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CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XII

ORISSA

PART V-B

REPORT ON SCHEDULED TRIBES OF ORISSA

BOOK ONE

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Orissa

TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

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CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XII

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FOREWORD

I congratulate Shri J. K. Das for finalisation of this stupendous and monumental work which, indeed, is the first and the only Encyclopaedia of Scheduled Tribes of Orissa. I am fully aware of the danger, extreme physical hardship and personal inconvenience involved in carrying on the spot investigation and study in far-flung and isolated hamlets or in scattered dwellings in groups of three or two or even one single hutment and located in truly inaccessible areas, approachable by no other means than by journey on foot under protection by a sympathetic member of a tribe armed with an axe needed not only for self protection against wild animals but also for clearance of forest growth obstructing the track. In the earlier stages of the operation, when I visited a few such tribal hamlets along with the Census Investigator, the difficulties were not only confined to those of physical nature described above, but also to the unwillingness of a member of a tribe to talk on matters relating to their culture, religion and even economic and social problems. His initial shyness had to be discarded and confidence gained before any useful result from the visit could be expected. The process of study thus started was confined in instalments covering some long periods. It is a matter of great credit for all those who were engaged in this vast range of ethnographic study and preparation of illuminating reports. The personal and sincere interest, the devotion and the hard work which were the contribution of Shri J. K. Das were mainly responsible for the publication to see the light of the day. I once again congratulate him for the sincerity of purpose, hard work and erudition bestowed by him for completion of this work.

CUTTACK
2nd January, 1969

M. AHMED
Superintendent of Census Operations, Orissa

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Of the many innovatory 'inroads' of the Census of India, 1961, by far the most important were the studies in the field of cartography and social sciences. The latter studies comprised socio-economic survey of selected villages, survey of crafts and ethnographic studies. The Administrative and Economic Atlas volumes were the gifts of the cartographic studies.

The study of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes was an idea mooted as early as in 1959 with the initial emphasis on retrieving and reprinting the old and existing literature on the subject and on preparation of short notes of about four to five pages on each one of them after a brief field study. The demographic data to be thrown up by the 1961 Census were also to form part of these notes.

With the passage of time, this modest design grew, as it often does, in content and stature and by 1966, a national review made in two conferences at Kurseong and Hyderabad revealed that the nucleus plan had gathered enough accretions to make it look like a big ambitious venture. Meanwhile, the Census Organisation of Orissa had achieved considerable progress by completing the preliminary round of field studies. Time and resources being limited, there was, therefore, no going back on it. The first draft had been prepared on the basis of these field studies incorporating the demographic data available. In sustaining,

however, the progress of this modest venture, one basic objective was always kept in view. And this was to present in one handy volume some objective facts about the important Castes and Tribes of Orissa based on mid-depth studies in the field.

The story of the study is as simple as the book now being presented. The selection of the Castes and Tribes posed some teething troubles. The President's Order, 1956 constituted the basis for selection but then, in this were listed as many as 94 Castes and 62 Tribes. This was too formidable for the resources in hand and the personnel available. It was hence decided to restrict the scope of the study to only such of them which had returned a population of more than 1,000 in 1961 Census. Later, however, some more Castes and Tribes considered important from the ethnic point of view were added to this list thus bringing the total to 53 Castes and the same number of Tribes.

Field investigators were trained on the methodology of collection of data through canvassing of a simple questionnaire and through group discussion method. Villages were selected on the basis of data available on their numerical preponderance. The preliminary field survey was thus gone through according to schedule by those Investigators with the help of local administration. At this stage, a decision was taken that the data collected by the Investigators on the Tribes should be first vetted in the field before preparation of notes and that notes on Tribes should first be attempted. This task of considerable magnitude fell on me. Let apart studying them, to approach the habitations of as many as 53 Tribes—most of them dispersed in far-flung inaccessible areas looked all too formidable at the first instance. But I planned the restudy over a stretch of about a year and half and simultaneously prepared the notes. This is no forum, I confess, to exude excesses. But I should be true to myself to put it on record that I look back on those days with the Tribes as not only strenuous and fascinating but perhaps the most fruitful to be cherished as ever.

As indicated earlier, the preparation of write-ups proceeded hand in hand with the field resurvey so that by 1967, notes on most of the Tribes had been prepared and sent to the office of the Registrar General (Social Studies Unit) for technical scrutiny. Received back with their comments, the notes were revised.

The work relating to this book was thus proceeding without a hitch when at the stage of preparation of final drafts, the burden of the Office came all too heavy on my shoulders. The inter-censal work comprising the publication programme of 1961 Census and special sample surveys were a few of the many items of work which demanded my exclusive attention. I owe this explanation to the readers because shortly after these very engaging preoccupations, I had to stay away from this country for a year though before that, I had taken care to send the manuscripts contained in this volume to the press. But that did not help and the whole thing had to wait till after my return when the brisk preparations for the 1971 Census left me with no breathing time to devote to this work. No sooner I felt a little free than I laid my hands again on this labour of love.

I am greatly apologetic about this conspiracy of circumstances. Though often I look back in retrospect to wonder if I could have done any better, my only satisfaction, however, is that this volume in Orissa will at last see the light of the day when most other States have postponed the project still further on account of the pressure of work of 1971 Census.

I am fully conscious that, to many readers and particularly to scholars, the present volume may not look too erudite in content. I need hardly reiterate that if not within the time available, this is all the best that could be achieved with the resources available. To illustrate the point, the Census Organisation did not own a camera and all the pictures taken for this and its sister volume were taken by me in borrowed cameras. To all intents and purposes, it was wading a lonely furrow with occasional fits of utter helplessness.

It is far from my intention, however, to add to the list of ordeals that came my way in bringing out this volume. I am so happy that the book is born and God willing, the second and the last volume will be in the press before the year is out. If the disappointment of readers on account of the inherent limitation of the book is partly compensated by any feel of the humble intellectual honesty that has gone into its making, the work will be worth it.

The study on Castes may have to be continued during the inter-censal period. As it will be quite some time before the 1971 demographic data on Tribes are released, the same will be presented later either in the second volume or in the shape of a separate brochure.

I must place on record my respectful gratitude to Shri Asok Mitra, the erstwhile Registrar General, India and Shri A. Chandra Sekhar, Registrar General for their interest and guidance. To Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, the Deputy Registrar General and the officers in his unit, I owe a deep debt of indebtedness for their technical support and assistance. Shri M. Ahmed, the former Superintendent of Census Operations, Orissa has been the mainspring of my inspiration. But for his invaluable guidance and moral support, the task would have been impossible to achieve. Shri B. Tripathi, my present Director has been extremely generous to me in this venture. I am grateful to him.

I can never repay the debts of those unknown multitude of willing informants and field helpers whose aid and warmth have brought the undertaking to its present shape. I greatly value the assistance and association of Shri M. A. Rahman, my constant companion in those hard days. For admirable fortitude shown with my long spells of absence on tours as also for the unremitting encouragement, I owe my wife a word of thanks.

Cuttack J K D

The 30th September 1971

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Shri J. K. Das	Cover design

CENSUS OF INDIA, 1961

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The Census Report, 1961, Volume XII (Orissa) is published in the following parts :

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I-B	..	Report on Vital Statistics
I-C	..	Subsidiary Tables
II-A	..	General Population Tables
II-B (*i*)	..	General Economic Tables
II-B (*ii*)	..	General Economic Tables
II-C	..	Cultural and Migration Tables
III	..	Household Economic Tables
IV-A	..	Report on Housing and Establishments
IV-B	..	Housing and Establishment Tables
V-A	..	Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
V-B	..	Report on Scheduled Tribes (the present volume)
V-C	..	Report on Scheduled Castes
VI	..	Village Survey Monographs (in Series)
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VII-B	..	Fairs and Festivals
VIII	..	Administration Report (for official use only)
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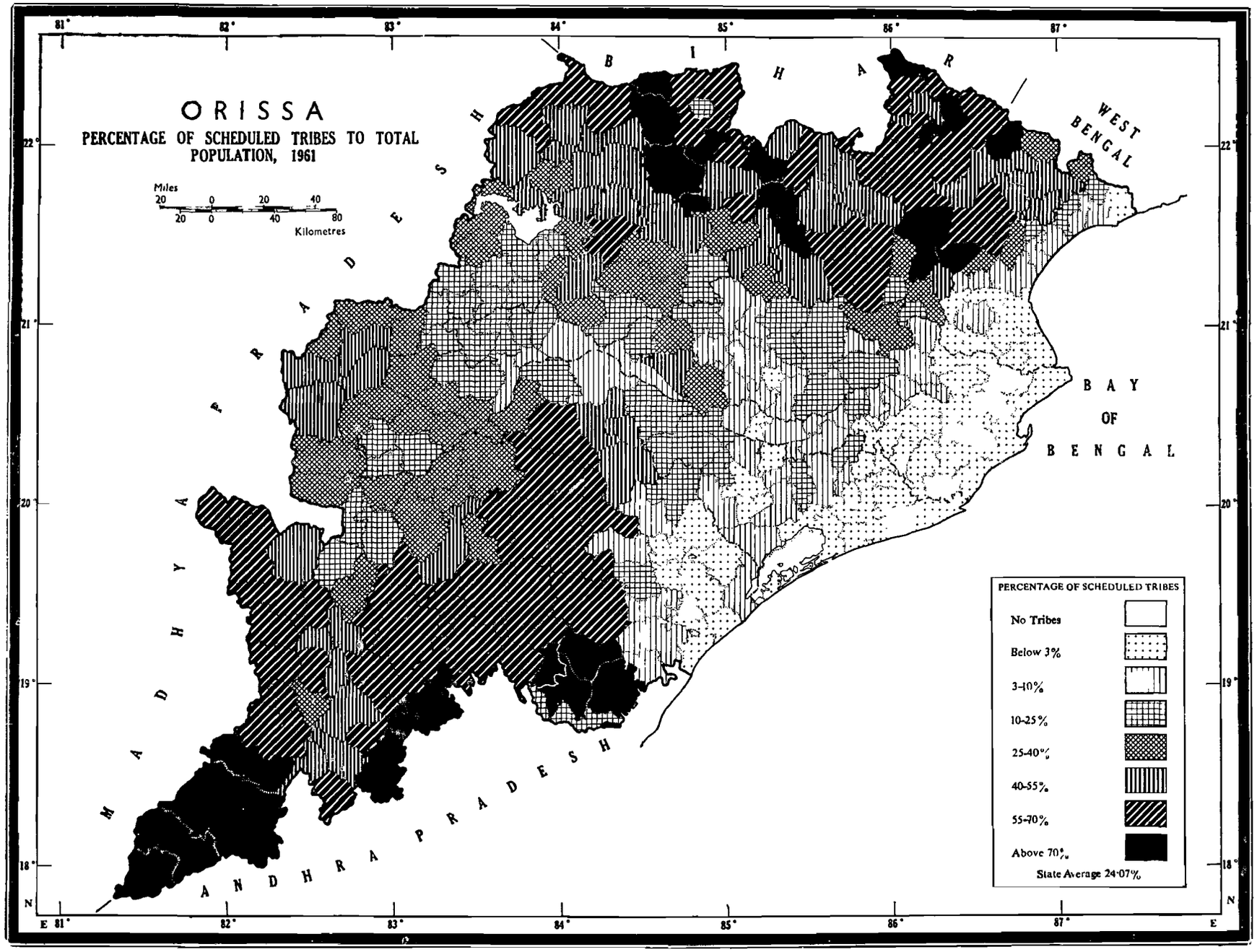
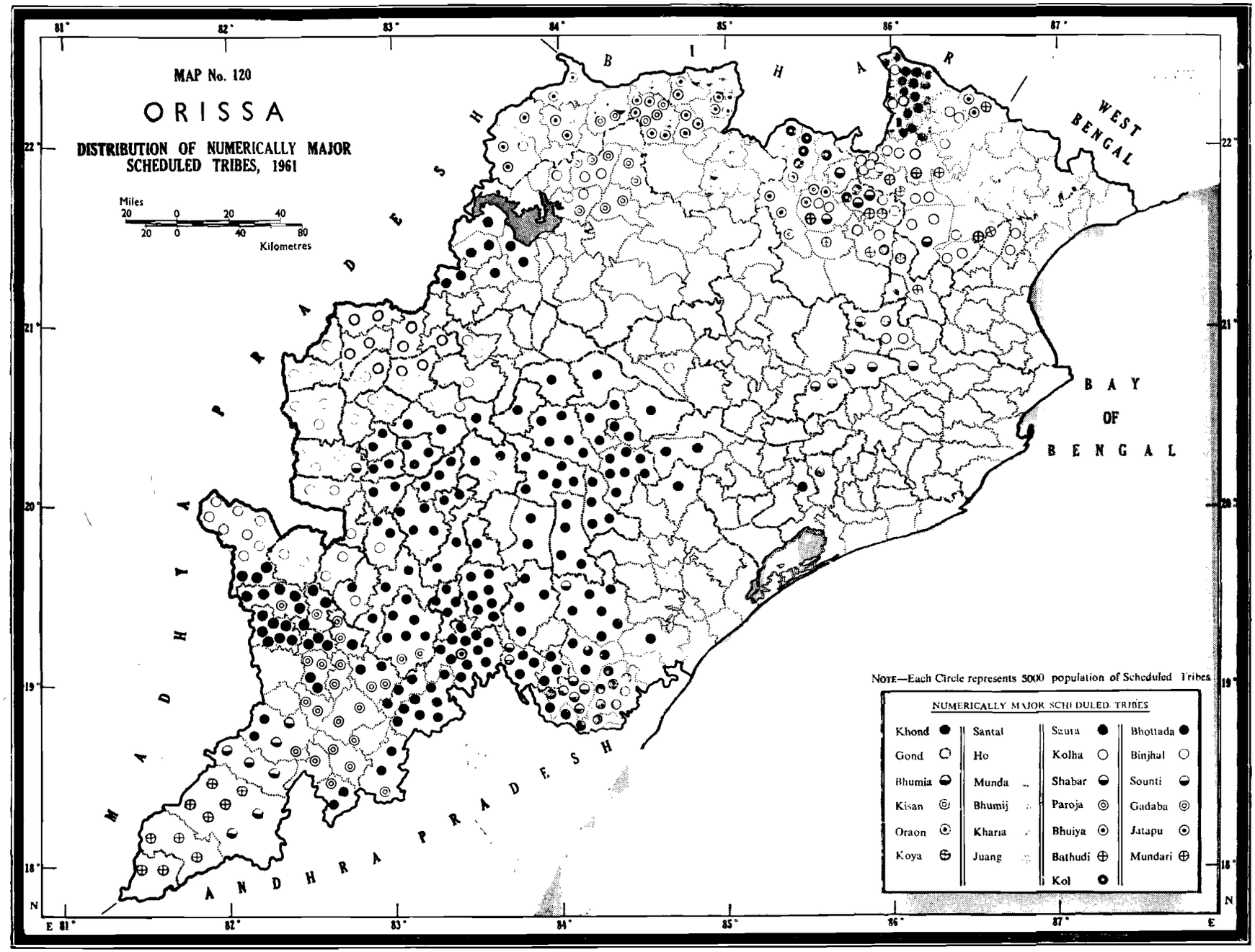
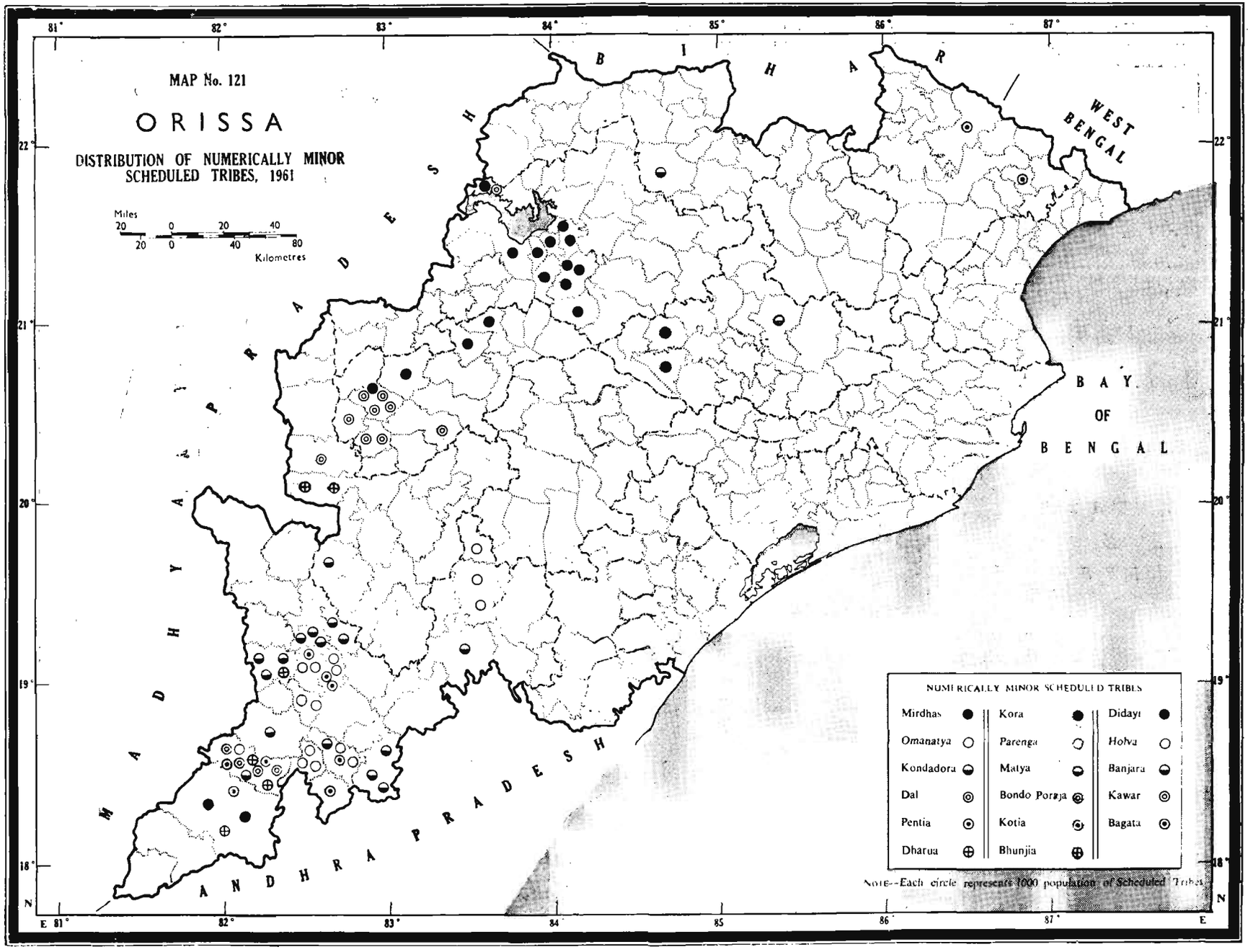

ORISSA
PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED TRIBES TO TOTAL POPULATION, 1961
Miles
20 0 20 40
20 0 40 80
Kilometres
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
MADHYA PRADESH
ANDHRA PRADESH
BAY OF BENGAL
PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED TRIBES
No Tribes
Below 3%
3-10%
10-25%
25-40%
40-55%
55-70%
Above 70%
State Average 24·07%
81°
82°
83°
84°
85°
86°
87°
22°
21°
20°
19°
18°
N
E


MAP No. 120
ORISSA
DISTRIBUTION OF NUMERICALLY MAJOR SCHEDULED TRIBES, 1961
Miles
20 0 20 40
20 0 40 80
Kilometres
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
MADHYA PRADESH
ANDHRA PRADESH
BAY OF BENGAL
81° 82° 83° 84° 85° 86° 87°
22° 21° 20° 19° 18° N
NOTE—Each Circle represents 5000 population of Scheduled Tribes
NUMERICALLY MAJOR SCHEDULED TRIBES
Khond
Gond
Bhumia
Kisan
Oraon
Koya
Santal
Ho
Munda
Bhumij
Kharia
Juang
Saura
Kolha
Shabar
Paroja
Bhuiya
Bathudi
Kol
Bhottada
Binjhal
Sounti
Gadaba
Jatapu
Mundari


MAP No. 121
ORISSA
DISTRIBUTION OF NUMERICALLY MINOR SCHEDULED TRIBES, 1961
Miles
20 0 20 40
20 0 40 80
Kilometres
BIHAR
WEST BENGAL
MADHYA PRADESH
ANDHRA PRADESH
BAY OF BENGAL
NUMERICALLY MINOR SCHEDULED TRIBES
Mirdhas
Omanatya
Kondadora
Dal
Pentia
Dharua
Kora
Parenga
Matya
Bondo Poraja
Kotia
Bhunjia
Didayi
Holva
Banjara
Kawar
Bagata
Note--Each circle represents 1000 population of Scheduled Tribes
81°
82°
83°
84°
85°
86°
87°
22°
21°
20°
19°
18°
N
E

KISAN

Villages of study :

1. KHUTURA
   P. S. Rajgangpur
   Dist. Sundargarh
2. LAKHTOLA
3. PADMAPUR
   P. S. Biramitrapur
   Dist. Sundargarh

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4. Shri Bandu Kisan
5. Shrl Sakra Kisan
6. Shri Jogia Kisan
7. Shri Rajeswar Kisan
8. Shri Prasanna Kr. Kisan
9. Shri Bhainra Kisan
10. Shri Torku Kisan

KISAN

The Kisans, included in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956 are mainly concentrated in the western part of the State comprising the districts of Sambalpur and Sundargarh. They are a tribe of settled cultivators and agricultural labourers.

2. As suggested by Dalton in his Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal (1872 : 127) it is probable that the tribe has acquired its Hindi appellation from their devoting themselves peculiarly to the occupation of agriculture. Risley in his Tribes and Castes of Bengal (1891 : 490) describes Kisan as a *mul* or section of Biahut sub-caste of Kalwars in Bihar and Kisans as a totemistic sept of Mundas in Chotanagpur and also a synonym for the Nageswar tribe. Enquiries made during the present study undertaken in villages Kutura and Padmapur of the district of Sundargarh revealed that the Kisans of this area are oblivious of the terms Nageswar or Nagesia reported by Prasad (1961 : 248) to be synonyms of their counterparts in Bihar. It was learnt during field study that Kisans in these areas do not inter-marry with Oraons nor do they have social relationship with them to any considerable degree. But both these tribes have a good deal in common with regard to their languages. The Kisans in the villages under study stated clearly that Koda, Kuda or Mirdha is not their surname as mentioned by Mohanty (Adibasi : 1963-64 : 179). They also do not call themselves as Naga Bansis as stated by Prasad in his Land and People of Tribal Bihar (1961 : 248).

Origin

3. There is very little data to trace their origin and ancestry. If questioned, Kisans particularly of the older generations trace their origin to such places as Rohtasgarh, Kuanagar, Nagpur and Dhanpur. Some others state that their forefathers migrated from Chotanagpur area in Bihar to the Gangpur ex-State. They conjecture that their forefathers used to lead a nomadic life till they received encouragement from the ex-rulers to settle down permanently as agriculturists. Members of the tribe hold the plough in reverence as would appear from their offerings of rice powder to the plough on the Nua Khia day.

4. The members of the tribe are divided into a number of exogamous and totemistic clans. These are *Majhi, Lakada* (tiger), *Topo* (a bird), *Bahala* (wild dog), *Bada* (banyan), *Kind* (a type of fish), *Kujur* (a plum), *Ming* (kite), *Eka* (tortoise), *Haha* (crow), *Hes* (paddy). Each clan is further subdivided into a number of sub-clans basing on the names of the villages from where the forefathers of the members of the sub-clan originally came. The Topo clan, for example, has the following sub-clans : (1) Sharbadia Munda, (2) Kagadia, (3) Padmapur and (4) Barabia.

Geographical distribution and population

5. About 93 per cent of the tribe are concentrated in the two adjoining districts of Sundargarh and Sambalpur bordering Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Another 6 per cent lie scattered in the districts of Dhenkanal and Keonjhar. They have not been returned from the districts of Balasore, Puri, Ganjam andBaudh-Khondmals and their population in the districts of Kalahandi, Koraput, Bolangir, Cuttack and Mayurbhanj is insignificant. Their sex-ratio is 1,037 females per 1,000 males and their total urban population is 2,278. Rajgangpur Police Station of Sundargarh district and Laikera Police Station of Sambalpur district have each more than 10 per cent of the population of the

State. The Table below gives the districtwise population of the tribe according to 1961 census.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

State/ District	Persons	Males	Females
Orissa	125,668	61,723	63,945
Kalahandi ..	6	2	4
Koraput ..	41	25	16
Sambalpur ..	66,528	33,298	33,230
Bolangir ..	3	..	3
Sundargarh .	50,632	24,146	26,486
Dhenkanal ..	*6,010*	*3,057*	*2,953*
Keonjhar ..	2,241	1,088	1,153
Cuttack ..	138	70	68
Mayurbhanj ..	69	37	32

6. The total population of the Kisans in the State in 1931 was 85,615 out of which 22,396 were returned from the district of Sambalpur. No authentic figures for subsequent censuses are available till 1961 when their population rose to 125,668. The average rate of decennial rise of population thus works out to 15·6 per cent but what is significant is the phenomenal rise of their population in the district of Sambalpur.

Houses

7. In the area under study, the Kisans live in separate *tolas* (hamlets) but close to other castes and tribes. Both the villages surveyed by this organisation were multi-caste and multi-tribal villages where Kisans have their separate hamlets. It was reported, however, that there are villages where Kisans now lived with other castes and tribes in the same residential cluster.

8. They do not consult Brahmins before selection of a house-site or before construction of a new house. Their customary practice is to fix a few posts at the proposed site and scraping a bit of earth near each post, they put in it seven grains of rice which are then covered up with leaves. At the centre of the site they fix a piece of iron. It is believed that if the site is inauspicious, the iron post and the grains of rice would be disturbed the next morning.

9. The informants stated that the houses previously bore a chest-high plinth. Presently the plinths are about $1\frac{1}{2}'$ to $2'$ higher than the corresponding ground level. The houses are rectangular and may measure $24'$ in length and $7\frac{1}{2}'$ in width with a verandah about $3'$ in width at the front. The house usually has two rooms with a thin partition wall one serves as a store and the other as a bed-cum-kitchen. More well-to-do persons have six to eight rooms, a granary for paddy and one or two cow-sheds. The walls are built of mud and the roof is a wooden or bamboo frame thatched with straw or *naria* tiles. There is one door and a green fence round the compound.

Family

10. A hurried survey of the incidence of joint family system indicates that the Kisans do not separate from the joint mess and cultivation immediately after marriage. If the boy married is the only son, he stays jointly with his parents. If they are many brothers, they may later have separate ovens but joint cultivation. The sanction of society to such separation is obtained at a later stage through a sumptuous and expensive feast by the separating members. The old parents with a share after separation are maintained by the sons in turn. Equity of distribution is maintained but for the eldest son who is entitled to a slightly larger slice.

Dress and ornaments

11. A Kisan male wears a short and coarse handloom dhoti and a napkin. A banyan or a *chadar* is added when he moves out. Shirts are put on on special occasions and a coarse handloom *chadar* is all that some possess to protect them from the winter cold

12. A Kisan woman usually wears a coarse handloom sari about five yards in length. Children go naked till they reach the age of about eight. Women wear petti-coats and blouses on festive occasions.

13. Some ornaments stated to have been extremely popular in the days of yore are now obsolete. The Kisan women, at one time used to wear a few varieties of silver and golden ornaments but the brass ornaments reported to have been greatly in use are *tadki* for the ear and *pata* or bangles for the wrist. *Kakni, panheri* of bell-metal and *pun* for the neck are some other ornaments since nearly given up.

14. The ornaments used today have a separate look and pattern more in common with those of the Hindu neighbours. Golden *ganthia, karnaphula* and *jhalaka* are the ornaments for the ears of women; *dandi, guna* and *chatar guna* are ornaments for the nose; and *sorisha mali* and *daba mali* are worn round the neck. The common silver ornaments for women are *chudi* and *bandharia* for the wrist and hand respectively, *panheri* for the ankle, rings for the fingers and toes and necklaces of silver four-anna bits for the neck. Ornaments that adore the hair-do are *chaunri mundi, malli phula* and *pan-patra phula,* all made of silver. Men wear golden *phasia* on their ears. Widows do not put on bangles but can use other ornaments.

15. Tattooing is freely taken recourse to by Kisan women. The limbs preferred are from the wrist to the arm and about a 4" wide band up the ankle. The tattoo designs take distinctive forms and the commonest pattern adopted are floral and circular designs.

Food

16. Rice is their staple food. *Gulji,* a kind of small millet and *mandia* (Eleusine coracana) are also taken. Varieties of pulses and vegetables besides forest roots and fruits are taken alongwith rice and the available millets. Flesh of birds like peacocks, fowls, green-pigeons, pigeons, ducks, etc., are relished. They also take the meat of goats, pigs, sheep, *sambar,* deer mice, mongoose, etc. but not beef. Two meals a day is common.

17. In cooking, they use chillies, oil, mustard seeds, onion and other spices. Only on festive occasions, ghee and rich spices are used. Earthen pots are common whereas brass and aluminium pots are rarely used. Among their popular drinks, mention may be made of *handia, daru,* a country liquor and *tadi* extracted from the date-palm trees.

Birth

18. No restriction whatsoever is imposed on the mother with regard to her food or movements. No. separate lying-in-room is provided. A corner of a room is set apart for the purpose. Experienced caste women are called to assist the woman in confinement. In extremely difficult cases, the woman is generally removed to the nearest maternity centre. Soon after birth, the naval cord is severed with a knife, and along with the placenta it is buried by the attendant woman in a pit on the rear side of the house. A stone is then placed to cover the pit. The mother is not allowed to take rice for two days. She is given boiled *kulthi* (horse gram) water with *Mahasindhu* (the local name of a plant) herbs for relief of her pains.

19. The first purification ceremony takes place on the 7th day of birth. The mother after anointing herself with turmeric and oil takes bath and cleans her clothes. She then takes the sacred *tulsi* water. This completes purification. The final purification which synchronises with the name-giving ceremony takes place on the 21st day of birth. The relatives and castemen gather round a pot-ful of turmeric water. Rice grains are thrown into it each with the suggestion of a name. When the grains float jointly, the name proposed is accepted.

Marriage

20. Marriage is restricted within the tribe and adult marriage is more common. Boys and girls usually marry at the age of sixteen or seventeen and the bride is always younger than the bridegroom. This does not hold good for widow marriages where widows marrying may be older than their husbands. Child marriage among the tribe is rare. Widow

marriage or marriage after divorce is allowed. Polygyny is prevalent. The proposal for a marriage is initiated by the father of the boy and only when agreement is reached between both sides that betrothal takes place. The father of the bridegroom with his castemen visits the house of the bride and finalises details of arrangement for the marriage. Betrothal is marked by service of liquor to the tribesmen at the cost of the father of bridegroom. A sum of Rs. 7 in cash and ten *khandis* of paddy are paid to the bride's father as bride price.

21. The full-moon day in *Pousa* (December-January) is preferred for all marriages. The reason is obscure. A woman with four male members of the bridegroom's side constitute the forward party who go to invite the bride. Thatafter, a large party proceeds with the bridegroom to the house of the bride accompanied by drum-beaters playing *mardal* and *dholak*. It is significant that the party consists of even numbers but on return, must be of odd numbers. The caste priest named *Kalo* officiates in the marriage. The palms of the bride and the groom are united. The couple are then taken in a procession to the houses of their relatives and tribesmen for collection of money, paddy and rice. Whatever little collection is thus made is spent in merry-making. All tribesmen are entertained to a feast. Revelling in good food and drinking continues for long hours.

Death

22. The Kisans bury their dead. Persons dying of cholera and smallpox are abandoned at some out of the way place. The dead bodies are placed in the pit with the head towards the south and face upward. A pot locally called *khuri*, 2½ yds. of new cloth, oil, turmeric and paddy grains are kept beside the dead body. The cot defiled by the dead body before death is broken to pieces and thrown away. The same day all are purified after bath. A diminutive effigy of the dead man is made with roots of *bena* and on the next full-moon day in *Margasira*, the effigy contained in an earthen pot is thrown into a river. The Kisans of the area under study used to throw it into the Koel near Panposh, but of late, they have chosen the river Nati near Kukura bhuka for the purpose. On return home after this ceremony, a feast is given to all castemen and with this, final purification ceremony ends.

Language

23. According to the classification of Grierson as adopted in 1961 Census, Kisan is returned by the speakers of Koda/Kora of Austric Family as well as by the speakers of Kurukh/Oraon of Dravidian Family. Majority of them, however, have adopted Oriya as their mother-tongue.

Bilingualism

24. Of the total population of 125,668 only 20,083 persons speak a language subsidiary to their mother-tongue. Majority of them numbering 18,627, however, are those who have Kisan as their mother-tongue. As many as 16,784 of this population speak Oriya as their subsidiary language. The rest speak Hindi and English. On the other hand, only 922 persons of 74,262 speaking Oriya as their mother-tongue, have adopted Hindi, English and Bengali as their subsidiary language.

Literacy and Education

25. Figures relating to literacy and education of the members of the tribe, as obtained in the 1961 Census are given in the Table below. Only 11,189 persons or 8·9 per cent of the population are literate. This compares favourably with the percentage of literacy of scheduled tribes against their total population in the State. Of 11,188 literate persons, the majority numbering 9,805 persons can read and write a simple letter and the rest are educated up to primary or junior basic standard or above. Only 89 persons in all have read up to matriculation or higher secondary standard and above.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION
(Census, 1961)

State/ District	Total Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	125,668	114,479	11,189	9,805	1,295	89
Kalahandi ..	6	6	..	..	..	..
Koraput ..	41	33	8	8	..	..
Sambalpur ..	66,528	60,203	6,325	5,603	704	18
Bolangir ..	3	..	3	3	..	..
Sundargarh ..	50,632	46,791	3,841	3,325	449	67
Dhenkanal ..	6,010	5,381	629	587	42	..
Keonjhar ..	2,241	1,869	372	270	98	4
Cuttack ..	138	136	2	2	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	69	60	9	7	2	..

26. It was gathered during field enquiry that members of the tribe show great aptitude to education. In a village under study in Rajgangpur P. S., besides a number of school-going students, there were as many as three matriculates.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CALSSIFICATION OF POPULATION
(Census, 1961)

Category	Persons	Males	Females
Total population	125,668	61,723	63,945
Workers:			
I. Cultivator	45,436	25,475	19,961
II. Agricultural labourer	11,519	7,205	4,314
III. Mining, quarrying, etc.	155	53	102
IV. Household industry	1,793	447	1,346
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	373	324	49
VI. Construction	30	27	3
VII. Trade and commerce	33	22	16
VIII. Transport, storage and communications	143	124	19
IX. Other services	7,689	3,549	4,140
Total workers	67,176	37,226	29,950
Non-workers	58,492	24,497	33,995

Occupation and economic life

27. Cultivation is their main occupation. The table above gives the industrial classification of workers as returned in the 1961 Census. Of the total population, 53·5 per cent are workers. The remaining 46·5 per cent of non-workers include children, housewives, old and invalids and others who are not economically active. 36·2 per cent of the working population are engaged in cultivation and 9·2 per cent as agricultural labourers.

Religion

28. The Kisans worship a number of gods and goddesses who usually take the form of shapeless stone slabs, wooden masses or trees. Male goats, sheep and fowls are sacrificed and liquor is also offered. Every Kisan village has its own village deity whom they call as *Gansir, Budha-Band, Baghia* or *Bhim-Debata.*

29. Their system of beliefs and superstitions is interesting. An empty pitcher, a stack of fuel, a black cat, jackal, snake and a twig falling are all deemed as inauspicious omens whereas a full pitcher, a corpse, etc., are regarded as auspicious. They have their caste sorcerer, called *Gunia* and the *Vaidya,* who attend to ailments of many kinds.

30. They believe in the existence of ghosts and spirits. Many diseases are believed to be the outcome of the wrath of such spirits and ghosts. Before propitiation of a goddess or spirit, they determine her requirements in the following manner. The *Gunia* is given drinks and is worshipped. A particular goddess or ghost is then believed to communicate her desires through him. Their home deities are called *Mahabir* or *Samalei* whom they worship on all important occasions. They also pay due reverence to Hindu gods and goddesses. In recent years, some Kisans are reported to have accepted Christianity as their religion by conversion.

Festivals

31. The annual cycle of festivals observed by the Kisans follow a fixed pattern and lean more on the side of their main occupation, i. e., agriculture. *Nuakhia* in the month of *Bhadrab* (August-September) is by far their most important festival. *Akshaya Tritiya* festival otherwise called *Bihan Buna* is observed in the month of *Baisakh* (April-May) when paddy seeds are first sown in the fields. On the full-moon night of *Sravan* (July-August) they observe *Gamha* when they feed their cattle with *Mohua* flowers and post a *Kendu* twig in their fields with the belief that this will prevent the crop from damage by insects. In *Bhadrab* (August-September) they observe *Nabarna* or *Nuakhia.* They wear new clothes and take their year's new rice on this occasion. *Pausa Purnima* is observed in *Pausa* (December-January) after the harvest is over. On the occasion of *Dola Jatra* in *Falguna* (February-March) they take new mango for the first time. This seems to have been adopted from their neighbouring Hindus. In all these festivals, special food and cakes are prepared and offered to home and village deities. The days are spent in great mirth and revelry amidst songs and dances. Drinking in liberal doses constitutes an important item of merry-making.

Village organisation

32. Every Kisan village has a tribal council consisting of old members of the caste knowledgeable in caste rules. There is a *Mukhia* or head-man for every village who is assisted by the *Katwal.* The post of *Mukhia* is not hereditary and reports of his being dislodged on grounds of allegations are not rare. In marriages and other special occasions, the *Katwal* receives new clothes from the concerned parties.

They have a super-structure over their tribal councils known as *Kisan Mahasabha* that sits irregularly. In 1964, it is reported to have had its sitting in village Khokapada near Gobindpur of Sundargarh district.

They have yet another functionary called *Beriha* who performs the rites of purification at the Ghat of a group of Kisan villages.

The tribal council resolves all caste disputes. Among departures from caste rules, incestuous marriages are deemed as important in which case severe punishment is inflicted. They do not take beef now and someone detected as a beef-eater is punished.

References:

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BATHUDI

The Bathudis as mentioned in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956, are a tribe of cultivators and agricultural labourers in Orissa with considerable concentration of their population in the north-western parts of the State, particularly in the areas bordering the districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. Their settlements lie mostly on the plains and many of them are so greatly Hinduised and accultured that to call them a hill tribe is perhaps a misnomer.

2. Notwithstanding this, the members of the tribe do not take offence to being called as Adibasis or to being identified as members of the scheduled tribe. Apparently they do not bear any other synonym though Bathuri as they are called by some, may be only a phonetic variation of their original name. None of them call themselves as Bathuhuli as they do in the Singhbhum district of Bihar (Prasad : 1961 : 237).

3. Russell and Hiralal (1916 : Vol. II : 315) refer to Bathudis as an inferior group of the Bhuiyas. The Census Report of Mayurbhanj State, 1931 (1931 : Vol. I : 201) mentions inter-marriage among Bathudis, Bhuiyas and Sauntis with the only restriction imposed that after marriage the whole family of the girl is to leave its own community to join that of the bridegroom. It is further said that the practice was in vogue in 1931 though in a rare form and without the open sanction of any of the three communities.

4. This organisation undertook study of Bathudis in village Baunsauali and Jashipur of Jashipur P. S. in Mayurbhanj district. The traits, customs and characteristics mentioned here may therefore be taken as representative of the area.

5. The informants of the tribe stoutly refuted the suggestion that they are an inferior group of the Bhuiyas. They asserted further that they have neither heard of nor talked about intermarriage among Bathudis, Bhuiyas and Sauntis.

6. The single most important feature which emerged remarkably during the short scope of the present study was that the tribe has greatly adopted the ways of their Hindu neighbours and the extent of their acculturation appeared considerable.

Origin and affinities

7. The Census Report of Mayurbhanj State, 1931 (1932 : Vol. I : 200) records local traditions which claim that the Bathudis belonged originally to Batuligarh in Oudh. It is from here that they migrated following the course of the river Godavari in Deccan. The informants during the present study were confronted with the facts of this tradition to which however, they pleaded ignorance. On the other hand, they claimed to have migrated from Bakua in Similipal hills. The members of the tribe hold that originally the zamindars of Bathudi tribe reigned in the Similipal ranges. They, however, defeated the great Chief of Jashipur, one Dasu Kharia of Kharia tribe. It is popularly believed that the head of the vanquished 'Kharia' still exists in solidified form at the top of a Batuli 'fort' in the Similipal hills. The informants further recounted a tradition that the Bathudis, in order to reign supreme in the area had a bitter fight with the Gonds at Tentaposhi in Bamanghati subdivision and defeated the latter. One of their ancestors, named Birabara came across two stone slabs floating in the river Khairi. He attempted to seize both by his hands but the one in his left hand eluded his grasp and sank. The other one was picked up by him to be installed later in the Raghunathjiu Math which continues to maintain its supremacy,

over other Maths in the area. The Maths at Karanjia and Jashipur were reported to be later offshoots. The Bathudis firmly believe that the stone thus being worshipped in the Jashipur Math is gradually growing in size. Apart from these traditions and beliefs which are greatly popular with members of the tribe, the fact remains that the Bathudis are greatly preponderant in the area and that at one time they used to wield considerable power and authority by virtue of being zamindars of the area. The zamindars of Karanjia and Jashipur belong to Bathudi tribe.

8. In village Baunsanali under survey which contains about fifty houses of Bathudis, all have Naik as their title and but for two houses all belong to Parasara *gotra*. These two houses belong to Nageswar *gotra*. Other *gotras* of the tribe were stated to be Ganeswara, Kashyapa, Dhanaphula and Bharadwaj. It is not unlikely that this highly Hinduised tribe of Orissa have adopted Gotras as a mark of Hinduisation. They, however, appear to be subdivided into a large number of exogamous sections called *Khilli*. During investigation, it transpired that the Khilli of each member of the tribe is the same as his title. There are for example, Biswala, Madhai, Nimbada, Baghajalia, Khandei, Patra, Manika, Andharajadia, Giri, Sankiala, Jhariala, Dasa, Kusumalia, Parhiala, Routa, Barasalia, Pichilia, Senapati and Baghasingh. It is interesting to note that 56 such sections have been mentioned in the Census Report of Mayurbhanj State, 1931 (1931 : Vol, I : 201). According to this source, most of these titles appear to relate to the particular military or domestic service rendered by the ancestors of the section bearing that title in their relation to the zamindars.

9. The relationship between *gotra* and *khilli* appears ubiquitous and in the process of investigation, it was difficult to ascertain the course of evolution of each *gotra* or *khilli*. Some stated that each *khilli* constitutes a *gotra*. The illustration cited was that all those of Biswala *khilli* belong to Parasara *gotra*. It, however, remains certain that in absence of more extensive investigation it would be risky to hazard a generalisation on the implications and inter-relationship of *khillis* and *gotras*. The *khilli* Barasalia for example, was explained as having been adopted by one of their ancestors who worshipped daily twelve *salas* (gods) after taking bath twelve times a day. All the Bathudi zamindars, for instance, have Dasa as their *khilli*. But the reasons are difficult to guess.

10. They take water called *Bhuja* pant (fried rice and water) from Bhuiyas and Sauntis. But they do not accept cooked food from them. The touch of Kols or Santals pollutes them. So is their attitude to Hadi Pana, Ghasi, Kandara and Dhoba.

11. A point that evokes considerable interest about the tribe is that acceptance of *Karna mantra* (the sacred vow that is whispered on one's ears) from a *Baishnab Guru* is obligatory for each Bathudi before marriage. Why is it so is no doubt a matter of detailed investigation. The Census Report of Mayurbhanj State, 1931, however, mentioned that there are a number of Baishnab Bathudis in the district of Mayurbhanj. Within our limited scope of study, it was difficult to encounter a single Bathudi Baishnab. In the village under study the informants also stated that there are none among them who have taken to Baishnabism.

