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*Editors*

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# ADIBASI

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## EDITORIAL

Shri P. Shilu Ao, Chairman of the Study Team on Tribal Development, Planning Commission, paid a visit to the State in two phases. In the first sojourn he saw tribal life and studied the problems in Phulbani, Ganjam and other coastal districts. In the second trip he visited Koraput, Kalahandi, Bolangir and Sundargarh districts. His intelligent appraisal of tribal problems will find place in his report which may be compiled by him in due course. However, in course of itineraries, he met officials, non-official social workers and others who have studied the tribal problems. He visualised the multiple array of tribal life in the State. Orissa provides a veritable store-house of tribals in different stages of social, cultural and economic development. Shri Shilu Ao met the Hill Bonda women who still continue to be virtually naked, cherishing the legendary curse of Goddess Sita ordaining them to remain as such, because they jeered at her nudity while taking bath. He met the Dangaria Kandhas, who

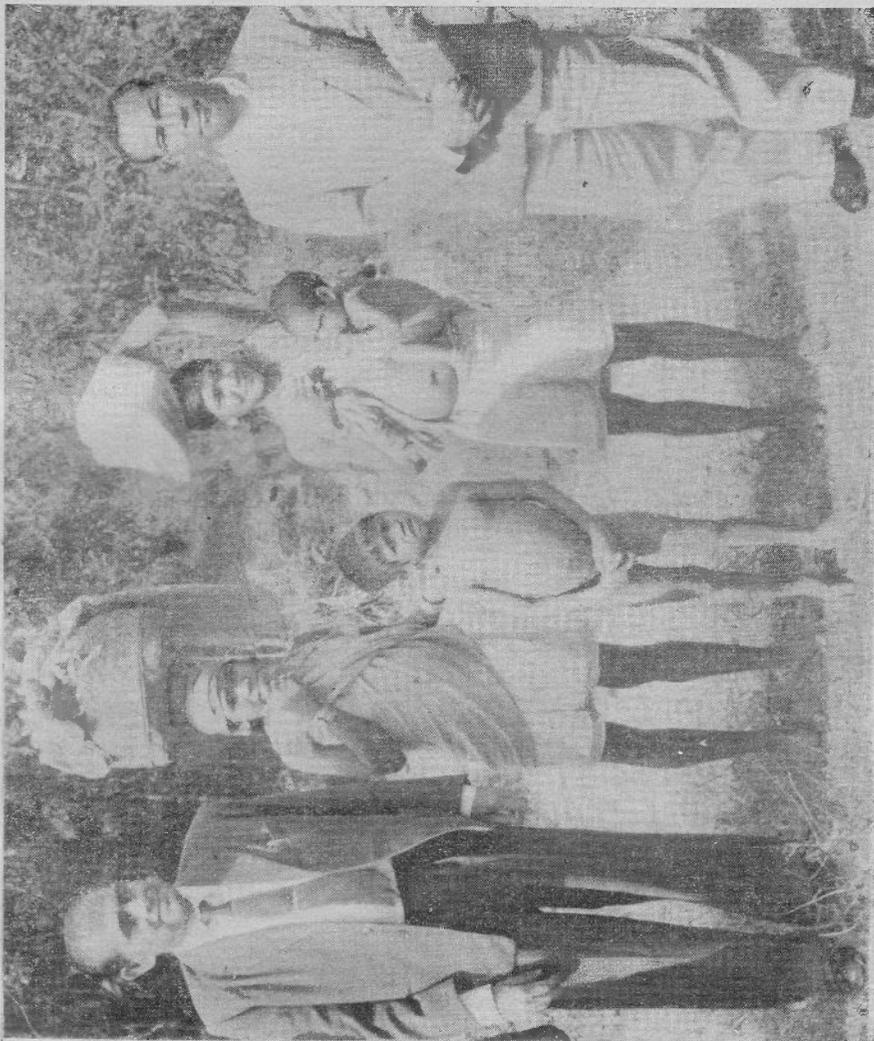
are proud of their traditions and well-built in stature. They are now coming with their produce to the Government Purchase—Sale Centre at Chatikana discarding middlemen and petty traders. Shri Shilu Ao also learnt about the *Goti* or bounded labour system in Laxmipur area of Koraput, which continues as a slur in the modern society.

Shri Shilu Ao was cautious in expressing much before he submits his report to Government of India. Nevertheless he as a tribal leader himself, and wholly devoted to his task, got enough material to brood over the prospects for development of the tribes in right lines. Some of the tribal problems continue to bewilder our leaders for the last two decades after independence. Shri Shilu Ao comes from Nagaland where there are 80,000 school-going children in a population of 4 lakhs. He is a tribal who had all the benefits of modern education before 35 years. He appreciated the residential schools for tribals run by the

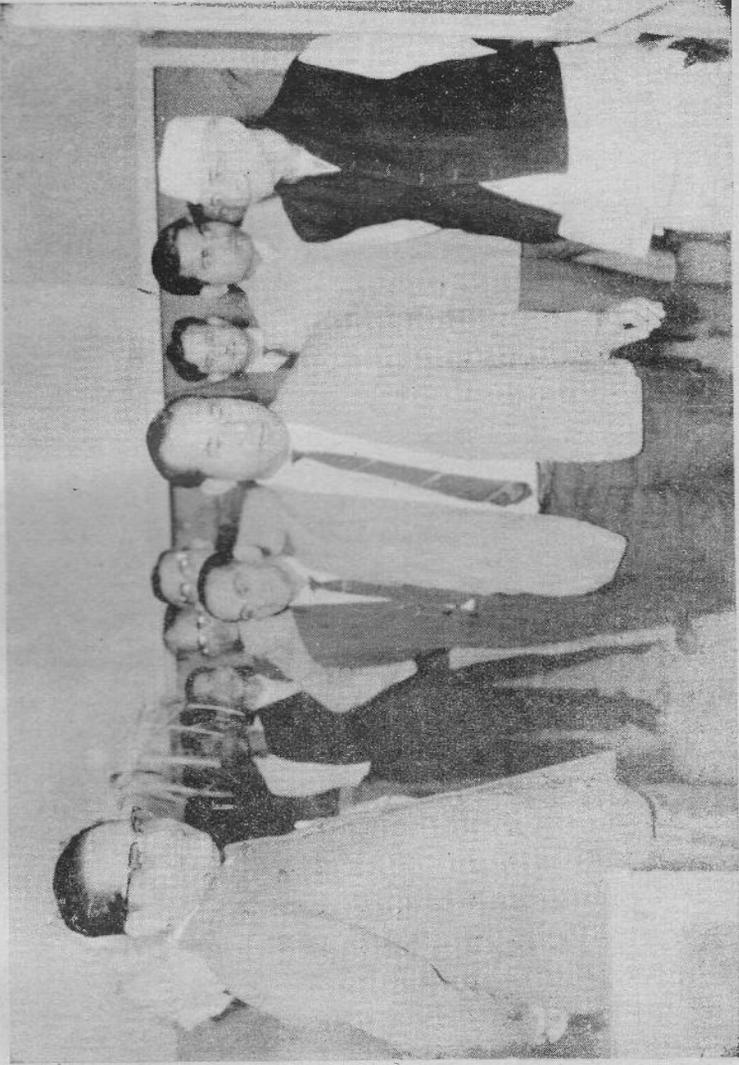
State Government. He could not find the programme in Tribal Development Blocks suited to the felt needs of the tribals. Shri Shilu Ao appreciated the Purchase—Sale Scheme lunched among backward tribals to remedy the evils of chronic indebtedness and exploitation by middlemen.

Shri Shilu Ao visited Tribal Research Bureau and had a discussion with the research staff. He was given an idea of the research projects which have been completed and have brought to light most of the intricate tribal problems of the State. Shri Shilu Ao appreciated the role of Tribal Research Bureau in assisting the administration for planning appropriate

measures on scientific lines for the solution of outstanding tribal problems. Shri Shilu Ao sought the help of Tribal Research Bureau to place before him the knotty tribal problems and this gesture of goodwill was duly reciprocated by the Officers of the Bureau. It is hoped that the recommendations of Shilu Ao Committee on Tribal Development will be acted upon to develop the tribals in the country as a whole and our State in particular. The 'Adibasi' while fully realizing the formidable task before the Committee anticipate a good speed to the Committee so that the difficulties in tribal areas, and the hardship of the tribals could be redressed within the next decade.



Shri P. Shilu Ao, Chairman, Tribal Development Study Team with Saora women and Secretary, T. R. W. Department.



Shri P. Shilu Ao visiting T. R. E.

## A STUDY ON THE SOCIO-RELIGIOUS LIFE OF TRIBALS IN GUDVELLA AREA, BOLANGIR DISTRICT.

(The study was initiated and led by Shri A. Das, I. A. S., Director Tribal Research Bureau cum-Secretary to Government, Tribal & Rural Welfare Department, in the month of September, 1967. Sarbasri P. K. Mohapatra, P. S. Das Patnaik, B. Choudhury, S. P. Rout, A. K. Mohanty and G. N. Satpathy, Research Officers undertook the field work under the supervision of Shri N. Das)

The Panchayat Samiti of Tentulikhunti is comprised of seven Grama Panchayats. Four, out of seven Grama Panchayats lie on the right bank of river Tel which forms a barricade on entrance to these four Grama Panchayats. They are Tentulikhunti, Gudvella, Ghuna and Jamut. The south-east of these four Grama Panchayats border Kalahandi district. Near Dhanpur the border also lies close to Balliguda subdivision of Phulbani district although a strip of land (Mohongiri area) of Kalahandi district, intervenes in between. The physiography of this area constitutes undulating surface on earth which have, however, been levelled by human ingenuity to grow crops of various kinds. The hill ranges of south-east part with reserved forests constitute another feature of the physical aspect of the area. Next is the network of river system which covers most of these area. The main river is Tel which is a tributary of Mahanadi. The others are Rahul, Khadang, Kaliganga and a number of other hill streams which flow in a criss cross manner all over the area.

Out of the total population of 30,977 of the entire Panchayat Samiti area four Grama Panchayats, namely, Gudvella, Tentulikhunti, Jamut and Ghuna have a population at 15,190 or 50 per cent of the total population. Out of this 5,464 souls belong to the Scheduled Tribe population of Kandha and Gond. Scheduled Caste population is also nearly 3,000 according to 1961 Census. Hence the area under these four Grama Panchayats is inhabited more by Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste population than by any other castes.

River Tel almost stands as a barrier and divides the Panchayat Samiti of Tentulikhunti into two parts. The three Grama Panchayats situated on the left bank of the river are approachable due to all-weather roads having direct link with towns and district headquarters. The four Grama Panchayats mentioned above are cut off from the administrative as well as commercial centre at Tusra, intercepted by the river Tel which is unbridged. Regular communication is lacking even within these

four Grama Panchayats due to hill streams which swell up after each shower of rain. Country boats are used at certain points as ferry. The charges vary from 0.15 paise to 0.20 paise according to the condition of the river. There are a few Kutchra roads accessible during fair-weather only. One of such roads is from Tusra to Gudvella. The other one is from the right bank of river Tel which extends up to Mohangiri and Madanpur-Rampur in Kalahandi.

The villages, taken up for study to throw light on the social and economic condition of the tribes inhabiting this area were selected from three Grama Panchayats, namely, Jamut, Tentulikhunti and Ghuna. The villages are Bhuanpara, Ghuna, Dongargaon and Rugudipalli. The first three villages are predominantly inhabited by the Kandha and the fourth one by the Gond. Social customs, religion and economy of the Kandhas and Gonds studied in these three villages almost confirm to customs and practices in vogue among all Kandhas and Gonds of this area.

#### **Migration and settlement of Tribes in the area.**

From historical documents it is gathered that the Central Indian belt and its peripheral region were inhabited by the Kolarian tribes like Bhuinya, Kolh, Juang, etc. Subsequently the Gonds, a powerful Dravidian race invaded the area and drove the former autochthons to

farther north. Evidences from the local history indicate the habitation of Bhuinya tribe in this area. The Bhuinyas probably lived on a particular site, named, Jampadar, near the ancient historical site Kharligarh which is marked by earthen mounds and other archaeological specimens. Iron arrow-heads, nails, fish hooks and earthen hookah are available from the Jampadar site which corroborate the local traditional history of Bhuinya habitation. The Bhuinyas are said to be making fine stone-beads which are also found from the site.

There are numerous traditional historical evidences which describe the Gond influence in this area. That the Gonds has definite connections with the ruling dynasty of Patna is found from old palm leaf records as well as other historical events. After the Gonds, came the Kandhas, a section of the Dravidian stock who established their villages and lived with the Gonds. The Kandha migration was from the east and south-eastern sides, i.e., Baudha-Kandhmal and Kalahandi districts. Migration of Kandhas has continued over long period of time and a narrative recorded from an old Kandha of Bhuanpara is as follows : "My grandfather came with a batch of Kandhas during early part of his youth. They settled near Kharligarh which was densely forested by clearing patches of forests. Gradually they shifted to this village. He wanted to increase the area of cultivation. In

Madikela another group of Kandhas were living. A quarrel ensued between my grandfather and the Madikela Kandhas. My grandfather drove them further east into hill tracts and brought the entire area under his control. My grandfather concealed his wife at a place while fighting which is now known as village Lukapara and the spot where he fought is now known as Badipara the name Tulapar means a hamlet for concealed. The Kandhas who fled away took an oath not to return to the place except on a particular day when they are to worship *Sikerpat* and before night fall must return to their places". The tradition is still maintained.

The route through which migration took place is pointed to a Kutcha road which extends beyond Dhanpur, a village near the border of the districts of Kalahandi and Bolangir. This road is connected to Balliguda in Phulbani district through Mohangiri in Kalahandi district. Beyond Mohangiri the road passes through hills and dense forests via Mahajan Pokhari and Barkhoma, 12 miles from Balliguda. This route is followed by various types of traders and travellers of both the districts. The distance between Bhuanpara and Balliguda is calculated to be approximately 40 miles.

Migration of Kandhas also took place from another direction, i.e., the south-east part of the contiguous hills in Kalahandi district.

The Madikela Kandhas with whom the grandfather of Parsuram Majhi had a quarrel might have belonged to those groups coming from Kalahandi area. These Kandhas from Kalahandi area are known as Kadanugia or Kadaniagia where as the Kandhas who migrated from Boudh-Khandmals are known as Majhi-Pradhan.

Although Kandhas either from Kalahandi or Boudh-Khandmals area predominate this particular region the history of their migration is comparatively recent than that of the Gonds who are the first migrants to this area. The trace of Gond habitation in this area is admitted even by the Kandhas themselves whom they say that the Gond cleared the forests but never settled at a particular place (*Kodkia*). The Kandhas later on, took occupation of the places and settled themselves (*Padarbasa*). At present Gonds and Kandhas live side by side although Kandhas outnumber the former. It is known from history that Gonds who were a powerful tribe came from the south and drove Kolarian tribes like Bhuinyas, Kolhs or Hos to farther north. Gonds since then, have spread into various parts of the central plateau and have migrated in minor groups to east and north.

