

CHAPTER III

PEOPLE

POPULATION

According to the 1971 Census * the population of Boudh-Khondmals district was 621,675 of which 310,233 were males and 311,442 females. It is divided into 3 subdivisions, 4 Tahsils and 14 police-stations. The population of each such administrative unit is given below :—

Subdivision/Tahsil/Police station	Males	Females	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Khondmals Subdivision</i> ..	55,678	55,323	111,001
Khondmals Tahsil ..	55,678	55,323	111,001
Phulabani P. S. ..	18,886	17,900	36,786
Phiringia P. S. ..	23,324	23,525	46,849
Khajuriparha P. S. ..	13,468	13,898	27,366
<i>Boudh Subdivision</i> ..	114,576	113,326	227,902
Boudh Tahsil ..	114,576	113,326	227,902
Boudh P. S. ..	45,157	44,278	89,435
Ghantaparha P. S. ..	20,173	20,425	40,598
Manamunda P. S. ..	28,590	28,179	56,769
Harabhanga P. S. ..	20,656	20,444	41,100
<i>Baligurha Subdivision</i> ..	139,979	142,793	282,772
Baligurha Tahsil ..	79,622	80,527	160,149
Baligurha P. S. ..	37,135	37,307	74,442
Belaghar P. S. ..	6,920	6,926	13,846
Kotagarh P. S. ..	13,591	13,466	27,057
Daringbarhi P. S. ..	13,162	13,104	26,266
Bamunigan P. S. ..	8,814	9,724	18,538
G. Udayagiri Tahsil ..	60,357	62,266	1,22,623
G.Udayagiri P. S. ..	40,639	41,980	82,619
Raikia P. S. ..	19,718	20,286	40,004

* Census of India, 1971, Part II-A, General Population Tables, pp, 44—46

During the last seventy years the population grew from 334,036 in 1901 to 621,675 in 1971, an increase of 86·11 per cent which is less than the State average growth of 112·09 per cent during the same period. The growth of population from decade to decade is given below: *

Growth of population

Census Year	Males	Females	Total	Decade variations	Percentage decade variation
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1901	165,955	168,081	334,036	..	..
1911	187,789	190,250	378,039	+44,003	+13·17
1921	186,534	189,821	376,355	-1,684	-0·45
1931	203,618	208,051	411,669	+35,314	+9·38
1941	222,690	227,369	450,059	+38,390	+9·33
1951	226,733	230,157	456,895	+6,836	+1·52
1961	255,685	258,742	514,427	+57,532	+12·59
1971	310,233	311,442	621,675	+1,07,248	+20·85

It is evident from the statement that the decade 1901 to 1911 was favourable for the growth of population in the district. Although the failure of mango and mohua crops in 1907 and 1908 caused distress to the Scheduled Tribes, it was a temporary phase. The Census of 1911 showed an increase of 13·17 per cent. The decade 1911—21 was a miserable period as the death rate on account of epidemics enormously increased. Repeated failure of crops led to famine in 1919 in the southern part of the district. There was a moderate increase of population by 9·7 per cent in Boudh while the population of Khondmals was practically steady. Baligurha lost heavily so that the district as a whole suffered loss of population to the extent of 0·45 per cent. In the following decade 1921—31 there was speedy recovery as public health had improved. There was a gain of 9·38 per cent in the growth of population. The same growth of population was maintained during the decade 1931—41 in spite of the set-back caused by epidemic diseases. The population rose to 450,059 in the 1941 Census, an increase of 9·33 per cent. The decade 1941—51 was worse than the previous decade on account of shortage of foodstuffs. There was marked deterioration of public.

Census of India, 1971, Orissa, Part II-A, General Population Tables, p. 109

health. Death rate on account of fever had increased considerably. At the end of the decade, there was a nominal increase of 1.52 per cent in population.

The next decade (1951—61) was more favourable than the previous decade and there were signs of recovery. Special schemes for the tribal people were introduced through National Extension Service Blocks. As irrigation facilities were not extensive, much progress in agriculture could not be achieved although the food problem was far better than the previous decade. General improvement in public health was noticed as the death rate on account of Agency fevers had come down. In the Census of 1961, population rose to 514,427, marking an increase of 12.59 per cent.

The last decade 1961—71 has recorded the highest growth of population, i.e., 20.85 per cent. But it is less than the corresponding State average growth of population which is 25.05 per cent. The reasons for the growth of population are generally the excess of births over deaths and the general improvement in public health and personal hygiene. Another important factor for the increase of population is the migration of a large number of persons from neighbouring districts of the State. The industrial and commercial developments at Boudh, Phulabani, G. Udayagiri and Baligurha have also attracted many persons to these places.

Density

According to the Census of 1971 the density of 56 persons per sq. km. in the district is much below the State average which is 141 persons per sq. km. The density of 46 persons per sq. km. in 1961 was equally low compared with the then State figure of 113 persons. The density of the district thus continue to be low in the Censuses of 1951 and 1971. This is because the area has neither the natural advantage to sustain higher density of population nor are there industries and projects coming up to attract persons from outside.

The Census of 1971 also recorded the highest density of population, i.e., 66 persons per sq. km. in Boudh subdivision and the lowest (50) in Baligurha subdivision. Further analysis reveals that G. Udayagiri Tahsil is the most densely inhabited area whereas Baligurha Tahsil is the most sparsely inhabited area in the district. Among police-stations, Khajuriparha tops the list with 108 persons per sq.km. and Belaghar ranks the lowest with 19. Of the two urban centres in the district, Phulabani, the district headquarters, leads with an average of 676 persons.

Rural Urban distribution

The total population of 621,675 persons in the district is distributed into 602,107 rural and 19,568 urban in the ratio of 96.85 per cent and 3.15 per cent, respectively.

In 1971, there were 4,397 inhabited and 238 uninhabited villages in the district. The total rural population of 602,107 persons (299,742 males and 302,365 females) live in these inhabited villages. The average population size per inhabited village thus comes to 137. It is very much less than the State average which is 428.

Rural
population

Further, this district records the lowest average population among all the districts of Orissa. In the following statement, the proportion of different size of villages to the total number of villages and the population of such villages to the total rural population (in percentage) is shown according to the Census of 1971.

Villages with population of	No. of villages	Percentage of No. of villages to total No. of villages	Rural population	Percentage of rural population to total population of the district
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Less than 200	.. 3,505	79.71	2,61,214	42.12
200—499	.. 748	17.01	2,22,322	38.19
500—999	.. 122	2.78	81,698	13.57
1,000—1,999	.. 18	0.41	24,403	4.05
2,000—4,999	.. 4	0.09	12,470	2.07
5,000—9,999	.. ..	..	..	..
10,000 and above	.. ..	..	..	..

It is evident from the foregoing statement that the number of villages with population less than 500 is the highest in the district. These villages constitute 4,253 or 96.72 per cent of the total number of villages. The villages of this category accommodated 80.31 per cent of the total rural population of the district. These figures, though significant, in 1971 have registered a fall when compared to the 1961 Census figures which recorded 97.76 per cent and 84.33 per cent respectively. Correspondingly an increase in the percentage of medium and large-sized villages is noticed. This trend is on par with the State figures.

The urban population of 19,568 persons (10,491 males and 9,077 females) is spread over Phulabani and Boudh towns of the district. The former is the district headquarters and is the Class IV town with a population of 10,677. The other town is Boudh which belongs to the category of Class V town (with population varying from 5,000 to 9,999).

Urban
population

It appears from the Census records that Boudh was the only town in the district from 1941 to 1961. Phulabani acquired urban status in 1971. Thus the number of towns has increased from one in 1941 to two in 1971. The following statement gives a picture of the growth of population in the towns since 1941.

Town	Population			
	1941	1951	1961	1971
Boudh ..	5,740	5,498	6,088	8,891
Phulabani ..	..	..	..	10,677

Of the two towns, Boudh, the primary and industrial town, has increased its population by 46.04 per cent within a decade (1961—71). The urban population of the district also increased from 6,088 in 1961 to 19,568 in 1971 with the declaration of Phulabani as an urban area.

Displaced persons

As a result of the partition of the country a large number of persons from West Pakistan (present Pakistan) and East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) were displaced not only geographically but also socially and economically. They were settled in different parts of the country. The total number of such migrants to this district from 1946 to 1951 was 122 (65 males and 57 females) of whom 29 have settled in rural areas and 93 in urban areas. All the displaced persons have adopted non-agricultural professions.*

Age-group

The distribution of population by age and sex according to the Census of 1971 is given below. **

Age-group	Males	Females	Total	Percentage of district population
0—14 ..	1,28,971	1,29,499	2,58,470	41.6
15—59 ..	1,65,467	1,64,674	3,30,141	53.1
60 years and above ..	15,735	17,200	32,935	5.3

* Census of India, 1951, Orissa, Part-II-A, pp. 148—155

** A Portrait of Population, Orissa, 1971, pp. 158—173

The statement shows that children below 14 years constitute 41·6 per cent of the total population while persons in the working age-group 15—59 constitute 53·1 per cent. The other districts which have a relatively high percentage of population in the working age-groups are Sambalpur (54·6 per cent), Koraput (53·5 per cent) and Balangir (53·3 per cent). Persons above 60 years are only 5·3 per cent of the district population. In the age-groups 0—14 and 60 years and above greater survival of females than males are noticed.

In 1971 the number of females per thousand males in the district was 1,004, higher than similar ratio of 988 for the State as a whole. The following statement presents the sex ratios of Boudh-Khondmals district from 1901 to 1971.*

Sex ratio

Census year	Number of females per 1,000 males			
	Rural	Urban	Total	
1901	..	1,013	..	1,013
1911	..	1,013	..	1,013
1921	..	1,018	..	1,018
1931	..	1,022	..	1,022
1941	..	1,021	1,029	1,021
1951	..	1,016	961	1,015
1961	..	1,013	949	1,012
1971	..	1,009	865	1,004

The statement makes it clear that the district has maintained a surplus of females since 1901. In this respect the position of Boudh-Khondmals in the State was third in 1971. The higher female ratio is also noticed in rural areas. It is probably due to the absence of male members who have moved out in search of livelihood to urban areas. Scarcity of women is found in the urban areas from 1951. But the urban female sex ratio of the district is higher than the State urban female sex ratio of 845 in 1971.

* Census of India, Orissa, Part II-A, 1971, p. 106

Migration

In 1971 the migrants to this district constituted 6.30 per cent of the total population of whom 0.21 per cent were born outside the State. The migrants from outside the State hail from Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mysore, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. As Boudh-Khondmals district is not contiguous to any other State, there is no predominance of migrants in relation to a particular State. The small number of migrants from the above mentioned States indicate the lack of economic development of the district which would have otherwise provided sufficient incentive for infiltration from outside the State. The immigrants from countries like Nepal, Pakistan and Ireland to this district numbered 40 persons. Of these, 10 persons were from Ireland. These persons of Irish origin are mostly engaged in Christian Missionary Work in G. Udayagiri area. The distribution of population on the basis of place of birth is as follows.

Place of birth	Males	Females	Total	Percentage to total population	
Persons born at the place of enumeration	247,584	171,028	418,612	67.33	
Persons born elsewhere in the district of enumeration	45,166	117,725	162,891	26.20	
Persons born in other districts of the State	16,523	21,344	37,867	6.09	
Persons born in other States in India	610	615	1,225	0.20	
Persons born in country in Asia beyond India	10	20	30	0.01	
Persons born in country in Europe	..	10	10	Negligible	
Unclassifiable	..	340	700	1,040	0.16

The predominance of females in all the categories of migrants, except those born at the place of enumeration, indicates that they have moved from one village to another and from one police-station to another consequent to their marriage, while participation in economic pursuits may be the secondary aspect thereof.