Physical and racial characteristics

12. No anthropometric study was taken up among the tribe by this organisation. In absence of this, the following account about the physical appearance of Bathudis of the Dhalbhum subdivision of Bihar is collected from the 'Land and People of Tribal Bihar' (Prasad : 1961 : 237). "In physical appearance, they are of short stature, average height

BATHUDI

Villages of study :

1. JASHIPUR
   P. S. Jashipur
   Dist. Mayurbhanj
2. BAUNSANALI
   P. S. Jashipur
   Dist. Mayurbhanj

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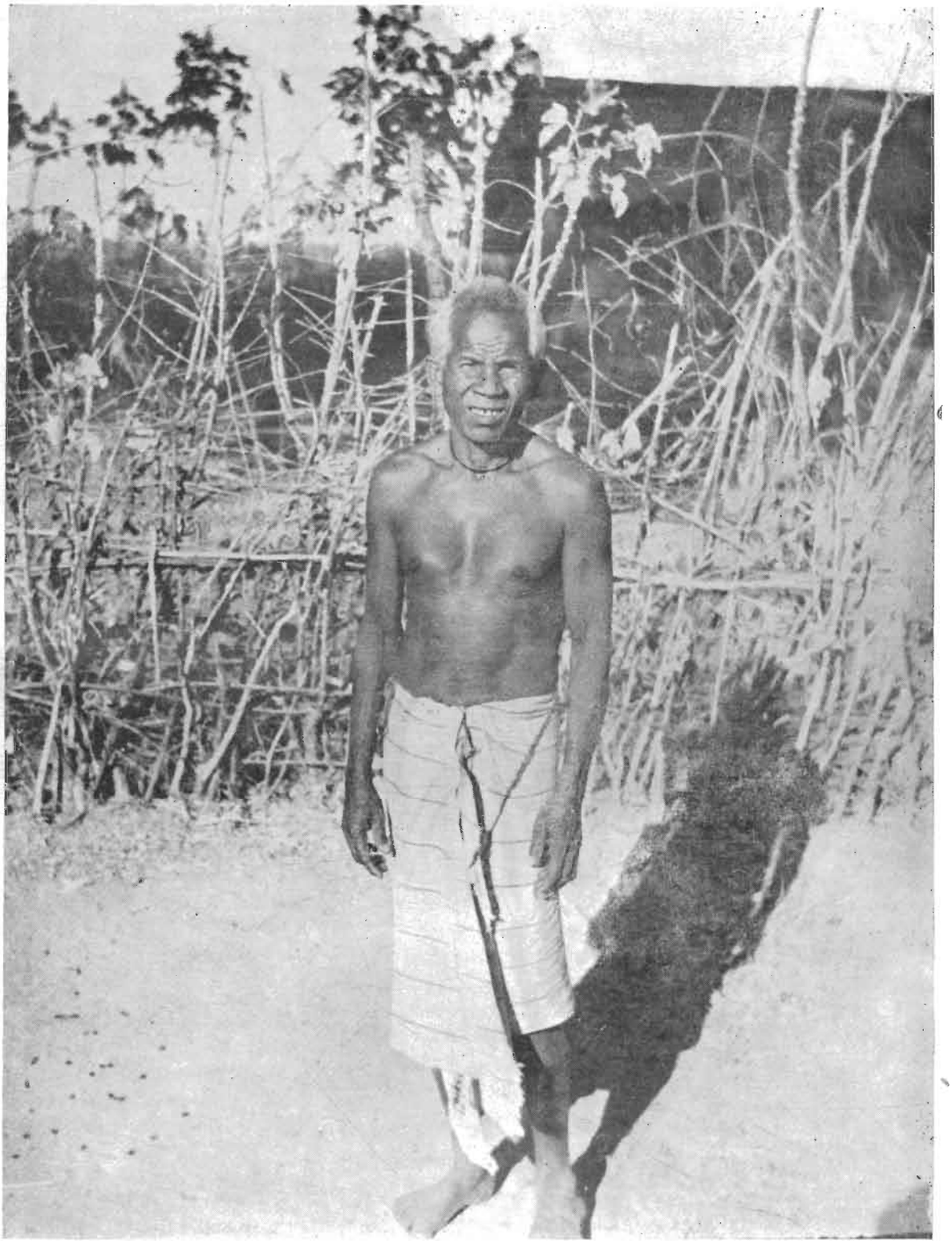
5. Shri Shyama Naik, S/o. Late Bhima Naik
6. Shri Bhagabata Naik, S/o. Netra Naik
7. Shri Netra Naik, S/o. Late Mudha Naik
8. Shri Udhab Naik, S/o. Late Panchu Naik
9. Shri Duitiya Naik, S/o. Late Banamali Naik
10. Shri Sundar Naik, S/o. Late Manu Naik



An old man

of males being 159·4 cms. and of females being 146·52 cms. The average weight of males is 100 lbs. and that of females is 85·13 lbs. The complexion varies from dark deep brown to black. The distribution of ABO blood groups among the Bathudis is O-33·63, A-26·55, B-31·86 and AB-7·96 and the percentage of secretors and non-secretors is 59·29 and 40·71 respectively."

Geographical distribution and population

13. According to 1961 Census, their total population in the State is 104,542, the sex ratio being 1,009 females to 1,000 males. In absence of precise data relating to earlier censuses it is difficult to record any view on the trend of population growth. But from a comparative analysis of their total population in the State of Mayurbhanj in 1931, it would appear that they are a growing community in this area of maximum concentration.

14. In fact, the district of Mayurbhanj has 56·8 per cent of their total population, the next district is Keonjhar which is inhabited by 35·8 per cent. In Balasore, there are 6·8 per cent. The rest 0·6 per cent are scattered in the districts of Cuttack, Sundargarh and Koraput. Among the police stations containing more than 10 per cent of their population mention may be made of Karanjia and Jashipur in Mayurbhanj district. The Table below gives the district-wise population of the tribe.

Table 1

POPULATION
(Census, 1961)

State District	Persons	Males	Females
Orissa ..	104,542	52,041	52,501
Koraput ..	5	4	1
Sundargarh ..	75	75	...
Keonjhar ..	37,165	19,092	18,373
Cuttack ..	544	243	301
Mayurbhanj ..	59,377	29,208	30,169
Balasore ..	7,076	3,419	3,657

Houses and living condition

15. Bathudis are seldom seen mixed up with other tribes or castes, even though they stay with them as very close neighbours. Their settlement in most villages was reported to be separate and thus to come across a Bathudi house placed in the midst of other communities is rather rare. In villages neighbouring the one under study, for example, this appears to be precisely the position. In village Matiagarh, Dhobas and Bathudis have separate hamlets. In Basantapara, Santals and Bathudis lived separately. Similarly, in village Jamukeswar, Mahantas and Bathudis had separate settlements. In Marada and Maharadapalasa there were Panas, Mahantas and Bathudis in the former village and Panas, Damas, Mahantas, Dhobas, Kamaras, Khandeits, Kumbharas and Bathudis in the latter village. It was stated that in between two Bathudi houses there were members of no other community in either of these two villages.

16. The look of the Bathudi houses differ from those of the Kols and Santals. It was learnt in the village under study that in earlier days, Bathudis used to apply one colour uniformly all over their house. Kols and Santals, on the other hand, are traditionally fond of multicoloured paintings on their walls. It was the view of the informants that Bathudi girls too, of late, have been using two to three colours to decorate their walls. But that a clear distinction in decoration existed sometime ago was asserted by all the members of the tribe of the older generation.

Another point of distinction is the number of doors in a house. In Kol and Santal houses it is so difficult even today to locate a second door in any room. The one existing serves as both entrance and exit. And there are no windows too. But most of the Bathudi rooms have two doors. After having food, they usually go out into the backyard through the rear door to wash their hands.

The walls of Santal houses are decorated lavishly with multiform and multicoloured designs. Bathudis, on the other hand, use thin ropes and love to paint some floral designs. This again was reported to be the practice being resorted to only very recently. The bark of the *Asan* tree is removed and and steamed. This gives the red hue which is mixed up with watery mud and then dabbed over the walls.

17. Most of the houses have mud walls. The verandah at the front is usually high though not that wide and the level of the courtyard is often higher than the level of the village path. A typical house conforms to the following pattern. Close to the courtyard, there is a small thatch for dehusking pedal and in front of the courtyard there is the cow-shed. To another side of the courtyard lies the living room partitioned in the middle by a chest-high wall, one side is set apart for goats and poultry and the other for bed-cum-kitchen. The protruding ceiling made of mud acts as the store for paddy, rice, other agricultural commodities and household equipments. Seeds for the ensuing year is kept in bundles of *siali* leaves sewn together with an envelope of plaited straw and the whole thing is made to hang from the thatch.

18. In the village under study, of the fifty households, about 10 to 12 have the sacred basil plant. In the backyard called Bari there are plantain, chilli, papaya, horse-radish and custard-apple trees.

19. Among other household equipments, those of importance are stringed charpoys, aluminium, bell-metal and earthen utensils, bow and arrow, fishing bamboo traps, mats, ect.

20. It was ascertained in the area under study that the pattern of houses a few years ago was what is locally called *dandi ghara*. This means a long row of houses with two slopes on the thatch. Roofs with slopes on all sides are coming up now-a-days, *Purabandi* house with different rooms for bed, store, kitchen and cow-shed, etc., on the four sides of a courtyard are rare in the area under study. The informants stated that such well-to-do houses might be met across in the Sadar subdivision of Mayurbhanj district. The roof usually has either a straw thatch or has tiles made by local artisans.

Dress and Ornaments

21. Their dress is scanty. A coarse cotton dhoti about 8 cubits in length or a napkin about 4-5 cubits long is all the dress of a male person. A banian or a shirt is worn when they move out. A wrapper or a torn dhoti serves as protection during winter.

22. Women wear saris about 9 to 10 cubits long in the same fashion as local caste Hindus do. But old women use saris about 12 cubits long after folding it into half its length. Some years ago the women were particularly fond of *Maniabandi* saris (a kind of sari which draws its name from its place of origin in Cuttack district) but presently they love to wear more fine and coloured saris. It was curious that the orange colour particularly is their great favourite. Their love for colour in general is perceptible in their garments, particularly in their choice of saris and ribbons. Orange-coloured saris and floral patterns out of coloured ribbons are features so common in any Bathudi village. Other items of hair-do besides the coloured ribbons are ornaments of silver specially floral designs, flowers plucked fresh from the trees and even flowers made of paper. But by all means, the hair-do must bear the decoration.

23. Children up to 4 or 5 usually go naked. School-going children are given half-pants, shirts, frocks, small dhotis or saris. More colourful pattern of saris preserved for the purpose are worn during festive and ceremonial occasions.

24. Golden ornaments were rarely used a few years ago. At present one comes across in a village quite a few Bathudi women

putting on golden ornaments. Such ornaments comprise *guna* at the centre of the nose and *phuli, jhara phuli* or *guna* on both sides. The type of ear-rings and ornaments for the ear are locally called *ganthia,phirphira* and *noli*. The ornament for the neck is *padakamala*.

25. Of the silver ornaments worn a decade or two ago, mention may be made of *kapa* at the bottom of the ear-pinnae, *bentula* at the centre and *phirphira* at the top. Other silver ornaments constituted nathu in the nose and *suki mala* and *kanthi mala* in the neck. Ornaments of other metals included *pahuda* or *khaduabanki* in the leg. The ornaments popular today are bangles of silver or rubber, *baja bandha* of silver in the arm and *khadua* of silver in the leg. Men wear silver rings but rather rarely. Women wear clips, pins and forceps on their hair.

26. Bathudi women did not know previously much about plaiting or braiding of their hairs. At the centre of the back portion of their head they used to twist their hairs into a knob called *nutuni*. These days, the use of plaits is extensive but a plait is seldom allowed to dangle on their back. It is twisted to form slightly a stiff knob at the back.

27. Tattooing, the local name of which is *khada* is popular among Bathudi women. A rule is in force that before marriage a Bathudi girl must tattoo one or two floral designs on her head or arm. Women of Thatari caste who usually roam about with these odd jobs tattoo their hands with considerable skill.

Food

28. Beef and pork are forbidden food but they take termites and ants called *jhari poka.* and *kai*. They do not accept snails as food. Previously, the variety of fish called *sala* with small scales and a *chakra* mark on its head was a taboo. The taboo has stopped in a way as many persons are reported to be relishing this fish now-a-days. They do not take rats but relish tortoise.

29. Being traditionally non-vegetarian they take all kinds of fish and flesh but for the exceptions stated above. Dried fish is their favourite food item.

30.Three meals a day is common. Boiled rice soaked in cold water is taken in the morning along with a pinch of salt and onion or chilly with some fried edible green leaves. Hot boiled rice is taken both as lunch and dinner supplemented with dishes of vegetables, fish or meat. Fried or flattened rice is taken as tiffin. Cakes of rice, cocoanut, molasses and black-gram are prepared on ceremonial occasions. Mustard oil is their cooking medium.

31. Their popular drinks are *handia* or rice-beer which they prepare themselves and *mahula* liquor which they purchase from the shops in the neighbourhood. Tea is taken mostly without sugar and milk. They both smoke and chew tobacco.

Birth

32. Certain restrictions are imposed on the expectant mother. She is restrained from taking sweets and fruits like ripe plantains, custard-apples, jackfruits, sweet potato, etc. She should not take twin fruits or offer worship. She is allowed to take fish, meat, egg and milk. Both the woman and her husband during the period of the former's pregnancy cannot kill any animal not even a scorpion or a snake. Their prohibition for sweet food goes so far as to prohibit her from taking sweets during *sada* ceremony. This ceremony is arranged on the completion of the ninth month of pregnancy when the expectant mother is fed with best of food by her friends and relations.

33. It is the house of the husband where birth takes place. Though no separate arrangement is made for a lying-in-room, one room is exclusively set apart for the purpose no matter how rich or poor the person is. In case it is a one-roomed house and the person has none to help, he does the cooking himself but all the same, cooking has to be done at a separate place.

34. Previously, an old and experienced woman of the tribe used to assist in child birth. Now-a-days the service of a woman of the Bhumij tribe is usually requisitioned. In either case it is the woman assistant who cuts the umbilical cord with the arrow blade in case of a male child and a knife in case of a female child. The umbilical cord along with the placenta are buried in the backyard under the eaves. The *dai* cleans the room and dabs it with cowdung water.

35. Shortly after birth, the child is bathed in tepid water and is fed with either goat's milk or mother's milk. The child is not given honey. The mother is given a powder mixture of dried ginger and black-pepper with cow's ghee which is believed to stimulate the process of healing.

36. Pollution is observed for 9 days. For all these days a log of sal wood is kept burning within the room. This is called *Antudi Jala*. On the ninth day the *dai* throws away the ashes called *Antudi Khara*. None else are permitted to handle it. In the food prescribed for the parturient woman, *arhar* and *kulthi* (kinds of pulses) are given and blackgram and *mung* are eschewed.

37. The first stage of pollution is over in 9 days and the second stretch continues up to the twenty-first day. Some name the child on the ninth, i.e., *Uthiari* day and others on the twenty-first or *Ekoisia* day. Washermen and barbers serve them both these days. On the ninth day, the house is cleaned with cowdung mixed in water. Kitchen articles like pots, baskets and broom-sticks are thrown away. The clothings of the mother and the child are given to a washerman for a wash. The family members after shaving undergo a purificatory bath along with the mother and the child. After this members of the household and others can touch the mother and the child.

38. The mother, however, cannot enter into the kitchen and touch the cooking pots till the twenty-first day. Another Purificatory bath is taken by all members of the household and new cloths are put on on this day. The mother for about two years after birth of the child is prohibited from taking, fish, sweets and ripe jackfruits. She is, however, allowed to take meat and leafy vegetables. The midwife assisting in child birth was previously being paid four annas in cash, two cloths- -one new and the other old and four seers of rice. Now she is paid annas eight or Re. 1 according to ability, four seers of rice and an old cloth in case of a male child and in case of female, she is not given the old cloth.

Puberty

39. Prohibitions for a girl attaining her puberty are rigid. She is kept segregated in a separate room for at least a week. During the period, she is not allowed to see the face of any male member. She is fed within by another woman member of the household. A week after, she takes a purificatory bath and then wears a new cloth. It is after observance of these formalities, that she can attend to her normal household duties. In subsequent menstruations, a woman is permitted access into the kitchen and to touch the cooking utensils only after bath. No segregation is observed.

Marriage

40. As stated earlier, marriage within the same *khilli* is prohibited. Marriage with cousins either from the paternal or maternal side is also tabooed. Sororate is practised but levirate exists in a form not strictly sanctioned by the society. To illustrate the point, a woman cannot marry with all the rituals of marriage after her husband's death. She, however, can enter into *sanga ghara* with her husband's brother or with others. Adult marriage is the rule and instances of child marriage are rarely met with. Widows can live with another but cannot strictly marry him. The same is the fate of the divorcees, no matter whether one has children. He is allowed to marry twice.

41. Marriage takes place either in the house of the groom or the bride. Both these systems are prevalent in the area under study. Though economic ability of the father of the bride was reported to be the main determinant in the choice of place for marriage, the same of the groom's father initiates him to establish his ego in society by getting the marriage done at his own place.

42. The proposal is always initiated by the father of the groom who sends a negotiator named *dandia* to the girl's place. Though they have not yet built up the system of horoscope, they consult Brahmins, Baisnabs and astrologers before fixing up finally a marriage. System of payment of bride price exists and varies in amount between Rs. 60 to Rs. 100. A betrothal ceremony is held few months prior to marriage. A marriage altar is constructed and a Brahman priest officiates in the ceremony. A shade with plantain trees at the corners and a new earthen pitcher decorated with vermilion and sandal-wood paste filled with water are other auspicious items that decorate the pendal. *Homa* is performed by burning ghee and the palms of the couple are united and tied but are subsequently untied by the Brahmin priest. This appears to be the binding part of the marriage. It is on the fourth day of marriage that the bride cooks food which is offered to all ancestral spirits. Thatafter they live as husband and wife.

43. Among the tribe, marriage by service and the system of *gharajuain* is prevalent. There is no marriage by force. Persons who take to *pasa* or *ghini pala* systems of marriage (which are the local forms and names of marriage by consent and capture) do not have to marry strictly thatafter since the Brahmin priest does not come to officiate and not many of the rituals are gone through.

44. There existed a curious practice when in the caste feast held on the day of marriage, a special cake was being served. It was a cake of monstrous proportions which consumed about a maund of rice flour alongwith black-gram, cocoanut and molasses. All members of the tribe used to donate rice flour for the purpose. A pit was being dug in which the cake was baked by fire. The size of the cake was so big, at times as big as a cart wheel that it was being cut into pieces by an axe. This system has died down perhaps because of the financial exactions it entailed on members of the tribe or may be for other obscure reasons.

45. As indicated in earlier paragraphs, it is an interesting point to probe as to why each Bathudi has a Baisnab Guru called *Karna Guru*. The *Karna Guru* for Bathudis of the village Baunsanali belongs to Digposi, a village in the same police station area. He initiates them with specific mantras both before start of education and before marriage. No marriage can take place unless the Baisnab Guru administers the *Karna mantra*.

Joint family

46. The system of joint family exists. A cursory survey undertaken in the village under study showed that the sons do not separate from their parents immediately after marriage. With the growth of their families and consequent inconveniences in putting up together, they construct new houses and separate themselves from their parents. The latter usually accommodate themselves with any of the sons with whom they hold joint mess and property.

Death

47. Both burial and cremation are practised. The Bathudis of the village under study have a separate ground for this. The choice of burial or cremation appears to be determined by availability of fuel. Those dying of pox, cholera or other infectious diseases are thrown away on the burial ground or are buried at a distant place. Children are usually buried. On the death

of a pregnant woman her husband makes an incision on her womb. The foetus is taken out and buried separately.

48. The news of death is disseminated soon after its occurrence when all relatives and tribesmen assemble in the house of the deceased. The dead body is then removed and is carried either in a bier made out of six pieces of bamboo or sal wood or in a cot. The dead body is not allowed to be touched by a member other than a tribesman. The eldest son of the deceased either shoulders the bier or accompanies the procession. None, however, are allowed to lead the bier. All have to follow.

49. At the burial ground one of the pall-bearers is made to sit near the dead body touching the bier all the while. Meanwhile, arrangements are made either for cremation or for burial. The dead body is bathed and wrapped with a new piece of cloth. Vermilion and sandal-wood paste are anointed over the forehead. The body is taken round the pyre thrice and is then placed on it. The eldest son lits the fire.

50. The same day rice is cooked with a few *neem* leaves. This, called *Pita bhat*, is taken by the family members and agnates. Food is offered to the spirit of the deceased by the eldest son for 10 days. In absence of the son the daughter-in-law does the job.

51. Death pollution is observed for 10 days. Non-vegetarian diet and use of oil is prohibited for the family members during the period. They are also prohibited from visiting any place of worship. None of the relatives are allowed to shape or pare their nails. On the 10th day, i.e., the day of purification the house is cleaned and all clothings are given to a washerman for washing. All the family members and relatives get a shave and pare their nails at a bathing ghat after which they take a purificatory bath and wear new cloths. A Brahmin priest engaged on the occasion arranges a *homa*. After *homa*, he offers ghee sanctified by mantras to all relatives. He sprinkles holy water in all the houses. This completes purification. It was ascertained in the village surveyed that the ritual relating to the call of soul of the dead is no more observed. On the other hand, the Brahmin priest officiating on such occasion calls the dead ancestors alongwith the spirit of the deceased. On the eleventh day, the relations and tribesmen are fed with some non-vegetarian dishes.

Language

52. About half the number of Bathudis in the State speak Oriya as their mother-tongue. In fact, in the village under study and the neighbouring areas Bathudis speak in Oriya with outsiders and among themselves. In Keonjhar, many Bathudis have taken to Ho and in Mayurbhanj many have taken to Bhumij as their mother-tongue.

53. About 20 per cent of the total population can speak a language other than their mother-tongue. The majority, however, are the Bhumij speakers all of whom speak Oriya as a subsidiary language. It is curious that very few of the Oriya speakers know any other subsidiary language.

Literacy and education

54. Only 8·3 per cent of their population are literate. This compares favourably with the percentage of literacy of schedule tribe against its total population of the State which is 7·3 per cent. More than 33 per cent of those who are literate or educated have gone up to primary or junior basic level and the number of persons who have passed

matriculation or higher secondary stage and above are nearly 100. The Table below gives detailed districtwise figures on literacy and education.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Census, 1961)

District	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	104,542	95,871	8,671	6,599	1,974	98
Koraput ..	5	4	1	1	.	..
Sundargarh ..	75	45	30	25	5	..
Keonjhar ..	37,465	34,870	2,595	1,963	548	84
Cuttack ..	544	533	11	11	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	59,377	53,851	5,526	4,126	1,386	14
Balasore ..	7,076	6,568	508	473	35	..

Occupation

55. The Table below on the industrial classification will show that half the population are workers out of which the majority are engaged either as cultivators or agricultural labourers. The rest who constitute about 5·2 per cent of the total population have taken to other services and household industry. The male members also choose to serve as labourers in earthwork. During lean months, some trade in rice. Women make mats out of date palm leaves during their leisure. Many also prepare flattened and fried rice and sell them in markets. In their spare time they also prepare leaf cups and plates both for domestic use and sale.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

Category		Persons	Males	Female
Total population	..	104,542	52,041	52,501
Workers	..			
I. Cultivator	..	34,332	21,945	12,387
II. Agricultural labourer	..	12,589	6,308	6,281
III. Mining, quarrying, etc.	..	379	280	99
IV. Housshold industry	..	1,035	520	515
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	..	18	13	5
VI. Construction	..	20	16	4
VII. Trade and commerce	..	124	94	30
VIII. Transport, storage and communications	..	109	109	..
IX. Other Services	..	3,776	2,414	1,362
Total workers	..	52,382	31,699	20,683
X. Non-workers	..	52,160	20,342	31,818

Caste and village organisation

56. They do not appear to have any standing functionary or council to decide social disputes. Any matter of social importance that requires immediate decision is referred to *Gan Panchuati,* a council of village elders of the tribe who decide the issue. If the importance of the issues so demand, they invite elderly members of other tribes and caste Hindus who aid in the decision-making process. All cases of divorce and remarriage of widows and divorced women require prior sanction of the council of elderly members.

Religion and festivals

57. They worship all Hindu gods and goddesses located in the area. *Athara Deula,* which literally means 18 temples located at Lembuguda is a traditional place of pilgrimage for members of the tribe. It was previously believed that each member of the tribe should visit the temple at least once during his life time and perform *puja.* Informants take it that they still hold these temples in high reverence but a visit thereto is no more considered as a must-be in one's life. It was, however, learnt that Bathudis of Sadar subdivision of Mayurbhanj district still pay visit to this place of pilgrimage. Among other gods and temples of importance for them are the *Pidha pati* (Pirh or *Pidha* is a territory of a limited revenue jurisdiction) of Bhanda Pirh and *Budhipa Thakurani* in Budhipat hills. There is no temple as such but a *Salagrama* (a slab of stone) founded there long ago is still worshipped. The god *Mahabir* in Jashipur also is worshipped. Among other village deities mention may be made of *Basuki, Budhipata, Sarapata, Khichingeswari, Badaon, Hatiani, Baunaberi, Kendua Basuki* and *Sundara Gouri.* All these deities are worshipped each in the form of a stone piece. It is the village Dehuri who attends to the worships.

58. The goddess *Basuki* has to be worshipped before sowing operation starts or before mangoes or a new fruit of the season is taken. *Budhipata* is also worshipped before sowing operation starts. Similarly, *Sarapata* is offered worships during harvest time. It is before new rice is taken that *Khichingeswari* is worshipped. *Hatiani* is worshipped in order to ward off the elephant. Thus it would appear that their religion and worship is inextricably intertwined with their agricultural operations. Many of them also consider Puri, the seat of Lord Jagannath and Bhubaneswar, the seat of Lord Lingaraj as places of pilgrimage.

59. They appear to have retained no tribal festival as such. All Hindu festivals that come in the annual cycle of the caste Hindu neighbours are also observed by them. *Raja Sankranti, Makara Sankranti,* and *Gamha Purnami* are their main festivals which are, however, observed according to Hindu customs. Goats or fowls are sacrificed and great revelry continues with drinking of *handia.*

60. Among their pastimes, cock fight in the post-harvest period is rather important. They take great delight like Santals in rearing of cocks specifically for fight and as mentioned in the note on Santals, in a fight between two cocks, the one vanquished is usually owned by the victor.

61. Acculturation has deprived them of their community tribal dance. Some years ago, unmarried boys and girls used to get together and dance *changu* to their hearts' content. The same is gradually disappearing. There is no system of any dormitory organisation either for the boys or girls. A system still prevails according to which *dhangadas* or dhangidis of one village invite their counterparts in another village. The invitees are fed sumptuously by their hosts after which songs and dances continue in great merriment. The characteristic feature of the songs in such cases is that it usually goes in the form of questions and answers.

References

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OMANATYA

Villages of study :

1. BAGASIVINI

   P. S. Nowrngapur
   Dist. Koraput

2. PURUNA BORIGUMMA

   P. S. Borigumma
   Dist. Koraput

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4. Taila Pujari, S/o. Late Lati Pujari
5. Shri Narahari Pujari, S/o. Late Gobardhan Pujari
6. Shri Sanatan Behera, S/o. Rama Behera
7. Shri Jayaram Omanatya, S/o. Dhananjay Omanatya
8. Shri Suguru Behera, S/o. Lalu Behera

OMANATYA

The tribe was studied in village Puruna Borigumma of Borigumma P. S. in the district of Koraput. Members of the tribe when asked about the name of the tribe, stated that they are Amanatya. When their attention was drawn to such other possible corrupt forms of their names as ଅମନାତ୍ୟ (Amanatya), ଅମନାଥ (Amanatha) or ଓମାନତ୍ୟ (Omanatya), one of them went far to fetch the Mahabharata of Late Sarala Das in which in the Birata parba, there is mention about Amanatya. Obviously, the name finds place in this classic not with any specific reference to this tribe but as the minister of a king who too is designated as Amatya.

2. The study of the tribe was also undertaken in village Bagsivni of Nowrangapur P.S. in the district of Koraput.

3. Bell (1945 : 79) calls Amanaitas as similar to the Bhottadas who live in the north of the Jeypore taluk and the south of Nowrangapur. Thurston (1909 :Vol. V:443) calls the tribe as the Omanaitos or Omaitos and derives the name from a tradition according to which the ancestor of the tribe was one Amatya, a minister of Sree Rama at Ajodhya. After Rama had gone to heaven, there was no one to take care of them and they took to agriculture. Members of the tribe confirmed this tradition and added that it is on the death of Ramachandra that they migrated to Birata kingdom where they took to agriculture.

4. The Patras of the villages Nowrangapur, Pappadahandi, Patraput and Dongarveja were the local heads of the tribe who are reported to have enjoyed landed properties in lieu of services rendered to the Jeypore estate in the form of collection of rents. It was reported that they are concentrated in the Police Station areas of Nowrangapur, Bhairavasingpur, Kotpad of Koraput district and in Kalahandi and Bastar regions.

5. None among the tribe could throw any light on their origin and migration. They said that they are settled in those areas for many generations. Some among them have served as *Pujaka* (worshipper) of such deities in the area as *Thakurani* and *Bhairaba* for years.

6. They are not deemed as untouchables by the neighbouring caste Hindus. There are Bhumias, Saoras and Bhottadas in the region. Members of the tribe refuted the suggestion by Bell that inter-dining with the Bhottadas were sometimes permitted. On the other hand, they asserted that they never accept water from any of the above three castes. The only caste from whom they ungrudgingly accept water are Goudas. But with the change of times, many of them have been accepting water from those castes, an act not looked down upon so seriously as before.

7. Marriage in other castes or tribes is prohibited. Such a person, in spite of the severity of the penance undertaken by him is out-caste from the society and thereafter is never accepted into the folds of the tribe. The division of the tribe into two sections called *Bada* and *Sana* is precisely on the basis of those who have been out-caste as illegitimate children of a *Bada* with Bhottada, Gouda or other women. It is true that a member of the *Sana* section can attend the rituals and festivals of members of the *Bada* section, but he has to occupy a seat at an avoidable distance. He will be fed and taken care of but from a yard's length.

8. In the village under study in Borigumma P.S., members of the tribe are divided into so many exogamous septs like *Narasingha, Bagha* (tiger), *Nageswar, Swana, Kachhapa, Markata,* etc. Septs common in other villages are *Sua, Dudha* and *Kumda.*

Geographical distribution and population

9. It can be said that the tribe is solely concentrated in the district of Koraput as of the total population of 14,365, as many as 14,145 inhabit this district. The remaining few lie scattered in the districts of Baudh-Khondmals, Mayurbhanj, Kalahandi and Ganjam. Table 1 below gives the district-wise figures of population. Their sex ratio is 1,036 females to a thousand males. They are essentially a rural community as only 49 have been returned from the urban areas. The following police stations in the district of Koraput have more than 10 per cent of the population : Nowrangapur (3,022), Kotpad (2,519), Borigumma (2,415), Tentulikhunti (2,135) and Bhairavasingpur (1,896).

Table 1

POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

State/District	Persons	Males	Females
Orissa ..	14,365	7,055	7,310
Kalahandi ..	4	1	3
Koraput ..	14,145	6,952	7,193
Baudh-Khondmals ..	103	40	63
Ganjam ..	1	1	..
Mayurbhanj ..	112	61	51

Houses and living condition

10. They live in villages of multi-ethnic composition. In village Puruna Borigumma, there are Bhumia, Gouda, Ghasi and Dombo. In some villages, there are separate hamlets with exclusive concentration of Ománatyas.

11. The houses are usually two-roomed, one is used as a store and the other as bed room with provision of verandahs, a part of which is set apart for the kitchen. The walls are made of mud or mud plastered over wattles. The roof is thatched with straw. Wooden planks are provided for the ceiling and the top portion of the ceiling is utilised as a store room. Cow sheds are constructed at a distance. Most of the houses are without windows. A single door way with shutters made of wooden planks provide the entrance and the exit. The walls are painted white, red and black with coloured soils.

12. *Desari,* the priest is consulted regarding choice of an auspicious day for starting construction of the house. On this day, they post a peg and decorate it with turmeric paste and mango leaves. An auspicious day is chosen for occupation of the house after the same is completed. Libation of ghee is offered and a modest feast is arranged.

13. Their environmental sanitation appeared satisfactory. Cowdung with water is sprinkled daily on the courtyard and the surroundings are swept clean. Cattle sheds are cleaned daily. The floor of the house is also cleaned regularly with cowdung water. The cowdung and the rubbish collected are thrown into the pit in the backyard.

Dress and ornaments

14. Most of them are very poorly dressed. The common wear for a male member is a dhoti of $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards to $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards in length. Banians and shirts are also used. Saris both mill-made and hand-loom are worn by the female members. Silken and coloured cotton saris are usually preserved for festive and ceremonial occasions. Under-garments are seldom used. Children wear small napkins or nickers.

15. Women use *pully, nagul* and *noli* on their ears, *guna* and *dandi* on their nose, *kala mali, suna mali* and *kanthi mali* on their neck, *khadu* and *gudi* on the wrist, *panri* on their ankles, *jutia* on their toes and rings on their fingers.

16. Women seldom plait or braid their hairs. The hair knob is fixed at the right side

of the back. They tattoo their limbs particularly on the arms and the fore-arms. Women reported to be of the Bugaralia caste visit the areas and tattoo their limbs on payment. There is no social law for tattooing. They do it out of fancy.

Food

17. They are essentially non-vegetarians. Fish and flesh of all varieties are taken. They, however, do not take beef, pork and carrion. Members of the tribe asserted that they have not heard even of their great grandfathers taking these prohibited food.

18. Mahua flowers plucked and preserved are consumed during the rainy days. Liquor is taken and tobacco is smoked by the males. Two meals a day is most common.

Birth

19. During pre-natal period the expectant mother is prohibited from taking banana, coconut and jack-fruit. She also does not take twin fruits. She is prohibited from going out of the house after evening as it is believed that she may be attacked by any *Debata, Duma* or *Dahani.*

20. No lying-in-room is constructed and a corner of the bed room serves the purpose. Birth takes place under the care of an experienced elderly woman of the tribe. The umbilical cord is cut by this woman assisting in child birth with the blade of an arrow. The same is buried alongwith the placenta by her in a pit and after burying the same she arranges the *Antudi jala* (post-natal fire). Both the child and the mother are given a bath with tepid water. Her food for some days consists of fried rice, salt, boiled *kulthi* and *kandul* without chilly, *badi* and some bitter fish.

21. The first purification ceremony takes place on the 9th day. The mother takes her bath alongwith the new born in a small ditch outside the house specially made for the purpose. The name-giving ceremony also takes place on the 9th day. An astrologer, particularly the *Desari* is consulted as to the suitability of the name. Though normalcy in the household is restored after 9 days and all are allowed to touch the woman, she is not allowed to enter into the kitchen for about a month. She is also served food only once daily all these days. It is believed that unless her diet is light, the child will contact diseases.

22. *Desari* and the exorcist called *Gunia* are called to assist in all forms of difficult labour. They usually administer some herbs to the mother for easy delivery.

Puberty

23. The girl, on attainment of puberty, is kept segregated for 9 days. She is kept confined to a room and in no case, is allowed to stir out. No male member is allowed to see her face. Her mother and other female members serve her food during the period. On the 9th night, two girls accompany her to the village pond. They carry new earthenwares, fowl and eggs. She takes her bath and offers the fowl and eggs for sacrifice after wearing a new sari. The *Desari* makes libation of ghee in a *homa.*

24. In subsequent menstruations, a woman is kept segregated for some days depending on the stoppage of the flow. It is on expiry of this period that she takes her bath and is then allowed to touch the kitchenwares.

Marriage

25. It has been stated earlier that marriage within the same *gotra* or marriage of the *Bada* division with the *Sana* is prohibited. Child marriage occurs and this was confessed by many of the informants. A widow can remarry.

26. Though marriage by capture and force prevails among many tribes of the area, it is absent among Omanatyas. It was said that incidence of marriage by

consent is large as marriage by negotiation is expensive. Though the custom of payment of bride price does not exist, sizeable quantities and varieties of food articles are presented to the parents of the girl by the bridegroom's father during the process of negotiation.

27. In negotiated marriages, the parents of the boy usually initiate the proposal during a visit to the house of the girl of their choice. Soon after, this is reciprocated. Articles taken as present by the parents of the boy are flattened rice, fried paddy, rice and a sweet called *khaja*. A date for marriage is fixed by the Desari after both the parties come to a formal agreement.

28. Eight days prior to the date of marriage, a mediator named *mahalakaria* is deputed by the bridegroom's father to the house of the bride with the following articles : 2 *putties* and 10 *mans* of rice, 1 goat, 1 *putty* and 15 *mans* of paddy, 1 *man* of dal, etc. He announces the date of marriage after delivery of the articles.

29. The boy proceeds to the house of the bride in a procession on the day preceding the marriage. His father does not accompany him. His friends, relatives and other villagers join the procession. On reaching the village, a feast is arranged with the articles previously presented to the bride. The same is enjoyed by villagers of both the villages. The *mahalakaria* carries with him rice, fried and flattened paddy, oil, turmeric, pulses, salt, chillies, khadi for the bride's mother, etc., on the day preceding the marriage. It is his job to invite members of all the castes in the bride's village to the house of the groom the next morning. He convenes for the purpose a meeting of all castes except Doms and Ghasis. On the day of marriage, the boy and the girl are taken to the booth constructed of some posts of *sargi* tree and a central post of *mahula* tree with some turmeric and mango leaves attached to it. The villagers of the bridegroom's village bless *(Bandana)* the couple. The little fingers of both are linked together by the *Desari*. Women throw rice coloured with turmeric and pour water brought from the village stream and coloured with turmeric on the couple. Both then wear new clothes. After the feast, the night is spent in dance and songs.

30. The next day the girl is given a send-off at the outskirts of the village. About 100 to 120 persons accompany the girl and the boy. Songs and dances continue on the way. The parents of the boy feed all in the procession with fried paddy, molasses, etc., near their village.

31. A marriage pendal is constructed in the house of the groom where the *Desari* officiates and binds them both in marriage. The little fingers of both are interlocked and both go round the *Vedi* at least thrice. The marriage feasts continue for three consecutive days. For example, if marriage takes place on a Sunday, *Haladi kadua khela* or the game of earth and turmeric takes place on Tuesday and the feast on the occasion called *Kadua handi Bhoji* is arranged on this day. The mother and the father's sister of the groom fetch water from a canal which is carried to the accompaniment of some music and is poured on the newly wed by the *Desari* and his parents. The *Desari* during *lagna* ties the cloth ends of both the bride and the groom and into the ends are tied one arecanut, seven grains of rice and one copper coin. With their ends so tied, both go round the central post of the booth at least thrice.

32. Marriage by service or by elopement occurs though rarely. In the village under study, pseudo-marriage with *mahula* post as is reported to be the practice elsewhere (Adibasi: 1963-64: 140) never occurs.

Death

33. Burning is the rule though burial is occasionally taken recourse to due to non-availability of fuel. Persons dying of such

infectious diseases like smallpox and small children are buried on death. The bodies of preghant women are not taken to the cremation ground but are buried at a certain distahce separately. It is believed that this very separate nature of disposal will forbid her from joining the generation of their *Dumas* (Duma Kula). She instead will turn out to be a *Sildani* or *Bhuta*.

34. News regarding death is disseminated to all friends and relatives who assemble in the house of the deceased. Each put a piece of cloth over the dead body which is then carried in a bier covered with a new piece of cloth. A pyre is arranged over which the body is placed with its head pointing north and face upwards. The new cloths offered to the deceased are either placed over the pyre or are given to Doms and Ghasis accompanying the funeral procession playing musical instruments. Either the son or the grandson of the deceased sets fire to the pyre. Ghee and molasses are thrown into the pyre along with some salt. After disposal of the body, the pall bearers take their bath in a tank and return.

35. Mourning is observed for 10 days. On the third day, *pita* or the first stage of purification is observed by taking bitter rice. Final purification ceremony comes over on the 10th day when the house is cleaned, old cooking earthen pots are exchanged with new ones, male members get themselves shaved and all the family members take purificatory bath. The elderly persons carry some cooked rice and food articles to the cremation ground and offer the same to the memory of the deceased. Well-to-do persons wear new cloths and new sacred threads. A feast is arranged.

Language, literacy and education

36. The regional language Oriya is the mother-tongue of the tribe except for a few who have Telugu. Bilingualism is rare- Some (226) who speak Oriya have returned Telugu as the subsidiary language spoken by them. Some persons also speak Kui as a subsidiary language.

37. The percentage of literacy is very low as this is 3·2 compared to the 7·36 per cent being the percentage of literacy of Scheduled Tribe against its total population in the State. The members of the tribe, studied in the village Puruna Borigumma, could not recount the name of a single matriculate among them. Very few are reported to be in the U. P. School. The same is substantiated by the figures of literacy as per 1961 Census presented in the Table below which shows that only 7 persons have read up to primary or junior basic standard.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Census, 1961)

State/ District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	14,365	13,902	463	456	7	..
Kalahandi ..	4	4	.	..	..	..
Koraput ..	14,145	13,692	453	448	5	..
Baudh-Khondmals	103	93	10	8	2	..
Ganjam ..	1	1	..	..	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	112	112	..	..	..	..

Occupation

38. Cultivation is their traditional occupation. Landless persons usually get employment as agricultural labourers.

The Table below gives the industrial classification of population.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

Category	Persons	Males	Females
Total population	14,365	7,055	7,310
Workers:			
I. Cultivator	5,417	3,277	2,140
II. Agricultural labourer		1,248	1,135
III. Mining and quarrying, etc.	90	50	40
IV. Household industry	55	28	27
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	11	3	8
VI. Construction	..	..	..
VII. Trade and commerce	32	11	21
VIII. Transport, storage and communications	2	2	..
IX. Other services	1,162	543	619
Total workers	9,152	5,162	3,990
Non-workers	5,213	1,893	3,320

Village organisation

39. The area of concentration of Omanatyas was previously divided into *Desas* each in charge of one head man named *Nayak*. Each *Desa* comprises some villages. The four *Nayaks* belong to Jeypore, Bhairavasingpur, Nowrangapur and Nilpata. The considered decision of the Nayak on such social issues as divorce and widow marriage were deemed as sacrosanct and binding on all concerned. Another official called *Paik* works as messenger under the *Nayak*.

40. In recent years, members of the tribe are found taking active part in the Grama Panchayats and other local bodies established by the laws of the land. New functionaries elected under these statutes have begun wielding considerable authority and influence.

41. Among other tribal functionaries, mention may be made of the *Desari, Pujari* (the priest) and *Sira* (the exorcist).

Religion and festivals

42. The members of the tribe worship *Bhairaba* in the form of a stone image in a temple under the hillock near village Borigumma. In this village, they also worship *Thakurani, Gan Debata* and *Ista Debata*. The shrine of *Thakurani* is worshipped near the *Hat*. She is worshipped with sacrifices at the time of outbreak of such epidemics like smallpox and cholera. The home deity called *Duma Debata* is worshipped during all important festivals with offering of food articles and burning of incense.

43. The Omanatyas observe many of the Hindu festivals and worship some Hindu gods and goddesses. They observe *Chaitn Parba* after *Purnami* of *Chaitra*. A date is fixed by the *Desari*. The *Ista Debata* is worshipped and mango is taken for the first time. *Amabasya Parba* or *Chitou Amabasya* is observed in the month of *Sravana* when varieties of cakes are prepared and taken. A *Kendu* twig is posted to the cultivated land. In *Bhadra Parba*, they take new rice. They observe *Dasahara, Ratha* and *Dewali* and in the last named festival they feed the bullocks sumptuously. On the *Pusa Purnami* day all of them dance and visit each house for presents.