### The Villages

(A) *Bhuanpara*—Bhuanpara is located at a distance of five miles east of Tusra, a commercial centre. It comes under Tentulikhunti Block

and lies 2 miles north of Panchayat Headquarters of Tentulikhunti. The village is bounded by river Tel on its western and northern fringes at a distance of 4 miles and one mile, respectively. River Rahul encircles the villages on its south-eastern and eastern fringe at a distance of 2 miles beyond the historical site of Kharligarh. On the north-western corner of Kharligarh river Rahul joins the Tel.

Communication to and from this village is difficult due to hill streams which are negotiated by country boats. During this year a considerable part of Tentulikhunti Grama Panchayat was flooded by those rivers and damaged roads, fields and houses in many villages.

There is a link road which connects village Bhuanpara with the road from Tusra to Gudvella at Dahimal. Out of 17 families of the Kandhas, 12 families are residing on the entrance to the village. These are the progenitors of the original Kandhas who first settled in this village. Other caste groups gradually came in and settled with the permission of the headman or Gauntia of the village who is a Kandha. The present Gauntia, Parsuram Majhi also happens to be the traditional headman of the village although most of the powers and authority of a traditional leader have fallen into disuse consequent upon introduction of statutory Panchayats and abolition of Gauntia System.

The other caste groups are Gaudas (Herdsman), Gandas (Scheduled Caste), Keuts (Fishermen), Barber (One family) and Brahmin (One family). After Kandhas, Gaudas came to this village. The suite was followed by Gandas and other castes. It is interesting to note that certain castes like blacksmith are prohibited to settle in this village. Once a family of blacksmith came and settled in the village. After a few days all his family members suffered from diseases and some died. On enquiry, the priest of Kandhan Budhi, the village goddess of Kandhas stated that the Goddess was fed up by the sound of implements made.

The next caste which was prohibited to settle in the past was Brahmin. Once a Brahmin family was employed by the father of the present Sarpanch, Nilandri Majhi. The headman was attacked by the Goddess and turned semi-mad and left the village. The reason was that the Goddess did not like a Brahmin. Recently one Brahmin family is residing in the village. He happens to be the priest of Lord Jaganath, the cult of which has been installed by a Gauda for worship in the village since 24 to 25 years. A thatched shrine has been constructed in the centre of the village and the Brahmin resides in a house close to the temple. Some of the villagers told that the present Brahmin also suffered a lot and had left the village for some years. Again

since last 3 years he has returned and has continued to stay. He comes from Sonepur.

The rest of the castes, however, have not suffered from the wrath of the village Goddess of Kandhas. But they have taken sufficient precaution by way of propitiating the Goddess.

The houses are mud built thatched structures. The Kandhas also build their homes in the similar manner and leave a courtyard in the middle around which rooms with varandhas as one finds among non-tribals. The traditional Kandha pattern of long rows of houses with a wide street in between them has disappeared. Towards the centre of the village by the side of village street narrow lanes have been stretched inside by the side of which different caste groups are found to have constructed their houses. With minor exceptions all caste groups have their respective wards. In the extreme end live the Scheduled Caste Gandas. Kandhas have retained their indentity by occupying a separate ward to indicate their status and superiority from others. Except Kandhas all the caste groups have constructed their houses with small plinth area. Ventilation and drainage are poor. This is due to the fact that the other caste groups being later migrants had limited space and the increase of population necessitates subsequent partition of the same space.

Out of 177 families, 80 belong to various Hindu clean castes, 20, to the Scheduled Caste Gandas, the remaining 17 to Kandhas. Although the Kandhas constitute the smallest number, being the first settlers they dominate over other castes in village affairs. In fact, Kandhas say that they permitted various castes to settle with them.

(B) *Ghuna*—The village Ghuna is situated towards the south-eastern direction of the district. The village is located between the 20°25' and 20°30' North Latitude and 83°35' to 83°40' East Longitude. This village is within the jurisdiction of Tusra police-station and Ghuna Grama Panchayat.

The village is surrounded on the south by village Gudvella and Gunimunda and on the west by the river Rahul, a tributary of the river Tel. The eastern side of the village is bounded with reserve forest. Wood and bamboo are worked by forest contractors who provide also work to the local tribal people. The northern boundary is formed with Baudh-Kandhamals district. The proposed Block Headquarters at Gudvella is separated from this village by the river Rahul. There was taboo with former ruling family of Patna State not to cross the river Rahul. Thus the portion beyond the river Rahul suffered from a traditional isolation. To approach this village during rainy season ferry is the only means to cross the river. River Rahul constitutes to be the main water source for the village.

Besides, there are 5 katcha wells. A small stream, flowing on the side of this village is used for washing of clothes. During summer there is water scarcity.

The main inhabitants of this village are Kandhas. Other castes are Dom, Ganda, Kumbhara (Potter) Gauda (Milkman) and Bania (Goldsmith). The village is composed of 3 wards with a total number of 71 families. The villagers still believe that the original settlers in this village were Kandhas. In due course other castes came to live in this village.

Gandas being untouchables live separately in a compact ward known as Gandapara. The total population of the village, collected during the field work, is 338. The main Kandhapara contains 44 households with a population of 209 of whom 103 are males and 106 are females. Other 27 households belong to above-mentioned castes. Average size of household comes to 4.76 persons.

Almost all are mud houses with thatched roofs. Each house generally consists of two rooms of which the bigger one is used as bedroom and the smaller as kitchen. A verandha is usually provided at the front of every house. Every household has a cattleshed and a kitchen garden. Construction of a house is simple. Foundations are not deep and walls are composed of mud. Height of the walls is about 10 feet over which the frame work for the roof is raised on wooden or bamboo beams. Roof frame is mostly of split bamboos.

Wild grass (*Khar*) is used for thatching <sup>for</sup> purpose. Construction of new <sup>wooden</sup> houses and annual thatching work are done by hired labourers (*Bhuti*). Floor, verandah and walls are plastered with mud and cowdung. The cost of construction of a normal two-roomed house roughly comes to Rs. 250 which includes cost of material such as wood and bamboo as well as labour charges. However, timber and bamboo are brought from the reserved forest on payment of royalty.

(C) *Dangargaon*—The village Dangargaon means dangar-hill, gaon-village or hill village. The location of the village being at the foot of a hill, the name has been derived as such. This is situated in Jamut Grama Panchayat at a distance of nearly 3 Kms. from the headquarters. The village is located on a picturesque setting by the side of a perennial stream. There are three separate wards in the village. The first ward is inhabited by Dhurua Gonds while the other two are occupied by Kandhas. The ward at the foot of the hill is the original one, from where some inmates have separated and formed another ward which is situated in between the Gond ward and the original one. The wards are wide apart.

The total population of the village is 179 with 89 males and 90 females belonging to 39 families. Out of these, Gonds number 99 and Kandhas 71 with 19 and 17 families, respectively. Other 3 families belong to Goud (Milkman) caste.

The house type is of general nature with thatched roofs and mud walls of bamboo frame. Gonds have slightly better houses than Kandhas. The general type of the houses are virtually the same as in Ghuna but inferior to these found in Bhuanpara. There is patch of forest adjoining the village. The villagers are, therefore, placed in more advantageous position than those of Ghuna and Bhuanpara in respect of getting minor forest-produce as well as timber and bamboo for their consumption.

### THE KANDHA

#### Units of Social Organization

*Family*—Family being the smallest unit of the Social Organization is mostly of nuclear type among Kandhas, comprising of married couple and their unmarried children. The total extended families having the married son or sons and their children living with the father and mother are comparatively less and still less is the number of joint families run by married brothers and their spouses after the death of parents. Such heterogeneous families comprising of the spouses of adopted son-in-law, widow sister and the like are grouped in separate category. For example in village Ghuna, out of the total 61 Kandha families 9 are joint families, and one is an extended family. The nuclear families number 48, while the mixed and miscellaneous families number 3. In other words 78.7 per cent of the total families are

of nuclear type, while 14.7 per cent are joint families, 1.6 per cent are extended families, and about 5 per cent are of the mixed type.

The residence is patrilocal and the descent is patrilineal. There are a few families having their sons-in-law living with them as *Ghar-Jamai* but such families are exception. Membership in the family is acquired by birth, though girls leave their parental families for good after marriage. Descent is carried through the male spouses. Even in case of adoption of son-in-law, the male spouses retain descent through their father only.

The size of Kandha families is usually small consisting of 4 to 6 persons. The average size of family is 4.5 members. Economic co-operation, common residence, common cooking are other general features of Kandha family. All the members of a family co-operate in economic pursuits and contribute for the maintenance of the family. Common cooking is the main feature of family solidarity and separate cooking leads to breakdown of joint families.

Quarrel between family members, economic disparity of earning members, and excessive growth of family size to accommodate all in a common residence lead to the formation of new families. It is usual for the sons of a father or the brothers, to establish their independent households soon after

their marriage so that there may not be scope for growing misunderstanding between the newcomers, leading to quarrels and conflicts.

The kin tie between blood relatives like father and son and between the brothers is conceptually strong, but cases of full brothers living in separate families and in separate villages and father and sons living in separate families are quite numerous. In Ghuna, 24 cases of full brothers were found to be living in separate families in the same village, while in 5 cases the brothers were living in different villages. Likewise five cases of fathers and sons living in different families could be gathered.

*Lineage*—A lineage is composed of a number of families, and the members of a lineage consider themselves to be the descendents of a common ancestor. In case of minor lineages, the relation of its members can be traced out genealogically, but in some major lineages such common ancestry is difficult to be traced out. The members of minor lineage consider themselves to be closer kin to each other and there is more kin obligation among themselves than with the members of major lineages. The following rites are marked between the families belonging to a single minor lineage :—

(a) All the families of a minor lineage throw away their used earthen cooking pots and earthen vessels in

cases of death of any lineage member.

- (b) All mourn for any death within the lineage and observe food taboos like eating vegetarian diet, till the funerary rites are performed.
- (c) The families of a minor lineage contribute liquor for purificatory rites in cases of death.
- (d) A widow may be remarried to her deceased husband's younger brother who has a claim over her, but in case the deceased ceases to have any younger brother, the widow may preferably be remarried, to a member of her deceased husband's lineage who stands her as husband's younger brother in classificatory sense. For such marriage, no bride-price need be paid to the widow's parents, as once she is brought by marriage she becomes the property of the lineage at large.
- (e) Greater economic co-operation is expected from the members of a lineage who tend to help each other in various economic pursuits.
- (f) In connection with birth ceremony, the lineage members bring contribu-

tions of money, chicken, grains, etc., for the newborn which may be used as a saving for the future life for the child.

- (g) In marriage, the lineage members exhibit greater co-operation to make the occasion a success and are fed more frequently than the villagers.
- (h) In case of girl's marriage, one cattle from the bride-wealth paid by the groom goes to the lineage. The cattle is sold and the money is utilized for holding a communal feast.
- (i) Shares of food and cakes are distributed among the families of a lineage on festive or ceremonial occasions.

*Barag or Clan*—A number of major lineages taken together form *barag*, the members of which consider themselves to be agnates to each other descending from a common ancestor. One such clan is the Maghi, Dalpat and Pradhan. They consider themselves as brothers of the same clan and distinguish themselves from other Kandhas of this area. The Bhuanpara Kandhas belong to this clan. The clan cult is *Pat Khandha* as acquired from Kandhamal.

The clan group is then identified with the name of the area where its members inhabit having a clan

of their own. The second clan is Masu Kandha or Mausia Kandha who inhabit the Masia Chaka or area with their clan cult *Sulia*.

The third one is known as *Kudurkia* and/or *Turkia* chak with their cult *Bhim Boiri* and *Paha Sulia*. The fourth one is Sika Kandhas of *Sika Chak* with their cult *Barubhai Nad*. The fifth one is *Kadanungia Chak* or *Khadangu Chak* inhabited by Kadanungia Kandhas with their cult *Sikerpat* or *Sikelpat*.

All these clans are exogamous and should not bring brides from kin clans. There is, however, an exception as regards Mulingia Kandhas. These Kandhas although inhabit the Khadanga Chak do not come under the clan of Kadanungia Kandhas. They call themselves brother of Majhi clan. A reference may be made here of the migration of Majhi clan from Kandhal. This clan is responsible for introduction of *Pathanda* cult which is not only revered by the Kandhas of this area but also the local Hindus as well as the Zamindar families of Jarasingh and Atgaon, etc., offer their worships to this cult. The traditional legend also connects this cult with the ruling family of Patna on the eve of a war between Patna and Bastar State. The cult is very elaborately worshipped at Jarasingha.

The other social divisions of Kandhas like *Bachha Timkia* and *Binjhalka* have come into origin

with the Majhi Kandhas on their arrival in this area with communities of their own as well as untouchable castes. When a Kandha takes a wife from other communities he is allowed to form another section of Kandha instead of being excommunicated. The original Kandhas established marriage relationship with such a new section as mentioned above. There is another section called Ganka Kandhas who inhabit Belgaon and Titlagarh areas. All the sections mentioned above can bring brides from that section. The Kandhas of this area say that the Ganka Kandhas have no brother clan in this area. The Kandhas have been so much diversified socially that on the eve of marriage negotiations the elders take immense trouble to trace out the clan ancestry so as to decide whether negotiation and ties could be possible.

Kandhas of this area trace their descent through their father line. The organisation of family is same as other local castes with the father becoming the head of family till he becomes very old when the eldest brother assumes the position of head of the family with regard to family affairs. But soon after marriage, sons build separate houses to live separately. Thus the nuclear type of family still continues although brothers unite to cultivate the family agricultural land and share the produce equally.

The institution of marriage has undergone change with its underlying system of belief. Important among this is the change in the traditional system of payment of bride price to the bride's father. Today the bride's father is no more in advantageous position to enjoy the bride-price. He has to present his daughter and son-in-law equal amount of gift to tally with the bride-price. If the bride's father only receives and never spends in presents to the married couple, he is socially decried. This is in par with the local Hindu custom of presenting dowry to son-in-law and daughter. Introduction of this new trait of status consciousness following Hindu social custom has resulted in another problem. Many young Kandha boys are unable to marry as a result of the strict principles that are being followed with regard to payment of bride-price. The father of a bride does not show any inclination to relax the payment of bride-price which amounts to as much as seven heads of cattle, new clothes for the parents and maternal uncle of the bride, one goat or sheep for feast, 2 pots of liquor and one *puti* of rice. Besides, the groom has to spend to entertain bride's party on the day of marriage. Kandhas say that the father of the bride could relax the payment of bride-price, in consideration of the paying capacity of the groom. But during these days they are insisting upon the full payment as a result of which many young men cannot

marry which again reflects on the marriageable girls who cannot marry in absence of wealthy grooms.