In 1971, ten languages were recorded as major mother-tongues in the district. Of these, Oriya is the predominant language and is spoken by 418,328 persons or 67.29 per cent of the total population. Kui, a tribal language, is next in importance with 196,312 speakers. The following statement gives the distribution of population according to language in Boudh-Khondmals district as per the 1971 Census.*

Language

Name of mother-tongue	No. of speakers	Percentage to total population
Oriya	418,328	67.29
Kui	196,312	31.58
Gondi	2,208	0.36
Khond/Kondh	1,727	0.28
Telugu	1,165	0.19
Urdu	617	0.10
Hindi	496	0.08
Tamil	214	0.03
Bengali	154	0.02
Savara	81	0.01
Total	621,302	99.94
Others	373	0.06

* A Portrait of Population, Orissa—B. Tripathy, Census of India, 1971, p. 250

Bilingualism

Of the total population in the district 67,162 persons are returned as speaking a language subsidiary to their mother-tongue. The following statement gives the total bilingual population in the district and also the principal subsidiary language spoken by them.*

Mother-tongue	Total No. of Speakers	Total No. of persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to the mother-tongue	Principal subsidiary languages				
			Oriya	Hindi	English	Kui	Others
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Bengali ..	122	68	32	3	33	..	..
Gondi	1,930	1,146	1,014	1	3	128	..
Hindi	510	153	123	..	29	..	1
Khond/Kondh	11,818	1,140	1,140	..	..	..	..
Kol	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kui	1,82,736	41,925	41,557	52	273	..	43
Laria	52	10	10	..	..	..	..
Mundari	17	1	1	..	..	..	..
Oriya	2,74,708	21,403	..	1,191	3,659	16,180	373
Savara	41,129	418	418	..	..	..	..
Telugu	671	501	411	8	81	1	..
Urdu	557	397	359	25	13	..	..
Total	5,14,251	67,162	45,065	1,280	4,091	16,309	417

* Census of India, Orissa, Part II-C, 1961, pp. 126—132

It is observed from the table that Oriya is the most important subsidiary language of all the non-Oriya speakers in the district. Kui, English and Hindi are the other important subsidiary languages.

The Oriya script is in vogue all over the district. Even the tribals who speak Kui, Khond/Kondh or Savara language prefer Oriya script while writing their dialects. The people speaking other Indian languages use their respective scripts.

Scripts

The Hindus are found in great majority in Boudh-Khondmals district. Their strength in 1971 was 579,671. They were followed by the Christians (40,561), the Muslims (1,427), the Sikhs (15) and the Buddhists (1). The statement below illustrates the religious divisions of the people of the district and their growth rate during the decade 1961—71.

Religion

Name of the religion	Number of followers in the census year		Percentage decadal growth rate, 1961—71
	1961	1971	
Hindus ..	497,684	579,671	16·47
Muslims ..	446	1,427	219·96
Christians ..	16,247	40,561	149·65
Sikhs ..	21	15	—31·82
Buddhists ..	17	1	—96·30
Jains ..	1	..	—100·00
Other religious & persuasions ..	..	..	..
Religion not stated ..	..	..	..

The foregoing figures indicate the increase of Hindu, Muslim and Christian population during the decade 1961—71. The decade has recorded steady decline in the population of Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains. The analysis also reveals that the Hindu population is not increasing in par with the Muslim and the Christian population.

Among the Hindus most of the people are semi-Hinduised aboriginals. They have adopted Hindu customs and worship Hindu gods. They claim to be orthodox Hindus, but side by side worship their

Hinduism

own tribal gods and sylvan deities. In every village there is almost invariably a village priest who is known as *guru*, *dehuri*, *jani*, etc. They appease the evil spirits and the sylvan deities of the tribe with sacrifices of buffaloes, goats and fowls. The villagers do not conduct any auspicious work without worshipping the village deities which are represented by a log of wood or a stone smeared with vermilion and usually located in a dense forest. The village deities are worshipped on the occasion of every religious ceremony and also on special occasions like the outbreak of epidemics, famine, etc. The priests get remuneration from the villagers for their service. These village deities are also worshipped as Durga, Bararaul, Jogini, etc. The worship of the *grama devati* is conducted with great pomp and show on the Mahastami day of the Durga Puja. At some places goats and buffaloes are sacrificed.

The Hindus of the district are polytheists. They worship gods and goddesses in temples dedicated to Lord Jagannath, Siva, Radha-Krushna; Sakti in her various manifestations; and other deities. The people congregate near these temples on different festive occasions like Ratha Jatra, Durga Puja, Sivaratri, Dola Jatra, etc. Usually in a Hindu household when a child is seriously ill, the parents make religious vows to offer special *puja* before some deity for the recovery of the child and perform *puja* in the prescribed manner. In case it is not done a fresh danger of a more serious magnitude is apprehended. Women also offer special *puja* to deities in the hope of having male issues.

The Hindus worship the Sun-god daily while bathing and a libation of water is made in his honour. Many abstain from eating fish or meat on Sunday which is ceremonially observed as it is the sacred day for the Sun-god. The Earth is described as the holy mother of all living things and the giver of all good and is regarded as a benignant female deity. The people worship the Earth goddess during agricultural operations. Besides the Sun and the Earth, the planets like *sani* and *rahu* are also worshipped on certain occasions. Thursday is considered an auspicious day for goddess Lakhmi and is observed with religious devotion mostly by the women folk.

The Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), Banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*), Bel (*Aegle marmelos*), mango (*Mangifera indica*), Anla (*Phyllanthus emblica*), Duba (*Cynodom dactylon*), Asoka (*Janesia asoka saraca indica*), Barkuli (*Zezyphus*), Bakul (*Mimusops elengi*) and Tulsi (holy basil) are held sacred by the Hindus. In almost every Hindu household there is a *chaura* or a sacred place where Tulsi is planted and worshipped. Every evening, lighted wicks are offered by the housewife before the *chaura*.

Siva is the most popular among the gods in the Hindu Pantheon. Because of his benign qualities Siva has become a very familiar god among the common people. The followers of Saivism worship Him in the name of Mahadev, Nilakantha, Rudra, Sankar, etc. The Siva temples at Boudh, Jagati, Sarsara, Mallisahi, Bandhugora in Boudh police station; Bisiparha in Phulabani police station; Belligurha in Bali-gurha police station; Dapala in Manamunda police station; Bhejigora, Burubuda and Raniganj in Harabhanga police station; Chakapad, Purunagarh and Dungi in G. Udayagiri police station; Dadagamaha and Daniguda in Raikia police station; and Kotagarh in Kotagarh police station are known as important centres of Siva worship in Boudh-Khondmals district. The pilgrims usually visit these places on the Sankranti day and during Sivaratri festival and worship the deity. The devout Saivites use three horizontal lines of sandal wood paste on their forehead as religious mark and wear *rudraksha mala* round their neck.

Saivism

The district has been a seat of Saktism and Sakti worship from hoary past. Of the Sakta Pithas, the places Bandhagarh and Balaskumpa are important. The goddess Bararaul at Bandhagarh in Phiringia police station is worshipped with great pomp and ceremony in the month of Jyaistha (May-June) which attracts a large crowd consisting mostly of the Kandhas. The object of worship is a piece of stone said to have been unearthed by a Kandha while ploughing the field. The other Sakta Pitha is at Balaskumpa in Khajuriparha police station. The village contains a shrine of Bararaul, a goddess identified with Durga of the coastal districts of Orissa. The blessings of the deity are invoked in wedding and other ceremonial occasions and her aid prayed for in times of sickness. In the bright fortnight of Aswina (September-October) of every year there are large gatherings when offerings of rice, milk, sweet-meats, goat, sheep, fowl and buffalo are made.

Saktism

The Sikhs residing in the district are mostly immigrants from outside the State. They numbered 15 according to the Census of 1971 and are mostly found in the Khondmals subdivision. They have no Gurudwar in the district.

Sikhism

In Boudh-Khondmals district traces of Buddhism are found in the ex-State of Boudh. This reminds one of the days when Buddhism reigned in the area. In course of time the number of followers of the religion declined and in 1971 only one person was found to have professed Buddhism.

Buddhism

The Census of 1971 has recorded 1,427 Muslims in the district. They have faith in God. According to them, Mohammad is the last

Islam

prophet and there will be no prophet after him and they accept Quoran as the Holy book of the Almighty God. The Muslims of Boudh-Khondmal are of Sunni sect. They abide by the teachings of one of the four Imams (guides) i. e., Imam Abu Hanifa.

In 1912-13 when the Raja of Boudh was a minor the estate was under the management of the court of wards. At that time Rahimullaha, a resident of Punjab, was working under the court. He constructed the mosque at Boudh alongwith the mosques at Rairakhhol and Athmallik. In 1978, there were six mosques in Boudh-Khondmals district. These are located at Phulabani, G. Udayagiri, Boudh, Manamunda, Subarnapalli and Baligurha. Of these, the mosque at Subarnapalli under Manamunda police station is a new one. It was constructed in the year 1972.

Christianity

Christianity has the second largest following in Boudh-Khondmals district as per 1971 Census. The followers of this faith number 40,561 and account for 6.53 per cent of the district's population and yet they come next to the Hindus. In 1961, they also ranked second in the district.

The Christians found in the district are mostly Roman Catholics or belong to the Church of North India. Christian Missionaries belonging to the other denominations are also found in the district. Most of the local Christians are aboriginal converts. There is a larger concentration of aboriginal Christians in Baligurha subdivision.

Mahima Dharma

The followers of Mahima Dharma or Alekha Dharma are found mainly in Boudh subdivision of the district. They believe in one God, i. e., Param Brahma, the Supreme Being. He is indescribable, indivisible and invisible. He is believed to have created the universe. The founder of this cult was Mahima Gosain whose name, parentage, age and place of birth are not known. His disciples believe that he is an incarnation of Param Brahma. According to Biswanath Baba* this religion flourished in the ex-State of Boudh during the middle of the 19th century. During that period, Gobinda Baba, the first disciple of Mahima Gosain in the Abdhuta order was preaching Mahima Dharma in this region. Once Mahima Gosain visited Balasinga and from there proceeded to Rairakhhol with Gobinda Baba and initiated Bhima Bhoi, the great saint-poet of Orissa. (For a detailed account of this cult see—Orissa District Gazetteers, Dhenkanal, Published in 1972).

CASTE

Caste plays an important role in the socio-economic life of the people of the district. For a detailed description of each caste, caste-wise population figures are essential. But since 1951, no enumeration in regard to different castes is made in the Censuses. In the absence

* Biswanath Baba—Satya Mahima Dharma Itihasa

of such statistics, much of the valuable information relating to the life and economy of the people could not be incorporated in the present work. However, a general discussion of various castes is given below.