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BHUMIA

The Bhumias as mentioned in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956, are a tribe of cultivators in Orissa. In the Castes and Tribes of Southern India (Thurston : 1909 : Vol. 1 : 238) they are mentioned as an Oriya caste of hill cultivators, found in the Jeypore Zemindari. According to a tradition, they were the first to cultivate the land on the hills. In the Central Provinces they are said to be known as Baigas, concerning whom Captain Ward writes that "the decision of the Baiga in a boundary dispute is almost always accepted as final, and from this right as children of the soil and arbiters of the land belonging to each village, they are said to have derived their title of Bhumia, the Sanskrit Bhumi meaning the earth."

2. Russell and Hiralal (1916 : Vol. II : 305) have treated the Bhuiyas and the Bhumias as one tribe and are of opinion that Bhumia is only a variant of Bhuiya having the meaning of lord of the soil or belonging to the soil. According to them Bhumia is the synonym of the Baigas of the Central Provinces who are a branch of the Bhuiyas. It is said that in the Central Provinces Bhumia is the name of the office of the priest of a village and the local deities held by the Baigas. The name of the office is often attached to the members of the tribe, who consider it as somewhat more respectable than their tribal name and accordingly Russell is of view that the Bhumias of Mandla and Bilaspur in the Central Provinces are the Baigas. Stephen Fuchs (1960 : 192) thinks that Bhumia is an endogamous sub-section of the Baiga tribe divided into a number of over-lapping circles of required groups.

3. In Orissa, the Bhuiyas are concentrated mainly in the northern districts of the State whereas the Bhumias are preponderant in the southern district of Koraput. The study taken up by this organisation relates to village Pangam of Mathili P.-S. in Koraput district. The Bhumias of the village claim to bear no affinity with the Bhuiyas and they are obilivious of the existence of Baigas. They claim to have settled down in Pangam and in the neighbouring areas for three to four generations and do not know as to wherefrom they came. The Matyas of the areas in order to upgrade their status are reported to call themselves Bhumias but the latter claim no relation whatsoever with them.

4. They accept water from the Holvas but not from the Bhottadas. It is difficult to assess their relationship with other neighbouring castes because of their living in seclusion. In fact, to queries on inter-caste relationship, they react in almost a vacant mood pleading ignorance all the while to most of the questions. The tribe has two endogamous divisions: 'Bada' and 'Sana'. Sana Bhumias were said to be concentrated in the villages of Talapadar, Chamundarasi, Saraiguda, Salimi, Kamarputta, and Durumagudu, whereas the Bhumias of the village under study belonged to 'Bada' variety. Members of 'Sana' division will eat in the house of 'Bada' but the reverse is not possible.

5. They are divided into a number of exogamous totemistic septs called Bansas. It was stated by the informants that in the past, uni-Bansa villages or hamlets was the accepted pattern. But this is slowly yielding place to multi-Bansa villages or hamlets which appear to have come to stay. In the village under study for instance, there are members of Bagha (tiger), Cheli (goat) and Naga (cobra) bansas. Das and Roy (Adivasi : 1957-58: Vol. I : 54) studied the tribe in village Balia and came across the clan 'Surya' besides Nag and Bagh.

Geographical distribution and population

6. Nowrangapur subdivision in the district of Koraput has, according to the 1961 Census the maximum number of Bhumias with

49,568 persons out of the State population of 50,294. It would appear from Table 1 below which gives the districtwise statistics of their population as obtained in the 1961 Census that the district of Koraput has 98·58 per cent of the population and the rest lie scattered in the districts of Sambalpur, Baudh-Khondmals, Ganjam and Sundargarh. The Police Stations having more than 10 per cent of the population are Malkangiri (9,565), Mathili (15,052) and Boipariguda (9,678) in the district of Koraput. The sex ratio is 1,026 females to 1,000 males. They are essentially a rural community as their total urban population is as small as 23.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

State/District	Persons	Males	Females
Orissa ..	50,294	24,840	25,454
Koraput ..	49,584	24,477	25,107
Sambalpur ..	560	273	287
Baudh-Khondmals ..	6	6	..
Ganjam ..	121	61	60
Sundargarh ..	23	23	..

7. A casual study of their trend of population and general distribution reveals that in 1931 their population was 31,689 of which 31,473 lived in Koraput and the rest in Ganjam. In 1961, their population stood enhanced to 50,294 thus recording a rise of 58·71 per cent during these three decades and what is significant, the population had spread to Sambalpur, Baudh-Khondmals and Sundargarh.

Houses and living condition

8. No fixed pattern appears to guide their settlements. The houses usually lie scattered or are ranged in two rows flanking the principal village road. These are generally two-roomed, rectangular with gabled roof. A house may measure 18′×12′ ,the height at the centre being about 10′ to 11′. A verandah, about 4′ wide is provided at the front. The walls are constructed either with mud or by posting bamboo or wooden saplings or wattle plastered with mud on both sides. The structure of the roof is made with bamboo or wooden poles and is thatched with wild grass. The house is divided into two rooms by a partition wall which may be about 4′ in height. The inner room is utilised as store and the outer room having a doorway to the front varandah is utilised both as kitchen and bed-room. There are no windows. Sometimes ceilings are provided by spreading bamboo poles in between logs of wood. The top of the ceiling is used as an additional store room. Ordinarily food is taken in the verandah. Pens for cattle are provided separately on one side of the house.

9. The rituals gone through while selecting a site are as follows. On an auspicious day, at evening time 3 grains of rice are placed each at three ends of the proposed site. These are covered with *dana* or leaf-cups by the Desari, their traditional tribal priest. Next morning, the *danas* are removed and if the grains are found disturbed, the site is considered inauspicious for house construction. The Desari also fixes the central pole on a day selected by him for laying the foundation. After construction of the house, a homa (libation) is performed by the priest before the same is occupied.

10. Though their standard of living is poor, their way of living cannot be said as insanitary. The houses are kept neat by the women who frequently dab the floor and the walls with cowdung mixed in water. The outer walls are painted red, black, white and yellow with coloured ochres. Women take great interest in painting the walls by mixing clay in water.

Dress and ornaments

11. The average Bhumia puts on a small napkin about 2½ yards in length and 1 yard in width. A coloured sari, about 4 yards long

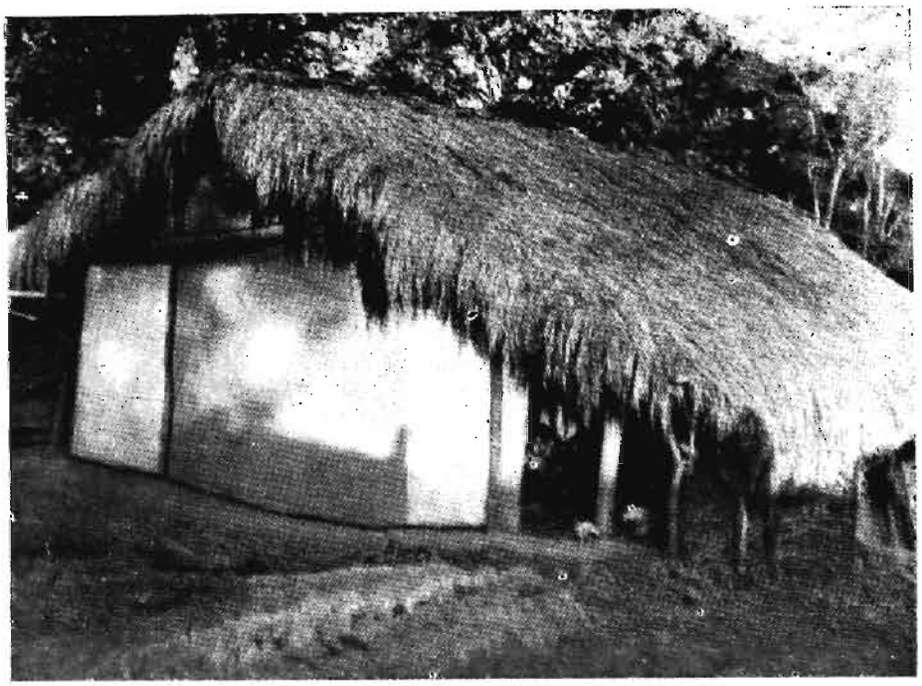
BHUMIA

Village of study :

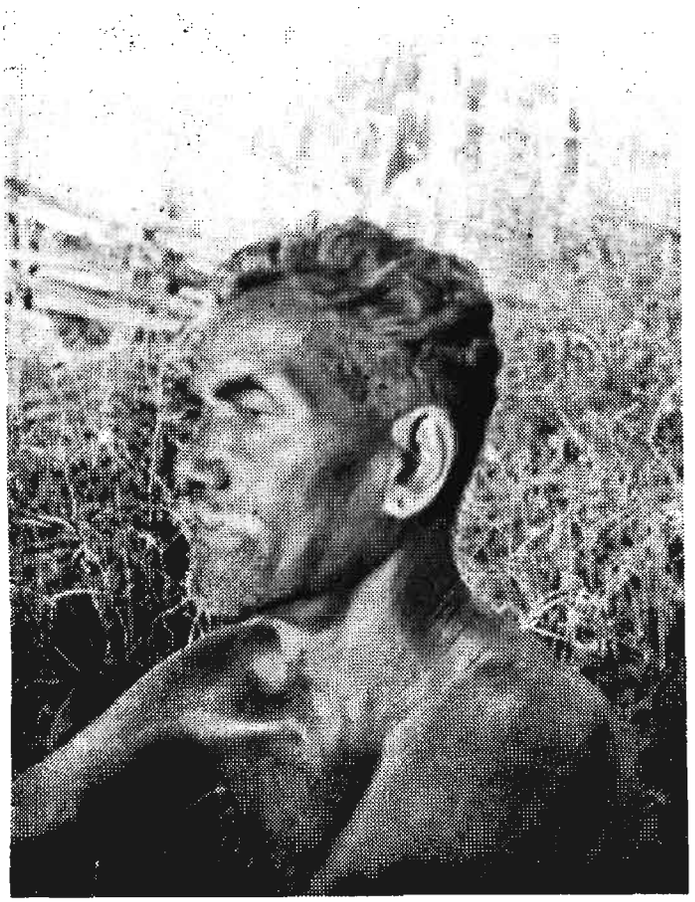
PANGAM
P. S. Mathili
Dist. Koraput

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

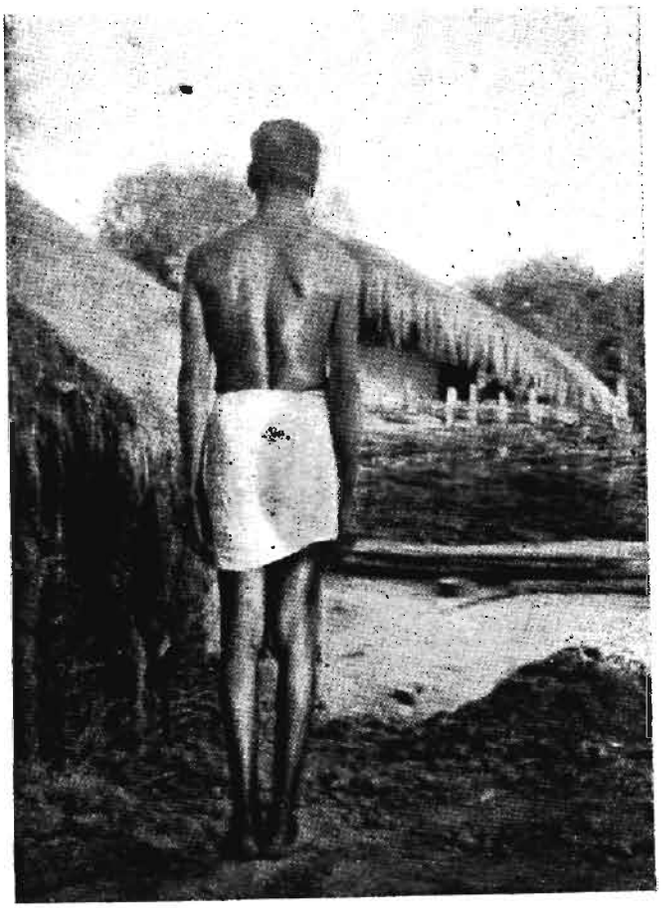
1. Shri Raghunath Naik, S/o. Mukundo Naik
2. Shri Ramsundar Naik, S/o. Raghu Naik
3. Shri Jayasingh Naik, S/o. Guru Naik
4. Smt. Manguli, W/o. Hari Naik
5. Smt. Gurubari, W/o. Goura Chandra Naik
6. Smt. Neela and Somari



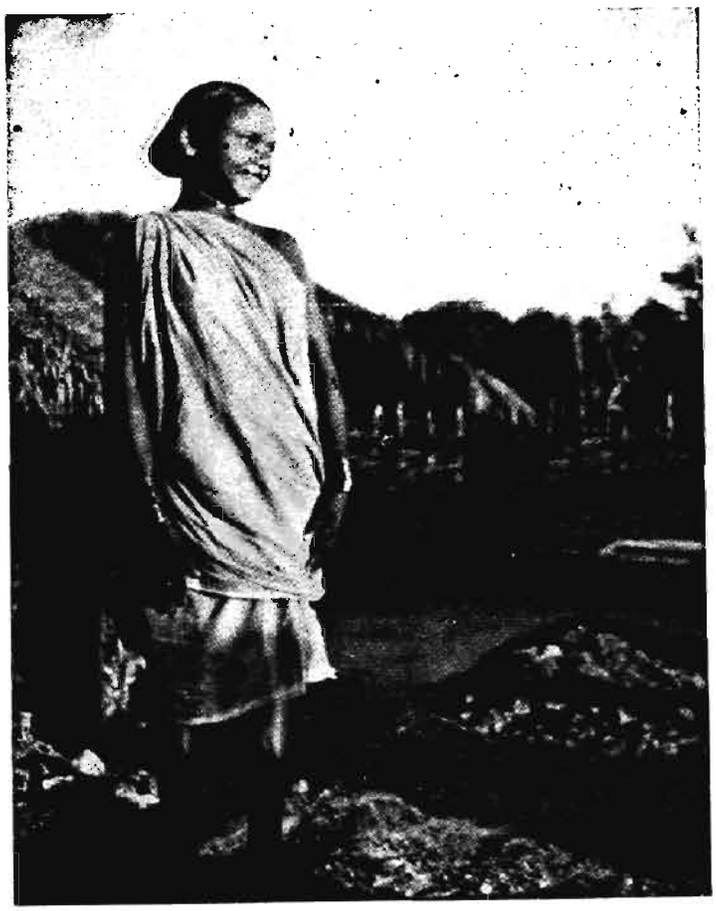
A typical Bhumia house



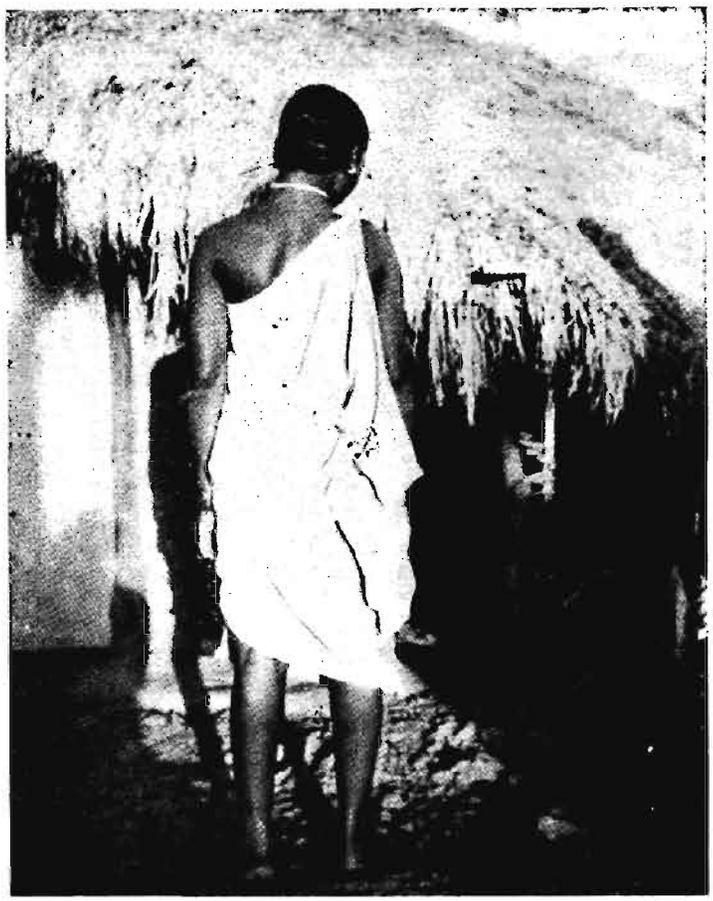
Bhumia male—in profile



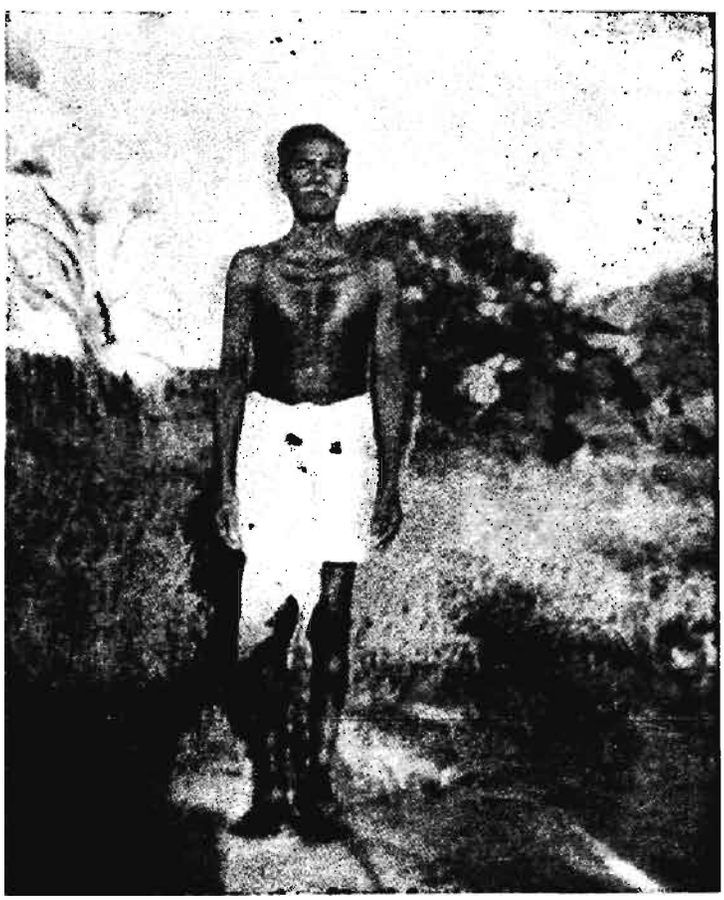
Bhumia male—back view



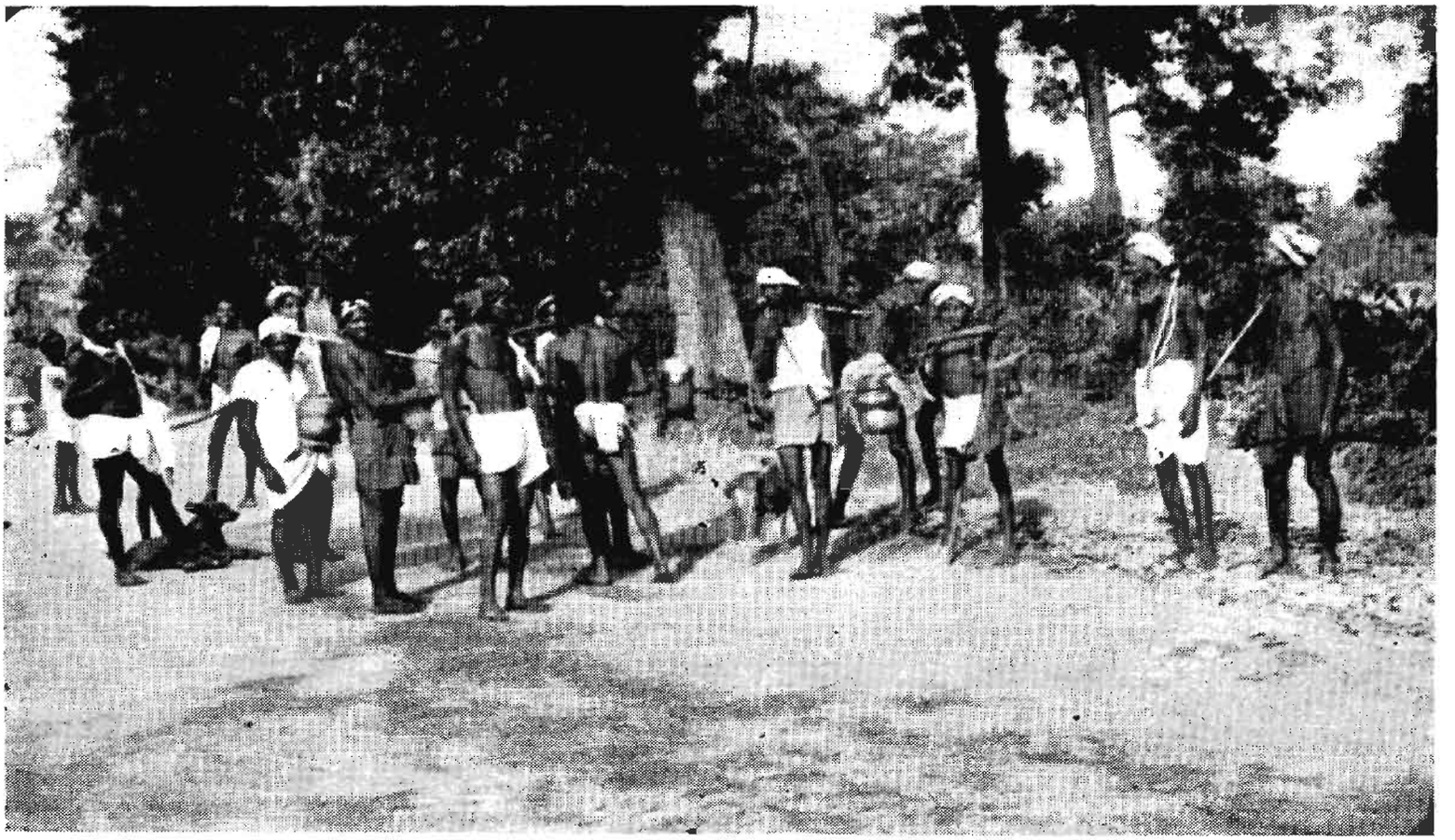
Bhumia woman—*front view*



Back view of a Bhumia woman



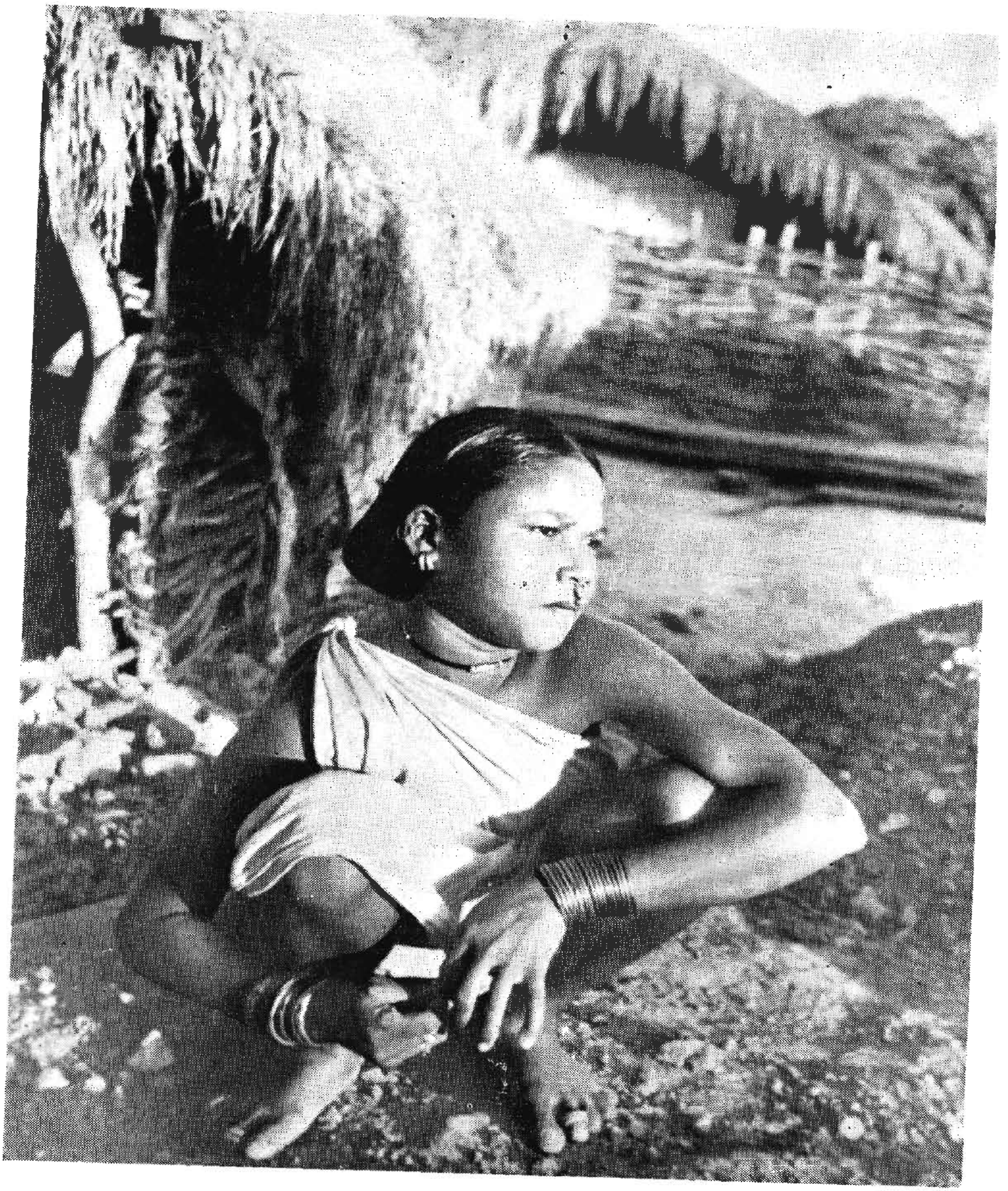
A Bhumia old man—*Front view*



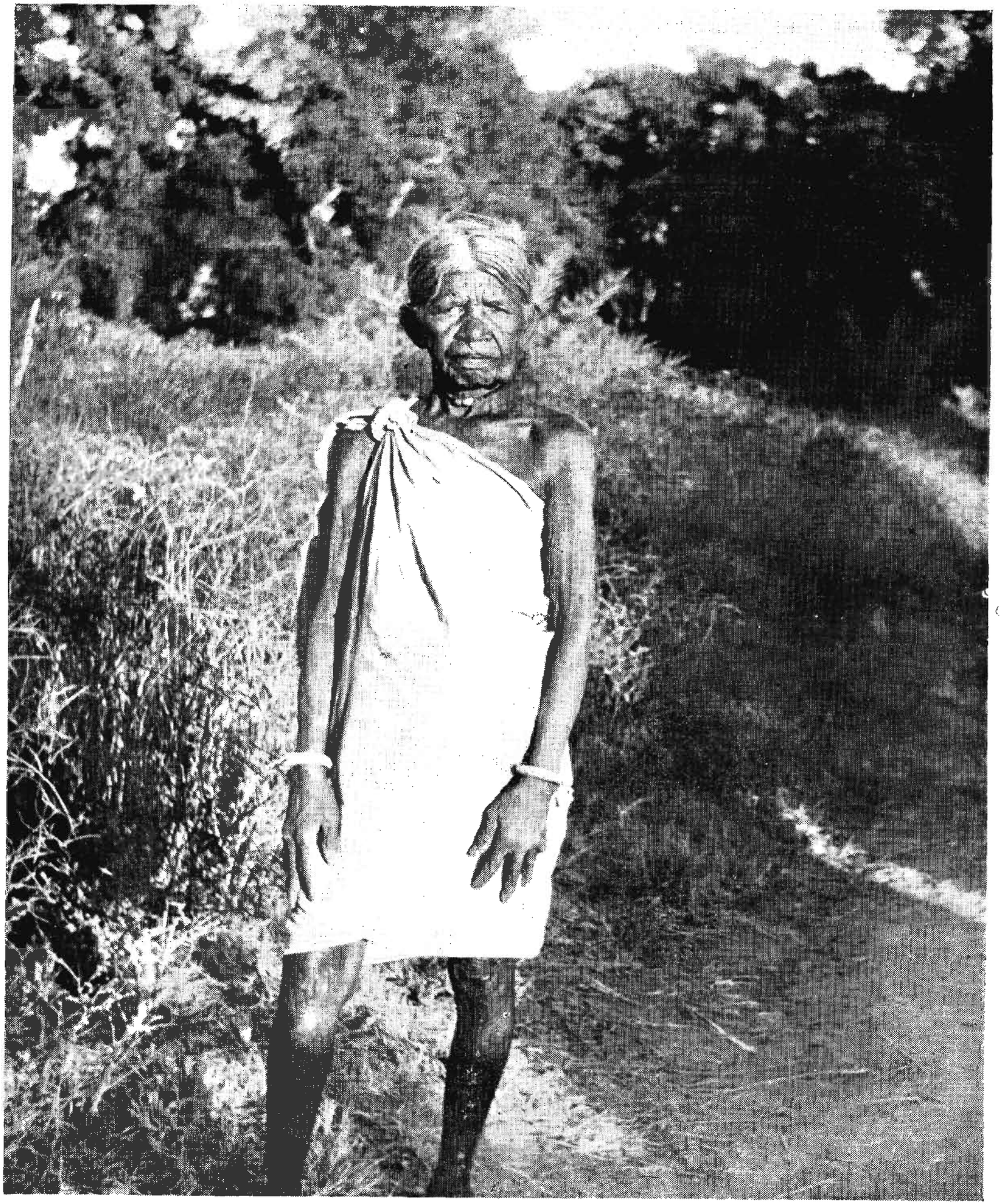
A group of Bhumias on their way to Shikar (hunting) during 'Chait Parav' (Chait Festival)



A group of Bhumia women with their 'Bheti' (presents) during 'Chait Parav' days



A Bhumia young woman—front view



An old woman



Two Bhumia girls



'Rau Devata' of Bhumias

is the common dress of the women. The sari is worn with two knots, one at the left waist and the other at the right shoulder. Small dhotis, shirts and jackets are worn by men when they go out of the village. Fine saris of about 5 yards in length are generally put on by women on ceremonial and festive occasions. Small napkins, dhotis and saris are provided to the children. Warm clothings are used in winter only by well-to-do people and others use coarse cotton wrappers. The clothes are either handloom or mill-made.

12. Among ornaments used by Bhumia women, mention may be made of *mudi* for the nose, *khanja* for the ears and necklaces —all made of gold. They, however, rarely use brass bangles now. Use of brass *panheris* on the ankles is also becoming rare. Glass bangles are increasingly becoming popular. Black beads stung together with some golden beads are worn as necklaces called 'Pustis'. These are usually worn by married women. No tattooing is done. The females braid their hair with oil in the ordinary manner by tying them into a knot to the right at the back. They decorate their hair with flowers.

Food

13. Rice is their staple food. Ragi, other available millets and pulses are also taken alongwith vegetables, edible forest roots and fruits. They are non-vegetarians. They take the flesh of goats, sheep, fowls and other game animals and birds. Beef and pork are held as taboos which they do not take at all. Fish of all verieties are taken. *Tola* oil extracted out of *mohua* seeds is used as the cooking medium. Chillies, onions, turmeric and other spices are also used.

14. Generally they take two principal meals a day, at noon and at night. The food consists of hot boiled rice with some dishes of fish or flesh. *Mandia* (ragi) gruel is taken at morning and evening. They take liquor and also drink *salapa* juice. Tea is getting popular as a beverage. Both men and women smoke tobacco which they grow themselves.

Birth

15. Child birth is not deemed as so important an occasion as to entail enforcement of ritual restrictions on the mother. Very few restrictions are imposed on her during the pre-natal period as to her food, movements or otherwise of a woman during the pre-natal period. She takes her usual food and attends to her normal work. Birth takes place in the house of her husband. A portion of the verandah is fenced and is utilised as a lying-in-room. An elderly woman of the tribe with experience attends to most of the child-births in a village. She cuts the umbilical cord of the child and buries it along with the placenta in one corner of the house. None are allowed a chance to get a glimpse of the process. It is believed that if this is buried outside the house, others may get a chance to harm the child by evil incantations.

16. The mother is given boiled rice and sesamum seeds on the day of delivery. She is also given boiled *kulthi* (horse-gram) water for relief of her pains. Later, in the post-natal period, she takes all kinds of food except rice soaked in water, gruel, edible green leaves, and pumpkin. Pollution is also observed in the family during the period. On the seventh day, the house is cleaned with cowdung mixed in water and the purification ceremony takes place on the 8th day. Both the mother and the child take purificatory bath after being anointed with turmeric paste and oil. Both the parents fast for the day and invite their relations to a feast. The woman who assisted in delivery is also invited.

17. The child is named a couple of days after the vestige of the umbilical cord wilts off. The *Desari* names the child. At times, the mother is given to suggest the name. If she had dreamt of any deceased person offering her fruits during pregnancy, it is believed that the particular person took rebirth and the child is named after the deceased person.

Puberty

18. The girl, on attaining puberty, is kept segregated for 3 to 4 days after which a small ceremony is performed. She takes her bath and puts on new clothes, new bangles and necklaces. The old ones are thrown into the water

Marriage

19. Adult marriage is common but child marriage is also met with. According to 1961 Census, 56 males and 227 females are married in the age-group of 0—14. Marriage is restricted within the tribe but is prohibited within the same *gotra*. Das and Roy report that in rare cases there can be inter-tribal marriages between the Bhumias and the Bhottadas but never between the Bhumias and any of the other tribes. Marriage between cross-cousins is preferred. A match arranged with the maternal uncle's daughter is deemed as ideal. The custom of divorce exists. Widows and divorced women can remarry. Polygyny prevails.

20. Marriages are generally arranged by the parents of the boy and the girl. *Jhinka* marriage or marriage by capture is rare but *Udulia* marriages, i.e., those arranged by love and consent prevail. In marriages to be settled by negotiation, the parents of the boy visit the house of the girl with parched rice and liquor and open negotiation with the father or guardian of the girl. The latter's acceptance is taken as implied if they accept the parched rice and liquor. This initial function is known as *Dwara Mandini*. A second visit by parents of the groom settles the proposal. The groom's parents take a big jar of liquor and a small jar of *salapa* (Caryota urens) juice which are distributed among all those attending the feast. This second visit is called *Kanya Magani* which means asking for the bride or *Katha chhidini* meaning final word giving. A putty (about 60 kgs.) of rice and a goat or a ram may also be sent to the house of the bride by the father of the bridegroom. The date for the marriage is fixed at the time of *Katha chhidini*. On the date of marriage, two pieces of new *saris*—one for the bride and the other for her mother is sent to the house of the bride alongwith some liquor through some relatives of the bridegroom. After being entertained in a feast, it is they who bring the bride to the house of the bridegroom.

21. The bride is received by the bridegroom in the outskirts of the village. A mixture of milk, parched rice, honey and plantains is prepared in a cup of pipal leaf and an egg is placed at the centre of the cup. Some lighted cotton wicks soaked in oil are kept around the cup and the *Desari* waves the light in front of the bride and bridegroom. The bride and her party are then taken to a place arranged for them. A pendal is constructed in front of the house of the bridegroom. Both the bride and the groom sit on it. Arecanuts are tied to the ends of the clothes worn by the couple and a curtain is hung between them. The *Desari* officiates in the marriage while girls of the tribe sing songs.

22. On the second day of the marriage, the couple take their bath holding the branch of a *Mohua* tree and a goat is sacrificed in front of them. A tribal feast is held and the bride's party is entertained. Thereafter the couple live as husband and wife.

23. On the fifth day after marriage, the couple visit the house of the bride taking some money which may be Rs. 60/- or more and a pair of bullocks or a cow as presents to the bride's father if these are requried by him. They stay there for about four days and return with presents from the bride's father.

24. The custom of marriage by consent takes the following course. When a boy and a girl agree to marry each other, the boy has to take away the girl to his house forcibly and perform the marriage. No rituals are gone through in such marriages but for a tribal feast. A widow is allowed to remarry but not the brother of her husband. A woman deserting her husband and marrying another is required to pay compensation to her first husband.

Death

25. The dead are generally burnt but those dying of pox, etc. ,are buried. They have their separate crematorium in villages inhabited by them. Soon after death, the dead body is washed after being anointed with turmeric paste. It is wrapped in a new piece of cloth and is then carried in a bier by his relations and tribesmen.

26. The news of death is conveyed to all friends and relatives after whose arrival only, the dead body is removed. The chief mourner, it appears, is the maternal nephew who ignites the fire and offers *duma bhat*. In absence of the nephew, the son-in-law of the deceased attends to these rites. The body is placed on the pyre with its head pointing east in case of men and west in case of women. After disposal of the dead body, the pall-bearers return home after purificatory bath. The first stage of mourning and pollution continues for three days. The relatives during the period, do not take fish or meat and do not shave. In the feast called *Pita Khia* on the third day named *Pita buda,* only vegetarian dishes are served. On this day, the relations of the deceased alongwith some tirbesmen visit the cremation ground and collect the ashes of the pyre which are either thrown into a river or kept in a heap underneath a bush. The place where the dead body was burnt is dabbed with cowdung. A figure representing a human being is drawn over the spot with rice flour. A new piece of cloth is placed over the figure alongwith some cooked rice, dal and chicken curry, all offered to the spirit of the deceased. A small earthen pot with an aperture at the bottom is hung from a stand (*rukha*) made out of *Kendu* (Diospyros malanoxylon) twigs. A thin sheaf of *Kusa* grass is thrust into the aperture of the pot filled with water, thus allowing it to trickle drop by drop over the figure. The ritual known as *Kusa Pani* is done with the object of enabling the spirit of the deceased to take rebirth.

27. The final purification ceremony known as *Dasa* is observed either on the tenth day or long afterwards even a year or two after. The resources to arrange it determines the date of observance. On this occasion a feast is held to which all relations, friends and tribesmen are invited. Some goats are sacrificed. Liquor and meat constitute the chief items in the menu. Neither the *Desari* nor any other functionary presides over the rituals. It is the tribal elders who look after the details.

Language

28. Oriya is the mother-tongue for majority of the Bhumias, which they speak amongst themselves and with the outsiders. According to 1961 Census, only 164 persons have Telugu and 4 have Savara as their mother-tongue.

29. Out of their total population of 50,294, as few as 289 persons know a language subsidiary to the mother-tongue, and of these, the majority numbering 240 know Telugu.

Literacy and education

30. Only 3·4 per cent of the population are literate which appears to be very much on the low side compared to the all-State percentage of literacy of scheduled tribes against their total population which is 7·3. Of 1, 689 number of literates, only 49 persons have gone up to primary or junior basic standard and none of them up to matriculation or higher secondary stage.

Occupation and economic life

31. Cultivation and agricultural labour constitute the main occupation of the members of the tribe. This is borne out from the Table below on the industrial classification of workers.

Table 2

INDUSTRIAL CLASSFICATION OF WORKERS

(Census, 1961)

Category		Persons	Males	Females
Total Population	—	50,294	24,840	25,454
Workers				
I. Cultivator	..	22,096	13,287	8,809
II. Agricultural labourer	..	4,139	2,019	2,120
III. Mining, quarrying, etc.	..	96	77	19
V. Household industry	..	178	111	67
V. Maniufacturing other than household Industry	..	18	1	17
VI. Construction	..	10	10	..
VII. Trade and commerce	..	59	12	47
VIII. Transport, storage and communications	..	5	5	..
IX. Other services	..	2,535	1,320	1,215
Total workers	—	29,136	16,842	12,294
Non-workers	..	21,158	7,998	13,160

32. The Bhumias usually take to settled cultivation. Grams, oil seeds, etc., are grown on high lands. Many of them own lands, plough, bullocks and other agricultural implements. Besides agriculture they take to construction and repair of houses and make *Kulla* (winnowing fans), *Duti* (fish container), *Bisarshalla* (fishing net), *Kudarjal* (a net for entrapping rabits), *Talari* (rain-proof coat) etc.

Village Organisation

33. The head of a Bhumia village is known as *Nayak*. The post is not hereditary as he was reported to be elected by an assembly of all villagers. In the village under study, there have been as many as three changes within the span of a generation. It is only when seven Nayaks of as many or more number of villages join that they can order acceptance of an outcaste person. The unmarried youths or *Dhangadas* of a village elect their own Nayak who under orders of the Nayak proper manages festivals and other community occasions. The assembly of seven Nayaks at the regional level decide all matters of social dispute. *Desari* is the village priest whose post is hereditary. He officiates in rituals connected with death and marriage. Under his direction, the village Pujari attends to worshipping of gods and goddesses. In many Bhumia villages, there is an official called *Challan* who works as the orderly to the Nayak. A few Doms settled in many Bhumia villages serve as village watchmen.

Religion

34. During the 1961 Census, all Bhumias have been returned as Hindus. An account of their traditional gods and goddesses is given below. *Budhi Thakurani* is their village deity who is worshipped on all important occasions. At the centre of the village a platform is raised with a thatched roof. The goddess *Budhi Thakurani* is installed over this platform. One of the pillars of the platform represents the goddess and this is worshipped with offerings of cocoanuts, plantains, etc. Once in a year during *Chaitra* (March-April), a goat is sacrificed before this goddess. Besides *Budhi Thakurani,* the other village deities are *Nisani, Mauli* and *Rau Devata* who are worshipped once a year with offerings of fruits, fowls and goats. The other deities of importance are known as

Lenjan, Kanchari, Paradesini and *Basiki Devata* who are looked upon as the children of *Budhi Thakurani.* These gods and goddesses take the form of either a piece of stone or a heap of stones piled together. They believe that the mould of their destiny is designed by these gods and goddesses and they attribute all their woes and welfare to them. During any calamity, they employ the Desari for propitiation of the goddess through sacrifice of goats and fowls. They believe in ghosts and spirits. The spirits of deceased pregnant women are generally considered as evil ones.

Festivals and recreations

35. *Balijatra* is by far their most important festival. It is observed once in every three years. A house is put up at the centre of the village with split bamboos. Every family collects some sand in bamboo baskets. Paddy seeds and seeds of other cereals are put in these baskets which are kept and watered inside the house for 9 days. If the nature of germination is found unsatisfactory, the gods and goddesses have to be propitiated.

36. *Chaitra Parab observed* in Chaitra (March-April) was reported to be mainly a festival of hunting. All gods and goddesses are worshipped including *Budhi Thakurani. Osha* festival held in the month of September-October marks the eating of new rice. This is also known as *Nuakhia.* During *Pusa Parab* observed in December-January, cattle are worshipped and beans are taken for the first time. Fowls and goats are sacrificed to the village goddess and new beans are cooked and taken. They believe that unless *Pusa Parab* is observed properly, ravages of wild animals would grow and their safety would be at stake.

37. Bhumia women are fond of dance and music. *Dhemsa* dance, so popular with other neighbouring tribes is indulged in by them. Young men and women sing and dance to the tune of drums played by the Doms.

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BINJHAL

The Binjhals also called Binjhwar by Russell (1916: Vol. II: 329) are said to be a subdivision of the Baigas in the districts of Raipur and Bilaspur of Madhya Pradesh. According to him, Binjhals are the off-shoot of the primitive Baigas but are comparatively a more civilised tribe. O'Malley (1932:88) also refers to them as Binjhal or Binjhwar. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956 mentions the tribe as Binjhal.

2. According to the informants, the word 'Binjhal' seems to be derived etymologically from *Bin* meaning *without* and *jhal* meaning *sweat*. The epithet seems to denote that they are capable of great strain and hard labour without any care for sweating.