The rituals in the ceremony of marriage have also changed in accordance with the pattern of Hindu customs like playing of "areca nuts" by the couple, sending of *Jalingia* (in the pattern of *Bardhara*), to bring the bride to the groom's village on the day of marriage. The ceremony of *Nirbandha* or ceremonial fixing up of marriage has been introduced which was not there previously.

The forms of marriage have, however, not changed much. The most common form of marriage is known as *Biha* which has been described above and is done after negotiations between the groom's father and bride's father. The next form is the system of capturing the bride by force. If the girl, however, gives her consent her parents are paid bride-price which is less than the amount paid in marriages by negotiation. In another form of marriage the girl forcibly comes to the house of the groom and her parents in this case depend upon the mercy of the groom as to the payment of bride-price. The groom may give whatever he likes, which is nominal.

*Religion*—Kandha religion during these days essentially remains as a tribal religion although influence of Hindusim is found to be conspicuous. From

accounts given below it may be seen that some of the tribal cults are in the process of achieving the status of Hindu Gods whereas some others are still in the transitional phase. There are certain others who are still worshipped in the traditional way.

By observing *Laxmipuja*, *Ditia Osa* and *Raxi bandhan* Kandhas have taken a further step towards Hindusim so far their religion is concerned. Yet most of the deities are associated either with agricultural activities or with diseases, especially those that break out in epidemic form. So they are required to be appeased annually and occasionally. The spirits responsible for diseases are generally worshipped during that period while the agricultural deities receive their share of offerings at the beginning or end of those particular operations over which they preside.

The religious performances are mostly communal in nature. All Kandha households of the village jointly worship the deities and all contribute their share. The collection of subscription and the management of the whole affair together with the actual performance of the ritual rest with the *Jhankar* (Village-priest). In spite of this, the villagers cannot remain at home or follow their daily pursuits undisturbed as they are required to participate in the performances as observers. It is

interesting to note that excepting the *Jhankar* or *Dehuri* no other Kandha households sacrifice animals themselves.

The religion of Kandhas of this area is mainly based on the belief in the cult of two Gods, namely, *Patkhanda* and *Sikerpat* or *Sikelpat*. Kandhas of Bhuanpara who have been described as migrants from Kandhamal have greater devotion to *Patkhanda* cult. Kandhas residing around Ghuna and Jamut have greater devotion for *Sikerpat* cult. In other words Kandhas who worship *Sikerpat* live in a hilly and forested area where as the *Patkhanda* worshippers live in comparatively plain, and open areas. Thus the Kandhas worshipping the *Sikerpat* cult are in a more tradition directed with regard to their religious practices.

The *Patkhanda* is worshipped in the month of *Dassarah*. It begins with the 9th day of *Aswina* during dark fortnight and continues for 16 days till the *Dassarah* day (10th day of bright fortnight). Prior to this festival, the *Jhankar* collects subscription of Re. 1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  seer of rice from all the households to purchase *Puja* articles and sacrificial animals (at least 8 to 10 numbers of he-goats).

On the first day of the festival, the *Dehuri* visits each household in the night to get *Bandana* (ceremonial welcome). The owner of the house washes his feet and

welcomes him by circumbulating a lamp in a winnowing fan and throwing some *arua* (raw) rice. He observes fasting throughout the day.

On the second day at dawn the *Dehuri* takes bath and proceeds to *Patkhanda* shrine accompanied by the *Jhankar* and the drum-beaters. Sometimes, females also join the procession to blow conch shells. The deity is brought to the village in a procession by *Dehuri*, *Jhankar* and *Pujari*. *Dehuri* gets possessed and practically rolls on the ground. He is carried to the shrine where he forecasts about the health and wealth of the people. Those afflicted by illness, approach him one after another and the *Dehuri* prescribes medicine. Hindu castes also approach the *Dehuri* with sacrificial animals seeking cure. The trance and return to normal continues alternately till evening. In the evening he becomes senseless. Then the *Jhankar* starts the rituals and the *Pujari* kills the animals one after the other. Gradually the *Dehuri* comes to senses and joins the worship of *Patkhanda*. The sacrificed animals are then cooked with rice and eaten by all male members. The heads of the sacrificed animals are shared by *Dehuri*, *Jhankar* and *Pujari*. The drum-beaters get only remuneration of Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 each. The ceremony continues till the day when the *Patkhanda* is taken back to the original seat in the jungle from where it is brought to the village for worship.

*Patkhanda* is worshipped and propitiated in order to bring good harvest and ensure general well-being. However, it is believed that sterile women by propitiating this God can bear children. The priest who is possessed by the God foretells about the child bearing capacity. The couple are asked to lie before the altar and the priest puts his feet on their belly as well as back.

The ceremonial bringing of the God from *Jungle* to *Desh* for the ceremony may be said to indicate the onward movement of a tribal cult to the plains inhabited by caste Hindus. The original seat of the God in the *Jungle* symbolises the original abode of tribals and its carriage to *Desh* symbolises its acceptance by Hindus living in plains.

The cult of *Sikerpat* is the clan deity of the 'Khadange Chak' Kandhas which is at present worshipped by the local Hindus. The original seat of God which is believed to be on the top of the hill of *Sikerpat* at an altitude of 2,000 ft. is no more visited by Kandhas. The offerings are made in a site near village Ghuna. The Kandhas relate a legend regarding the deity's desire to be worshipped near Ghuna. Once the priest went up the hill and after worship came down forgetting to bring the jug in which he carried water. When he again climbed up to get it back the *Sikerpat* was sharing the offerings

along with other Gods. An additional share was automatically formed and the God wanted to know who else was near about. The priest had to reveal his presence. The God was angry and threw the jug which fell near village Ghuna. The God ordered the priest not to come to offer worship on the hill top any more and worship Him where the jug fell. There is no other indication except two to three stone slabs, one of which is pointed out to be the jug.

The ceremony is observed twice in a year. Once on the 2nd day of *Ashar* and the other on the 5th or 10th day in the month of *Pus*. There are certain restrictions observed by the participants as well as onlookers. Nobody should wear shoe or shirt while going to see or take part in the ceremony. No female is allowed to witness the ceremony. Even the wife of the priest is not allowed to come near the sacred spot on the eve of the ceremony. No *dhoti* should be worn in the manner of clean caste Hindus. *Dhoti* worn should rest on or above knees. No cycle or any vehicle is allowed to be ridden by the visitors. Nobody is allowed to enter the area who has drunk liquor. No umbrella is allowed to be carried to the sacred site. These are certain taboos which are observed by all going to observe the ceremony or to offer worship. The priest who is a Kandha is never allowed to cross river Tel. He may go in any other direction except crossing the river Tel.

A piece of bamboo is installed to symbolise the deity. The priest falls in trance and foretells about the general well-being of the area, about crops, harvest, death due to natural calamity and attack of wild animals. The characteristic of *Patkhandā* cult to enable barren couple to bear children is, however, not found in this cult. When all the sacrifices and rituals are over, the priest goes with *aruā* rice and sacrificial meat to a spring where his wife would be waiting. Both of them cook, eat and go back to their home.

*Pahagiren*, a female deity is also worshipped along with *Sikerpat*. *Pahagiren* is believed to be the sister of *Sikerpat* and therefore She is equally revered by the people.

Next to *Pahagiren* is *Kandhen budhi*, a female deity represented by a small clay mound on a clay altar in each village. A coneshaped wooden cover is always given on the clay mound and the altar is ceremonially adorned with chalk-clay, etc., during *Puja*. This deity is worshipped twice in a year, once in the month of *Asar* and in the month of *Bhadrab*, during *Nuakhia* ceremony.

*Bhuasani*, another female deity of the village is worshiped in a fixed place at the outskirts of the village under a mango grove, in the months of *Asar* and *Bhadrab*. This deity is believed to patrol the village throughout the night and protects the village from attack of evil spirits. She is offered sacrifices by the Vewtakers.

*Samalai*, another female deity is also worshipped only with *Bhuasani*, in the months of *Asar* and *Bhadrab*, during *Nuakhia* ceremony. Generally 2 to 3 fowls or two he-goats are sacrificed before Her. She is considered to be very arrogant. If She is not properly propitiated, the villagers may suffer from epidemics. Hence along with *Bhuasani*, *Samalai* is also worshipped with separate sacrifices. The following festivals are observed by Desia Kandhas.

*Kada Jatra*—It is observed in each Kandha village in the month of *Asar* on full-moon day. Individual families contribute only half-seer of rice. All take bath early in the morning and assemble near *Kandhunibudhi* to observe the *Puja*. Then the *Jhankar* starts *Puja*. He draws four compartments and places four heaps of *aruā* rice in each of them. Four fowls are fed with those *aruā* rice and then sacrificed in each compartment. After it the *Jhankar* proceeds to each deity, and sacrifices only one fowl near each deity. For the whole night the people get themselves engaged with hilarious drinking and merry-making.

After the *Puja* is held, the villagers start weeding in their respective paddy fields. It is customary not to do the same before the *Puja*.

*Nuakhia*—It is first fruit ceremony of *saria*, an early paddy, observed in the month of *Bhadrab*,

though *saria* paddy is harvested before-hand. On that day members of each household take bath in the morning. Ladies smear the courtyard, etc., with cowdung and the boys adorn their houses with mango and *sal*-twigs. After the bath, the children generally put on new clothes. The head of the family brings some rice and prepares a paste along with other fruits available locally, which he offers before the ancestors along with sacrifice of a fowl. After that all the villagers assemble near *Kandhunibudhi* to observe the festival ceremonially. The *Jhankar* first worships *Kandhunibudhi* by offering milk and ghee, and then sacrifices one goat. He then goes to other tutelary deities and offers cooked rice and sacrifices a chick near each deity. The villagers then circumbulate the entire village twice along with the *Jhankar* and drum-beaters. Later on they assemble again near *Kandhunibudhi*, where the sacrificed animals are cooked with *saria*-rice and taken by the male members only. The liquor, prepared from the common fund prior to the festival is shared by all.

The articles used in performing various ceremonies are described to indicate the association of Hindu beliefs to the tribal ceremonies.

### A. *Kandheni budhi*, the village Goddess

(1) *Bel leaves*, (2) *Aruachaul* (raw rice) (3) *Milk*, (4) *Ghee*, (5) *Dhup*, (6) *Sindur* (Vermilion), (7) *Mandar* flower, (8) *Dahanaleaves*, (9) *Cocoanut*, (10) *Fowls*, (11) *Goat*, (12) *Sheep*, (13) *Pigs*, (14) *Buffalo*, (15) *Duck*, (16) *Liquor*.

### B. *Sikerpat*

(1) *Aruachaul* (raw rice), (2) *Milk*, (3) *Bans* (Bamboo) (4) *Sindur* (Vermilion), (5) *Ghee*, (6) *Dhup*, (7) *Cocoanut*, (8) *Siaklipatar* (Leave of elephant reeper), (9) *Goat*, (10) *Sheep*, (11) *Buffalo*, (12) *Fowl*, (13) *Pigeon*.

### C *Patkhanda*

(1) *Belpatra* (Bel leaves), (2) *Sitkel* *patra*, (appearing turmeric leaf), (3) *Arua* rice, (4) *Ghee*, (5) *Dhup*, (6) *Sindur*, (7) *Milk*, (8) *Mandar* Flower, (9) *Dahanapatar*, (10) *New cloth*, (11) *Cakes*, (12) *Cocoanut*, (13) *He-goat*, (14) *He-sheep*, (15) *Bauti* (sacred umbrella).

It is interesting to note that the cult of *Patkhanda* has achieved the status of a Hindu cult by discarding the traditional *Kandha* ritual objects like liquor, buffalo which are strictly forbidden to be offered to a Hindu deity. High caste Hindus also refrain from taking liquor, buffalo meat and fowl. Introduction of certain objects like *Muan*, (sweets made of molasses and fried rice), *cocoanut*, *bauti* (the sacred umbrella) indicate the influence of Hindu ritual in the ceremony.

In the cult of *Sikerpat* it is observed that some of the traditional *Kandha* rituals are discarded. Certain items like liquor and sacrifice of pigs have been

discarded though fowl and buffalo sacrifices are still practised. This gives the blending of tribal cult with Hindu one.

*Kandhunibudhi* or the village Goddess is taken as earth Goddess in the realm of traditional Kandha pantheon. The Goddess unhesitatingly demands liquor, fowls, pigs, buffalo and ducks to be offered to her although some of the Kandhas have discarded the practice of eating the meat of buffalo and pig.

From the above discussion it is evident that the *Sikerpat* cult has reached the transitional phase in the process of achieving the status of a Hindu cult whereas *Patkhanda* cult has, to a great extent, achieved it. But the Kandhas retain their identity by adhering to the worship of *Kandhunibudhi* in the traditional manner. The prevalence of tribal cult amidst the Hindu population of this area indicates that the Kandhas were the earlier inhabitants of this area prior to the inflow of Hindu castes.

#### The Gond

Gonds of this area have totally forgotten their aboriginal Gondi language and have adopted Oriya as their mother-tongue. Some of them have faint memory of a traditional legend according to which the remote ancestors of the tribe were believed to have descended from two birds. Another story describes how the forefathers of

the tribe originated from the *urin* of Lord Mahadeo. Some others say that the tribe descended from Takhuaka, the son of Bharat. Whatever may be the story of their origin the Gond tribe of Orissa in general is divided into a number of sub-tribes which are independent units. In course of time these sub-tribes have become endogamous. The Gonds of this area call themselves as Dhurua Gonds, Raj Gonds or simply Gonds claiming superiority over other sub-tribes.

#### Units of Social Organisation

*Family*—The smallest social unit of the Gond is family. Both simple and compound families are found in their society. Compound families arise from rare occurrences of polygynous marriage and widow remarriage having issues through her former husband. Generally even after marriage, married sons with their wives and children live together with their parents. Thus joint families are invariably noticed. Whenever there is quarrel among the brothers, there will be establishment of separate hearth while the ancestral property is held jointly till the father is alive. Family among them is patrilineal and patripotestal.

*Clan*—In this area the tribe is subdivided into a number of totemistic clans called *Barga*. The *Barga* names denote different animals, vegetables and occupations, which are said to be somehow or other related to the members of

respective *Bargas*. Some of them have faint memory of a legend describing their association with these *Bargas*. In the beginning Gonds went out in search of the Great God. On their way they came across a river flooded to the brim. They plunged into it and with the assistance of these totems they were able to cross the river. Since that day they were named after those totems. Their leader also told them to honour these totems and to abstain from killing or eating them. Among these *Bargas* there was no hierarchy. In the past, people from *Dhurua Barga* were eligible for becoming the tribal head (*malik*). Similarly people of *Ghadei Barga* were employed as *Panigrahi* (tribal priest who officiates in the ceremony for readmitting the outcasted persons). Some *Bargas* have been split up into parts. For example, the *Pata Barga* is divided into *Kosala Pata* and *Jagat Pata*.

