowing, the basket is filled with seed, the man holds it in his left hand.

(12) *Habda* (*Crow-bar*).—It is an iron bar of about four to five feet in length with a sharpened point at one end. It is used for digging holes to erect poles, for digging out tubers, roots, etc. It is also purchased at a weekly shandy.

(13) *Virivanja* (*Sling*).—It is made of twined 'Paidorka' fibre and used for slinging stones to scare the birds away from the fields.

(14) *Moku* (*Rope*).—It is a thick rope made of 'Paidorka' fibre and used for connecting and holding various components of a plough in their respective places.

Hunting :

The Samanta tribe uses bows and arrows, spears, traps, pits and guns for hunting. Bows and arrows are used both by elder and youngsters. These are used mainly for shooting birds, wild goat, deer, and also sometimes sambar. Shooting of birds and occasionally others like hare or goat, is done by individuals themselves. Whoever has a gun may also go alone to shoot the sambar, bison, spotted deer, hare, boar and birds. But, when it is a matter of hunting with the help of traps, pits and others, it is mainly a collective enterprise, and takes place mainly during summer season.

The usual method of catching the boar and others like tigers is to dig a pit of six or more feet deep, plant in it sticks with sharp ends and then cover by small sticks, grass and also logs of wood. As the pit is dug on the way

of the wild animals to the stream or the river, they would fall in the pit and in the process get pierced by the sticks and also get entangled in the wooden logs. If the animal is found still alive and struggling hard to come out, it is killed either with spears or guns.

Large traps are also used for catching wild goat, boar, etc. According to this method, a large trap is so arranged that no sooner does the animal touch it, than it will fall down and entrap the animal. Men actually drive the animals towards the trap or fix that trap on their way. Immediately, after the animal is entrapped, men will pierce it with spears so that it may not escape by any chance. During Landi Lenju, the Samanta tribe fixes up a wooden frame in the jungle for catching boar. The frame is constructed in the form of a house, and an arrangement is made such that the frame falls down entrapping the animal as soon as it touches the food kept in a particular spot. As the frame is constructed in the jungle and the people leave that place, sometimes other animals like tigers and chitas also get entrapped.

Wild cats, hares and squirrels are caught by some other method. When the tribal comes to know that the wild cat has entered a cave or a big hole, (he closes one end of the hole or crevice if there are two openings) he burns grass so that the smoke may enter the cave. When the animal gets suffocated and dies, it is taken out. Wild rats are caught after digging holes in the earth. Sometimes they take the help of the dogs in hunting hares.

Fishing :

For fishing, the tribe uses various methods. Individuals go to ponds with fishing hooks and earth-worms which are used as baits. Small groups of people catch tiny fish in streamlets or ponds with the help of nets made in the shape of baskets. The net is placed against the current of water. Sometimes a dam is constructed across the stream and a big bamboo basket specially made for this purpose is placed at a particular place allowing the water flow through it. Along with the current, the fish gets into the basket but cannot come out. When it is a collective attempt by the entire village they select a big pond and all the women and men including children go to that spot to take part in the fishing activity. Women bring the bark of a tree called 'Royyakarra' and fruits of a tree called 'Puttiki'. The two are ground into paste

by women. After it is made sufficiently soft, the same is mixed into the water to stupify fish. After one hour, when the stupified fish float on the surface of the water, men catch them with the help of small nets. However, we are told that in view of shortage of water and ponds and also dearth of fish, the Samanta tribe very rarely takes recourse to this method of catching fish.

Domestication of animals :

Domestication of animals has been one of the aspects of Samanta culture. Yet we find at present a good number of Samanta families possessing no domestic animals or birds. Even those who domesticate, have only a few cattle and birds. The domesticated animals and birds are as follows :—

Oxen and Cows.—Normally these are owned by the settled plough cultivators (garuvu). They use both cows and bullocks for ploughing. Others own them because of their sacrificial and food value. These invariably form part of bride-price ('oli'), compensation ('kerdinga') and fine paid by an adulterer. Buffaloes are rarely domesticated. The Samantas do not practise milking cows and buffaloes as they do not consume either milk or milk products. But of late, one can find them buying milk and milk products from a Gowda tribal at shandy and relishing it.

Goringa, mendinyya (Goats and Sheep).—Very few Samantas own goats. They also are of sacrificial value. The cattle subsist entirely on forest grazing when there are crops standing on the fields. But, after harvest they are allowed to graze on the harvested podu-fields. The tribe does not take care to store dry stalks of crops for the purpose of feeding the cattle. If no grass is available either in the forest or in the harvested fields they go on starving, for no other food is preserved for them. That is why generally the bullocks and cows are found very weak.

The Samantas keep cattle in the cow pens attached to their houses. Only a few maintain cow pens separately.

Horses.—Rarely we come across a family owniñ horses of inferior breed. They are used mainly as pacy animals for carrying men and materials. They do not have either sacrificial or food value.

Nehudi (Dogs).—None of the Samanta villages are without dogs. But only a few are specially domesticated by certain families to protect their houses from thieves. A few people also domesticate hunting dogs.

Fowls.—Every Samanta family possesses a number of fowls. They try their best to multiply their number. During day-time fowls wander about the village and peck whatever eatable things they find. They are not fed by their owners. During nights, however, they take shelter in a corner of the house of the owner.

The Samantas attach much importance to the fowls since they have an immense sacrificial value. There is no festive or other occasion which goes without the sacrifice of a chicken to gods and goddesses. Even a chicken of two or three days old is used for sacrificial purposes. In order to augment their number to the maximum extent possible, the Samantas usually do not eat the eggs and allow them to be hatched.

Hireli (Wild Rats).—Wild rats are kept in an earthen pot. They are fed on ragi flour. These rats are relished by them very much. Pigeons are also domesticated by these people but rarely.

Arts and Crafts :

The Samanta tribe has knowledge of certain arts and crafts. The crafts are mainly dependent on the raw materials available in the forest and the product raised in the fields.

Oils :

The Samanta tribe extracts oils from Castor (kiya) Niger (olise) 'ganuga' (kerangi), 'Kossomi', 'Pengo' and 'Kisi' seeds. The first two are raised in their fields and the rest are collected from the jungle.

Castor oil is primarily used for cooking purposes. It is also used for hair-dressing, anointing the body and as a fuel to light the lamps. The castor oil lamp has a religious value as it is lighted almost in every ritual. Its liberal use is restricted, however, because of the non-availability of the castor seed in plenty. It is grown in small quantities as a mixed crop along with 'sama' and

“ragi”. Niger (Olise) oil is used mainly for cooking purposes while ‘Kisi’ oil is used for cooking purposes exclusively. The other oils, viz., ‘Ganuga’, ‘Kossomi’ and ‘Pengo’ are used for hair-dressing and also for anointing the body, besides being used in lamps as fuel.

Extraction of Oils :

(a) *Castor Oil*.—Castor seed is fried and pounded into pulp. The pulp is put into a pot and is mixed with water. After stirring the liquid mixture thoroughly it is boiled. When gradually oil begins to float on the surface of the liquid, the oil is drawn out with a thin wooden blade or some leaf.

(b) *‘Olise’ oil*.—Olise ‘Niger’ seeds are fried and pounded into pulp. The pulp is spread on a bamboo mat and is rubbed against the mat with hands till the pulp becomes very soft. It is then put into an earthen pot, the bottom of which is removed but replaced by a bamboo sieve. Another big earthen pot filled with water is placed on the hearth. The pot with pulp is then put on the bigger pot and its mouth is sealed tightly with a lid. When the water in the big pot is boiled the resulting steam gets into the small pot through the bamboo sieve. The pulp gets boiled. Later when the pulp is sufficiently boiled and becomes soft, it is transferred into a big basket (kuddedi dore butti). And the oil crusher is used to extract oil.

This crusher is very simple to handle but the process is time consuming it is prepared by themselves to suit their needs. The crusher is made of two wooden planks. One plank would be of about eight to twelve inches in width and four to four and a half feet in length. In the middle, it has a round hole of about three to four inches diameter and about two inches depth. From the hole a narrow groove extends to one end of the plank. Another wooden plank of about eight feet length and twelve inches width has a hole about two feet from one end. The ends of the two planks are fixed together in a hole of a tree at a height of about one and a half feet above the ground in such a way that the second plank can rest on the first one and the holes made in the two planks touch one another. The planks are further arranged somewhat horizontally with some slope. To crush the oil, the small baskets

consisting of the pulp are placed in the hole of the first plank. When the pulp is crushed by pressing the second upper plank, oil flows through the groove into a vessel placed at the end of the bottom plank. In order to apply heavy pressure one or two people sit on the top plank or place heavy stones on it. 'Ganugu', 'Kossomi', 'Pengo' and 'Kisi' oils are also extracted in the same way as the 'Olise' oil.

Apart from the above, this tribe has skill in carpentry, bamboo and stone work. As was pointed out earlier, a number of household articles and agricultural implements of bamboo, wood and stone are manufactured by the Samantas.

Preparation of various items of food :

Ragi gruel (Jurmunga).—It is prepared by boiling ragi flour in water and adding some salt to it. Some times caryota palm flour or mango kernel flour also are mixed in ragi flour.

'Sama' and Rice.—'Sama' grain and paddy are pounded to remove the husk. The pounded rice is washed and boiled in water till the rice becomes soft and the water gets evaporated.

Unleavened Bread (Roti).—Unleavened bread (roti) is made from the flour of 'ragi', caryota palm, mango kernel and tamarind seed. Water is mixed in the flour to make it like a paste and salt is also added. The paste is then wrapped in either 'adda' or castor leaves and is baked on the embers.

Caryota Flour.—The bark of a felled caryota palm is stripped of to get the pith. The pith is then placed on the attic for about ten days to dry up. When it dries up, it is beaten with sticks into rough powder. The rough powder is pounded and strained through the pores of a cloth.

Mango Kernel Flour.—The kernels have a disquietening odour and hence are not edible. To make them edible and to remove the disquietening odour, the kernels are soaked in a pit dug in a stream for about a day. The kernels are dried up in the sun and pounded into rough flour. It is strained through the pores of a cloth.

Tamarind flour.—To remove the shells the seeds are either fried or boiled. After removing the shells, the seeds are pounded and the resulting rough flour is strained through the pores of a cloth.

Curries.—Curry is prepared from a number of tubers, leaves and also flesh of various animals. The preparation of curry from various vegetables and flesh is more or less the same. They add salt, chilly powder and few drops of castor oil to the boiled vegetable or flesh. When curry is made in a large quantity on feast-days, oil is not used because it needs a large quantity of it which they cannot afford whenever group is needed, tamarind juice is mixed in the curry. Usually, curries are prepared with sufficient soup so as to be sufficient for all the family members.

Fried curry is occasionally prepared with dried French beans, Jack seed and 'addu' seed. The seeds are boiled and then fried on a frying pan. A few drops of oil, chilly powder and salt are added.

'*Tamarind soup*'.—Tamarind is boiled in water by adding salt and chilly powder to it. Every Samanta family prepares it almost daily.

Dhal.—Red-gram are fried and ground. By grinding, each grain splits into two halves and the husk also gets removed. The resulting dhal is boiled in hot water till it becomes soft and semi-solid.

II. INDEBTEDNESS.

During our study it was found out that a number of Samanta families were in debt. Out of the fifty families interviewed for this purpose as many as thirty reported as being in debt to various agencies, i.e., the private money-lenders, the Co-operatives and the multi-purpose blocks. Of these, thirty indebted families, twelve took loans only from private money lenders, five took only from Co-operative and multi-purpose blocks and the remaining took loans from all the sources. It is found that loans in kind are always taken only from the private money-lenders. The rate of interest for the loans taken from private money-lenders, who are both plainmen and tribals, varies between twenty and fifty per cent per annum in the case of cash loans and the same varies between fifty and hundred

per cent per annum in the case of loans in kind. Further, any kind of approach to these Governmental and semi-Governmental agencies is quite formal involving certain administrative procedures. The tribal who is accustomed to a very informal way of life feels happy with the informal behaviour of the money-lender and without being mindful of the high rate of interest, he willingly takes loans from him. Another important thing that is pointed out by the tribals is that the money lenders do not insist on payments immediately and they are not so strict as the Co-operatives and multi-purpose blocks.

From the answers elicited from the Samantas and also from our observation, it is found that, the tribals borrow loans for the following reasons.—(1) The produce from the fields is less and the sources of food gathering are decreasing year by year, (2) During Hire Lenju, the month that follows the harvest season, the Samantas spend most of their time in drinking and dancing and thus consuming a greater part of the field produce which is originally very meagre. During this month the Forest Department, the Public Works Department, and other departments feel it very difficult to employ any labourer on wages. Thus, the Samanta does not earn during this month and later when he goes back to work in his fields he hardly finds time to work on wages. Only those who do not have much work on the fields either sell fire-wood or work as labourers, (3) Considerable amounts are spent by them on marriages and other social rituals. Even fines and penalties in the form of feasts are quite heavy to bear. But, under the present socio-religious and socio-political customs, he cannot help spending on various rituals and celebrations.

The Gothi System.

This system is an off-shoot of indebtedness. According to this system a poor man who borrows loans from the money-lender-cum-agriculturist, remains with the latter as an attached labourer till he repays that amount. Generally, it is arranged that the debtor is fed and clothed by the creditor and every year Rs. 20 are deducted from the loan amount without any further interest. The debtor's family usually works with the creditor on nominal wages. However, among the Samantas, the incidence of the Gothi system is low.

Barter and Trade.

Until recently, the tribals used to take salt from the plains tradesmen and in return pay equal quantities of mustard. As the price of mustard is more than three times that of salt, the tribals definitely incurred loss. But now with the starting of the Co-operatives and the Andhra Pradesh Girijan Co-operative Corporation the price of mustard is being paid reasonably along with the fair prices paid to other commodities. As every commodity is now valued in terms of money, barter system is virtually nonexistent and the tribal economy has practically turned into a money economy. The shandy plays a very important role in the tribal economy apart from its sociological value as a meeting place. Tribals from a long distance do visit the shandies for purposes of selling and purchasing various commodities. The commodities that are purchased regularly by them are kerosene oil, salt, ornaments and clothing.

Chapter V.

LAW AND ORDER.

1. *The Village Council.*

Every Samanta village has its own council which is in effect an agency to carry on and control various activities of local interest. The strength of the council is not fixed in number. It varies from village to village. The strength usually would be around four or five persons including the head. The Council has one assistant called 'Chalani'. This type of organisation is not in any way peculiar to this Samanta tribe. All the villages in the agency area do have this type of councils. It was actually the arrangement made under the Jeypore administrative set up in the days of the reign of the Maharaja. The Estate was actually divided into various units for administrative purposes and each such unit is called 'Mutta'. The head of the 'Mutta' is called 'Muttadar' who is responsible for the collection of the revenue and also for the maintainance of law and order with the assistance of the Police. Under the jurisdiction of 'muttadar' each village has one head whose functions are to collect revenue from the villagers and pay the same to the 'Muttadar' and also to look after the village affairs. The officers of both the 'Muttadar' and the head of the village are hereditary. In lieu of their services both of them were entitled under the Jeypore Revenue Rules and Regulations to some amount of the revenue Rules and actually collected from the tillers of the soil.

In order to send messages to the heads of the villages every 'Muttadar' has one "Bareka". This is also a hereditary office. But held invariably by a man belonging to the Valmiki or Dombu tribe. Within the village the 'Chalani' works as messenger. A 'Chalani' may belong to any tribe. Similarly, the village head and the 'Muttadar' could be members of any tribe. But usually one who has taken the lead in constructing the village is entitled to become the head of the village.

The Havnta.—The village head is called 'Havnta' by the Samantas. He is the head of the village council.

Among the Samantas this office also is hereditary. He enjoys certain privileges over others. The privileges are of the following nature :

- (1) In all matters concerning the village his voice prevails.
- (2) All communal festivals are first celebrated in his house or he inaugurates them.
- (3) During feasts and ceremonies he is the man who is first served.
- (4) He takes the lead in a marriage held in any family of the village.
- (5) He is entitled to a lion's share whenever there is a distribution of anything. Particularly he is given a piece of flesh around the ear or a hind leg of the animal that is hunted.

The Naitaki-Kajjasi (Tribal Head).—If village is completely inhabited by the Samantas the 'Havnta' himself is treated as a tribal-head. On the other hand if it is a village of various tribes living together, the Samantas do have their own tribal head who will participate invariably in the village council. Whenever, problems regarding the tribe itself are discussed, the voice of the 'Naitaki-Kajjasi' prevails over that of others and the head of the village will remain as a tutelary head. The tribal head enjoys status next to the village 'Havnta' in all matters.

The members of the Council.—The other members of the council would be normally the aged ones in the village. They are chosen on the basis of their intelligence and the capacity to judge things in accordance with the tribal customs and usages. Occasionally, comparatively younger ones with sufficient knowledge of tribal organisation and customs are also recognised as members of the council and are requested to be present on any occasion.

Activities of the Council.—The functions of the council cover each and every aspect of Samanta life which is particularly of common interest. The common activities that call the attention of the village council are :

- (1) Preparations to be made in connection with the festivals observed by the whole village.

- (2) Arrangements to be made in connection with carrying out economic activities with joint efforts of the villagers.
- (3) Arrangements to be made in connection with the help necessary to be given to one who is in need at the time of any unfortunate event.
- (4) Punishment to be given to the offender or violator of the tribal customs and usages, the problems of ex-communication or granting membership into the tribe and;
- (5) To solve disputes between individuals or families, etc.

In taking decisions about all such matters the members of the village council have the right, but in no case they ignore the suggestions made by any individual in the village. The deliberations actually take place in the open amidst all the villagers. The decisions arrived at will be mostly in conformity with the traditional tribal practices and also pleasing as far as possible to every one in the community. Hence, the decisions may be said to be democratic in nature. In putting them into practice, therefore, it does not require any pains taking efforts on the part of the council.

2. *Mode of Control and Punishment :*

Among the Samanta tribe the usages and customs, that have been in vogue since ancient times, passing on from one generation to the other, are the only means of controlling the behaviour of the deviant or the violator. The village being a very closely knit local group, an individual's action is influenced by public opinion. What is good and what is right is known to everyone. Hence, everybody is also in the know of the mode of punishment for any particular breach of custom and tradition.

As in any other primitive society the whole family is held responsible for the actions of an individual, and the clan responsible for the family, and lastly the tribe responsible for the actions of the clan. The mode of punishment is also prescribed accordingly. In deciding a case of violation of tribal rules, recourse is taken generally to the

clarification of the actions themselves as they took place on the spot. But, whenever it becomes difficult to arrive at any conclusions, decisions are taken on the basis of the oaths and ordeals that are prescribed by the tribe. The violator is asked to take the risk of incurring the displeasure or pleasure of supernatural elements by going through the ordeals.

This tribe makes a distinction between sin and crime. Breaches of certain taboos are treated merely as sinful acts, and the offender is left to the mercy of Gods and Goddesses. It is assumed that by such actions the individual himself will undergo certain troubles. When it is felt that the actions of the culprit are also harmful to the society at large, the culprit is punished accordingly for the crime apart from leaving him to the mercy of supernatural powers for the breach of the tribal social values and morals.

The mode of punishment is usually of four types. In ordinary cases, the violator is expected to treat the villagers to a feast. In other cases which demand ex-communication of the violator, purification feasts have also to be arranged. In case of certain heinous crimes, when the actions of the culprit are no more tolerable, he is ex-communicated permanently from the village. In the case of very minor disputes between husband and wife, brothers, etc., the person responsible will be simply reprimanded and left free. It is important to note that in spite of serious disputes, the parties concerned never show enmity towards one another once the dispute is settled. In order to make the two parties or individuals feel happy after the dispute is settled, the 'Havnta' asks them to bring liquor and make them exchange liquor and drink, of course, along with the members of the village council and the Havnta himself.

The village council headed by the 'Havnta' and/or the tribal head is responsible for settling the disputes and punishing the violator. Whenever a complaint is lodged by some-one against the other, the 'Havnta' sends for the violator and also convenes a meeting of the village council. If the violator belongs to another village a word is sent through the 'Chalani' to the head of that village and through him a day is fixed for the trial. In any inter-village dispute both the 'Havntas' and the community heads and also members of the village councils meet and discuss. The judgement normally would be based, as said

above, on the given mode of prescribed customary punishment. No individual can dare ignore the decisions taken by the village council for he is haunted by the fear of ex-communication. Ex-communication makes one separate from the whole tribe and it makes it difficult for him to maintain contacts of any type with the other members. The modus operandi of meting out punishments for various *sins* and crimes are dealt with under separate headings.

Adultery.—The Samantas consider adultery as an encroachment upon the conjugal rights of a man over his wife by another man. It is only a civil offence. Such encroachments, therefore, they feel, should be controlled by punishing the culprits. The adulterer is punished only when the deceived husband lodges a complaint. Otherwise, the adulterer remains unpunished and ignored.

If a Samanta woman is caught red handed in adultery, her husband, if capable, may beat her lover black and blue on the very spot. On the report made by him about the same, the village council calls for the culprit and also the woman. On the basis of the enquiry, if the act is proved, the 'Havnta' asks them whether they are ready to pull on together. If the woman is willing, the culprit is forced to marry her. Whether he marries or not, he is forced to pay 'Tarsa Tappu' i.e., compensation to her former husband. If the woman wants to stay with her husband only, the adulterer will be fined Rs. 10 and a cow. The cow will be slaughtered and the flesh is divided among the villagers. On such occasions, the husband of the woman will be given a side of the cow and the adulterer the back of the cow.

Sometimes it is possible that adultery never takes place, but the woman is seen with her lover and husband will suspect her. In such a case, the woman and her lover are asked to go through the ordeals prescribed if they plead not guilty.

It is told that sometimes a woman may report against her husband's sexual intercourse with another woman. But, normally, such a situation would not arise, for, the woman herself has to lose some amount towards the payment of the compensation or the fine by her own husband and/or her husband may have to marry one more wife.

Incestuous Relations.—Incestuous relations of all sorts are treated as serious crimes. The violators will have to be meted out with suitable punishments by the village council, apart from the punishment given to them by supernatural forces for their sins. However, the nature of punishment varies subject to the degree of kinship relations between the members involved in such a sinful and criminal act.