3. This organisation studied the tribe in Padampur and Paikmal Police Station areas of Sambalpur district, where informants belonging to the tribe appeared to be oblivious of the fact that they are derived from the old stock of Baigas and that they are also called as Binjhwar. But those knowledgeable among them seemed to guess that their name might have got something to do with Vindhya hills. Traditionally, they continue to pay devotion to Vindhyabasini, the tutelary deity of the Vindhya hills.

4. The story of their origin as recorded by O'Malley (1932:88) and Russell (1916:Vol.II:330) is fascinating. According to these sources, the tribe say that their original ancestors were *Barah bhai betkar* or the twelve Brother Archers, all believed to be the sons of the goddess Vindhyabasini. The King of Puri had allotted them estates as token of his appreciation of their bravery. Another legend concerns the origin of the zamindari of Borasambar. A discussion with the informants revealed that they were generally aware about these legends. They call Malda as *Biramati,* i.e., soil of the heroes and that their ancestors, the *Barah bhai betkar* were formerly residing near Malda. They were roaming about in the woods hunting and once, while following a wild boar and aiming at it, their arrow struck the wall of the Puri temple. It was a Herculean task to pull it out and though all failed, the twelve brothers accomplished the marvellous task at ease which fascinated the Raja of Puri so much that he vested them with 14 *Kros* (a linean measure) of his State. But for the eldest brother who accepted the estate of Borasambar and reigned there as its zamindar, all the rest went out in their normal pursuit of hunting. It is claimed that a few miles from Padampur, there still exists the Bhojpur fort which was constructed by members of this dynasty.

The Binjhals refer to themselves as a proud race of warriors who still worship bows and arrows and swords during Dasahara.

5. The other legend regarding protection having been afforded by a Binjhal to the mother of one of the Rajas of Patna is also recounted by them with great pride and valour. According to them, during Asta Malla administration in Patna, Ramei Deo was born and brought up in the house of a Binjhal at Borasambar as his mother was afforded protection by the Binjhals. Later on he defeated Asta Mallas and usurped the throne of Patna. It is since then that the household of the Bariha zamindar of Borasambar is recognised as the uncle's house of the Raja of Patna. In reward of the protection afforded to his mother, the Raja of Patna gave the Binjhal the Borasambar estate requiring him and his descendants the tribute of a silk cloth on his accession of the zamindari. This service alongwith affixing of *ticca* to the Maharaja of Patna on his accession has been rendered ever since by the zamindars of Borasambar as a mark of fidelity. The informants stated that the popular epithet Bariha by which the Binjhal takes pride in calling himself is derived from the heroic pursuit of *Barha,* a wild boar, as narrated in the legend.

6. It may be of interest to note that the word *Binjhia* according to Russell is only a diminutive form of Binjhwar and according to Risley, both are synonymous. In Bihar also, the Binjhias, curiously enough call themselves as Vindhyaniwasi. There the Binjhia and Birjia Asur communities were being confused together into one community for a long time, and the former tribe were called Binjhuar and Somjharia. In Orissa, on the other hand, these names appear to be unknown to them as neither do they call themselves so nor are they called as such by others.

7. The tribe is divided into a number of exogamous divisions called *Bansas*. Amri, Dudka, Kamati and Mahaling are Bansas inhabiting the village under study. Names of a few other Bansas inhabiting neighbouring villages are : Bagha, Marhi Bagha, Khussal, Endja, Bentkar, etc. Lathra, Endja, Mullick, Negi, Lohar, Samni, Kharsel and Majhi are their common surnames.

8. Elderly persons of the tribe claimed that they do not accept water from any caste or tribe and least so from Gonds or the Saoras. Brahmins do not officiate in their marriage but of late the barbers and the washermen serve them.

Geographical distribution and population

9. The tribe, according to 1961 Census, has a total population of 76,692 and is concentrated mainly in the western region of the State comprising the districts of Sambalpur and Bolangir. There are about 4,000 members of the tribe in the district of Kalahandi. There is a scattering of the population in the remaining districts of the State excepting Balasore and Baudh-Khondmals. Police Station areas containing 10 per cent or more of their State population are Padampur, Jagadalpur and Paikmal in the district of Sambalpur and Patnagarh in the district of Bolangir. The sex ratio is 1,015 to 1,000 males. It is essentially a rural community as only 189 of them are found in the urban areas. The Table below gives the districtwise population of the tribe.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

State/District	Persons	Males	Females
Orissa ..	76,692	38,052	38,640
Kalahandi ..	4,368	2,202	2,166
Koraput ..	5	2	3
Sambalpur ..	46,134	23,269	22,865
Bolangir ..	25,191	12,073	13,118
Ganjam ..	1	..	1
Sundargarh ..	612	313	299
Dhenkanal ..	154	70	84
Puri ..	3	1	2
Keonjhar ..	3	1	2
Cuttack ..	24	11	13
Mayurbhanj ..	197	110	87

Houses and living condition

10. A knowledgeable person of the Saora tribe is consulted before selection of a site for a new settlement. The Saora concerned refers to his records and pronounces the verdict on the suitability of the site. The same Saora is also consulted about the date and time (*lagna*) for entry into a newly constructed house. Cotton wicks dipped in ghee and rice are offered as worship on the occasion. *Ganat*, the astrologer provides direction in the matter of selection of any auspicious occasion.

11. The houses usually lie in the midst of cultivated fields all around. In between two rows of houses runs the village road. At times 7 to 8 families choose to have a common courtyard. Most of the houses are usually one or two-roomed, small in size and have verandahs in the front and at the back. The end of the verandah duly enclosed serves as the kitchen.

12. The houses are made of mud walls and wooden beams. The structure of the roof is made up of bamboo and wooden poles. At times ceilings are provided that serves as a storage space or a lumber room. Windows are not provided.

13. Their settlements and the surroundings look ill-ventilated and insanitary. All rubbish and cowdung are dumped at the backyard. Fowls and other domesticated animals are provided accommodation either inside the room or on the verandah. The common courtyard belonging to a few families is usually cleaned by none and becomes the dumping ground of all rubbish.

Dress and ornaments

14. A coarse dhoti measuring 6 to 7 cubits in length and a coarse cotton handloom sari about 9 cubits in length are the common dress of the Binjhals. Male persons carry a napkin over their shoulders. Women prefer to wear coloured saris with no undergarments. Children up to 6 to 7 go naked. School-going children are provided with shorts and frocks.

15. Golden ornaments are rarely used by Binjhal women except on the nose and ears. These are called, *guna* and *suna* respectively. The bangles called, *bandaria, chudi* and *kataria* are made of silver. *Khagla* made of silver is their favourite ornament for the neck though they also use necklaces of glass, silver and lac beads. On their arms, they use *baha suta* and *baha tada* and on their legs they use *painri* made of silver. Of the ornaments made of brass, mention may be made of *mathi* for the hand and *painri* for the leg. Besides, they also wear *gunchi* on the waist, *anta suta* and glass bangles.

Food

16. The following account regarding the food of the Binjhals is taken from O'Malley's Sambalpur District Gazetteers (1932:89). "They have few scruples about food, eating pork, fowls, fish, tortoise, snakes, rats and leopards, but they do not eat monkeys, beef, crocodiles, lizards and jackals. The staple food of the poor consists of roots and the flowers of the *mahua* trees, and they eat rice only on special occasions and on festivals. Cultivators, however, eat rice in the form of *pakhal*. They are very fond of smoking, but will never use the *hukka*, but only the *kahali*, i.e., a cheroot made of country tobacco enclosed in leaves, one of which may generally be seen in the ear or waist of every male Binjhal."

17. They do not take beef or pork. Young she-goats called *pethi* are taken but old ones are avoided. They also relish he-goats. The reasons for treating old she-goats as tabooed food are obscure, though by some, it is attributed to a traditional hatred. Oil made of *mahua* seeds is used as the medium of cooking.

18. Rice is their staple food. Other available cereals and pulses are also taken. Being non-vegetarians, they relish fowls, pigeons, ducks and all types of game birds.

19. Three principal meals a day is the common practice. Cooked rice soaked in water is taken both in the morning and at noon and hot boiled rice is taken in the evening. Mahua liquor called *daru* is taken liberally. Toddy is also relished. Service of liquor on ceremonial occasions is deemed essential. Tobacco is smoked and chewed. Raw tobacco wrapped in leaves is carried by the male members over their ears or waist for smoking.

Birth

20. No prohibition exists in either food or movement for the parturient woman or her husband. Birth takes place in the house of the husband. A separate lying-in-room is set apart. It is the old experienced woman of the tribe who attends on the

BINJHAL

Villages of study :

1. KHAIRA
   P. S. Paikmal
   Dist. Sambalpur
2. BHAGATPUR
   P. S. Padampur
   Dist. Sambalpur

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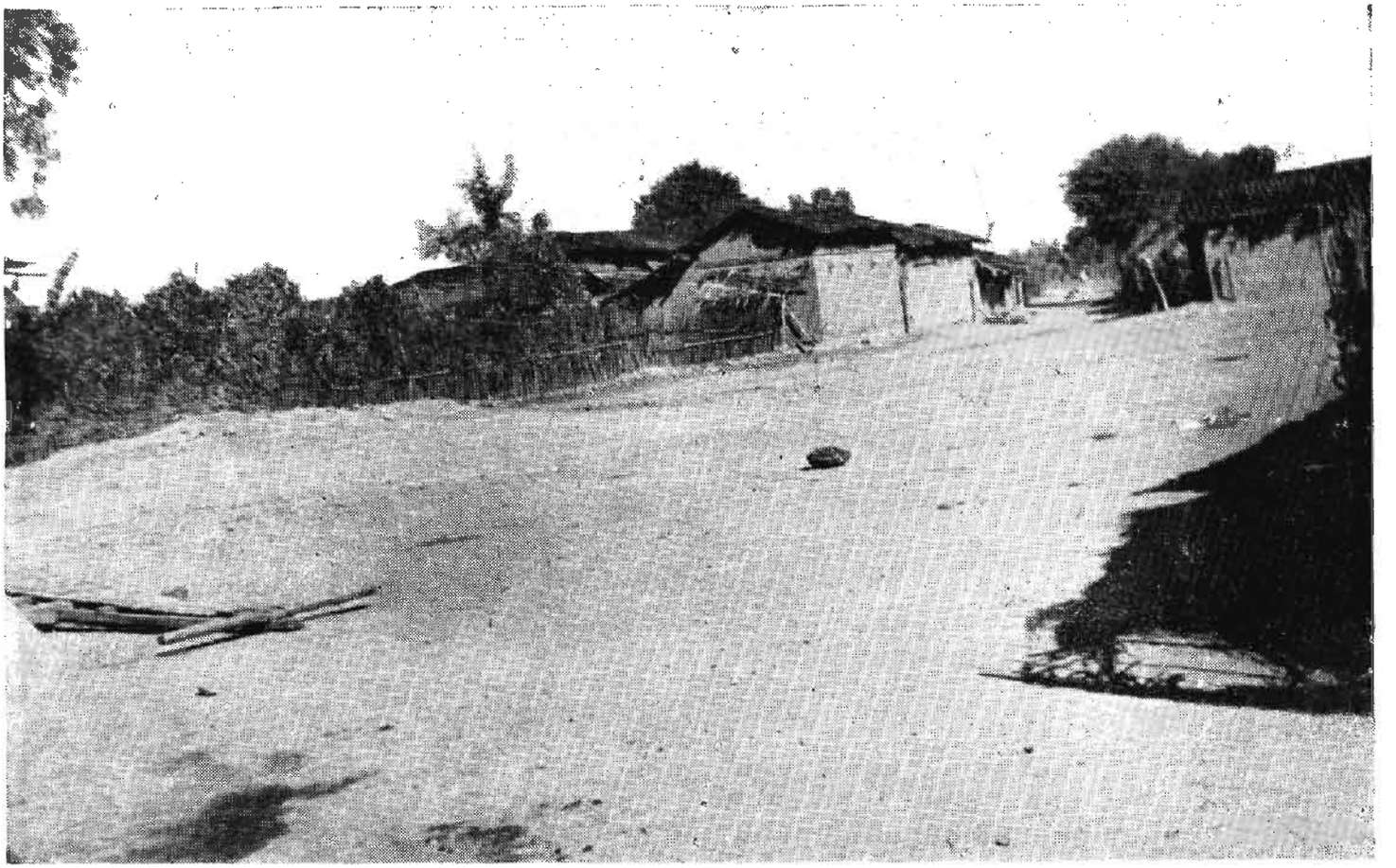
3. Shri Aditya Prasad Patnaik, W.E.O., Padampur Block
4. Shri K. C. Padhi, W. E. O., Paikmal I Block
5. Shri Uansa Bariha, S/o. Tapan Bariha
6. Smt. Malati, W/o. Uansa Bariha
7. Smt. Tarabati Barihani, W/o. Jaladhar Bariha
8. Shri Lalmohan Bariha, S/o. Budu Bariha
9. Smt. Phula Barihani, W/o. Balaram Bariha
10. Smt. Padmabati Barihani, W/o. Chalu Bariha
11. Shri Butu Bariha, S/o. Jaladhar Bariha
12. Shri Jaideb Dudka, S/o. Ram Dudka
13. Shri Raghunath Marhi, S/o. Budka Marhi
14. Shri Ramsing Mari, S/o. Dukri Marhi



A near view of Khaira, a Binjhal village



A Binjhal mother and her child

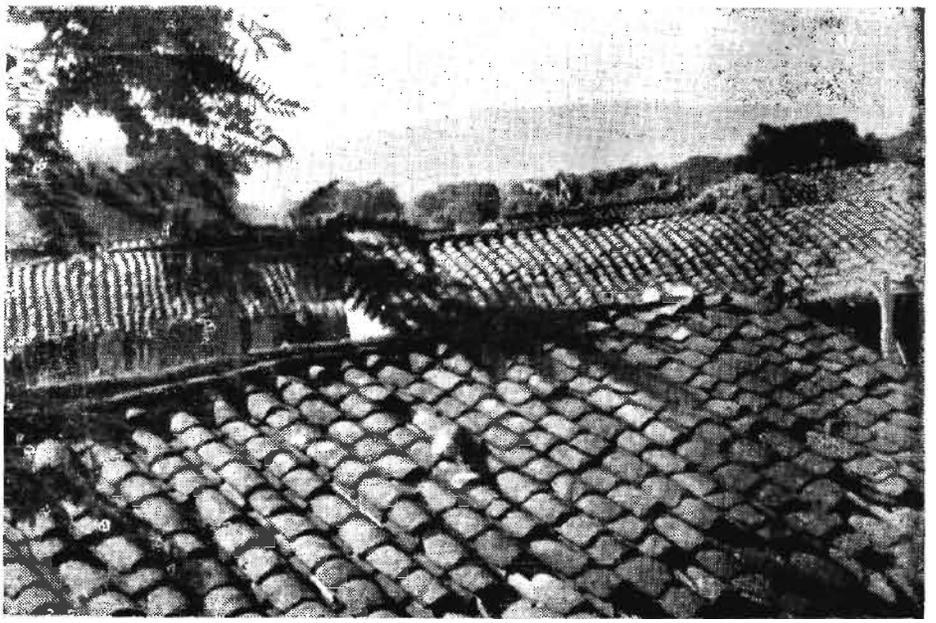


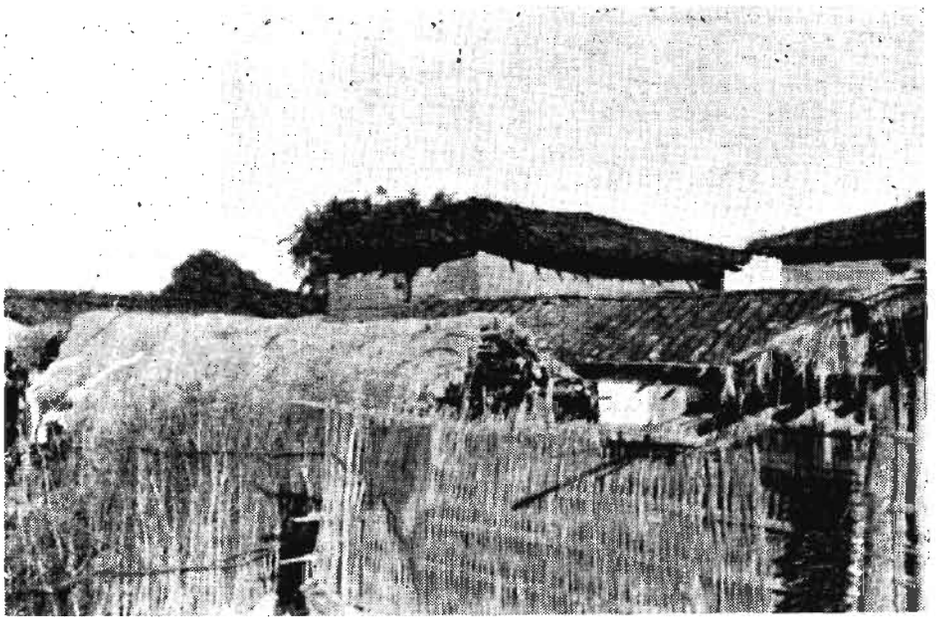
The village school



A street scene

A view of tiled roof tops

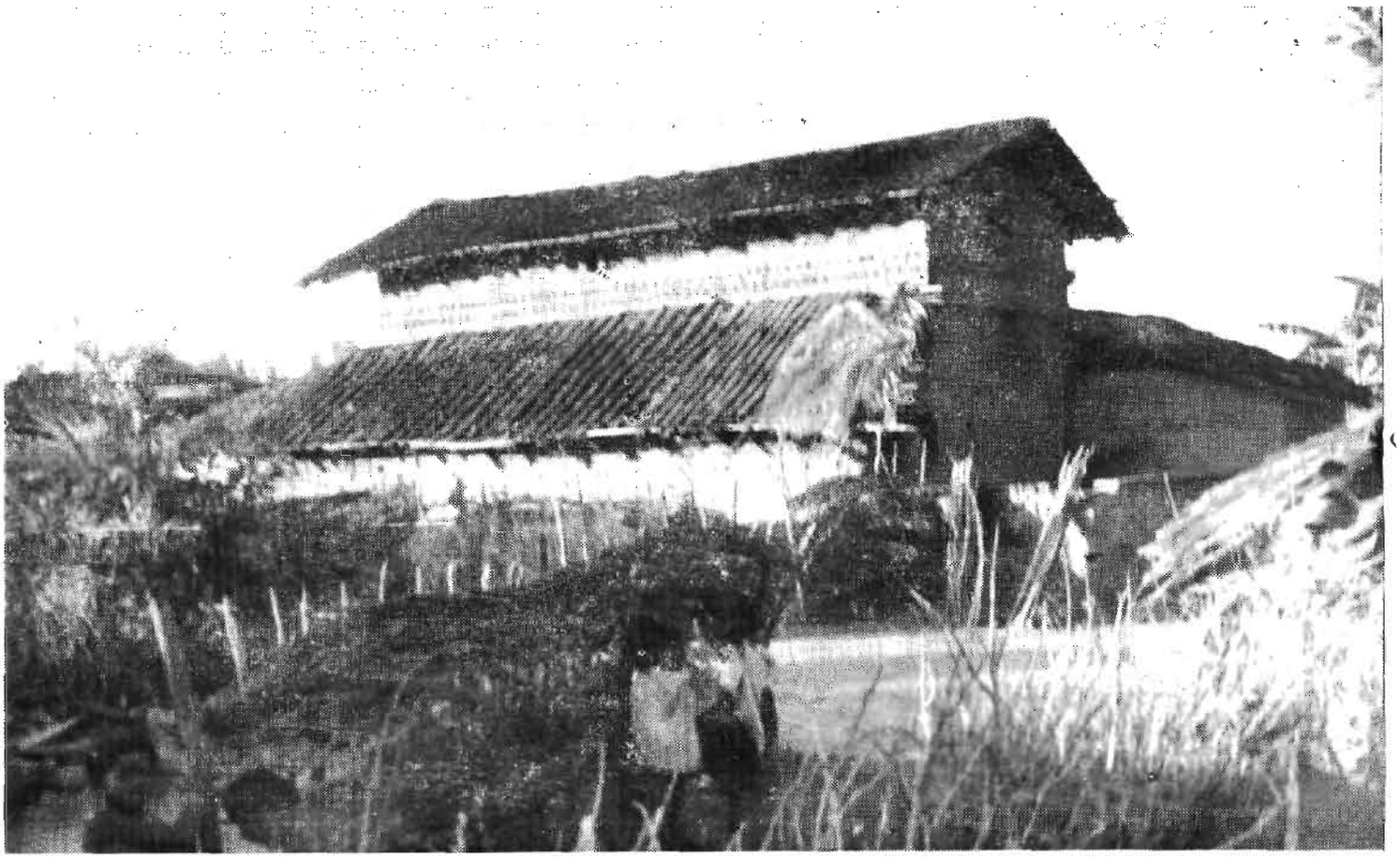




A typical village scene



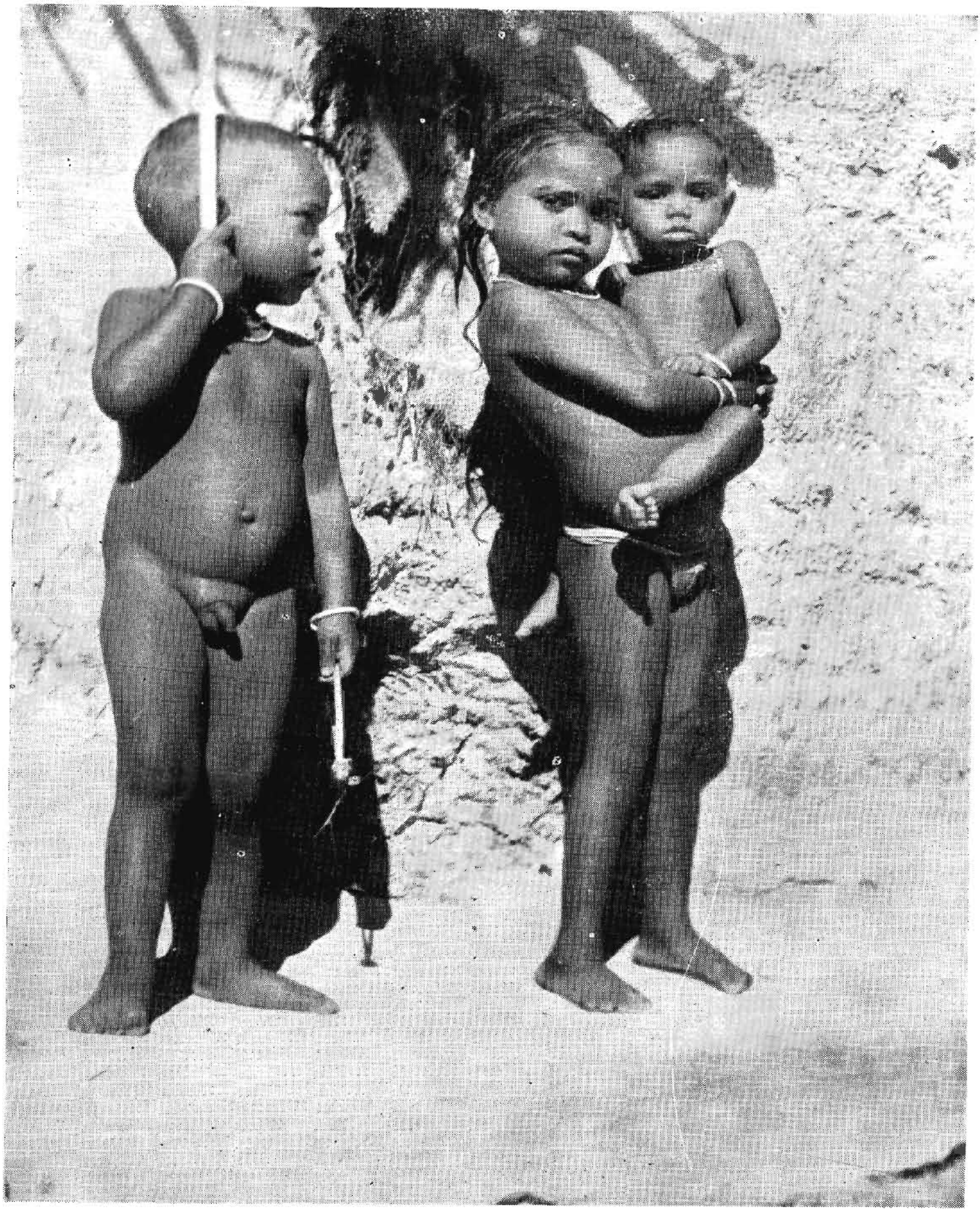
A typical street scene



A two-storeyed house structure



The village water source



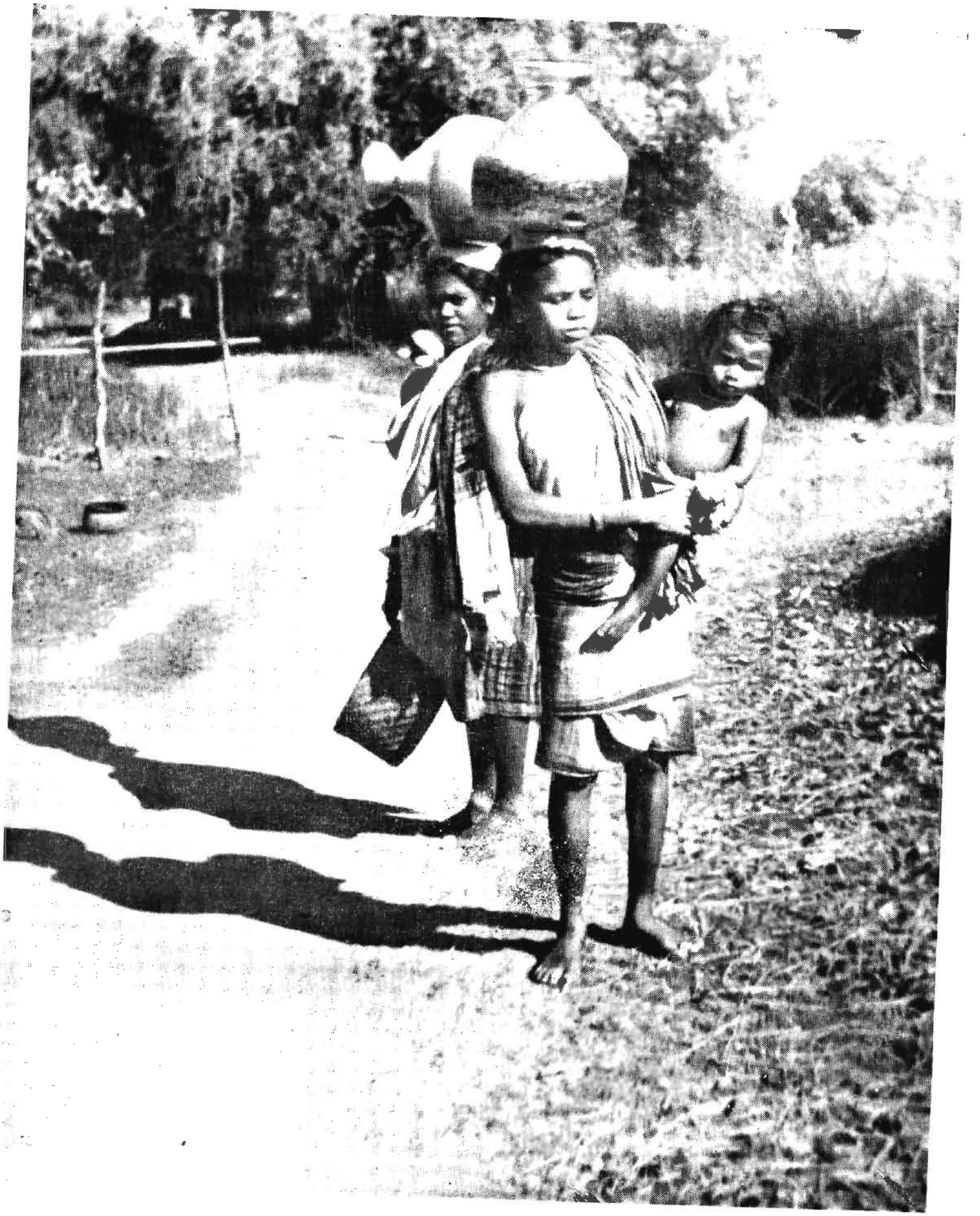
Binjhal children



A cheerful father with his child



The village elders



Two women—to and from the village water source



A Binjhal youth on his home bound buffalo cart



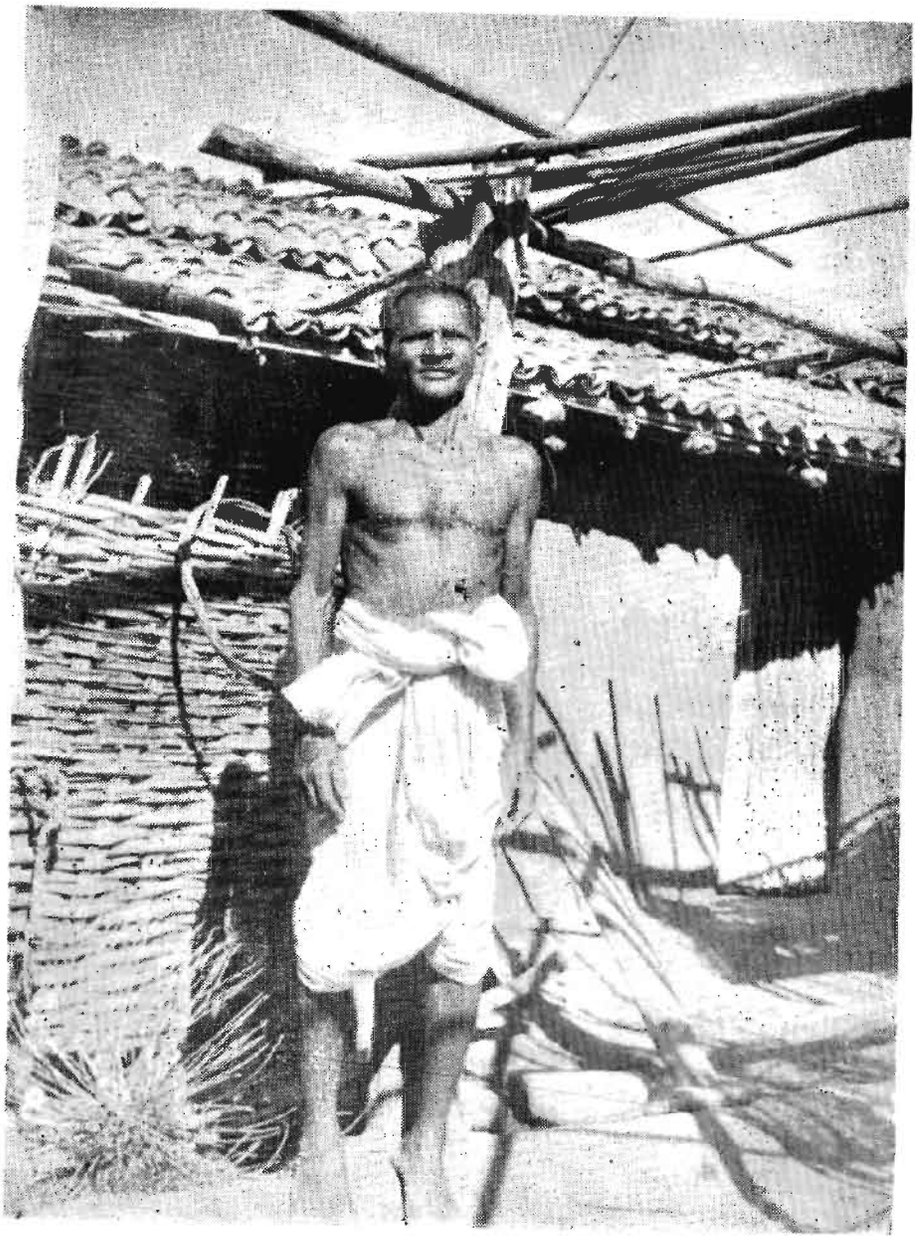
A Binjhal belle



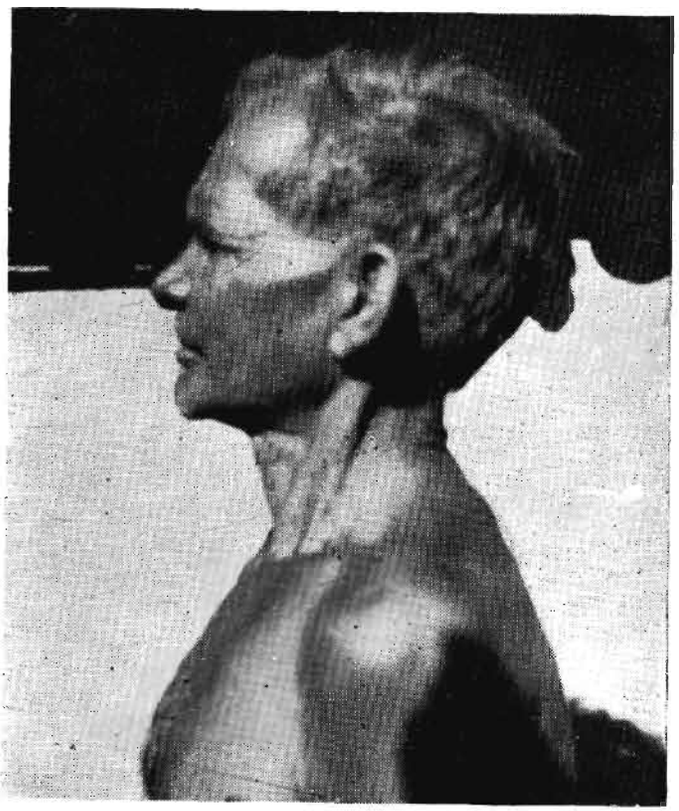
Two Binjhals returning home after the day's earthwork



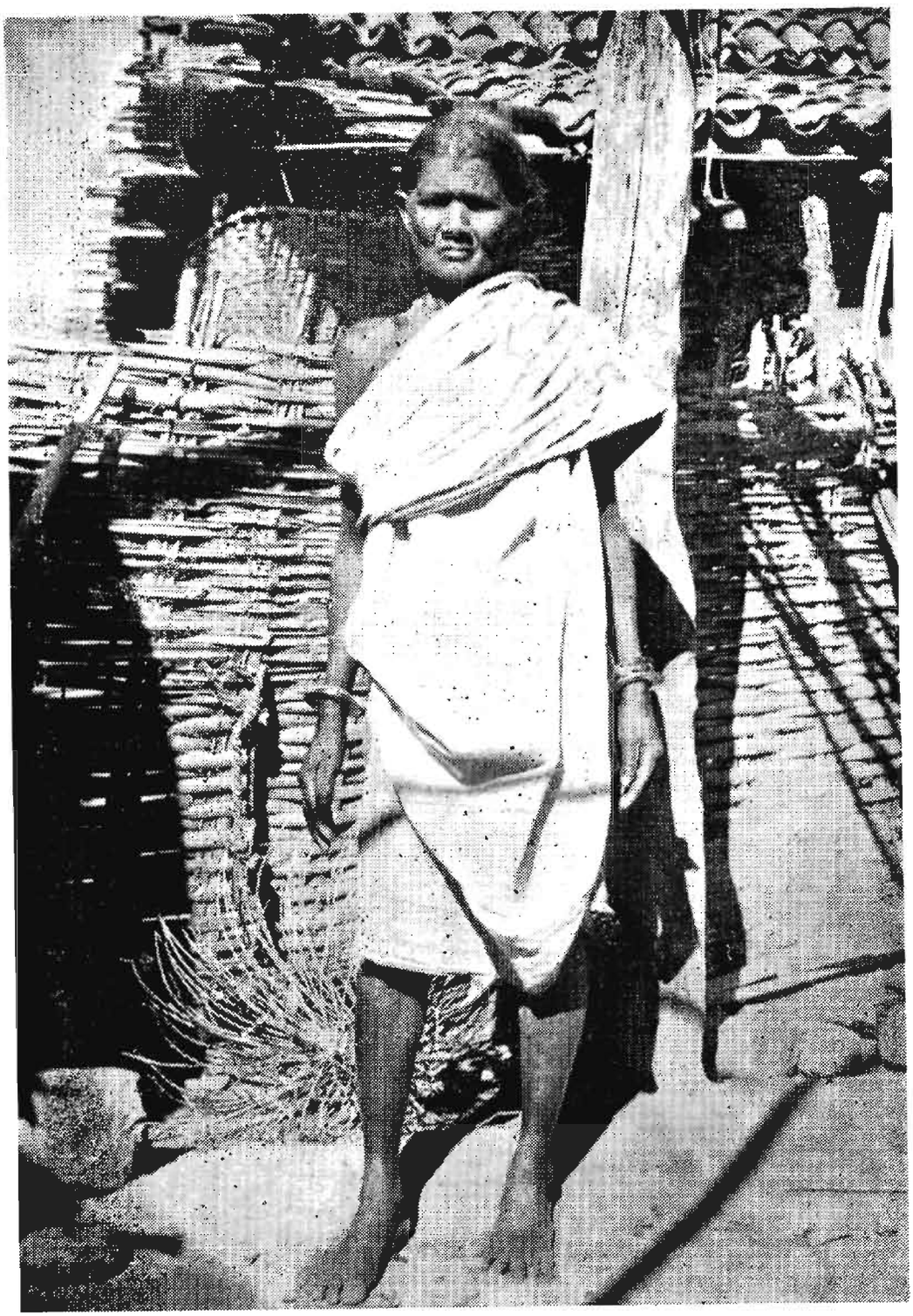
A woman bartering for rice



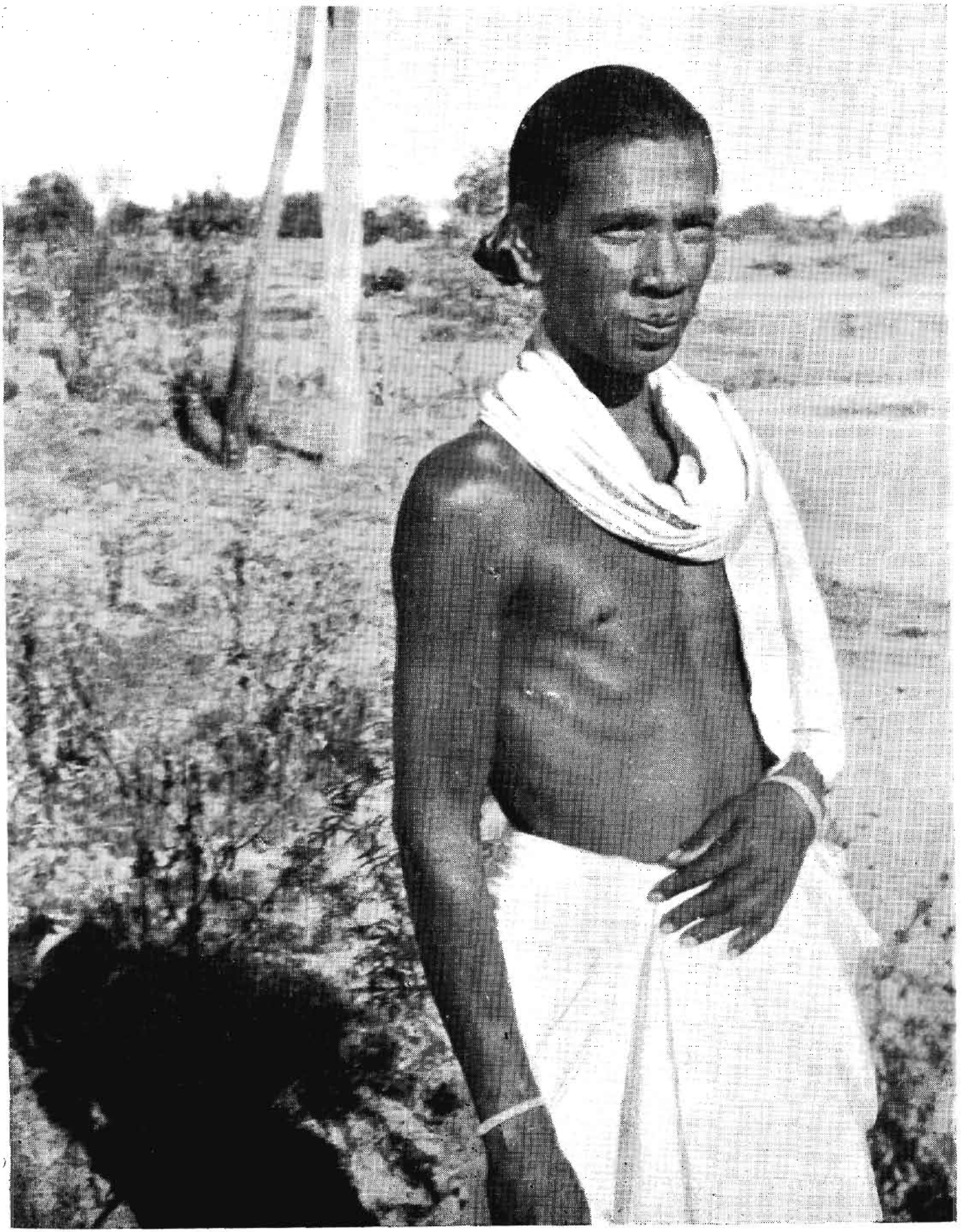
A Binjhal old man in front of his house



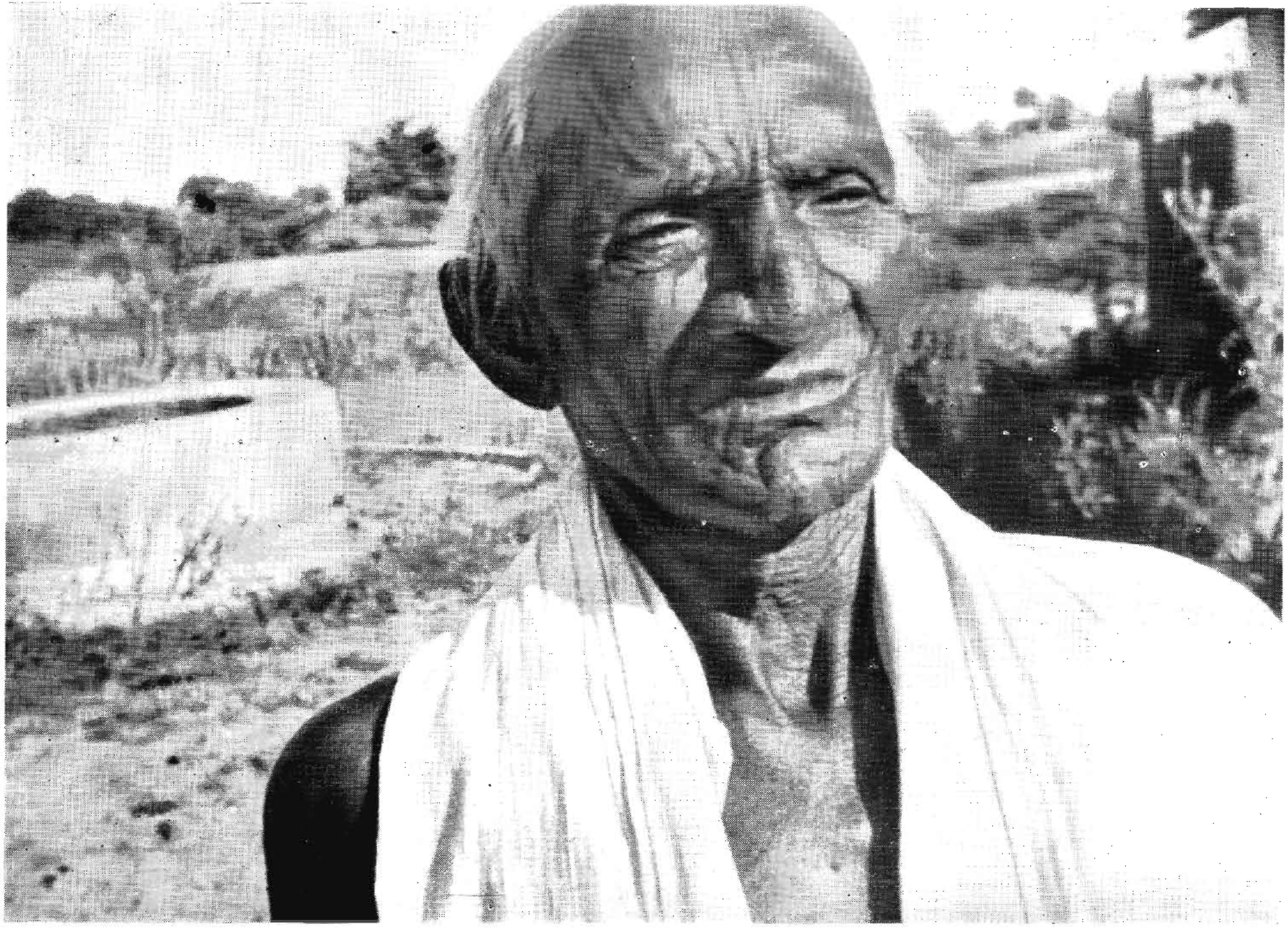
The profile of a Binjhal old man



A Binjhal old woman



The village 'Gountia'



An old Binjhal—a close-up view



A woman with her child



Karama' dance

woman in confinement, washes her clothes and looks after her needs. She cuts the umbilical cord and with the placenta buries it in a pit dug in the backyard. On the pit is placed a stone piece. The umbilical cord is cut with an arrow blade. A fire is set at the place of birth. This, called *antudi* fire is kept burning for seven days, that is for the period of pollution on expiry of which the ashes are thrown away.