*Bargas* are strictly exogamous and when any one marries in his/her own *Barga* is outcasted till the marital alliance is continued. *Bargas* are patrilineal and a woman after her marriage acquires the *Barga* of her husband.

A number of *Bargas* stand to each other as *Bhai Bargas* and some others as *Bandhu Bargas*. Thus a number of *Bargas* are grouped together into a wider group known as *Dia*. There are *Ek Dia*, *Do Dia*, *Tin Dia*, *Char Dia*,

*Panch Dia*, *Chha Dia*, and *Sat Dia*. These names have been derived from the number of Gods the members of the *Barga* worship. All *Bargas* of a *Dia* are *Bhai Bargas* and marriage amongst them is prohibited.

*Lineage*—Each *Barga* is composed of several lineages (*Kutum*). All members of a particular *Barga* living in a village are considered as members of one lineage, while persons of the same *Barga* living in different villages do not constitute one lineage. At the death of a member all households of that particular lineage observe death pollution. The eldest male member of the lineage is respected and obeyed by other members of the lineage.

*Marriage*—The tribe is strictly endogamous. Any person marrying outside is outcasted. As mentioned earlier *Bargas* and *Dias* are exogamous. Marriage among them is normally monogamous although polygyny is not disapproved in special circumstances such as barrenness of the first wife.

As a rule they can practise both adult and child marriages. In practice adult marriage is common among them because child marriage involves more expenditure. The age at first marriage varies from 18 to 26 years in case of boys and 14 to 22 years in case of girls. Boy is always older than the girl. Generally parents take initiative and shoulder entire responsibility of the marriage of their children. As such, the boys and girls have

very little say in the selection of spouses. Premarital familiarity between boys and girls is looked down and considered antisocial.

There is provision in Gond society for marriage by service, by exchange, by capture, by intrusion, by elopement and by negotiation. Widow remarriage and divorce by either party with the approval of the caste council are allowed.

*Religion*—The religion of Gond is a conglomeration of beliefs and practices belonging to both tribal as well as Hindu pantheon. Incorporation of Hindu Gods into their pantheon has been a long and gradual process during their association with the Hindus in this area since time immemorial. The tribal conception of a high God, namely, *Bada Deo* has found a counterpart which is also worshipped by Gonds as *Bhagaban* with similar attributes of *Bada Deo*. The difference lies in the fact that *Bada Deo* is worshipped both at the tribal as well as clan level. *Bada Deo* at tribal level is almost synonymous with *Bhagaban*. But *Bada Deo* at clan level is a tribal deity propitiated for general well-being.

Household deities also are not purely tribal among Gonds of this area. In addition to existing tribal Gods like *Bhaenu Debota*, *Paikra Debota*, *Dulha Debota*, Hindu Gods like *Narayan*, *Dharam* and *Panda* have been adopted by Gonds. *Dulha Deo* is believed to reside in a corner of the main room near

hearth. Ancestral spirits are also considered as Gods and are invoked at the time of first fruit eating ceremonies. *Bhima Thakur* is considered as cattle deity who saves cattle from decay and God and Goddesses like, *Bagheswarpat*, *Dassani*, *Bastaria*, *Surjun Mukhi*, *Bilum Dei*, *Chatra Bauti*, are considered to reside in fields and mountains.

*Gabadi Budh* is a tribal village deity who looks after the villagers, well being. Gonds also worship *Kandhen Budhi* where they live along with Kondhas. *Mati Mata* or *Prithin Mata* is identified as earth goddess. She is worshipped on occasions like first fruit eating, sowing and such other ceremonies. She is believed to be not always satisfied with the offerings and torments till she is satisfied by causing diseases.

*Ganga Devi* is considered as river deity which is no doubt a Hindu Goddess and *Masan Debota* is the God of burial ground who lives with the spirits of dead till they are united with *Bada Deo*. These ideas appear to have been taken from Hindu belief.

The priest of *Kunda Deo* is called *Pujari* or *Kumara* who were being provided with land by the ex-ruler. The priest of *Gaboda Debt* belongs to the family of first settlers of the village hence, hereditary. Household deities are worshipped by family heads. They take the help of local Brahmins to worship certain Hindu Gods.

The festivals of Gonds can be categorised as belonging to traditional ones and newly acquired ones as a result of association with Hindus. The traditional festivals are also gradually acquiring Hindu way of worship. For example *Gauri Puja* which is mainly performed to worship different totems of Gond clans has taken a new direction by worshipping *Iswar-Parbati* cult which is essentially of Hindu origin. Offerings of coconut, plantain, flowers are ritual objects of Hindus. Those are associated with sacrificial animals like goats and fowls. The priest is the *Dehuri* of a village.

*Pus Puja* is performed to worship the great *Kunda Deo*, the priest is *Kumara*. The shrine is cleared and worshipped by the priest. Fowls and goats are sacrificed by the *Kalkumar* or the assistant priest. Their heads are cooked and eaten by priests. The rest are taken away by those who bring the animals. When they return the priest is honoured by the villagers with blowing of conch shell and *hulhuli* (a Hindu way of welcome). Next day the *Kumara* goes to worship at the shrine. Being possessed by the deity he takes with the villagers on behalf of the deity. The festivals lasts for four days.

*Lochhe loka Puja* is observed in honour of all field, mountain and forest Gods specifically for which hares are sacrificed. Village *Dehuri* performs the worship during the

dark fortnight of the month of *Pusa*. *Masan Debata* is also worshipped in the same month to save people from the wrath of evil spirits.

*Huma Devi Puja* is prototype of *Agnipuja* of Hindus on the full-moon day of the month of *Magh* (*February*). But Gonds perform it in the *Falgun* (*March*) fullmoon day. Sacred fire is lighted by the village *Dehuri* and the cattle are washed with warm water caused by heating iron implements and inserting them inside a water vessel. *Mangala Osa*, essentially a Hindu festival is observed by the Gonds with the help of a Brahmin priest. *Mangala* is identified with Goddess of wealth (*Laxmi*).

Religious festivals connected with agriculture such as first sowing and transplantation are observed by the villagers as well as individual families during the month of *April* (*Baisakh*) and *July* (*Asadh*) respectively. In addition first fruit-eating ceremony of rice is also performed in the month of *Bhadrab* (*September*). *Bhaijatu* festival is a new introduction from Hindu religion in the month of *October* (*Aswina*) during *Dasserah*. *Tulsi* plant is worshipped by few Gonds during the month of *Kartika* (*November*) which is called *Kartika Brata*. *Sudasa Brata* is also observed by Gond women with the help of Brahmin priest. Before reaping lowland paddy Gonds perform *Mailipuja* in honour of the Goddess *Mailipidhi* enshrined at the end of

the village under a grove. The village priest fasts on a day fixed by the villagers during the month of *Kartika* (November). This Goddess is indentified with earth Goddess and worshipped for bumper crop. Fowls and pigeons are sacrificed during night. *Chordia Puja* is performed by individual families or groups of families of a single lineage at the time of reaping.

Gonds also believe in witchcraft and sorcery and the man who practises these are called *Pangunia* and is very much dreaded. There are witch doctors who also cure these types of cases. They are known as *Raulia*. *Raulia* can also be a *Pangunia* and practises both black and white magic. Gonds also believe in ghosts whom they call *Preta*. The souls of deceased are believed to roam as *Pretas* till they are united with *Bada Deo*.

In brief it may be stated that the Gonds have incorporated a number of Hindu Gods and Goddesses into their pantheon although they continue to worship their traditional deities. Their religious festivals are getting transformed into Hindu way of worshipping which is observed from the use of Brahmin priests and ritual objects like cocoanut, plantain, conch and *hulhuli* (sacred sound by women).

*Economy*—Economy of Kandhas and Gonds of this area is mainly based on agriculture. Agriculture alone is the main-stay of the people, whether Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste or their clean Castes of

the area. Shifting cultivation has been extinct due to absence of forest in the area. Instead, settled cultivation has been resorted to by the people for many generations. Collection of minor forest-produce for house construction, for use as household articles and other materials and for supplementing their diet has become a risky job due to rigidity in forest rules. Scope of wage earning is limited to seasonal requirements of the local cultivators who need extra labourers and for some developmental activities. Live-stock raising for cultivation and also for some additional income is not so common among them. Also they get nothing out of rural arts and craft. Local trading and business are the monopoly of a few families, more particularly of Marwaris, Gaudas and Telis who have settled in the area. Service, either Government or private has not been a significant source of employment for them. Only five persons are working as peons in the Grama Panchayat and Co-operative Graingola.

From the above consideration we find that Kandhas have no other sources of livelihood except agriculture. But this is quite insufficient to meet their annual consumption. So they are forced, under circumstances to borrow. Kandhas avail different credit agencies like Graingola, local Marwaris, Gaudas and Telis. Also they receive Taccavi loan to improve their agriculture.

*Agriculture*—The table below shows that there is overwhelming dependancy on cultivation. As many as 147 out of 227 households depend on cultivation as their main source of livelihood, while only a few depend on wage earning and service. The scope of wage-earning is limited mainly to the demand of well-to-do cultivators at the time of transplanting, weeding and harvesting. Occasionally there is scope for working as labourer for contractors. As mentioned earlier only five persons have joined

service as there was scope for appointment as secretary, watchman and peon in the Grama Panchayat and Graingolas recently. In Trade and Business not a single person is found to be engaged. Thus we can conclude that cultivation is the mainstay of these people.

*Land*—To any agrarian people land is the most valuable possession. People whether Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes or non-Scheduled Castes of this area are settled agriculturists.

TABLE No. 1

SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS ON THE BASIS OF MAIN OCCUPATION

Serial No.	Categories of people	No. of households engaged in—						Total No. of household.	REMARKS
		Cultivation	Wage earning	Trade and Commerce	In Service	In Village Crafts	Caste Occupation		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1	Scheduled Tribes.	77	17	..	3	..	..	97	
2	Scheduled Castes.	10	18	..	1	..	..	29	
3	Others	..	60	32	..	1	..	8	101
Total ..		147	67	..	5	..	8	227	

TABLE No. 2

## NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS AND SIZE OF LANDHOLDING

Serial No.	Categories of people	Total No. of households	No. of landless	No. of households having			REMARKS
				Less than 1 acre	Between 1 acre to 8 acres	Above 9 acres	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1	Scheduled Tribes.	97	6	12	55	24	
2	Scheduled Castes.	29	8	5	16	..	
3	Others	101	16	17	62	6	
Total ..		227	30	34	133	30	

From the Table No. 2 it can be seen that there are landless households numbering 6, 8 and 16 belonging to Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Castes, respectively. Among Scheduled Tribes 12 households have less than 1 acre of land. Similarly, 5 and 17 households belonging to Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes, respectively have owned less than one acre. 55 households belonging to Sche-

duled Tribes possess land between 1 to 8 acres. Corresponding figures for Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes are 16 and 62, respectively. Only 24 and 6 households belonging to Scheduled Tribes and non-Scheduled Castes possess land amounting to 9 acres or more. Thus it can be concluded that majority of households possess less land. A table given below will show the market price and average yield per acre from each types of land in rice cultivation.

TABLE No. 3

## SHOWING MARKET PRICE OF LAND AND AVERAGE YIELD PER ACRE FROM DIFFERENT TYPES OF LAND

Sl. No.	Type of land as per local classification	Market price per an acre	Approximate yield per an acre	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Bahal	.. Rs. 1,000	500 to 550 Kgs.	
2	Berni	.. Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 6,000	300 to 350 Kgs.	
3	Mal	.. Rs. 400 to Rs. 5,000	200 to 250 Kgs.	
4	Ant	.. ..	100 to 125 Kgs.	

NOTE—Figures given in the above tables are approximate, and may vary from place to place. But it is clear that price of land depends on the value of its output.

From the above table it is clear that *Bahal* type of land (deep and wet land) are more fertile. Next comes the *Berni* type of land. These two varieties of land are valued more. It is a matter of prestige and pride to own these types of land. A real cultivator does not like to part with such type of land. As regards sale of *Ant* type of land (up-land or dry-land) there is a popular belief that a person who sells it will have no child and hence his family will disintegrate (*Antkuda*) after his death. These petty cultivators solely depend on monsoon for water in their cultivation. When there is dearth of water as it happened in the last year, there is drought.

*Live-stock*—As they are settled agriculturists, they require bullocks and buffalows for ploughing. Moreover, demand of their religious practices compel them to keep goat, fowl, pig and sheep for sacrifice. They also sell few varieties of live-stock for cash. The people of this area keep six varieties of domestic animals for various purposes. Among these animals the number of cows and bullocks is the biggest. Now they are afraid of keeping large number of

domestic animals after the reservation of forest.

*Crops*—They grow a number of crops in different types of land. Among cereals they grow small, medium and late varieties of paddy, *mandia* (ragi), *gulzi*, *kuda*, *maka*, (maize) and *Jangarla*, *Arhar*, *Mung*, *kolthi* and *birhi* are the important varieties among the pulses. Niger and mustard are also grown. Cultivation of tobacco and sugarcane as cash crops are undertaken by some households. Growing of vegetables in homestead land in the rainy season is a common practice among them. Rice which is their main crop is grown only once in a year. In the dry-land one can grow two crops, viz., one food crop and one variety of pulses in a year.

During our field investigation in this area an attempt was made to collect quantitative data on agricultural output of different varieties during the last year from two villages, namely, Ghuna and Dangargaon. However, it is difficult to collect exact information from them, the approximate quantities which have been noted in a table below will give some idea about some of the important crops.—

TABLE No. 4  
SHOWING AMOUNTS OF AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT OF SOME IMPORTANT CROPS  
(In Kilogram)

Serial No.	Crops		By Scheduled Tribes	By Scheduled Castes	By others
(1)	(2)	..	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	Paddy	..	57,600	2,080	19,680
2	Suan	..	330	..	30
3	Mandia	..	245	..	..
4	Birhi	..	393	2	6

TABLE No. 4—*concl'd.*

Serial No.	Crops	( In Kilograms )		
		By Scheduled Tribes	By Scheduled Castes	By others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
5	Maize	.. 783	60	180
6	Janjarla	.. ..	..	..
7	Mung	.. 1,213	120	186
8	Kolthi	.. 1,949	60	546
9	Niger	.. 1,689	33	124
10	Mustard	.. 183	45	90

The above table shows that they mostly grow many items of cereal. It is interesting to note that they cultivate some early varieties of paddy, *suau*, *kuda*, *mandia* in the upland and maize in the homestead land for their dietary requirements in the lean months of September and October when the main crop of rice in the wet-land is not ready for harvest. Cultivation of vegetables is not popular among them.

Use of chemical fertilisers, green manures and improved seeds are not commonly used by them. Only a small number of them have started using.