The Bhulia is a weaver caste. They are said to have emigrated from Chhatisgarh and speak Laria Language. The Bhulias of the district occupy a higher rank than the ordinary weavers and assume the honorific title of Meher. Their settlements are found in the areas from Ghantaparha to Bhutapali in Boudh subdivision. Bhulia

The Brahmins are a few in the district. They are divided into two classes, viz., Jhadua and Oriya or Utkaliya. They act as priests and are engaged to worship the deities during fairs and festivals. They also conduct marriages. Before the arrival of the Bhanjas, according to legend, the ancestors of Jhadua Brahmins were ruling the old Boudh or Jharkhanda areas. At that time many Brahmins got Jagir lands and were engaged in cultivation. Brahmin

Magadha and Nanda Gauras are found in the district. They claim to belong to Jadubamsa and worship Lord Krishna. They pay special reverence to the cow. The traditional occupation of the caste is to tend cattle and to deal with milk and milk products. Some of them have now changed to other occupations. Gaura

Oriya and Jhadua Karans are found in the district. Their number is very few. In the past they helped the rulers in administration. Karan

The Kosthas are weavers. They deal in *Kosa* or tusser silk. They do not prefer to establish marital relationship with the Bhulias, a weaver caste dealing in cotton. Kostha

The Kumbharas of the district prepare earthen pots like *handi*, *mathia*, *surei* and sell the products in the weekly markets. They are found almost in every village of the district but Ghulghulapadar appears to be their main centre. Kumbhar

The Lohars are found mostly in Ghantapada and Boudh area of the district. They manufacture agricultural implements like sickle, axe, spade, crowbar etc. They collect crude iron-ore from the neighbouring areas and prepare the required implements by smelting iron ore. Lohar

The district was a seat of tantra. Even today Bhairabi temples are found in different villages. Siva temples are also seen in many villages. The Malis mostly act as priests in these temples. Among the Malis there is a section who are known as Saga Malis. Cultivation of vegetables is their main profession. Mali

Vaisa Bania

The Vaisa Banias are known as Putli Banias. They live mostly in Panchara, Khaliapali, Dantapali, Boudh, Mahulpali, Birgarh, Bamanda, Takuda and Khajuria villages of Boudh subdivision. They earn their livelihood by cultivation.

Dumal

Dumals belong to the agricultural community. But most of the Dumals identify themselves as Nanda Gauras. They worship Sthambeswari or Khambeswari as their presiding deity on the fullmoon day in the month of Aswina (September-October). They place their tutelary deity in the north-east corner of a dark room and worship.

About the origin of the Dumals some say that they have come out from Dimba (ଡିମ୍ବା). Others are of opinion that they were the cowherds of the Raja of Puri. Everyday they used to supply milk, curd and Ghee to the Jagannath Temple. Once a vulture sat on the temple. The Pujapanda had a dream and came to know that the Ghee served to Jagannath was impure. For this Jagannath was dissatisfied and the vulture appeared on the temple. This news was communicated to the Raja. The Raja was annoyed with this and decided to punish the cowherds. One official of the Durbar secretly informed the cowherds about the Raja's decision. Those who had supplied Ghee to the temple left the place at night with family and moved towards west. After many days they settled at Dumbagarh in the Athmallik region of Boudh. In course of time these cowherds of Dumbagarh came to be known as Dumal Gauras.

Boudh is their main centre of habitation. From here they have spread to other places. Due to the heavy concentration of this caste in Boudh, the Raja of Boudh was known as *dedhalakhya dumbadhipati* or king of one and a half lakhs of Dumals.* The Raja employed many of the Dumals in responsible posts. He gave some Dumals as dowry to the Raja of Patna. Those Dumals adopted Mahakhur as surname. Afterwards Mahakhur became Mahakhuda, Mahakuda and Mahakul.

Many old Dumals worship *nisan baja* (semi-circular drum with the sticks). During fairs and festivals they first worship this drum and then perform other worships.

Keuta

The Keutas or Kaibartas are fishermen by caste. Fishing, net making and plying of boats are their main profession. The females prepare fried paddy (ଝିଲ, ଝିଆ), and fried rice (ଝୁଡ଼ି) and fried pressed paddy (ଝୁଡ଼ା) which they sell in weekly markets.

*S. P. Das—History of Sambalpur, 1969,p.13

The Keutas of Boudh have the reputation for their patience, courage and skill in plying boats safely in the narrow and rocky beds of the river Mahanadi. They earned a lot from the traders whose boats used to ply between Sambalpur and Cuttack. Now due to the opening of new roads and the popularity of moter transport, river transport in the Mahanadi has considerably decreased.

They observe Chaitra Parab as their caste festival on the full moon day in the month of Chaitra (March-April). During this festival they worship goddess Basuli.

The number of Kshatriyas is few in the district, found mostly in the Boudh subdivision. They belong to the warrior caste and observe *Upanayan*. The ex-Ruling House of Boudh is a branch of the Bhanjas of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj who claim to be Suryavamsi Kshatriyas.

Kshatriya

According to a legend the Kulthas migrated from Ajodhya and settled in Boudh. The Raja of Boudh gave one family of Dumal and five families of Kulthas to the Raja of Patna as dowry during the marriage of his daughter. The surnames of those four families were Pradhan, Sahu, Naik and Biswal. Besides that, Bhoi title is also found among the Kulthas. The Kulthas of the district are steady and industrious cultivators. Many of them are quite prosperous and rich. Sarasara and Jagati of Boudh are the main centres of the Kulthas. Hanuman is their tutelary deity. Though the Chasas have some similarities with the Kulthas marital relationship between the two was not common. Some of the Kulthas have migrated from the ex-State of Boudh and have settled in different parts of the Sambalpur district. Even today the Kulthas of Sambalpur identify themselves as the Sarasara Kulthas and Jagati Kulthas.

Kultha

The Sudhas or Suds are a community with traditions of having formerly been the dominant power in Boudh, with whose chief they claim to have relationship. Though now mostly cultivators, they used to serve as soldiers or paiks and worship the gun and other war weapons in their houses.

Sudha

The chief deity of the Sudhas is goddess Khambeswari, represented by a wooden pillar (Khamba) fixed in the ground. The deity is worshipped with elaborate rituals in the month of Bhadra.

Besides the above castes, people belonging to Sitara (bell metal utensil maker), Khadra (bell metal bangle maker), Sunari (gold and silver ornament makers), Teli (pressing and selling oil), Guria (sweetmeat maker), Paik (feudal militia), Sundi (distillers of liquor and money lenders) and Khitibansa or Matibansa (teach children in Chatasalis) castes are also found in the district.

Other Castes

The Census of 1971 enumerated 117,987 Scheduled Castes (59,335 males and 58,652 females) in the district. This constituted about 18·98 per cent of the total population. With this percentage Boudh-Khondmals heads the list among the districts of Orissa. It is closely followed by Balasore (18·51 per cent) and Cuttack (18·06 per cent). This district (Boudh-Khondmals) was also the first among the districts in 1961 with 19·32 per cent.

Of the 40 Scheduled Castes returned in 1971, the most numerous were Dhoba (4,909), Dom (1,631), Ganda (18,580), Ghasi (5,441), Haddi (4,692), Khadala (1,023), Pan (69,072) and Tanla (3,408). The above 8 Scheduled Castes comprised 92·17 per cent of the total population of Scheduled Castes in the district.

The Scheduled Castes are concentrated in the rural areas of the district to the extent of 97·74 per cent. The 1971 Census recorded the highest Scheduled Castes population in the Baligurha subdivision (51,204) and the lowest in the Khondmals subdivision (24,227).

Further analysis revealed that the proportion of Scheduled Castes is much higher in G. Udayagiri (16,623), Boudh (16,205), Baligurha (11,690), Harabhangra (10,647), Manamunda (9,362), Phiringia (8,346) and Khajuriparha police-stations than in other police-stations of the district.

In 1971, the literate and educated persons among the Scheduled Castes numbered 17,283, i. e., 14·64 per cent of their total population in the district. The analysis revealed that 25·80 per cent of males and 3·36 per cent of the females were literate. This indicated that education has spread very little among the females.

Among the Scheduled Castes 54·60 per cent were workers and the rest non-workers. Majority of the workers were engaged in agricultural occupations, household industries and other services. In addition to these works, 585 persons were engaged in unwholesome activities like scavenging and tanning and currying of hides and skins.

Examining the marital status of the Scheduled Caste population by their broad age-groups it is found that the number of married persons in the age-group 15—44 is the highest in both the sexes, while large number of widows are found in the age-group 45 and above. The evil of child marriage has not been completely rooted out as small number of married persons are still found in the age-group 0-14.

Chamar

In the 1971 Census, 156 persons were enumerated as Chamar, Mochi, Muchi or Satnami in the district of whom 22·43 per cent were described as literates. They speak both Oriya and Laria languages and deal with leather and footwear. The creed adopted by them is the Satnami. This religion was preached by one Ghasidas belonging to the Chamar Caste in early 19th century. Among Satnamis idolatry of every form is eschewed.

The traditional occupation of the Dhobas or Dhobis is to wash garments. They collect dirty clothes from house to house. After washing they return the clean clothes with or without ironing. For this work they get remuneration either in cash or in kind. This system is still prevalent in the district. Their services are also essential for the people on social occasions like birth, death, etc. Dhoba

As regards education, it was found in the Census of 1971 that 21.53 per cent of the Dhobas were literate.

The population of Doms, Domos or Duria Doms, according to the 1971 Census was 1,631 (910 males and 721 females). They are said to be clever people. The Kandhas treat them as their advisers. They are, however, now turning to agriculture and other allied professions for their sustenance. Dom

As regards their education, it was found that 130 persons, i. e., 7.97 per cent of the total population were literate in 1971.

The strength of the Gandas in the district was 18,580 (9,435 males and 9,145 females) of which 11.71 per cent were literate in 1971. They are found almost in every village of the district. They worked as Chowkidars and reported to the police about the law and order situation of the village. Ganda

They play musical instruments like Dhol, Nisan, Changu, Tamka, Tasa Madapa (one type of war musical instrument) and Mahuri on ceremonial occasions and lead the procession.

Most of the Gandas of the district are cultivators and agricultural labourers. Some of them weave clothes and identify themselves as Tantis. The Gandas were also known for their criminal habits in the district. Some of the Gandas bear the surname 'Rakshyasa'.

The Census of 1971 returned 5,441 (2,699 males and 2,742 females) Ghasis or Ghasias in the district. They worked as sweepers and grass-cutters to horses. The incidence of literacy among them was confined to 12.95 per cent in 1971. Ghasi

According to the 1971 Census, Hadi or Hari numbered 4,692 (2,624 males and 2,068 females) in the district. They worship Hindu deities. They have their own community priests who perform marriage and other ceremonies. Most of them work as scavengers in Phulabani, Boudh, Baligurha and G. Udayagiri. Some persons earn their livelihood as cultivators and agricultural labourers. They also act as drummers in social functions. In 1971, literacy among them was confined to 16.13 per cent. Hadi

Khadalas numbering 1,023 (500 males and 523 females) constituted 0.86 per cent of the district Scheduled Caste population in 1971. Of their Khadala

working population, the majority are engaged as cultivators and agricultural labourers. They are comparatively advanced in education and follow Hindu rites and customs.

Pana

Numerically Pan, Pana or Pano is the largest Scheduled Castes community in the State and also in Boudh-Khondmals district. Their population in 1971 was 69,072 (34,368 males and 34,704 females). They are found almost in every village and have close relationship with the Kandhas. Nearly 70 years ago O' Malley* observed "In the Khondmals, the Pans were the serfs of the Khonds. They worked on their farms and wove cloth for them, in return for which they obtained a small area of land, grain for food and all their marriage expenses; they used also to procure victims for the Meriah sacrifices. Their serfdom was so well recognised that if a Pan left his master and worked for another, it caused serious dissensions among the Khond community. To this day there is a settlement of Pans—a kind of Ghetto—attached to every large Khond village, where they weave the cloth the Khonds require and work as farm labourers". The picture remains more or less the same today except for the Meriah sacrifice. In lieu of Meriah, buffaloes are being procured for sacrifice. The Panas also acted as intermediaries and exploited the tribal people economically.

A survey** undertaken by the Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute in 1973 revealed that the image of the Pana as a cunning, wicked and unscrupulous person has inadvertently emerged out of some old records. This image is far from true. The stigma attached to them is partly a legacy of the British period when certain groups were treated as hereditary criminals. It has been established on historical evidence that the Pana migrated from the plains and settled in the tribal areas. The reasons of this migration are obscure. Coming from more sophisticated areas it was but natural on their part to develop into a cleverer and more advanced section of the local people.