21. Pollution is observed for seven days. During the period, the mother and the child are kept segregated in the lying-in-room. After the period of pollution, the mother is allowed to touch all articles. A feast is arranged and members of the tribe attending with their family and children, eat and spend a merry time together. The name-giving ceremony takes place on the *Sathi* day where old women of the tribe help in name giving. The day of birth often guides the nature of the name. Usually, the *gunia* of the locality picks up a handful of paddy from a winnowing fan and places it on the floor. The number of grains in the pile so placed is then counted. If the number is even, the name is accepted, but if odd, another name is tried.

Marriage

22. Endogamy within the tribe and *Bansa* exogamy is practised. Adult marriage is common and child marriage is rather rare. Marriage with a paternal uncle's daughter is prohibited as the latter would belong to the same *Bansa*.

23. Some years ago the bride price varied between Rs. 60/- and Rs. 100/-, and the upper limit was exceeded rather very rarely. At present, one just cannot think of going out in search of a bride without arranging a minimum sum of Rs. 400. Bride price has to be paid in cash as it is never accepted in kind. *Udulia* form of marriage or marriage by consent is reported to be rare now-a-days. The system of *gharjuain* exists. Seven women who are named *Suhasan* push through all the rituals and functions on the day of marriage both in the houses of the bride and the groom.

24 The ritual-components of a typical Binjhal marriage in the area under study is given here. The party of the groom leaves for the bride's place after sun-set. They would never start during the day time. One of the *Suhasans* carries the groom in her waist. On the way, at the spot of reception by the bride's party the *Ganat* propitiates the planets and uttering *mantras* throws sanctified water over members of the groom's party. On the way to the house of the bride, there would be decoration of *chita* (wall paintings), a pitcher-full of water and seven burning wicks. The mother-in-law of the groom goes round the latter seven times and foments his cheeks with cakes shown against the heat of seven burning wicks. She then takes the groom by his hand on to the *vedi*. Around the *vedi* are posted green *mahua* twigs and the bride is anointed with oil and turmeric. After the groom is seated near the bride in front of all members of the tribe, the ends of the sari and cloth of the bride and the groom respectively are tied together by the *Ganat*.

25. The ritual called *Binki* then follows. Some amount of paddy and rice are put into the hands of the bride and the groom. Two male members of the tribe by then would take the bride and the groom on their shoulders and another member carrying paddy and rice in the basket would be going round both. The bride will then ask for paddy and rice to the groom, a gesture that is reciprocated by the latter.

26. After *Gala-seka* and *Binki* stages of the marriage ritual, follows *Ganthi, Tikasara* and then *Kanya sampa*. In *Tikasara* friends and relatives of either party touch the forehead of both with rice and offering their blessings present whatever suits their capacity. In *Kanya sampa,* members of both the parties sit down at a place where the father or guardian of the bride offers the bride to the groom's party. He would say "I am offering to you

a broken brass pot, maintain it well. If you cannot, pray, do not throw it away but leave it carefully at the same bottom of the tree from where you picked it up." After enjoying a gala feast the same evening, the groom's party returns home with the bride.

27. A widow cannot strictly marry but can stay with another man of her choice. This has the tacit consent of the society. Marrying widows and particularly the widow of one's elder brother is permissible. Polygyny exists.

Death

28. Burial is the rule though body of elderly and rich persons are burnt. The body of the deceased is anointed with turmeric paste and washed. After wrapping the body with a new cloth it is taken to the burial ground by the relatives. All old clothes of the deceased are stretched within the pit. The body is taken round the pit seven times and then placed inside with the head pointing north. A little rice cooked at the pit is placed in the mouth of the deceased as his last food. After the body is covered with a new piece of cloth, the pit is filled up. The first purification ceremony called *tela* is observed on the third day when the house is cleaned, all clothings are washed and all earthen pots used are thrown away. Oil is supplied to agnates and the male members get themselves shaved by a barber. The last purification ceremony called *kama* takes place on the seventh day. Some cooked food, rice, dal and cakes are offered to the spirit of the deceased on a leaf plate and the insect approaching the food is captured with the belief that this imbibes the soul of the deceased. The insect alongwith a part of the cake is worshipped by the female members. On the last day of purification there is a bath and shave. A tribal feast is held in which all the kinsmen, friends and neighbours are entertained.

Language, literacy and education

29. According to 1961 Census, almost all the members of the tribe speak Oriya as their mother-tongue, except 209 persons in the district of Sundargarh who speak their tribal language Binjhia and 304 persons in the district of Kalahandi who speak Laria. There are 95 other persons who speak other languages.

30. Bilingualism is rare. Of the total population of 76,692, only 228 persons speak a language subsidiary to their mother-tongue. Majority of them again are those who have Oriya as their mother-tongue.

31. Only 6,292 persons, i.e., 8·2 per cent of the population are literate of which 3 persons have read up to matriculation or higher secondary standard. Though these figures appear rather low, it is almost in par with the percentage of literacy of scheduled tribes against their total population in the State. The Table below gives the number of total literates as in 1961 and their break-up for the State as a whole,

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Census, 1961)

State	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa	76,692	70,400	6,292	5,726	563	3

Occupation

32. Cultivation is their main occupation and those on the plains take to wet and settled cultivation. Members of the tribe residing in the hill areas and jungle tracts carry on *Dahi* through reclamation of new lands after clearing forests. Many Binjhals are either landless or own insufficient land to sustain them for the whole year. For part of the year, therefore, they work as farm servants under the Pandras and Kultas. In the area under study cases of shifting cultivation were not reported.

33. The Table below on the industrial classification of population will show that a great majority of the population are workers of whom the greater number are devoted to cultivation and agricultural labour.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

Category		Persons	Males	Females
Total Population	..	76,692	38,052	38,640
Workers:				
I. Cultivator	..	24,781	15,910	8,871
II. Agricultural labourer	..	12,200	8,236	3,964
III. Mining, quarrying, etc.	..	67	13	54
IV. Household industry	..	524	246	278
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	..	15	5	10
VI. Construction	..	8	8	..
VII. Trade and commerce	..	48	13	35
VIII. Transport, storage and communications	..	..	..	..
IX. Other services	..	3,632	1,378	2 254
Total workers	..	41,2 5	25,809	15,466
Non-workers	..	35,417	12,243	23,174

Village organisation

34. The tribe has no traditional organisation at the village or regional level to decide matters of social importance. All conflicts and disputes are discussed and decided in the informal village council which consists of elderly members of the tribe of the village. Offenders are fined and the fine realised is utilised for a tribal feast. *Ganat* is the tribal priest who officiates in marriages and other social functions. *Jhankar* is the village official who works as a priest of the village deities and assists the village watchman. He gets a share of the offerings made by members of the tribe to the village deities.

Religion and festivals

35. The structure of religion of the Binjhals may be described as one that has taken the shape through transformation of the beliefs and practices characteristic of a traditionally simple society to a more sophisticated position under the influence of the beliefs and practices of their high caste Hindu neighbours. Lord Narayan and goddess Laxmi are their principal deities. *Mulen Devi* and *Dula Debata* are their domestic deities. The former is represented by a few bangles kept in a corner of the house and is worshipped with offerings of sweet fruits, sweets and sacrifice of fowls and goats. Usually a barren she-goat is offered as a sacrifice before *Mulen*

Devi when any woman gets her first child. *Dula Debata,* considered as the tutelary family goddess, is worshipped on all important occasions. Among other village deities, mention may be made of *Dhulia Pata, Khambeswari* and *Dungar Debata. Dhulia Pata* goddess is represented by some burnt earthen posts anointed with vermilion and some three-headed spears kept inside a shed at the outskirts of the village. *Khambeswari* goddess is represented by wooden post anointed with vermilion and *Dungar Debata,* their mountain deity is enshrined by a piece of stone slab inside the jungle. Narsingnath at Paikmal is their place of pilgrimage. It is believed that goddess *Bindubasini* is installed in one of the temples. They also pay reverence to Lord Jagannath and Siva. The vestiges of old beliefs and superstitions like the existence of ghosts and spirits, calamities of any form being attributed to the wrath of malevolent spirits and employment of exorcists for propitiation of such spirits continue to hold good with them. The person deceased is believed to take rebirth in case a child is born in the family within two years of death.

36. They observe almost all the important Hindu festivals. Besides, tribal festivals like *Madhen Parba, Magha Parba, Mahulabhaja Parba* and *Karam jatra* are observed. *Madhen Parba* is observed in the month of *Pausa* in the post-harvest period. Khambeswari Thakurani is worshipped with offerings of rice, pulses and flesh of goats and fowls. In *Magha Parba,* Dungar Debata is worshipped with offerings of sweets, fruits and sacrifices of goats and fowls. *Mahulabhaja Parba* is celebrated in *Chaitra* when the village priest *Jhankar* offers the first *Mahua* blossoms to the village deity. It is only after observance of the ceremony that the *Mahua* flowers are taken by the villagers, *Harali Parba* is obsered in the month of *Asadha* when Khambeswari Thakurani is worshipped. It is after the festival is over that weeding and transplanting operations are taken up. In *Karam jatra* festival held in the month of Aswina, Karamsani Thakurani is worshipped. A pulpit is made and twigs of Karam tree fetched from the forest are planted round the pulpit. All the maidens fast for the day and worship the branch of the tree which symbolises the goddess. Dancing and singing by the maidens and youths continue in great merriment. This is an occasion when youths of either sex enjoy together a communal dance.

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SOUNTI

Villages of study :

1. TIKIRA
   P. S. Ghatgaon
   Dist. Keonjhar
2. KERKERA
   P. S. Karanjia
   Dist. Mayurbhanj

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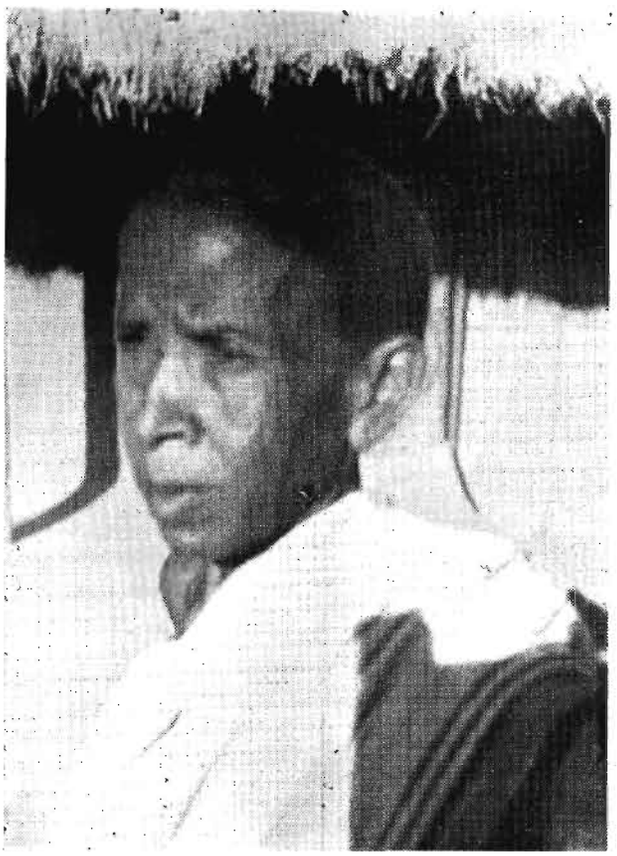
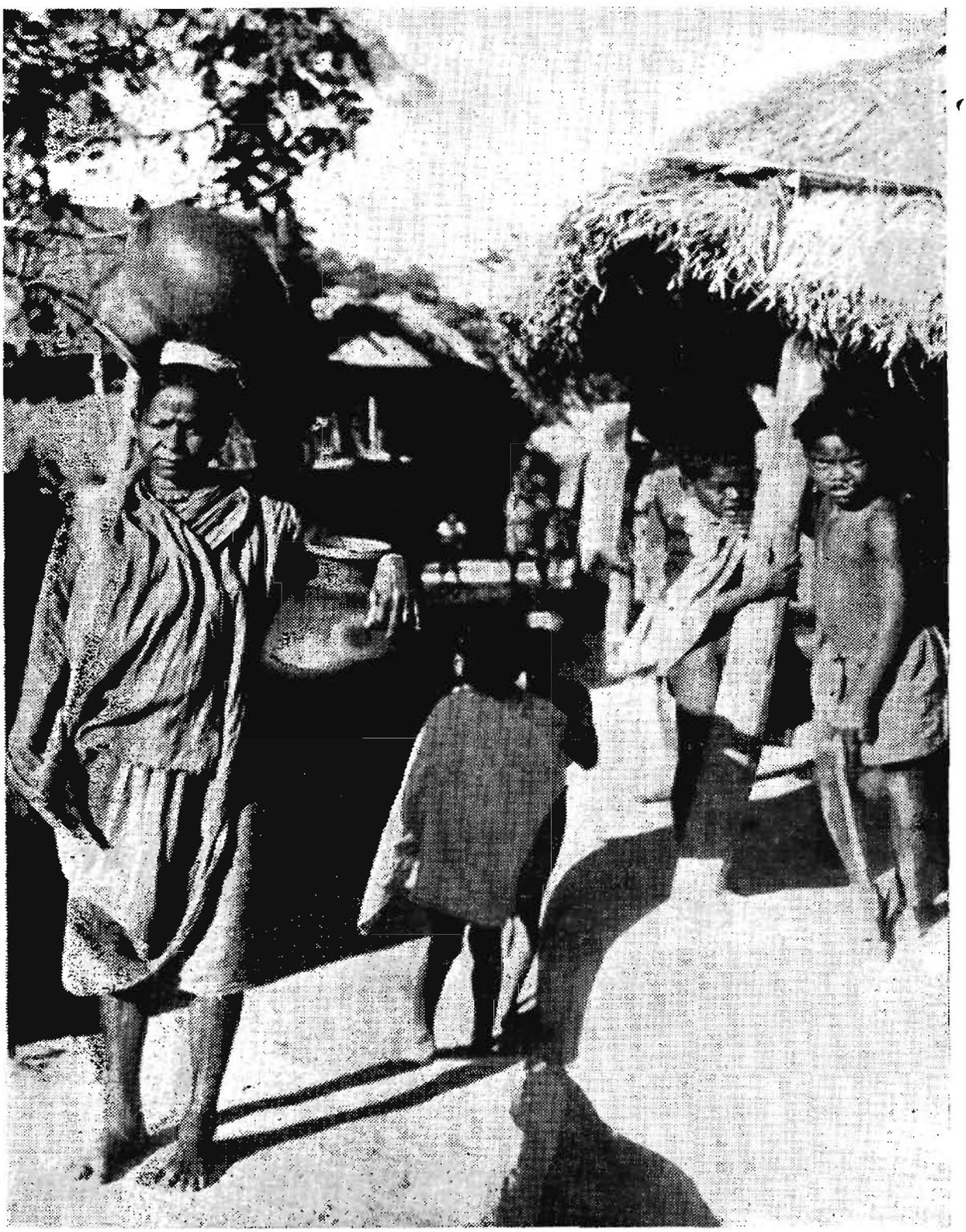
4. Shri Sudarsan Nayak
5. Shri Dharani Nayak
6. Shri Shiva Nayak
7. Shri Kalakar Nayak
8. Shri Bana Nayak
9. Shri Sana Ishwar Nayak
10. Shri Nari Nayak, Dehuri
11. Smt. Ghasiani Bewa, W/o. Late Kuansa Naik
12. Smt. Kansali Nayak, W/o. Satrughna Nayak



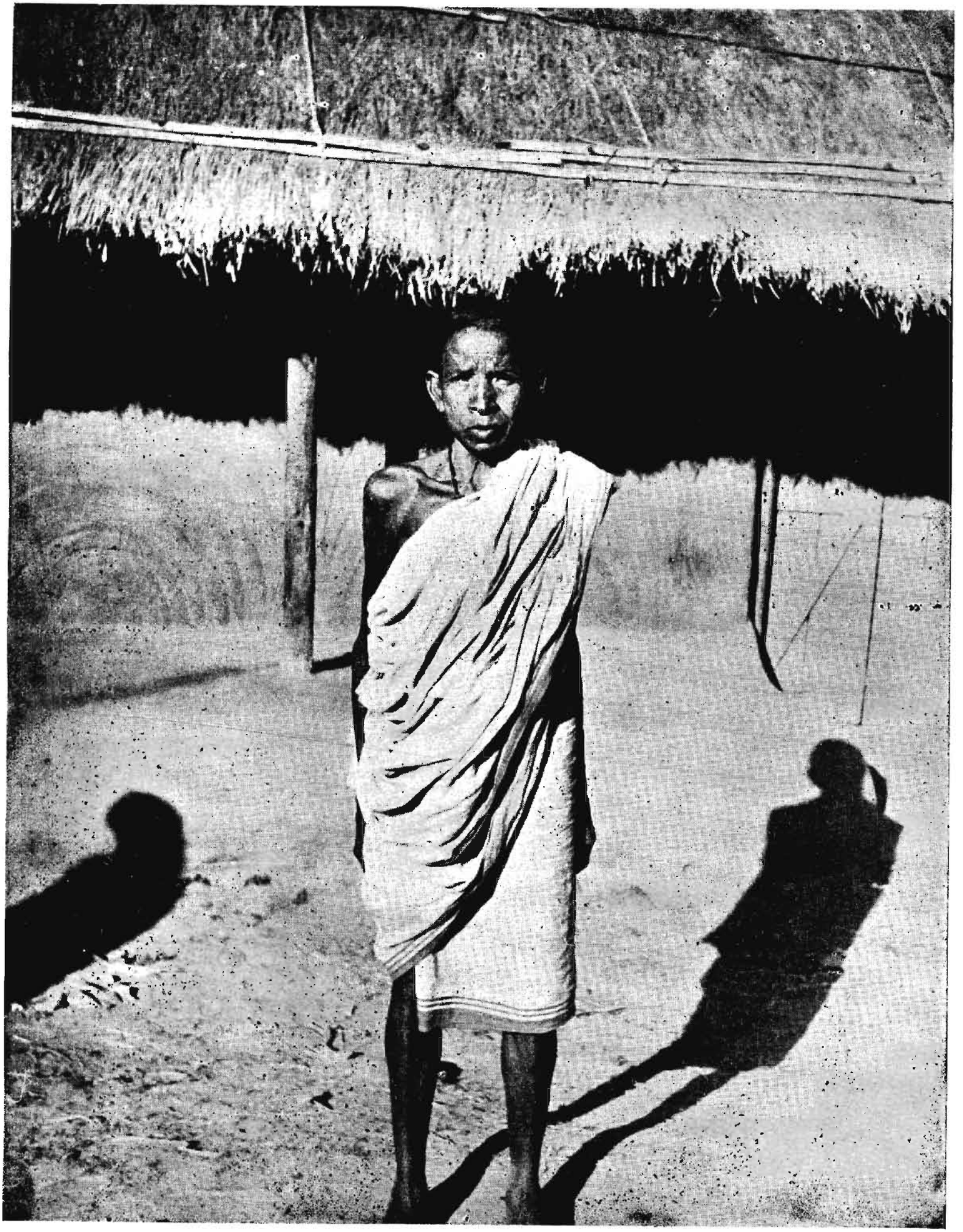
The profile of a Sounti woman



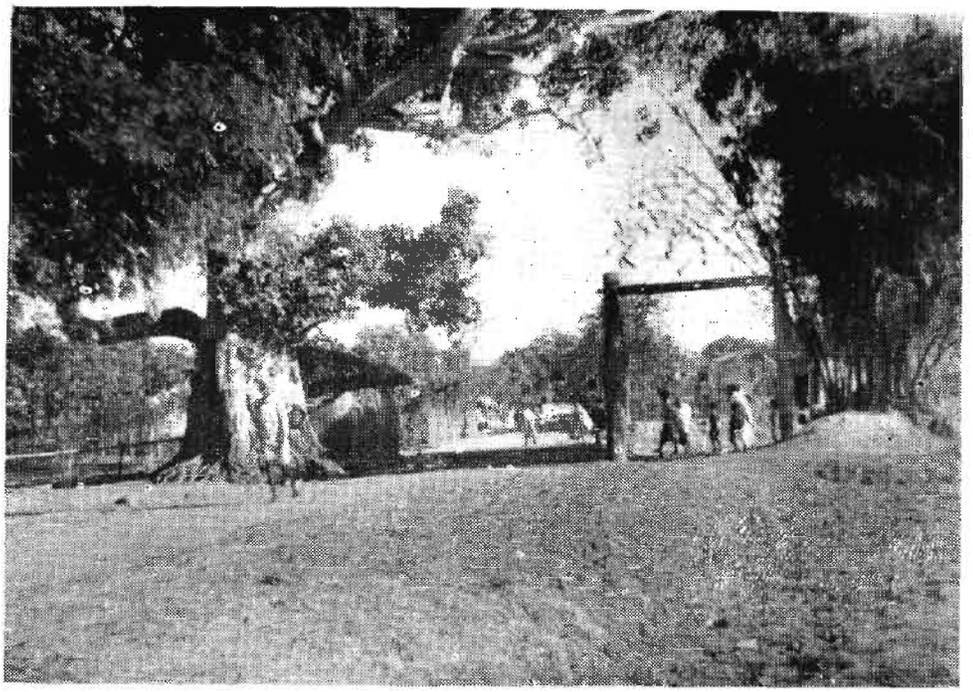
A Sounti woman with an inverted earthen pot proceeding to village water source



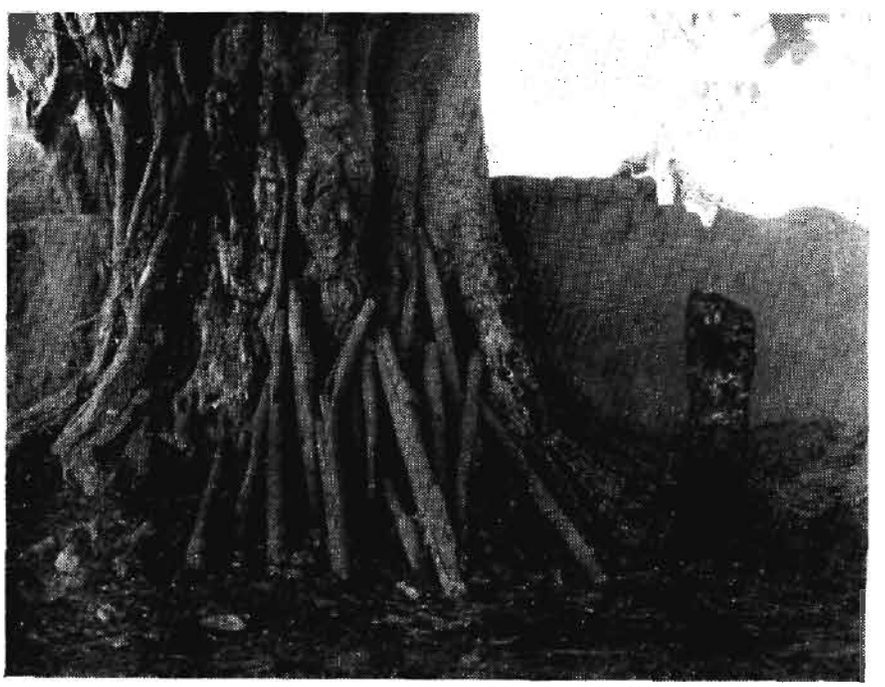
The village street scene



An old Sounti woman in front of her house



A view of temple Chandia Babu Sal



View of Badham Sal, the village deity

SOUNTI

The facts regarding the origin of the Sountis makes an interesting reading. Census of Mayurbhanj State (1931:Vol. I: 164) speaks of the origin of the tribe some three centuries ago, when its founder Joygobinda Das of Puri, said to be a Khandayat by caste was allowed to settle in Mananta, one of the villages in Keonjhar near Musakhuri. According to the local tradition referred to in the above Census Report, Joygobinda Das came to Keonjhar from Puri in 1600 A. D. and coming out of his caste, he is said to have formed a new caste, the nucleus of which according to O'Malley as quoted in the same report consisted of persons outcast from respectable Oriya families who were allowed by the Chief of Keonjhar to settle in Mananta. Their numbers grew rapidly as they received other outcastes with open arms. The only condition for admission was that the newcomers must have belonged to some caste from whom Brahmins would take water. The caste name, Sounti is said to have been derived from the word '*Saunta*' meaning 'gathered in' thus pointing to the meaning in which the members of the newly formed caste were gathered in.

2. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956 refers to them as Sounti. Census of Mayurbhanj State, 1931 mentions them as Sounti. Some of the tribesmen, due to their inability to properly pronounce the word called themselves as Samuti or Samti. Keonjhar district of the State is their acknowledged homeland where they are stated to occupy a position of distinction and privilege. Next to Keonjhar they are found in large numbers in Mayurbhanj district particularly in Panchpir Subdivision.

3. In Orissa, there is a community named Sauntia (Santia) who are included in the list of Scheduled Castes of Orissa. They are concentrated mainly in the district of Ganjam and particularly in Chatrapur Subdivision of the above district. Besides agriculture which is their main occupation, they cut and sell firewood.

4. This organisation took up study of Sountis in village Tikira of Ghatgaon Police Station in the district of Keonjhar and in village Kerkera, P.S. Karanjia of Panchpir subdivision in the district of Mayurbhanj. It looked as though the story of origin as narrated in the Census Report of Mayurbhanj State is no more current among them. On the other hand, the informants narrated altogether a different story apparently designed to elevate their social status which runs as follows : Once upon a time there were two brothers belonging to Khandayat caste. The younger brother after due education served as a sepoy under the Raja of Puri. It was through him that a woman of another caste conceived. The Raja of Puri commanded him to marry the woman and for their future maintenance vested in his name a lot of landed properties. The tribe is reported to have started its origin from this married couple and as a mark of respect to the courage of this Khandayat who dared to gather in a girl of another caste in those days of rigid social taboos that the tribe has been named as Sounti.

5. The Sountis have one *gotra* called Nagasa and one surname called Nayaka. They are, however, subdivided into a number of *khillis*. To name a few in the village under study, they are : Chipindia, Biswal, Patalia, Pungia, Kapundia, Tangania, Gomodia, Ankadia, Sankadia, etc. Other *khillis* of neighbouring villages are Jalapadia, Kalapadia, Tainsuria, Kalapala, Das, Baunstia, Kusumalia, etc. The Mayurbhanj Census Report lists 97 such groups. All these *khillis* are exogamous and some have accepted, of late, the *khilli* names as their surname.

6. They accept water from Bathudis and Bhuiyas, a gesture that is reported to be

reciprocated by both these tribes. They are served by Brahmins, barbers, and washermen.

Geographical distribution and population

7. Their total population in the State is 44,409 which is 1·05 per cent of the population of the Scheduled Tribes in the State as a whole. Their sex ratio is 1,039 females to 1,000 males. They are primarily a rural community as only 1,149 persons of the tribe reside in urban area.

8. They are concentrated in the police station areas on the border line of the districts of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj. Police Stations containing more than 10 per cent of the State population are Baria (5,460), Keonjhar Sadar (7,038) and Patna (8,867) of Keonjhar district. Thakurmunda P. S. in the district of Mayurbhanj contains the maximum population (6,021) in this district.

9. There is no record of the previous censuses to study the trend of population growth of the tribe. Coming to a single district, i.e., Mayurbhanj, the population of the tribe in 1931 numbered 8,250 persons. In 1961 the same has risen to 11,450. The statistics of the population of the tribe in the district of Keonjhar or in the State as a whole is, however, not available.

The districtwise population figures of the tribe are given in the Table below.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

State District	Persons	Males	Females
Orissa	44,409	21,775	22,634
Koraput	439	232	207
Sambalpur	29	13	16
Ganjam	350	158	192
Sundargarh	71	39	32
Dhenkanal	23	11	12
Puri	322	179	143
Keonjhar	30,891	14,924	15,967
Cuttack	65	23	42
Mayurbhanj	11,470	5,847	5,603
Balasore	769	349	402

Houses and living condition

10. In the area under sutdy in the district of Mayurbhanj, there are villages exclusively inhabited by the Sountis. In other neigh bouring villages cited below of Panchpir Subdivision, they put up with other castes and tribes but their habitation is located separately in a hamlet and usually at a distance. In village Udalbeda there are some houses of Baisnabs, Kols, Pans and Magadha Gaudas but the Sountis have a separate hamlet. In village Pingu of Karanjia P. S. there are two Sounti hamlets. In between these two hamlets there are Pans, Bathudis, Kols and Gaudas. In Kasipal of Jashipur P.S., Sountis have a separate hamlet but the houses of Bariks and Gaudas are very near. In village Sunaposi of Karanjia P. S. they put up with Kols and Gonds but have a separate hamlet to themselves. In most of the villages there are two rows of houses wth a village *dand or gohiri intervening*. Scattered houses are rare in Sounti settlement.

11. In the district of Keonjhar, on the other hand, the members of the tribe are reported to be neighbours of other caste Hindus like Gauda, Kamar, etc. There are all types of settlements, conglomerate, agglomerate and scattered.

12. Their process of site selection before construction of a house deserves mention. They draw a rectangle on the site and putting vermilion paste at the centre, they place a handful of rice. On this they put a leaf lid. Next morning if rice is found in tact, the site is considered as auspicious.

13. The houses are mostly two-roomed. Single-roomed houses are rarely met with Where more than two rooms constitute a house, the same are built round a central courtyard. Spacious verandahs are provided in the front. Cattle-shed and shed for de-husking are built close to the house. Verandahs are low to the inner side but have a slightly higher elevation to the front

No door is provided towards the road side. No windows are also provided. In the village studied in the district of Mayurbhanj, even the house of an educated teacher of the Sounti class, which looked from outside prosperous when measured in their standard did not possess a window. With either red clay or china clay fetched from local sources, they dab the walls which alongwith the verandah are kept rather neat. The houses are built of mud and either are straw thatched or tiled. *Chhana ghasa* which were previously being purchased locally is not available at present. The goat, poultry and other domesticated birds and animals are accommodated either in the bed room or in a separate shed or in the shed for de-husking paddy.

14. A few stringed charpoys, mats made of date-palm leaves, bell-metal and aluminium utensils appear to be the main household equipments.

Dress and ornaments

15. A dhoti about 8′ long for men and a sari about 12′ to 15′ long for women are all that go to constitute their dress. Undergarments are seldom worn. Specially coloured saris are kept for ceremonial occasions. Warm clothings are rarely worn. Children up to 6 to 7 move naked.

16. There is no social law making it obligatory for the women to tattoo their limbs. Some tattoo their limbs these days out of fancy. Some have also taken to plaiting and braiding their hairs. Previously this art was unknown and they used to twist all their hairs into the shape of a knob right at the back of their head.

17. The traditional silver rings worn by women are *Kapa* and *Bentula* on their ears, *Guna* made of silver or gold on their nose, *Nali kanthi, Chapa swari,* and *Rupa Suki hara* on their neck, *Khadu* and *Kankans* are worn by them on their hands and *Kansa pahuda* on their anklets. Now-a-days they use only glass bangles. Those who are well-to-do, use silver bangles and rings on their fingers made of alloys. Women, however, have a great fancy for a decorative hair-do. Red ribbons and silver hair-pins decorate their plaited knobs.

Food

18. Rice is their staple food though other cereals and pulses are taken according to availability. Beef, pork, termites, ants and rats are deemed as tabooed food. *Handia* and *mahula* wine are said to be socially unpopular.

19. Two principal meals a day is common. Hot boiled rice with some side dish of vegetables or edible green leaves are the main items of the menu. It was reported that years ago, one taking liquor stood the risk of being outcast from the society.

Birth

20. No restriction appears to be imposed on the parturient woman except that she is not allowed to cross a river. There are no restrictions for her husband either. At the advanced stage of pregnancy the father of the girl brings delicious foodstuff which are offered to the woman in a ceremony called *Sada khia.*

21. Birth generally takes place in a corner of the living room and no separate arrangement for a lying-in-room is made. In village Kerkera, an old woman of the Ghasi caste is called to assist in deliveries. She is remunerated on the *Ekusia* day. She cuts the umbilical cord of the male child with the arrow blade and that of females with a knife. The cord with the placenta are put in a leaf-cup and are buried at the corner of the house. Husk is applied to the body of the babe in order to bring out the sticky mucus substances. After this, the babe is given a tepid water bath. The Ghasiani sets a fire called *Antudi* close to the mother and

the new-born. Ashes of this fire are, however, thrown out by her on the date of purification.

22. The first stage of purification comes on the 9th day when the house is dabbed with cowdung water. The *Antudi* ashes are thrown away. Members of the household are shaved and the washerman washes the clothes. But the woman is not allowed to touch the kitchen articles until the second stage of pollution is over on the 21st day. On both these 9th and 21st days, new earthen pots and vessels are procured for the kitchen. On the 21st day the mother of the child puts on new clothes and the name-giving ceremony is performed. The mother and other women present throw sesamum and rice grains into a pot of turmeric water. A feast is then arranged.

Puberty

23. The rituals of puberty are observed rather rigidly by members of the tribe. A girl attaining puberty is segregated for 7 days. None touch her during the period and she is not even permitted to see the face of a man. On the 8th day, she takes her purificatory bath and wears a new cloth. She is forbidden from touching the earthen pots and vessels in the kitchen in her later menstruations.

Marriage

24. As stated earlier, marriage within the *khilli* is prohibited. Adult marriage is the usual practice although traces of child marriage are there. There is strictly no custom of remarriage of a widow who, however, is at liberty to stay with another. The process which has the tacit consent of the society is called *Sanga*. Levirate is despised as the wife of the elder brother is held in high esteem and is offered the status of the mother by the younger brother of the deceased. The customary practice of bride price exists which has been raised from Rs. 3 to Rs. 40. Monogamy is the rule though polygyny is occasionally resorted to when the first wife proves barren.

25. Initiative for negotiation is always taken up by the parents of the boy. Two negotiators called *Dandia* are sent to the house of the girl. If the parents of the girl agree to the proposal, a betrothal ceremony called *Pindhani* is held in the house of the girl. The ceremony includes a feast and putting on a new piece of cloth by the bride. The bride price is also paid on this day. Another ceremony is performed in the house of the girl, when the date and *lagna* are fixed up and after cracking of arecanut, bride price is paid.

26. On the date of marriage, a procession starts to the house of the bride consisting of the bridegroom, his relations and friends. On their arrival at the house of the bride, her mother alongwith other old women of the tribe receive the groom ceremonially which is called *Bara Barana* or *Bata Barana*. Initially, a feast is given after which the rituals of marriage are gone through. The Brahmin priest makes both the groom and the bride sit on the marriage pendal. Doms are engaged who carry on with the concert. The priest arranges a *homa*. Both the palms of the groom and the bride are then tied together by the priest. Since the Brahmin priest officiates on such occasions, the rituals follow by and large the Vedic rites. The fathers of the boy and girl offer their sons and daughters to each other.

27. Usually the groom returns to his house with the bride the next day. On the date of return a feast is arranged. On the fourth day, *Chauthi* ceremony is also held. After eight days called *Athamangala,* the girl returns to the house of her father. During this intervening period both the bride and the groom have games of *kouri* and mud.

28. When a woman accepts a second husband, the divorced husband needs to be compensated. Where the fault is not with the woman, the husband is required to pay a sum of Rs. 5/- and a piece of cloth to the divorcee.

Death

29. The dead are both buried and burnt though burning is reported to be more frequent than burial. Immediately after death, the tribesmen of the village remove the body and anointing it with oil and wrapping it with a new piece of cloth, they remove the body outside. The body is carried either on a piece of ladder made exclusively for the purpose or on a piece of cot. The sons of the deceased also act as pall-bearers. On the funeral pyre or in the pit, the body is placed with its head towards north and face to a side. The tribesmen of the village then proceed to a pond where they are shaved by a barber and after a bath, they return home. The relatives of the deceased have a shave the same day at home. The same evening, relatives take bitter rice. From the next day the eldest son carries some food in a leaf-cup and offers it to the soul of the deceased. Pollution continues for 10 days after which there is a shaving, a general wash and cleaning up. On the 11th day, new earthen pots and vessels are purchased. On the 10th day, the Brahmin priest arranges a purificatory *homa* and on the 11th day a feast is given to the tribesmen.

Language, literacy and education

30. Their mother-tongue is Oriya. Nearly 1,000 persons in the district of Keonjhar speak Kui and another 700 persons speak other languages like Ho and Telugu. The number of persons speaking a language subsidiary to the mother-tongue is insignificant.

31. The percentage of literacy is 8 which compares favourably with the all-State percentage. More than 600 persons have gone up to primary or junior basic standard and at least 22 have read up to matriculation or higher secondary standard. The Table below presents districtwise figures on literacy and education.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Census, 1961)

State District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	44,409	40,875	3,534	2,866	646	22
Koraput ..	439	405	34	32	2	..
Sambalpur ..	29	28	1	1		..
Ganjam ..	350	342	8	8	..	..
Sundargarh ..	71	59	12	7	5	..
Dhenkanal ..	23	16	7	7	..	..
Puri ..	322	276	46	46	..	..
Keonjhar ..	30,891	28,384	2,507	2,095	395	17
Cuttack ..	65	58	7	7	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	11,450	10,611	839	591	243	5
Balasore ..	769	696	73	72	1	..

Occupation

32. Their main occupation is agriculture and agricultural labour. Fishing is taken recourse to during leisure. From the Table presented below on industrial classification of population based in 1961 Census data it would appear that 45·2 per cent of the population are workers economically active. Nearly 41·2 per cent of their population work either as cultivators or as agricultural labourers.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

Category	Persons	Males	Famales
Total population ..	44,409	21,775	22,634
Workers:			
I, Cultivator ..	11,795	6,986	4,809
II. Agricultural labourer	6,476	3,719	2,757
III. Mining, quarrying, etc.	246	124	122
IV. Household industry	374	244	127
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..	19	14	5
VI. Construction ..	5	4	1
VII. Trade and commerce	43	32	11
VIII. Transport, storage and communications	15	15	..
IX. Other services ..	1,094	690	404
Total workers ..	20,067	11,831	8,236
Non-workers ..	24,342	9,944	14,398

33. Writing on the Sountis of Keonjhar, Cobden Ramsay (1950:224) says : "The Sountis XXX look to their chief, the Birajal Mohapatra, for social and caste grievances. This Birajal has the unique privilege of riding in a *Palki* on State occasion and has quit-rent *jagir* (service) lands assigned to him. The title is hereditary."

34. It transpired during discussion with the informants that the Birajal Mohapatra who expired a few years ago continued to be the chief of Sountis till his death. He was the sole arbitrator of important caste disputes and grievances. Now that he has expired, another tribal council will sit to authorise his edest son.so assume the powers of Birajal.

Village organisation

35. It was learnt from local sources that according to the system of tribal organisation as it existed some years ago, there was a Desa Padhan for a few villages who adjudicated all social disputes. Matters beyond his powers were being referred to the Birajal. These days the elders of a village and those invited from neighbouring villages sit down and decide matters of social importance. Those taking food from low castes are generally held as outcastes but with the express sanction of Birajal Mohapatra they can stage a retreat to the tribal after a shave, bath and payment of compensation that is utilised for a feast.

Religion and festivals

36. Most of them profess Hinduism and worship all Hindu gods and goddesses. The sacred basil plant is also worshipped by them. The Sun god and goddess Earth called *Dharamdevata* and *Basukimata* respectively are revered most. The kitchen room is supposed to be the abode of the ancestral spirits who are worshipped on all ceremonial occassions.

37. The presiding deity of the village is named *Gramadevati Thakurani* and *Parasurama Chandia Babu*. They are worshipped inside a small shed at the end of the village called *Chandia Babu Sala*. Any person having his wish fulfilment, offers either an earthen horse or a canopy. The earthen horse is said to be the *Bahana* (carrier) of the deity.

38. They have the trunk of a tree named as *Badam Sal* below which there is a large-sized slab of stone called *Badam*. This stone slab is worshipped on all festive and ceremonial occasions. *Badam is perhaps the*

corrupt form of *Balaram* since a lot of broken ploughs popularly believed to be the carrier of this god are found thrown at the feet of this deity.

39. They further believe that the goddess *Duarasuni* whose image is worshipped at the entrance to the village keeps a watch over the evil spirits and warding them off, keeps the village happy. During occurrence of epidemics like smallpox, *Duarasuni* is worshipped. Other goddesses whose images are worshipped near the embankment of the village tank are *Kamala* and *Bimala*.

40. They observe almost all the Hindu festivals. *Makara Sakranti* is by far the most important festival. Besides, they observe *Raja, Gamhapurnami, Rahasa Purnami, Kumar Purnami, Prathamastami*, etc.

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DIDAYI

The Didayis are numerically a minor hill tribe inhabiting principally the district of Koraput. Their abode lies in the 4,000-feet plateau of the Eastern Ghat range which is a continuation of the habitat of the Bondas. Their habitat was once very compact but in recent years there has been considerable dispersion down to the plains particularly to the valley on the eastern side of the plateau. Those inhabiting the plains are in greater contact with the world outside than their counterparts on the hill tops who continue to be in a state of seclusion from the general trend of population. The total number of villages inhabited by the Didayis either in the plains or on the hill top are extremely few in number. Any attempt to approach the hill villages is rendered difficult by the very nature of the terrain and its topography. The village studied by the organisation is 'Orangi' which is at the foot of the hills and is close to the Kudmulguma Panchayat Samiti headquarters in the district of Koraput. The village has about 100 households with all Didayi inhabitants.

2. Their touch does not pollute the caste Hindus and they are said to be served by barbers but not by Brahmin priests and washermen. Water and cooked food are not accepted from their hands by any of the caste Hindus but they have free access to Hindu temples and common wells. They accept water from the hands of Bhumias, Gadabas, Matyas, Khonds and Koyas but refuse to accept it from the Bondos and other scheduled caste people. It is said that Matyas, Ranas and Kotias do not accept water from them. The tribe is mentioned as 'Didayi' in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1956. From its members, it is difficult to extract a story or legend about their origin. Members of the older generation claim to have settled in these parts of Koraput for generations. According to them, they are a very primitive tribe and are autochthones of the land. According to Thurston (1909 : Vol. II : 171) the 'Didayi' are a subdivision of Poroja. He mentions further (1909 : Vol. VI :210) that Dur Porja, a section of Porojas, are also known as Didayi Poroja and that they speak Oriya.