(a) *Between members of the same Clan.*—Sexual approach or conjugal relationship between a girl and her brother, real or collateral, belonging to the same clan is the most sinful act. It is believed that such human beings are punished by supernatural beings. If nothing happens to either of them, their off-spring at least would pay for their parents' sins. The village council on its part forces such couple to quit the village. It is reported that a *Samanta* boy belonging to *Korei* village eloped with his father's brother's daughter and ran away to a far away village in *Orissa* State. It is not known if any misfortune befell the couple as a consequence of the criminal and sinful act.

(b) *Between Members belong to Tainga clans.*—Incestuous relationship between a boy and a girl belonging to brother clans is also treated as a heinous crime. But unlike the previous case, it is believed that a 'KULAM VINDU' i.e., community feast arranged by the man involved in the sinful act would suffice to save him from excommunication. The feast given in such a case will be generally very expensive, as the menu is expressly dictated by the village elders. After the feast, the couple would be allowed to move freely with the villagers. In spite of this the tribe believes that the feast would not completely wipe off the sin. The couple or either of them or their offspring will suffer from some incurable diseases or bodily injury which generally turns into a permanent physical disablement. It is reported in a village that a *Hooika* man eloped with a girl of *Maniyeka* clan. *Maniyeka* and *Hooika* are 'tainga' clans. The man gave a community feast to the villagers. But, the community feast did not save the couple. They had to incur the displeasure of the 'PENU' and as a result of this a son was born to them with mutilated legs.

Other Incestuous Relations.—Under kinship structure a list of the relatives between whom marital relations are prohibited is mentioned. Any action contrary to this is

taken to be an incest. Those who are involved in such acts are also duly fined by the village council, the fine being a feast to be given to the villagers.

Marital Contacts with other Tribes.—A Samanta man should not marry a girl from a tribe which is considered socially inferior to it. The violator will be ex-communicated. If he wants to come back into the fold of the tribe he has to leave the girl and go through a purification ceremony and also arrange a feast. If the Samantha girl elopes with a man belonging to any socially inferior tribe she has to sever her relations permanently with her parents. The parents of the girl, however, try to get compensation from the man with whom the girl eloped.

For the act of breach committed by the girl, the parents are also held responsible for not having taken proper steps against such an alliance. Hence, the parents of the girl are required to entertain the villagers to a feast if they want to save themselves from being ex-communicated. In this connection, the informant, Joseph, a Samanta Christian, mentioned the case of his daughter Manonita who eloped with Korra Jacob of Anantagiri. Jacob belonged to an inferior tribe, viz., Paidi. Joseph kept quiet. The village 'Havnta' being the brother of Joseph did not take any action against Joseph. But, the other villagers and also people belonging to that tribe from neighbouring villages demanded a community feast and asked Joseph and all the members of his clan to go through the purification ceremony for having kept silent since the elopement took place. Joseph was threatened with ex-communication. Hence, he had to agree to the terms prescribed by the tribal elders. Joseph's family and members of his clan underwent the purification ceremony. Further Joseph had to entertain the villagers to a feast consisting of beef, besides distributing an amount of Rs. 12 among all the members present.

The Samantas do not, however, object to anyone marrying a person who belongs to the tribe superior in status.

Acceptance of Food.—As said elsewhere, this tribe has occupied a fixed social status in the social hierarchy of the tribes inhabiting the agency area. It avoids cooked food from any tribe inferior to it in social status. If anybody

violates the practice he will be fined a cow which is slaughtered and the flesh is divided among villagers. The alternative to the fine is excommunication.

Looking after the Parents.—If any Samanta individual fails to discharge his duty towards his parents in accordance with the prescribed rules and customs, the village council summons such man on the complaint lodged by the parents or anyone of them as the case may be. At first the violator is admonished and asked to take proper care of the parents. If he does not pay heed to, the council goes to the extent of forcing that individual to vacate or leave the property inherited by him through his father. In case the parents are quite old and unable to manage their own affairs the council makes some arrangement to cultivate the land, if any, and/or asks some one to feed the old people.

Murder.—Homicide is both a crime and a sin. Under any circumstances the murderer must get himself purified from the sin committed by way of entertaining his villagers to a feast which includes beef. Apart from collecting a fine from the murderer, the tribal people entertain the belief that the murderer will be punished by supernatural powers and that he will become crippled or be subjected to chronic diseases.

When the agency area was under the administrative charge of the Jeypore Raja, the 'Muttadar' used to be quite powerful to deal with such crimes. The 'Muttadar' used to collect some amount from the offender and a part of that amount was also to be given to the family of the deceased. Since the abolition of the Estate, the Police have become more powerful and at present they deal with such cases in accordance with the procedure of the Court of law of plains.

Theft.—If any thief is caught red-handed he will be fined Rs. 10 and a cow. The flesh of the cow is divided among the villagers and the fine is given to the person affected by such an act. Should a person be caught often, he is forced to quit the village permanently. There is, however, a feeling among other local tribes that the Samantas commit thefts most often by way of stealing cattle, as they are beef-eaters and also sacrifice buffaloes to Tokki Penu.

3. *Oaths and Ordeals:*

Ordeals.—(1) An unmarried girl aged twelve or thirteen years fetches water from the stream in a small earthen pot and dung of a heifer. Then she plasters a small patch of floor in the centre of the village. Decorative lines with turmeric powder and 'ragi' flour are drawn on the plastered spot and a measuring utencil is put upside down on that spot. On the measure, a castor oil lamp is lighted. The adulterer then is asked to put out the lamp with his right hand. Before putting out the lamp he says "O ! God! If I am guilty of the alleged offence and am denying it, may my both eyes lose sight ; on the other hand, If I am not guilty, nothing should happen to me".

(2) The accused is asked to hold the tail of a female calf and declare as above.

Oath.—If it is a minor offence like stealing, the accused may be asked to take an oath in the name of his child or children. If it is believed that if the accused is really guilty his children will die or his family will have some troubles.

Purification Ceremony.—The man who performs the ceremony is the village 'Havnta'. If the 'Havnta' of the village is himself a violator or an accomplice, the 'Havnta' of the other village or the community head as the case may be will conduct the ceremony.

On a fixed day, the violator is expected to bring a few leaves of Pipal tree (*Ficus Religiosa*) some quantity of cow milk, green grass blades, two small pieces of silver and gold each and also twelve rupees in cash. The 'Havnta' prepares a cup out of the leaves and puts the other things in it. In order to purify the offenders he calls them one by one near him and touches everyone's tongue with the gold piece dipped in cow's milk. The amount of Rs. 12 is then distributed among all the elders.



Chapter VI

RELIGION AND RITUAL

I. THE SAMANTA RELIGION.

The preceding analysis of the various factors makes it clear that the supernatural element plays a considerable part in the socio-economic and political life of the Samantas. Their religious beliefs consist of animism and natu-
rism.

Belief in spirits and ghosts.—The Samantas believe in spirits and re-birth. It is believed that the spirit of a dead man takes re-birth in the form of a male or a female child. The ancestral spirit, i.e., the 'Manni', gets pleased with the family members only when the final 'suddi' ceremony is performed after the death of an individual. In the case of violation of such practice it is believed that the spirit would wander here and there restlessly and would never come to the rescue of the family in times of need. They make a distinction between natural and unnatural deaths. All accidental deaths are treated as unnatural deaths. The spirits of such people involved in accidental deaths, it is believed, possess wild animals and would try to kill human beings. Thus, all the man-eating wild animals are believed to be essentially possessed by the spirits of individuals who died because of accidents. This tribe also entertains the belief that the spirit of a woman dying immediately after giving birth to a child or a woman who dies during pregnancy will become a 'Dahni Dumba', i.e., ghost, and try to haunt people that pass through the jungle, mountains or the burial grounds which are the places of its abode. It is believed that those who are haunted by ghosts develop diseases in the form of giddiness or vomiting all of a sudden.

Superstitions.—The Samantas entertain various types of superstitions. There are a number of animals and activities whose appearance either in the dreams or on their way results in either good or bad.

The appearance of each of the following on one's way is treated as good or bad omen.

<i>Omen.</i>	<i>Result anticipated.</i>
Tiger ..	.. Success.
Baboon ..	.. Bad.
Snake ..	.. Death.
Bear ..	.. Success.
Domestic fowl ..	.. Success.
Wild fowl ..	.. Failure or death.
Wild cat ..	.. Do.
Wild sheep or goat ..	.. Do.
Monkey ..	.. Failure.
Fox ..	.. Failure.
A woman with any empty pot	Failure.
A woman with a bundle of grass on her head.	Failure.

The appearance of each of the following in the dreams has its own effects as given.

<i>Objects in dream.</i>	<i>Result anticipated.</i>
More than five animals ..	.. Success.
Death of a person ..	.. Long life.
Bite of a snake ..	.. Increase in cattle wealth.
Marriage ceremony ..	.. Good rains.
Playing with children ..	.. Good crops.
A Tree falling on him ..	.. He will be eaten away by a tiger.
Eating mutton ..	.. Danger due to fire.
Eating Mango fruit ..	.. Tiger kills his cattle.
Eating jack-fruit ..	.. Suffers from scabies.
Expected bride ..	.. Failure of marriage pro- posal.
Celebration of a festival ..	.. Troubles from officials.
Disari } ..	.. Tiger kills the man
Pejjeni } ..	.. Tiger kills the man
Suffering from fever ..	.. Suffers from fever.
Bringing fire-wood ..	.. Death.

These anticipated good or bad results are known to most of the people of the tribe. As they cannot have any precautions with regard to the dreams, care is taken to see that when they start on some important work they would not come across bad omens and should they happen to see them, they try to withdraw from work for the time-being. Sneezing before the start of any work is also considered as a bad omen.

In addition to belief in dreams and good and bad omens the Samantas also look for auspicious and un-auspicious moments before undertaking any economic activity or performing life cycle ceremonies or any other important work. The auspicious moment is decided according to ruling star of the moment. The names of the star and the associated evil or good effect for various occasions are given at the end of the chapter.

Pantheon.—Apart from the beliefs in spirits, ghosts and certain superstitions, the Samanta believes in various natural objects as having supernatural powers. The availability of food in the jungle, the falling of the rains and also the break of epidemics are supposed to be dependent on the mercy of various Gods in charge of the same.

The Samanta pantheon consists of various Gods and Goddesses. The word for God is 'Penu', but no specific words are found to make a distinction between Gods and Goddesses. The various 'Penus' of the Samantas are as follows :—

- (1) Bhima Penu, Penu of Rains.
- (2) Jakeri Penu or Sanku Penu, Penu of the village.
- (3) Illu Penu, Penu of the house.
- (4) Horu Penu or Hussa Penu, Penu of mountains.
- (5) Jolla Penu, Penu of streames.
- (6) Ruga Penu, Penu of diseases.
- (7) Pota-Raju, Penu of Jungle.
- (8) Tokki Penu, the mother Earth.

Among these, Bhima Penu is believed to be the most powerful god on whose mercy depends their agriculture. Jakeri Penu is next to Bhima Penu. This 'Penu' protects the village from evils and blesses with good crops. As a matter of fact, Jakeri Penu is worshipped on each

and every occasion except on the occasion of Bhima Penu festival. Illu Penu is the third important 'Penu' worshipped by each and every Samanta family individually. This 'Penu' protects every family from any unfortunate and adverse effects. In fact, the first festival in the year starts with the worship of Illu Penu. Ruga Penu is worshipped to ward off epidemics. Horu Penu and Jolla Penu are worshipped almost on all occasions along with the ancestral spirits without being referred to by individual names. Tokki Penu is worshipped every year or whenever there occur famines.

There are no temples as such for these 'Penu' except for Jakeri. Every village of the Samantas has a small temple of Jakeri at the outskirts. The temple is enclosed on three sides and also at the top. Inside this temple one or two stones are placed symbolic of Jakeri Penu. The temple is also kept closed by a big flat stone to be removed on the occasion of worship.

Illu Penu is supposed to be residing in every house. Bhima Penu, Jolla Penu and Horu Penu are believed to dwell in the sky, river and hill respectively. Ruga Penu, however, takes abode outside the village.

Rites and Rituals.—The Samanta tribe is partly agricultural and partly food-gathering. As their life is dependent on these sources of livelihood, on all important occasions the produce is offered to 'Penu'. Thus there is a close correspondence between the various agricultural activities and the worship of 'Penu'. Whenever rain is needed, Bhima Penu is worshipped, and whenever new edibles are available, they are eaten after offering them to the other 'Penus'.

The tribe also observes a number of rites of passage at different phases of life of an individual to mark every event from birth to death. Almost every such rite of passage is associated with a particular ritual meant for worshipping the ancestral spirits and the 'Penu'.

As can be observed from the description of various festivals and rites of passage, the core of all the rituals is essentially one and the same. Almost at every rite, a fowl or a goat or a bull is sacrificed and the blood is spilled on the offerings made to the 'Penu', symbolising the belief

that spilling of blood ensures blessings of the Gods and Goddesses. Before the animal or fowl is sacrificed it is made to peck or eat the cooked rice that is sprinkled on the floor, in the belief that the pecking shows the willingness on the part of the 'Penu' and ancestral spirits to accept the animal. With these beliefs in view the Priestess in charge of the performance of the rituals even goes to the extent of thrusting the raw or cooked rice as the case may be in the mouth of the sacrificial animal or fowl if it does not eat or peck on its own accord. Similarly, the formalities and the paraphernalia necessary for the observance of rituals are basically the same.

Religious Functionaries.—Among the Samantas there is a clear-cut division of ritual roles with regard to religious functions. The various religious functionaries are as follows :—

(1) *Disari*.—The most important of all the religious offices is the office of the 'Disari'. He is both a priest and an astrologer. He fixes up auspicious days and 'muhurtams' (Sogu) for various purposes following the Samant traditional calendar. This calendar is based on the movements of the moon and the stars. Hence the 'Disari' is expected to be acquainted with these movements. The Samanta calendar includes twelve months in a year, twenty eight 'Muhurtams' in a month, and seven days in a week. Among these 'muhurtams' and days, certain numbers are auspicious for various activities, and the others are inauspicious. The auspicious days and 'Muhurtams' for different activities and occasions are as follows :—(See Calendar at the end of the Chapter.)

(2) *'Pejjeni'*.—The other important religious office next to 'Disari' is the office of the 'Pejjeni'. The 'Pejjeni' is a married woman or widow who performs almost every rite of the Samantas. She is the woman who has the power of coming into communion with spirits and Gods.

(3) *'Tromba'*.—'Tromba' is another religious office held by a young man, preferably unmarried one. He acts as a priest for the Jakeri Penu and Ruga Penu at the time of Hire, Parbu and Bicha Parbu besides the 'Pejjeni' and 'Gumbria'.

(4) *'Gumbria'*.—'Gumbria' is another male religious functionary whose major duty is to play on musical instruments, Liseni and Dunduni, at the time of celebrating Hire Parbu and Ruga Penu festivals.

(5) *'Mahini-pujara'*:—The other important religious office is the one held by the *'Mahinipujara'*, the priest to the spirits. He officiates only on the *'suddi'* day, the last purificatory rite observed after one's death to offer *'suddi bojji'*, purification meal to the departed soul.

The offices of these religious functionaries are not strictly hereditary, even though sons and daughters often succeed. Any man can become a *'Disari'* if he is well-versed in the calendar. Any woman can become a *'Pejjeni'* provided she can recite all the hymns. The same is the case with the other offices. In case the number of aspirants for any office is more than one, *'Havnta'* i.e., the village head, nominates one whom he thinks fit. Payments for these functionaries are not fixed. They are entitled to certain privileges either in the form of cash or and that are customarily sanctioned on various occasions.

Of these five religious functionaries, the *'Disari'* and the *'Pejjeni'* have to observe certain food restrictions. They do not eat hare, squirrel, wild rat and long gourd. Any violation of these restrictions makes their power, it is believed, ineffective.

II. FEASTS AND FESTIVALS.

A number of festivals celebrated on various occasions by the Samanta tribe are as given below :—

S. No.	Name of the Parbu.	Deity worshipped	Purpose	Month
1 st	Hire Parbu	.. Illu Penu.	To Charming seed.	Hire Lenju.
2 nd	Maha Parbu	.. Illu Penu.	Mango eating	Hire Lenju.
3.	Tokki Parbu	.. Tokki Penu, Illu Penu, Jakeri Penu, (or Sanku Penu.)	To eat mango kernels.	Besaki, Ratta Lenju.
4.	Junanga Parbu	Jakeri Penu, (Sanku Penu).	Maize eating	Ratta Lenju.
5.	Kumda Parbu	.. Illu Penu.	Eating pump-kin leaves, as vegetables	Bandapanna Lenju.
6.	Pairaka Parbu	.. Jakeri Penu, (Sanku Penu).	To eat 'Adda' fruit.	Maga Lenju November.
7.	Balu, Bhima Parbu.	Bhima Penu.	..	Dasara, August and January.
8.	Maha Bonda Parbu.	All deities.	To eat mango flower.	Pusu Lenju.
9.	Bicha Parbu	.. Jakari Penu (Pota Raju).	Sowing seed	Maga Lenju.
10.	Ruga Penu Parbu.	.. Ruga Penu (Tallinomi)	To avert epidemics	Gundi Lenju.

Of these there are festivals which are observed by each and every household individually, and also others that are celebrated collectively by the whole village. The Maha Parbu, Taku Parbu, Junanga Parbu, Pairka Parbu, Bhima Parbu, Mahabanda Parbu, Bicka Parbu and also Ruga Penu Parbu are celebrated by the whole village, and the other festivals only by individual households.

Apart from the above list of festivals, Dasara Parbu is celebrated in the month of Dasara collectively by the whole village. But this festival is different from others in the sense that it is not intended to propitiate gods and deities to bless the tribe with good fortune. On the other hand, it is intended to make presents to the 'Muttadar' of the 'Mutta' *i.e.*, a group of villagers. This is a practice that was in vogue in the days of the rule of the Maharaja of the Jeypore Estate in which the tribe lived. It was a normal practice in those days for each villager to contribute something to the fund payable to the 'Muttadar' by the 'Havnta'. The 'Muttadar' who is the head of a number of villages in his circle *i.e.*, 'Mutta' is expected to meet the 'Raja' on the day of 'Dasara' and make presentations with a view to showing his sense of loyalty towards the Raja. Hence, this is not strictly a religious festival.

The other festive occasion, on which all the Samantas come together to enjoy themselves, is the occasion of the propitiating ceremony observed in the name of Tokki Penu. This celebration required in the olden days a human sacrifice. In recent years human being is, however, substituted by a buffalo.

1. *Hire Parbu* :

Hire Parbu is by far the most important festival of the Samantas. This festival is observed in 'Hire Lenju' to propitiate Illu Penu, and also to prepare for sowing seed. The 'Pejjeni' performs the ritual first in the house of the 'Havnta'; next in her own house, and then in other houses one by one, covering all the houses within a period of two or three days.

The Samantas decorate their houses a few days before the actual festival day. On the morning of the festival day they plaster their houses with cow-dung and take an oil-bath.

On the day of the celebration of the festival, as fixed by the 'Disari', the 'Pejjeni' arrives in the house of the 'Havnta' accompanied by the 'Tromba' and the 'Gumbria' in the morning. As soon as they arrive, the woman of the house brings water in a tumbler or gourd-vessel. The water is mixed with a little bit of turmeric powder and is sprinkled on the feet of the 'Pejjeni', the 'Tromba', the 'Bumbria' and others that are present. The woman of the house also fixes 'buttu' (Vermilion) on their foreheads. Then the 'Pejjeni' and her party enter the house.

The 'Pejjeni' replasters a small portion of the floor of the house and draws lines with turmeric powder and ragi flour on the plastered floor. On this spot she puts two baskets, one filled with rice, and the other with ragi seed, apart from a few castor oil seeds. On the rice basket a castor oil lamp is lit, and beside the ragi basket, liquor in a ground-ladle, six or twelve paise, and a few grains in an 'adda' leaf are placed. The members that are present place six paise each on the ragi basket. Then, the 'Pejjeni', the 'Tromba' and the 'Gumbria' together chant hymns and pray to Illu Penu as follows. "O ! God ! We are celebrating Hire Parbu, bless us with good crops and sound health. If you ward off the evils, we offer you two fowls, one at the time of threshing ragi, and the other at the time of next Hire Parbu". As the chanting goes on, the woman of the house brings embers and sprinkles castor oil on them in order to offer the resulting smoke to Illu Penu. The 'Pejjeni', then sprinkles some rice on the floor and makes the fowl peck them and sacrifices the chicken. The blood is spilled on the plastered ground. Those, who can afford to sacrifice a goat or a pig, give a feast to all the villagers.

The ragi and castor oil seeds, that are offered to Illu Penu on this occasion, are kept separately in the house to mix them afterwards with the sowing seed at the time of starting sowing operations in the field.

The trifling amounts of money that are placed in the basket are shared by the 'Pejjeni', the 'Gumbria' and the 'Tromba'. However, the 'Pejjeni' takes one share and the other share is taken by the 'Gumbria' and the 'Tromba' in equal amounts. Thus the ritual is performed in every house.

Exchanging of Parbunda.—In accordance with a tribal custom, the Samantas exchange chicken, curry, and cooked and raw rice among relatives in the neighbouring villages. For this purpose, immediately after the ritual, one member visits the relatives in the neighbouring villages, and gives them the cooked rice, raw rice and chicken curry (Parbunda) and in turn receives from the relatives the same. It is said that such exchange of 'Parbunda' strengthens the relations between relatives. Stopping of such exchanges indicates spoilt-relationships.

2. *Maha Parbu :*

Maha Parbu (Mango festival) is observed to celebrate the first eating ceremony of mangoes during the month of 'Hire Lenju'. This festival is observed separately after the Hire Parbu on any auspicious day, or along with Hire Parbu on the same day.

Maha Parbu is celebrated at the family level and also the village level. To observe it collectively by the whole village, on the morning of the days fixed by the 'Disari', and 'Pejjeni' plasters with cow-dung a small place in the middle of the village and drawn lines with ragi flour. She puts in that place a small basket filled with rice. A castor oil lamp is then lit on the basket. She chants hymns for sometime and then goes to the mango tree with a cotton thread that is soaked in turmeric solution. The thread is then tied to the trunk of the tree and a chicken is sacrificed in the name of Illu Penu. The blood is sprinkled on the trunk of the mango tree. With this, the celebration comes to an end and all the people go back to their houses. The chicken, that is sacrificed, is distributed among the families of the village in small but equal quantities.