The Panas worship Vima Devta at the time of illness. They worship Dharani Devta on all occasions and Sikerpat Devta for harvesting bumper crops and for forest produce. Sikerpat Devta is also known as Danger Devta in the district. The people of this caste also participate in the Durgapuja, Diwali and Rahas Jatra festivals. Due to the influence of the Christian Missionaries a considerable number of persons of this caste have been converted to christianity in Kotagarh, Tumudibandh, Baligurha, Nuagan, Phiringia, Daringbarhi, Raikia, G. Udayagiri and Phulabani regions of the district. The converted Panas have changed

* L. S. O.' Malley, Bengal District Gazetteers, Angul, 1908, p. 42

** Report on Benchmark Survey of Baliguda Project Area in Phulbani district, 1973, p. 27

their pattern of living and are more clean, health conscious and educated. In 1971, literacy among the Panas was 48.37 per cent in the district. This shows their advancement in education.

According to the 1971 Census, the population of the Tanlas in the Boudh-Khondmals district was 3,408 (1,526 males and 1,882 females). Only 13 persons were found in the urban areas while the rest were in the rural areas. They are mostly concentrated in the Boudh and the Khondmals Tahsil of the district.

Tanla

The traditional occupation of the Tanlas is tending of cattle. But nowadays they mostly live on cultivation. Some of them work as casual labourers.

They worship Goddess Banadurga in the month of Margasira (November-December). They have their own priests. Bride price system is prevalent among them.

The Tanlas have caste council. The headman of the council is called Pradhan. He is assisted by some persons who are known as Beheras.

They speak Oriya and Kui languages. In 1971, 19.57 per cent of them were found literate in the district.

As per 1971 Census the number of tribal population in the district was 250,605 (122,802 males and 127,803 females) accounting for 40.31 per cent of the total population of the district as against 23.11 per cent in Orissa State and 6.94 per cent in India as a whole.

SCHEDULED
TRIBES

Of the 62 tribes notified as Scheduled Tribes for the State as many as 29 tribes are found in this district. Of these, five tribes, viz., Gond, Kandha, Saora, Kandha-Gauda and Kotia are numerically important. These five tribes together constituted 96.21 per cent of the total tribal population of the district in 1971. Kandhas alone constituted 89.11 per cent of the total tribal population. Tribal people are found throughout the Boudh-Khondmals district but their concentration is larger in Baligurha subdivision (157,694) followed by Khondmals (60,884) and Boudh (32,027). Among the police-stations, G. Udayagiri (43,872), Baligurha (40,289), Phiringia (29,074), Phulabani (17,698), Daringbarhi (16,964), Kotagarh (15,776) and Boudh (6,367) claimed comparatively more tribal population than the other police-stations of the district.

The tribal people in the district live mostly in far off interior regions inside the forests. Their primary activity is cultivation of land by primitive methods, hunting and collection of forest produce. They constitute the weaker and the most neglected section of the community. Their average

annual income from all sources may be around Rs. 200/—. In some of the other districts of Orissa, the tribal people are being absorbed in the main stream of life by working in mines, factories, road construction, etc., but the tribal people of this district are not yet exposed to such forces of economic advancement. Majority of them still work on land, but the yields are extremely low due to primitive methods of cultivation and lack of irrigation facilities. Most of them are also landless. The harmful practice of shifting cultivation is widely prevalent among them. Turmeric is their main crop. They also raise millets and oil-seeds. They cultivate only the traditional crops and a second crop is practically unknown to them. Due to inadequate transport and marketing facilities, they get very low price for their products. The economy is not yet monetised and as a matter of fact, barter prevails on a large scale. The village weekly markets are of great economic importance in the life of these people. They are often exploited by the local merchants and the non-tribals. These people have also their peculiar social customs and practices. Much of their income is spent on rituals and drinks. They have practically no savings. Indebtedness is a common feature with them. They have to borrow heavily in the lean season from local money-lenders against promise to repay the loan in kinds after the harvest. Much of their produce is thus spent in repayment of debts and as a result, they have to live in a vicious circle of poverty and debt.

The State Government have taken a large number of welfare measures to ameliorate their distressing conditions. Out of the 15 Community Development Blocks in the district, 9 are declared as Tribal Development Blocks* to undertake special tribal welfare measures and to ensure rapid economic development of the area. Besides Khondmals, Baligurha and G. Udayagiri Tahsils have been declared as "backward areas" so that various Departments of the Government would keep these areas in view while undertaking development programmes. The above three Tahsils covering 2,952 square miles (7,645.68 sq. km.) have also been declared as "Scheduled Area" under the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution. The Agency Marketing Co-operative Society at Tikabali has been organised with a view to providing marketing facilities to the tribals for their crops and collected forest products at remunerative prices. Two purchase, sale and fair price shop schemes have been taken up departmentally by the State Government at Belaghar and Subarnagiri area in Baligurha Tahsil with the object of providing marketing facilities to the Adivasis for their produces at remunerative prices and selling them their daily necessities of life at reasonable prices in fair price

* The name of the 9 Tribal Development Blocks are Baligurha, Nuagan, Kotagarh, Tikabali, G. Udaygiri, Raikia, Chakapad, Phulabani and Khajuriparha.

shops. These schemes, however, have gone a long way in safeguarding the economic interests of the tribals, but on the whole, the people are still largely backward and live a precarious existence.

The Census report of 1961 revealed that among the Scheduled Tribes 97.68 per cent professed Hinduism and the rest Christianity. Out of 29 tribes, Christianity seems to have influenced only four tribes, i. e., Kandha, Gond, Kuli and Pentia.

As regards education of the Scheduled Tribes, it was found in the Census of 1971 that 12.87 per cent of their total population were literate. This percentage was higher than similar State average of 9.5 per cent.

Numerically the second most important Scheduled Tribe of Boudh-Khondmals is the Gonds or Gondos. They numbered 9,734 (4,760 males and 4,974 females) according to the 1971 Census.

Gond

They are very industrious. Their main occupation is agriculture. They supplement their income by the collection of forest products. Bow and arrow are their main weapons.

The Gonds are divided into a number of clans. Marriage within the same clan is strictly prohibited. Like other tribes, they have bride price system in the society. They believe in the malevolent deities who, according to them, bring considerable harm in the form of disease, death, loss of cattle and property. They also worship the Hindu deities. They celebrate Pausa Purnima and Dasahara with much pomp and show.

The educated Gonds have given up dancing, singing and alcohol drinking on social and religious occasions, but others still retain these habits.

In 1971, literacy was confined to 14.84 per cent among them.

The Khonds, Konds, Kandhs or Kandhas are a Dravidian tribe. They are the most important and numerically the most significant tribe in the State as well as in the Boudh-Khondmals district. They numbered 223,322 (109,356 males and 113,966 females) in the district, according to the 1971 Census.

Kandha

The word Kandha is difficult to derive. It may be derived from the Telugu word Konda which means a hill, or from Oriya word Kanda (କାନ୍ଦା), an arrow. The Oriyas most probably have kept the word Konda as it is, and called the hill people Kandha by aspirating it.

The Kandhas have good physique. They are not much dark in complexion. Among them some fair-skinned persons are also noticed. The men are slim, active and of average height. The women, though

short, are robust and sturdy. A study* of the ABO blood groups of the Kandhas of Daringbarhi was made in the year 1972-73. It is reported that among the Kandhas the incidence of blood group B is the highest (36.6 per cent). It is followed by blood group O (33.3 per cent), A (20.0 per cent) and AB (10.0 per cent).

The Kandhas are very simple frank, naive and credulous in nature. Their behaviour is pleasant and they are extremely hospitable. They are very courageous before the fierce wild animals, but extremely timid before an unarmed stranger. They formerly practised human sacrifice and female infanticide. The human sacrifice was locally known as Meriah sacrifice. In this respect accounts have been graphically described by various British Administrators who were in charge of the Khondmals in the 19th Century. In this connection the names of Major Macpherson, Colonel Campbell, Colonel Mac Neile, Mr. Ravenshaw, Captain Mac Vicar, Mr. Russel and Lieutent Hicks may be mentioned. They have worked hard to stop these barbarous practices.

The dress of the Kandhas is very simple. The men wear a long and narrow cloth which passed round the waists and between the legs. The ends of this cloth are brightly coloured and hang down behind like a tail. The Kandha men used to wear long hair which they fastened in front by a knot. In this they invariably stuck cigars, comb, metal pins and feathers of favourite birds.

The Kandha women wear two cloths. One around the waist and another for the upper portion of the body. The Kutia Kandha women wear only one loin cloth. This, of course, has changed to some extent with the ingress of civilisation and now some of them wear dresses normally as worn by the clean caste women. They have intense love for ornaments and wear gold and silver necklaces, ear-rings, nose-rings and hair ornaments. Coloured beads are highly prized in their society and are generally used as necklaces. The most interesting is the ornamentation of the ear. They bore the entire rim of the ear into which small thin sticks are inserted. After marriage the sticks are replaced by silver rings. They tattoo their faces before marriage. In the past, a Kandha never accepted a girl who had not so adorned herself. The Kutia Kandha women do not have tattoo marks on their faces. Most of the old customs among the Kandhas are now fast disappearing.

The Kandhas live with the Panas, the Gandas and other castes in the plains as well as in the hilly areas. The Panas generally act as their creditor and advisor.

* Sangram Keshari Nayak and Srissha Patel, Distribution of blood groups among the Koudhs—Indian Medical Gazette, Vol. XV, No. 4, 1975, pp 165—167.

They live in houses made of wooden walls and spilt bamboos, with a thatching of forest grass and leaves of date palm. Their houses are generally neat and tidy and the women folk take pride in it. Though clean, it lacks ventilation and domestic animals, fowls and men are all huddled together in two or three rooms. They live in small villages. A group of villages is called a *mutha*. The *mutha* is governed by a sardar who is known as *mutha malika* or *mutha sardar*. He settles social disputes.

The Kandhas have many family titles suffixed to their names of which the most common are Malika, Kahanra, Padhan, Majhi, Naik and Ghatal. Besides these, the names Jhankar, Jani, Dehuri and Bahauk are applied to those who perform priestly functions or assist at sacrifices. Malika, Kahania, Jhankar and Jani are purely Kandha titles and the rest appear to have been borrowed from Sūndi, Sudha and Keuta castes.

The Kandhas are divided into three classes, viz., the Kutia, Dangaria, and Desia. The Kutia Kandhas are found mainly in Kotagarh, Tumudi-bandh and Belaghar area of the Baligurha subdivision. The Dangaria or Malua Kandhas live in high lands in hilly areas of the district. The Desia or Oriya Kandhas live in the plain areas with the non-tribals. The Kandhas have intermingled with other sections of the people belonging to the Hindu community and have adopted many of their customs, although a large number of them still follow some of the rites and rituals of their animistic past. The Kutia Kandhas and Malua Kandhas do not marry with the Desia or Oriya Kandhas of Boudh.

The Kandhas freely admit into their fold members of other castes excepting the Panas, Doms and Ghasis. The new entrant has to entertain with a huge feast in which drinking plays an important part. He also presents buffaloes. The Kandha-Lohars, the Kandha-Gauda, the Kandha-Kumbhar, etc., have adopted the religion, customs and practices of the Kandhas. But the Kandhas do not intermarry or eat with them. In every Kandha village admixture of the Kandha tribes and the Hindu artisans are thus noticed.

Exogamy is strictly observed among the Kandhas. According to Major Macpherson, among the Kandhas inter-marriage between persons of the same tribe is considered incestuous and punishable with death. Their matrimonial alliances are regulated by avoiding common ancestors.