3. In the village under study, the members of the tribe are divided into three *Bansas* or exogamous septs, viz., *Bagh* (tiger), *Nag* (cobra) and *Kula* or *Surjya* (sun). Muduli, Challan, Gudia and Manjhi are the surnames of those belonging to the *Bagh* (tiger) *bansa* and Golpeda, Palasi, and Angrunibadia are those of *Nag bansa*. There are, however, deviations as persons with Muduli as their surname also belong to *Kula bansa* and can marry a girl from any other *bansa*.

Geographical distribution and population

4. The distribution of the tribe is limited to the district of Koraput and particularly to the Malkangiri Police Station area of the district. Out of 1,978 members as per 1961 Census, 1,666 reside in this police station and 310 have been enumerated in Mathili P. S. The sex ratio is 1,056 females against 1,000 males. They are exclusively a rural community as none has been enumerated in the urban areas of the State. The Table below gives the sexwise break-up of the population.

Table 1

POPULATION
(Census, 1961)

State District		Persons	Males	Females
Orissa	..	1,978	962	1,016
Koraput	..	1,978	962	1,016

Houses and living condition

5. Their houses are arranged in rows with a narrow path winding between two rows. They live in low-roofed houses of rectangular size. The dimensions of the houses vary according to the means of the owners but ordinarily a house may measure 12′ in length

and 9′ in width. It is usually divided into two rooms one of which is used as a store and the other as a kitchen-*cum*-bed room. A low verandah is provided at the front. But for a single doorway, there is no other entrance or exit, even not a window. Four wooden posts are pitched at the four corners of the house and above these posts the structure of the roof is made with the bamboo and wooden poles. The roof is thatched either with straw or with Sabai grass. Ceilings are provided by spreading split bamboos and wooden planks. It is utilised as a storing space of all household articles. The walls are made of split bamboos and wattles plastered with mud.

6. A look at their houses shows their love for the kitchen gardens. With one or two *salapa* (Sago palm) trees in the front enclosure, they plant all kinds of seasonal vegetables including gourd and pumpkin which creep on specially made *bhadis*. Poultry keeping is their hobby.

7. The surroundings are far from clean. Cowsheds are built separately and the cowdung and other rubbish are dumped in a pit at the back-yard of the house. They clean their house once a week by washing the floor and walls with cowdung mixed in water.

8. Before construction of a house, the site is selected by placing three grains of rice over the proposed site and covering them with a basket. Next morning the basket is removed and the rice grains are examined. If the grains are found undisturbed, the site is considered suitable and auspicious. Thereafter foundation is laid by pitching a *Mohua* or a *Jamu* post. On completion of the house, a tribal feast is held in which the neighbours are fed with cooked rice and *dal* of blackgram.

9. Before selection of site for settlement of a new colony, the Desari is invited who posts a pole and makes a canopy of mango twigs. A fowl and an egg are offered as sacrifice at the spot, and the same are put into a pit. Into the same pit are also thrown some sand and algae collected from a nearby fountain.

Dress and ornaments

10. A coarse cotton dhoti of about 3½ yards in length is the common dress of male members and a coarse cotton sari about 4 to 5 yards in length is the usual dress of adult women who do not use any undergarments. Men, however, use shirts and jackets on rare occasions and particularly when they go out. On festive and ceremonial events, coloured saris specially kept for the purpose are worn by women. Children up to six or seven years of age usually go naked and those above this age-group are provided with small napkins. Most of their clothings are hand-woven and are purchased from nearby weekly markets.

11. Ornaments worn by women lack varieties. Bangles called *khadu* adore their wrists. These are made of either nickel or brass. Anklets and armlets made of the same metals are worn. Silver and brass necklaces called *kangala* and necklaces of multi-coloured glass beads are worn on the neck. Golden ornaments are very rarely used. Nose rings and nose tops, ear-rings and ear-tops of gold are used. Male members of the tribe usually go without any ornament. The females braid their hair either with castor oil or with cocoanut oil obtained from weekly markets. They also decorate their hair with flowers. Tattooing is not popular among them.

Food and drinks

12. Rice is their principal diet. Other millets like ragi and *suan* are also taken along with pulses of all varieties. *Mandia peja* (Ragi gruel) is their common food. Being non-vegetarians, they relish all kinds of meat including beef and pork. They also take fish and vegetables, edible tubers, fruits and young bamboo shoots collected from the forests. They collect and dry a kind of leaves locally known as 'Samiliya abad' and after grinding it with ***kudo***

(broken rice particles), the same is boiled with salt and chillies. This is called *kanji*. Salt, turmeric, chilly and onion are used in cooking though the use of oil and spices is extremely rare. Food is cooked in earthen pots and is taken in leaf plates and cups. The use of brass and aluminium utensils is slowly getting popular. Two principal meals a day is common. The first is taken at about 9 or 10 in the morning and the second after evening. On festive occasions cakes with rice flour and molasses are taken. *Salapa* juice and liquor of ragi and *mahula* (Bassia latifolia) are their popular drinks.

Birth

13. The customs and rituals relating to child birth are simple. No prohibition appears to be imposed on the woman either on her movements or food except that she is forbidden from taking beef and jack-fruits during the pre-natal period. Always a separate lying-in-place is provided and usually a part of the store room is set apart for the purpose. Either the mother-in-law of the woman in confinement or some other old and experienced woman of the tribe attends on her. In case of an extremely difficult delivery, the village *desari* is called. *Dukri*, the old woman attending on her cuts the umbilical cord with a knife and buries it along with the placenta under the eaves in the court-yard. A pit about a cubit deep is dug with *siali* leaves spread at its bottom and after burial, the pit is covered with a large stone piece and some twigs. Shortly after birth, both the mother and the child are given a tepid water bath.

14. In the post-natal period, she is prohibited from taking ragi gruel. tamarind or non-vegetarian dishes. She is mostly given the gruel of *suan* rice.

15. Pollution is observed for 8 to 10 days, after expiry of which the house is cleaned with cowdung water. Both the mother and the baby take bath alongwith the father. The deity *Nisani Debata* is worshipped on this occasion with rice, parched rice and incense. Rice offered to the deity is touched to the forehead of the baby and the mother The child is also named on this day. No formal ceremony is observed. The child is usually named after his birth day, that is if born on a Wednesday, they name the child as 'Budiya' or 'Bodili' depending on the sex. No feast is given. The village *desari* is invited who offers worship and at times a sacrifice to the god praying for its long and prosperous life

Puberty

16. No restriction is imposed on the girl on attainment of puberty. As is the custom with many other tribes, she is not also given a new cloth to wear.

Marriage

17. Mahapatra (1963:127) says that the Didayi kinship system is based on two distinguished exogamous clans known as *ghia* and *nta*. *Ghia, sig, gudia, majhi, muduli, suruma* and *sisa* constitute the *ghia* clan and *nta, mleh, gushuwa, golpeda, potasi* and *kswa* constitute the *nta* clan. The groups of each clan are exogamous and can have marriage relations only with any of the groups of the next clan. The clans have respective totems. *Malabu-bais* or *nag* is the totem of the *nta* clan and *Nku-bais* or tiger is the totem of *ghia* clan.

18. It was learnt during field study that the Didayis are divided into three exogamous septs called *Bansas*. Each of such *Bansa* is further subdivided into a number of titles and each title is also exogamous in nature. The details of *Bansas* have been discussed at length in earlier paragraphs.

19. According to Mahapatra, as the Didayi kinship system is based on two exogamous clans, mother's sister's children and father's brother's children are considered to be brothers and sisters. Preference is given to father's sister's daughter and mother's brother's daughter who are called *Marraseboi*.

20. Didayi marriage assume any of the following three forms : *Bihay* or marriage by negotiation, *Gube* or marriage by capture and *Posiamundi* in which the girl forcibly gets into the groom's house and enters into sexual relation with him. It was learnt from the informants and from those assisting in the study that the marriage by negotiation is more frequent than the other two categories.

21. Negotiation is always initiated by the father of the groom and may continue for 2 to 3 years. *Raibedia,* the mediator-negotiator visits the girl's house with presentation of *penam* (wine). On the date prior to the marriage, 4 to 5 persons from the groom's village proceed to the girl's house in order to fetch her. Neither the father of the groom nor any member of the household accompanies the party. On the date of marriage, both the bride and the groom are taken to a river or a pond. Both are made to stand on a place plastered with cowdung water. A new piece of cloth is held as a canopy over their heads. The *desari* officiating in the marriage wears a new cloth. The boy and the girl keep all their four hands folded with the boy's hand at the top. A few grains of rice are kept on it which are picked up by a dark cock. The same cock, however, is later sacrificed (Sani Biru) and its body is thrown away. The girl is then physically carried by other girls of the village and the groom is carried away either on the head or the shoulder of other *dhangadas* (unmarried bachelors) of the village. When both enter the house of the groom, somebody from the eaves throws turmeric water on them. After both enter into the house, the boy with a loud exclamation of joy asks the bride to dehusk some paddy. Some amount of this rice is put into the rice to be served in the feast the same evening. These formalities complete the rituals of marriage. Mahapatra (Adibasi : 1963-64 : No. II : 65) reports that February to April is the season for marriage and Tuesday and Wednesday are considered to be the auspicious days. According to him the bride price called *gneng* consists of a cow, one metal plate, one arrow, three plates of rice, one new cloth and one small chicken seated over a cock. All these are offered to the bride's father who on receipt announces to the groom's father that he is finally offering his daughter for his son. The informants, however, stated that after the feast on the day of marriage, bride price ranging from Rs. 100 to Rs. 120 is paid to the bride's father

Death

22. Cremation is more popular than burial. Only persons dying of such infectious disease as pox are buried. The dead body is not removed until the arrival of all the relatives who wash the dead body and anoint oil and turmeric on it. Each of the relatives then offer a small *khadi* (new cloth). The body is carried to the cremation ground by the relatives, either on a piece of charpoy or on *baunsa tati,* i.e., a mat of split bamboo. The head points south and face upwards on the funeral pyre. Any of the relatives lits the first fire. Immediately after the pyre takes fire, all those accompanying the funeral procession along with the pall-bearers leave the cremation ground for their respective homes. They visit the ground once again 2 to 3 hours after in order to ensure that the body has been fully burnt. They visit the place once again next morning and with the water carried in a new water-melon pot, they sprinkle the same in order to extinguish the fire. The same day they clean the house with cowdung water and wash all their clothes. They carry from the cremation ground neither the bones nor the ashes as it is their firm belief that it is only the *Pangana,* i.e., one who is adept in the art of *mantras* who will touch the same.

23. On the date after cremation, after the house is cleaned they keep turmeric water and water in two leaf cups. Cynodon and *Jamu* (Eugenia jambolana) twigs are put into both these leaf cups. All the relatives and members of the household touch the water in those leaf cups and then go out.

24. A year after and during *Kartik* or *Margasir,* the annual *sudhi kriya* (purification rites) take place. On this day, a feast is arranged. In a corner of the house of the deceased, the *desari* cooks rice called *Charu bhata* in a separate oven, whose fire is forbidden to be blown. The desari takes a part of this rice called *kua bhata* and dedicates it near the cremation ground to the soul of the deceased. With this ends the final stage of purification. This function called *Buda* appears to be expensive though some dose of prestige is attached to its observance.

Language, literacy and education

25. According to 1961 Census, **only 2·7** per cent of the population are literate which is certainly very poor when compared to the all-State percentage of 7·3 for the scheduled tribes. There are none in the tribe who have gone up to primary or junior basic standard. In 1961 Census all of them have returned as speaking Oriya as their mother-tongue, Bilingualism is rare. Only 70 persons out of the total population of 1978 can speak Telugu as a language subsidiary to their mother-tongue. The Table below gives detailed districtwise figure on literacy and education

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION
(Census, 1961)

State District	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above	Percentage of illiterate	Percentage of literate
Orissa ..	1,978	1,924	54	54	..	..	97·3	2·7
aput ..	1,978	1,924		54	..	..	97·3	2·7

Occupation

26. The Table below on the industrial classification of the population according to 1961 Census will show that 66·6 per cent of their population are workers. Majority are employed in cultivation and agricultural labour. Only 4·7 per cent of their population are employed in other avocations of life and **services.**

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION
(Census, 1961)

Category	P	M	F
Total population ..	1,978	962	1,016
Workers:			
I. Cultivator ..	1,173	576	597
II. Agricultural labourer	51	12	39
III. Mining, quarrying, etc...	27	16	11
IV. Household industry ..	7	2	5
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..	..	..	..
VI. Construction ..	..	..	..
VII. Trade and commerce ..	..	..	..
VIII. Transport, storage and communications. ..	..	..	..
IX. Other services ..	59	24	35
Total workers ..	1,317	630	687
Non-workers ..	661	332	329

27. According to Mahapatra (Adibasi : 1963-64 : No. 2 : 65), the hill Didayis practise shifting cultivation. Those on the plains, have taken to settled agriculture. Both the groups cultivate *ragi* and *suan* extensively. The monthly cycle of economic activities of the hill Didayi are as follows : In *Magh* or *Phalgun,* Guebar or virgin forests are cleared by felling trees. In *Chaitra* or *Baisakh* the dried logs are burnt. With bamboos fetched from the jungle, the house compounds are fenced. In *Jestha,* houses are thatched with *Piri,* a type of jungle grass which grows on Birla or tree-less hill tops. These hill tops are abandoned after shifting cultivation for a few years. *During Jestha,* the *suan* fields are dug for broadcast of *suan.* The operation is continued during the month of *Asadha* when the stumps and other undergrowths of *guebar* or virgin forests are cleared for broadcast of *ragi* and other seeds. During *Sravana,* seeds of rice, maize, millet, *jhurung* (cow-peas), chillies, castor, cucumber and *biri* are broadcast on the patch of cleared forest. In *Bhadra* or *Aosa,* vegetable seeds like tomato, brinjal and chillies are sown. In *Aswina,* weeds are

DIDAYI

Village of study :

1. ORAGI
   P. S. Malkangiri
   Dist. Koraput

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Ghasiram Golpada, S/o. Mulia Golpada
2. Shri Buti-Madi, S/o. Ghasi Madi
3. Shri Budan Palasi, S/o. Buri Palasi
4. Ramu Golpada, S/o. Bothi Golpada



A Didayi woman



A Didayi woman—with the hilly terrain as the back drop

cleared from *suan* and *ragi* fields. During subsequent three months up to *Pousa, suan* and *ragi* are harvested, dehusked and stored.

28. The plain Didayis have very little virgin forests to fall back upon. They depend on paddy and *ragi* on wet land cultivation. They grow cash crops like *atsi* more extensively than the hill Didayi. Besides *ragi* and *mahul* which are utilised for production of liquor wine, the juice of *salap* tree provides another abundant source of wine all the year round. It is significant that whereas the hill Didayis still lead a level of bare subsistence with their economy lingering on at the stage of gleaning, the plain Didayis can be said to be slightly better off.

29. It is important to know the process of shifting cultivation as practised by the hill Didayi. The virgin forest is cleared by felling the trees in February to March. The logs are allowed to dry up after which usually in May and June the stumps and other under-growths are cleared. After one harvest the field is called *sasembar* where only a small variety of *suan* is cultivated. After the second harvest the plot becomes *birla* for 3 to 4 years. During the intervening period no cultivation is taken up. After 3 years or so it again becomes *guebar* and shifting cultivation is practised again. The process continues till that patch of land is finally used for cultivation of small variety of *suan,* maize and vegetables.

Village organisation

30. The headman of the tribe at the village level is called *Naik. Chalan and Barik* assist him in the process. All social disputes of the village are decided by the *Naik* who takes the advice of elderly persons of the tribe. Social anomalies relating to marriage, death, divorce and elopement are decided by him. There is another functionary, the village *Pujhari* who works as the priest of the tribe and worships the deities. He also attends all marriage functions. The village *desari* also attends to marriages and works as the village *Baidya* (physician). The *Sirua* is one who knows the language of the spirits. In case somebody falls ill, the first man who is consulted is the *Desari* and then the *Sirua.*

Religion and festivals

31. Deities worshipped by them are *Bhairab, Hundi Devata, Thakurani Mata* and *Nisani.* They consider *Nandi* as the supreme god. Next to him is *Hundi Devata* who is believed to be the protector and who keeping watch over the village wards off the malevolent spirits. The *Nandi Devata* are a pair of deities represented by two earthen posts each belonging to either sex. The village is usually divided into two groups one retaining the male deity and the other the female deity. They worship both the deities in *Magh* corresponding to January and February. Feasting, drinking and dancing continues for about a week. Besides they believe in *Chuan Devata* who is the water goddess. She is worshiped with sacrifice of an egg every month failing which it is popularly believed that calamities would be fall on the village.

32. Among festivals, mention may be made of *Chaita parba* in March to April when members of the tribe go to the forest for hunting and for worshipping their deity, *Bhairab* with sacrifice of a goat. *Pus Parba* is observed in the month of *Pausa* (December-January). The festival is also known as *Simba* festival as they take new bean for the first time after offering the same to the deities. They observe *Osa Parba* in *Bhadrab* and *Nandi Parba* in *Magha.* During *Pus Parba* they also worship cattle.

References:

1. The Didayi—a hill tribe of Orissa, Adibasi : No. 2—1963-64

2. Adibasi, N . .—1963-64

MIRDHA

Russell and Hiralal (1916:Vol. I :390) describe Mirdhas as a branch of the Khangar or Dahait caste of Saugor and Damoh. As an explanation of the name, he mentions that this section of the caste were born from a Mohammadan father and a Dahait woman and hence were called Mir-Dahaits or Mirdaha, Mir being a Mohammadan title. Mirdha is, however, a name of the head of the caste committee among the Dahaits and in Gujarat the name is said to be a corruption of Mir-deh or mason of the village. Risley (1891:Vol. II:92) mentions Mirdha as a section of the Kadar caste in Bihar. According to Mohanty (1964:181), the Mirdha is a small Dravidian tribe which is only referred as Koda in the districts of Sambalpur and Bolangir. The traditional occupation of the tribe is the digging and carrying of earth and hence they are known as Koda. The term Mirdha means head cooly. The Kodas in course of time have adopted this honourable term Mirdha instead of the derogatory term Koda which means earth-working labourers.

2. The Mirdha and Koda find separate mention as two distinct tribes in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956. The Mirdha were studied by this organisation in village Dongapal of Jujomura P. S. in the district of Sambalpur. Their concentration in this region is fairly thick. The informants of the tribe stated that they were previously being called as Koda. In the days of yore at some place a huge embankment was being cut. The problem was who would give the first dig. The trouble was that if the Harijans did the job, other castes and tribes would not accept the water. The Mirdhas, then called Kodas, accepted the challenge and took upon themselves the task of the first dig. On account of the gallantry involved in the first dig, they since then were named as Mirdhas.

3. The Mirdhas in the area under study contend that their ancestors resided previously in Dhanpur-Nagapur area wherefrom they migrated to different regions. Even today, while worshipping a god or a goddess, the Mirdhas utter the name Dhanpur as a mark of memory to their original habitat.

4. The informants in the village under study stated that they belong to the Bada Koda section and that there were a fairly large concentration of Sana Kodas in Sonepur area of Bolangir district whereas in the marriage rituals of Bada Kodas no crown is worn and music is not allowed. Sana Kodas accept these customs.

5. According to Mohanty there are only two divisions within the tribe, the Bada Koda or Kunhar and Sana Koda or San Kunhar. The Bada Koda have retained many of their Kisan customs while the Sana Koda section seems to have come closer to their Oriya neighbours in their customs. Mohanty asserts that the so called Mirdha are none else but a section of the Kisan tribe. Local enquiry revealed that the Mirdhas are called as Kodas by their neighbouring communities.

6. They accept water from none of the neighbouring communities. Some relaxation in this rule is tolerated till marriage after which the practice is held as a great taboo. Water from the hands of Kols and Gonds who constitute a large bulk of the neighbouring population in the area under study is not accepted by the Mirdhas.

Geographical distribution and population

7. They constitute numerically a small tribe with only 0·6 per cent of the total scheduled tribes population in the State. The district of Sambalpur alone claims 62 per cent of the tribe. The next two districts

to follow in descending order are Bolangir, Dhenkanal and Kalahandi. The Table below gives the districtwise population of the tribe.

8. They are essentially a rural community as their total urban population is only 571. The sex ratio is 997 females to a thousand males. The only Police Station to contain more than 10 per cent of their population is Jujomura of Sambalpur district.

Table 1
POPULATION
(Census, 1961)

State/District	P	M	F
Orissa ..	26,660	13,352	13,308
Kalahandi ..	1,268	662	606
Koraput ..	732	343	389
Sambalpur ..	16,491	8,195	8,296
Bolangir ..	4,946	2,469	2,477
Baudh-Khondmals ..	593	293	300
Sundargarh ..	39	32	7
Dhenkanal ..	2,094	1,104	990
Puri ..	144	70	74
Keonjhar ..	172	105	67
Mayurbhanj ..	181	79	102

Houses and living condition

9. They inhabit villages either exclusively to themselves or when mixed up with others in the same village, they have a separate hamlet. In Dangapal, for example, there are Chasas, Gonds, Dhobas, Bhandaris and Mirdhas, but the latter have a separate hamlet. In two other neighbouring villages, viz., Jharanpada and Dhatakipara, no tribe other than Mirdha inhabit them. In Bagdafa, there are Gondas, Goudas, Sauras and Telis, but Mirdhas have a separate hamlet

10. The procedure for reckoning an auspicious site is similar to those practised by the neighbouring tribes. Seven grains of rice with turmeric are put into pits at four corners of the site. The heaps are examined the next day. If they are seen in tact, the site is considered as auspicious.

11. The Mirdhas do not have their tribal astrologer. Before erecting the first pole they dig a pit, put *Dub* (Cynodon) grass, rice and turmeric into it and then place the pillar in the name of the goddess *Matima*. On the post is placed an earthen pot and some mango leaves are tied on to it. Wednesday in considered as auspicious for entry into a new house. On the date of entry, a feast is arranged. Some food is first offered to the soul of the deceased ancestors and finally a few friends and relatives are fed.

12. The houses in a Mirdha village follow no fixed pattern. They are mostly scattered in an irregular fashion. The houses are usually two-roomed with walls made of bamboo mats or dried twigs thickly plastered with mud and thatched with straw. Pucca houses are rare and in the area under study, it is difficult to come across a roof covered with tiles. The houses are fenced by twigs and occasionally one comes across a big enclosure. The components of the roof are bamboo or wooden poles and thatching is done with wild grass or date palm leaves or straw. Of the two rooms, one is used as a kitchen and the other as bed-*cum*-store. There are no windows and usually a small shed is constructed for the cattle and chicken. The courtyards and the surroundings do not present a picture of sanitation. All rubbish, cowdung and refuses are heaped at the backyard.

Dress and ornaments

13. A short piece of dhoti or sari usually coarse and hand-woven by the neighbouring Gondas is their usual dress. Women put on saris placing the anchal on the right shoulder. Even grown-up children wear loin cloths called *koupins* or *longutis*. Those having education in the school, put on shirts and pants.

14. Use of golden ornaments by women is rare except for the ear and nose in the form of nose-rings and nose-tops and ear-rings and ear-tops. The ornaments for the nose are *Ganthia* and *Jhalka;* for the nose *Guna* and *Nakaputki;* for the neck *Khagala* and *Gunja mali;* for the wrist *Bandria, Chudi, Baha suta* and *Tada* and *Paijhal* for the ankle.

15. Not much care is taken about the hair dressing. Long hairs uncombed and irregularly tied on to a knob at the right back side of the head is the usual pattern. *Alta*, a red paint is used by women over their feet. The women are to tattoo their limbs particularly before marriage. Both the arms, the hands and legs are tattooed by various floral designs.

Food

16. They do not take beef and pork. Rice is their staple food but their chief millet is *gulzi.* Cereals and pulses of other varieties are also taken along with edible forest roots and fruits. *Tola* oil and *sargi oil* extracted respectively from *Mahula* and *Sal* seeds are greatly relished.

17. Three meals a day is the common feature. Early morning they take rice cooked the previous night and soaked in cold water. The same is repeated during day time but at night, they prefer to have hot boiled rice.

18. Of drinks, liquor extracted from *Mahula* flower and juice extracted from date palm trees are relished. They also prepare *kusuna* or rice-beer and offer the same to their fore-fathers and deities on ceremonial occasions. Chewing tobacco is a popular addiction.

Birth

19. A woman usually gives birth to her first child in the house of her husband. No restriction worth the name is imposed on the woman or husband during the pre-natal period. No separate arrangement for a lying-in-room is made and birth takes place in a corner of the bed room. An elderly woman of the tribe assists the mother in confinement. This woman cuts the umbilical cord with the knife and buries it with the placenta in a pit in the back-yard. Immediately after delivery, paddy husks of fine variety is rubbed on to its body to bring out the mucus after which a tepid water bath is given. The baby is fed cow's milk till the mother lactates. The mother is kept under a restricted diet chiefly consisting of vegetable soup and hot boiled rice. Normally no fire in the lying-in-room called *Antudi* is arranged except when either of them catch severe cold or pneumonia.

20. Pollution continues for a week. On expiry of the period, the house and its surroundings are cleaned with cowdung water. A feast is arranged for members of the tribe and the child is named. It is the father or the grandfather who names the child. Double grains of rice are put into turmeric water and names of dead relatives are simultaneously uttered. If both the grains float and meet, the name uttered is accepted for the child and the dead man concerned is believed to stage a resurrection. After naming the child, both the grains of rice and the wilted naval stump are buried together on the door way of the bed room. A bit of *kusuna* or rice-beer is also mixed with it.

21. The final purification ceremony takes place on the 21st day when a final cleaning of house, clothes and pots are done. A feast is arranged in order to entertain the tribesmen.

Puberty

22. No restriction whatsoever is imposed on the girl attaining her puberty nor any segregation is observed during subsequent menstruations. The whole affair is just taken so normally that there is no formal recognition of such an important critical stage in the life-cycle.

MIRDHAS

Villages of study :

1. JUJOMURA
2. DANGAPAL
   P. S. Jujomura
   Dist. Sambalpur

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Gokulananda Naik, A. E. O.
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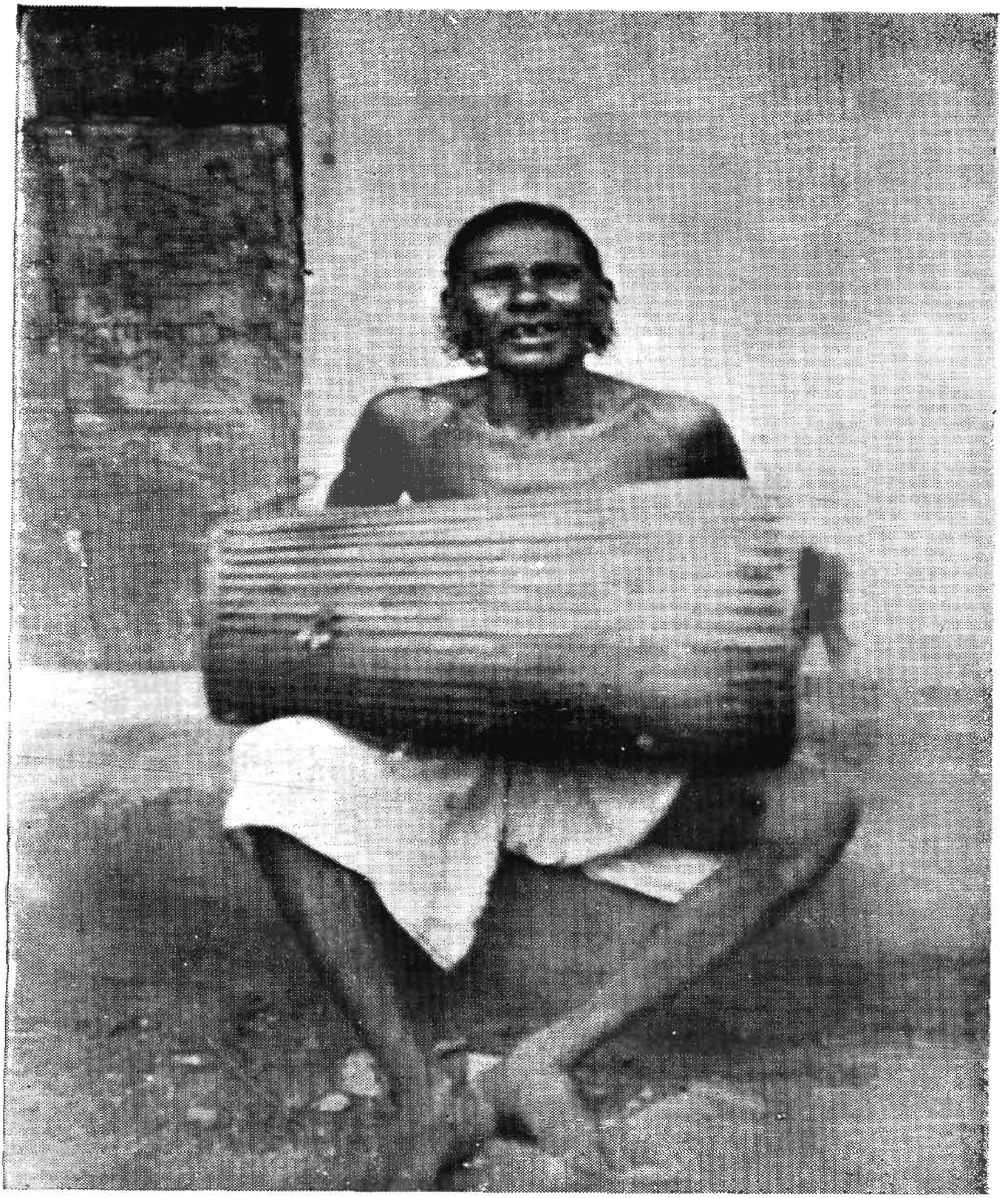
3. Shri Raghunath Dev, H. C.
4. Shri Dutiya Mirdha, S/o. Charu Mirdha
5. Shri Ranjit Mirdha, S/o. Gobinda Mirdha
6. Shri Srimuka Mirdha, S/o. Jhala Mirdha
7. Shri Suru Mirdha, S/o. Basu Mirdha



A Mirdha youth



A Mirdha woman



A Mirdha with his madal



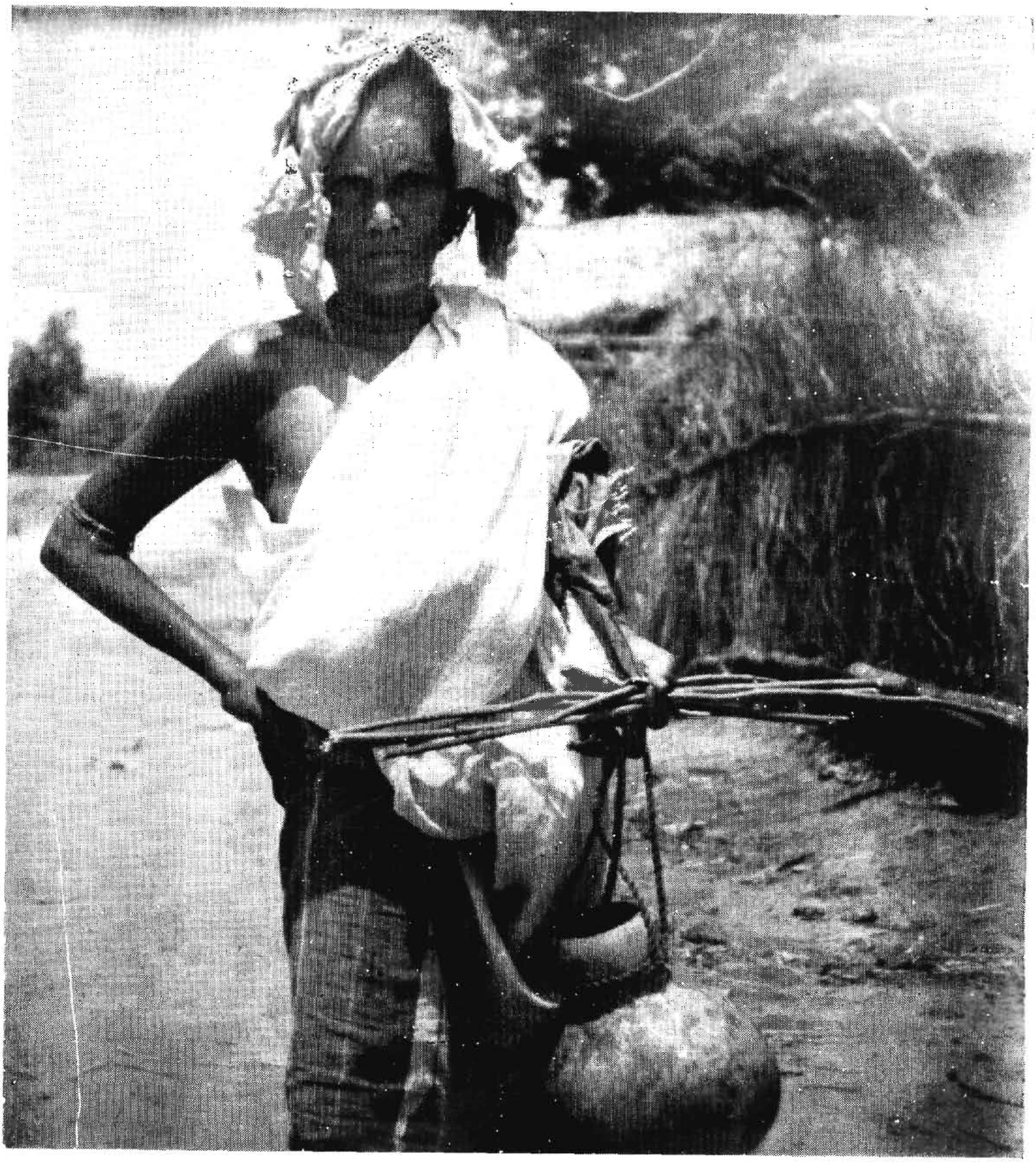
A Mirdha woman



Mirdha boys on a cradle



A Mirdha woman carrying Kendu leaves



A Mirdha woman—front view

Marriage

23. The tribe is divided into a number of exogamous septs called *gotra*. *Gotras* in the village under study are *Macha, Majhi, Bagha* and *Kau*. The only title they all invariably use is Mirdha. Marriage usually occurs between adults. Marriage of widows and divorced women is allowed. Marriage with the daughter of one's maternal uncle is possible. Sororate and levirate are practised.

24. Most marriages are finalised through mediators. The parents of the boy usually take the initiative in a marriage settled through negotiation, choose a negotiator whom they call *Kanihara* and depend on him for finalisation of all details of marriage till the marriage is solemnised. The month of *Magh* is the most suitable month for marriage and the days considered auspicious are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Bride price usually includes Rs. 4/- in cash, 4 pairs of dhotis and 2 pairs of saris.

25. On the preceding day of marriage, two elderly women of the bridegroom's party visit the house of the bride in order to fetch her to the house of the boy on the date of marriage. The women trek the distance and no formal drum beating is done.

26. Marriage rituals are gone through on a raised platform under a shed specially constructed for the purpose. The parents of the boy usually hand over the entire responsibility of marriage to an elderly and experienced man of the tribe who is vested with full authority to operate on behalf of the parents of the boy. He is the man of the occasion. In case the parents of the boy do not go by this convention and try to manage the whole show by themselves, they are held as miserly. It is the old man who pours water on the head of the groom and the bride and puts vermilion mark on the forehead of the latter.

27. The marriage is followed by dance, feast and drinks. Meat and *kusuna* (wine) must be served on the occasion.

28. The *Udulia* form of marriage when the boy and girl fall in love and decide to marry is prevalent but *Jhinka* form involving marriage by capture is reported as rare. A tribal feast follows the *Udulia* form of marriage. Marriage within the same *gotra* is prohibited.

29. Separation does not take place immediately after marriage of adult sons. It follows a conflict or strong difference of opinion between members of the family.

Death

30. The dead are buried. The dead body is anointed with oil and turmeric paste and after being wrapped up with a new piece of cloth is carried to the burial ground over a cot by the tribesmen. Old earthen pots in use in the household are thrown away at the outskirts of the village. Here the body is taken round the cot seven times before being finally carried to the burial ground.

31. A pit is dug to size, usually 6′×3′ and about 4′ deep. The body is placed inside the pit with the head pointing south. The eldest son serves as the chief mourner. He throws the first handful of earth to fill up the pit and others follow him. 10 to 12 stone slabs along with thorny twigs are placed over the pit perhaps to ward off jackals and other carrion-eaters.

32. After burial, the pall-bearers return to the house of the deceased where a bit of oil in a pot, some turmeric water and bit of oil, fish and neem leaf dust thrown on to a small pyre wait to purify them. They warm up their body and hands in the fire. The descendants of the deceased have to be fed by one of the tribesmen who collects rice from different households. The pall bearers too take the same.

33. Pollution is observed for 11 days. On the 12th day the eldest son goes to the burial ground with a small earthen pot filled with water. He cleans the ground, prepares a small earthen toy and carries it back home within the pot. The pot with the toy is buried within the house till the 10th day of *Kartika* of the succeeding year and in memory of the dead, a morsel of food is offered everyday. The houses are cleaned with cowdung water. Male members get themselves shaved. All clothes and cooking pots are either washed or replaced. A tribal feast is held in which rice and meat are served.

34. On the 10th day of the bright fortnight in the month of *Kartika,* the pot containing the toy is brought out of the floor of the room and is thrown into a river or stream nearby where they believe that the dead soul attains its salvation. The members of the tribe in the village under survey stated that they used to go to river Malati near Khandual. Because of the distance, of late, they have been going to the river Bhimakhoj for performing the ceremony called *Buda.*

Language, literacy and education

35. According to 1961 Census, majority have Oriya as their mother-tongue. Only 5,539 persons speak Mirdha. A few speak Telugu and other languages. Almost 50 per cent of the Mirdha population of Sambalpur speak Mirdha as their mother-tongue and those of this category in other districts are rather rare.

36. A considerable section of the Mirdha population are bilingual. The majority of them belong to the category who have Mirdha as the mother-tongue. Again, of the latter category, the majority speak Oriya as their subsidiary language.

37. The percentage of literacy among the tribe is 10·7 which is higher when compared to 7·4, being the percentage of literacy of scheduled tribes against its total population. In fact, in the village under survey though the population was meagre, as many as 4 students in the local L.-P. school hail from this tribe. In neighbouring Jharnapara, 10 children including girls belonging to the tribe were in the primary school but the villagers could not recall the name of one who has read up to matriculation stage or above. The Table below on Literacy and Education gives the districtwise break-up of details.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Census, 1961)

State/District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	26,660	23,796	2,864	2,589	271	4
Kalahandi ..	1,268	1,193	75	72	3	..
Koraput ..	732	689	43	41	2	..
Sambalpur ..	16,491	14,492	1,999	1,782	215	2
Bolangir ..	4,946	4,621	325	304	19	2
Baudh-Khondmals ..	593	499	94	91	3	..
Sundargarh ..	39	36	3	3	..	..
Dhenkanal ..	2,094	1,810	284	261	23	..
Puri ..	144	142	2	2	..	..
Keonjhar ..	172	137	35	29	6	..
Mayurbhanj ..	181	177	4	4	..	..

Occupation

38. The Mirdhas are expert earth-workers. The men do the digging and women assist them. The implements used are simple and primitive. They are *kudi* and *gounti* for digging and *dola* or *bhara* for carrying the earth. Majority of course work as agriculturists and field labourers. But in the area under study the collection of Kendu leaves from 15th April to 15th June stands out as the most ostensible occupation. Women join in their hands and if one enters the village during the peak collection season, one finds the entire village empty till about noon. Other collections made in the nearby forests are roots, fruits, fuel, tooth sticks and leaves. The last named item is collected for preparation of leaf cups and plates. The figures on the industrial classification of population are given in the Table below.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Census, 1961)

Category	P	M	F
Total population ..	26,660	13,352	13,308
Workers			
I. Cultivator ..	8,191	4,946	3,245
II. Agricultural labourer	3,395	2,386	1,009
III. Mining and quarrying, etc.	81	24	57
IV. Household Industry	365	128	237
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	19	19	--
VI. Construction ..	5	5	..
VII. Trade and commerce.	87	23	64
VIII. Tronsport, storage and communications.	6	6	..
IX. Other services ..	2,460	1,273	1,187
Total workers ..	14,609	8,810	5,799
Non-workers ..	12,051	4,542	7,509

Village organisation

39. There seems to **exist no headman of** the tribe at the village level. The headman known as Behera Pradhan of the village under study, for example, stays in Phalsakholia, another neighbouring village. He is the tribal head or the group of villages called Barpali Ilaka, i.e., a group of 12 villages. His post is hereditary and all disputes and deviations from social laws are decided upon by him. Marriage of widows and divorced women have his consent. He punishes the delinquents by imposing fine. His decisions are deemed as final and binding over all members of the tribe.

Religion and festivals

40. The member informants of the tribe appear blissfully ignorant about their gods, goddesses, deities and religion. It was immensely difficult to extract from them anything about their religion. On enquiry it was ascertained that they profess Hinduism as their religion and worship many Hindu gods and goddesses. Though Shiva, Bishnu and goddess Durga are revered most, Budha Devata and Mangala Thakurani are some other goddesses worshipped by them.

41. They have great faith in their dead ancestors. They also believe in the existence of ghosts and spirits.

42. *Nuakhia* is by far their most important festival. This is observed for a day in the month of *Bhadrab* corresponding to August-September. On the occasion, new rice is taken for the first time. *Pitru-Pita* or the souls of the dead are worshipped along with their *Ista-Devata* or the presiding deity.

43. *Amba-gundi* festival is observed on the full-moon day in the month of *Falguna* when mango, *Mahula, Chara* and *Kendu* are taken for the first time.

They do not observe such Hindu festivals as Diwali or Dasahara.

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DESUA BHUMIJ

Desua Bhumij as mentioned in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1956 are numerically a very small tribe with their total population enumerated at 248 only in the State in 1961 Census.

2. They are no doubt a section of the Bhumij tribe and it is perhaps true that the principal distinction between Desua Bhumij and other categories of the Bhumij tribe is the adoption of Oriya as the mother-tongue by the former. All other sections of Bhumij appear to retain still traces of their original dialect. The appellation *Desi* or *Desua* probably indicates that they are, unlike other sections, autochthonous of the land.

3. An extensive search for a settlement of the tribe in the district of Mayurbanj revealed that the appellation *Desi* or *Desua* is unfamiliar to many sections of the Bhumij tribe, particularly in Kaptipada and Sadar subdivisions of Mayurbhanj district. Whereas Haladipokharia and Tamundia sections abound in those areas, none of them could locate for certain any concentration of Desua Bhumij. It was learnt at Deuli in Suliapada police-station from one of the Haladipokharia Bhumij of the locality that he had married the daughter of a Desua Bhumij. It is on receipt of this clue that the village of the father-in-law of the informant was visited and the Bhumij there who identified themselves as Desi Bhumij were studied.

4. It is a fact that the Desi Bhumij are fast melting into the parent pot of the Bhumij class. They are fast losing their separate identity and their urge to identify themselves as Haladipokharia Bhumij appears perceptible. The informants in the village of study in Suliapada P.-S. initially identified themselves as Desi Bhumij but in no time retracted to claim that they belonged to the same category as Haladipokharia Bhumij. That they fought shy to identify themselves as Desi Bhumij and loved to align themselves with the Haladipokharia Bhumij is a fact but the reasons appeared obscure. The reasons might lie in their numerical minority and the social pressure to merge into the ocean of the parent major community. The subject certainly demands a more intensive probe. It was learnt during enquiry that marital relationship between Haladipokharia and Desi Bhumij is gradually growing frequent and that like the Haladipokharia section, members of the Desua class carry, if resources permit, the bone of the deceased to Haladipokhari in Bihar for disposal.