Apart from the above celebration, each family brings a mango fruit and mixes it with some curry. The cooked curry is offered to Illu Penu before it is eaten by the family. Since that day each Samanta family is free to eat mangoes.

3. *Taku Parbu :*

Taku Parbu, the first eating ceremony of mango kernels, is celebrated in the month of 'Ratta Lenju'. This festival is observed by the village as a whole. On the morning of the day fixed by the 'Disari', the 'Pejjeni' plas-

ters a portion of the floor in front of the temple of the 'Jakeri Penu and draws lines with turmeric powder and ragi flour. On that floor a basketful of rice is placed and a castor oil lamp is kept on the rice. By the side of the basket a mango kernel is also placed by the 'Pejjeni'. She chants hymns for sometime and then sprinkles rice on the floor in order to allow the fowl to peck the rice. Afterwards the chicken is sacrificed, and the blood is spilled on the floor. Later, the mango kernel is broken and the seed is offered to Jakeri Penu. With this simple ritual the celebration comes to an end. From that day onwards the Samantas are free to use mango seed as a regular food.

4. *Junanga Parbu* :

In the month of 'Ratta Lonju', the Samantas start eating maize after offering them to Jakeri Penu and observing a festival. This parbu is also celebrated collectively by the whole village.

On the day fixed by the Disari, the 'Pejjeni' plasters the floor in front of the temple of Jakeri Penu and draws lines with turmeric powder and ragi flour. She roasts the maize ear and offers it to Jakeri Penu. The fowl is made to peck the sprinkled rice and then it is sacrificed. The severed head of the fowl is placed on the plastered floor and a few hymns are chanted by the 'Pejjeni', propitiating all the 'Penu'.

The burnt maize-ear is eaten by the 'Pejjeni' herself, and the flesh of the sacrificed fowl is distributed among all the families in the village.

5. *'Kumda Parbu'* :

Kumda Parbu is performed in the month of August *i.e.*, 'Bandapanna-Lenuju' to celebrate the first eating ceremony of 'Kumda-Aku' *i.e.*, pumpkin leaf. As Hire Parbu, this 'Parbu' is also performed in each and every house one by one, starting from the 'Havntas' house.

On the day fixed for the purpose, the 'Pejjeni' goes to the house of the 'Havnta'. Inside the house, she keeps ready all the materials necessary for celebrating the festival. The only new thing needed in this connection is the pumpkin leaf that is placed by the side of the basket filled with rice. After chanting the hymns the pumpkin leaves

are offered to 'Illu Penu' and other 'Penu'. Then the fowl is sacrificed after it is made to peck the rice sprinkled on the floor. The sacrificial blood is then spilled on the leaves.

This festival is later performed in the house of the 'Pejjeni', followed by celebrations in others' houses.

The flesh of the sacrificed fowl and the pumpkin leaves offered to the Penu are cooked into one curry. The 'Pejjeni' is served a meal by each and every family.

6. 'Pairka Parbu' :

Pairka Parbu is celebrated to observe the first eating ceremony of 'Adda' fruits. In the month of November, on the day fixed by the 'Disari', the 'Pejjeni' performs the festival on behalf of the whole village. This festival is performed exactly in the same way as the 'Junanga Parbu' in all its details.

7. 'Bhima Parbu' :

Bhima Parbu is an important festival for the Samantas. This is a festival observed by them in order to propitiate the God Bhima, the God of the rains. It is observed by the whole village on a large scale in two different phases. The first phase is performed in the month of May, and an animal is dedicated to the God Bhima. During the second phase in the month of either August or January, the dedicated animal is sacrificed and a communal feast is also arranged. In case the God Bhima blesses the tribe with rains the second phase is observed in the month of January. If the rains are quite heavy, damaging the standing crops, the second phase is performed in the month of August itself instead of in January and the God is prayed for lessening the severity of rains.

First phase of the ritual.—On the evening of the day fixed in the month of May by the 'Disari', the 'Pejjeni' goes to the foot of a hill accompanied by the villagers. She selects a small place at the foot of the hill and plasters it with cow-dung and draws seven lines each with turmeric powder, ragi and rice on the floor. On that portion a basket filled with rice is placed, and a castor oil lamp is lightened on the same. After chanting hymns, the animal that is to be dedicated to God Bhima is brought to that

place and water is poured by the 'Pejjeni' on its head. The 'Pejjeni's' prayer to God is as follows :—

“O ! Lord ! we are performing the ritual to
 please you,
 We are dedicating the animal to you,
 Bless us with good crops,
 We will sacrifice this animal to you later”.

With this the first phase of the festival comes to an end.

Second Phase of the ritual.—The second phase of the ritual is observed either in the month of August or January as the case may be in order to redeem the promises made to God Bhima. For this purpose on an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari', the 'Pejjeni' goes to the spot where the promise was made previously and repeats all the preliminaries necessary as a prelude to the sacrifice. After chanting hymns, he prays to Bhima as follows : O ! God ! In accordance with the promise made previously we are sacrificing the dedicated animal. Be satisfied with it and bless us with good crops and prosperity”. Someone, that is present, sacrifices the goat or the bull as the case may be, and the 'Pejjeni' sprinkles the blood on the plastered floor.

After this part of the ritual is completed, a few young unmarried men wrap a small quantity of the flesh of the sacrificed animal with castor leaves and put it in the fire. When the flesh gets roasted, the 'Pejjeni' offers it to Bhima.

The Festival feast.—Immediately after the ritual is over, rice and the flesh of the sacrificed animal are cooked by men at the very place of sacrifice, and the feast is enjoyed.

8. *Maha Bonda Parbu (Mango Flower Festival) :*

This is a ritual observed in the Pusu Lenju (January) to mark the first-eating ceremony of mango flowers. Though the Samantas do not eat mango flowers regularly yet they observe the ritual, because they maintain that even an accidental eating of them without observing the ritual would cause illness. The windfalls of mango flowers

fall in the stream and they move along with the current. Since they get mixed up with water, they may find place in the potfuls of water carried home by women for drinking and cooking purpose. Hence, accidentally they may be eaten up. In order to avoid the ills that may be caused by such accidental eating, the samantas perform the ritual.

For the ritual, the villagers collectively purchase a fowl to sacrifice it to 'Penu'. On a Wednesday or another auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari in Pusu Lenju, the 'Pejjeni' takes bath in the stream, plasters with cow-dung a small piece of ground in the middle of the village; brings a small mango branch with flowers and plants it in the middle of the plastered ground; draws decorative lines with turmeric Powder and ragi flour; sprinkles rice here and there; fills a small basket with rice and puts it in front of the planted mango branch. She chants hymns for some time; then sprinkles rice and makes the fowl peck them and again resumes chanting. The some one present will sacrifice the chicken by severing its head and the blood is sprinkled on the mango branch by the Pejjeni as offering to the deities.

Soon after the ritual, the cooked rice and unleavened bread made of ragi flour is distributed among the villagers. Along with this the fowl's raw-flesh is also distributed among all the villagers. The 'Disari', the 'Havnta' and the 'Pejjeni', however, receive somewhat larger shares.

9. *Bicca Parbu (See Festival) :*

Bicca Parbu is the other very important festival of the Samanta tribe. This parbu is celebrated collectively by the whole village in the month of Maga Lenju (February).

In the first week of Maga Lenju, the 'Havnta' convense a meeting of the villegers and in consultation with the 'Disari', an auspicious day is fixed in the same month for observing the festival. In the meeting they also take decisions with regard to the amount of money and the quantity of grain needed and the contributions to be made by each family if the amount of the common village fund is insufficient.

On the evening of the auspicious day fixed for the celebration of the festival, the 'Pejjeni', the 'Disari' and the 'Tromba' take an oil-bath in the stream and go to

the shrine of Jakeri Penu. The villagers also assemble there. The 'Gumbriya' accompanied by a few villagers plays on 'Liseni' and 'Dundeini'. The 'Pejjeni' first removes the front stone of the shrine and draws decorative lines with tuameric powder and ragi flour after replastering the floor. The 'Tromba' puts a small basket filled with ragi seed in the shrine. He puts a few grains each of Sama, castor, red gram, paddy, etc., on the basket full of ragi seed. The three, the 'Pejjeni', the 'Disari' and the 'Tromba' begin chanting hymns, and after some time the 'Tromba' makes a hole with a small stick in front of the Jakeri Penu, and drops a few grains taken from the basket into it. The dropping of the grain into the hole is repeated thrice. When this is done, he puts the rice cooked by him meanwhile in a leaf plate and offers it to the 'Penu'. Again he joins the 'Pejjeni' and the 'Disari' in chanting hymns until the next morning. During that night all the villagers will be busy singing and dancing.

Early next morning, the 'Pejjeni' brings a fowl, sprinkles rice on the floor and makes the fowl peck the grains. While doing this she will be busy chanting hymns. The 'Tromba' is asked to sever the head of the fowl, and she sprinkles the blood on the Jakeri Penu, on the seed in the basket, and also on the seed put in the hole. This is followed by the sacrifice of another fowl and a pig. To sacrifice the pig, it is carried to the place of ritual with legs tied. The 'Pejjeni' sprinkles water on its head and makes it eat the cooked rice. If it does not, the 'Tromba' and the 'Disari' thrust the rice into its mouth. Later, the pig is killed by thrusting a big knife into its neck three or four times. The resulting blood is spilled on the Jakeri, on the seed in the basket, and also on the seed put in the hole by the 'Tromba.' For some time afterwards, the 'Pejjeni', the 'Disari' and the 'Tromba' continue chanting hymns and praying Jakeri Penu to bless them with bumper crops.

- When the ritual is over, the 'Tromba' pours water into the hole and covers it with earth. At the time of taking out the earth and also covering the hole, the 'Tromba' takes care that his nails do not touch the earth, for they believe that if his nails touch the earth the crops will have stunted growth that year, and the sacrifice of the animals will be of no avail. He takes away the seeds in the basket to his home and distributes them among all

the villagers to be mixed with other seed at the time of sowing. It is only after this ceremony, that the Samantas sow seed in their fields.

During the whole night and day of the ritual, the 'Pejjeni', the 'Disari' and the 'Tromba' will be on fast. At the end of the celebration of this festival all the villagers enjoy a feast at the very place of ritual. When the tritual is completed, young men cook rice, chicken and the flesh of the pig, and serve the same to all the villagers.

10. *Ruga Penu or Tallinomeri Parbu :*

This 'Parbu' is celebrated in the month of 'Gundi Lenju' with the intention of propitiating 'Ruga Penu', the Goddess of epidemics, and to pray to her not to visit the village and bring distress. Ruga Penu is also propitiated whenever an epidemic breaks out in a village. All the villagers join to observe the festival as it is the common interest of the villagers to save themselves from all the epidemics.

Tuesday is considered the best day for celebrating this festival. On the morning of the day 'Pejjeni' takes oil bath in the stream, and on her way back to the village, she brings with her a small mango branch. In the middle of the village she plasters a portion of the ground with cow-dung, draws decorative lines with turmeric powder and ragi flour and also sprinkles rice, and lights a castor oil lamp. A hole is dug in the middle of the plastered floor and the mango branch is planted in it before the floor is decorated with lines of ragi powder.

After the preliminaries are over, the 'Pejjeni' goes on chanting hymns to the accompaniment of music played on 'Liseni' and 'Dappu' by the 'Gumbriya'. After some time the mango branch and the oil lamp are brought to the outskirts of the village where again a small portion is plastered with cow-dung and the same is decorated together with the floor, after the branch is planted again. Here chanting of hymns continues and a fowl is also sacrificed to Ruga Penu. At the very spot, rice and chicken are cooked and eaten by all those present.

After this is over, the villagers and the 'Pejjeni' enter the village. Special care is taken to see that nothing is brought into the village from the ceremonial place at the outskirts of the village. It is believed that along with the things that are brouhgt back from that ceremonial place

Ruga Penu will also re-visit the village. Thus, by observing the above ritual, it is believed that Ruga Penu is sent out of the village and thence the village is free from epidemics.

Other Rituals

Tallinomeri or Ruga Penu Puja.—Tallinomeri or Ruga Penu has a legendary origin. She came to this world at the instance of the God Bimesu or Bhima. She occasionally visits village and causes small-pox. In order to ward off her anger each Samanta village propitiates her once a month. On behalf of the entire village the 'Pejjeni' offers either an egg or a fowl. The offering takes place either on Saturdays or on Tuesdays depending upon the offer made. An egg is offered on Saturdays and a fowl on Tuesdays. Despite this regular offering, if smallpox epidemic break out the Samanta tribe promises to offer incense, plantains, coconuts, pigeons, fowls and a goat to that 'Penu'. The following is an account of the rite performed in Allivara, a Smanta village, while redeeming the promises made to Ruga Penu.

The 'Pejjeni' and two other old women who were acting as 'Pejjenis' took bath in the stream and put on washed clothes in the morning. The 'Pejjeni' then accompanied by the two women entered her house, sprinkled some rice in front of her, and put a coconut, a handful of rice in a leaf-plate, a bunch of 'Neredu' leave and some straw. She then began chanting hymns. The other two women also followed suit. As the 'Pejjeni' went into a trance, one of the two other women took a chicken and said 'I pray you not to be angry. Ask us whatever you want. As promised earlier, now we are offering'. After uttering these words she handed over the chicken to the 'Pejjeni'. The 'Pejjeni' received it with both hands; held the chicken with left and hand over her head; took some rice from the leaf-plate with right hand and waved the hand to and fro thrice. Then she handed the chicken over to one of the two women. The women repeated the same act holding also the coconut, while chanting hymns. At the end, the three together said 'O Tallinomeri' Pray, be satisfied, leave the house and leave the village. Do not visit our village any more. We will continue to propitiate you once in a month". Meanwhile a woman brought a child aged about four. The 'Pejjeni' put rice into the child's right hand and made the chicken peck the rice,

Later, the three women went out of the house chanting hymns. They also brought the things necessary for 'Puja' with them. Meanwhile a boy brought a basket tied to a stick about five feet long. The 'Pejjeni' threw all the things into the basket. Then again in front of the house, she sprinkled water, drew turmeric and ragi powder lines put small heaps of rice on one of the lines, turmeric solution in three leaf cups, fire embers in a tin and then burnt the incense. All the three women went on chanting hymns while offering a pigeon, and a coconut, the 'Pejjeni' then waved her hands towards the sky, knelt down, touched the ground with her forehead; and burnt incense thrice. After about half an hour of chanting, a boy brought one goat. The 'Pejjeni' took the rope tied to the goat's neck into her hands, chanted hymns, offered 'Neredu' leaves and the rice. The goat was then taken away. After chanting there for about half an hour the 'Pejjeni' dropped the leaves, coconut, etc., into the basket.

Later, the three women went a furlong away from the village and stood there on the foot-path. After drawing lines with turmeric powder ragi flour and chanting hymns, six coconut were broken, and four fowls and five pigeons were sacrificed. The goat was once again made to eat rice and then its head was severed by a young man with a billhook.

The meat of the fowls, pigeons, and goat, were cooked separately, Rice was also cooked. The three women including the 'Pejjeni' and the 'Havnta' were specially served. All the villagers including children partook of the meal.

The Samantas believe that if the rite is performed on the public path Tallinomeri would go back by that path. No other member from any other village will be present on this occasion for fear that Tallinomeri would perhaps follow him leaving the village in which this rite is being performed. It is also believed that the goat must be killed with one stroke. If it is not killed with one stroke it is believed that Tallinomeri is not happy and hence another goat must be sacrificed on the coming Tuesday.

The Mariah Sacrifice.—Almost everyone who has written about the Samanta tribe has reported about human sacrifice. A careful study of various reports makes one believe beyond any doubt that male children were the

victims of such a practice ; but to which ' Penu ' or Goddess this victim is offered is not clear. Mr. Edgar Thurston quotes many authorities in his book *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*. A few of them are reproduced below :

1. "The best known case", Mr. Frazer* writes, of human sacrifices systematically offered to ensure good crops is supplied by the Khonds or Kandhs. Our knowledge of them is derived from the accounts written by British Officers, who forty or fifty years ago, were engaged in putting them down. The sacrifices were offered to earth goddess, Tari Pennu or Bera Pennu...."

2. In 1837, Mr. Russell, in a report on the districts entrusted to his control, wrote as follows : "The ceremonies. . . In the Maliahs of Goomsur, the sacrifice is, offered annually to Thadda Penno (the earth)....."

In the same year, Mr. Arbuthnot, Collector of Visakha patnam, reported as follows : "Of the hill tribes Codooloo-there are said to be two district classes, the Cotia Codooloo, and Jathapoo Codooloo. The former class is that which is in the habit of offering human sacrifices to the God called Jenkery, with a view to secure good crops".

4. Apart from human sacrifices, the Samanta tribe was practising female infanticide in the olden days. Mr. Thruston goes on to say that "The practice of female infanticide was formerly very prevalent among the Kondhs of Ganjam, and, in 1841, Lieutenant Macpherson was deputed to carry into effect the measures which had been proposed by Lord Elphinstone for the suppression of Meriah sacrifices and infanticide".

5. With regard to the relinquishing of this practice Thurston observe "The Kondhs of Bara Muttah promised to relinquish the rite on condition, inter alia, that they should be at liberty to sacrifice buffaloes, monkeys, goats, etc., to their deities with all the solemnities observed on occasions of human sacrifices and they should be at liberty, upon all occasions, to denounce to their Gods, the Government, and some of its servants in particular, as the cause of their having relinquished the great rite". He says further "The last recorded Meriah sacrifice in the Ganjam Maliahs occurred in 1852".

*James Frazer, 'The Golden Bough' 1900.,

During our investigation it became very difficult to elicit any information with regard to the 'Meriah' sacrifice. We are told that these people every year and whenever they experience famine, sacrifice buffaloes to Tokkipenu. After much persuasion one man came out with this following description of the sacrifice.

The sacrifice of human beings to Tokkipenu was in vogue in the remote past. No one belonging to the last two generations knew about it. At present only a cow or a buffalo is sacrificed in the month of 'Ratta Lenju'. Whatever is heard by the present generation about human sacrifice is very little. The actual story runs thus :

The Tokki Penu lives in a cave away from villages. Whoever has the power of coming into communion with that 'Penu' acts as a priest. Whenever a child is needed for sacrifice, the elders go to remote villages in order to kidnap him. Care is taken that kidnapping operations are started during the month of 'Ratta Lenju' when children go out early in the morning in search of mango wind-falls. The priest brings with him rice soaked in turmeric solution that is already offered to Tokki Penu. When the boys are seen he throws the rice at them. As soon as the rice touches the children, they lose their senses and become tame and follow the Kidnapper. On the day of sacrifice the boy is brought to the cave and sacrificed to the 'Penu'. Sacrifice to the Tokki Penu is peculiar. The priest with his magical powers hurls his weapon made of steel which is split into a trident at the end. It goes to the victim by itself, and pulls out lumps of flesh from his body. In this way the victim is killed.

If a number of children are available for sacrifice all of them are fed for the future sacrifices and only one is sacrificed at a time.

Infanticide is not at all practised at present.

III: MYTH AND LEGEND.

Much information could not gathered by us on this topic. It seems as if the Samantas in the Agency area are gradually forgetting their mythological stories. However with great difficulty, the following myths have been collected.

Myth about the continuity of the Human Race :

Once upon a time there occurred a deluge. The entire earth was submerged under flood waters, so suddenly that no living creature could run anywhere for safety. Two human beings, a brother and a sister, however, escaped death by climbing up a huge log which was floating on the flood-waters. After being exposed to sun and cold for some days, they found a large hole in the log and went into it. They spent a number of days in it. While drifting along, one day when the log touched the top of palmyrah tree, they climbed up to its top, and remained there for a long time. After a number of days, the water receded. The man and the woman wanted to climb down but they were afraid. So, they abandoned the idea and stayed up there itself. One day, a crow saw the used-up leaf plates thrown down on the ground by the man and the woman. It thought that human beings might be living somewhere. It flew here and there in search of them. At last it found two human beings on the top of the tree and asked them why they were staying on the tree instead of getting down. They narrated their plight to the crow. The crow directly went to the God Bimesu and narrated what it had seen. He was glad to find the man and the woman, because they could make an attempt to restore the population. He expressed the same to the crow. The crow remained him of their relationship. He was taken aback because it was not permissible to ask a brother and a sister to be come husband and wife. He had, however, a hope that they would one day become husband and wife as they were living together. He watched them for a number of days but to his utter disappointment what he wished did not come off. He then thought that something must be done to make the perpetuation of the human race possible.

Bimesu then summoned Tallinomeri, the Goddess of small-pox and commissioned her to cause small-pox to them so that they might not recognise each other after the disease was cured. Tallinomeri built a hut near the tree, put the man and the woman in the hut when they were asleep and also caused them to develop small-pox. When they were cured of the small-pox, they could not recognise each other, because the disease changed their appearance greatly. Further, they forgot their relationship are. There was no one else except these two. One day the woman said "O ! Man ! You are my husband !" The

man in turn said " O ! woman ! you are my wife". And after that they became husband and wife. The woman gave birth to a number of children. But the multiplication of the numbers as expected by Bimesu stopped because the children of the man and woman are brothers and sisters. So, he again sent Tallinomeri. She accordingly cause small-pox to visit all the children. After the disease disappeared, they were so disfigured that they could not recognise each other. Then Bimesu accompanied by 'Pejjeni', the priestess, visited them. The 'Pejjeni' asked the men and women to stand in pairs, and fixed vermilion (bottu) on their foreheads and asked them to lead family life hence forth. She also asked them to propitiate various gods for prosperity and imparted hymns and the procedure of performing various festivals to some of the women. Later, Bimesu asked them to go to some part of the country where there was plenty of fertile and settle themselves by cultivating lands.

The men and women accordingly began their journey in search of fertile land. On their way they found two sister-rivers, Bansudara and Ballunadi. All the members propitiated the rivers by throwing money into them. After a few days of journey, they found a large flat stone near the village, Panabadi. The eldest among the men divided the land among a number of groups. Each such group was also given a separate name. These groups, now known as various tribes are Bagta, Porja, Mirka Dora, Kavinga, Konda Dora, Pindi, etc. The eldest among the Samanta tribe divided the tribe into friend-brother clans and 'Sandinga' clans between whom marital relationship are prohibited and permitted respectively.