In their society the parents generally choose a girl with the help of a Desari who is supposed to be the agent of the gods and the spirits. Accordingly they start negotiation with the parents of the concerned bride. If the bride's parents accept the proposal then the question of bride-price

comes up. Marriage is settled after the bride-price is fixed. Generally it is paid in the shape of money, ornaments, buffaloes, cows, goats, utensils and other articles. The period of payment may extend for many years if the boy's father is not able to pay it all at once. A man who is unable to pay the bride-price is asked to work under his would-be father-in-law until the required quantity is realised. After that the marriage date is fixed. On that day the pieces of broom sticks are removed from the bride's ear and she wears gold or brass rings. On the day of marriage the bridegroom and the male relations of his go to the bride's house in a procession. That evening and the next day morning is spent in feasting. The marriage is solemnised by Jani, the village priest. After the marriage is over the bride and bridegroom are carried on the backs of the bridegroom's friends to his house where the marriage is consummated. On the way, a mock fight is held between the bride's party and the bridegroom's party. The bride's party pretend to take back the bride with oral as well as physical opposition but fail to do so. At last the bride's relations return to their village.

The next day the bride and the bridegroom worship Dharma Pennu, one of their principal deities, by offering fowls, rice and liquor.

Conjugal fidelity is strictly observed among the married Kandha couple. In their society polygamy is not resorted to, but if a woman proves to be barren, the husband may take another wife. Even then he does not forget to give equal treatment and privileges to both the wives.

In Kandha society the pollution in connection with child birth ends on the fifth day. On that day the father of the child sacrifices a fowl and offers cooked meat, rice and liquor to the ancestors so that no ill may befall the child. Some households perform this ceremony on the seventh day. After one month the head hair of the child is shaved off and a feast is given to the neighbours.

They burn their dead but bury the bodies of pregnant women and babies. On the following day the priest purifies all the people who attended the funeral by sprinkling some oil over their heads with a small broom made of twigs or blades of grass. The members of the family of the dead do not eat meat and drink liquor until a ceremony of propitiation and purification is performed. No particular period of mourning is observed. After a few days they renew all the earthen vessels and perform a sacrifice and libation to the departed spirit. On this occasion they give a feast to the relatives and villagers.

The chief occupation of the Kandhas is agriculture. The Kandhas living in the plain areas learnt cultivation from their non-tribal neighbours. Those living on the hills in the Baligurha and Khondmals subdivisions

practise shifting cultivation (*podu chasa*) on the hill slopes. The yield from shifting cultivation is very less in comparison with wet land cultivation. The paddy grown are also of crude type. The Kandhas also grow ragi, turmeric, Kandul and Mandia. They spend all their income from the field within four to six months. For half of the year they live only on the powder of tamarind seeds, mango stones, edible roots and tubers.

Their needs are few and they want to remain aloof from the civilised people of the plains. They utilise their leisure time mostly in drinking and in dancing with their women folk. They sing love, marriage and harvest songs. For this purpose they use musical instruments like *nagara*, *singha*, *dhol*, *changu*, *nisan*, *mahuri*, *khanjani* and *gini*. The last two are not tribal musical instruments. They have introduced these items recently after coming in contact with the people living in the plains. They generally keep the musical instruments in *dhanger basa* where unmarried boys and girls sleep at night.

The Kandhas of the district drink *peja* (gruel of rice) and also use it as a sick diet. They eat rice with boiled green leaves and vegetables. They never use their fingers for taking rice when they are out of their village, but use a scoop made of leaf. They do not take milk, but are very fond of meat. On social and religious functions they kill buffalo, goat, fowl, *sambar* and eat their meat. They do not take beef. Fish is eaten when available.

They smoke and chew tobacco leaves. Both men and women consume excessively *salapa*, *handia* and *mohua* liquor on all occasions.

The Kandhas are keen sportsmen. They chase bison, deer, wild boar with bows and axes. Their aim with bow and arrow is very accurate.

In 1961, there were 198,995 Hindus and 4,801 Christians among the Kandhas in Boudh-Khondmals district*. Majority of the Kandhas follow Hindu customs and rites. They worship eighty-four deities of which the chief is Dharani Penu or earth goddess. She is also known as Tana Penu. They observe Kedu (Jagadi), Anaka, Parbata Debata Puja, Thakurani-Maa Puja and Matu Puja. They also celebrate car festival of Lord Jagannath, worship Ganesh and Saraswati and offer Puja to Siya.

They speak a dialect called Kui. This is their mother-tongue. But most of them speak and understand Oriya.

As regards their education, the 1971 Census has recorded 195,729 illiterates and 27,593 literates among them. The incidence of literacy is thus confined to 12.35 per cent.

* District Census Handbook, Boudh-Khondmals, 1961, p. 226

Kandha Gauda Out of 7,185 Kandha-Gaudas in the State of Orissa, 2,460 were found in Boudh-Khondmals district according to the Census of 1971. Literacy was confined to 12.64 per cent among them.

Kotia In the 1971 Census, 3,131 (1,540 males and 1,591 females) persons were enumerated as Kotia of whom only 1.91 per cent were described as literate. They mostly live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for earning a livelihood.

Saora The Saoras are also known as Savara, Saura or Sahara in the district. They live mostly in rural areas. Their total strength was 2,465 in 1971.

Among the Saoras marriage within the village is prohibited and they do not countenance cross-cousin marriage. In their society polygamy is in vogue. They follow Hinduism. They offer pig, buffalo, fowl and liquor to please their tribal deities. In 1971, literacy among them was 13.38 per cent.

CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES Important customs observed by all the Hindus are those relating to *garbhadhana* (pregnancy), *vivaha* (marriage) and *swargarohana* (death).

Birth After the first pregnancy the pregnant mother generally goes to her parent's house for her first confinement. On the birth of a child the mid-wife cuts its umbilical cord and the placenta is disposed of in a ditch made outside the house. On the night of the sixth day after birth, the *sasthi puja* is performed, when *Vidhata* or the goddess of destiny writes the child's future. On this day the new born baby and the mother take first purificatory bath. She takes second purificatory bath on the 12th day and is allowed to change her room. The child is named on the 21st day which is popularly known as *ekoisa*. On this occasion *Satyanarayan puja* is held amidst much rejoicing. The next important ritual among the Hindus are *mundan* or shaving of the head, ear-boring and *bidyarambha* or initiation to learning. The *upanayana* or sacred thread ceremony is a vedic *samskara* performed to invest the boy with the sacred thread. For the *dwijas upanayana* is an essential *samskara* or purificatory rite which formally initiates one to *brahmacharyashrama* or the stage of celibacy and studenthood. Besides the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas are entitled to perform *upanayan*.

In tribal society the pregnant women observe various taboos for the safety of the child. Delivery generally takes place in a separate room where one or two elderly women of the village or family who are familiar with the process attend her. After delivery the umbilical cord and the placenta are buried near the house. The child is bathed in tepid water. The mother cleans her clothes and washes in warm water. She usually does not eat or drink on the day of birth. She is not allowed to touch cooking pots or other

household articles for five or seven days as she is considered defiled. Even members of her family do not touch her. If anybody accidentally touches the mother or child during these days he or she is required to take bath. After the end of birth pollution the head of the family or the father of the child worships the local deities. Generally the child is named after a dead ancestor, but this practice is not being strictly followed nowadays among the educated tribal people. Similar customs are also followed among other sections of the people belonging to other castes, especially in the rural areas.

The Hindus follow the Prajapatya type of marriage. It is generally settled after the examination of the horoscope of both the bridegroom and the bride by the astrologer. He predicts whether the stars of the couple are in harmony or not. If the horoscopes of the couple are found compatible then the marriage takes place on an auspicious day according to the almanac.

Marriage

The marriage rites and ceremonies to be performed at the *vivaha* or wedding are generally the same among all the Hindus, though they may vary in some minor details according to caste. The principal rites commonly in vogue are in order *kanyadana*, *vivaha homa*, *panigrahana* and *lajjahoma*. In the marriage a Brahmin officiates as priest.

Among the tribals, marriage is usually settled by the guardians of the parties but the consent of the bridegroom or the bride is not ignored. They select a bride and fix up an auspicious day for the marriage after consulting the *Desari*. Before marriage the bride price is fixed. It is generally paid in cash, kind or both. In their society marriage is solemnised by the *Jani*, the village priest.

The Kandhas usually prefer marriage by negotiation. The other systems of marriage by way of elopement, capture, service and intrusion are gradually dying out in the community with the spread of education among them.

In Hindu society the corpse is carried on a bier by the members of the family and the relatives of the deceased to the cremation ground. There the dead body is either cremated or buried. *Mukhagni* or lighting of the funeral pyre is performed by the eldest son of the deceased. The death pollution continues for ten days. During this period the members of the family observe certain restrictions with regards to food, etc. The Hindus perform *sudhikriya* or after-death ceremonies for the salvation of the departed soul on the 10th day. On the 11th day food which were restricted during the period of mourning are allowed to all concerned. On this occasion all the clean castes get the services of the Brahmin, the Dhoba and the Bhandari. Every year the Hindus perform *shradhas* in memory of the deceased person.

Mortuary
custom

The tribal people often believe that death occurs due to the anger of the gods and spirits, and for the ill-effect of sorcerers and witches. When death occurs they usually perform a series of rituals at different stages. They adopt cremation for some and burial for others like children, victims of epidemics and snake bite and so forth. The Jani performs the rituals and purifies the members of the household as well as those who took part in the cremation. The period of pollution varies from three days to ten days at different places. Animal sacrifice in honour of dead ancestors and feasting the members of the community are common observances. It is believed that without a feast funeral rites are incomplete. They worship their ancestors once a year by offering sacrifices and prayer.

The Muslims and the Christians like their co-religionists in other parts of the country observe the customs and practices connected with child birth, marriage and death prescribed by their respective religions.

**Inter-caste
Relations;**

The traditional division of the Hindus into castes, though basically still intact, has lost much of its social rigidity due to the impact of western civilisation. The drive of Mahatma Gandhi against the social disabilities of the untouchables has broken the barriers between the high castes and the untouchables. As untouchability is now punishable under law, people of various castes do not hesitate to dine on a common table in restaurants and hotels. They are also not reluctant to travel together in public conveyances. The change of occupations, spread of education and appointment of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in public services have shrunken the traditional differences between various castes. Inter-caste marriages, though rare in the district, are now tolerated. Under these circumstances the traditional structure of the Hindu society based on caste is undergoing a steady change. However, old beliefs die hard. Notwithstanding legal provisions and high and lofty preachings by eminent social reformers from time to time, the Hindu society mostly in the rural area, have not yet been fully freed from the curse of untouchability.

The tribals of the district have preserved their individual identity based on clans and dialects, but they have cordial relationship and reciprocity among themselves. Sometimes marriage between members of two different tribes, though not socially approved, are endured without protest. Although social relationship of the converted Christians is almost confined within their own group, they do not forget to participate in the socio-religious functions of the tribes to which they originally belonged.

**New religi-
ous leaders
and move-
ments**

During the past few decades, new religious leaders like Shri Aurobindo and Shri Maa, Sathyasai Baba, Swami Sivananda of Divine Life Society, Thakur Anukul Chandra, Thakur Nigamananda,

Aviram Paramahansa and Namacharya Baya Baba have exerted considerable influence mostly on the educated people of the district. The teachings of these new religious leaders or *gurus* are not different from the basic principles of Hinduism. At many places, study circles, *bhajan mandalis* and other religious functions are being organised to propagate the teachings of these religious leaders. But all these new fangled creeds have little effect on the tribals and the common masses in the district.

The people of the district are mostly Kandhas. They are aboriginals and have no special law, and cases relating to property and inheritance are decided in view of prevailing customs on the principles of equity and good conscience. By and large, the Kandhas have adopted the Hindu law of inheritance. As far the non-Kandha population of the district are concerned, they are governed by the law of inheritance as in vogue in other parts of the State.