5. It has been stated in the Adibasi (1963-64 : 125) that they are known as Singbhumia Bhumij. They neither call themselves as such in the village under study nor are they known by this appellation by their neighbours.

6. Their surname is *Singh* and it was stated by the informants that unlike other sections of Bhumij like Haladipokharia, Bara Bhuiyan, Sikhar Bhuiyan, Munda Manika, Tamundia and Changua who know the *thara* or dialect of the Bhumij, they know Oriya only as the mother-tongue. They are divided into so many exogamous septs like *Kauri, Kuchia, Hembrum* and *Udu*.

Geographical distribution and population

7. The distribution of population of this tribe can be studied from the table below. The Census Report of Mayurbhanj, 1931 makes no mention of Desua Bhumij as a separate tribe and deals with Bhumij in general. In 1961 Census, however, a total

DESUA BHUMIJ

Villages of study :

1. PATHARNESA
   P. S. Suliapada
   Dist. Mayurbhanj
2. GOBINDAPUR
   P. S. Suliapada
   Dist. Mayurbhanj

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3. Shri Chakulu Singh
4. Shri Maheswar Singh
5. Shri Baidhar Singh
6. Shri Kalipada Singh
7. Shri Nath Singh, S/o. Maheswar Singh



A typical house – front view



Two women in front of their house



Two women—one with a child in her arm

number of 248 persons have been returned out of which 137 are males and 111 are females. Out of this 206 have been enumerated in the district of Mayurbhanj alone. The other two districts with a smattering of their population are Puri and Sambalpur. The police-station areas containing more than 10 per cent of their population are Suliapada (122), Baisinga (82) and Nayagarh (39). From the nature of their distribution, it may be inferred that they are the original settlers of Mayurbhanj and that they have migrated in course of time to other districts of the State. But the informants—members of the tribe claimed that their ancestors belonged to Haludpukhur in Bihar which is borne out from the fact that their ancestors invariably visited the place for disposal of the bone of the dead. At present, very few members of the tribe can afford to go all the way.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	248	137	111
Sambalpur	..	3	3	—
Puri	..	39	22	17
Mayurbhanj	.	206	112	94

Houses

8. Being numerically small, they are thinly distributed in lots of five to ten families per village. In villages having a majority of higher caste Hindus, members of this tribe stay together but at a distance from the settlement of the former. With other Scheduled castes and tribes, they reside together without keeping any physical distance.

9. Their dwelling houses reflect their modest living. The huts are small, one or two-roomed with narrow mud verandahs. The dimension of the rooms varies according to the resources of the household. The smallest single-roomed hut measures $7\frac{1}{2}' \times 10\frac{1}{2}'$ though the customary dimensions of rooms are 5 cubits by 15 cubits and 7 cubits by 17 cubits. Rooms are divided by a thin partition wall, a door is attached to each of these two rooms and no door is attached to the partition wall. They avoid using windows, for fear of evil spirits and thieves. A part of the room is used as the kitchen during the rains and the winter, whereas during the summer, a part of the outside verandah is enclosed for the purpose by palm leaves or bamboo screens. The walls are made of *sal* logs and mud. The roof is thatched with straw. Ceilings of bamboo poles and wooden planks are found in well-to-do households.

10. The very few who own cattle construct sheds very close to the living room. The *Dhenki*—a wooden pedal for dehusking paddy occupies a part of the cattle shed.

11. Hand-made stringed charpoys are ordinarily used by the head of the family as separate provision of one for each of the family members is a luxury, they can ill afford to. Others therefore, sleep on the ground on palm-leaf mats. Cotton pillows are scarce but an improvised one made of straw is in common use.

12. Generally each married couple has a separate hut. The unmarried boys and girls sleep with their elders in the same room. The rooms, the courtyard and their surroundings are kept fairly neat. A fence is put round the compound wherein fruit trees like papaya, palm, custard apple, and horse radish are grown along with irregular clusters of bamboo clumps.

Dress

13. Their dress is poor and simple. A napkin 4 to 5 cubits long is all that a male member of the tribe wears both at home

and in the field. It is only when he moves out on occasions special or festive that he wears a dhoti 7 to 8 cubits long and about 2 cubits wide.

14. Women drape saris 9 to 10 cubits long and 2½ cubits wide. Hand-made cloths are increasingly being replaced by mill-made ones. Children up to an age of 4 or 5 go naked. Above this age, they are given cotton knickers, shirts, jackets and frocks.

15. On ceremonial occasions, men use fine white dhotis, jerseys and shirts. Women use fine saris with gaudy borders, blouses and petticoats. Widows do not use saris or blouses as their only dress is a borderless dhoti. They have no separate warm clothing for the winter. A coarse cotton wrapper is all that men wear while moving about in the cold weather.

16. They have no formal head dress nor do they use any foot-wear. Those who can afford provide their school-going boys with shoes and socks.

Ornaments

17. Women are fond of ornaments. Hairpins of silver and nickel, *champakadi* and muff-chains of silver for the neck, *baju* (armlets) of silver, bracelets and bangles of nickel and silver, ear-rings and ear-drops of imitation gold, nose-pins of gold, anklets and rings of silver and nickel are commonly used. Married women during the life time of their husbands wear *katuri* of brass whereas the widows usually go without any ornament. Only when the widow is young that she is allowed to wear a bangle on each wrist and a light muff-chain on the neck. Men use silver and nickel rings. Women use collyrium in their eyes and those married use vermilion and *alta*. Scented oil, toilet powder, etc., are becoming popular with members of the higher economic status.

Food

18. The food habit of this tribe is simple. Rice constitutes the staple food. Three meals a day is customary, but with their meagre resources, they can hardly afford this all the year round. The menu consists of hot boiled rice or boiled rice soaked in water, fried edible leaves *(sag)* and a pinch of salt with chilly and a raw onion or garlic. Pulses are rarely taken but when used it replaces all other items except rice. Flattened rice or baked rice is served to the children as tiffin. The members of the tribe are essentially non-vegetarian. They relish all kinds of fish and meat of goat, sheep, bear, fowl, duck, snipe and pigeon. Beef, pork and carrion are prohibited. Crabs, tortoise and red-ants are taken. Dried fish is taken frequently.

19. Besides garden fruits and vegetables, varieties of tubers, plums and fruits from the forests are enjoyed freely. *Kachada* oil extracted out of *mohua* seeds and mustard oil are the common media for cooking Ghee is seldom used though on festive occasions dehydrogenated oil is used in preparing cakes, etc. Milk and milk products are not popular with them. It is rarely on festive occasions that they take sweets purchased from the market. Rice-beer and *mohua* liquor are very liberally taken by members of both the sex on festive and ceremonial days. Rice-beer is distilled at home, and wine is got from licensed vendors. Tea, as a cheap beverage is gaining popularity, particularly at market places. Opium and *ganja* are not taken by members of the tribe.

Birth

20. A few prohibitions, based apparently on superstitious beliefs are attched to movements of an expectant mother. She is also not permitted to visit houses in mourning and never before the days of pollution are over. Her husband would not kill a snake, a fowl, a scorpion, not even an insect during the period.

21. The first delivery takes place in the house of her husband. The father of the parturient woman sends sweets, fish, vegetables and a sari. She is entertained sumptuously in a feast called *sad* alongwith the family members and other relations and later, her relations and other villagers feed her with the best of delicacies.

22. No new structure is erected for the delivery. A wing of the hut or a corner of the room is set apart for the purpose of a lying-in room. A midwife of the *Hadi* caste attends on the woman with other elderly women of the family. The umbilical cord is severed by the midwife with a conch shell piece and with the placenta it is buried by the *Hadiani* near the front door. The mother and the child are then given a warm water wash. The midwife is given half a seer of rice and seven turmeric pieces for accosting the child and some amount in cash for severing the umbilical cord.

23. The mother is served with half-fried rice and garlics about an hour after delivery. From the second day onwards, she is given hot boiled rice with dal and vegetable curry. The child is fed either with the goat's milk or milk fetched from some other mother till the mother lactates.

24. The period of pollution continues for 9 days in the first stage. On the ninth day called *Narta ghar,* washermen and barbers serve them. The house is dabbed with cowdung water, old earthen pots are replaced and the *Antudi khara* (ashes of the fire in the lying-in-room) are thrown out. Some persons observe the name-giving ceremony on this day. Others have it on *Makar Sankranti* day in the month of *Magha* or postpone it to some day a year after. The maternal uncle of the newborn selects the name.

25. The final purification takes place on the 21st day when the rooms are dabbed with cowdung water and the old earthen cooking pots, pitchers and baskets are again replaced by new ones. The maternal uncle visits the home of the new-born with a new sari for the mother, some ornaments for the child and sweets for all.

26. The members of the tribe abhor use of contraceptives or modern family planning methods. Attempt at abortion is deemed all the more sinful. If an unmarried woman conceives, the castemen take it on themselves to make all strenuous efforts to bring in a union. Sterility or still births are accepted as divine curses. The pinnae of the ears of children are bored between the age of one to seven. It is after ear boring that the boy is taken in as a member of the tribe. The uncle or the aunt, either paternal or maternal bores the ears. In rare cases, this is done two to four days before marriage. A Vaishnab Guru administers them *Karnamantra* on this day.

Puberty

27. On attaining puberty, a girl is kept secluded in a room for seven days where her food is served and she is not allowed to touch anyone. She does not bathe all these days. On the seventh day, she is taken to a bathing ghat by elderly women and relatives and anointing oil and turmeric paste all over her body, she takes a bath. She then wears a new sari and after bowing down before a sacred basil plant, she chews a leaf or two. She then bows down and pays obeisance to her parents and other superiors. Her movements thatafter are kept closely under watch and she is not given the opportunity to mix freely with the members of the opposite sex. Later menstruations keep her confined for four days only when she is not allowed to touch drinking water, cooking pots, etc. Nor is she allowed a visit to a temple or place of worship.

28. In many cases, because of the demands on a woman's abilities, she takes her bath on the very first day and attends to normal household work. In fact, elderly women with children do not observe pollution so strictly. They do not visit places of worship, but normally attend to all household duties.

Marriage

29. Marriage of adults is the rule although traces of child marriage exist. A girl is considered suitable for marriage on attaining puberty but the marriageable age is between 15 and 18. A young man marries when he is 20 to 25. *Jhinka* or marriage by force exists. One who applies vermilion mark forcibly on a girl's forehead is taken to task and is fined. Marriage through love and consent also occurs.

30. Initially, parents of both the parties meet to proceed with the negotiation and to consider such restrictions as the degree of relationship and gotra, etc. All going well, the help of a mediator locally called *Aguadar* or *Dandia* is sought to carry the negotiation to its final stage. On the date for betrothal as agreed upon earlier by members of both the parties, the father of the boy arrives in the bride's house with the mediator and makes over the bride price of Rs. 40 to the girl's father. A date for marriage is then finally fixed. Besides bride price called *pan,* the groom has to present saris for the bride for her mother, for her mother's mother and her father's sister on the day of marriage.

31. On the marriage day the boy and the girl take their baths before sunrise at their respective houses and wear new cloth dyed yellow with turmeric. They are not to eat anything solid till the marriage ceremony is over.

32. On the day preceding the marriage, the bridegroom proceeds to the house of the bride with friends, relatives and castemen. Drummers of the Hadi or Dom caste and a Brahmin priest also accompany them. They are accosted at the outskirts of the village where the brother and uncle of the bride receive them formally and escort them to their place of stay. The rituals of marriage are gone through during the small hours of the marriage day. The maternal uncles of the groom officiate in marriage.

33. The mother-in-law accosts the would-be son-in-law by washing his toes for which she gives presents in cash. She then leads him to the *Vedi* a mud platform raised specially for the marriage ceremony and modestly decorated with green mango leaves, etc. The maternal uncles of both the sides exchange vermilion on the *Vedi*. The bride is escorted by her mother to the *Vedi*. The groom holds her right hand and going round the *Vedi* makes her seated to his left. Both wear pith crowns on their foreheads. The fire-god is made a witness to the union which is solemnised in the form of uniting both their right palms with a holy cotton thread. The bridegroom then applies vermilion on the forehead of the bride. The ritual is reciprocated by the bride. Both are then escorted into the house. The younger sister of the bride bars their way at the threshold with the hope of some presents.

34. Both the groom and the bride anoint oil and turmeric on their bodies. Other girls present help them. Both are fed sumptuously and the ritual is called *Sital Tundi*. The girl receives presents from the folk.

35. The next morning, both return to the groom's house. Here too, the sister of the groom plays the parallel trick and prevents the bride from getting in until she realises her presents. The members of the party then retire to their house but the relatives hailing from distant places stay on for some more days. It is after the turmeric-soiled cloth is washed on the eighth or *Athmangala* day that the groom and the bride ceremonially meet off the evening and prior to this they are not allowed to see each other.

36. Marriage by capture is resented to now-a-days. This, in a way, reflects their aspiration to shun the old ways and be identified with the caste Hindus. Levirate and sororate are allowed. Cross cousin marriage and marriage with sister's children are strictly prohibited. Marriage within the same gotra is prohibited. It may be stated that there is no restriction in the marriage between

Desua Bhumij and Haldipokharia Bhumij. But marriage with Tamadia, Teli or Bari Bhuyan is not allowed.

37. Monogamy is the rule though wives suspected of sterility are divorced, and the aggrieved husband is allowed to take to another wife. Widow marriage is allowed but in such marriages the bride price is nominal and the elaborate rituals of marriage are not gone through. Divorce of the wife on grounds of infidelity, leprosy, etc., is allowed subject to the approval of the caste-panchayat. Extra-marital relations now-a-days are perhaps as rare as anywhere else.

Death

38. Cremation is the customary practice. But there are exceptions particularly for dead bodies of cholera, smallpox or leprosy patients which are thrown away. Dead bodies of small children are also buried. One has to burn the dead body of his wife as with burial the brother of the deceased will acquire the right to give her daughter in marriage to any person. The father of the girl or the caste society, in such a case, can raise no objection to this. The husband incises the womb of his pregnant woman on death. The foetus is buried under a *Mahula* tree and a drop of the latex is put into its mouth. The body of the mother is cremated. On hearing the death news of an adult, all castemen visit the house in mourning and make immediate arrangement for the cremation. The body of the deceased is washed well and vermilion and collyrium are then applied. A bier is prepared with 3 to 5 pieces of bamboo poles in the form of a ladder. The dead body placed on it is carried in a procession led by one of the sons of the deceased who carries a bundle of smoking straw. A spade, a new earthen pitcher, a sieve, a new dhoti and some wicks of cotton in a winnowing fan are articles carried alongwith the procession. The pall-bearers follow with shouts of *Haribol* at intervals.

39. The bier is lowered in the cremation ground and the funeral pyre is arranged. The corpse with a new cloth wrapped round loins is made to traverse the pyre thrice. It is then placed on the pyre with the face downward and the head northward. The face points upwards in cases of burial. The son accompanying the funeral procession lits the funeral pyre. He is then removed physically from the place of cremation with his eyes blind-fold to a distance from where he is not allowed to look back. Other pall-bearers present then take care of the cremation.

40. *After the dead body is fully consumated*, all take bath in a stream and return to the house in mourning. Here they are served with *Pitabhat* or bitter rice which stands for the first stage of purification.

41. The next morning the son who had lit the funeral pyre goes with a pitcher in hand to the burning place accompanied by a brother or relation. He fetches a pitcherful of water and pouring the same over the burnt pyre, brings out a piece of bone and preserves the same in a tiny earthen pitcher. He offers tooth sticks, water, rice, lime and tobacco to the memory of the deceased from the next day for a period of ten days at the outskirts of the village where the bier had been lowered for a while.

42. Pollution is observed for 10 days. Sons, nephews, brothers and cousins who observe mourning for the period do not shave, do not use oil and not attend places of worship or amusement. Fish, meat, onions or garlic are prohibited foods for the period. The son of the deceased who lits the fire is not allowed to cross rivers and streams for the period.

43. On the 10th day, all rooms and courtyards are dabbed with cowdung and water. Old earthen pots, pitchers, bamboo baskets, broom-sticks and winnowing fans are thrown away to be replaced by new ones. All cotton cloths are washed.

44. The mourners on this day come to a bathing ghat. After a shave, the male members take to purificatory ablutions. A Brahmin priest then sprinkles on them holy wate with sacred basil leaves and sun-dried rice

This completes the process of purification. Brahmins are then fed and are rewarded each with a few coins. The family members eat out of the new pots' cooking.

45. On the 11th day, cooking is done in new earthen pots and those used on the 10th day are thrown away. All the caste-men dine together where fish. meat, rice, dal and curry etc. are served.

Language, literacy and education

46. The Desua Bhumij speaks Oriya which is his mother-tongue. Out of a total Oriya-speaking population of 248 only 5 speak Kui as a subsidiary language. Few children learn Oriya in schools but all speak Oriya well. Even middle-aged persons when interviewed confess that they never spoke Bhumij. This goes to prove that they have adopted Oriya as their mother-tongue for decades past. Only 29 persons are literate of whom 2 have gone up to primary or junior basic level.

The statistics relating to literacy and education in the districts is presented in the table below.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa ..	248	219	29	27	2	..
Sambalpur .	3	2	1	1	..	..
Puri ..	39	25	14	14	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	206	92	14	12	2	..

Occupation

47. Few members of the tribe possess enough landed property to sustain them throughout the year. Some own 1 to 3 acres of land including their homestead, but most of them are agricultural labourers. They earn on daily wage basis to meet their day-to-day requirements of food, clothing, etc. Petty trade in forest produces like *Kachada* (mohua fruit), Kusum myrobalans, etc, constitute their secondary occupation. They also procure oil seeds like sesamum and mustard and sell them in the weekly markets on marginal profit. Some of them know stringing of charpoys and *manchias* (stringed stools). They use coloured strings and weave them into colourful designs. Almost every household has the tools for carpentry. A chisel, hammer and saw are the must-be possessions of every household. The women in their leisure stitch leaf plates and cups.

The industrial classification of workers is given in the table below :—

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

Category	P	M	F
Total Population	248	137	111
Workers—			
I. Cultivators ..	62	34	28
II. Agricultural labourers ..	66	43	23
III. Mining, Quarrying etc. ..	..	..	..
IV. Household Industry	9	1	8
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..		..	..
VI. Construction .	..	..	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	..	..	..
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications .	..	..	..
IX. Other Services ..	6	6	..
Total Workers ..	143	84	59
Non-workers ...	105	53	52

Religion

48. They worship many Hindu gods and goddesses. None have any household deity. Some of their important deities are *Dharma, Grama Devata* and *Istipat*. Like any other Hindu, many plant *Tulsi* (sacred basil) plants in front of their house which is watered daily by the women after bath and a lighted oil lamp with a cotton wick is kept near the plant every evening. During *Margasira* (November-December) *Lakhmi*, the goddess of wealth is worshipped and offerings to her in the form of sweets and flowers are made each Thursday. When there is ailment at home, the village deity is propitiated with sweets, flowers or sacrifices of cocks or goats. *Dehuri* the village priest officiates on such occasions.

49. Like any other tribe, superstitions make a part of their living. Some evil eye is suspected when a child wails for no reason and an exorcist is summoned to ward off the evil. A pitcherful of water, a bunch of plantains, fish or birds like peacock or *bhadabhadalia* are considered auspicious. Sight of an empty pitcher, dead body or an oilman with oil pots, snakes, carcass of animals or vultures on house tops, etc., are considered as ill omens.

Festivals

50. A curious mixture of festivals—both of Hindus and of his own tribe is observed by the Desua Bhumij. Among the tribal festivals mention may be made of *Karam dance* in the month of August, *Bandana* in November-December, *Salui Puja* in February-March and *Makara* in January-February. In such festive occasions, community dancing by women is no more popular. It is said to have stopped for the last few decades. Only the male folks dance to the rhythm of drum-beating.

51. Among Hindu festivals mention may be made of *Pana Sankranti, Raja-Sankranti, Gamha Parva, Durga Puja, Kumar Purnima, Kartik Purnima, Kali Puja, Dol* and *Shivaratri*. *Makar* is by far the most important festival when all indulge freely in eating, drinking and revelries.

Recreation

52. Like any other poor class of people, they have neither time nor money to enjoy leisure. The only occasion is their festivals. The elders join *kirtan* party of the village and the younger ones play indoor and outdoor country games.

Caste organisation

53. The Desua Bhumij have no caste organisation or caste council in the formal sense of the term. It is usually the elderly caste-men who settle all disputes and punish the offenders.

Reference :

1. Adibasi—No. 3,1963-64

JATAPU

Jatapus are also called as Jatap Dora or Jatapu Doralu. They are a tribe of cultivators and agricultural labourers in the district of Koraput. They are said to be a section of the Khonds as even educated Jatapus asked about their caste express that they were originally Khonds. The Madras Census Report, 1901 as quoted by Thurston (1909 : 453) confirm this belief and describe them as those who speak Khonds in the hills and Telugu on the plains and are now practically a district caste. They consider themselves superior to those Khonds who still eat beef and snakes and have taken to some of the ways of people on the plains. They are included in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1956.

2. The name Jatapu is popularly believed to be an abbreviated form of Konda Jatapu Doralu or lords of the Khond caste. It was explained during field study that the word Jatap in Telugu means ? and Dora refers to the chief of the tribe. This organisation took up study of the tribe in village Bandhugam of Narayanpatna Police Station and in village Munikhol of Bissamcuttack Police Station. It was further stated that those of the Khonds who are modernised, do not take beef and pork and speak Telugu are known as Jatapu Doras.

3. In village Munikhol, there were Konda Doras, Enet Doras and Jatap Doras, all living together with Kumuties and Brahmins. The Jatap Doras take water from Konda Doras and Enet Doras but accept boiled rice from Enet Doras only. They asserted that they do not accept water from either Dongria or Desia Khonds.

4. There titles or *Bainsas* which are exogamous septs into which they are divided are *Kadraka, Koraḍa, Bidika, Kondagara, Pagaka, Minaka, Puala, Paḍaka, Toyika,* tec. C. Hayavadana Rao gives the following names of septs of the tribe—*Thorika or Thorik* who revere the *thorikakodi* a specie of wild fowl; *Kadrika,* who revere another species of fowl ; *Mamdangi,* who revere the bull or cow; *Addaku,* who revere the *addaku* (Bauhinia racemosa), which is used by low-country people for eating-platters; *Konda Gorre,* who revere a certain breed of sheep; *Navalipitta,* who revere the peacock; *Arika,* who revere the *arika* (Paspalum scrobiculatum). Other septs, recorded in the Census Reports, 1901, are *Koalaka* (arrow), *Kutraki* (wild goat), and *Vinka* (white ant, Termes).

5. Dora, Nayak, Samanta, Mudali and Jani are their titles which they suffix to their names.

6. According to Bell (1945:68), Jatapus or Jatapu Doras "appear to be a recent off shoot of the Kondh tribe. They worship the Kondh goddess Jakera or Jakeri with sacrifices of pigs, goats and buffaloes and their customs are a mixture of Kondh usages and those of the Telugu Hindus". It is a fact that the tribe is divided into exogamous septs and the name of the sept is frequently placed before the individual name after the fashion of Telugu house names.

7. The Jatapus of village Munikhol bear a vague impression that their ancestors came from Andhra side. The grandfathers of many of the settlers of this village hailed from Almanda in Narayanpatna Police-

Station .They establish marriage relationships at present mostly with their counterparts in Rayagada side, whereas Khond marriages occur mostly within a radius of 10 miles. The Jatapus search for brides at far off places.

Geographical distribution and population

8. Jatapus are concentrated mainly in the district of Koraput, though a few have been returned from the Ganjam district. Police Station areas containing more than 10 per cent of the population are Rayagada (6, 269), Gudari (1, 806) and Gunupur (1, 487). The sex ratio 1,013 females to a thousand males. They are essentially a rural community as none have been returned from the urban areas of the State.

The table below gives the districtwise population.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	10,801	5,?65	5,436
Koraput	..	10,583	5,263	5,320
Ganjam	..	218	102	116

Houses and living condition

9. Many of the Jatapus are educated and some others appear affluent in rural standards and their houses accordingly appear well built. The house of an ordinary Jatapu provide few characteristic features. Most of the houses are two-roomed with wide verandahs at the front and the room on the outer side is used as bed and store and the one at the rear side is used as kitchen. The roofs are low and the houses lie too close together. The cattle are kept in the backyard.

10. The building materials used are bamboo, timber, mud and straw. The walls are raised with split bamboos, wattles and mud. A polish with coloured ochres is given on the wall. The doors are made of split bamboos plastered with mud and cowdung.

11. The houses are constructed during January after *Pangal*. The *Desari* is consulted for an auspicious day. On a Wednesday, a pole is fixed at the centre of the site and turmeric paste, vermilion marks and mango leaves are put at its top. The house should preferably face east.

12. The surroundings are kept neat and the general living condition appears sanitary. The floors and the walls are smeared regularly with cowdung.

Dress and ornaments

13. Members of both the sex comb their hair regularly with castor or coconut oil. Turmeric paste is anointed regularly by women on their body.

14. The common dress of a male is a *gochi* or *koupin* which is a loin cloth wrapped round the waist. Women use handloom and mill-made saris. They tie the cloth above the knees and cover the whole body. Coloured saris, banians and shirts are used on festive occasions.

15. Brass and aluminium ornaments are used by women. Those who are well-to-do also use golden ornaments. They use *pusti* of the size of a peepul leaf made of gold and tie it on to a thread. This ornament is deemed as essential before marriage. Ornaments for the ear are *nagul* and *bagdalu*, for the nose *kanisi kamulu* and for the neck *pateli* or *tigi*. Most of these ornaments are made of gold. They use silver ornaments on their fingers and anklets called *pati* of silver. Golden and glass bangles are getting popular.

16. Among other ornaments, mention may be made of *kami, gundu* and *pusaperu.*

17. They do not tattoo their limbs. The loins used by the male folk differ from those of the Khonds in as much as tail ends of the cloth are kept hanging both at the front and at the back. Old women still get on with the hair knob in the typical Khond fashion but the younger generations have learnt to plait their hairs.

Food

18. It was claimed by members of the tribe in village Munikhol that as early as in 1946 the caste council in Ganupur decided that members of the tribe must eschew unclean food items like beef, pork and flesh of monkeys and snakes. It was claimed that these food items have been given up completely by members of the tribe.

19. Their method of cooking has reached quite a sophisticated level. They use *chana tela* or *mahula teal* and *phutana* and other spices in cooking.

20. Their staple food is rice and ragi gruel. Besides, other millets like *suan, gantia* and horse-grams are taken. The kernel of mango and tamarind seeds sun-dried and powdered are also made into a gruel and taken. They take food four times a day. Various vegetables are grown and purchased which serve as side dish to rice or ragi gruel. *Rodoka,* bamboo shoots, *kambalinava* and *talanga* are forest roots and tubers which are collected. Dry fish is relished after being roasted in fire. Those who take beef, do not use oil while preparing it.

21. Though their caste council forbids drinking, *salapa* juice and rice-beer are popular.

Birth

22. Birth takes place in the house of the husband. A separate room is usually arranged as a lying-in-room. At times, the room near the backyard is set apart for this or a portion of the verandah is enclosed for the purpose. No restriction seems to be imposed on the food and movements of the expectant mother. She is given delicious food in her own house.

23. In village Munikhol, members of the tribe do not have their own Desari. Previously the Desari was being consulted for a difficult labour. Now-a-days the usual practice is to refer the case to hospital or call any knowledgeable person of some other caste or tribe who can help in relieving the pain. Two old and experienced women of the tribe assist the women in child birth. Sometimes an experienced woman of the Konda Dora tribe is also invited to help in easy delivery. The *Dai,* otherwise called *Dai Budhi,* cuts the umbilical cord with a knife and along with the placenta buries it at the backyard at quite a distance digging a pit herself. Date palm root is administered to the mother along with some other roots to avoid exposure to cold and to help in lactation. During the first 3 days of confinement she is given hot gruel, later she is given a small quantity of boiled rice with pulses. She, as a rule, is not given any curry.

24. Pollution is observed for 7 days. On the 7th day both the mother and the new born take purificatory bath. On the 11th day final purification takes place. On this day both are given a bath and at evening all the women put the new born into a cradle. Elderly women of the household select a name for the child. Usually, the grandfather's or the grand-mother's name is preferred. A feast on a modest scale is arranged for members of the household.

Puberty

25. On attainment of puberty, a girl is segregated for 10 days. The news is conveyed to other members of the tribe in the village. In subsequent menstruations segre-

gation is observed for a period of 4 to 7 days, when during the period she is not allowed entry into the kitchen and cooking is done by others.

Marriage

26. As stated earlier, marriage within the same *Bainsa* or *gotra* is held as incestuous. Cross cousin marriage is permissible. Though Thurston reports that marriage is celebrated either before or after the girl reaches puberty, it was reported in the village under study that child marriage these days is rather rare. Previously the tribal Desari was officiating in all marriages. Some Brahmin priests do the job today among the more modernised sections. One could claim to marry his paternal aunt's daughter. Widows are allowed to remarry. There is no bar for the younger brother to marry the widow of the elder brother in case of the latter's death. One can marry the younger sister of his wife in case of her death but never the elder sister. Widow marriage was not prevalent earlier. It is gradually getting current. Old persons of the tribe claimed that child marriage was not prevalent years ago. The practice now-a-days is that even before puberty the question of marriage is being settled up for the same to be solemnised after the girl attains puberty. Among preferential marriages, one can claim to marry one's maternal uncle's daughter or paternal aunt's daughter but marital relationship with the maternal aunt's daughter is not permissible as she is deemed as a sister.

27. No dormitory organisation exists in the villages. The system of bride price is current and the amount is usually placed at Rs. 12. The system, however, appears to be in a state of flux as now-a-days in some cases, the bride side pays dowry to the groom.

28. Negotiation starts as follows. Initially 3 to 5 persons from the boy's side visit the house of the bride on purely exploratory grounds. The groom, however, does not accompany them. This is followed by another visit by 3 to 4 ladies. In case their choice becomes final, they visit the house of the bride a second time and through presentation of some golden ornaments to the bride, they express their consent. The date for marriage is fixed up by the Desari. This practice long current is being replaced by consultation with a Brahmin priest. On the day previous to the marriage, the groom, his parents and other relatives of boh the sex go to the house of the bride. They are received at the outskirts of the village by the father of the bride. Their accommodation and food, etc., are arranged also by the bride side. The parents of the girl bring her down to this place and offer her to the groom. *Woli* or bride price is paid on this date. The girl is brought to the house of the bridegroom in a procession. Members of the bridegroom's party indulge in merriment and dance with liberal enjoyment of liquor. This, however, is reported to be slowly vanishing. The rituals of marriage are gone through in the house of the bridegroom either by the Desari or by a Brahmin priest. The priest puts *kankana* after uniting the hands of both the bride and the groom. The groom puts *pusta* on the girl's neck. The barber trims the toe nails of both. Wearing of *pusta* is the binding part of the marriage. Unmarried girls fetch two pitcherfuls of water. Both the bride and the groom take a bath with this *tagara nilu*.

29. Marriage by consent exists whereas marriage by capture is reported to be rare. One can pay Rs. 3/- to the parents of a widow and after keeping her for 2 to 3 years also one can marry her. The system of *ghar juain* or *ilara kaon* exists.

30. They live in joint families. Separation seldom occurs immediately after marriage of the sons. During separation, all sons take equal share.

Death

31. Burning appears to be the rule in disposal of dead bodies. Those dying of pox and snake bites are buried. Domb Barika of

the village conveys the death to all concerned. All friends and relatives are intimated. In case of the death of someone's wife, her parents must be informed.

32. A bier is made either with bamboo or charpoy. On the way the dead body is brought down for the sake of a change of shoulders. The eldest son puts fire and immediately after, leaves the burial ground. On the funeral pyre, the head points east and the face upwards. Pregnant women are burnt alongwith foetus of their own.

33. Pollution is observed for 3 days and during this period all works in the household including agricultural operations are suspended. The period, however, in some cases, is being extended to 12 days.

34. The Jatapus have a system of offering *voga* called *panduku* on every *Makar Sankranti* day. A fowl or a goat may also be sacrificed.

Language, literacy and education

35. Bell reports (1945 : 68) that Telugu is usually the subsidiary language to the ancestral tongue of the Jatapu Doras which is a variant of Khond. It appears certain that Jatapu, if at all a separate language, has no separate script. Many Jatapus communicate in Telugu at home but are simultaneously well versed with the Khond language. The figures of 1961 census show that majority of them have Koya as their mother-tongue. The rest have either Oriya, Telugu or Khond as the mother-tongue. Only 2,451 persons speak a subsidiary language. Of this, the majority have adopted Oriya.

36. The percentage of literacy is only 4·3 which neither compares favourably with their all-State percentage nor does it go to show any significant progress in the sphere of literacy and education. As early as in 1945, Bell wrote "the tribe has for some years been in the fore-front of the hill tribes in respect of educational progress. A number of them have obtained employment as school teachers and one at least has passed the Secondary School Leaving Examination."

37. A cursory review of the progress of education in the village under survey indicated that out of only 15 to 16 households, 2 were in the High School, 4 in the M.E. School and at least 10 to 12 pupils had been enrolled in the primary schools. It was reported by the informants that quite a few of their tribe have reached college level of education.

The table below gives the details of literacy and education among the tribe as based on 1961 census.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

District		Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa	..	10,801	10,342	459	438	18	3
Koraput	..	10,583	10,139	444	426	16	2
Ganjam	..	218	203	15	12	2	1

JATAPU

Villages of study :

1. MUNDIVALSA—Hamlet of BANDHUGAN
   P. S. Narayanpatna
   Dist. Koraput
2. MUNIKHOLA
   P. S. Bissamcuttack
   Dist. Koraput

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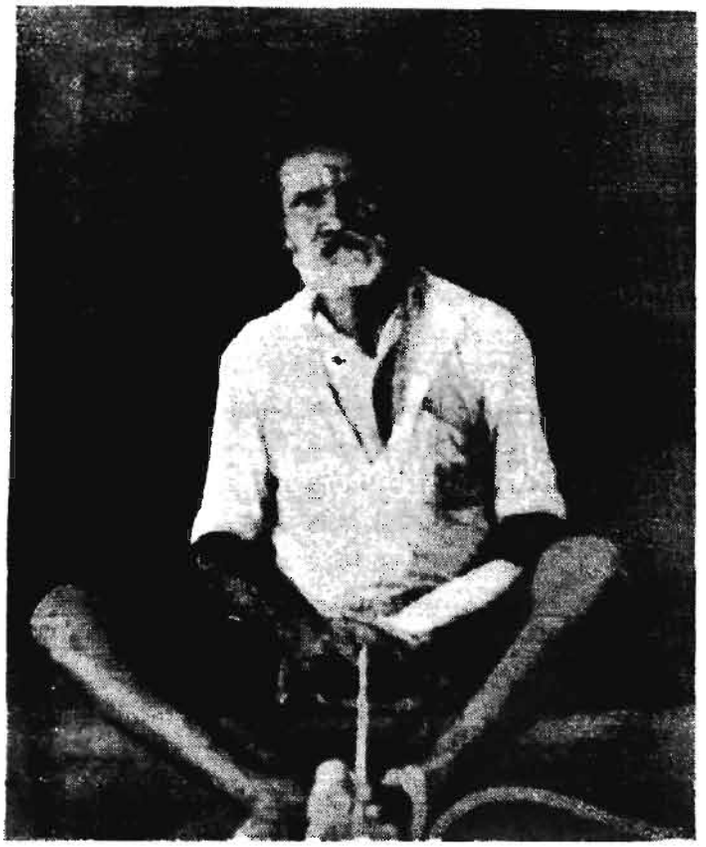
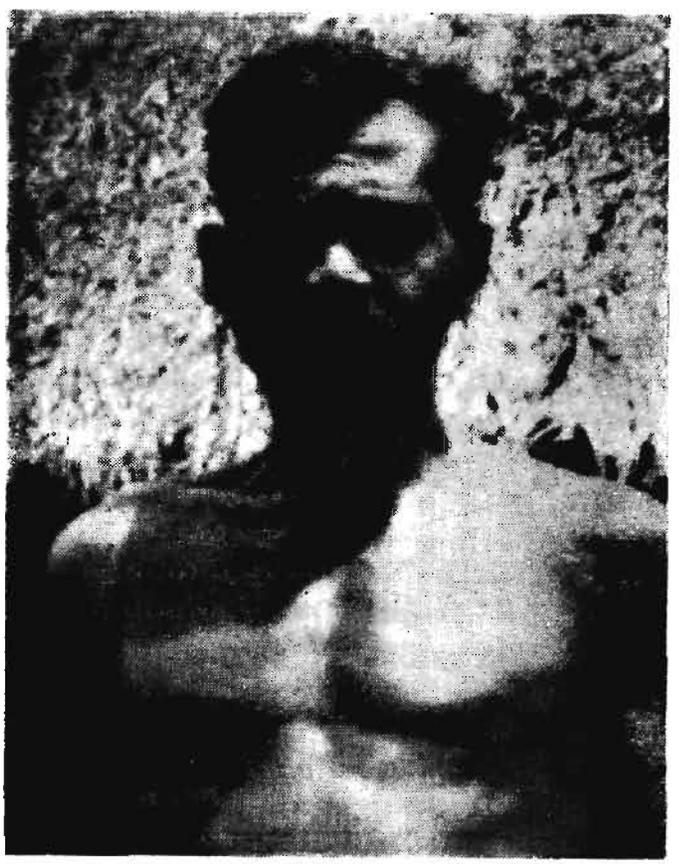


A Jatapu busy in rope-making



Front view of a Jatapu male

Occupation

38. They are essentially a class of agriculturists and wage-earners. Their main cereals are rice, ragi, suan and maize. Unlike in Andhra Pradesh, these people do not take to podu cultivation but they depend mostly on irrigation and settled cultivation. Women also aid their male counterparts in agricultural operations. Besides, men take to carpentry and preparing ropes out of *siali* bark.

Table below gives the industrial classification of workers, according to 1961 Census.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF WORKERS

Category	P	M	F
Total Population ..	10,801	5,365	5,436
Workers:			
I. Cultivators ..	1,720	1,268	452
II. Agricultural labourers ..	2,632	1,609	1,023
III. Mining, Quarrying, etc...	56	55	1
IV. Household Industry ..	100	75	25
V. Manufacturing oth r than household industry ..	16	2	14
VI. Construction ..	3	3	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	15	4	11
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications ..	8	8	..
IX. Other Services ..	1,281	519	762
Total Workers ..	5,831	3,543	2,288
Non-workers ..	4,970	1,822	3,148

Village organisation

39. The head of the tribal organisation at the village level is called *Samanta Nayak*. Previously, he was in charge of revenue collection as the agent of the zamindar. Even after abolition of the zamindari, he continues to function as the head of the tribe and his decisions in matters of social arbitration are paid due respect. Another official called Barika of Domb caste assists him particularly in carrying messages. *Desari* and *Jani* act as priests. Whereas the former officiates in marriages and other social functions, Jani worships the village deity.

Religion and festival

40. Their Supreme deity is Jakari. Besides, they worship Ista Debatas in each household. Jakara and Jakari are worshipped in the shrine of some shapeless stones where sacrifices of pigs, goats and fowls are offered on all festive and ceremonial occasions.

41. Pangal or Pandugu is their most important festival. They also observe Dasahara and Nuakhia. Another festival called Bhagadi is observed in the month of Chaitra. Their new year is said to start from this date and mango is taken for the first time.

References :

1. Madras Census Report 1961
2. Thurston E. 1909
3. Bell, R. C. S., Orissa Dist. Gazetteers,
4. Adibasi, No. 3, 1963-64

KHARIA

The Kharias, otherwise called Khadias have three distinct divisions, the Pahadi or Erenga Kharia, the Delki Kharia and Dudh Kharia. The primitive and wildest members of this tribe belonging to the Pahadi section reside in the Similipal hill ranges of the Mayurbhanj district. "They are the only persons to wander forth over this wild tract of country, spend days and weeks wandering through the dense and tractless forests and vast hill ranges, in search of jungle products such as honey and horns. They are experts at catching young birds, especially the hill-talking Mayana and the large brown tree squirrel, which they sell to the people of the plains." (Cobden-Ramsay : 1950: 64).

2. The brief study undertaken by this organisation related to villages Khampur, Rouldega and Talsara of Talsara Police Station in the district of Sundargarh. Kharias of this area belong to the Delki section who are reckoned by some to be culturally midway between the Pahadi Kharias and the Dudh Kharias. It is stated (Adibasi 1963-64: No. 3: 175) that though Ranchi area is the home of Dudh Kharias, they have spread throughout the western Orissa along with Delki Kharias. A few other sections as Munda Kharia, Oraon Kharia, Barga Kharia and Satera Kharia are perhaps the product of intermarriage between Kharias and these groups.

3. According to Dalton (1960: 159) there is a tradition that Kharias with another tribe called Purans were the aborigins of Mayurbhanj. They aver that they and the family of the chief were all produced from a pea-fowl's egg, the Bhanj from the yolk this Purans from the white; the Kharias from the shell.

4. Russell (1916 : Vol. III : 445) describes Kharias as one of the most backward of the Kolarian tribes who appear to be allied to the Mundas and Shabars ; whereas Dalton (Ibid : 156) places them linguistically most closely allied to the Juangs. Sir Edward A. Gait quoted in the Mayurbhanj Census Report (1937 : 155) makes a difference between the Kharias in the Orissa State and those of Ranchi. In his opinion, the language spoken by the former is a Dravidian dialect and not the Munda dialect spoken by the latter.

5. The Kharias have been mentioned as the Kharia or Kharian in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1956.

6. It is said (Adibasi : Ibid) that while the Delki and Dudh Kharias are divided into totemistic exogamous clans, such clan organisation is conspicuous by its absence among the Hill Kharias. In this source, 8 and 9 such clan names have been mentioned respectively for the Delki and Dudh sections. In the area under study, the Delki Kharia informants, however, stated that they are divided into *Bargas* like Majhi, Padhan, Dandsena, Bagha and Kujuru. These *Bargas* were stated to be exogamous.

7. Members of the tribe in the area under study are ignorant of their origin and migration. They have been inhabiting these areas for more than four generations. But

the tradition about their origin as narrated by them vaguely corresponds to the one mentioned by Russell, a gist of which is given below. The Kharia legend of origin resembles that of the Mundas and tends to show that they are an elder branch of the tribe. A child was born to a woman in the jungle, and she left it to fetch a basket in which to carry it home. On her return she saw a cobra spreading its hood over the child to protect it from the sun. This child had an elder brother and the two setting out on a journey came to Chotanagpur where the younger was made the king. Of the two caskets given for choice, the elder brother chose the one containing earth. According to the Kharias, they are the descendants of the elder brother while the younger one was the ancestor of the Naga Bansi Rajas who are really Mundas. This story is very much similar to that of the Parajas in connection with the Raja of Bastar and the Parajas are probably the elder branch of the Gonds who were reduced to subjection by the subsequent Raj Gond immigrants under the ancestors of the Bastar Rajas. It seems therefore a reasonable hypothesis that the Kharias stood in a similar relationship to the Mundas or Kols. This theory derives support from the fact that according to H. H. Risley, the Mundas will take daughters for marriage from Kharias but will not give their daughters to them, and the Kharias speak of the Mundas as their elder brethren.

8. According to Hiralal, the name Kharia is derived from *kharkhari,* a palanquin or litter. According to him, Oraons who carry litters are also called Kharias. This derivation is in accordance with the tradition of Kharias that their first ancestor was carrying a *banghy,* and with the fact that the Kols are the best professional *dhooli* bearers.