The Legend of the Bamboo Shrub (Deruduppa) :

A Samanta man, native of Narayanapatnam was working as an agricultural labourer with an agriculturist of a neighbouring village. He was lodging with his master, leaving his wife behind. At the time of this leaving Narayanapatnam his wife was pregnant. After working continuously for a year and a half, he thought of going back to his village to see his wife and his son. He took his master's permission and started one day for his village.

After walking half the distance he was surprised to see that a bamboo shrub spreading infinitely, was blocking his way. He attempted by all means to pass the shrub

but he could not. Days passed by, but he was still blocked by the shrub. Then he prayed to all deities and promised various bamboo sacrifices. All proved fruitless. At last, he prayed the bamboo shrub itself and promised all sorts of sacrifices. Even that was of no use. Having felt greatly disturbed, he offered himself in sacrifice to the shrub. Even the no passage was given him by the shrub. Then he promised to sacrifice his wife also. This also had no effect. Ultimately, in great confusion, he realised that he had only his beloved son left unoffered. So, he also decided to do that finally. No sooner did he promise to sacrifice his only son to the shrub than it gave way to him

20 The Samauta man after reaching his house saw his wife and beloved son. His wife got hot water ready him and asked him to take bath. Full of grief the man could not move or speak. His wife asked him not to have any sorrowful things in his mind but to take his bath. His son also requested the same. At last he took his bath, and all of them together took their meal.

After finishing the meal, his wife asked him to reveal the cause of his sorrow. After much persuasion he narrated all that had happened. Immediately after hearing the news the woman fell into a swoon. After some time she recovered. They were hesitant to sacrifice their only son but they were much more afraid of the anger of the bamboo shrub, the consequent destruction of their whole family. Eventually they decided to offer their boy to the bamboo shrub. One day the man, with his son went to the place where the bamboo shrub blocked his way. He brought with him a cooking utensil, rice, a laddle and a fowl. He first sacrificed the fowl to the bamboo shrub and cooked the rice and the chicken curry. Then served the rice and curry on the leaf-plates. He fed his son with his own hand, but he ate nothing because of grief. He was unable to sacrifice his son with his own hands. So, he hit at an idea. "My dear son", he said, "We will return". So, saying he picked up the utensil and bill-hook, and left the laddle intentionally there. When they were about 100 yards away, he pretended as if he remembered something and said, "My boy, I forgot the laddle there. "Go and fetch it". The boy went and bent to pick up the laddle. Suddenly the bamboo shrub came down and picked the boy up and disappeared into the sky. The man returned home mourning.

IV. MAGIC AND MEDICINE.

Like any other primitive religion, the Samanta religion is not free of magic. It is believed by this tribe that there are two types of magic ; one is black magic and the other, white magic. Black magic is done by any woman or man to harm somebody. White magic is to cure the disease of somebody or to nullify the effects of black magic.

Whenever an individual feels uneasiness or gets vomitings, and gradually goes on becoming weaker and weaker without any sufficient reason, it is believed that the man has become a victim of some magician. It is said that if a magician wants to harm somebody he takes small pieces of chillies, chicken bone, rice grain, charcoal, and ties them in a piece of cloth with hair, and with his magical powers, he manages to send the same to any part of the body that he wishes. Because of this the victim experiences pain in that part of his body. Any magic performed by one magician can be neutralised only by a magician more powerful than he, and in so doing he sees that the small piece of cloth with the contents comes out.

The 'Guru', the magician, is, as a matter of fact, both a physician and a magician. For certain cases like scorpion sting or snake bite or any wound he always administers some medicine and in the case of certain diseases like fever, boils, long-term body pain, etc., he administers medicines and also does some magic.

Whenever a patient approaches him, the magician begins with the process of ascertaining whether the disease will respond quickly to treatment, or takes a long time. He asks the sufferer to bring a castor oil lamp, a winnowing fan and few unbroken grains to diagnose. He then lights the castor oil lamp near the sick man or his bed and he sits near it. He then takes a few grains and holds them between his right hand thumb and the forefinger, and chants hymns for some time, invoking Illu penu, Horu Penu and other spirits. When the invocation comes to an end, he drops the rice, which he is holding over the winnowing fan. If the rice does not break during this process it is taken as an indication that the disease will respond quickly to the treatment. If the grains get broken, it will respond very slowly. In case grains are broken in the process, he counts them in pairs. If the total of the counted grains happens to be an even number, the disease can be cured at a comparatively early date, or else it will take a very long time.

The Samanta tribe also employs magicians from other tribes. In the Agency area the man who knows some Oriya language is likely to become a successful magician for, the hymns and other magical spells are in that language. One of such hymns to cure disease is given below :—

Jan Jan Javandhan Manne Guru Poorsalu guru,
Chillangi Chedta dignaduko, diganaduko, diddigre
dignaduko.

Sandiki bondiki nadagidigira bibidimantri,
Upukudale, amri etiyas, Jeeboinanan.

Jado jado paradisti jado paradishti jado,
Nasani jado, pangone jado, dishtiko jado,
Manoki jado, jantoriki jado, kiriyaki jado,
Sapananki jado, deevananki jado.

English Version :—

O 1 Manne Guru,¹ Poorsala Guru,²
Any black magic should prove ineffective,
The sufferer should be set free from the effect of
black magic,

He should be free as the man who has drunk Amrit³
Any effect of evil sight, evil dream, black magic, or any
other at performed to disturb the heart, Come down.

It is important to note that every magician makes claims as though he knows only how to cure disease and ward off evil spirits, but not how to harm other people. Obviously this is unbelievable.

When a disease is attributed to balck magic and the objective to cure it, a long procedure is adopted and the performance actually takes place on a public path. The procedure adopted is described below as was seen in one village.

The 'Guru' came to the outskirts of the village along with the child who was suffering from fever, and getting weaker and weaker over a long time. As the boy was only two years old, his father took him in his arms, on reaching the particular spot, the magician drew designs with charcoal powder, ragi powder and red earth as given at the end of this Chapter.

1 & 2.—The Magician invokes his 'Gurus'

3.—Divine nectar that gives everlasting life.

To start with, the 'Guru' stood up and touched the head of the child with an egg, a small chicken and some rice that he held in his hand and then he placed the egg on the design in the prescribed place. After chanting for some time, he placed the chicken also at the centre of the design. While chanting, at intervals, he touched the head of the boy with a grass blade. When the chanting was over, he threw away the grass blade, broke the egg, severed the head of the chicken, and moved both of them, twice round the head of the boy. After placing them on the ground he took the amulet, a palm leaf on which a few words were written unintelligibly, and put it over the burning incense and tied it to the body. At the end, he took some water in his hand, moved round the head and the body and dropped the same on the design.

The above performance was actually performed by one Bagatha magician, in order to cure the disease of the boy belonging to the same tribe. But the same holds true in the case of the Samantas also.

MUHURTAMS : Auspicious and Inauspicious for Different Occasions and the Supposed Effects Auspicious and Inauspicious Stars
Reigning Various Occasions.

Name of the 'Muhurtam' or 'Sogu'	Agricultural operations	Marriage	Birth of a child	Construction of houses
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Asta	.. Inauspicious	.. Auspicious for (1) taking liquor to the father of the bride's house in order to start negotiations of marriage, (2) cooking for the first time by the bride, (3) for celebrating marriage.	The child born will be killed by an elephant in his life. This bad effect can be ward off by performing 'Sitra Puja' of the next 'sogu'.	Inauspicious.
Sitra	.. Not very auspicious if not inauspicious	.. Auspicious for (1) marriage ceremony and (2) taking liquor to bride's house for marriage negotiations.	The child will be free from the fear of devils.	Auspicious (1) for selection of a new site for the village and (2) laying foundation of the house.
Soda	.. Inauspicious.	.. Inauspicious	.. The child will suffer from chronic diseases.	Inauspicious.
Besanda	.. Not very auspicious	.. Inauspicious	.. The child will be brave.	..
Lodda	.. auspicious; good especially for sowing seed.	..	The child will develop a strong physique.	..

(5)

(4)

(3)

(2)

no effect, either good or bad

.. Auspicious, particularly for sowing (1) Paddy and (2) 'sama' seed.

Jetti

The child will either become sick or a victim of some wild animal in his life.

.. Auspicious for dibbling seed into the ground

Sihuda

.. Auspicious for (1) sowing, (2) pooling the harvested crops into a heap, (3) to take out stored grain for the first time.

Muhda

.. auspicious for sowing same 'seed'

Makidi

the child becomes (1) thief, (2) a female child in particular leaves the parental roof for husband's roof even before her first menstruation i.e., through child marriage.

Danasana

inauspicious for the child; Auspicious but if foundation is laid down, the house will be visited often by relatives.

Satabisi

.. Auspicious for threshing.

Auspicious for first cooking by the bride.

Auspicious.

Inauspicious.

Banje	.. Inauspicious	.. ..	If the baby is a male child no woman can bear children by him.
Reti	.. ..	Auspicious.	auspicious ; fortune favours him.
Dasi	.. Auspicious	Auspicious	the child gets married at an early age.
Asini	.. Auspicious	.. ..	the child dies at an early age.
Barani	.. Auspicious	.. ..	The child dies at an early age.
Karti	.. Specially auspicious for sowing red-gram.	.. ..	A girl born in this 'sogu' gives birth to a number of children.
Ruhni	.. Inauspicious	.. ..	The child will be involved in fire accident.
Medjidangacri	.. Auspicious.	.. ..	Auspicious for construction of house in the field to watch crops. Wild animals do not come near the field house.
Medjisira	.. Inauspicious	.. Inauspicious	The child on attaining the adulthood becomes audacious and also hospitable.
Adra	.. Auspicious	.. Auspicious	The Child become headstrong and careless.
			The child acquires property and becomes hospitable.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bidathai	.. Auspicious especially good for digging operations and collecting tubers.	Auspicious.	The child becomes strong and courageous.	Auspicious.
Pasubelli	.. Auspicious for hunting; safe return of the hunter.	..	The child becomes a liar and deceiver.	..
Sarpa	..	..	The child will not be involved in accidents caused by animals.	..
Magga	.. Auspicious	.. Inauspicious	.. Either the child or the mother will die.	Inauspicious.
Randa	.. Auspicious	..	Child becomes strong and healthy, but mother becomes weak.	..
Utra	.. Auspicious	.. Auspicious particularly for taking liquor to the girl's house for starting marriage negotiations.	The child grows into a healthy strong and brave adult.	Auspicious for selection of site for a new settlement.

Among days, Wednesday is the most auspicious day.

Among the months, Hirc Lenju, Maga Lenju and Pusa Lenju are auspicious for marriages.

Chapter VII

rites of Passage.

PREGNANCY AND CHILD BIRTH.

The Samantas believe that children are given by God and that they are the re-birth of their ancestor. Yet they also know the causal connection between sexual intercourse and conception. Both men and women know that pregnancy lasts for eight to nine months and in no case for more than nine months. According to them if menstruation stops for two or three months, it is an indication of conception. If a woman gets pregnant immediately after marriage within a month or two, her sincerity is doubted. The usual belief is that until and unless she has sexual contact sufficiently for a minimum period of four or five months she cannot conceive. When a woman is certain about her pregnancy, she informs her husband. A Samanta husband takes it as a happy news, because pregnancy means the arrival of a new member into the family in the near future, not only with a mouth to eat, but also with a pair of hands to work. Nobody can predict the sex of the unborn child. Everyone, however, prefers the birth of a male child because unlike a female child who after marriage leaves the father's house for husband's house, the male child helps the father throughout his life and maintains him when he becomes old.

A pregnant woman is allowed to indulge in sexual intercourse for the first six or seven months and does all activities. During the advanced pregnancy sexual intercourse is avoided because they consider that sexual intercourse during this period is harmful to the child in the womb. She also avoids going into the jungle or fields and participating in dances. But she attends to all domestic work including fetching water from the stream.

A pregnant woman takes even during her advanced pregnancy whatever food is prepared usually in the house. However, she takes care not to consume much water and salt. There are only a few taboos that are observed by an expectant mother and also by her husband.

A pregnant woman should not (1) cross a plough or yoke, (2) cross the 'Mutta's' boundary, (3) kill a snake, and (4) eat the flesh of the head of an animal killed in hunting. A pregnant woman's husband should not (1) kill animals, (2) touch a gun, (3) head or go ahead of a group of people when they are starting for hunting, marriage or other activities, (4) eat the flesh of the head of an animal killed in hunting, and (5) kill a snake.

The expected consequences of violation of these taboos are as follows :—

If a pregnant woman's husband (a) touches a gun either it would miss fire or he will miss the shot, (b) heads or goes ahead of a group of people going for hunting or marriage, the function would not be a success. (c) If either the pregnant woman or her husband kills a snake the child born to her will always move its tongue to and fro like a snake, (d) if the pregnant woman crosses the yoke or the 'Mutta' boundary the child will become crippled.

Two days after delivery, her diet consists only of cooked rice, 'roti' (a cake made of ragi flour) or dry fish. From the third day onwards she can take 'ragi' gruel and tamarind soup. She is allowed to take non-vegetarian food only after the seventh day of confinement.

The Samantas consider the confinement of women in the house inauspicious. So they erect a temporary shed behind the house and the pregnant woman retires into that shed at the first pangs of labour. A mid-wife ('Eyu-vakane Budhi'), generally an old woman, is called for and she conducts delivery. The expectant mother may squat on the floor or kneel or lean down holding a rope suspended from the roof and supported by female relatives. As soon as the child is born, the mother or the 'Budhi' cuts the navel string with a small knife, and spills a few drops of hot water on the remaining navel cord of the child. The after-birth is then buried at some distance from the house. 'Eyu-vakane Budhi' then gives a hot water bath to both the mother and the child.

In the meantime a corner of the room, preferably the one near the door, is replastered by some woman from the same house, in her absence, from the same village, with cow-dung, and a mat is spread on the floor. The mother and the child then occupy that corner. The corner is screened off from the rest of the house by a cot or temporary wattle wall.

Promise to Gods :

At the first pangs of labour, the 'Pejjeni' who is called for, invokes Jakarapenu (Village God), Illu Penu (House God), Horu Penu (Mountain God) and Jolla Penu (Water God) for the safe delivery, and promises them the sacrifice of a fowl, a goat or a pig.

Pollution :

The Samanta custom requires a confined woman to observe pollution for a period of seven days, during which she should not touch others and anything in the house. Since a confined woman is considered impure and unclean, she has to take bath twice a day—morning and evening—and wash her clothes daily in the stream. The child is also given bath twice a day along with the mother. 'Eyuvakane Budhi' assists the mother in such activities.

Before the seventh day as the remaining navel cord dries up and falls, the mother buries it in a small pit at some distance from the house.

On the seventh or tenth day after the confinement the woman takes a purification bath. Relatives from the neighbouring villages attend the function on invitation. In the morning of that day, the entire house is replastered with cow-dung. 'Eyuvakane Budhi' fetches water from the stream in a new earthen pot. She smears turmeric powder soaked in water over the mother and the child. Mother and child then take a hot water bath. After this, the other members of the family and the nearest relatives of the confined woman take oil bath.

Feast :

With the bath on the seventh or tenth day, the mother becomes pure. She cooks food for the first time after confinement. The purification day is a day of domestic ceremony, and a castor oil lamp is lighted in the house. The house is replastered, and a fowl or a goat is killed. The relatives and one member from each family in the village are invited to have a look at the castor oil lamp and are also served with a feast.

Payments to 'Eyuvakane Budhi' :

'Eyuvakane Budhi' stays in the house of the delivered woman till she has taken her purification bath, and looks after both the mother and the child. During this period

she also takes her food in their house. At the end she gets a customary reward of two 12 paise in cash, and the right leg of the fowl which is killed on the purification day.

Offerings to Gods :

If the mother and the child do not show signs of ill-health, on a Wednesday, one month after the confinement the 'Pejjeni' redeems the promises made to the Gods. On the public path, the 'Pejjeni' plasters a small portion of ground with cow-dung. She draws lines on it with turmeric powder and 'ragi' flour and she puts some raw rice on the flour design. She then puts on it a small basket filled with raw rice. Afterwards a castor oil lamp is lit and put on it. A lengthy hymn is chanted by her for about twenty minutes which ends as follows :—

"Oh ! God ! I am redeeming the promise.
Kindly ward off the mother and the child
and all others from evils".

Then the chicken is sacrificed.

Birth of twins :

Birth of twins is not well received, because they consider it a bad omen. According to their belief, the birth of twins causes the death of either the father or the mother. However, if twins die, or one of them dies they believe nothing will happen either to the mother or to the father.

Birth of the child on an inauspicious day :

Three or four days after the purification bath, the father of the child goes to the 'Disari' with a small basketful of rice and two paise and places them in the middle of the Disari's house. When the 'Disari' enquires about the purpose of his coming, the father reveals the day and time of the birth of the child. After going through his traditional calendar, the 'Disari' announces whether the time of the child's birth was auspicious or inauspicious. If inauspicious he further asks the father to be ready to perform a rite in order toward off the evil effects. The articles needed for the rite are : Turmeric powder, charcoal powder, ragi flour, a small basketful of rice, vermilion, two paise coins three pieces of cloth of different colours (white, red and black), one piece of cotton thread, white cock, three chicks of different colours and castor oil lamp

On the day fixed, the 'Disari' goes to the bank of a stream accompanied by the parents of the child, the 'Pejjeni' and a few other villagers. The 'Pejjeni' plasters and draws decorative lines with the powders on a selected spot. The other articles are placed on the design. The castor oil lamp is placed on the basket and lighted. The 'Disari' then recites the 'Sogu' thrice starting from the auspicious 'sogu' next to the 'sogu' on which the child took its birth. The fowls are then made to peck the sprinkled rice and are sacrificed. The rice and flesh are cooked there only and the invitees are treated to a feast.

Co-habitation after delivery :

After delivery, a Samanta woman usually does not indulge in co-habitation till the child attains the age of three years or the child stops suckling the breast whichever is earlier. It is firmly believed by this tribe that by the act of co-habitation during this period, the breast milk would spoil the health of the child for they believe that the milk will turn into blood. If a woman conceives before the child is weaned away, she and her husband will be looked down upon by the villagers.

Barrenness :

If a woman is born in 'Banji Sogu' it is believed that she will not give birth to children. But in the belief that they children can be gotten by the grace of 'Penu' and ancestral spirits, they promise sacrifices to them.

Hair Cutting :

Shaving the head.—Hair cutting is a common custom among the Samantas. Whatever might be the sex of a child on the seventh day after its birth or in the third month after its birth on an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari', 'Eyuvakane Budhi' or the 'Disari' shaves the head of the child with a small sharpened knife meant for this purpose. Hence forth shaving is done periodically.

Piercing of Ears and Nose :

The Samanta women in particular and men in general wear a number of ear and nose rings made of brass or aluminium. The piercing of ears and noses of children takes place before they are one month old. The Samantas observe that it is the proper age to pierce because during that age the ear-lobes and the nostrils and septum are soft and as such piercing is easy.

At a weekly shandy either the mother or the father of a child buys either brass or aluminium wires meant for nose and ear-rings. On an auspicious day, the mother pierces the nose and ears of her child with the wires and twists them in the shape of rings. For a female child she pierces the ear-lobes, the two nostrils and the septum of the nose, whereas for a male child she pierces either the left or the right nostril and also the earlobes. It is common among the Samanta women to wear ear-rings not only in the ear-lobes but also throughout the rim of the ear. No special ritual is associated with ear and nose piercing.

Name-giving :

Samanthas inhabiting Araku area name their children twice. The parents name their child first on the day of the child's birth, and finally by the 'Pejjeni' when the child attains the age of four or five years.

Name-giving by parents.—Parents give a name to the child after the day on which it is born. For example, if a child is born on Sombara (Monday) the name of the male child would be Sombra and that of female child would be Sombri. The following table shows the names given to children born on the different days of the week :

<i>Day of birth.</i>	<i>Names given.</i>	
	<i>Male Child</i>	<i>Female child.</i>
Sombara (Monday)	.. Sombra	Sombri
Mangdara (Tuesday)	.. Mangada or	Mangdi Mangudu
Puddara (Wednesday)	.. Buddu	Budri
Lakkivara (Thursday)	.. Lakku	Lakki
Sukri (Friday) ..	.. Sukra	Sukri
Sannara (Saturday)	.. Sonnu	Sonni
Varomi (Sunday)	.. Ajo	Aji

The child is known by this name till it is given another name by the 'Pejjeni'. If the 'Pejjeni' confirms the first name, the child will be called after that name only.

Name-giving by the 'Pejjeni'.—The 'Pejjeni' gives a name to a child when it attains the age of four or five years. This ceremony invariably takes place either on Hire Parbu day or on Bandapanna Parbu day. The 'Pejjeni' performs a ritual in order to find out the 'mahni' (an ancestral spirit) that is re-born as the child in question. On that day, she takes a bath in a stream and puts on clean or new clothes. The members of the family also take an oil bath. The 'Pejjeni' then replasters a corner of the house in which the child is kept after its birth and draws lines with dry 'ragi' and turmeric powder and puts on it a small basket filled with raw rice. She lays then a castor oil lamp on the basket. Afterwards, she invokes Gods and ancestors with prayers. As she chants hymns she moves her head back and forth and then side-ways. She sprinkles some rice on the floor which she holds in her right hand. This is all a prelude to the spiritual communion with the 'Mahni' that is re-born in the family. During the communion, the 'Pejjeni' comes to know the name of the 'Mahni' which she will announce. Now the child is named for a second time. Later, she sprinkles some raw rice in front of the lamp and lets the fowl peck them. When the chanting of hymns is finished she asks the head of the family to sacrifice the fowl and spill the blood on the re-plastered floor. This ritual lasts for an hour and a half.