Property and inheritance

The joint family system was in vogue in the district. But with the passage of time, the old bonds which bound the family together have begun to relax. The desire for individual liberty has brought a change in the income of the family. The increasing needs of the higher educated separates them from the family. On the completion of their studies, many have a tendency to settle in towns and establish a separate household, as villages offer little scope for employment. Another factor affecting the joint-family system is the migratory tendency of the people who move outside and settle either on a permanent or a semi-permanent basis in distant places. The individualistic tendencies are also gaining ground day by day and the former ties which bound the family together are gradually disintegrating. The younger generation prefers to live separately if they can afford to do so. They are becoming more conscious about their own needs and comforts than about the needs of the other members of the family. Despite these changes, the joint family system still survives, though the spirit of sacrifice and regard for common welfare have considerably slackened.

Joint family

Prior to the implementation of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, polygamy was permissible in Hindu society. But it has now been legally banned. The Christians are monogamous, but the Muslims follow polygamy. Though Muslim religion permits four wives, most of the Muslims are found to be monogamous. In Hindu society marriage customs have considerably changed with the spread of education, enactment of laws and pressure on the purse. A number of social practices like horoscope reading of the bride and the bridegroom, consideration of *gotra* and the ceremony of *nirbandha* which

Marriage and morals

were rigidly observed in the past are not strictly adhered to nowadays. The practice of child marriage which was common in former times has well-nigh disappeared and the age of marriage has substantially advanced in all caste groups.

Civil
marriage

Only 8 civil marriages were registered in Boudh-Khondmals district from 1968 to 1977. This shows that the society is still predominantly tradition-bound and the people are not much conscious about the procedure of marriages to be solemnised under the Special Marriage Act, 1954.

Widow
re-marriage

Widow re-marriage is no longer frowned upon in the society. However, even now it is mostly confined to the educated section of the society. Among the scheduled tribes, scheduled castes and other backward castes widow re-marriage is permissible by tradition.

Divorce

From 1968 to 1977 no suits or cases under the Divorce Act were instituted in any of the civil courts in the district of Boudh-Khondmals. The custom of divorce is prevalent among the tribals and some other lower castes.

The place of
women in the
society and
their
economic
dependence

The position of women in Indian society has been held high ever since ancient times. It was only after the Muslim invasions of India that the status of women declined in the country. Tattoo marks, pardah or seclusion of women came into vogue as a measure of safety and self protection. The *pardah* system is gradually vanishing from Hindu society with the spread of education and urbanisation.

In the past, difficulty of finding a suitable husband for a daughter and demand of a large amount in dowry gave birth to the cruel practice of female infanticide which was prevalent among the Kandhas of the district. The practice no longer exists now. The position of women has, however, changed for the better after Independence. In the rural areas of the Boudh-Khondmals district, women of some of the poorer segments of the society in addition to their domestic chores also help the male members in agricultural operations. They also earn independently by working as labourers. Rope making, basketry, leave plate making, pottery, beverage preparation work, laundry work, midwifery, cloth weaving, bead and lac bangle making, making of country cigar and forest produce gathering also provide employment to some women.

In urban areas the women are mostly dependant on men and do not take part in any economic activity. Out of the total number of 34,253 female workers enumerated in the district in the 1971 Census,

only 1,066 were from the urban areas. Thus it is evident that the females, in general, are more dependant on the males in the urban areas than in the rural areas. Economic stress and strain of modern life have, however, forced the educated urban women to take to various professions. Many of them are now serving as mid-wives, health visitors, teachers, clerks, typists, etc. The uneducated women earn their livelihood as cooks, maids and sweepers.

Prostitution has been banned by law. Hence organised brothels, cases of prostitution and trafficking in women have not come to the notice of the police.

Prostitution,
drinking and
gambling

Drinking is rampant in this district and the tribal people are the worst victims of this vice. Tribal women are also addicted to it. They use *salapa* juice and *mahua* liquor regularly as a part of their social custom.

No regular gambling is reported from these areas. Action is taken under the appropriate provisions of law for the detection and punishment of such offences.

In 1971* there were 1,55,785 houses in Boudh-Khondmals district, of which 1,51,175 were in the rural areas and 4,610 in the urban areas. The distribution of houses and the uses to which they were put in the district are given below:—

HOME LIFE
Type of
Dwellings

Type of houses	Number
1. Houses vacant at the time of house listing ..	7,735
2. Occupied houses used as—	
(i) Residence ..	1,26,340
(ii) Shop-cum-residence ..	1,705
(iii) Workshop-cum-residence including household industry.	3,685
(iv) Hostels, Sarais, Dharmashalas, Tourist homes and Inspection houses	220
(v) Shops, excluding eating houses ..	680
(vi) Business houses and offices ..	600
(vii) Factories, workshops and worksheds ..	415
(viii) Restaurants, sweetmeat shops and eating places ..	115
(ix) Places of entertainment and community gathering (Panchayat Ghar) excluding places of worship.	255
(x) Places of worship (e.g. Temple, Church, Mosque, Gurudwara, etc.,)	2,220
(xi) Others	11,815
Total houses ..	<u>1,55,785</u>

* Census of India, Housing Report and Tables, 1971 p. 84

BOUDH-KHONDMALS

As evident from the foregoing statement there are as many as 1,26,340 dwelling houses, 1,22,895 of which occur in the rural areas and 3,445 in the urban areas. This gives a density of about 1,141 houses per 100 square kilometres in the district.

The statement also reveals that majority of the houses are used as residences. Workshop-*cum*-residence, including household industry, constitute the second largest group, and the lowest category includes restaurants, sweetmeat shops and eating places.

According to the 1971* Census Boudh-Khondmals district has the second largest proportion of houses in the State with walls made of grass, leaves, reeds or bamboo; 14.4 per cent of these being in the rural areas and 13.0 per cent in the urban areas. In this district forest is very close to inhabited areas. Hence, the poor people prefer this inexpensive and poor quality material for walls. Though these materials for wall are available easily with no extra cost still then the percentage of such houses in the rural areas has considerably decreased from 20.0 per cent in 1961 to 14.4 per cent in 1971. On the other hand, the percentage of houses using grass, leaves, etc., for wall has significantly increased in the urban areas, i.e., 3.5 per cent in 1961 to 13.0 per cent in 1971. The reason for such increase may be due to the cheap temporary hutments fast coming up to accommodate the wage-earning labourers, petty hawkers and others who migrate to towns to earn their livelihood. Due to the increasing influx of such persons to the towns of Phulabani and Boudh, slums consisting of clusters of cheap improvised hutments have come up.

Due to urbanisation, burnt brick as wall material is gaining popularity among the people. Use of metal sheets, stone and cement concrete as wall material is negligible in Boudh-Khondmals district as most of the people are poor.

In 1971**, the incidence of grass, leaves, reeds, thatch or bamboo, etc., as roof material in the rural areas was the highest (95.90 per cent) in the Boudh-Khondmals district, followed by Balasore (94.7 per cent), Cuttack (93.7 per cent), Dhenkanal (93.4 per cent) and Puri (90.6 per cent). In the urban areas, the proportion of houses with thatched roofs is more than 60 per cent which is also the highest in the State. Compared to 1961, there is a consistent decrease in the proportion of thatched houses during the decade 1961—71. This is a clear indication of the fact that there is not only a growing preference for better roofing materials than grass, leaves or thatch, etc., but

* Census of India, Housing Report and Tables 1971, p. 29.

** Ibid. p. 35.

with improving economic condition, a larger number of people are now able to provide better roofing to their houses. The use of tiles, metal sheets, asbestos cement sheets and reinforced cement concrete as roof materials is negligible in the district. But well-to-do persons nowadays prefer these materials for roofs.

Generally people in the urban areas use various types of furniture for a comfortable living. Well-to-do families usually possess chairs, tables, bench, stool, almirah, bed-steads and other furniture made of wood or steel according to their need, taste, status and capacity. They also possess radio sets, transistor sets, clocks and table or ceiling fans. People belonging to the lower income group remain content with a wooden chair, table, bench, stool or cot of ordinary make. The poor families in the villages do not have more than one *charpai* or stringed cot. The head of the house usually uses the *charpai*. It is also offered to guests for sitting.

Furniture,
utensils and
decorations

Most of the villagers in the district are poor and do not have much utensils. They mostly use cups and plates made of leaves. Sal and Siali leaves are collected from the jungle and stitched together to form eating or drinking vessels. Grain is stored in baskets of spilt bamboo or containers of Siali leaves. Each household has a few earthen cooking utensils and receptacles for water. Aluminium jugs, plates and bowls are used in almost all the households. Very few households have brass pitchers, jugs and bowls. In most of the houses one can occasionally find glass tumblers, cups and saucers. Most of the households do not possess lanterns. Those who possess lanterns use them only when something is required to be done outside the house. Lighting inside a house is usually done by *dibri* (uncovered tin lamp). In the interior, the villagers depend mainly on wood for light and heat. Rural electrification has made some progress in the district of Boudh-Khondmals, but very few villagers have the means to use electricity for domestic purposes.

Though the people of Boudh-Khondmals are living in a region surrounded by hills and forests, still they possess an innate artistic sense. It is evidenced from the interior decoration of their households and the paintings drawn on the walls of their dwellings. The walls of the dwelling houses are smeared with cowdung and sometimes with coloured earth. In socio-religious functions they decorate the walls and floors of their houses with *chita* or *alpana* designs. The well-to-do persons in the urban areas decorate their houses with door and window screens, photographs, pictures, calendars, toys, etc.

Generally, men in the rural as well as urban areas wear *dhoti*. Some of them also use *lungi* and *gamchha*. The tribals use *lungi* or *dhoti* and rarely use any upper garment. In winter when they

Dress

feel cold, they cover their body with a piece of *chadar* or *gamchha* made by the local weavers. Nowadays, due to external contact the people have started using western garments such as trousers, shirts, bush shirts and mill made *dhotis*. These garments are not only found in the urban areas but also have entered into the rural areas.

Women, irrespective of caste and social condition, wear *sari*. In urban areas they wear *sari*, blouse and petticoat, but in rural areas only *sari* is commonly used to cover lower as well as the upper part of the body. Sometimes two pieces of cloth or two towels of small size are used in place of a *sari*. One is tied round the waist and the other covers the upper portion of the body. This type of dress is generally used by the Kandhas of the district.

Very few people in the district use shoes, slippers and umbrellas as the economic condition of the people is not good.

Ornaments

The people of Boudh-Khondmals wear a variety of ornaments on different parts of their body. Most of these are gold, silver, aluminium, brass, coloured glass beads and rolled gold. The design, size, weight and contents of the ornaments have undergone change from time to time according to the prevailing fashion. They also differ from one community to another. The ornaments used in the past were generally simple in style and heavy. Those in vogue at present are much lighter and refined in designs. The principal ornaments used by the women are Chaurimundi, Khilpin, Panpatri, Padia for head; Khagla, Chapasari, Pohalamala, chain for neck; Fasia, ear-ring, Kissidi, Chitikini for ear; Nakafula, Dandi, Notha, Guna for nose; Armet, Bahasuta for arm; Kateria, Bandria, Chudi, Mathi, Bala for wrist; Mudi for finger; Antasuta for waist; Poinri for anklet; Godamudi for toe.

Some of the ornaments such as Chaurimundi, Khilpin, Fasia, Khagla, Dandi and Notha have lost their popularity and are now confined to a very few womenfolk in the rural areas.

Besides the metal ornaments, the tribal women also use feathers, Kaincha, coloured beads, etc. to deck their body.