*Wage system*—The scope for wage-earning as mentioned earlier is limited to the demand of the well-to-do cultivators requiring extraneous labour at different stages of agricultural operations and occasionally by the contractors

undertaking construction work and forest cutting. An agricultural labourer of either sex gets wage mostly in the shape of grains at the rate of 4 measures (*adda*) per day. In construction work the rate of wage goes up to Rs. 1.25 P. per day while the forest contractors pay only Rs. 1.12 per day. In the absence of any industrial or mining undertaking there is no permanent scope for wage-earning.

*Forestry*—In the past the economy of the tribals of this area was forest-oriented to a great extent. Forest provided them with various kinds of roots, fruits, leaves and bamboo shoots for food materials for house construction and for fashioning a number of wooden household implements and fuel. It was an unlimited source of herbs and medicinal plants. Hunting of wild game for meat was a common

practice. Forest was of immense help at the time of natural calamities like flood or drought. It was a permanent source of livelihood for the poorer section of the people.

Present forest rules have restricted many of the privileges of the tribals and others. Forests are also not so rich in minor produce. The dependance on forest is gradually declining and there are many restrictions. On many occasions people have to encroach on forests and are prosecuted. Forests allowed for the use of the villagers are not good. Last year, when there was drought in the area, Government did not liberalised restrictions to help the people. Rural arts and crafts excluding blacksmithy, pottery and basketry which are the traditional occupations of *Badiha* (Kamar), *Kumbhari* and *Mahari* (Ganda) castes are not resorted to as gainful economic pursuits. At their leisure men and

women make rope, broomsticks and furniture or wooden household implements mainly for their own use. Reservation of forests from which they used to collect raw materials, is responsible for the fast decline of these crafts.

*Expenditure*—So far as the pattern of expenditure is concerned people spend the highest on food. Then comes social functions like marriage, death and child birth and other rituals. No doubt, they spend some amount on drink, dress and medicine. Expenditure on transport cost and repair of houses is quite negligible. So far as their monthly expenditure is concerned they spend some amount on the above items but not regularly. Table No. 5 shows the monthly expenditure of 17 households of village Bhuanpara as data could not be collected from other two villages.

TABLE No. 5  
MONTHLY EXPENDITURE

Sl. No	Tribe and Caste	Food	Drink and Intoxicant	Social Religious function	Social function	Dress	Educa- tion	Health	Fashion and Ornament	Guest	Travel- ling	Repairing of houses and household article	Total expendi- ture	Total income
		Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.	Rs. P.
1	Scheduled Tribe	1,848.75	33.62	43.91	338.17	134.57	--	15.62	23.89	13.92	19.30	2,471.75	1,408.00	
2	Scheduled Caste	1,903.00	42.00	26.53	33.32	92.01	--	0.46	4.59	22.28	2.42	23.17	2,149.78	1,735.00
3	Others	7,259.47	136.62	90.34	440.82	569.61	-	16.83	46.97	87.22	9.60	248.70	8,906.18	7,349.00
	<b>Total</b>	11,011.22	212.24	160.78	812.31	796.19	..	17.29	67.18	133.39	25.94	291.17	1357.71	10,492.00

*Indebtedness*—The people of this area like any other part of Orissa groan under the problem of indebtedness. As mentioned earlier, majority of the households are not self-sufficient. They are also not self-supporting cultivators. They have yet to take up gainfull employment. They have neither training nor financial capacity to undertake trade and commerce. They mainly live on agriculture and allied activities. Hence when there is failure of

crop due to flood or drought, they have to run for credit for consumption and cultivation. This has happened during the last year when there was drought. During social events like marriage, funeral and other festivals, loans are usually incurred.

The table given below will show the extent and average amount of loan per household in surveyed villages.

TABLE No. 6

Sl. No.	Cetagories of people	Total No. of families	No. of families.	LOAN				Percent age of family with loan.	Remarks
				Total amount borrowed		Average loan as family			
				In cash	In kind	In cash	In kind		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	10
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Per cent	
1	Scheduled Tribe..	97	64	4,734.75	204.82	73.98	320	66	
2	Scheduled Caste..	29	17	330.78	34.05	19.56	200	58	
3	Others	101	56	1,520.18	57.63	27.14	103	55	
Total		227	137	6,585.71	296.50	38.07	217	60	

This shows that as many as 64 households out of 97 belonging to Scheduled Tribe are indebted. They constitute 66 per cent of the total tribal households. The average amount of debt per household among them is Rs. 73.89 in cash and 320 Kgs. in kind. Similarly among the Scheduled Castes 58.6 per cent of the total households are indebted. The average loan per household comes

to Rs. 19.46 in cash and 200 Kgs. in kind. The position of debt among the non-Scheduled Castes is different. There are as many as 55 per cent of total households are indebted. The average debt comes to Rs. 27.14 in cash and 103 Kgs in kind. Last year there was drought in the area and the villagers were advanced loans by official agency. These figures also include the old loans.

**Conclusion**

Agriculture is the mainstay of the area. The tribals have long forgotten the practice of shifting cultivation. Methods of cultivation being primitive the rate of production is quite low. On the other hand pressure on land is on increase due to restrictions in the forest and growth of population future. The most vital problem which they face at present in their agricultural activities, is the absence of irrigation facilities. As a result of this they solely depend on monsoons. When there is no rain, there is crop failure. This happened last year. All these make the economy of the area unstable. Certain measures given

below may improve the situation :—

- (a) Landless tribal families may be allotted waste land and provided with irrigation facilities.
- (b) There are a number of rivers and rivulets with perennial flow which are suitable for lift irrigation.
- (b) They may be allowed to utilize the products available in the neighbouring forests, for their domestic consumption. In this respect the concerned authorities can be instructed to treat them sympathetically to enable them to be economically stable.



Tribal Chiefs of Orissa with the Prime Minister at New Delhi,  
along with a Research Officer of T. R. B.

**T. B. NAIK**

### **Introduction**

In the prehistoric caves of Parchmarhi we find symbolic paintings of hunters and animals. That is an eloquent witness of early man's aesthetic sense. This antiquity of art proves it to be a basic form of human behaviour. So also does its universality among the living races of man, all of whom have some or the other characteristic form of art. This can be proved by a survey of tribal arts of Madhya Pradesh, which has more than 60 tribal groups living almost in all parts of the State. I will confine myself to arts which have physical media and will leave out music, dance and literature. I will only make a rapid survey of some of the contemporary tribal arts and not analyse them from an anthropological point of view or as an art critic.

### **Artistic village sites**

The tribal's aesthetic sense can be appreciated from his selection of village sites and house construction. The plan of a Baiga village gives the impression of energy, equality and community loyalty. The Baiga have an eye for a good

## **TRIBAL ARTS OF MADHYA PRADESH**

site. They set their villages in places convenient for *bewar* but it is hard to believe that aesthetic considerations are ignored. Bohi is a charming village with a waterfall near it and with a view of undulating hills dense with forest. There are other beautiful Baiga villages like Rapnidarar visited by every wind with vistas of great beauty just visible between its surrounding trees and Amadob in the quiet forest glades.

### **The Oraon Sarna**

Outside the Oraon *basti* is a beautiful grove of trees called *sarna* sacred to the principal village-deity called *Sarna Burhia*. Ancient custom forbids any one to cut trees or branches of trees standing on the Sarna groves. No Bhuinhar of the village may take or use the wood of *sarna* trees. Other symbiotic tribes also have the village *sarna*, which is really artistic, soul-soothing and cool, where one would like to sit for hours and read or mediate. And if you want to see how aesthetic calculations count in the selection of a site you have to see the *ashram* of Gahra guru near Gai

Guda, Raigarh, where he has created a magical place near a small waterfall with caves to live in and rest, forest trees growing one upon the other and fruit trees now young but happy in growing there.

### Beautiful Kawar Houses

In house construction nothing more spacious and beautiful than a Kawar house has been witnessed by Madhya Pradesh. The thick, tidy mud walls, the relief ornamentation thereon, the long *parchhi* and the utilitarian rooms so uniformly made : are breath-takingly beautiful.

The fences round the tribal houses and the fields near them are also very artistic. The Madia weave a fence from branches of trees. It stands erect in the form of a slanting, wavy but strong warf and weft giving a most pleasing impression to the eye and the mind. The Oraon *pachri* is a mud wall about 3' high running at exact right angles round the house and the farm and is covered with country titles to protect it from the rain. It looks very nice. straightness, smoothness and geometrical run with the titles on it evoke the admiration of any one who sees it.

### Binjwar wall Paintings

Among the least known tribes of Madhya Pradesh are the Binjwars whom I studied in the Bilaspur

district. They have an excellent sense of decorating their mud walls with designs and drawing in relief of elephants, horses with riders, sword-in hand soldiers, flowers, birds, the swastika, trees and creepers. They look exquisite on the clean walls. Decoration with relief designs of their taks and windows is also found.

On some Binjwar house walls there are coloured paintings made by the Adolia at the time of Diwali for which he gets some paddy. These paintings known as *putri* by the tribe consist of birds, beasts, hunters or of Gods and Goddesses.

### Personal Decoration of Mundas

Let us pass on to the artistic personal adornment of the tribes. One of the most artful tribes as far as personal decorations is concerned are the Mundas, who are found in a small number in our State. Young Munda women are very fond of decorating their person with a large variety of ornaments. Ear-rings made of silver and even of gold are occasionally used. They wear for the arm, brass bracelets, *sakom* and *Kakana* lac bracelets called *lathi*, brass armlets called *tar* and glass armlets called *Churla*.

Similarly intreatly d e s i g n e d ornaments for the neck and the nose are also there. The poorer Munda women use a peculiar artistic ear ornaments made of palm leaf. Wooden combs called *nakis*

and hair pins are used. Necklaces or *hisirs* made variously of coral, of *kasi* grass, of *birni* reed and of glass beads are also worn.

### Gond ornaments :

The Gond, Korku, and Pradhan women of Chhindwara, Betul, Seoni, Balaghat and Mandla districts use *hamel*, *bindiya* and *karanphool* which are lovely silver ornaments.

### The Bhilalas :

The Bhilala men and women almost compete with the Mundas in personal decoration. It is an eyefilling sight to see well dressed Bhilala girls in a fair where they look almost like a painter's dream come true of pristine beauty.

In the course of a cultural survey of tribal Madhya Pradesh, about twenty-four types of ladies hair dressing done on various ceremonial and other occasions were noticed. In a study of the Bhilala of Dhar, I found that it takes about four hours to do the hair of a Bhilala woman, it is so minutely and finely done. It was also observed that tribal women know how to perfume their favourite *mahua* oil with different flowers in different ways.

### Gaily coloured Bead-work :

Most striking of all is their gaily coloured bead work. The Murias wear bead bands, sometimes three

or four of them round the head, keeping the hair in place. Round the neck are two or more broad bead collars and a profusion of necklaces made of coloured beads, tied symmetrically colourwise and designwise. A tribal woman may not have ornaments to put on but she can hardly afford to go without tattoo marks on her person. Tattooing is not merely meant for personal decoration but it has a magico-religious significance and a social bearing also. A study of tattoo marks will clearly show that there are patterns with specific names and meaning e.g. among the Bhils we find such patterns as *ambe moidi* i.e., a mango tree and a peacock; *chowk* i.e., a square and *sitan van* i.e. the garden of Sita.

### Tribal Dress :

Tribal dress is also full of colours and variegated designs. The Bhil-Bhilala dress have designs called *juoria*, *attha* and *taharia*, on the body of a *sadi* and *molika adya*, *thuddi*, *bod*, *banda wala adya*, *gad*, *chup kulya*, *pola adya*, *kinar* and others on the pallu.

### Head-gears :

The head gear of the Bison-horn Maria of Bastar is a rare artistic piece, made of the horns of a bison. The scarcity of bison horn makes it all the more valuable and important. The cowrie decorations and peacock feathers artistically tied round it and the shine of the horn make it lovely to look at.

The Korku head gear for marriage is elaborately made from the palm leaf which is ceremonially brought from the tree and the artist names the designs, he makes on them as *jheta*, *machhli*, *kalsa*, *solgola*, *bonhta*, *ful*, *bichhiya* and *tikiya*.

Let us pass on to their household articles : The Baiga make a variety of basket e.g., *Sikoshi* is a square basket of broad twilled bamboo strips, 14<sup>11</sup> square and 6<sup>11</sup> high. A cover is made to come right over the basket. The result is a double basket very useful for storing clothes.

#### Basketry :

*Jhapi* is a beautifully made basket for storing clothes, ornaments and dresses for the dance. It is made of strips of bamboo of various sizes. *Mora* is a shallow open basket, 9" square and 5" deep of bamboo strips' 1" broad plaited checkwise and used for baling out water from a stream which has been *dommed* for fishing. Then there are *mora*, *dhuti*, *dauri*, *dali*, *kikrahi*, *tukna*, *pitla* and others.

The basket which is carried by the Bhil women in the Bhagoria bazar or which is used at the marriage time to carry the gift for the bride is also very artistic. Some of the bamboo-ware made by the tribal Pandos and the Turis for the tribes are specimens of beautiful, sturdily, technically perfect basketry. A small tribe called

the Dhulia specialise in basket-making for agricultural purposes. Their handicraft is pleasing aesthetically also.

#### Wood-carving :

The tribes also do beautiful wood carving. As we move across the centre of the Muria country in Bastar we find more and more elaborate carving of wood used as decoration of the ghotul, which has stimulated artistic creation not only in the realm of personal decoration but also in wood-carving and well-painting. The *chelik* desire that their ghotul really should be lovely as a bison's horns. In many of the Muria ghotul there are excellently carved pillars. These may be seen at Almer, Nayanar, Ramavand, and elsewhere. At Almer, one of the pillars has *kiddari* birds at top, another has tortoises. On the body of the pillars are carvings of the moon, boys and girls dancing the Hulki and elephants. At Nayanar one of the pillars is decorated with tortoises and another has hooded snakes projecting from all four corners.

Wood carving is done by the Gonds also. An examples of this is provided by the door frames of Gond houses at Lahgadua, Chhindwara District. Each door frame has designs carved upon it, door leaves are also sometimes carved profusely but with sobriety. The Baigas also know wood carving. A few specimens of these may be seen in the museum of the Tribal

Research Institute at Chhindwara. Korku wood carving is at its best in their memorial *gatha* for a dead (on which are ceremonially carved the figures of a man sometime on a house back. On the top corners are the sun and the moon and in the top centre is shown a symbolic spider and Binnayak, their God of Well-being).

### The Madia Khamb

A survey of the tribal art of wood carving will not be complete if the Madia memorial pillar is not mentioned. It is a solid tall wooden slab, about 8' high and about 2' wide and 2' deep, on all sides of which scenes from daily life are depicted. The top of the pillar is well carved in floral designs and has a carved bird placed on it.