There is a slight variation in the performance of this rite performed by the Samanthas living around Paderu and Parvatipuram areas. Here the child is given a name only once within the year of its birth. None is named after the day of its birth. The Samantas living around Araku might have acquired the custom of naming the child after the day of its birth from the Konda Dora tribe. On the day fixed, the 'Pejjeni' replasters a corner of the house and draws lines with dry 'ragi' flour and turmeric powder and puts on it a small basketful of rice. Six paise coins are also placed on the rice. She then lays a castor oil lamp on the basket. Afterwards, the ancestral spirits are invoked by her. The mother holds the child in her arms and extends its right hand toward the 'Pejjeni'. The 'Pejjeni' then puts in the child's hand a small morsel of cooked rice, and begins mentioning the names of the ancestors. If on the mentioning of a particular name the child folds its fingers, the child is given that very name.

The 'Pejjeni' is given the head of the fowl and one seer of rice for her services. The father of the child entertains the relatives and one male member from each family of his village to a supper which includes chicken curry.

Nicknames.—It is also common among the Samantas to be nicknamed. Hire Lenju is the month of festivity. During this jovial period, young men of neighbouring villages jointly go on hunting during the day time, and dance during nights. In all these jovial activities some give nicknames to others, generally to the brothers of one's wife. Among themselves they will be called after those nicknames.

The names given by the 'Pejjeni' and also the nicknames are as given below :—

Names given by the 'Pejjeni'.—Ranju, Dombu Rупpa, Boddu Besu, etc.—for males.

Sutro, Saleme, Bando, etc.—for females.

Nicknames.—Dobbulu, Dori, Jilli, Dumni, etc.

These are based on the physical characteristics and the behaviour of the individuals concerned. For example a man who is tall and lean is nick-named as Dori, meaning a thread.

Change of a girl's name after her marriage :

A Samanta girl soon after her arrival at her husband's house will be given a new name, and she will be called afterwards by that name in the village. Soon after the arrival of the bride and the bridegroom, the 'Pejjeni' asks the bride to carry a pot filled with water which was brought by a young unmarried girl on her head. The bridegroom enters the house first. The bride follows him with the pot on her head. After their entrance, the 'Pejjeni' makes them walk round in the house three times. The 'Pejjeni' chants hymns all the time as they take rounds. Then the water is transferred into another pot and both of them take a bath with that water.

Then the 'Pejjeni' replasters a corner of the house, draws decorative lines with turmeric powder and ragi flour; puts a small basket filled with rice; and lights a

castor oil lamp on it. As she chants hymns, she falls into a trance. In that trance she comes into communion with the ancestral spirits and finds out the ancestress or ancestor that came into the house in the person of the bride. As soon as she finds out the name of the ancestral spirit, she calls the bride by that name. From that day onward the bride will be called after that name only. The 'Pejjeni' then sacrifices a chicken.

CHILDHOOD.

A Samanta child is given 'ragi' gruel when it is about six months old. It is given its solid food, the cooked rice, when it is about one year old. Even after a child is given solid food, the mother continues breast feeding, till the child attains the age of three or four years. Till that time the child usually sleeps with the mother.

Young children are looked after by their elder brothers, sisters and other old people who do not go out to work in the fields or jungle. Some parents take their children along with them to the fields, where the smaller ones are looked after by their elder sisters and brothers of above seven or eight years old.

Children of nine or ten years of age, begin taking part in the economic life of the adults. Girls of this age accompany their mothers or elders sisters to the stream to fetch water in small earthen pots ; to the fields to assist the parents in weeding, to the forest to assist the mother or elder sister in digging the tubers and roots, or collecting any edibles. Boys of this age work in the fields and also tend the cattle, if any. It is not uncommon among Samanta children of both sexes of this age to accompany their elders to the forest and return with small bundles of fire-wood on their heads or shoulders. If four or five children of this age happen to meet in a jungle or in a field, they amuse themselves with play. As the age progresses the economic responsibilities devolving on their children also increase. A boy of fifteen or sixteen years fully participates in all the economic activities except those that require skill, so does a girl. No ceremony or ritual of initiation is practised among the Samantas to mark a change in the activities of either the boy or girl as they pass from youth to adulthood. In case of girls, menstruation, however, marks the change. It is important to point out that young

girls before reaching puberty are required to fetch water from the stream in new earthen pots for marriages in the village.

Dangda Bassa :

It is reported that the Samanta tribe once used to build separate dormitories for young girls and boys. But nowhere in the Agency area this practice exists now.

First menstruation :

Samanta girls generally menstruate for the first time between the ages of thirteen to fifteen. During the first menstruation, a girl is considered impure and unclean for a period of three days. Soon after the first menstruation, the girl takes bath in the stream followed by a hot water bath at the house soon after her return from the stream. To keep herself at a distance from others and the things in the house during the period of pollution, she occupies a corner of the house, preferably the one near the door. She sleeps on the floor and eats 'in leaf-plates'. Custom taboos her from doing any work or moving except for answering the calls of nature and taking bath in the stream. She takes bath twice in a day in the stream followed by hot water bath at the house during the period of impurity.

On the morning of the fourth day of menstruation, she applies castor oil to her hair and body, smears turmeric solution on the face and takes a bath in the stream. She also washes her clothes and cleans the utensils, if any, used by her. The house is also replastered with cow-dung. No ceremony or ritual is observed to mark the event.

During the subsequent menstruations, the woman takes bath once a day in the stream, and sleeps on the ground till the menstrual flow ceases. She, however, is not prohibited from participating in the normal domestic activities subject to the following taboos.

Taboos concerning a woman in menstruation.—Until the eighth day a woman should not (1) Co-habit, (2) cook, (3) go near the hearth, (4) Climb the attic, (5) take out the stored grain, (6) touch others, and (7) attend ceremonies.

Any violation of the taboos is believed to bring trouble to the family. If a man Co-habits with a woman during this pollution period, it is believed, he loses the sharpness of his brain and becomes an idiot.

MARRIAGE.

When a boy is able to do work with efficiency both in the fields and forest, and when the girl attains puberty, the Samantas think that they should now be married. Child marriage is very rare. As was pointed out earlier, marriage is permissible between a set of prescribed relatives belonging to Samdinga clans. Selection of mates is done, therefore, accordingly. Generally, parents of the boy start negotiations with the parents of the girl and fix up the match. But it is also quite usual on the part of the boy and girl to have their own choices. The shandy, the fields and the forests provide opportunities to the boys and girls to meet and select their life partners.

The method of celebrating the marriages and also the performance of marriage rites depend upon the ways of acquiring mates. Every type of marriage, necessarily includes payment of bride price. The different types of marriages are given below.

(Kaza Pendli Marriage by Negotiation.)

Of all the types of marriages, 'Kaza Pendli' is the most favoured method of acquiring mates. According to this type of marriage, when the father of a boy comes to know about a girl of marriageable age in some village, on enquiry or through a mediator, he tries to start negotiations with her parents. Sometimes, he might be having some girls in view from among his own kith and kin. In consultation with the 'Disari' he fixes up a day for visiting the parents of the girl, and passes on the date to them through a mediator. A Successful negotiation ends with three visits.

First Visit.—The boy's father accompanied by the 'Havnta' and the 'Disari' along with two or three bottles of liquor visits the bride's village. He then calls on the 'Havnta' and the 'Disari' and other elders of the girl's village to ask them to be present on the occasion. One member of his group, meanwhile, goes to the house of the girl's parents, places one bottle of liquor on the 'Dingeri' and then comes back to the 'Havnta's, house. When all

of them gather at the house of the girl, he presents liquor to the girl's father through the 'Havnta'. If the proposal is agreeable to the girl's father, he accepts it in the presence of all the people and all of them drink the liquor. The boy's party stays for the night in the girl's house and enjoy a vegetarian supper. Non-vegetarian food is customarily prohibited on this occasion. Next morning, the boy's father along with his party returns home. The father of the girl according to their customary practice, presents a cigar to each one of the guests at the time of their leaving for their village.

The first visit of the boy's father to the house of the girl's father is significant because if the visit is cordially received and the liquor is accepted by the latter, it is an indication of the willingness or desire on the part of the parents of the girl for the marriage proposal, and further visits can be undertaken by the boy's father before the marriage takes place. The girl's consent is, however, taken by her parents.

Second Visit.—A month after the first visit, the boy's father accompanied by the 'Havnta' and the 'Disari', pays second visit to the girl's house with five rupees worth of liquor. The amount to be paid as bride price will be settled during this visit. If the marriage proposal is between cross cousins, no negotiation or bargaining regarding bride-price takes place, because the prevailing bride-price between their families would be taken for granted. On the other hand, if the contemplated marriage is between a boy and a girl who are not cross-cousins, active bargaining regarding the bride price can be witnessed. This is due to the desire of the girl's father to secure something more than the prevailing bride-price which consists of twenty rupees, five rupees worth of liquor, a cow and sari. The sari is for the mother of the bride. This sari is called 'Pitula-batta' and is considered as a token remuneration to the bride's mother for all the trouble she has undergone in bringing up the girl.

During the night, the girl's parents serve their guests a vegetarian dinner. Next morning, the boy's father returns home along with his village 'Havnta' and 'Disari'.

Third Visit.—One month after the second visit, the boy's father accompanied by the 'Havnta', the 'Disari' and other elders, visits the house of the girl's parents to

pay the bride price. The 'Havnta', the 'Disari' and the other elders of the girl's village are also invited. The boy's father pays the bride price to the girl's father in the presence of all the invitees. The visitors are entertained to a vegetarian dinner. Next morning, the boy's father and his party leave for their village. With this visit, negotiations come to an end and the match is settled. During this visit, the actual day of marriage and the day on which the bride-groom's party should visit the bride's village to take her to the boy's village is all fixed in consultation with the 'Disari'.

Arrival of the bride.—On an auspicious day agreed upon by both the parties, the parents of the bridegroom accompanied by the villagers visit the parents of the girl to take the girl to their home. They stay there for the night. They will be entertained with a vegetarian dinner that night and a breakfast consisting of cooked 'sama' rice, ragi gruel and pumpkin-soup, the next morning. That night young men and women forget themselves in dancing and singing. After breakfast, the bridegroom's party returns home accompanied by the bride, her parents, and other kith and kin. On their way, men and women sing songs. One of such songs is given below:

Women.—(Addressing the bride).

Oh! My dearest friend, yours and
Ours is the same life
You feel all right.

Men.—(Addressing the bride).

The house of Srikka's uncle,
The house of Peedekka's uncle,
There is a thatched house and also a terraced
house,
The marriage will take place there;
There are men and women there,
The bridegroom's father is there,
The bridegroom's mother is there,

Why are you afraid?

What trouble do you apprehend?

The Wedding.—It is generally so arranged that the marriage party reaches the bridegroom's village by dusk. By this time a pandal in front of the bridegroom's house is erected. It is covered with caryot palm leaves. The pandal is decorated with bunches of mango leaves tied with fibre. The entire house is replastered with cow-dung and the walls are white washed.

Soon after the arrival the bride in the village of the bridegroom, she is taken directly to the 'Havnta's house and made to sit in his 'Bithri Illu'. While entering the 'Havntas' house, the girl is asked to step in her right foot first. The 'Pejjeni' then fixes 'bottu' and smears turmeric solution over her feet.

Next day the 'Havnta' brings the girl to the bridegroom's house. The 'Pejjeni' fixes 'bottu' (sacred mark on the fore head—A mixture of raw rice and turmeric paste) on the fore head of the bride and bridegroom who are made to stand side by side under the pandal. She then smears turmeric solution on the faces of the bride and bridegroom and the young women follow suit in applying the solution all over their bodies. The 'Pejjeni' then bathes the bride and—the bridegroom with the water which is brought by young girls in new pots for the purpose. The father of the boy then presents bead-necklaces and a sari to the bride. Both the bride and the bride groom put on new clothes. The bridegroom wraps a towel round his head and wears a dhoti. Then the bride and the bridegroom are made again to stand side by side under the pandal. In one big plate a wrapped up small rope of Sambar hide 'Mai Tolu' is placed, and on it is placed another plate consisting of four seers of rice. The 'Disari' makes the girl put her left foot in the rice and the boy puts his left foot on hers. One man belonging to the Tone Tainga clan of the bridegroom is called for in order to take one fowl round the feet of the couple and then sacrifice it to the 'Penu' and ancestor spirits. Then the 'Disari' takes in his hand one new pot full of water brought by young girls and takes it round the couple thrice. He also sprinkles some water on the couple with the mango leaf. At the same time, a few men who are sitting on the pandal pour down turmeric solution on the couple and people around the couple throw rice. During this time men and women begin to

sing song to the accompaniment of the beating of drums and other musical instruments. The song runs as follows.

Who? Who?

Whose water? Whose water?

Whose son? Whose son?

Whose daughter?

Whose water? The water of the God Bheemu.

Whose son? Whose son

The son of Pippala Bhudaro.

Whose daughter? Whose daughter?

The daughter of Poyuro.

Whose pot? Whose Pot?

Whose plate is this on earth?

Whose Sambar hide rope is this in the plate?

The marriages of God.

The marriage is performed by the 'Disari'.

This is the water of God.

By the Grace of God the marriage is being performed (between) the son of Pippara Bhuda and the daughter of Poyuro Bhudha.

After this rite, the couple are given a bath and taken into the bride groom's house. Then the 'Pejjeni' puts vermilion marks on their foreheads and chants certain-hymns invoking the 'Penu' and the ancestor spirits to bless the couple with a happy life. She then gives vegetarian food to the bride and the bridegroom.

In the meantime, men and women engage themselves in the preparation of dinner for all the invitees including villagers. Cooking is always the job of the young men on such occasions. Young women and unmarried girls assist them in slicing the pumpkin and fetching water from the stream. The menu for the dinner consists of cooked 'sama' rice, 'dhal' and pumpkin curry. After dinner, all the young men and women that are present begin dancing till very late in the night and some times even till the next morning. Next day again, young men and women begin preparation for the breakfast and dinner. The breakfast consists of 'sama' rice, ragi gruel and tamarind soup. The feast that is served at about 2.00 p.m., is of two types.

One type consists of 'sama' rice and beef. It is meant for all those that are present except the two 'Havntas' the two 'Disaris' and the father of the bride. For the latter, the dinner consists of sama rice, chicken curry and one or two bottles of liquor. The food is served for all the five in the house of the bridegroom and for the rest in the shade of a tree outside the village. The bride and the bridegroom are served with rice and beef in the bridegroom's house.

Pendili Bojji (Marriage feast).—In 'Kaza Pendili' the most important item is the feast arranged on a very large scale. About five to six bags of 'sama' rice is cooked. Every family in the bridegroom's village co-operates in pounding the rice. Because of the huge quantity of rice to be cooked, ordinary hearths do not serve the purpose. So, at the outskirts of the village, underneath a big tree, a hearth is constructed on which five to six pots of rice can be cooked at a time. Young men actively participate in this. Mostly, it is the young men taking the help of an expert in cooking who do the entire cooking for the feast. Young women fetch water and slice the pumpkin into pieces. Some men tie the four legs of a cow together, and kill it by striking with an axe on the forehead. A portion of the left hind leg will be given to the 'Havnta'.

2. *Oli Pendili*

This is rather a simplified form of the 'Kaza Pendili' and involves less expenditure.

Under this type of marriage, a Samanta boy tries to contact a girl of his liking. For this purpose, he visits often preferably the house of his relatives, if they have a girl of marriageable age and he can take her as his wife in accordance with the prevailing marital rules and regulations. Or else, he pays visits to shandies trying to come into contact with some girl. It is also possible in certain cases that a Samanta boy is asked by his father to visit a girl whom his father had in view. In every case the boy tries to impress on the girl that he is interested in her, by way of presenting her with bead necklaces and sweet-meats. He further tries to ascertain from her whether she will be ready to marry him or not. In case the girl shows her willingness for the proposal, she keeps her parents informed of the same. If her parents also give their consent—as they would normally do—the same is communicated to the

boy by the girl and through him to his parents. It is quite possible that sometimes the parents of both the boy and the girl would meet at the shandy, discuss the marriage proposal, decide the amount to be paid towards bride-price and also fix up a day for formal negotiations.

On an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari' and in consultation with the parents of the girl, the father of the boy along with the parents of the girl, the father of the boy along with his village 'Havnta', 'Disari' and other male members pays a visit to the house of the parents of the girl. He takes with him a cow, one bottle of liquor, one sari and some amount in cash to be paid towards the bride-price.

To hold the formal talks, the 'Havnta', the 'Disari' and other male adults of the girl's village are also invited. After some chit-chat the father of the boy presents liquor to the father of the girl. All those that have assembled share it. If nothing was decided previously about the amount to be paid towards bride-price the same is decided now and paid to the father of the girl along with a cow. The mother of the girl is also presented with a sari.

During that night the girl's father treats his guests to a vegetarian meal consisting of rice and 'Dhal'. Young women and men spend the night dancing and singing. Next day, the visitors are served with a morning meal consisting of 'ragi' gruel, rice and tamarind-soup and afterwards with a mid-day meals consisting of rice and beef. The boy's party then leaves for their village in the evening.

Before returning to his village or after some time a day is fixed up in consultation with the 'Disari' to take the girl to the boy's house. On that day, the bridegroom, his parents, relatives and other members of his village go over to the girl's parents' house. The bridegroom's party stays there till the after-noon of the next day of their arrival. On the night of their arrival, they are served with a vegetarian meal consisting of rice and dhal and the next day morning with ragi gruel, rice and tamarind-soup. The same day in the evening they are treated to a mid-day meal consisting of rice and beef. The bride-grooms' party then leaves for its village along with the bride, her parents, relatives for its village along with the bride, her parents, relatives and other villagers so as to reach the bridegroom's village by dusk.

Soon after their arrival, the 'Pejjeni' makes the bride and bridegroom stand side by side in front of the bridegroom's house. She then pours water brought for the purpose in the new earthen pot on their feet and fixes 'Bottu' on the foreheads. The couple are then allowed to enter the house. Along with them both married and unmarried young women enter the house making fun of the bride and the bridegroom as the case may be. The guests are served during that night, next day morning and afternoon with meals exactly as done at the house of the parents of the bride.

3. *Marriage by elopement :*

Marriage by elopement among the Samantas takes place in two possible ways :—

- (1) Elopement of an unmarried girl with a boy, and
- (2) Elopement of a married woman with another man.

The first type involves payment of bride-price to the parents of the girl and the latter payment of compensation '(Kerdinga)' to the first husband of the woman.

(1) '*Hopathathi*' (*Marriage by elopement of an unmarried girl with a boy*).—Under 'Oli Pendili' it was stated that when both the boy and girl agree to marry, the fact is communicated to their parents. Marriage takes place when the parents also co-operate with the couple. But it is quite possible that the parents of the girl do not give their consent for the match. Despite this if both the girl and the boy insist on getting married they plan for an elopement.

After deciding for an elopement, the boy consults the 'Disari' to fix an auspicious day for elopement. They also fix up a place, generally at dusk. *The boy on that day lies in wait for her along with a few people of his own village.* The girl goes to the stream alone or along with a few small children on the pretence of fetching water. She leaves the water pot there at the stream and runs away with the boy and his party.

Wedding.—On arrival of the eloped couple, the girl is kept at the 'Havnta's or any relative's house. The 'Pejjeni' puts 'bottu' on their foreheads and allows them

to enter the house. She also goes to the stream and sacrifices a fowl. After that the girl stays with the boy and his parents in the same house leading a married life.

Payment of Bride-price ('Oli').—The father of the boy consults the 'Disari' to fix an auspicious day to pay a visit to the parents of the girl and pay the bride-price. The visit takes place normally within a period of ten-days after elopement. If it is very late, the parents of the bride send a word to the father of the boy. The father of the boy informs the parents of the girl about the day of their visit. Accordingly he goes to the village of the girl accompanied by the Village 'Havnta', 'Disari' and other villagers. They will be received cordially by the girl's parents. In the evening the payment of 'Oli' (bride-price) takes place. The 'Oli' consists of:—Rs. 5 worth of liquor, Rs. 20 in cash, Rs. 40 worth of cow, and Rs. 6 worth of sari.

Regarding the amount to be paid in cash, variation can be noticed. Tadinga Ruppa of Sindhiput who married his father's sister's daughter paid only Rs. 5 which will be the 'Oli' amount for the posterity also, if cross cousin marriage recurs in future. Generally the variation ranges between Rs. 5 and Rs. 30.

During the night the parents of the girl give a feast to the visitors and their villagers. It is left to the father of the girl whether to treat their guests with beef, or not. Generally, the cow which is given to him by the father of the bridegroom will be killed. The feast consists of 'Sama' rice and beef. If there is no beef, 'Dhal' and pumpkin curry are served. Chicken and mutton are customarily prohibited in the dinner (Oli-bojji). The father of the bride-groom and his party leave for their village the next morning.

Cooking by the bride.—The girl, since her arrival at the father-in-law's house, takes part in every kind of household activity which she is expected to do except cooking. It is only after the payment of the bride-price, on an auspicious day that the girl is allowed to cook for first time in her father-in-law's house. After that she becomes a full-fledged member of the house with all rights and duties.

Visit of the girl's parents.—One or two weeks after the girl is allowed to cook, her parents pay a visit to her. The boy's parents treat them well and give them a feast which invariably include chicken-curry. They return home early next morning or after having mid-day meals. Marriage by this method is generally practised as it involves less expenditure particularly to the bride-groom.

In view of this minimum expenditure, it has become customary on the part of this tribe to prefer more and more marriages of this type. Even if the parents of the girl give their consent to the match, elopement takes place with their support. Thus, they have become rather arranged elopements.

(2) '*Kaza Kerdinga*' (*Marriage by Compensation*).—In this type of marriage, women generally take the initiative. A man, married or unmarried, during his visit to relative in another village, or inter village festival, shandy or some other festive occasion, may be surprised by the news from a nearest relative, generally an old woman, that a certain woman desires to marry him. (case history No. 2). In certain cases he may be surprised with the news by the woman herself who desires to marry him (case history No. 1). The woman directly or indirectly through someone in whom she reposes confidence compels him to marry her. It is informed that in a vast majority of such cases only the young women, that are badly ill-treated by their husbands, await for the chance meeting a new person and run away with him. It is also quite possible that in certain cases, the woman intends to elope with one with whom she has developed sexual intimacy before long, on his or her own insistence.

Both the woman and the man decide about the time, place and day of elopement. The time generally would be mid-night. The man lies in wait at the appointed place with a few friends who are brought from his village to defend himself and the woman from any impending chase or attack from her husband and his party. Being in a group they can also protect themselves from wild animals as they move in the night. The woman slips out of the house stealthily and joins her lover at the appointed place. Many a time such elopements escape the notice of the husbands of the women who have eloped.