Food and Drink

Rice is the staple food of the people. A few people use wheat. Besides rice and wheat, people also take ragi, mandia, kandul, maize, mushrooms, various kinds of roots and tubers. The principal meals are usually taken with salt, chillies and tamarind, and occasionally with boiled green leaves and vegetables. Fish and meat are eaten when available. But meat is an indispensable item for social and religious functions. On such occasions people kill goats, sheep and fowl. The tribals in addition to these animals, take the flesh of buffaloes and

pigs. In between principal meals people usually eat rice, cakes, *mahua* flower cakes, fried rice, parched rice, etc. Every tribal household generally reserves mango stones, tamarind seeds and jackfruit seeds for eating in the off season.

Food is cooked in earthen pots. Well-to-do persons use aluminium, brass and bell - metal utensils. In the past, the tribal people of the district used to eat vegetables, roots, mushrooms, fish and meat just by baking on a fire and adding salt to it. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian curries are generally prepared by boiling and adding only chillies and salt. But nowadays they have changed their food habits and are using groundnut oil, onion, spices, etc. to make curries. Besides groundnut oil, people of the district also use mustard oil, *mahua* oil, *til* oil and *pesi* (linseed) oil for cooking purposes. Only on festive occasions people use *ghee* and various brands of hydrogenated oil.

The consumption of liquor is common among the tribals. Most of the non-tribals of the district are also addicted to it. They drink *mahua*, *handia* and *salapa* liquor. Their favourite alcoholic beverage is *handia* which is prepared in almost every tribal household. Sundi caste people also prepare liquor and sell it in the market. Liquor is an important item in every social and religious function and social etiquette demands that guests and visitors be offered liquor.

Smoking of tobacco is very common among the males. The tribals and other poorer class of people in the district smoke a kind of cigar called *Kaheli*. It is made of tobacco rolled in *sal* leaf. The non-tribals generally consume *pan*, *bidi* and cigarettes of various brands. Besides smoking, some people are also addicted to opium, *ganja* and *bhanga*.

The important centres of pilgrimage in the district are Chakapad, Rushimal in Daringbarhi; Boudh, Balaskumpa in Khajuriparha and Bandhagarha in Phiringia. Details about these places are given in Chapter-XIX (Places of Interest).

COMMUNAL
LIFE
Pilgrim
Centres

Various types of dances are prevalent in the district. These are usually held during socio-religious functions.

Communal
Dance

The Dhangda-Dhangdi dance* is also known as Lasani Enda dance by the Kandhas. It is performed both by the Kandhas and the Kutia Kandhas, but the style and music of the dance differs from one tribe to another. This dance is generally performed on the occasion of fairs, festivals and social functions. In the Kandha society the Dhangdas of one village do not

Dhangda-
Dhangdi
Dance

*Folk Dance and Music of Orissa, Phulabani, 1961 pp. 8-10

dance with the Dhangdis of the same village. They dance with the Dhangdis of other villages. Such dances generally form a prelude to love making and marriage between the young girls and boys.

The Dhangdas wear their usual dress, but the Dhangdis wear special costumes during the dance. They wear a piece of beautiful cloth known as *Kabta* which covers the lower part of their body from the waist. They put another piece on the upper part of their body covering their breast. They do not wear blouses.

They wear chains of silver coins (rupees) on the waist and bangles (*bala*) around the feet. The *balas* produce a typical sound during the dance as they join and disjoin their feet rhythmically while dancing. The males and females stand in lines opposite to each group. The male members sing and play on a musical instrument known as *Khanjani* which is held by the left hand and played on by the right hand. The girls do not sing. They perform the dance by moving forward, and backward. When the male participants move forward, the girls move backward and vice versa. The girls sometimes bend their bodies forward and dance. Sometimes they dance in sitting position and make circling movements in that position. Sometimes the girls hold small pieces of cloth in their hands and wave them this side and that while dancing.

The Dhangdas sing songs in Kui language. Love, beauties of nature, devotion to tribal gods and goddesses are the usual themes of these songs. The *tal* of the songs is generally *dadra* and the tunes are confined to only four to five notes.

Due to the impact of modern civilisation and change in the outlook of the people the dress, music and style of the dance has changed in some villages. But in remote villages the traditional methods of dance are still followed.

The Kutia Kandhas also perform Dhangda Dhangdi Dance which is known as *Gaichinamu* in their dialect. Unlike Kandhas, the Kutia Kandha boys and girls of the same village dance together without any restriction. The male members sing songs and the girls repeat the same. Instead of *Khanjani*, the Kutia Kandhas use musical instruments such as *Changu*, *Nagara*, *Singha* and flute. The themes of their songs are the same as that of the Kandhas.

The Krahenda Dance* is a hunting and warrior dance. It has much resemblance with the Paik Dance of Cuttack and Puri districts. The Scheduled Castes people also take part in the dance with the tribal members. About twelve male members perform the dance. The dancers wear *dhotis* or *saris* making *ghagra* and put on horns with turban

Krahenda
Dance

* Ibid, p.10

as their head-dress. They use *ghagudi* and *ghungur* too which produce sound during the dance. The dancers hold axes, bows and arrows in their hands. A joker generally dances with the troupe in typical humorous dress and helps in creating laughter in the audience. The steps and movements of the dancers are not systematic as in Paik Dance.

There is no song for this dance. Drums and flutes (*nisan* and *mahuri*) are the instruments which produce the music of the dance. The drum-beaters also dance with the dancers.

The dance is nowadays performed on the occasion of social gatherings and religious functions. This is also performed for welcoming dignitaries in the villages. The dance is in its vanishing stage as in many villages the people have forgotten the style of the dance and do not possess the costume, horns and other materials used in the dance.

Dalkhai is one of the popular folk dances in the western part of Orissa. This dance is common in the districts of Sambalpur, Kalahandi and Balangir. But the Dalkhai festival and the Dalkhai Dance of the Kandhas are quite peculiar and different. The Dalkhai festival of the Kandhas is held on the Thursday in the month of Margasira. On this occasion the Kandhas worship the goddess of forest and the goddess of crop, *i. e.*, Laxmi. To satisfy the goddess of the forest, they perform animal sacrifice in the forest and then come in a procession to the village with a Kalashi (waterpot) worshipped by them. The participants hold branches of 'Anla' tree while returning to the Dalkhai Gudi or house of Dalkhai. They invite their friends and relatives on this occasion and make the house neat and clean. The festival starts on Wednesday and ends on Thursday. All the villagers including their friends and relatives dance on the occasion and the dance is known as Dalkhai dance. The steps and movements of this dance are like other Kandha Dances.

Dalkhai
Dance

Dhol and Mahuri are the accompanying musical instruments. The Kandhas sing vulgar songs in their own dialect on this occasion. The *tal* and the tunes are same as the other songs of the Kandhas.

Probably Dalkhai is not the original dance of the Kandhas. This might have been imported from the neighbouring districts of Kalahandi, Balangir and Sambalpur. But they have not succeeded in acquiring the real Dalkhai dance and songs. The worship of Laxmi has been added to the worship of the goddess of the forest at a later stage as a result of contact with other castes of people who settled in this district. They are known as 'Odias' by the Kandhas. The so-called 'Odias' perform 'Manabasa' or 'Mana osha' which means

'Laxmi Puja' on each Thursday in the month of Margashira (November-December), *i. e.*, the harvest season of Orissa. The singing of vulgar songs is being discouraged by the younger generation of the Kandhas.

The Dalkhai dance of Boudh is different from that of Khondmals and Baligurha, and is more akin to the Dalkhai dance performed in the neighbouring districts of Sambalpur, Balangir and Kalahandi. The people of Boudh perform this dance during the month of Aswina (September-October) on the occasion of Bhaijuntia (Bhatri Dwitya).

Karama
Dance

The Karama dance of Boudh is quite different from the Karama dance of the Oraons of Sundargarh district. In Boudh, the Ghasis perform this festival and dance. They observe Sana Karama festival on the 11th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Bhadrab (August-September) and Karama festival on the 11th day of the bright fortnight of the same month. On both the occasions, males and females belonging to Ghasi community perform the Karama dance. The girls sing Karama songs and the boys play on the Mrudanga and Madala. They generally sing songs relating to goddess Karama whom they worship on the occasion.

Nachunia or
Pithakhia
Dance

The Nachunia dance is generally performed on the occasion of marriage ceremony. Two males participate in the dance—one in male and the other in female attire. They are usually professional dancers and earn their livelihood by dancing.

Danda Nata

Danda Nata is a ritual dance and is popular in Boudh, Khondmals, Baligurha, Tikabali and Chakapad area of the district. But it is more popular and developed in Boudh than in other places. The participants of the dance are the devotees of god Hara and goddess Parvati. They perform the dance in the month of Chaitra (March-April) and Vaishakha (April-May). Danda begins on an auspicious day before the Chaitra Sankranti or Meru Parba with traditional worship and fasting. This dance consists of a series of different dances which are performed one after another by the male members belonging to the Scheduled Castes and other backward castes. In this dance the Ghasis provide the music with the help of Dhol and Mahuri. The dance has a rich repertory. Parva dance is the first item of the repertory. The Prabhakar and the Prabhakarani, dressed in multicoloured dress, dance in the beginning. The dancer places a piece of cloth on his shoulders and holds the ends of the same in front with both the hands. He moves his hands forward and backward, right and left, to the rythme of the dance. A semi-circular plate, made of bamboo sticks and covered with coloured and decorated cloth with ornamental border, is tied to the back of the Prabhakar. The Prabhakar wears multicoloured skirt and jacket. The Prabhakarani, a male in female role, dresses himself in *sari* and *kanchala* (blouse).

The Prabhakariani holds a piece of coloured handkerchief in his hand. After the Parva dance is over the Hara-Parvati dance begins. Then a group dance of Fakir and Fakirani is performed. The dances of Savara and Savarani, Chadeya and Chadouni, are performed one after another. Then the party performs a *leela* based on a story from the Ramayan or the Mahabharat or from any other Puran through songs and dances. Patarasaura and Patarasaurani perform their dance at the end of the *leela*. The last, but not the least, is the Binakar who closes the performance with his most significant songs and dances.

The music of the Danda Nata is different for different dances. The songs are of different tunes for different characters. The songs are mainly devotional and mostly based on the stories from the epics. Humorous songs are sometimes sung by the dancers. Sometimes they put questions in songs and their counterparts give the reply in songs. The songs are of folk and Odissi style. The dance originated from tribal dances, but has been much influenced by the *yatra* and *pala* performances of the State. Danda Nata is being gradually modernised in respect of music, dance, costume, style and make up. It is thereby losing its original simplicity and traditional characteristics. The dance was being patronised by the ex-Rulers of the States which is no longer available after the States merged with the province of Orissa in 1948.

The Hindus of the district observe a number of festivals all the year round. These festivals may broadly be divided into two categories, viz., domestic festivals observed in each household and public festivals and fairs where people congregate in large numbers on some auspicious days. The domestic festivals are confined to the worship of family deities, observance of *ekadashis*, various *vratas*, etc., most of them being guided by phases of the moon. The public festivals are usually religious ceremonies attended by a large number of men, women and children who come for worship as well as entertainment. An account of some of the important festivals in the district is given below :

Fairs and
Festivals

Matu Puja is held on the Akshaya Trutiya day in the month of Vaishakha (April-May). The Puja is performed in every household by the head of the family. Some offer fowl as sacrifice on this occasion. On this day seeds are sown in the cultivated land.

Matu Puja

The Parbat Debata Puja is observed in the month of Jyestha (May-June). The villagers fix a day for this Puja. They arrange a he-goat, rice and other materials for the Puja. On the day of the festival the villagers go to the hill (Parbat) with the Dehuri and the Puja materials in a procession. There the Dehuri performs Puja. At the end of the Puja, the Bahuka sacrifices the he-goat. A feast is held to mark the occasion.