### Art of making Musical Instruments

The art of making musical instruments is very well developed by some of the professional music making tribes like the Pradhans and the Lanjhas. The stringed instrument with which the Pradhan does singing at the door of his Gond clients is known as *bana*, which to him is the very birth place and seat of Bara Pen, who appeared among men only when the *bana* was made. It is a simple instrument but when it is fully decorated with bells, peacock feathers and balls of coloured wool, it looks very pretty.

### A more fascinating fiddle

A more fascinating fiddle is the one used by the Lanjhas, who are bards to the great Kanwar tribe. They call it *benbaja* or *kathway*. It is slenderer and finer and instead of the bow a small plucking instrument is used to play on its strings. The instrument is so lovely that I rushed for it for many hot dusty miles from one Lanjha village to another of Raigarh District but even today I am a disappointed art collector and anthropologist. I had not yet been able to get one for my Institute; but its mere sight has given me an imperishable pleasure.

### Metal Images

Another field where we find most elaborate and artistically rich material is the metal images and idols of the tribal deities, the most revered of whom is the Budhi Mata goddess of Bastar, who is represented by an elephant having a palanquin on its back in which is seated a small idol of the goddess. The Madia Muria have Ghoda Deo on a house back, Nag Deo or the Serpent God and Firangi Deo or the god riding a horse with a gun in his hand. This and other metal images or idols found in Bastar are manufactured by an indigenous lost wax process which is used for hollow casting, in which the Bharewa specialise.

**Other items of Art**

Before closing I must recommend to the artist in you to see the massive colourful stone work of the *Bhall gathas* of the *Gond Budha Deo*, the lac work designs of tribal bangles, the wonderful pottery used by tribes like the

Korwas, the casual designs on the tobacco pouches of the Bastar tribes, the embroidery used by the Bhilalas and the artistically rich materials of the metal images and idols of the Bastar tribal deities. If you do not see these you will miss a most unforgettable aesthetic experience.



Tribal Labourers at work in a mine by courtesy—Press Information Bureau

## HARISH CHANDRA DAS

The present paper is a part of the analyzed ethnographic materials collected from Laxmisagar, a suburban village of New Capital, Bhubaneswar. The study was undertaken in 1962-63 for the United Science Foundation, U.S.A. under the proper guidance and supervision of Dr. Cora Du Bois, Professor of Anthropology, Harvard University. Since then occasional visits to the village have helped to supplement knowledge of the on-going changes. I call the village 'suburban' because it has not yet been fully urbanized, as the different self-contained Units of the Capital Town, but is in the process of being urbanized.

Laxmisagar is situated to the east of Bhubaneswar Railway station under the jurisdiction of Bhubaneswar Notified Area Council. It comprises six wards, namely, Panchamimandap Sahi, Upar Sahi, Upar Bauri Sahi, Thakur Sahi, Laxminarayan Sahi and Gad Sahi, and has a total population of 1,602 persons of whom 846 are males and 756 are females.

## FACTION IN A SUB-URBAN VILLAGE

"Informal and loosely organized groups in mutual opposition from the active political units" (Epstein p. 129) which we may call factions. Local village leaders use the English word 'partie' to designate factions. Factional opposition is manifested in almost all organized activities of the village.

In Laxmisagar Khandayats are the dominant caste and they play predominant role in village factions. All the traditional leaders of factions belong to this caste. Only since 1955 have some leaders emerged from other castes to challenge Khandayat leadership through newly organized groups.

### Leaders of Factions

There are different qualities by the possession of which a man can command respect and obedience of others living around him. Intelligence, tactful management of village affairs, wealth, honesty, education, ability to direct development works are several qualities which mark a man important and

powerful. But it is not necessary that a leader possesses all the qualities. One or all of them may make a man popular. I have selected six such persons from Laxmisagar as leaders, because they have some qualities mentioned above and take active part in village factions and in decision of disputes.

Of the six leaders two are traditional, one transitional and three new. I deem it proper to give a short sketch of the leaders in order to know which qualities make them popular, and what role they play in village factions.

#### 1. Jhula Lenka

Jhula Lenka, Khandayat by caste is 60 years old. He has seven years of schooling in indigenous Chatsali. He is popular in the village for his intelligence, eloquence and tactful management of village affairs. He has been an influential leader in village affairs since 1942 when he gained control of the Temple Committee, the central organization of the village. Since then he acted as the Secretary of the said Committee until the emergence of a reformed Committee known as the Patitpaban Sahajog Samiti in 1962. All the village disputes were referred to him for his decision. His position was not efficiently challenged for 20 years.

#### 2. Bhagban Naik

He is in his mid-fifties and belongs to Khandayat caste. He has five years of schooling in the village

Chatsali. Like Jhula Lenka his influence lay his membership in the Temple Committee of which he has been a member since 1943. His leadership continues even after the Temple Committee was replaced by the Patitpaban Sahajog Samiti in 1962. He acted as an assistant leader to Jhula Lenka until the latter was ousted from the village affairs. He is accepted as a leader because he is intelligent and very tactful in managing any odd situation. He is reported to be very conservative and does not like youth clubs to interfere in village politics.

#### 3. Bisi Pradhan (Transitional Leader)

who is in his middle fifties is a contemporary of Jhula Lenka. He had three years of schooling in the Chatsali and two years in the old primary school of the village. He is the richest man in the village possessing about 50 acres of paddy land. He earns thousands of rupees catering the food for both New Capital Hospital and more recently the Bhubaneswar jail. Prior to 1953 he had practically no influence in the village, but as he amassed wealth and initiated developmental works like the school, the village road and reconstitution of the village central organization and Palli m a n g a l Youth club he gained power over others. He is reported to have contributed some thousands of rupees for village M. E. School, therefore the school has been named after him. He now is in charge of the Temple Committee as well as

the temple management. Since he has certain reformist inclination, he can properly be designated a transitional rather than a traditional leader.

### Young Leaders

The young leaders have institutional rather than personality bases. They came to village affairs through the newly organized youth clubs. Two of the three young leaders to be discussed represent one club known as the Panchami-mandap Youth club and the other Pallimangal Youth club, another youth organization of the village.

1. Soumak Bhunya, a 25 year old weaver casteman is the highest qualified man in the village. He has not yet been employed anywhere but is interested to take part in village affairs. He is a founder-member of the Panchamimandap Youth club and maintains its records as well as its library. He takes a leading role in the decision of disputes. He commands respect from a section of the village.

2. Jhula Barik, who is 35 years old is a barber by caste and one of the influential men in the Panchamimandap Sahi. He has only three years of schooling in the old primary school of the village but has amassed wealth from hotel-keeping and on this basis in part he exerts influence in the community. He has contributed some hundreds of rupees for development of the club. In decision of

disputes referred to the club he plays an important role.

3. Anadi Rout, a Khandayat of 35 is a portege of Bisi Pradhan. He has six years of modern schooling. By occupation he is an electrician in Government service. He is the secretary of both the Pallimangal Youth club and the village Central Co-operation Committee (known as the Patitpaban Sahajog Samiti).

### History of Factions

Prior to 1953 factions in Laxmi-sagar seem not to have had the importance they acquired later. The villagers complained that factions were much more disturbing now than they were in the past. It is the rise of Bisi Pradhan as a leader and his rivalry with Jhula Lenka that has precipitated a more acute factionalism and which has been given expression in some of the recent and modern organizations. After the establishment of the youth clubs and their new leaders, the factions assumed sharper roles. Jhula Lenka was the towering figure in the village politics till 1958. His decision in all matters were accepted as final. The Temple Committee composed of Khandayats had controlled the lower caste people who did not challenge them because they were economically dependent upon them. Some worked as the wage labourers in Khandayats' fields, some share-cropped their land; others served

them as artisans. After the establishment of the New Capital economy of the village diversified. Villagers began to avail themselves of new economic opportunities in the capital. More specifically the authority of the Temple Committee and Jhula Lenka was eroded by a series of episodes of which the following are illustrative.

The Temple collected revenue from the 12 families which resided on the temple land in Panchami-mandap Sahi. They paid one rupee each as annual rent. When the rent was increased from one rupee to Rs. 2.50 for each family, one of the tenants protested in harsh language to Jhula Lenka who then beat him in the presence of several villagers. Bisi Pradhan, although he was not a member of the Temple Committee, requested Jhula to levy a moderate rent, but he was not heeded. Insulted by having his advice ignored Bisi persuaded the twelve households to take their cases against the Temple Committee to the Khurda court. In the court the renters were awarded occupancy right to the land but were required to pay rent to the Temple Committee since the land belonged to the Temple.

In the meantime a Bengali refugee, Sen Gupta settled in the village. A former salesman for a homoeopathic drug company, he called himself a doctor and was a self-appointed social worker. He

persuaded Bisi Pradhan who already exerted his influence in the whole of Gad Sahi and in a section of Panchami-mandap Sahi to extend his influence throughout the village. Bisi Pradhan began to decide village disputes in defiance of the Temple Committee. Hostility between Jhula and Bisi thereupon intensified. Jhula strongly protested against the activities of Bisi. On the pretext of discussing the coming Dola festival Jhula requested all the households to attend a general meeting to be held in the temple premises. Bisi and several of his followers refused to attend the meeting. In the meeting Jhula raised the question of Bisi's deciding disputes in defiance of the Temple Committee. Since most of the followers of Bisi were absent, the issue was not debated. Bisi's followers did not contribute money to the common Dola festival. Instead they offered bhoga individually to the deity as if they were outsiders. Bisi came to the temple on this occasion to give his offerings to the deity. When he was about to enter the temple Jhula told him in a stern voice not to disturb the village affairs. Bisi in fury and at the top of his voice shouted that he (Jhula) was anti-social and the root of all evil in the village. The villagers were silent observers of this quarrel between the two leaders. From the day of the quarrel both men stopped speaking to each other and Bisi sought every opportunity to depose Jhula from the Temple Committee.

In 1957 Bhagban Naik, a leader under Jhula organized a drama party (*opera*) in the village. He hoped that it would draw away some of Bisi's followers. But no one of Gad Sahi and Panchami-mandap Sahi co-operated. The tensions between the two factions led to the formation of a third group, Jana Kalyan Samiti to which Jhula was opposed. It was the aim of Bisi and Sen Gupta to arouse the lower castes against Jhula and Temple Committee. An opportunity came when a quarrel arose between Arkhit Jena, a Karan and Kanduri Bhoi, a Bauri of the village over share-cropping a plot of land. The quarrel became so acute that Arkhit and Kanduri came to blows. Arkhit sought the help of Jhula in deciding the case. But the Jana Kalyan Samiti which is the representative body of all the castes except Khandayat, Karan and Brahmin, demanded that the case be heard in the presence of all the household heads of the village.

A general meeting of all the household heads was held on the school premises. Bisi and Sen Gupta coached an old Bauri to rebuke Jhula for the tactics. Before the meeting started the old Bauri began abusing Jhula in harsh words to which Jhula took great offence. He was so enraged that he snatched away the records of the Jana Kalyan Samiti and the meeting disbanded.

The President and the Secretary of the Jana Kalyan Samiti were terrified and expected active retribution. This was the first occasion on which the lower castes had challenged the Khandayats. Both Sen Gupta and Bisi persuaded them to approach the President of the Depressed Class League. The President of the League was kept informed of the fact in detail. He decided to settle the matter amicably. On his request a general meeting of all household heads was called by the Jana Kalyan Samiti. The President of the Depressed Class League was unavoidably absent but he instructed the Capital police to keep watch on the meeting because he expected trouble. The police were told that Jhula planned to beat the leaders of the Jana Kalyan Samiti and they found clubs heaped back of the school. They therefore stood guard till the meeting dispersed. Since the quarrel arose again the police asked several persons including Jhula to come to the police station. The police Sub-Inspector instructed them and asked them to decide the case peacefully. For the first time the police intervened in the settlement of village disputes. Again a general meeting was held and the case was decided peacefully.

In 1959 the Panchamimandap and Pallimangal Youth clubs were organized and they heightened and intensified the factional tension. The Panchamimandap club challenged the jurisdiction of the

Temple Committee by arbitrating village disputes particularly in Panchamimandap and Upar Sahis which gave their alliance to Bisi Pradhan. Although Bisi and Jhula did not want the Panchamimandap youth club to interfere in the village politics they did not join hands in their opposition. Instead Bisi took the Pallimangal youth club under his guidance when the club was reorganized in 1962. He hoped next to reorganize the old Temple Committee thereby undermining Jhula Lenka's influence. He demanded an account of the Temple management which Jhula failed to give. Thereupon the villagers felt that the Temple Committee should be supplanted and the Patitpaban Sahajog Samiti was established.

Although Jhula was ousted from the central organization he did not remain silent. The temple priest who always sided Jhula sought a way to avoid his duties in the Patitpaban Temple by accepting an appointment as a priest in Chintamaniswar temple located near the station bazar. In the Dol festival of 1963 when the priest was asked to come to the temple he gave the excuse that he was suffering from fever although he was found officiating shortly thereafter in the family worship of Jhula Lenka. The Sahajog Samiti then discharged the old priest and appointed another from the village.

With the collapse of the Jhula Lenka's faction a new one arose. The Sahajog Samiti in order to centralize its power instructed the youth clubs to hand over to it all applications it received to settle disputes and served a notice not to interfere in the village politics henceforward. Pallimangal youth club joined hands with the Sahajog Samiti as its most influential members took part in the latter, but Panchamimandap club in defiance of the instruction continued deciding disputes. At the time of my investigation a tug of war was going on between the Panchamimandap club and the Patitpaban Sahajog Samiti.

From my own study it appears that it is not the number of factions that is important, but rather the way hostility between the opposing factions are expressed. I have given stress on the expression of mutual hostility between the opposing factions. Epstein says, "Factions are not self-contained and mutually opposed groups in every day life." It is true in Laxmisagar that there is more intensive social interaction between members of the same faction than between members of different factions. Yet apart from the faction leaders themselves, members of opposing groups mix freely, talk and work together except on common communal work of the village.

**SRI CH. P. K. MOHAPATRA**

## **CULTURAL CONSERVATISM AMONG THE BHUNJIA**

The ubiquitousness of cultural change is no more a hypotheses for study in any given culture. It has almost assumed the position of an axiom. The wheels of modern civilisation which have been set agog by developing technologies during the present century have penetrated into the regions, hether to considered, the most inaccessible. As a result, criteria of homogenity, isolation and simpler technology can seldom be attributed together to any single community, at present, which may be considered as primitive.

The students of change have foundout methodological tools to deal with the process or the dynamics of change. Attempts have been made to visualise change against the spatial as well as time dimensions apart from the details of the agencies of change.

In contrast to the phenomena of change, the literature on which abound, there remains yet another phenomenon which has attracted attention of very limited number

of scholars interested in the analysis of the dynamics of change. It is this phenomenon which in the face of rapid cult change, provides stimuli for the members of a particular society to continue their traditional way of life. This is "the phenomenon of cultural stability a phenomenon which, in its psychological aspects, is called conservatism" (M. J. Herskovits).