The man does not take her home directly. If the man and woman belong to the same village, the woman is kept in another village till it is made public. The man, after two or three days, however, deliberately lets the news of the woman's elopement with him reach her husband.

The deserted husband tries to know the whereabouts of his wife in order to get her back, if possible, or else demand compensation 'Kerdinga'. Having known about the elopement, he through 'Koskas' (Mediators) asks the man with whom she eloped to be ready for negotiations with the money needed for paying the compensation. A month later, on a fixed day, he, along with all adult members of his village, goes to the other's village and camps under a tree or its outskirts. He also brings along with him from his village, provisions necessary for one or two days sufficient for his party. He then through three or five mediators invites the other party for negotiations.

The elder members of the two parties sit separately under the tree. The other party puts forth a counter-proposal to the effect that he can only pay a smaller amount than the demanded one. At last after some heated discussion they agree on a figure which will be the compensation to be paid by the man who eloped with the woman to her former husband. The compensation usually consists of a sum of Rs. 200. The amount of cash may vary between Rs. 50 and Rs. 300. In a majority of the cases it is around Rs. 200.

If the man is not ready with the money necessary for the payment of compensation he asks to the other party for two days grace in which to secure the money. This request is generally granted. The deserted husband stays there with his party, and bears the expenditure towards meals.

Soon after the payment of compensation the man who eloped with the woman gives a pig or a goat or a sum of Rs. 12 and five measures of rice for a feast to be enjoyed by both the parties. After this feast the deserted husband and his party leave for their villages.

Although the aggrieved man gets compensation, yet he does not keep all that for himself. He has to treat his villagers to feast with beef and liquor. It is important to note in this connection that the woman's parents do not

visit her till the dispute is settled lest they should be mistaken for having taken part in the elopement. The man who eloped with the woman duly remunerates the 'Koskas' with one fowl and one seer of rice each. The deserted husband also pays to them 5% of the compensation he received as remuneration for the work they did.

Next day or a few days later the man who eloped with the woman treats his villagers to a dinner which includes beef and liquor. This is to obtain the formal sanction from his villagers to receive the woman as his wife and to express his gratitude to his villagers for defending him in the affair. After the feast, he brings the woman home and henceforth they live as husband and wife.

Dinda Kerdinga.—As has been said, under the first type of marriage, it involves presenting liquor three times to the parents of the girl by the parents of the boy in the presence of the 'Havnta's and other elders of both the villages. After accepting liquor for the first time, if the father decides not to give his daughter in marriage to the particular boy, he can refuse to accept liquor further, and the negotiations will come to an end. He may, however, expect a mild censure from the 'Havnta' of his village. If he refuses to give his daughter even after taking liquor for the second time he may incur the displeasure of the villagers and relatives for violating the approved rules of behaviour, and the negotiations will cease. But if he refuses to give his daughter in marriage even after entertaining the third visit by the boy's parents and accepting a cow and bride-price, the boy has the right either to demand 'Dinda Kerdinga' (Compensation to be paid by the parents of the girl when their married daughter returns to them,) or 'Kerdinga' from the man whoever marries her.

In case a woman refuses to go to her husband, and her parents also encourage the same, her husband is eligible to demand 'Dinda Kerdinga' from the parents. The amount of 'Dinda Kerdinga' varies between Rs. 60 and Rs. 100.

'Karjomi' (Marriage by Service) :

A boy who wants to marry a particular way lives with the parents of the girl and serves them for a period of three years. However, the period of service can be reduced at the discretion of the parents of the girl. Return of the

boy before the completion of the stipulated three years period without the consent of the girl's parents would deprive him of any right over the girl. After this period he returns to his village along with the girl who becomes his wife. 'Karjomi', is not very popular among the Samantas ; but one is compelled to agree to it under certain circumstances. Circumstances leading to the choice of this type of marriage are :—

(1) When the girl's parents desire service instead of 'Oli' (bride-price), if they are without any male issue or grown-up boys to assist them ;

(2) When the boy is an orphan and cannot afford the payment of bride-price ;

(3) When the parents of the boy are poor and unable to pay the bride-price.

The boy who wants to marry the girl of his liking expresses his desire to her when he meets her at a shandy or festival or any such other convenient place or occasion. If the girl also develops liking towards him, she or a mediator informs her parents about the boy. If the boy is poor, he himself agrees to serve the parents of the girl or the parents of the girl may require him to serve them. The girl informs the boy at their next meeting about the desire of her parents. She may also request him to agree for it. Sometimes the parents of the girl and boy themselves may also arrange for this.

If the two parties agree for the proposal, the boy or his father informs the parents of the girl of their visit to them, which is fixed in consultation with the 'Disari'. On an auspicious day, the boy accompanied by the village 'Havnta', the 'Disari', the father (if an orphan, some other relation) and three of his friends visit the parents of the girl with a measure of rice a fowl and a bottle of liquor.

The bridegroom and his friends collect a bundle of firewood on their way to the bride's village and the bridegroom himself carries it on his shoulder. The bundle of fire-wood collected by the bride-groom consists of eight pieces of different types of wood one of them is of 'Vada Marno' tree which should be very straight. The pieces are tied together with 'Paidorka' rope and the bridegroom is expected to carry it only on one of his shoulders throughout. Besides this, a friend of the bridegroom carries on

his shoulder one stick of about four to five feet in length with as many curves as possible. At the end of the stick a small bundle of 'adda' leaves is hung. While walking this man moves the stick hither and thither on his shoulder presenting a humorous spectacle.

The party goes directly to the 'Havnta's house and then accompanied by the 'Havnta' and others of that village reach the house of the father of the girl. All the materials, that are brought are placed in front of the girl's parent's house and the boy's father distributes one fire-wood stick each to all of them. Later, 'Havnta' calls for the girl and enquires her whether she is willing for the match or not. If she gives a favourable reply, her father also will be asked about his willingness. If he also agrees, the 'Havnta' of the boy's village hands over the boy to his counterpart. The latter in turn hands over the boy to the girl's father. The father of the bridegroom then gives rice, fowl and bottle of liquor to the bride's parents in the presence of all the villagers and asks the bride's parents to admit his boy into their family for a period of three years. The parents of the girl cook the rice and chicken and distribute the same in small, quantities in 'adda' leaves to the villagers. This is to inform all the villagers that they have given their daughter in marriage by service to that boy.

That night the father of the bride serves the bridegroom's party the 'Havnta' and the 'Disari' and other elders of his own village, supper which includes chicken curry and the bottle of liquor brought by the bridegroom's father. Next morning, the bridegroom's father leaving his son behind returns home. From the very next morning, the boy begins working along with the members of his father-in-law's family of which he has become a full-fledged member.

After one year of the boy's stay, the boy's father on an auspicious day fixed by the 'Disari', calls on the 'Havnta' of the girl's village accompanied by 'Havnta', 'Disari' and one young boy belonging to his village. He also brings three bottles of liquor with him. The 'Havnta' informs the girl and her father of the arrival of the visitors. The girl gets hot water ready for the visitors at the 'Havntas' house.

The very next day, early in the morning, the bridegroom accompanied by six young men goes to the forest. They search for a straight young tree and the boy cuts it with axe while the others hold the tree to prevent it from suddenly falling down on the ground. He cuts the tree into two pieces and again breaks the two into seven pieces without crossing the felled tree or the pieces. He ties the seven pieces together into a bundle with 'addanara'. He does not however, tie the two ends of the 'addanara' into a knot, instead, twists and inserts the ends into the wooden pieces. Another man ties seven 'adda' leaves to a curved stick and holds it. The bridegroom carries the bundle and keeps it standing with the support of the roof of the house of the 'Havnta'. The 'Pejjeni' in the meanwhile plasters a small portion, in front of the 'Havnta' house, lights a castor oil lamp, and burns incense. As soon as the bridegroom keeps the bundle there she fixes 'bottu' on his forehead. The girl drops the bundle on the ground, unties the bundle and gives one piece of wood and an 'adda' leaf each to the elders of her village. She then gets hot water ready for the bath of the bridegroom and other elders. She smears turmeric to the groom before he takes bath. Along with the hot water, she pours turmeric solution in a small metal or leaf-cup. Each elder who takes bath puts a five or ten paise coin into it as a present to the bride. She buys beads and bangles with the money. The elders are entertained to liquor brought by the boy's father. The girl's parents later entertain the visitors and elders at a dinner which includes chicken curry. The couple, however, should not drink either the liquor or eat the dinner. From now onwards the couple can lead family life.

At the end of the three-year period, the couple either decide to stay with the girl's parents or go to the groom's village, or set, up a separate household in the girl's village itself. In the case of the couple choosing either of the latter two courses, parents generally present their girl with a water-pot, a cooking utensil, a basket, winnowing fan, a grain storing basket, two sarees, and grain enough for at least a month. Parents that can afford will also give a cow.

If the boy and the girl return to the boy's house before the completion of the three-year period, the boy will have to pay bride-price consisting of Rs.20, a goat, and a sari to the girls' mother.

5: *Marriage by Capture ('Hasathanai') :*

This is a type of marriage in which a man kidnaps a girl and marries her against her will. Usually, a man will resort to this method when (a) the parents of the girl on whom he has preferential right according to the tribal customs, do not agree to the proposal or (b) the girl in whom he is very much interested, refuses to marry him.

To kidnap the girl the individual in question visits the village of the girl along with a party of a few strong friends and awaits a chance. Whenever the girl in view is seen alone or with a few age-mates or women at the outskirts of the village, the boy forcibly kidnaps her with the assistance of his party and runs away. Meanwhile, if the girl's parents come to know about this affair, they make a chase. In the encounter, if the boy's party wins over the girl's party, the former will take the girl to their village. During the encounter, individuals may even suffer bodily injuries.

Marriage between the boy and the girl, if the latter is successfully captured, takes place as in the case of marriage by elopement. The parents of the girl cannot raise their voice against the match once the girl is captured by the boy and taken to his village. The parents of the girl then send 'Koskas' to the boy's house in order to settle the amount of bride-price. The 'Koskas' are received warmly by the boy and his parents. They are also entertained to liquor and dinner consisting of chicken curry and rice. It is necessary to please the 'Koskas' as much as possible because that will help in settling the amount of bride-price to a reasonable extent. The 'Koskas', pleased by the warm reception, come down from the high demand made by them in the beginning.

Once the bride-price is settled, on an appointed day, the parents of the girl visit the boy and accept the bride-price in the presence of the 'Havnta'. Sometimes if a boy fails to capture the girl, he may start negotiations with her parents on the plea that since he has touched the girl and is also interested in her, he has the right over her. The parents may or may not accept the proposal but usually they agree to that by claiming a large amount of bride-price. However, such a type of marriage is becoming gradually out of date.

6. *Widow Remarriage :*

Widow remarriage is very common among the Samantas. It is customarily obligatory on the part of the younger brothers of the deceased to marry the latter's widow, provided she is not very old.

If a widow were to marry anyone of her deceased husband's younger brothers, no formalities whatsoever would be observed. In this case, she just moves into the house of one of the brothers of her deceased husband who has agreed to accept her as a wife, and stays with him. If she is inclined to marry a man other than her deceased husband's younger brothers with their willingness, the man who wants to marry the widow with her consent comes forward with the marriage proposal. He approaches her deceased husband's brothers and pays an amount of forty rupees apart from one cow and liquor to them towards 'Pdonju Tappu' i.e., fine for marrying a widow. In case a widow intends to marry a man other than her deceased husband's brothers without the latter's consent, she runs away with him. The man with whom she eloped, however, pays to her deceased husband's people the 'Pdonju Tappu' after a few days. If the man does not pay 'Pdonaju Tappu' voluntarily, the village 'Havnta' and the other members take up the case with the 'Havnta' of the village of the violator, and settle the dispute.

If the widow has children at the time of re-marriage, the children will be usually left with her deceased husband's younger brothers. She, however, takes young children, if she likes, with her.

Whenever the widow marries one other than her deceased husband's brothers, that man performs a rite in order to expiate any trouble that may be caused to him because of such an alliance. This rite is similar to the rite performed after bringing a second wife, even when the first wife is alive. In this case, the widow's deceased husband's brother beats the new husband of his deceased elder brother's widow instead of the first wife beating her husband. Of late, Samantas do not like the widow marrying the real brother of her deceased husband.

Divorce :

There is not any elaborate procedure for divorce among the Samantas. Mere separation of both man and woman and payment of compensation to the aggrieved person complete the procedure of divorce. Neither the divorced woman nor the man, in normal cases, suffers from any social disapproval or disability. Both men and women have absolute freedom to take the initiative. But it is generally the wife who takes the initiative in case of divorce.

A woman who dislikes her husband or who is very badly treated by her husband, normally tries to come into contact with a man of her choice and elopes with him at any opportune moment. Only when it is unbearable for her to live with her husband any longer and when she is unable to choose any other man, a woman runs away to her parent's house. The parents discourage their girl staying with them on leaving her husband on the ground that her husband would ask to pay a compensation ('Dinda Kerdinga') of Rs. 60 and a cow or else send her back to his house. If the girl does not like to return to her husband or does not marry some other man, the deserted husband insists on compensation the parents usually give Rs. 60 and a cow to him. Later on, if the woman marries any man the former husband has no right to claim compensation of Rs. 200 which he could have got had he not accepted the compensation of Rs. 60 before hand. The man who marries the divorced woman afterwards pays a compensation of Rs. 200 and a cow only to her parents.

Because of this difference in the payment of the amount towards compensation when the woman stays with her parents with their willingness and her elopement with some other man, normally a Samantha husband despite his dislike for his wife, does not take the initiative in divorce lest she should stay with her parents. He will simply subject her to certain rigorous which she cannot bear. He will then either wait till she re-marries another man in order to get a larger amount ; or bring her back giving her no scope to stay with her parents. Only when he is very much vexed with the woman, he gets prepared to give divorce to her by accepting a sum of Rs. 60 plus a cow from her parents. In case the wife insists on staying with her husband despite his unwillingness, the only course left open for the man to get rid of her is to take the initiative and

give her divorce at the point of loss of compensation, for which otherwise he is liable. For this purpose he goes along with the 'Havnta' of his village to the parents of his wife and through the 'Havnta' of that village makes his intention known to them. When all the elders of the village and parents of the woman assemble at one place, he makes it public that he would like to give divorce to his wife, and is ready to forego the amount towards compensation either from her father or any other individual who is likely to marry the woman in future. To confirm his statement he takes a small stick and a small clod of earth into his hand and then takes a pledge by breaking the stick into two and the clod into pieces. The pledge runs as follows :—

("Nanu viurikila dambitilehe dama halhe ?
Namu depla citilehe oya halbehe".)

"If at all I demand the compensation in future my life and property will go the way (i.e., broken) of the stick and clod". He, then gives Rs. 5 to the 'Havnta'. Liquor is purchased with that amount and is shared by all the elders present.

Taking care of the children.—If separation of a couple takes place after giving birth to children, the children are left with the father. When a pregnant woman divorces the child in the womb also belongs to her former husband. The woman is expected to take care of the child till it attains the age of one year and hand it over to its father later on. If by misfortune or accident the child dies, its father demands compensation from the woman and her parents on the plea that they were responsible for the death. He insists on the payment of the compensation. The compensation paid in this regard varies from Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 and a cow. The cow will be slaughtered and the beef enjoyed by the villagers of the man.

Death :

The Samantas believe in the inevitability of death. When a person dies of old age or illness it is considered to be a natural death. On the other hand, if a man dies in an accident, killed by a man or wild animal, or a fall from a tree, it is considered to be an unnatural death. The rites performed to the dead also differ accordingly.

Natural Death.—As soon as a person is dead, his relatives in the neighbouring villages are soon informed of the news by a member of his family or village. If death occurs during day time, the dead body will be disposed off before the fall of dusk on the same day. On the other hand, if a person dies during night, the dead body will be kept till the next morning. With the death of a person not only members of his family and clan but also other families of the village become polluted. The cooked food and stored water, whatever they have, will be thrown out by all the families in the village soon after the news of the death of any individual breaks out. The dead body is given a last bath before it is taken to the burial ground. For this purpose, women bring water in earthen pots from the stream. The dead body is laid on the cot or the mat which the person had used during his life time, or on which he expired. Four men of the village carry the dead body with the cot to the burial ground followed by the other male members of the village. Usually, the kith and kin of the deceased are not allowed to act as bearers of the corpse even though it is not strictly forbidden.

After reaching the burial ground on the bank of a stream either a rectangular pit is dug if the body is to be buried or firewood is collected to arrange a pyre in case of cremation. The 'Mahni pujara' takes three round around the pyre and then sets fire to it with the gass brought from the house-roof of the deceased. If the body were to be buried, it is laid in the pit in a sitting posture. In either case, the cot used by the deceased is burnt. All the people leave the 'Mahni Manda' and go to a stream immediately after cremating or burying the body in order to take an oil bath and wash their clothes before returning to the village.

After taking a bath, the 'Mahni pujara' picks up crab and a grass leaf and brings them to the dead man's house. On the way home all the people sit at one place to console the bereaved family, and also advise the sons of the deceased to pay off loans, if any, incurred by their father. Afterwards they leave for the village. Meanwhile, the women-folk in the village, young and old, go to the stream with utensils and clothes and wash them and also take bath in the stream. After returning home they sprinkle water mixed with cow-dung on the floor of their respective houses and re-plaster them. Each family prepares food for their consumption and also keeps hot water ready

for the men who had been to the 'Mahni Manda' as they are expected to get purified before entering the village. For this purpose the 'Mahni pujara' mixes the crushed pieces of the bark of mango and 'nerad' (Jambolan) trees in a Tumbler of water brought from the stream, and sprinkles that solution with mango and 'Jambolan' leaves on each and everyone who had been to the 'Mahni Manda'. Afterwards, every one takes an oil bath with hot water and put on washed clothes, leaving the polluted ones at the outskirts.

'Dzevnu Bethi Nai' (To have a look at the castor oil lamp).—In the middle of the house of the deceased, a small portion of the floor is plastered with cow-dung by a woman. The 'Mahni pujara' keeps an 'adda' leaf cup containing the crab, grass leaf, castor oil and one egg on the cleaned spot. A castor oil lamp is also lighted and placed on the plastered floor. Every one who has been to the 'Mahni Manda' is asked to come to that place and touch the castor oil and the other things in the leaf cup with the little finger of the left leg and move the finger round the castor oil lamp, and then leave that place.

On that day the bereaved family is served with meals by the villagers and no one in the village goes out for work.

'Vende Bechinai' (To look at again).—Next day morning the close relatives of the deceased go to the burial or crematory ground and set fire to the pyre once again if the body is not properly burnt and go to the stream to take bath. On this day, all the other villagers also go to the stream to wash the clothes that were left on the previous day at the outskirts of the village, and take a bath. Every one returning to the village again takes a hot water bath.

'Kadutha Meddinai'.—On the succeeding Wednesday, the 'Pejjeni' goes to the river with a fowl and one 'Kundacheepuru Aaiku' (Hill grass). She is also accompanied by the male and female members of the bereaved family. The 'Pejjeni' makes all the members of bereaved family stand in the river. She then plasters a small portion of the bank of the stream with cow-dung, draws decorative lines and lights a castor oil lamp. She goes chanting hymns for some time. Afterwards, she brings water from the stream in a gourd ladle and sprinkles

water on the members with grass. She puts a few grains of rice in the right palm of every individual and lets the fowl peck the same. The fowl's head is severed with a knife and thrown in the stream along with the ladle and the leaf. With this ritual, it is believed that any evil that is likely to befall the bereaved family will be warded off.

'Ichi Suddi' (The first purification ceremony).— On the succeeding Wednesday again a ritual is observed called 'Ichi Suddi' in order to purify the bereaved family. On that day, any male member of bereaved family brings some mud and, in the corner of the house, a small platform is raised with the same. On the platform, a small pandal is raised to which mango and 'Neredu' leaves are tied. The 'Pejjeni' plasters the platform, draws decorative lines, and places a castor oil lamp and a turmeric piece wrapped into thread on the floor. She falls into a trance while chanting hymns. At that time, one pig is brought to the place and it is allowed to eat some cooked rice. The pig is killed by the 'Mahni pujari' and the blood is sprinkled by him on the platform. While this goes on, all the member of the bereaved family go on crying aloud calling the deceased one. All those present touch the turmeric piece ('Hinger Dinger Nai') and give some amount to the 'Pejjeni'.

The head of the sacrificed pig is shared both by The 'Mahni pujara' and the 'Pejjeni'. A feast is served to all those who went on the day of the death to the 'Mahni Manda'. The feast consists of rice and pork.

'Kajja Suddi'.—The final ceremonial feast arranged by the bereaved family in the name of the deceased is called 'Kajja Suddi'. This is performed on any Wednesday after the 'Ichi Suddi' within a period of ten years after the death of a person. The selection of this day depends mainly on the financial position of the family concerned to give a feast for the whole village and relatives. The ritual is described below as it was witnessed in action on the 13th of January, 1960 in Pothangi, a Samanta village.

Sirikka Modi of Pothangi village was celebrating 'Suddi' for his deceased son, 'Gasi', who died ten years ago. On the previous Monday, Sirikka Modi went to all the illages in which his relatives were residing to invite them

to attend the ceremony, Accordingly, all the relatives arrived in 'Pothangi' by the evening of Tuesday. The relatives numbered about fifty; each one of them brought a bundle of firewood. Four of the nearest relatives brought a measure of 'Sama' rice and a bottle of liquor each. All these were handed over to Modi.