Parbat
Debata Puja

Kedu Jatra

The Kandhas of the district observe the Kedu Jatra in the month of Chaitra (March-April). This festival is held to please the goddess Earth by killing buffaloes so that the land would yield more crop, especially turmeric. The Kedu Jatra has its origin in Meriah sacrifice or human sacrifice which was formerly practised by the Kandhas. Due to the intervention of the British administrators this inhuman practice was abolished. Instead of Meriah, buffaloes are now sacrificed. This festival is generally celebrated for five days with different rites being observed on each day. Sacrifices are offered on the third and the fourth day of the festival. Guru or the priest plays the important role in this festival.

According to Sasibhusan Thiady*, in Boudh a similar function is observed in the last Friday of Margasira (November-December) wherein both males and females gather in a place and scold each other in filthy languages and also fight each other. The conception behind this is that by such function the land will yield good crops. This festival is called Chuda Khai Jatra. In Sarangagarh this Jatra is known as Rahas Jatra.

Thakurani
Puja

This Puja is held in the month of Magha (January-February) and Aswina (September-October). The object of this Puja is to protect the villagers, buffaloes, goats and cows from the attack of wild animals and epidemics. The villagers gather in a place on an appointed day and decide the time for the worship of goddess Baral. In this Puja the Bahuka (man who sacrifices the animal) and the Dehuri (priest) play important roles. These posts are hereditary. The day preceding the day of sacrifice is known as *bara* (ବାର). On that day a pole is fixed on the ground in the place of sacrifice. That pole is known as *chhata khamba* (ଛତା ଖମ୍ବ). On that particular place the Dehuri performs worship with *bel* (ବେଲ) leaves and turmeric smeared *arua* (ଅରୁଆ) rice. The villagers offer milk to the pole when drums begin to beat. Next day morning they prepare *muan* (ମୁଆଁ), fried paddy smeared with sugar or *gur*. At noon they pour water at the base of the pole. The Puja begins in the afternoon. On this occasion two he-goats are usually sacrificed. At places buffaloes are also offered as sacrifice.

Bali Jatra

The Gandas of the Boudh-Khondmals district perform Bali Jatra. It is generally held for seven days after Sunia, i. e., the 12th day of the bright fortnight of Bhadrab (August-September). In every village there is a Balighara or Bali house. There the people gather and dance. They use musical instruments like Dhola, Tamaka and Mahuri. The boys and girls also play on Ghumura on this occasion. On the last day a he-goat is sacrificed. The priest drinks the blood of the sacrificial goat

* Sasibhusan Thiady—Phulbani, the Khond land, 1965, p. 41.

and walk on the burning charcoal placed in a ditch. Some of the devotees who are present also follow the priest. During these seven days the villagers keep the cereals in the Balighar and distribute those to every villager. The Dhangdas (unmarried boys) play on Ghumura and the Dhangdis (unmarried girls) dance while the cereals are being distributed.

The Kandul Jatra is observed by the tribals after the harvest is over. This festival is very popular in Baligurha area of the district and is usually held in the month of April.

Kandul
Jatra

The Baruni Jatra is observed by the people in the month of Chaitra (March-April) in the hill Rusimal under Daringbarhi police station. The Rusikulya river has its origin in these hills. About 5,000 people gather here on the occasion and perform holy dip (Buda). Many people from the neighbouring Ganjam district attend this festival.

Baruni Jatra

The Ratha Jatra or Car Festival of Lord Jagannath is held on the second day of the bright fortnight in the month of Asadha (June-July). This festival is observed at some places in the district of which Boudh is most important. Over 5,000 people gather at Boudh on this occasion. The three deities—Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra are taken in a car from the main temple to the Mausima temple. The deities stay there for seven days.

Ratha Jatra

Laxmi Puja is observed in almost all Hindu households on every Thursday in the month of Margasira (November-December). The Hindu women celebrate this festival with great austerity and devotion. On the Thursdays the house and the courtyard are decorated with *chita* or *alpna* designs and Laxmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, is evoked and worshipped. The last Thursday of the month marks the end of the Puja when rice cakes and other preparations of sweets are offered to the goddess.

Laxmi Puja

Nuakhai is an agricultural festival. It is observed more or less in all the parts of the district. This ceremony generally takes place in the bright fortnight of Bhadraba (August-September) on an auspicious day fixed by the astrologer. On this occasion preparations of the new rice are offered to gods, goddesses and ancestors after which members of the family along with friends and relatives partake of the new rice. The head of the family officiates in this function.

Nuakhai or
Nabarna

Sivaratri festival is observed in all the Siva temples on the 14th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Phalguna (February-March). The devotees remain awake throughout the night and worship Lord Siva. At midnight a lamp called Mahadipa is taken to the top of the temple and is kept burning throughout the night. The devotees break their fast

Sivaratri

after seeing the Mahadipa. This festival is observed with great pomp and splendour in the Siva temple at Bisiparha in Khondmals subdivision; Boudh, Jagati, Sarsara, Mallisahi, Bandhugora, Dapala, Bhejigora and Raniganj in Boudh subdivision; and Baligurha, Jalespata, Kotagarh, Purunagarh, Dungi, Chakapad, Dadagamaha and Damigoda in Baligurha subdivision.

Durga Puja
and
Dasahara

The Durga Puja and Dasahara festivals are celebrated during the bright fortnight in the month of Aswina (September-October). Generally this Puja continues for four days from Saptami up to Dasami. The images of goddess Durga are worshipped in a few places in the district of which celebrations held at Boudh deserve special mention.

Durga Puja is also celebrated with due ceremony at several Sakta shrines in the district of which the worship of goddess Bararaul at Balaskumpa in Khajuriparha police station is important. The devotees offer rice, milk and sweetmeat to the goddess. Animals such as goats, sheep, fowl and buffaloes are also sacrificed on the Mahastami day. According to custom the tribal people of the district offer *bhetis* (presentations) to their hill-chiefs and Mutha-heads as a token of respect during Dasahara.

Dasahara has a special significance to the warrior caste. They worship their old weapons of war and exhibit physical feats on the occasion. Their heroic forebears used to start on fresh military expeditions during this season of the year.

Dola Jatra

Dola Jatra is observed in the villages under Phulabani, Phiringia, Boudh, Ghantaparha, Manamunda, Harabhanga, Baligurha and G. Udayagiri police stations of the district. But the celebration of this festival in Boudh deserves special mention. Dola Jatra is usually celebrated from the day of Phagu Dasami to Phagu Purnima. In some places it is observed from the next day of Phagu Purnima to Chaitra Krushna Panchami. On this occasion the images of Radha and Krishna are placed in a decorated *biman* and carried in procession to the accompaniment of music. At places the *bimans* carrying Radha-Krishna images from different places assemble together for a community worship. This assembly of the gods called *melan* is usually celebrated with great pomp and show. This is the main festival of the people belonging to Gaura caste. They worship the cow and play *naudi* (a play with sticks) by singing songs relating to Radha and Krishna.

Puajuntia
and
Bhaijuntia

The Puajuntia ceremony is celebrated on the 8th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Aswina (September-October). On this occasion almost all the mothers worship the deity Dutibahana for long life and prosperity of their sons.

On the 8th day of the bright fortnight of Aswina (September-October) Bhaijuntia is observed. The sisters worship goddess Durga on this occasion for the long and happy life of their brothers.

These festivals are mainly held in Boudh subdivision. This subdivision is very near to the districts of Balangir and Kalahandi where Puajuntia and Bhaijuntia are widely observed.

The Christians of the district observe New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Saturday, Easter Sunday, Easter Monday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with great pomp and show.

Christian
festivals

The Muslim inhabitants celebrate Id-UI-Fitre, Id-UI-Zuha, Shab-E-Barat, Shab-E-Quadar, Juma-Tul-Wida, Muharram, Shab-E-Meraj, Milad-Un-Nabi, and Ramzan like their fellow brethren in other parts of the State.

Muslim
festivals

Leisure and recreation are essential for life. People usually gather in the evening at the temple or in a common place where the priest or Puran Panda recites and explains from the religious texts like the Bhagabat, the Mahabharat, the Ramayan, the Haribansa or other Puranas. Singing of Bhajan or Kirtan accompanied with musical instruments like *khanjani*, *gini*, *mrudanga* or harmonium is also another popular form of entertainment of the people. Occasionally acrobatic feats, monkey dance, bear dance and snake charming and magic performed by itinerant professional groups also provide entertainment to the people.

Recreation

In the tribal areas the *dhangda* and *dhangdi ghar* provide recreation to the unmarried boys and girls. Here they pass the night by gossiping, dancing and singing. Fishing, hunting and cock fighting are also the traditional pastimes of the aboriginals of the district. The festivals and other socio-religious functions round the year never leave the people in want of mirth. The rural people also enjoy folk performances like the dance and *jatra*. Radio sets supplied by the Government to different institutions of the district also provide recreation to the rural folk.

In urban areas cinema is a common source of entertainment. There is only one cinema hall in the district, located at G. Udayagiri. Besides cinema, itinerant hall and theatre parties also provide entertainment to the people. There are 12 recreational clubs and associations functioning in the district. These are located at Phulabani, Boudh, Narayangarh, Ainlapalli, Manamunda, Kantamal, G. Udayagiri and Baligurha. They provide entertainment to the people by organising various cultural programmes, sports and athletic meets. Besides private clubs and Associations, 30 educational institutions take active part in the sports and games organised by the Phulabani District Athletic Association. To popularise games, Rural Sports Centres have been opened at Baligurha, G. Udayagiri, Nuagan Baida and Phiringia. Each centre is manned by a physical training instructor who imparts coaching to the youths of the area in different games and sports. The Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs supplies games articles to these centres.

There is only one park in the district called Trivedi Park, located at Baligurha. Charisambhu and Sitalpani of Boudh are well known picnic spots in the district. A large number of students and other people go to these places for sight-seeing and picnic.

Hotels and Restaurants are also places for social gathering and amusements. At Phulabani, Boudh, Baligurha and G. Udayagiri there are a few good hotels and restaurants.

From recreational, religious or commercial points of view the other important places in the district are Tikabali, Raikia, G. Udayagiri, Chakapad, Bandhagarh and Balaskumpa.

Impact of
abolition of
Zamindari
system on
Social life

There was no Zamindari either in Khondamals or in the Baligurha subdivision. Panchara, the only ex-Zamindari of the Boudh subdivision was a part of Sonepur ex-State before the formation of the district of Boudh-Khondmals. There were Maufidars in the ex-State of Boudh and hill-chiefs or Muthadars and Mutha-heads in Baligurha subdivision. The Muthaders were only the service tenure holders. They were realising Mamuls from the inhabitants of their Malihas. However, with the implementation of the Orissa Estate Abolition Act, 1952, the Zamindari of Panchara was vested in the Government in November 1952. The Government also by the executive orders of 1954 abolished the Muthadar system. Gradually the Maufis and Mutha-head systems were also abolished. Persons holding tenures in lieu of service in the ex-State period were given occupancy status in their holdings. With the abolition of the intermediaries the age-old feudal system came to an end. Thus direct contact between the Government and the tenants was established. The abolition of the intermediary system has brought rational system of land revenue collection and the cultivators are now assured of their right over the land they cultivate. This is a vital change in the socio-economic life of the people of the district in general.

The traditional leadership of the society usually came from the Ruler, the hill-chiefs and the Mutha-heads but under the changed circumstances they have lost their old prestige and status. With the spread of education and intellectual awakening, leadership is gradually passing into the hands of the common man. The tribal people are also getting accustomed to the modern ways of life.