Although we find highly developed methodological schemes to deal with the study of culture change, it is surprising to find that not even sufficient literature on the subject is listed for appreciation and appraisal of the problems of cultural conservatism. The problem is described as negatively oriented and as such difficult to deal with. It is also held that study of the problem of conservatism can be undertaken only when the fieldworker is present on the spot at the time of introduction of new element in a culture so as to be in a position to observe how it is rejected or resisted. So far,

historical documentation of facts or testimony offered by members of a society has formed the main source of data for analysis.

In the present paper attempt has been made to draw information partly from historical sources along with testimony offered by Bhunjia themselves to corroborate the present force of conservatism at work. Besides, few of the institutions and traits have also been analysed. It may be indicated that the term conservatism which implies resistance to change, while it is in process, may be significantly determined in particularly those cultures which are under the powerful impact of change either through innovations or inventions leading to the very struggle for existence of itself. This may not, however, imply that cultures undergoing a gradual process of change do not manifest elements of conservatism. What is emphasised here is that methodologically, it may be easier to approach those cultures which are under the sway of complete assimilation with the donor cultures. Because the elements of conservatism are more pronounced here than that of others, so much so that they appear to be exaggerations unless viewed from psychic distance of the observer. Kroeber holds the view that "No matter how awkward an established system becomes it normally remains more practical to keep it by a better scheme. The wrench and cost of reformation are greater,

or are felt to be greater, by each generation than the advantages gained". Reforms and changes are easy to be brought in technological aspects of a culture but it is difficult where institutions are involved. From the following accounts it will be evident as to how the Bhunjia have been under powerful impact of change since many generations yet maintain their own identity by exhibiting conservatism in certain elements of their traditional culture which give meaning and continuity to their way of life.

### The Tribe

The Bhunjia are a numerically small tribe of the province of Orissa numbering as little as 2,375 souls according to 1961 census. Their habitat lying at an altitude of 2,000 feet on the Sunabeda plateau of Kalahandi District amid forested areas is an extension of the central plateau which was once inhabited by Kolarian tribes and subsequently witnessed the large incursion of Gonds who came from south. The only written record about this tribe has been dealt with by Russel and Hiralal. The history of their racial origin has been a disputed one. The authors mentioned above hold the view that a section of the Bhunjia originated as a result of marriage between Gonds and Halvas. Field enquiry did not reveal any such fact to corroborate the view although definite connections between Gond and Bhunjia could be traced in

the history and myth of Bhunjia. The mythical origin is detailed below. In Sunabeda area a 'Mathiar' or the worshipper of Goddess 'Maait' was living. A group of seven brothers of Gonds from west came in search of wild games and shooted a Sambhur with arrow which ran for life and fell dead on the outskirts of village Sunabeda. The brothers followed and found the Sambhur and divided the meat into seven shares. Surprisingly the shares became nine instead of seven. Each brother tried in turn to find to their great surprise that nine equal shares emerged invariably. They thought that somebody else must be staying nearby and called for them. The 'Mathiar' came and the eight shares were distributed. The brothers again shouted for the unknown inhabitant to take the last share. Lastly a Gond came from Gatibeda village and shared the meat. Thus he is called 'Pat Dhurwa' or the Gond who came last. When the Gond brothers were there they saw seven young unmarried girls in the house of the Mathiar who were his daughters. The Gonds wanted to marry them. The Mathiar agreed under certain conditions that they have to leave their religion and custom and become Bhunjia and live in that territory. The Gonds agreed and became the Markam or 'Bandhu Barag' which was to have affinal relation with the 'Netam' group of clans of the Bhunjia.

The myth can be corroborated by historical record of events to the extent that during the distant past

there was an incursion of Gonds into this plateau. The Gonds were a superior group, who not only brought under their sway large tracts of land and ruled over them but also influenced as well as got influenced by the numerous other communities during the passing of years. Hence inter-marriage with a smaller tribe and subsequent adoption of their culture on the part of the Gonds is nothing but a part of usual phenomena that took place in the central and southern belt of India before advent of British.

It is, however, not known as to what was that tribe in this particular case who established marriage relationships with the Gonds but it may be suggested that the 'Matia' was the earlier name for Bhunjia, both the terms implying origin from earth.

### The Cultural Change in Process

In the foregoing accounts it is found that the Bhunjia had their earliest contact with Gonds with whom they established marriage relationship. That the Bhunjia eat food cooked by a Gond further corroborates the fact. Contact with the surrounding Hindu population must be ranked as next because on the plains down below on each side of the plateau Hindu villages ranging from small to very big with dense population are found. The Bhunjia, today, depend on the markets and stores for their daily necessities to a large

extent. Their material culture has been enriched by introduction of complex implements and tools for various purposes. They cultivate their land in the way their Hindu neighbours do. Mustard and millet are grown on commercial basis and taken to the markets down below. Growing of tobacco extensively for own use as well as marketings indicate their expanded outlook on agricultural practices.

Their dress and hairstyle are nothing other than the local Hindus. They admit that they have been addicted to tea now a days which in the past generation was not even known to them. They visit Hindu festivals and enjoy Opera and other audio-visual programmes wherever opportunities permit with utmost pleasure. There is always a flow of Hindu traders, merchants and other outsiders to Bhunjia villages.

Their religion has been greatly influenced by Hindu religion with the introduction of 'Sonadevi' cult which has been incorporated fully in the Bhunjia pantheon. The myths of Bhunjia are full of names of Gods and Goddesses who are found described in Hindu mythology. Goddess Sonadevi who is worshipped with observance of elaborate festivals thrice a year attract not only Bhunjia but also Hindus from quite distant places like Komna in Orissa side and places from M. P. side down the plateau.

The iconic figure of **Sonadevi** Goddess has been enshrined in a thatched temple constructed by the Bhunjia in their village. It is interesting to note that the traditional Goddess of Bhunjia, namely "Maait" is enshrined below a thorny tree without any shade and no iconic figure is developed for Her by the Bhunjia. She is much less elaborately worshipped on various occasions. The Bhunjia, these days, instal 'Chaura' a cult represented by earthen structure over which a creeper (Tulsi) is planted according to Hindu myth representing Goddess 'Vrundabati' on the head of Lord Vishnu. This cult is introduced in Bhunjia religion which further corroborates that Hinduisation has been in process among the Bhunjia since many generations.

### Elements of Conservatism

Amid bewildering array of cultural change in process among the Bhunjia it is interesting to note that certain elements are very rigidly adhered to by them. Mention may be made of the institution of ancestor worship which is observed not only with austerity but the place of worship is considered sacred, and a slight touch of the place by an outsider leads to complete demolition of the structure. The structure is no other than their own kitchen which is the abode of their revered ancestors. The placement of kitchen in the house site of Bhunjia is very

carefully considered. It is always constructed away from any road, or lane or bypasses to eliminate the possibility of touch by an outsider. Even inside the area of courtyard the kitchen is erected 10 to 15 yards apart from the main house where they sleep and work. The male members of a family are not always allowed to enter the kitchen because they work outside and may not be able to keep themselves clean before entering the kitchen. The women are, however, allowed to work after bath. During menstrual period they are not allowed to enter the kitchen until the flow ceases. Thereafter she takes bath and is allowed to enter inside. Till then the husband or any of the consanguinal relation of the husband manages cooking inside the kitchen.

It is interesting to note that a daughter, soon after her marriage, is prohibited to enter or touch the kitchen as she loses tie with her father's clan. When she visits her father's home she is given with cooking materials and utensils to cook outside and eat till she leaves for her husband's house.

According to the Bhunjia the kitchen is the abode of their ancestors. The cult of ancestor worship is thus one of the important feature of Bhunjia religion. The dead ancestors are considered to be the guardian spirits of the Bhunjia who look to the family wellbeing and prosperity and guide them in their day to day work. An elaborate rite is observed on the

occasion of bringing the spirit of the dead of a family who dies a natural death and is a married person. The rite is known as 'Budh' and is performed on completion of one year of the death of a person or can be deferred to be held on second, third or fourth year. If it cannot be held on the fourth year then a gap of five years is given to hold the rite on the ninth year. It is an expensive rite which tells upon the economic status of a person. Nevertheless, the rite is thought to be indispensable for no social or religious function can be observed in that particular family where the death has occurred. On the eve of the ceremony all the affinal and consanguinal relation, are invited although the consanguinal relations take active part in the ceremony. There is a special ceremony called 'pithpoda' which is observed to invoke the dead ancestors and offerings are made to satisfy them.

There is another element of conservatism which finds its expression at the time of marriage between a bride from 'Chinda' section of Bhunjia and a groom from the 'Chaktia' section and not *vice versa*. In this connection it is necessary to cast into relief the distinction between the two sections of the Bhunjia. The 'Chinda' section of the Bhunjia live on the plains down the hills above which the 'Chaktia' Bhunjias live. The 'Chinda' or those who know more are the acculturated group who have been considerably influenced

by the local Hindu culture and are no more observing the religious rites with as much austerity as the *chaktias*. Their kitchens are no more so much sacred as that of the *chaktias*. They eat food from the Hindu clean castes. They worship most of the Hindu gods and goddesses of the local area. The 'Chaktias' have however, continued to keep marriage relationship with them. On eve of marriage the bride of a *chinda* Bhunjia has to undergo certain special rites being poured with "Dudh Pani" (Milk water) so as to be cleaned and allowed to enter the kitchen thereafter.

There is another element which is clearly indicative of conservatism among the Bhunjia. The Bhunjia do not eat food or drink water from the hands of Brahmin who, according to Hindu are the only privileged caste to worship the various gods and goddesses of Hindu religion. It is only Brahmins who cook and make offerings to various gods and goddesses. In this context it is interesting to note that the Bhunjia do not eat food cooked by a Brahmin or drink water from his hands. The reason may be aduced to the fact that the Bhunjia being an admixture racially of the Gonds retain the Gond conception about Hindu Castes, especially Brahmins. The true Gonds who have not come under the sway of Hindusation refrain from taking food from Brahmins. Instances from Raj Gonds may be cited who consider it polluting to eat food from Brahmin whom they think to be inferior in social status.

There are many other instances of conservatism with regard to the various religious and social institutions. An analysis of the above instances may be made here for purposes of precision.

### Conservatism Vrs. Change

It has been observed that the Bhunjia have been in contact with other communities, especially, the Gonds since time immemorial. Other Hindu communities have also been in contact through trade and agriculture. The material culture of Bhunjia have been greatly enriched as a result of contact with these communities. The religion has also been influenced by Hindus. The result of change has been conspicuously observed in the separation of a section of Bhunjia called 'Chinda' who have almost adopted Hindu way of life. In face of such changes which have been in process since long the retaining of the traditional way of life has been a problem for that section known as *chakatias*. The elements of conservatism are nothing but "stubborn addiction to folkways, the established, the habitual. Some of it is due to societies getting enmeshed in their institutions and not seeing a way out....." (Kroeber). If the Bhunjia are considered a tribe with their distinct cultural traits it is only the manifestation of conservatism in certain traditional institutions through which one is able to understand the distinctiveness.

In case of ancestor worship the Bhunjia solely depend upon their ancestor for their well-being in spite of the fact that Goddess SonaDevi is elaborately worshipped. The females when go to markets or outside, cook their own food to eat instead of purchasing cooked food. This is because the females are largely responsible for up-keeping the sanctity of the kitchen. The males are usually not allowed to enter the kitchen off and on.

Avoidance in taking food from Brahmins indicate the true tribal spirit of Bhunjia based on the idea of ethnocentrism which is characteristic of unsophisticated cultures. Outsiders including Brahmins are considered socially low however high in social status they may be in Hindu society. The 'Chinda' Bhunjia, however, regard Brahmins superior and do not hesitate to take food from them. It has earlier

been mentioned that the 'Chakatias' perform 'Dudhpani' ceremony while marrying a Chinda bride although they are a section of the same tribe. In this case the attitude of conservatism is more pronounced in spite of the fact that they have continued to maintain marriage relationship with the Chinda section. It is a matter of further intensive research to find out the factors responsible for such social union. What is important here is that a specific purificatory ceremony is observed to permit such a bride to be socially acceptable. As mentioned above a married woman is largely responsible for upkeeping the sanctity of the kitchen which is the sacred abode of their ancestral spirits. It is for this reason that the 'Dudhapani' ceremony is considered indispensable for a Chakatia groom while marrying a Chinda bride.

**PRAFULLA BEHERA**

**FINGER TIP PATTERNS OF  
ANDHRA PEOPLE  
RESIDING AT  
CUTTACK**

Dermatoglyphic patterns are highly variable in the sense that they vary not only from individual to individual but also from population to population (Rife' 53) and this provides a tool in the study of populatoin genetics. Dermatoglyphic studies in India on caste basis are very few. In India castes are closed breeding units and the inflow and outflow of genes are restricted, therefore they can be taken as units for small population variation studies within geographical region. An attempt has been made here to find out various papillary pattern types and indices of some emigrant castes of Andhra Pradesh residing presently at Cuttack, Orissa.

**MATERIAL**

Finger prints of 221 male unrelated persons have been collected during July-September 1966 from Cuttack. They hail from the districts of Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna of Andhra State and at present they are residing at different localities of Cuttack town.

The sample of 221 individuals have been classified into different castes. They include 105 Madigas, a scheduled caste; 27 Christians, 26 Brahmins ; 20 Pallilus ; 21 Salilus ;

and 22 Chetagadus. Size of the sample for these various castes is small, however, in any event, it seems proper to have some information on the incidence of finger prints of different emigrant castes of Andhra Pradesh.

**METHOD**

The name, age, sex, religion and caste of each individual was noted on the blank side of the paper before taking finger prints on the otherside of the paper. For recording clear, complete and decipherable prints the technique and equipment recommended by Cummins and Midlo (1943) had been employed.

**ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

It will be seen from table I that the Pallilu possesses highest percentage of whorl (53.50%). In the descending order, Second place is occupied by the Chetegadu (48.64%), the third place by the Brahmin (46.54%) fourth place by the Christian (39.64%), fifth by the Madiga (36.10%) and the lowest frequency of whorls is possessed by Salilu (35.41%). In all the groups the highest concentration of whorl is found in the fourth fingers of both the hands and second place in this respect is occupied by the

first fingers. In all the groups the right hand is richer in whorl than the left except in the case of the Salilu in which whorl is found more in the left hand than the right. The lowest percentage of whorl is noticed in the fifth finger in both right and left hands among the Christian, the Brahmin, the Pallilu and the Chetegadu. The Madiga and the Salilu have the lowest frequency of whorls in their fifth fingers of left hand and third finger of right hand.