The 'Pejjeni' of Antriguda, Sellimaravalasa and Sindhiput also arrived in the evening of Tuesday to join the 'Pejjeni' of Pothangi in the performance of the ritual. On their arrival, the 'Pejjenis' took a bath in the stream and wore washed clothes. At night, the 'Pejjeni' of Pothangi village replastered the north-eastern corner of the house of Modi with cow-dung. Lines were drawn on the replastered floor with turmeric powder and ragi flour. She put a small basket filled with raw rice on the replastered floor and lighted a castor oil lamp on the basket. She then rolled up a small piece of an old cloth and put it by the side of the basket. The cloth was believed to represent the 'Mahni' of the dead in question. All the four 'Pejjenis' sat invoking the 'Mahni' of the deceased and Gods and Goddesses. In front of the baskets, one 'Pejjeni' drew a few lines with turmeric powder and put her and there some rice. About six inches away from the basket she put some paddy in a small heap as an offering to the 'Mahni' and invoked it to bless the bereaved family with bumper crops. She then took a fowl and dropped some rice on the floor in front of the basket and allowed the fowl to peck the rice. As it was pecking, the 'Pejjenis' were chanting hymns offering the fowl to the 'Mahni'. When one of 'Pejjenis' fell in trance, people around here placed rice in little quantities. She then offered liquor to 'Mahni' by throwing a little quantity at her back. Then she drank some liquor and others followed suit. When the chanting had come to an end by about 11-00 p.m. Sirikka Modi, the father of the deceased, was asked to sacrifice the fowl. He did accordingly. 'Pejjeni' then spilled some blood on the basket and put the head of the fowl in front of the basket and sprinkled some water on it. She put 'Bottu' on the forehead of Modi. With these the ritual part of the ceremony came to an end. But the 'Pejjenis' sat chanting hymns till the next morning, i.e., Wednesday.

The four 'Pejjenis' went on fast during that night. Four of them shared the flesh of the sacrificed fowl in equal quantities as a reward for performing the ritual.

There was no trace of sorrow or unhappiness. All the men and women except the old ones spent the night very happily dancing and singing. However, after the 'Puja' was over, the mother of the dead person mourned for some time, calling around her deceased son by name. A few female relatives also followed suit who were consoled by the adult male members. During that night all the visitors took their meal with the host, Sirikka Modi. The meal was not, however, significant from the point of the ceremony. At about 9-00 a.m. on Wednesday three men brought an old bull and tied its four legs together with a rope. Out of them took an axe and struck the bull on the forehead to death. Then it was carried away to the stream.

At the same time, a few young men prepared breakfast consisting of 'Sama' rice, 'ragi' gruel and pumpkin soup and served on leaf plates at about 11-00 a.m. to all the guests, men, women and children who sat in separate rows. Two men were busy serving rice and pumpkin soup and also 'ragi' gruel.

After breakfast a few men went to the stream to prepare raw beef. Some women were engaged in slicing pumpkin. Young women began fetching water from the stream. Two men were engaged in cleaning the rice 'in a basket and a few in cooking the rice for the feast in the afternoon. At about 11-00 a.m. the raw beef was brought, out of which the heart and a side bone were cooked separately.

At 1-00 p.m. Hareka Sonnaya, the 'Mehni Puja' of Antriguda, who also arrived in Pothangi in the evening of Tuesday, went to the burial ground accompanied by two men. He took along with him the beef curry, three 'adda' leaf-plates, cooked rice, a tumbler (Mutta) of water from a full pot and a bottle of liquor. He sat under a tree about a hundred yards away from the burial ground. He placed the de bone about one and a half feet away in front of him. In between him and the bone he arranged the three leaf-plates in a row and put some rice and beef on each of the leaf plates. Then he invoked the Mahni thus: "O! Lord! I am eating the rice and beef on your behalf. Save us from sorrow". Then Mahni Pujara' and the two others ate the remaining rice and beef. With the water they brought along with them they washed their hands and feet and returned to Pothau at about 1-30 p.m.

Meanwhile, rice and beef were cooked. Cooked rice was put on two cots and the beef on the leaves which were spread on the ground in the shade of the tree. At 2-00 P.M. all the men and women along with the children sat in three different rows in the shade of the tree under which cooking was done, with leaf plates before them. They number about 60. Three men served rice and two men served beef curry. About 2-30 P.M. the dinner was over and men who served had the dinner later. About 4-00 P.M. visitors from the nearby villages left for their respective villages. The remaining visitors left Pothangi on Thursday morning after having their breakfast.

For the feast only half of the raw beef was cooked. The remaining half was divided in equal quantities among all the visitors and the villagers to be taken to their homes.

'Vende Heenai' (Giving back).—In the case of a married woman, on the day of 'Kajja Suddi' after the feast in the presence of all the visitors the property given to her by parents, if any, is duly returned to them by her husband or any other nearest relative. Until this is done, it is believed the husband of the deceased woman or his family will be in debt to the parents of the deceased.

Taboos regarding 'Suddi Bojji'.—Modi was performing 'Suddi' for his son, Gasi, who died ten years ago. Selli, the brother of Modi did not eat 'Suddi Bojji' of Gasi, because the 'Pejjeni' informed Selli and Modi, at the time of giving name to Gasi, that Gasi in his previous birth was the a grand-father, and therefore, was prohibited from receiving the 'Suddi Bojji' of any deceased member in his family who was believed to be his (Selli's) father, grand-father or any male ancestor in the previous life. If Selli's father were to be alive, he should not accept the 'Suddi Bojji' of Gasi. Thus only the eldest male living member of the family is prohibited from accepting 'Suddi Bojji' in such cases.

Selli was therefore given rice, a panokin slice and dhal on the 'Suddi' day and he got the lunch prepared at his own house.

Taboos regarding cremation and burial.—If one meets with a natural death the dead body will either be

burnt or buried according to the season. If one dies when there are crops standing in the fields, the body will be buried and when there are no crops the body will be burnt. This is due to a belief that if a dead body is burnt when the crops are standing, the smoke from the burning body would damage crops.

A leper is not buried in the ordinary burial ground, but, instead, is thrown somewhere in the jungle away from burial ground. The man who dies of small pox is not cremated but only buried.

Unnatural death.—If a person dies in an accident the dead body should be burnt. Whatever might be the season, he is burnt at the very place of the accident. In this case it is believed, it would cause no damage to the crops. Further, no ritual is performed on the third day if the death is unnatural.

A FEW HYMNS THAT ARE CHANTED BY THE PEJENI.

1. At the time of name-giving :

(IN KUVI LANGUAGE) :

Maya halla halla jalla jalla,
 Kadi gayi pethagai deo maraja deo mapru,
 Kadi gayi dekkirai pairai tadevahinji,
 Sayyan tholle mayyan dekkavahan sinnovahan,
Rachelakapu kiyata atenji,
Kapadekuni dekkuni kapadekuni manni sinnoni,
 Guvva putto vane nuvva guvva nuvva pilli,
 Tadavane leekitha rachiyanni, kandenamu mun.
dedoru.

(SUMMARY IN ENGLISH) :

O ! God ! Save us.
 O ! Baby ! you have taken birth from the
womb of your mother,
 God has created you as a human being,
 So, you have taken the shape of a human being.
 O ! New born baby, you have taken your
birth in this world,
 And you are going to bear this name.

2. At the time of the purification ceremony of second marriage :

(IN KUVI LANGUAGE) :

*Kaja kadda vacha varatha,
Vovikimihai pavikimihai,
Neenjute merhalape neethihilape,
Neerigorohache kajakadatha,
Hovikithen pannikithen.*

(SUMMARY IN ENGLISH) :

We are performing the ritual in this stream
From this day onwards there should be no evil
effect of the second marriage,
This day all the evil acts should flow,
Along with the current of the water.

3. At the time of 'Ruga Penu Parbu' (Small-pox penu) :

(IN KUVI LANGUAGE) :

*Takumaharani Purbai, Odamahan gattai,
Neendoramma jumboramma,
Juggusai puttusai, mannasai sathasai,
Yethubuddani deearu buddani.*

(SUMMARY IN ENGLISH) :

O ! Takumaharani ! we are performing your
'Puja' to-day
You reside in the boat and in the stream and
everywhere
You never do fall asleep, you are always awake
We pray you,
Protect us.



Chapter VIII

HEALTH AND RECREATION.

HEALTH.

Personal Hygiene :

The Samantas take bath regularly, once a day, only in the summer, and that too in the evening. Men and children take a hot water bath. Women and girls generally take their bath in the stream itself when they go to fetch water but not regularly. During the winter and rainy seasons, the Samantas take bath once in three or four days. Children, of course, will be given a bath daily, irrespective of the season. Once a week or so, either men or women oil their hair. However, combing takes place regularly. Most of the children seem to suffer from stuffy noses. No particular care is taken by their parents to make them blow their noses well. Rarely parents help children in blowing their noses. When the snot comes out of the nose of its own accord, children just rub it with the hands over the upper lip and cheeks to allow it to get dried. Children after answering the calls of nature use leaves instead of water for cleaning.

They wear clothes till they become so dirty, as to emit foul smell. Once in ten or fifteen days, either women or men change their clothes. This may be one of the reasons for the prevalence of skin diseases. They sit around fire either in their individual houses or in the midst of the village to warm themselves in the cold.

Environmental Hygiene :

The Samantas mostly keep the floor of the houses clean by replastering once a week and also sweeping the floor very often. The walls are washed and decorated with coloured clay at least twice a year. But this cleanliness is spoiled by the fouls kept in their houses. Further they spit and or blow the noses wherever they sit; answer the calls of nature just behind their houses. They have their cow pens attached to their houses. The floor of the cow-pens will be such that urine does not easily drain out. It presents a very bad appearance emitting fowl smell.

Further, the ashes from fires made in the winter in the midst of the village get distributed, thus spoiling the environment of the village.

III:

In spite of this, as Samanta settlements are generally built on top of the hills or on slant plots at the foot of the hills, the rain water completely washes away the filth and rubbish thrown out in and around the village, thus affording them a natural wash off.

Diseases :

The diseases from which the Samanta generally suffer as reported by the Health Inspector, Dumriguda are : scabies, intestinal worm, infections such as round worm, hook worm, lip worm and Malaria. Leprosy is rare. Scabies is said to be the result of lack of proper personal hygiene, and vitamin deficiency. Worm infections are due to unprotected water supply. Malaria is widespread because of climatic condition and also unprotected water supply. At present it is being eradicated by anti-malarial operations. Whenever possible, the Development Blocks are providing the tribals with protected water supply. The hospitals in the Agency area are also supplying medicated soaps to the tribals.

RECREATION.

The Samantas are a very jolly people. Whenever there is some leisure time, they go on singing and dancing. On occasion of marriage, 'Mayura' (peacock) dances are performed. Men wear peacock feathers over the head and also tie them to the shoulders. It is only the men that play music. There are dances performed only by men and also those performed by both men and women. Women are as enthusiastic as men to participate in the dances. Generally, the music and dancing performances reach their climax when they are drunk.

'Hire Lenju' is the month of festivity. On the day of 'Hiri Punni' (Full-moon day) in the month of March, each family sacrifices a chicken to the Illu Penu ; and after that continuously for a period of fifteen days or more, the male folk go out into the forest in groups with their bows and arrows (some times guns also) for hunting wild animals. They move in the forest in search of wild animals, and come back home after having secured

sufficient game. If the male folk come back without any game, the women make fun of them by throwing dung at them. Because of the restrictions by the forest department in recent years, however, they are not in a position, to get sufficient game.

5 When the male members go out for hunting, the women in the village keep themselves occupied mostly with dances. When the male member come back with sufficient game all the members enjoy the feast. For this occasion, especially they prepare what is called 'Landa'. 'Landa' is made of 'Sama' gruel, kept for three days to ferment, and when it becomes bitter, it is intoxicating. The songs generally sung by these people are mostly romantic in nature. One of such songs is given below :—

Males and Females :

O ! See, Sing !

Sing, See and Sing !

See this day, whatever is told this day.

Let us be happy and smiling like the livestock
in the jungle,

We have seen one another,

We came like birds flying in the field,

O ! Daughters of aunts and uncles,

Let us laugh, talk secrets, while plucking
beans and collecting sticks in the jungle,

Anyhow we have seen each other, whether you
like us or not,

Do you like people like us ?

We came here, we made men leaving our country,

Our place, whether you like us or not ?

We cannot even undertake labour, do you
like such men ?

Females :

O ! Cross-cousins ! Look here

You are my maternal uncle's sons, you teach
us,

We do not know anything, we do not know
secrets,

We are mad persons, you tell us what is what.

Musical Instruments :

The musical instruments used by this tribe are the following :—

(1) '*Liseni*' (*Drum*).—A musical instrument consisting of a hallowed wooden body covered at the end with a tightly stretched membrane. The membrane is the tanned hide of a cow or a bullock or horse. It is played on all occasions of joviality and religious festivity, and also during nights on the watch tower to scare away wild animals and thieves. Only the *Dombs* make it. Other tribes consider making it below their social status. It is generally purchased at a weekly shandy for Rs. 5.

(2) '*Dunduni*'.—The membrane is made of goat skin. It is played during dances and festivals. It is made by the *Samantas* themselves.

(3) '*Dappu*'.—A wooden rim with a tightly stretched membrane made of tanned hide. It is played during dances and festivals. It is manufactured by the *Dombs*.

(4) '*Kanka Ginninga*'.—Is a bronze cup-shaped instrument with a wide mouth, with a leather flap hanging from the top inside. It is rung by the strokes of the leather flap. It is played during dances and also in the fields to scare away the birds.

(5) '*Pirudi*' (*Flute*).—A musical wind instrument consisting of a bamboo tube with the series of finger holes, in which the wind is blown with the mouth from a hole made near the closed end of the tube. It is played during dances and is made by the *Samantas* themselves.

(6) '*Muyyanga*' (*Tinkling bells*).—They are made of bronze. A man ties them around the ankles when dancing to produce a tinkling sound.

(7) '*Murdol*'.—It is drum played at both ends.

Sports and Games :

(1) *Kotani Gorri Kahinai* (*Tiger and Goats*):—About ten young men or boys played this game. A straight line of about twenty to thirty feet in length is drawn on the

ground. Among those ten, one acts as the tiger and the other the goats. The tiger stands on one side at the end of the line. The Goats stand on the other side of the line. When someone acting as an umpire says 'ready' the tiger runs without crossing the line. As it runs it tries to touch the goats. The goats, on their part, try to keep themselves out of the reach of the tiger. Yet the goats are expected to come near the tiger but quickly draw back when the tiger approaches them. The tiger tries its best to knock down as many goats as possible, and goes on until it has put all of them 'Out'. The goat remaining till the end, becomes the tiger, and the game is played again and again.

(2) '*Muddaguddu Kahinai*' (*Tug-of-War*):—This game requires at least eleven boys. The greater the number, the more lively would be the game. But the number always should be odd. A straight line of about two feet is drawn on the ground. A stout or strong man from among the group is made to stand on the line facing its direction. The rest of the group is divided into two equal sub-groups. The man on the line stands with folded hands keeping his palms on the chest. One from each of the group comes and pushes his hand inside his folded arms and bends it, holding fast. The rest of each group do likewise by coming together with either side of the middle man. Then on a signal, each group tries to pull the centre man off the line. Whichever group manage to pull the man off the line, that side wins. The centre man should not support any side and should try his best to keep himself sticking to the line. This is a game played by these people similar to that of tug-of-war.

(3) '*Konja Kahinai*' (*Monkey play*).—This is a game to be played by three people only. A straight line is drawn on the ground, and one of the three stands on it. Another member brings a rope and ties it round the waist of the man who is standing on the line, and stands about two or three yards away from the line with the other end of the rope in his hands. The boy standing on the line bends and keeps the hands on the ground. The third member who is young, hugs him like a monkey. Then the former tries to move forward. But the other boy pulls him back with the rope. If the monkey (The boy who is bent down) can move forward at least half a foot from the line, he wins the game; if he cannot, he loses,

Games of Children :

The Samanta children observe their elders when they play or when they are at work and imitate accordingly in their plays. A few of such plays are as follows :—

(1) '*Goni Koddilenen Kahinai*' (*Bag and Bullock play*).—The Samantas take their grains, etc., to be sold in the weekly shandy on the back of a bullock. Children just imitate this and play. One boy or girl acts as the bullock. The boy so acting bends down and walks like a bullock. Another boy or girl as a bag climbs up and sits on the back of the former. The boy acting as the bullock moves forward. After sometime the two reverse their roles, and in this way they go on playing.

(2) *Beating Drums*.—Every village will have a drum. It is played on every festive occasion. Children also play on it now and then. They cannot get it every time they want to. So, when the ground is moist, they make holes in the ground with crowbar and beat on the holes with palms. This produces a drum-beating sound.

Children also enjoy themselves by imitating cooking, serving, food, etc.

Some girls imitate their mothers and elder sisters by picking up a small pot and fetching water from the stream.

Chapter IX

CULTURE CHANGE

The comprehensive study of the complex cultural configuration of the Samantas depict them to be one of the most primitive tribes of Andhra Pradesh. In spite of the inaccessible habitat, typical of Samantas, the tribe has been never free from the administrative control of the government and contact with plains people. The government administrative machinery has been functioning in these hilly tracts since the consolidation of British rule in India. The British exercised indirect control over these areas as the Samanta country formed a part of Jeypore Estate and its feudatory chiefs like 'Muttadars', 'Mokhasadars', 'Musthyadars' and 'Zamindars'. Besides the feudatory chiefs, Government officials belonging to Forest, Revenue and Police Departments have been frequently coming into contact with the Samantas in discharging their routine duties. Hence in spite of the existence of village level social control institutions like tribal Councils and village councils, the Samantas used to obey the administrative machinery of the local estates and the Government indirectly. But the advent of independence resulted in the abolition of Zamindari system and the Government administrative machinery directly came into contact with the Samantas. Further the introduction of Community Development Programme with its stress on peoples' participation and the maintenance of the public relations took the Government more nearer to the tribals.

Another important agency of change is the plains settlers who have been migrating to tribal areas since a long time. In the initial stages the plainsmen were only itinery traders who supplied salt, spices, clothes and other daily requirements for tribals in exchange for minor forest produce and agricultural produce. They used to bring the plains products on pack animals by negotiating hill streams, steep hills and ridges through jungle paths and precarious foot paths on the hill sides. These plains traders were afraid to stay in tribal areas because of endemic diseases like Malaria, Black water fever etc., and the lack of transport and medical facilities besides the

fear of wild animals. But the idyllic isolation of the tribal areas has been systematically disturbed with the gradual improvement in transport and communication facilities and the consequent trickling of plains immigrants to the hitherto inaccessible Samanta country. With the improvement in health and hygiene due to eradication of Malaria, Yaws and Black Water fever under National Malaria Eradication Programme and Yaws Eradication Programme, the proverbial inhospitable areas have become habitable. Further the introduction of community development programmes with stress on health and hygiene and communications resulted in the establishment of Primary Health Centres, Mobile Medical Units and also provision of drinking water wells and laying roads. Thus the once unhealthy and unapproachable Samanta habitat has become habitable and approachable. This gave impetus to the plains settlers who started migrating in large numbers in search of profitable business and fertile lands. Both the Government officials and plains settlers are largely responsible for the percolation of certain non-tribal cultural traits and the supplanting of certain indigenous or traditional institutions of tribals.

The present day cultural patterns of Samanta illustrate forced, guided and voluntary changes. Various types of changes that have been sweeping through the Samanta country are described in the preceding chapters. However, an attempt is made to bring them together in the following pages.

Forced Change :

The various administrative measures and statutory regulations that have been implemented in the Samanta country since the British regime resulted in perceptible change in the socio-economic ritual and political life of the tribe. The traditional institutions like Samanta tribe and village councils are subjected to the 'suzerainty' of the Jeypore estate and its feudatory chiefs like the 'Muttadars'. The Samanta tribal council which is a traditional social control institution used to be subservient to the Jeypore administration in general and the 'Muttadar' in particular to whichever tribe he belonged, and their orders were always obeyed. This sort of obedience is evident even in their ritual structure. Even though 'Dasara' Festival and the worship of Durga do not find place in the traditional ritual structure of the tribe, Samantas used to

participate in 'Durga Puja' and also contribute towards the expenses of the ritual in compliance with the traditions of Jeypore estate of which they were subjects.

The most important examples of forced change are the abandoning of human sacrifice and female infanticide in obedience to the statutory abolition of these inhuman practices. The force of the police on one side and the persuasion of British Administrators like Mach person on the other compelled the Samantas to give up this cruel practice. Another important practice that has undergone modification is the use of caryota wine or arrak, from 'Mahua' flowers whose distillation and consumption are prohibited after Independence. Both caryota wine and Mahua arrak have religious and recreational values. The prohibition on the distillation and consumption of these alcoholic ingredients of their religious and recreational life forced them to substitute the indigenous liquor with illicit liquor containing poisonous chemicals like Ammonium Sulphate, which is available in the shandies and it ultimately give impetus to the distillation of illicit liquors by professional non-tribal distillers.

Many a regulation has been passed restricting the freedom of the tribal to exploit the forest wealth in order to save the valuable trees and precious game from indiscriminate felling and killing. In pursuance of this policy Reserved Forest boundaries have been extended from time to time, sometimes, even up to the village habitation site. The policy of extending Reserve Forest Boundary resulted in impoverishing the economy of the tribesmen as it restricted their means of livelihood like 'Podu' cultivation, hunting of game and bringing firewood and house building material. Even their ritual practices have undergone considerable modification as is evident from the restricted performance of the 'Hire Lenju' (the happy month) during which the tribals used to indulge in hunting, consuming meat and drinking, and dancing. With the prohibition of hunting in Reserved Forests, the ceremonial hunting has been greatly restricted and the immediate result is non-availability of flesh of wild animals for the festive consumption. In the absence of meat, the Samantas started heavy consumption of cereals during this month and in the process exhaust all their meagre agricultural produce during the Hire Lenju month which left them without cereals for the rest of the year leaving them

at the mercy of sowcars. Another effect of the process is the fast dying out of the arts of hunting and dancing. Besides, the forest rules and paucity of game led to the serious disturbance of the ecological equilibrium, on which the economic structure of the Samanta virtually rested before enactment of the forest legislations. Consequently their food habits have undergone radical changes. They are more and more thriving upon cereals which in turn created food problem as indigenous food production is far lower than the quantum of food consumption. This resulted in imbalanced and deficit food economy as a result of which food had to be imported from plains through the 'sowcars' and to the ultimate exploitation of the tribal by these unscrupulous sowcars.

Guided change :

While the Forest and Police Departments are mainly responsible for the forced change the activities of the Christian Missionaries and extension work of Community Development Programme set in motion the dynamics of directed change. As has been described the life of Samantas is dominated by religion whose main theme is spirit worship. In a society where religion is all pervasive, the culture of that society will be less susceptible to percolation of alien religious faiths. This is amply illustrated in the case of Samantas. Eventhough Canadian Baptist Mission has been carrying out its proselytisation activities for more than three decades, it could succeed in converting only a small number of Samantas. But its impact cannot be altogether ignored and the converts and non-converts provide an interesting study in contrasts. As one can imagine there is perceptible influence of the alien faith on the Christian converts, however small in number they may be, as is evident in their behaviour patterns and relations with the larger section.

The Canadian Baptist Mission has been carrying out its propagation of Christianity since 1930 in the village of Gangagudi and constructed a church in Sunkarametta about 9 miles from Araku and 1 mile from Gangagudi village. In Gangagudi all families except two embraced Christianity. It is said that the process of proselytisation started by converting present 'Havnta' and his brothers first, followed by the other families. To any observer the village presents a relatively prosperous picture of socio-economic life and standards of education than the other

Samanta villages. At present this village has more literates than the other villages and there are four young men who have studied upto 9th class in towns with the help of the Canadian Baptist Missionary. Of them, one took missionary work and the second is employed as a post man, while a third man took to agriculture. A few of the converts became contractors and money lenders too. The Araku Multipurpose Block Officials stated that the villagers are more receptive to developmental activities and this was a model village of the Block. The better socio-economic conditions of converts may be attributed to two factors, firstly, they are comparatively more literate and closely follow the advise given by the missionary whose guidance has generated an urge to improve their economic conditions by quickly exploiting any source of income. Secondly, the converts incur less expenditure on social and religious ceremonies unlike non-converts as the influence of the 'Pejjeni' and 'Disari' has been gradually diminishing. Further, the converts are not expected to offer oblation or sacrifice any animal to the traditional 'Penu' or deities. They have also discarded the elaborate and expensive traditional life cycle ceremonies as all these are performed in the church with little expenditure. Other striking differences between the converts and non-converts are that (1) the converted men stopped growing tufts of hair on their heads and started cropping their hair, (2) The converted women wear very few traditional ornaments, (3) During festivals the converts make offerings to the Christian God instead of traditional 'Penu', and (4) Every Sunday most of the converts, both female and male visit church and offer prayers. Eventhough the above mentioned changes are specific to the converts alone, but the small number of minority did not completely sever their social and economic relations with the non-converts. Certain cultural clashes are bound to take place as their conflicting faiths and practices are to be reconciled. Whenever the converts bring girls in marriage from the non-converts of other villages they are bound to pay bride price and observe other traditional formalities waether they respect them or not.

The problem is more complicated when the girls of the converts are offered to non-converts as the converts expect the man who wants to marry the girl to get converted to Christianity. A few years ago, Praske Besu, a non-convert Samanta, had to divorce his christian spouse who eloped

with him earlier. The divorce was actually engineered by the local Pastor on the plea that Praske Besu had already three wives and it is against the Christian principle to marry a man with plural wives. In fact, Praske Besu and the girl were cross cousins and according to traditional tribal custom they are permitted to marry. But at the same time, it is important to note that in view of the meagre population of the converts, they are not in a position to completely extricate from the traditional tribal customs. An interesting episode occurred two years ago when the daughter of Joseph, a Samanta convert eloped with a man belonging to lower status group. According to Christian religion, the match was permissible. Hence the Christian converts of Gangagudi did not raise any objection to their marriage. But the non-convert Samantas of neighbouring villages threatened Joseph and his villagers that they would sever all their relations with the converts if they do not arrange expiation feast to the tribe and go through the traditional purificatory ceremony. For fear of severing relations Joseph and his villagers agreed to go through the purificatory ceremony and offer the puritive feast. However, it is also to be noted that the non-converts are not so powerful now a days as they are becoming flexible in these matters. But there is one important difference between the attitudes of the converts and non-converts towards their traditional culture. The converts repeatedly disown their past culture and brand the non-converts as barbarious and uncivilised. Thus eventhough the converts embraced the new faith, survival of certain traditional traits is still discernible and the emerging pattern is a curious synthesis of traditional and Christian cultural practices.

While the activities of the Christian missionaries are mostly confined to bringing about radical changes in their religious and social life, the community development programme is a secular welfare programme intended to *uplift economic and social life of the tribals so that they may be integrated in the larger society without coming into conflict with the religious faith or causing serious dislocation in the social structure.*

As most of the Samanta people are living in inaccessible hilly areas and interior forests without communication facilities, many of the development programmes could not reach them. Further, as most of them depend on

shifting cultivation, the innovations suited to the development of settled cultivation are not useful for the development of their traditional agriculture. But some of this Samantas (Jatapus) living in Palakonda hills near plains areas who are relatively more advanced than their counterparts in the hills and forests are more eager to undertake settled cultivation. Hence, while the Jatapus of Palakonda and Parvatipuram could be successfully persuaded to take up settled cultivation, the Samantas of the Araku and Paderu Tribal Development Blocks could not be brought to the plains and weaned away from 'Podu' cultivation in spite of the latter being under greater programme period than the former as both Paderu and Araku have been receiving the benefits of development programmes since the inception of Multi-purpose projects. At present many of the Samanta families of Palakonda and Parvatipuram have been rehabilitated in colonies as they are more receptive to change. In the Chinagor colony near Palakonda, as many as 30 Samanta families hailing from the villages located on the hill tops have been rehabilitated. Each family was provided with 10 cents of house-site a pair of bullocks and agricultural implements free of cost. It was also originally planned to allot 5 acres of dry land free of cost to each family. But in practice only two and a half acres have been allotted. True to their traditions of 'Podu' cultivation, the rehabilitated families could harvest bumper crops in initial years. But the yield began decreasing from year to year as the fertility of land exhausted with the passage of time and the tribals are not accustomed to apply manure to replenish the lost fertility. As a consequence, the two and a half acres of land is hardly sufficient to maintain a family of average size and it is reported that a few of them are trying to go back to 'Podu' cultivation. Thus in the absence of persuasion by the extension staff and diffusion of innovations, the tribals are naturally trying to resort to their traditional means of livelihood as the new set up could not sustain them for long. Thus the Samantas living in interior areas could not reap the benefits of innovations due to inaccessibility of the area and the unsuitability of innovations to their shifting cultivation whereas the few Samantas rehabilitated in colonies near plains could not thrive on settled cultivation, in view of the lack of preservice and follow up programmes. Even though the co-operative credit societies, Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes Co-operative Finance and Development Corporation and the

development blocks could not meet the credit needs of the Samantas as the Samantas possess meagre land holdings and even the owners of these holdings do not hold ownership (Patta) rights due to lack of survey and settlement, still some of the tribal families could derive the benefits of these agencies especially Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes Co-operative Finance and Development Corporation as it provides them emergency hand loans with minimum official procedures and formalities. The Corporation activities have a definite impact on the marketing facilities available in the Samanta country. The Corporation Domestic Requirements Sales Depots and the Purchasing Depots have been selling them domestic requirements and purchasing the agency produce respectively at fair prices and in the process providing the necessary element of competition to the unscrupulous plains-trader. Thus breaking his vicious hold over the tribal economy. Now a days it is not quite unusual to see a Samanta man making efforts to know the prevailing market rates from different sellers and buyers including Corporation stalls and making his purchases or sales at the most advantageous shop, viz., Corporation Depot or a private merchant shop.

The most perceptible change can be noticed in the sphere of public health as the introduction of Primary Health Centres and Mobile Medical Units have contributed for the improvement in health and hygiene by providing correct diagnosis and modern medicines to the ailing Samantas. Many a Samanta goes to the Primary Health Centres and Mobile Medical Unit whenever they visit the Shandies or whenever they require the treatment. Further, the effective implementation of National Malaria Eradication and Yaws Eradication Programme have greatly controlled the most dreaded diseases of the agency, namely, Malaria and Yaws. Under drinking water programme, protected water is being supplied by constructing cisterns in order to arrest the spread of water-born diseases.

Eventhough the development programme made the most primitive of the tribes of the region like the Samantas conscious of the development programmes, they have yet to travel a long way. To achieve this goal sufficient infrastructure, social and political, is to be built up by evolving progressive indigenous leadership and improving their educational and economic standards, while preserving and nurturing their bright features of traditional culture.

Voluntary change :

Both guided and forced change are the hand work of out-side agencies, whereas voluntary change is the product of an inner urge of the group involved to imitate a relatively advanced group and adopt certain cultural traits of the forward group. In addition to forced and guided change, the Samanta culture depicts ample examples of voluntary change. *The tribe has been in contact with traders and agriculturists and officials who hail from plains areas and in course of time the tribe is lured to receive certain traits of material culture, and to some extent, the sacred elements too. The tribal in his eagerness to be presentable in appearance to the visiting officers and business men believed that the sophisticated way demands wearing shirts and dhotis. Even when he is not in a position to purchase new clothes he resorted to purchasing second hand dress at shandies. But the wearing of sophisticated dress resulted in skin diseases as the tribals have neither means to change them nor the interest to wash them.*

The traditional dress of Samanta women consisting of two pieces of cloth one wrapped around waist and the other around the breast and shoulders is also slowly replaced by a full length sari.

The availability of ground-nut oil in the shandies brought about a radical change in the indigenous oil extracting system. Now-days whenever the Samantas visit shandies, in addition to purchasing salt and kerosene they are purchasing ground-nut oil for cooking purposes. Previously they used to extract oil from 'Kossami', 'Ganuga' and 'Pengo' oil seeds for cooking purposes and Castor seeds for ceremonial purposes by using the locally manufactured oil crushers. But the availability of readily extracted ground nut oil replaced the indigenously extracted oil which ultimately resulted in decay of the art of manufacturing oil crushers as the Samantas almost stopped extracting oil from locally available seeds. Castor oil has still ceremonial value and for that purpose it is being extracted even now but not to the extent as it used to be in olden days.

The impact of contact with non-tribals can also be observed in the changes that have been brought about in their hair styles, personal decoration, house decoration

and material equipment. The growing of a tuft is being gradually abandoned and the hair cropping patterns of the plainsmen is being adopted. In place of the traditional variety of bead necklaces and other ornaments, the Samanta women are slowly acquiring metal ornaments manufactured in the plains areas. Their special ornaments 'Kuppenga' (Hair pins) are also becoming out of date. The crude door frames and doors are gradually giving way to strong and carved doors and door frames prepared by carpenters from plains areas. Decorative pictures of plains origin are being hung on the walls of the houses. More and more metal utensils are bought in place of local pottery.

The influence of contacts with plains people and other tribal groups is also discernible in their religious festivals and life cycle ceremonies. Besides the traditional tribal festivals, they are also celebrating Hindu festivals like Sankranti, Deepavali, etc. At the time of marriage the traditional sambar hide rope is replaced by jute rope and the plains music and recreation have taken the place of traditional music and peacock dance. Traditionally the name giving ceremony is performed on the seventh day after the birth of a child with 'Pejjeni' officiating as the priestess. Now a days as was observed around Dumriguda and Araku, the Samanta are naming the child immediately after the day of birth of a child in imitation of neighbouring Konda Doras.

Besides, their living amidst other tribal groups gave rise to social stratification similar to caste groups. The hierarchy from top to bottom runs almost as follows :—

- (1) Bagata.
- (2) Muka Dora.
- (3) Goudu.
- (4) Kotia.
- (5) Konda Doras.
- (6) Gadaba—Samanta.
- (7) Porja.
- (8) Valmiki.
- (9) Ghesi.

The Bagata, Muka Dora and Goudu wear sacred threads. and these three groups and Kotias do not eat beef and pork. But the Konda Doras who eat beef are also considered superior to Samantas. But the Gadabas are equal in social status to Samantas and the others inferior to the Gadabas and Samantas. In accordance with their position in the social hierarchy Samantas accept cooked food from those higher status communities but not from the low-status groups.

The activities of the Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes Co-operative Finance and Development Corporation and the indigenous traders and officials have gradually changed their economic transactions from barter to monetary system and the money minded tribal is gradually becoming individualistic with proportionate decrease in the traditional spirit of co-operation.

Even their spoken language 'Kuvi' is forgotten by some of the Samantas who are now called Jatapus living around Palakonda. Telugu, the regional language, has become their mother tongue. Thus the various changes sweeping through the Samanta country have transformed the traditional life of the Samantas to some extent. The cultural transformation is more dynamic among the plains living Samantas and the Christian converts whereas the hill and forest dwelling Samantas are tenaciously clinging to their traditional culture as the percolation of new ideas innovations is hampered by lack of sufficient transport and communication facilities.

Chapter X

CASE HISTORIES.

No. 1. Case History of Hareka Besu, Antriguda:

Hareka Besu of Antriguda was 40 years old. His father was a native of Narayanapatnam (Orissa State), who later migrated to Bariyapaka (Nandapur Taluk). Besu is his third son born in Bariyapaka. When Besu attained the age of ten, his father again Migrated to Pedapadu Kisangi Mutta. Ten years later, Besu and his brothers migrated to Antriguda and he lived there as member of a joint family. When he was about twenty-three years old, he visited one day the week'y shandy at Pukela. It was raining that day. So, instead of returning home, he went to Sembai village, where he had relatives belonging to Miniyeka family. Miniyeka Jombara, with whom he put up, would be, according to their relation, his son. Jombera's wife was therefore, his daughter-in-law. Jombera's wife developed a liking towards Besu and volunteered to elope with him to become his wife. That night they met in the house of Besu's friend to talk out the proposal. Besu explained to her that their marital relation was a prohibited one and that it was not desirable on their part to violate the communal taboo. In spite of his protest and dissuasion, she insisted upon marrying him and she pointed a way out. That was to give a feast to the villagers to get their sanction for the marriage. At last he yielded. The very same night they ran away to Antriguda.

Next morning, Jombera came to know of the incident. One month after the elopement, he went along with his villagers to Antriguda and camped under a tree outside the village. Three mediators ('Koskas') were appointed. Both the parties met. Jombera demanded Rs. 500 as compensation. After an active bargain for about one hour, they agreed for Rs. 100, a fowl, a goat, a pig and five measures of rice as compensation. Besu then paid the compensation accordingly.

The three 'Koskas' jointly received Rs. 3, fowl and three seers of rice as remuneration from Besu.

Besu also gave Rs. 20 to the Samdinga (families with which marriage relations are allowed) of Sembai village as a penalty for the violation of the custom.

He also entertained his villagers with five rupees worth of liquor.

No. 2. Case History of Praska Besu :

Praska Besu is the eldest son of Praska Sinnaya of Kothavalsa (Sunkarametta). He is aged 35 years at present.

At the age of about 17, he married Miniyecka Sitro, the daughter of Sinnaya's paternal uncle's sister. Sinnaya performed 'Kajja Pendili' and paid Rs. 12, a cow and a tin of liquor (about 20 seers) towards the bride-price. For the marriage feast he spent about 3 bags of rice, cut a cow and distributed four pots of liquor. Sitro bore a son to him. This wife is still with him.

Three years after the first marriage, Besu married Vingoda Salme. Besu's father, Sinnaya himself insisted on this marriage because Salme was his sister's daughter and he wanted to continue the relationship. This time also 'Kaja' Pendili' was performed. He gave Rs. 12, a cow and tin of liquor to the girl's parents. The marriage feast consisted of rice (about one bga), a pig and a pot of liquor. Besu performed 'Kidu' (Purification ceremony) after the second marriage. Salme is still living with him.

Four years later, Besu came into contact with the daughter of his mother's brother in Gangagudi village. With the mediation and help of a friend, he eloped with the girl. He later paid 'Oli' of Rs. 40, a bullock worth of Rs. 60 and a tin of liquor. But as the girl's father was a Christian convert, the father did not approve of the marriage, since the girl eloped with a married man contrary to Christian principle of monogamy. Besu left the girl within four days after marriage even without having any nuptial ceremony, taking back Rs. 40 from the girl's father.

Two years later he visited Adraguda. In that village there was a married girl, who returned to the parental roof. She belonged to a Mandinga family. A distant relative of Besu advised him to elope with the girl. He informed

Besu that the girl was an unmarried one and further she was interested in marrying him. Besu believed his words and eloped with the girl. A week later, the girl's former husband demanded 'kerdinga' from Besu. Besu could do nothing but pay 'kerdinga' of Rs. 100 and a cow. He also remunerated the mediators with Rs. 2, three measures of rice and a fowl. He gave his villagers a fowl and a measure of rice for a feast.

This girl was lazy. Neither Besu, nor his former wives and parents did like her, and so she was driven away to her parents. A month later, Besu, along with his father and other elders of his village, went to the girl's village. In the presence of the 'Havnta', elders of that village, he broke a stick indicating their broken relationship with the girl. He also gave Rs. 5 to the elders and returned home. On the whole, the girl stayed with him for about a month.

Besu contacted another marriage with Bando, his first wife's sister. Bando first married a Tadinga man. Her husband was living far away from Bando's parents village. So, she could not visit her parents often. So divorcing her husband, she returned to her parental roof. Once she visited her sister, Sitro, Besu's first wife. After staying for a week, she thought of marrying Besu. She expressed her desire to Sitro. Sitro readily agreed. Then Bando left for her parents' village. Sitro asked Besu to marry Bando. When Besu did not object to her proposal, she conveyed the same to her parents and one day she brought Bando to her village. Besu gave Rs. 100 to Bando's parents who in turn settled the question of 'kerdinga' with Bando's former husband. She is now living with him.

For all the subsequent marriages, Besu performed purification ceremony. Out of the five marriages, he contracted, two were annulled. He is now having three wives. They help him a lot in the agricultural works. Besu proudly observes that he need not exert himself too much like others because his wives look after most of the agricultural and other household work.

27. 3. Case History of Tadinga Tilsu (Gondivalsa)

Tadinga Tilsu, aged thirty of Gondivalsa (Gasaba area) was the son of Tadinga Dulubo. Along with his

father, he was working on his 'podu' fields. At the age of twenty he happened to visit his relations in Tadda near Guntaseema. One evening, he was informed by his paternal aunt that a certain married woman by name Melleka Jermo desired to marry him.

Jermo was the daughter of a Mandinga family in Setamada (Orissa State). She was a cross-cousin to Tilsu. Because Setamada was very far away from Gondivalasa, Tilsu's father did not consider her in marriage for Tilsu. She married a man from a Melleka family of Setamada. Six months after the marriage, Jermo's parents migrated to Tadda near Guntaseema. One year after their migration they visited their daughter in Setamada. On their return, Jermo accompanied them to Tadda. One week later, her husband came to Tadda to take her back to Sitamada. She refused to go to Sitamada but agreed to live with him provided he migrated to Tadda, so that she could live close to her parents. He agreed and migrated to Tadda. She bore a son to him. When the son was almost three years old, she proposed to elope with Tilsu who was on a visit to Tadda.

Tilsu's paternal aunt told him that 'Jermo's husband had been ill-treating her and as such she had been averse to live with him. Further, Tilsu being her cross-cousin, Jermo developed a sort of liking towards him. She advised him to elope with her. At first he hesitated because she was older to him and her husband might take him to task. Yet the youthful curiosity about elopement and romance combined with his ignorance of the compensation to be paid (as Tilsu discerned) prompted him to agree to the proposal of Jermo. His maternal aunt fixed the day for elopement. He returned to his village. On the fixed day at about 7-00 p.m. he arrived in Tadda accompanied by seven of his friends. He kept them waiting outside the village in the shade of a tree. He met his paternal aunt. She informed Jermo of his visit. Jermo asked him to wait just outside the village. When her husband and son fell asleep, she slipped out stealthily and joined him. Tilsu followed by friends eloped with her.

The very next day, Jermo's husband came to know of the elopement. Within a month after the elopement, he sent word (three times) to Tilsu to be ready with the money needed for compensation. One month after the incident, accompanied by the villagers, Tilsu had been to

Gondivalsa and camped under a tree near the village. Tilsu's party called on them for bargaining. Five mediators ('koskas') were appointed. Jermos husband's party demanded as compensation a measureful (Rs. 1,000) of rupees. Tilsu's party contended that Tilsu could not pay such a huge amount but he could pay only Rs. 100. Active bargain lasted for about two hours and they agreed to a sum of Rs. 300, cow, a goat and three measures of rice. Tilsu then paid the compensation. He also rewarded the 'Koskas' with three fowls and seven and a half measures of rice.

As 'Kulam Tappu' he gave a cow to the villagers for those who would eat beef and a goat for those who would not eat beef.

It is important to note in this connection that before the dispute regarding compensation is settled and the amount is paid, even the brothers and father of the woman do not visit the house of man who eloped with the girl. In the case of Tilsu, according to his own narration, inspite of his repeated requestes, the brothers of the girl did not visit his house. This was done so that the people might not suspect any and in this affair on the part of the parents and nearest relations.

Tilsu had to undergo many difficulties in order to secure the necessary money for the payment of compensation. He sold six cows and bullocks out of his seven cows and bullocks for Rs. 365. He gave away the remaining cow as part of compensation. He bought a cow and a goat for Rs. 25 and Rs. 20 respectively for his villagers for a feast. His economic position thus was shattered to a great extent.

Jermo bore a boy and a girl to him. Four years after Tilsu's marriage with Jermo, he visited one of his relations in Gativalsa (Orissa). He met a woman by name Mandinga Aso. She was thirty then. She was staying with her brother after her sixth divorce. She entreated him to take her along with him to his house. He found in her a good worker. He took her to his house as a second wife. He gave a cow and a goat to her brother as compensation.

He now intends to get a girl by paying bride-price.

No. 4 Case History of Tadinga Kusnu :

Tadinga Kusnu is the son of Tadinga Gasi. Kusnu is now living in the Sindhiput village. He migrated to Sindhiput from Jeera in January, 1960.

When he was twenty years of age, he married a Melleka woman, Gulli. Before marrying Kusnu, Gulli had married a Sirika man of Dabha village. Three years after marriage, her husband went away to Assam. She, however, was living with her parents-in-law with the expectation that her husband would come back. At that time, Tadinga Ruppa, now living in Sindhiput, was living in that village and was on a look out for a girl for Kusnu, his brother's son living in Jeera. Having known about the woman, Ruppa began to visit Gulli frequently and also console her. One day, he suggested to her that it would be better to marry some one rather than lead a lonely life. When she agreed to remarry, Ruppa suggested Kusnu whom he was having in view all the time. She agreed to that proposal. Ruppa explained the position to Kusnu. One night, he arranged a meeting of Gulli and Kusnu in his house itself and left them alone and they mutually agreed to marry. Ruppa arranged for their elopement the very same night.

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