The highest concentration of loops is found among the Salilu (61.24%) and closely followed by the Madiga (60.81%). The Pallilu possesses the lowest frequencies of loops (41.50%). Again the highest concentration of loops is found in the fifth finger of both the hands in all the castes except the Salilu in which the highest concentration of loops is found in the fifth finger in left hand and on third finger of right hand. Loops are found in higher frequency in left hand in the Madiga, the Brahmin, the Christian, the Pallilu and the Chetegadu. But in case of the Salilu right hand presents higher frequency of loops than the left.

Radial loops occur in the V digit of right hand in the case of the Chetegadu. The highest frequency of radial loops are found among the Brahmins (3.67%) and the Salilu possesses the least (0.95%). The Salilu does not possess radial loops in the left hand and it occurs only in the II digit of the right

hand. Another important point worth mentioning is that Christian (L 1.48, R 1.48) and the Pallilu (L 0.5; R 0.5) possess identical frequencies of radial loops on both the hands.

The ulnar loops are found in higher frequencies in V digit in both the hands in all the groups. When all the five fingers of each hand are considered (right and left separately), the left maintains its lead over the right in the higher frequency of Ulnar loops except in the case of the Salilu in which Ulnar loops are found more in right hand. When both the hands are considered together the Salilu presents higher percentage (60.20%) of Ulnar loops and the Pallilu possesses the lowest percentage (40.50%) of Ulnar loops.

According to Cummins and Midlo (1943) right fingers typically present a larger number of whorls and radial loops than the left fingers. The present study of finger tip patterns of Andhra people is quite in agreement with Cummins and Midlo's findings except in the case of the Brahmin, and the Chetegadu for radial loops. These two groups have higher frequency of radial loops in their left hands.

In all the groups arches are absent in the V digit of both hands. But arches are found in the I, II, III and IV digits of left and right hands in the case of the Pallilu and the Salilu. The Chetegadu does not possess arches on the left

hand but it is found only in the II digit of right hand. Arches are not found in the V digit of left hand and IV and V digits of right hand among the Madigas.

From table II it is observed that in the case of the Madiga and the Chetegadu the  $W > L$  in the I, and IV digits of both hands. Again  $W > L$  occurs on digits I, II, III and V of Brahmin and the Salilu while in the same group on digit IV the order is reversed to  $L > W$ . Among the Madigas and the Chetegadus  $L > W$  in the II, III and V digits of both hands. On the other hand in the case of Brahmin and the Salilu  $L > W$  occurs in I, II, III and V digits of both hands. It is interesting to note that among the christians  $L > W$  in II, III and V digits of both hands while in digit I on left hand indicates  $L > W$  and right hand indicates  $W > L$ .

The mean WL ratio for various castes have been calculated from table II and are arranged in ascending order like. Brahmin (1: 1.84) Chetegadu (1: 1.98), Christian (I: 2.03), Madiga (1: 2.25), Pallilu (1: 2.32) and the Salilu (1: 2.86). Then by analysing WL ratio digit-wise for aforesaid castes we came to the following conclusions. In Madiga WL ratio in the digit I and IV are identical (1: 1.112) while the loop and whorl ratio for II, III and V digit varies between (1: 1.42) to (1: 3.88) with a mean ratio of 1:3. Among the Christians W and L ratio for I and IV digit varies

between 1: 1 and 1: 1.52 with a mean of 1: 1.26 while LW ratio for II, III and V digit varies from 1: 1.73 to 1: 3.9 with a mean of 1: 2.56. But in the Chetegadu the whorl loop ratio for I and IV digits varies between 1: 1.32 and 1: 3 with a mean of 1: 2.16.

WL ratio is found in the IV digit in the case of the Salilu and the Brahmin such as 1: 2.33 and 1: 2.71 respectively. On the other hand LW ratio in the I, II, III and V digit in the case of the Brahmin and the Sallilu varies between 1: 1.08 to 1: 2 with a mean of 1: 1.62 for former and varies between 1: 1.56 to 1: 5.67 with a mean of 1: 3.05 for latter.

Table III shows the different patterns among the various caste along with the different indices derived from them. The Pallilu possesses slightly higher pattern intensity index (14.85) than the Chetegadu (14.82). The Arch-whorl index is highest in the case of the Pallilu (9.35) and least in the case of the Chetegadu (0.92). The highest value of whorl-loop index is found in the case of the Pallilu (128.91) while the least is possessed by the Salilu (58.58).

The Bimanuar shows highest peak at 4W6L (25 per cent among the Pallilu followed by the Brahmin Pallilu followed by the Brahmin 9 W1L (1923%). In the descending order, the third place is occupied by the Salilu, but the Salilu shows two peaks one at 2W8L (19.04%)

and the other at 3W7L (19.04%). The fourth place is occupied by the Christian 3W7L (18.51%), fifth by the Chetegadu 2W8L (18.18%) and last of all by the Madiga 2W8L (14.28%).

Caste difference is apparent in the frequency of Monomorphic hands as can be seen from table IV. It occurs in highest frequency (29.54%) in the case of Chetegadu and the lowest among the Salilu (16.66%). In between the highest and the lowest frequency of monomorphic hands the following are the frequencies—Madiga (25.71%), Christians (25.93%), Brahmins (26.91%) and Pallilu (27.50%).

Table V shows that the asymmetry is found in higher in all the castes than symmetry. The Madiga shows highest frequency of

Asymmetry (75.24%) and the Chetegadu shows the lowest frequency of a symmetry (59.09%).

#### SUMMARY

The data of 221 individuals from six castes from Andhra now residing at Cuttack, i.e., the Madiga, the Christian, the Brahmin, the Pallilu, the Salilu and the Chetegadu has been analysed. In the analysis of the pattern frequencies, the Madiga, the Salilu and the Christian present strikingly similar percentages. Similarly the Brahmin and the Chetegadu appear to be close to one another. The Pallilu seems to be a distinct group.

In case of the Index of finger pattern intensity the Pallilu presents highest value. The index supports the nearness between the Madiga and the Salilu.

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TABLE II  
COMPARATIVE OCCURRENCE OF WHORLS AND LCCP (R+U)  
IN DIFFERENT DIGITS

## THE MADIGA

Digit	LT	RT	LT+RT Combi- nation	WL Ratio
I	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:1-112
II	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1-425
III	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:3-743
IV	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:1-112
V	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:3-883

## THE CHRISTIAN

Digit	LT	RT	LT+RT Combi- nation	WL Ratio
I	L>W	W>L	W>L	1:1
III	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1-736
IV	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:2-000
V	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1-523
				1:3-909

## THE BRAHMIN

Digit	LT	RT	LT+RT Combi- nation	WL Ratio
I	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1-260
II	L>W	W>L	L>W	1:1-172
III	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1-080
IV	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:2-714
V	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:3

N.B.—LT—Left hand  
RT—Right hand

## THE PALLILU

Digit	LT	RT	LT+RT Combi- nation	WL Ratio
I	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:2.16
II	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:1.47
III	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1.47
IV	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:4.43
V	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:2.07

## THE SALILU

Digit	LI	RT	LI+RT Combi- nation	WL Ratio
I	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1.56
II	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1.545
III	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:5.67
IV	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:2.33
V	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:3.20

## THE CHETEGADU

Digit	LT	RT	LT+RT Combi- nation	WL Ratio
I	L=W	W>L	W>L	1:1.32
II	L>W	W>L	L>W	1:1.15
III	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:1.44
IV	W>L	W>L	W>L	1:3
V	L>W	L>W	L>W	1:3

N. B.—L T—Left hand  
R T—Right hand

**TABLE III**  
Percentage of papillary patterns and indices

People	Sex	No.	Whorl %	Loop radial %	Loop ulnar %	Total	Arch	Pattern intensity index	Arch whorl index	Whorl loop index
Madiga	Male	105	36.66	2.76	58.09	60.85	2.48	13.417	6.76	60.24
Christian	Male	27	39.63	2.96	56.30	59.26	1.11	13.85	2.81	66.87
Brahmin	Male	26	46.54	3.07	48.85	51.92	1.54	14.5	3.31	89.63
Pallilu	Male	20	53.50	1.00	40.50	41.50	5.00	14.85	9.35	128.91
Salilu	Male	21	35.71	0.95	60.00	60.95	3.33	13.237	9.32	58.58
Chetegadu	Male	22	48.64	2.27	48.64	50.91	0.45	14.82	0.92	95.54

Note—Pattern intensity index  $2 \times \% \text{ whorls} + 1 \times \% \text{ Loops}$

$$\frac{\text{Dankmeijer Index (A/W Index) \% Arches}}{10} \times 100$$

$$\frac{\text{Furuhata Index (W/L Index) \% Whorls}}{\% \text{ Loops}} \times 100$$

TABLE IV

## Distribution of Monomorphic hands

Castes	Whorls			Loops			Total No.	%
	Left No.	Right No.	Total No.	Left No.	Right No.	Total No.		
Madiga	10	7	17	17	20	37	37	17.62
Christian	2	3	5	5	4	9	9	16.67
Brahmins	3	3	6	4	4	8	8	15.38
Pallilu	2	6	8	2	1	3	3	7.5
Saililu	1	1	2	3	2	5	5	11.90
Chetegadu	4	4	8	3	2	5	5	11.36

TABLE V

## Symmetry and Asymmetry among Andhra castes

	No.	Symmetry				Asymmetry			
		Madiga	Christians	Brahmin	Pallilu	Saililu	Chetegadu		
Symmetry	No.	130	40	35	30	35	45		
	%	24.76	29.63	26.92	30.00	33.33	40.91		
Asymmetry	No.	395	95	95	70	70	65		
	%	75.24	70.37	73.08	70.00	66.67	59.09		



IRB Advisory Board held on 30-12-1967  
L. to R. Sarba Shri N. Das, A. Das, S. K. Das, R. N. Singdeo, M. M. Tudu, S. Misra

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT US

The re-constituted Tribal Research Bureau Advisory Board met for the first time on 30th December 1967 to review the activities since the last meeting of the Board, as well as to draw up the programme of studies for the next half year. Shri R. N. Singh Deo, Chief Minister, presided over the meeting. It was attended among others by Shri S. K. Das, Minister for T.&R.W. and Excise, Shri M. M. Tudu, Deputy Minister, T. & R. W. and Dr. Sadasiba Mishra, Vice-Chancellor of the Utkal University. At the out-set Shri Aniruddha Das, Secretary to Government-cum-Director, T. R. B. outlined the plan and programme of the T. R. B. in a brief speech. It is reproduced below :—

"It is a happy augury that we have assembled today to review the activities of the Tribal Research Bureau, and to advise on the programme of studies to be taken by the T. R. B. It is our proud privilege to have amidst us the Chief Minister as our Chairman whose administrative skill and knowledge, coupled with sympathetic interest for the development of tribals would generate considerable impetus for various studies to be taken up by the T. R. B. Our Minister and our Deputy Minister who are leaders of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities would provide us necessary guidance in our work.

In our re-constituted board which is meeting for the first time, we have also the privilege of having with us Shri Naba Krushna Choudhury whose studies and interest for the development of backward tribes are well-known in this country. Dr. Sadasiba Mishra, Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University who is an eminent educationist and economist has been taken as a new member, and it is hoped that his active participation in the programme of the T. R. B. will enrich those. Smt. Dr. Usha Dea Mohapatra, an eminent anthropologist, will help us with her knowledge and experience.

In this background it is my duty to present before you, Sir, a few words about the T. R. B. and its functions. The T. R. B. under the T. & R. W. Department, was constituted in 1956 as a useful organization to study the various tribal problems of the State and to suggest such appropriate measures as would be useful for the active growth of the tribals in right lines. As a scientific institution under the direct control of the Secretary to Government in T. & R. W. Department, the Bureau consisting of anthropologists is taking up various studies, both in qualitative and quantitative fields of social research. Some of the work done by the bureau have been extremely useful to the State Government. I have to regretfully admit the

many of our work have not been brought to lime light. The deficiency in publication is due to various handicaps, which tormented us for a long time. Being conscious of these draw backs, we are taking up all possible steps to make up these deficiencies. Some of the papers on specific studies are being published in the quarterly journal 'Adibasi'. The 'Adibasi' has now earned some reputation not only in this country but in other foreign countries also. I am also glad to report that both Indian and foreign scholars in course of their work on social aspects of our State consult the T. R. B. and find the studies conducted here useful.

During the year 1966-67 a zonal centre of the Bureau was opened at Phulbani. During the last meeting of the Board my predecessor has outlined the handicaps under which that centre was functioning which in turn thwarted the activities. After careful consideration Government were pleased to transfer that centre back from Phulbani to Bhubaneswar under the direct control of the Director, T. R. B. Thereafter the Bureau is now paying attention to outstanding problems and it is hoped that the functionaries would devote their zeal and attention to their work.

It may perhaps serve some useful purpose if I place before you Sir, certain inherent lacuna in our approach to tribals in the State, as

a result of which we have not been able to foster appreciable improvement in their living condition. It is a fact that the Goti system is still prevailing among the tribes of Koraput. Christianity is on increase in almost all tribal areas particularly in Ganjam, Phulbani and Koraput districts. Employment of tribals and improvement of their living condition require scientific appraisal and definite programme of work. The T. R. B. is useful in rendering valuable proposals in this regard.

The officers and staff of T. R. B. take up arduous duties in inaccessible areas and gain experience. It would be useful if their experience is utilized for imparting necessary training to the field staff of this Department as well as other Departments of Government who are charged with the development of tribals and backward areas of the State. Recently we have taken up some studies in West Orissa which were not done hitherto. I personally led a team of Research Officers to Gudvella area in Bolangir District. In an ancient fort at Kharligarh which is a derivative from Kharavelagarh, we found tools and implements of old stone age which, when properly excavated will throw a considerable light on the ancient man in Orissa. With these few words I beg leave of you Sir, to begin deliberations for the day and guide us in our work."

## OUR NEW CONTRIBUTORS :

In this issue our new contributors are :—

1. Professor T. B. Naik, Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Ravi Shankar University, Raipur.

Professor Naik received his doctorate in Anthropology from London University and worked in the Education Department of Madhya Pradesh. He was the first Director and organiser of Madhya Pradesh Tribal Research Institute at Chhindwara, and a member of the Central Advisory Board of Anthropology. Dr. Naik has written and edited a large number of books on Anthropology and Sociology.

2. Shri Prafulla Chandra Behera  
Shri Behera passed M. Sc. (Anthropology) from Utkal University in the year 1965. At present he is working as a Junior Research Fellow with a scholarship from the University Grants Commission in the Department of Anthropology, Utkal University.

3. Ch. Prasant Kumar Mohapatra, Research Officer, Tribal Research Bureau, Bhubaneswar.

Shri Mohapatra did his M. A. in Anthropology in the year 1958 from Bihar University and joined as a Junior Research Officer in Tribal Research Bureau in the same year.

He has worked among some of the most primitive Tribes of Orissa like Koyas, Gadabas, Bhunjias

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