Physical and racial characteristics

9. To quote Risley, Kharias are a Dravidian cultivating tribe of Chotanagpur classed on linguistic grounds as Kolarian. In their physique, the settled members of the tribe resemble the Mundas, but have rather coarser features and figures not so well proportioned. Mr. V. Ball's description (Jungle Life in India : 89) of the Kharia whom he met with at Dolma range in Manbhum during the cold weather between 1876-77 is given below. "In their persons the Kharias are very dirty, seldom, if ever washing themselves. Their features are decidedly of a low character, not unlike the Bhumij, but they seem to me to bear the absence of any strongly marked type in their faces or build, such as enables one to know of Santal and even a Kurmi at a glance." According to Mohanti (Adibasi Ibid : 176), the Delki Kharias stand midway between the Pahadi Kharias with a coarse feature and Dudh Kharias with a comparatively fine feature.

Geographical distribution and population

10. The computed figures of population of Kharias according to 1931 Census are 60,677 in the State with considerable concentrations in the districts of Sundargarh (36,656), Mayurbhanj (11,573) and Sambalpur (9,306). In 1961, the all-State population has risen to 96,691 thus recording a rise of 59·35 per cent during these three decades. The rate of rise apparently looks phenomenal from the district of Dhenkanal where from 1,349 souls in 1931 it has recorded a rise up to 8,675 souls in 1961. As against this there has been a perceptible fall in population in the district of Mayurbhanj.

11. "In 1901, the census return showed the total number of Kharias in the 24 States at 38,478 of whom 25,838 reside in Gangpur. This shows a very marked increase in the tribe since the census of 1872, when there were 3,942 Kharias in the States formerly known as the Tributary Mahals of Orissa and 1,613 in the Tributary States of Chotanagpur or a total of 5,555. The increase has been most marked in Gangpur, and the census reports

of 1901 attribute this to more careful classification." This trend of marked increase in the population of the tribe in the Gangpur ex-State area is further corroborated by the 1931 and 1961 population figures in the district of Sundargarh where keeping apart the population of the Bonai ex-State their rate of rise has been by 75·74 per cent compared to the 1901 population.

12. None of the police stations contain 10 per cent or more of the State population of Kharias. The one approaching the fringe is Bargaon (9,376) of Sundargarh district. Others in descending order are Raiboga (5,824), Sundargarh (5,622) and Rajgangpur (5,464) of the same district.

The table below presents the districtwise break-up of the population of the State.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District	P	M	F
Orissa ..	96,691	47,974	48,717
Kalahandi ..	516	256	260
Koraput ...	350	145	205
Sambalpur ..	19,180	9,475	9,705
Bolangir ..	461	262	199
Baudh-Khondmals ..	317	159	158
Ganjam ..	252	135	117
Sundargarh ..	53,243	26,578	26,665
Dhenkanal ..	8,675	4,321	4,354
Puri ..	1,344	661	683
Keonjhar ..	282	170	112
Cuttack ..	420	225	195
Mayurbhanj ..	10,930	5,255	5,675
Balasore ..	721	332	389

Houses

13. The Delki Kharias in the area under study live in multi-caste villages. In village Talsara, there are Mundas, Oraons. Kisans and Binjhias besides Delki Kharias. In village Tikilipada, they put up with Bhuyans, Gandas, Binjhals and Kisans and in village Rouldega, besides members of this tribe, there are Kumbharas, Agharias, Baishtambas, Bhuyans, Kisans and Oraons.

14. In this area, the Kharias put up their houses very close to their cultivating lands. This helps them to supervise effectively their agricultural operations. Very few stay in the midst of the village. Only those living on wages and without any landed properties have their residential structures in the midst of the *bustees*.

15. The procedure adopted for choice of a site for construction of a house is stated below. At each of the four corners of the site, they put seven grains of rice. At the centre they strike hard with the spade. This is done without publicity. Next morning the site is examined. In case the spade continues to stand erect and the grains of rice are not reduced in number, the site is deemed as auspicious. A tiny gate of mango leaves is made while putting the foundation. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday are accepted as auspicious days for starting with the foundation of the house.

16. Their houses are arranged in rows with a common village road and are usually located as a separate block near to the houses of other caste and tribe in the village. Most of the houses are two-roomed with a partition wall intervening that separates the store from bed-*cum*-kitchen. The roofs are characteristically low, the height at the centre being only seven feet or more with a symmetrical sloping on either side. The walls are made of mud and the roof made of wood, bamboo and *naria* tiles. The cow-shed is constructed in a separate row close to the residence.

Food

17. Rice is their staple food. Besides, other cereals and pulses like *mandia, gulji, harad, gangei, biri, kulthi and kandul* are

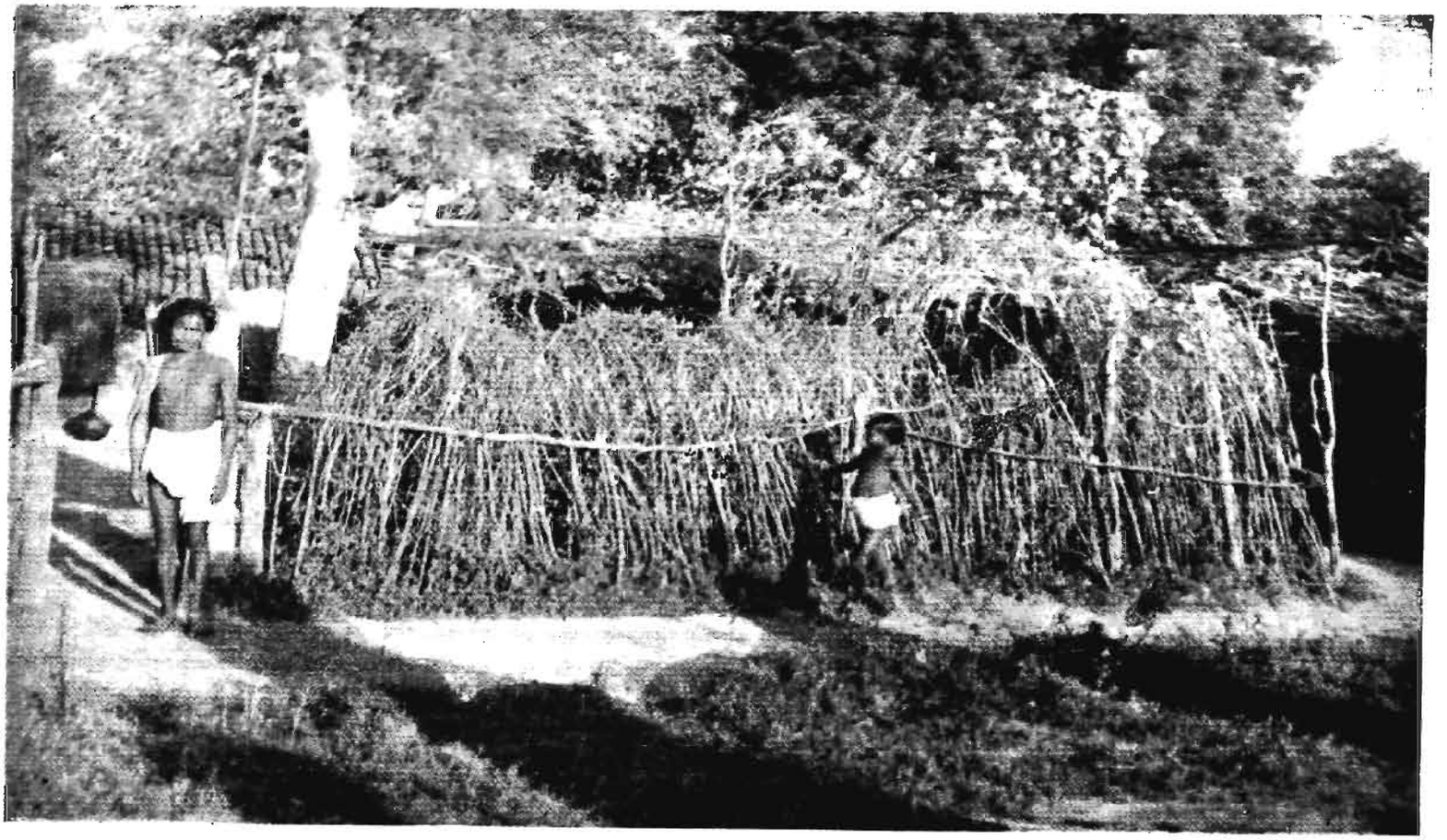
KHARIA

Villages of study :

1. KHAMPUR
   P. S. Talsara
   Dist. Sundargarh
2. RAULDEGA
   P. S. Talsara
   Dist. Sundargarh

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri D. S. Jeet, Officer-in-charge, Talsara Police station
2. Shri Gulbadan Khadia, S/o, Bija Khadia (Dehuri of village Jaisore)
3. Shri Birju Khadia
4. Shri Hira Khadia, S/o. Sukru Khadia
5. Shri Maidhanu Khadia, S/o. Lagara
6. Shri Bane Khadia, S/o. Lagara
7. Shri Madhu Khadia, S/o. Palhu Khadia
8. Smt. Daimati Khadiani, D/o. Charku Khadia
9. Smt. Ujjala
10. Smt. Basumati
11. Smt. Mangali
12. Smt. Sumati
13. Smt. Asomati
14. Smt. Ratani, D/o. Madhu Khadia
15. Smt. Sabitri, D/o. Jaladhar Khadia



A typical house



Kharia women



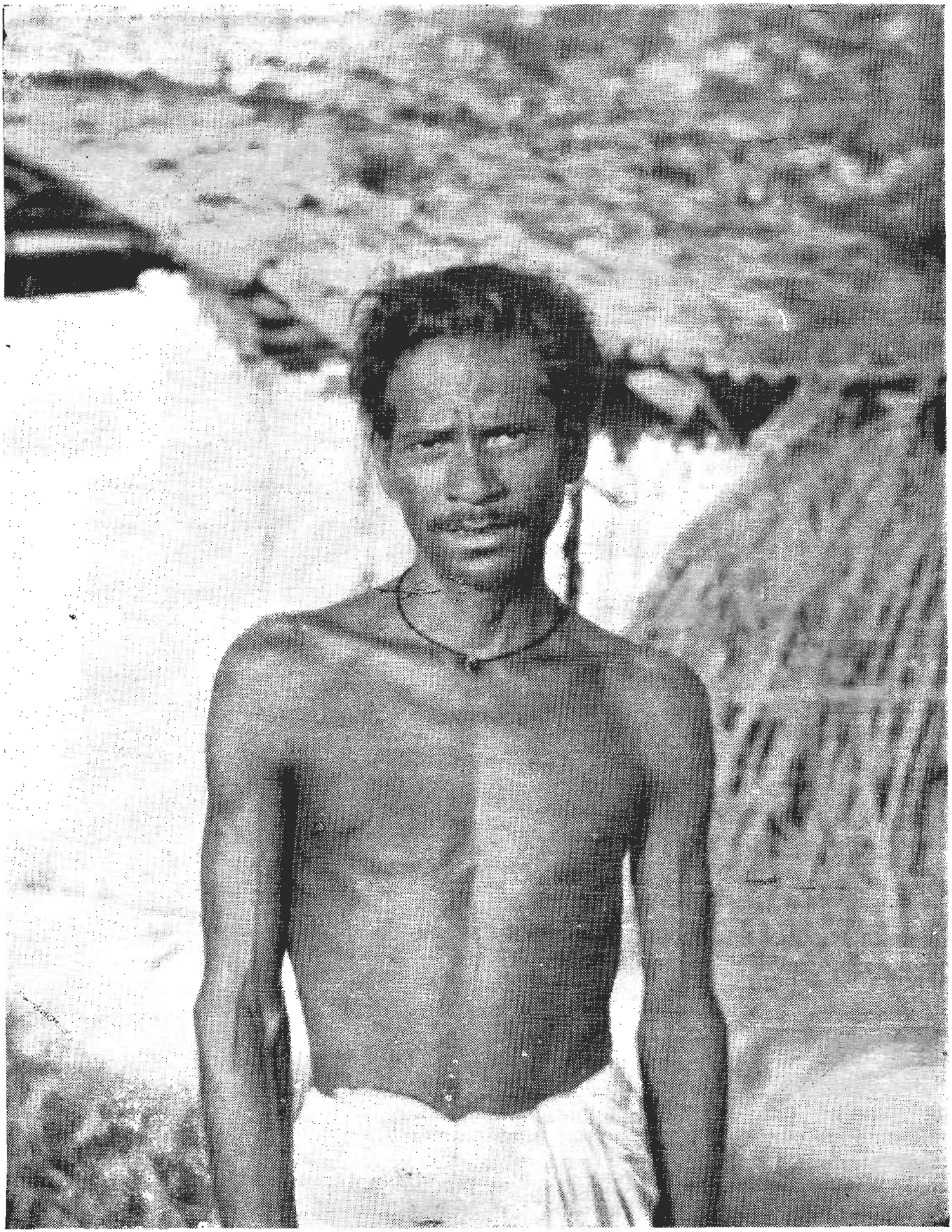
Two Kharia girls



A Kharia girl in front of the gate of her house



The Dehuri



A Kharia yoouth

taken. They claim that they do not take beef though pork and the flesh of iguana, mouse and termites are taken. Earthen pots are used for cooking purposes and food is taken mostly in brass and aluminium utensils. Oil, chilly and onion are used for cooking and on festive occasions ghee and spices are used.

18. They prepare *handia* or rice-beer at home. Besides, they relish the juice of *arakhi, mahuli* and *khajuri*. Both men and women indulge freely in drinking. Tobacco in form of roll with *kahali* are used for smoking and its powder in small metallic cases are rolled tight in the waist belts for casual consumption.

Dress and ornaments

19. There is hardly anything distinctive about their dress which resemble very much that of their poor neighbours. The manner of wearing the cloths too does not appear characteristic any way. The common dress of a male member is a short dhoti and a napkin and that of a female is a hand-woven sari. Banians, shirts and towels, blouses and other under garments are items of dresses reserved for special occasions. Children up to seven or eight go without any dress.

20. Brass *khadus* and *pohala malis* were ornaments very popular a few decades ago. These have been replaced now by *katarias* and *bandarias*. Common ornament made of silver and resembling a betel leaf decorated their hairs. This has presently fallen into disuse. Among other ornaments in common use today, mention may be made of *guna* for the nose, *ganthia* and *noli* for the ears and silver chains for the neck.

Birth

21. Certain restrictions of food and movement are imposed on a woman during pregnancy. She is prohibited from taking fried paddy, crab and any intoxicating drink. The woman attends to her normal routine duties till the date of delivery. No special hut is prepared as a lying-in-room. A corner of the bed room is set apart for the purpose. An old and experienced woman of the tribe serves as midwife. She is called *Sutreini*. The naval cord is cut with a piece of knife. A small pit is dug at the backyard by the father of the new born wherein the *Sutreini* buries the cord and the placenta.

22. The period of pollution continues for 6 days and in some cases for 12 days. For all these days, the mother and the child take their bath at the place of burial of the cord.

23. Immediately after birth the baby is given a tepid water bath. The mother is administered *Dasa muli* which indeed is a mixture of the roots of ten different trees, *Akanbindi* roots and *mahuli* wine. All these, it is believed, go a long way to minimise the pain.

24. Purification is observed in two stages. *Sathi* is observed on the sixth day when the first stage of house cleaning and new earth pots for the kitchen are done. The second stage is observed on the twelfth day when the name-giving ceremony also takes place. A small feast is arranged, fowls are killed and a bit of liquor is also offered as sacrifice. The older members of the tribe aid in nomenclature. The name of the birth day is the principal guiding factor. Turmeric water is taken in an earthen pot into which castemen throw rice grains. The process is repeated until two of the grains move jointly on the water surface. At each stage, the name of one of the ancestors is suggested. The purpose is to make out whether any of the ancestors have taken their rebirth in the new-born.

Puberty

25. It is claimed by the informant members of the tribe that the rites of puberty are observed strictly. On attainment of sexual maturity, a girl is kept segregated for a

period of seven days. She is prohibited from entering into the kitchen and the cow-shed during the period. She has to wash her clothes and drink turmeric water on expiry of the period after which the pollution is supposed to end.

Marriage

26. Dalton (1960 : 158) describes Kharia marriage in the following terms. "The primitive idea of marriage with the Kharias was a dance and a feast when the bride was first taken to the abode of her lord ; they have no word for marriage in their own language, but after certain festivities the bride and bridegroom are left to themselves, and next morning are carried to the river, and they and all the party bathe and wash their garments; but under the Hindu term *bibah* certain ceremonies are superadded, borrowed from their neighbours, or to give the ceremony more importance in the eyes of the Hindus. The nuptial dances of the Kharias are very wild, and the gestures of the dancers and the songs all bear more directly than delicately on what is evidently considered the main object of the festivities, the public recognition of the consummation of the marriage. The bride and bridegroom are carried through the dances seated on the hips of two of their companions."

27. A typical Kharia marriage as celebrated today is narrated below. After tentative selection of a bride the astrologer is consulted as to the suitability of the match. Health and other relevant considerations are taken into account.

28. The main brunt of the burden of marriage falls on an outsider named *Siana* who not only officiates in marriage but takes charge of the elaborate rituals. The father of the bridegroom entrusts to him all the articles, clothes, dresses and other items required for the marriage. The responsibilities entrusted to him is so complete in form that he takes over the key and at the end of the marriage ceremony returns the key alongwith the accounts of expenditure to the satisfaction of all.

29. As in the case of other tribes, overtures for marriage are always made by the bridegroom's father who either himself or with his brother and a few other friends and relatives of their village visit the house of the bride. Such visits are returned and reciprocated before the final date for marriage is fixed up. The bride price comprises 3 bullock calves, 2 pieces of saris and 2 one rupee coins placed on the saris. All these are paid ordinarily 8 to 15 days before the marriage date. Payment of the bride price is symbolic of the claim of the bridegroom over the bride.

30. Two of the castemen from the bridegroom's side are deputed on the day preceding the marriage to fetch the bride. Marriages are solemnised usually in the day time. The bride is accompanied with a host of friends and relatives including a number of her girl friends. They are all accommodated in a shed specially constructed at the backyard of the bridegroom's house for the purpose.

31. The *Siand* attends to all the elaborate rituals of marriage. The girls fetch water and bathe the bride. The bridegroom is given a bath by the boys of the village. Both the bride and bridegroom wear new clothes and sit down on the marriage vedi. A new piece of a cloth envelopes both the heads. The *Siana* anoints oil over their heads and combs their hair seven times. He then smears vermilion on their heads and unites the right hands of both. This perhaps is the binding part of marriage, and while this is done, the boys and girls attending the marriage dance wildly to the accompaniment of music on *madala*.

32. After union of the hands, both the partners are taken to a separate spot where on a *juali*, i.e., a part of the ploukh, a slab of stone is kept. Both are made to stand on the

stone. Behind the bride stands the bridegroom. The *Siana* takes a pitcherful of water and with a few mango leaves sprinkles the water on both their heads.

33. Both the partners return to the marriage platform again and sit side by side. The brother-in-law of the bridegroom administers him a fist for which he is presented with a cloth. All the presents brought by the bride are exhibited at this point.

34. The bride and the bridegroom live as husband and wife from the next day. On the *Satamangala* day both visit the house of the bride where they are entertained and after stay of a few days return home.

35. Child marriage is rare. Marriage of widows and divorcees are admissible. Cases of divorce are discussed and decided upon by the caste panchayat and in case the woman is found at fault, the man to marry her has to pay the cost of marriage to the first husband as compensation.

Death

36. The Kharias bury their dead. All castemen and relatives are immediately summoned. The corpse is anointed with oil and turmeric paste and a new piece of cloth is wrapped round it. In the burial ground the mourners dig out a pit. The cropse is set down with its head pointing north and face upwards. A piece of utensil, few grains of paddy, oil and a few coins are also put into the pit. The friends and relatives put the first few handfuls of earth before the pit is filled up.

37. The mourners return home, take their bath and cook bitter rice with rice fetched from each of their homes in the house of the deceased. The members of the deceased's household are then fed on this day. The mourners too sleep in the house of the deceased with the purpose to keep a vigil for the whole night.

38. The eldest son provides tooth-stick and food to the deceased for 12 days. A little fire is made at both ends of the pit. A large slab of stone is placed on the place of burial. Some bury the dead in their backyards if the land available is spacious and then upt the slab of stone.

39. The first stage of purification is on the 6th day called *Telapani* when non-vegetarian diet is touched for the first time after death of the deceased. The household is cleaned and all the clothes are washed. On the 12th day, all friends and relatives are invited to a feast. Killing a goat is a must on this occasion. Liquor is served liberally. On this day, a little far from the household of the deceased, rice, meat and wine are served to the deceased.

Language, literacy and education

40. According to Grierson, the Kharia dialect is closely allied to Shabara and bears some similarity to Korku and Juang. Kharia grammar has all the characteristics of a language which is greatly dying out and being spread by dialects of quite different families. the vocabulary is strengthened and Aryanised. Kharia is no longer a typical Munda language. It is like a Palimpsest, the original writing on which can only be recognised with some difficulty. G. B. Banerji's 'Introduction to the Kharia language' deserves reference for details on the Kharia dialect.

41. More than 50 per cent of the total Kharia population speak the Kharia language and about 43·2 per cent have taken to Oriya as their mother-tongue. Mundari is the only other language of significance accepted by 2,000 Kharias as their mother-tongue.

42. Of the total Kharia speaking population of 50,726, as many as 11,151 speak a subsidiary language of which the majority take to Oriya. Similarly, out of 41, 775 who have Oriya as their mother-tongue, about 1,401 have Hindi as their subsidiary language.

43. The spread of literacy among this tribe is fairly rapid and perceptible. Apart from the fact that 9·1 per cent of the population are literate, a study of the Kharia villages shows their eagerness for education. It may be mentioned that as many as 65 persons of the tribe have reached up to matriculation or higher secondary stage and above and 1,344 have gone up to primary or junior basic level.

44. In the villages under study quite a few students have been enrolled in the neighouring primary schools. The villagers named persons in the nearby police station areas who have passed M. E. standard or Matriculation and some of whom have served as teachers. It was clear from the village under study that the spread of education in recent years has stirred in them the urge to break up with the old apathy and indifference in schooling their children.

The table below gives details of literacy and education among the tribe.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

District	Total Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	96,691	87,876	8,815	7,406	1,344	65
Kalahandi ..	516	494	22	22	..	..
Koraput ..	350	330	20	20	..	..
Sambalpur ..	19,180	17,810	1,370	1,185	184	1
Bolangir ..	461	433	28	25	3	..
Baudh-Khondmals ..	317	282	35	35	..	:
Ganjam ..	252	219	33	33	..	..
Sundargarh ..	53,243	47,922	5,321	4,278	989	54
Dhenkanal ..	8,675	7,532	1,143	1,085	56	2
Puri ..	1,344	1,079	265	260	5	..
Keonjhar ..	282	266	16	16	..	..
Cuttack ..	420	366	54	51	3	..
Mayurbhanj ..	10,930	10,438	492	380	104	8
Balasore ..	721	705	16	16	..	..

Occupation

45. They are essentially agriculturists though from the table below on industrial classification of workers it would appear that only 27·9 per cent of the population and a little more than 50 per cent of the total workers are agriculturists. Their other avocation is earth digging which they are said to do efficiently. A part of the population

is also engaged in mining, quarrying and other household industries. Some educated members of the tribe have taken to service under Government and private firms.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF WORKERS

(Source: 1961 Census)

Category		P	M	F
Total population	..	96,691	47,974	48,717
Workers				
I. Cultivator	..	26,985	16,688	10,297
II. Agricultural labourer	..	11,840	7,044	4,796
III. Mining, Quarrying, etc.	..	1,027	521	506
IV. Household Industry	..	2,480	940	1,540
V. Manufacturing other than household industries	..	214	161	53
VI. Construction	..	51	43	8
VII. Trade and Commerce	..	86	26	60
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications	..	39	39	..
IX. Other Services	..	7,787	4,256	3,531
Total Workers	..	50,509	29,718	20,791
Non-workers	..	46,182	18,256	27,926

Village Organisation

46. Every Kharia village has its own caste panchayat consisting of the village elders who sit on judgement and pronounce their verdicts on all intricate social issues. It was reported that almost every year their caste council sits in a big way. The following are some of the recent trends discussed for general guidance in these caste councils : drinking of wine has to be eschewed, the number of bullocks given as bride price has to be reduced from 3 to 2. The *Kalo* or *Baiga* is the functionary who worships *Gansiri* and other deities and by virtue of his religious leadership is assigned some importance in social matters also.

Religion and Festival

47. The Kharias worship *Mahabir* for whom there is strictly no shrine. Besides, *Gansiri* is also worshipped on all important occasions. At home the dead ancestors are offered worship on *Nua khia* day.

48. *Phaguna Jatra*—This is by far their most important festival. It marks the beginning of the season of *mahula* and mango crop. These fruits are taken for the first time at the commencement of the festival for which no pre-calculated date is fixed up. The villagers sit down and decide on a date for observance of the festival.

49. *Nua Khia*—This is observed on some auspicious day in the month of *Bhadraba* when varieties of cakes are prepared out of the new rice crop. The festival symbolises the taking of the first rice harvest. The ancestors are worshipped in each house premises of which are cleaned and all earthen pots are changed.

50. They too observe many other local Hindu festivals like Makara, Pousa Purnima, Ratha Jatra, Sravana and Rakhi Purnami.

51. According to Dalton (Ibid : 158) dancing is an amusement to which the Kharias, like all Kolarians, are passionately devoted. The only noticeable difference in their style is that in the energy, vivacity and warmth of their movement they excel all their brethren.

52. Even today dance and music constitute for them the most popular and favourite pastime. After the tiresome day, they congregate on evening and sing and dance to the tune of high pitched *madal, phechka* and *gini*. The women also join the songs and dance. Young children take to country games.

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KOLI

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1956 mentions the tribe as Koli, including Malhar. The Malhars are a nomadic tribe in Orissa whose main occupation is collection of honey whereas Kolis are a class of weavers. Both these tribes have been studied by this organisation. They are two separate tribes who bear apparently no regional or ethnic affinity. Yet how and under what circumstances both these tribes have been clubbed together is a matter for more detailed enquiry.

2. Rusell (Vol. III : 1916 : 534) mentions Malhar as one of the five subdivisions of the Koli who are named from their deity Malharideo. They possess an alternative name of Panhari which means water-carrier. It is likely that the Malhars have been tagged on to Koli on the basis of Russell's reference to the latter's divisions in Madhya Pradesh. In Orissa, however, both these tribes seem to have very little in common.

3. The Madras Census Report, 1901 (Vol. 15 : Part I : 162) mentions Koli as a Bombay caste of fishermen and boatmen in South Canara and also a low class of Bengal weavers found in Ganjam. Russell (Vol. III : 1916 : 532) describes Kolis as a primitive tribe akin to the Bhills who have hitherto been confused with the Kori caste. The Koris or weavers are also known as Koli, but the Kolis proper who are residents of the Westeren Satpura hills are usually village servants, their duties being to wait on Government officers, clean their cooking vessels and collect carts and provisions. Koris, according to him, constitute the Hindu weaving caste of northern India whose name has been derived from that of the Kol caste, of whom they have by some been assumed to be an offshoot. The Koris themselves trace their origin from Kabir, the apostle of the weaving castes.

4. This note relates to study of Kolis in village Polsara of Kodala Police Station in the district of Ganjam.

5. The members of the tribe are known as Koli and there exits no other synonym or name by which the tribe is known to the outsiders. In spite of all attempts nothing much could be obtained from the informants as to the origin of their name and history of migration.

6. Russell speaks of the supposition that the common term 'cooly' is a corruption of Koli because the Kolis were usually employed as potters and carriers in Western India, as 'slave' 'comes from 'slav'. Put this does not apply to Orissa where members of the tribe are neither potters nor carriers but are weavers by profession.

7. Some members of the tribe, however, claimed to have learnt it from their ancestors that the members of the tribe were once in numerical preponderance near and around Ichhapur in Andhra Pradesh. They were then in a primitive state. Some were weavers and others not. They used to rear up goats and poultry. They migrated later to different regions in Orissa from this place. The influence of Telgu on these people is in a way manifest. They call their father as *dada*, sister-in-law as *bani*, grandmother their title. According to their *kula niyam* as *awa*, aunty as *pini* or *ata*. *'Patra'* is

or caste rules on every *Makar Sankranti* day they hold a feast near *Thakurani* and tie a new cloth on the head of their *Kula Behera.* bestowed is an annual feature.
The post is hereditary and the honour so

8. They are served by Brahmin priests, washermen and barbers. The Khadalas or Bauris, however, have refused to serve them in carrying their *sabari* for the last 15 to 20 years. It might be because in the estimation of this caste, the Kolis do not rank high enough in the social hierarchy.

9. There are other castes of the same occupation in the village under study. They are Behera, Ramani, Tanti, Patasalia and Pan. None of these castes accept water from the other and except the Pans all the rest are served by Brahmins, barbers and washermen. Members of the Koli tribe have free access to the village wells and temples.

10. They are divided into exogamous divisions called *gotras.* There are persons of the Gangalama and Sodasa *gotra* in the villages there are persons of the *Nagesa* villages there are persons of the Nagesa *gotra.* The rules of exogamy are not so strictly followed now-a-days.

Geographical distribution and population

11. Due to reasons enumerated earlier, the Kolis have been enumerated jointly with the Malhars and the population of both the tribes in the State has been returned at 344. The districtwise distribution of their population is shown in Table 1 below.

12. A rough enquiry from members of the tribe revealed that there are more number of persons belonging to the tribe than what has been enumerated in the 1961 census. It was stated that their main pockets of concentration are in and around Polsara, Buguda, Belguntha, Aska, Birinchipur, Pratappur, Chikitiganja and only two houses in Parikud. It was ascertained that their population in these areas alone would approach a figure above one thousand.

Table 1

POPULATION

(*Source*: 1961 Census)

District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	344	185	159
Koraput	..	3	1	2
Boudh-Khondmals	..	8	6	2
Ganjam	..	66	34	32
Sundargarh	..	13	13	..
Puri	..	7	7	..
Keonjhar	..	44	20	24
Cuttack	..	162	83	79
Mayurbhanj	..	41	21	20

Houses and living condition

13. The village under study is multi-ethnic in composition and is inhabited by members securing apparently very high positions in the social hierarchy. Their houses do not show any conspicuous variation from the traditional pattern adopted by members of other castes and tribes. The auspicious nature of a site is assessed before it is

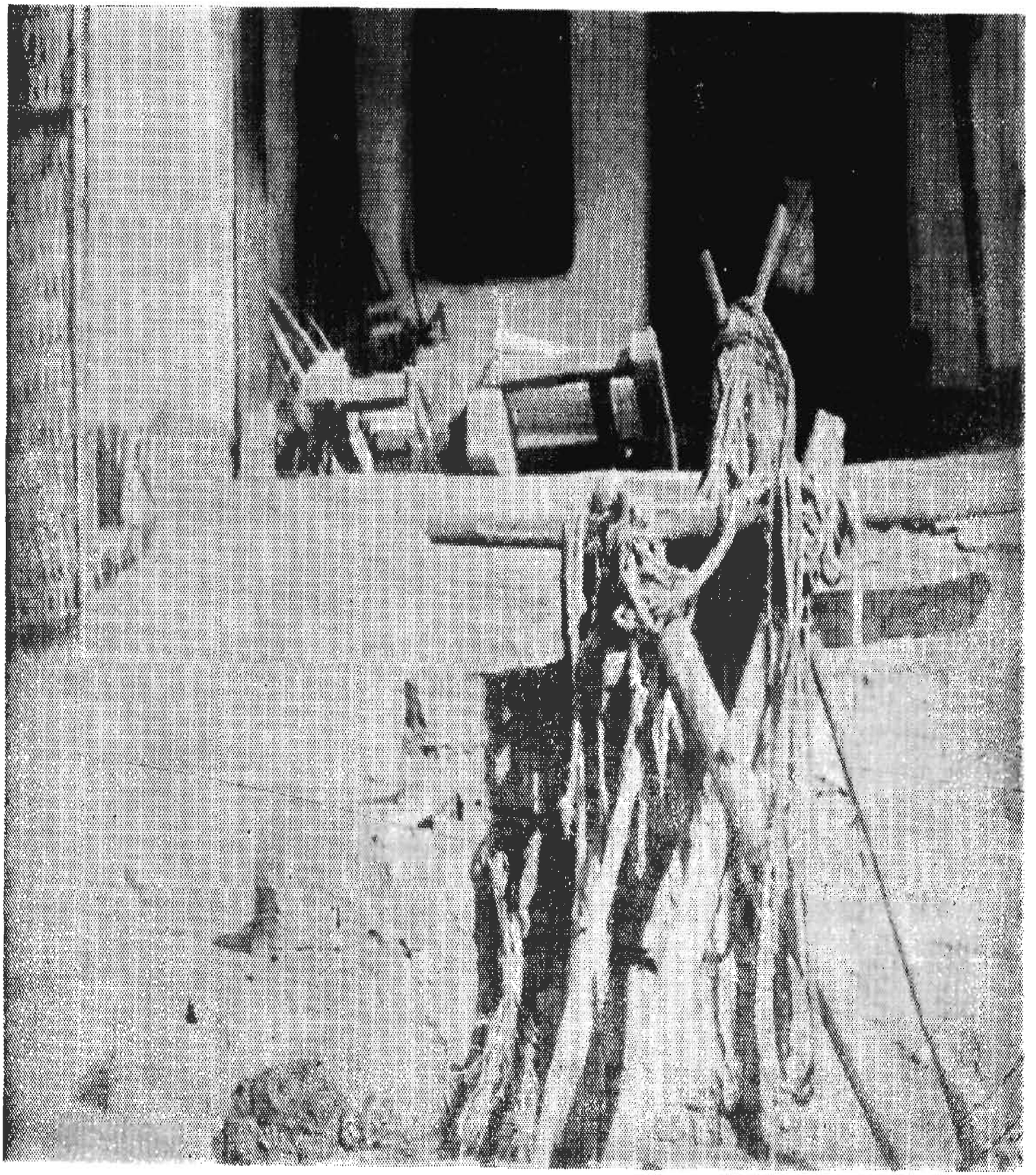
KOLI

Village of study :

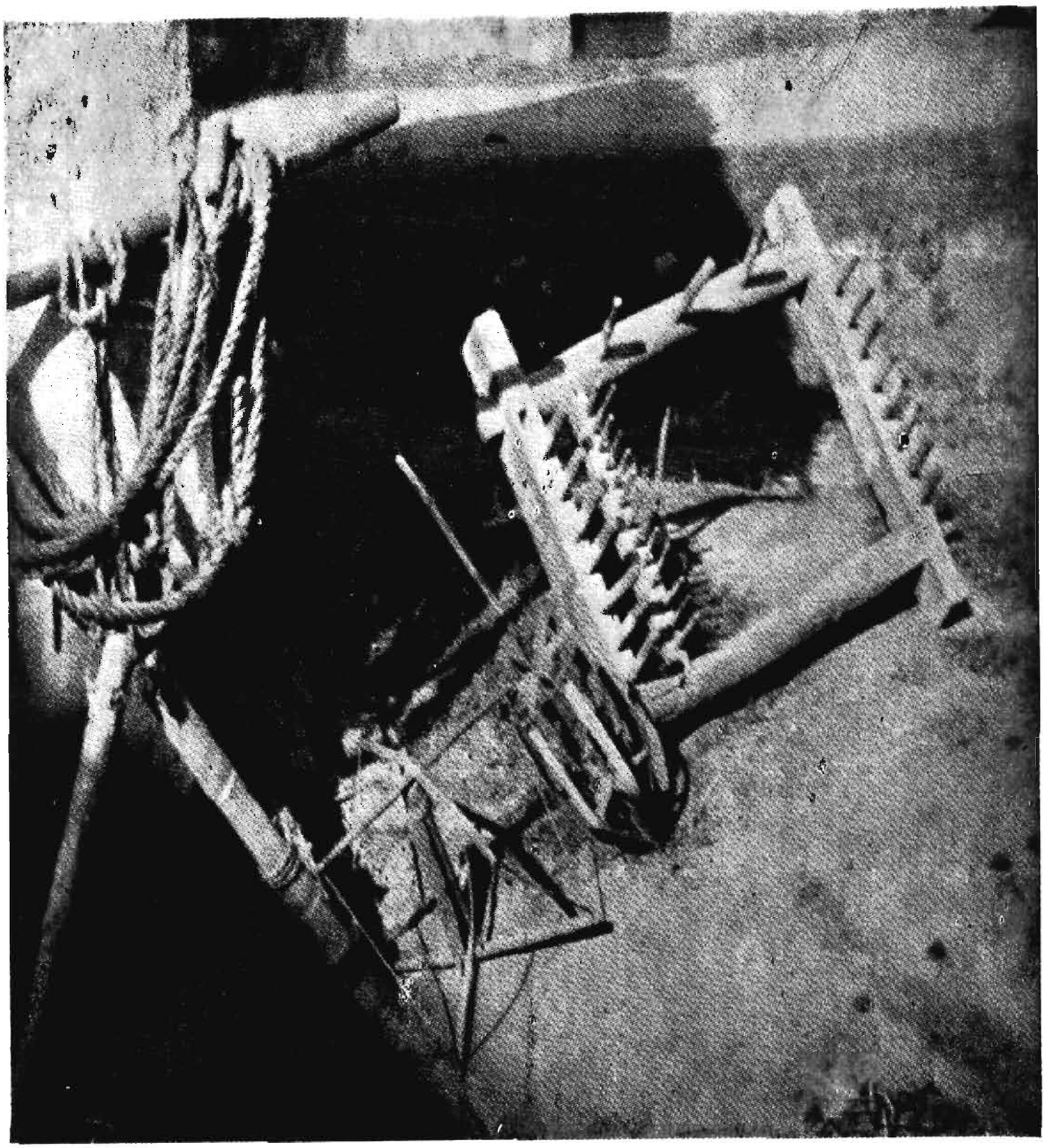
1. POLSARA
   P. S. Kodala
   Dist. Ganjam

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Raghunath Sethi, S/o. Narsu Sethi, Peon, Polsara Block office
2. Shri Nabaghana Patra, S/o. Gopinath Patra
3. Shri Gangadhar Patra, S/o. Gopinath Patra
4. Shri Ghana Patra, S/o. Kanhai Patra
5. Shri Madhab Behera, S/o. Laxman Behera
6. Shri Krushna Patra, S/o. Narahari Patra
7. Shri Satyabadi Patra, S/o. Bhairab Patra
8. Shri Hadu Patra
9. Shri Nabaghana Patra
10. Smt. Sura Beherani
11. Smt. Mahali Patrani, W/o. Satyabadi Patra
12. Smt. Chandrama Patra, D/o. Satyabadi Patra



The front view of a Koli house with weaving equipments



Weaving equipments—Urtu, Kointali, Pastum and Lundjpata

acquired. Consultation with the Brahmin priest is a must-be while laying the foundation and before the first occupation of the house.

14. The departure from the regional pattern seems to lie in the installation of the loom in the front entrance room. A narrow courtyard usually separates this from the inner room which is meant for bed-*cum*-kitchen. Wattles plastered with mud or sun-dried bricks are chosen for the wall according to the means of the occupant. The roof is either thatched in straw or with tiles.

15. In rural standards, their living condition looks fairly sanitary. The floor, the walls and the surroundings are cleaned regularly. Provision of windows and wide veradahs at the front are features rather peculiar to this tribe. Sometimes the walls are painted white with lime and the door and window leaves are painted with brilliant hues. The services of a Brahmin priest are requisitioned before first occupation to offer libation and regular worship.

Dress and ornaments

16. There is nothing characteristic about dress and ornaments of this tribe. It is a part of the uniform regional pattern. The common dress of a man is a coarse cotton dhoti and a banian or a shirt and that of a woman, a sari of about 5 yards in length The earlier fashion of wearing the self-woven handloom saris is fast disappearing to yield place to the mill-made ones. More modernised forms of dress are also used on ceremonial and festive occasions. Silken and warm clothings are also used by them during winter.

17. Women wear very few varieties of ornaments. Glass bangles over their wrists, golden nose-rings, nose-tops, ear-rings and ear-tops are the ornaments for the nose and ear which are locally called as *noli, phula, besari* and *dandi*. They used to wear previously *Bombai rupa khadu* on their ankles which have currently gone into disuse. Men wear no ornaments.

18. Tattooing was perhaps popular a few decades ago when women of the tribe used to tattoo their arms and legs. There was no caste rule as such to make the process obligatory. At present, the practice seems to have been given up completely.

Food

19. They take fish and flesh of all varieties which are relished by their caste Hindu neighbours. Beef, pork and carrion are held as unclean food. They are traditionally non-vegetarian. Besides rice which is their staple food, they take many other kinds of millets and pulses. Besides earthen pots, brass and aluminium vessels are also used in cooking. Food is taken in bell-metal and aluminium utensils. Groundnut oil serves as the cooking medium. Drinking is deemed as a taboo. Chewing pan and tobacco are popular. As with the neighbouring castes, tea has gained popularity with the members of the tribe.

Birth

20. Asafoetida, marine and dried fish, gourd, etc., are not given to a parturient woman. No other restriction is imposed on the expectant mother during the pre-natal period.

21. The birth of the first child usually occurs in the house of the parents of the woman. Subsequent deliveries are attended to in the house of her husband. A mid-wife of the local maternity centre or the hospital is now called to assist in the delivery. Till recently, a woman of the Bauri caste used to do the job. She was being remunerated. Experienced elderly women of the tribe also assist the mother during the delivery. The Bauri woman or the mid-wife cuts the umbilical cord either with a shell or a

knife. This with the placenta is buried either under the eaves or near the threshold by an elderly woman of the household.

22. The child is bathed in tepid water. The mother is immediately given water boiled with garlic and other spices to drink. She is also given hot boiled rice for five days. Pollution is observed in two stages; the first stage continues for 12 days when the mother and the child are kept segregated and none touch them. The second stage continues till the 21st day after child birth when she is not allowed to touch the earthen pots and other utensils in the kitchen.

23. The child is named on the 21st day. The household is cleaned, the mother and the child are bathed and their clothings are washed. A feast is held and the maternal uncle or his father present golden ornament to the new-born. During post-natal period the mother is forbidden from taking any flesh, edible green leaves and pumpkins.

Puberty

24. The rituals associated with puberty are observed rigorously. The giri on attaining puberty is kept segregated for seven days. During the period she is forbidden from seeing the face of any male member, Friends and relatives of the opposite sex serve her with rice, curd and cakes. They too are fed. At the end of the seventh day during the small hours of the morning, the girl is taken to the nearest water-source for a bath. She is given a new sari to wear and is then led to the temple where she offers worship to the *Thakurani*. A feast according to means is also arranged on the seventh day.

25. During the subsequent menstruations, the process of segregation is observed but with no great rigour. The woman is forbidden from touching any article in the household. She is not allowed to cook either. Others too are not allowed to touch her.

Marriage

26. Child marriage was reported to be common decades ago. In fact, of six of the informants, five were found to have taken to child marriage. Adult marriage was said to be slowly getting popular.

27. Preference in marriage is shown to the maternal uncle's daughter. A widow can remarry. In other words, no formal marriage with all the associated rituals is possible, but she is allowed all the same to settle down with another. The process is locally called *thua thoi*. In case of a divorce, the person at fault was previously being penalised by the caste council. The system of penalty has now been abolished and remarriage of the divorcee is possible. Sororate and levirate are practised. Most of the marriages are arranged by negotiation. In case of child marriage, it is solemnised when the boy is about 15 and the girl is about 10 or 11. Remarriage or *puani ghar* occurs after both attain maturity. Initiative is taken in marriage negotiations by either of the two sides. If the parents of the girl are well-to-do, the marriage function is solemnised in their house ; otherwise the girl is brought to the house of the boy where the rituals of marriage are gone through. There is no system of bride price or dowry, but the parents of the girl may offer presents for the son-in-law accoding to their capacity.

28. Marriage occurs by and large according to Hindu customs. A Brahmin priest officiates in the marriage. There is the usual *vedi, homa,* tying of the hands called *hata ganthi* and *kaudi khela.*

29. Separation does not occur immediately after marriage of the boy who continues to stay with his parents in joint family. It is only later on grounds of family feuds and quarrels that they separate and the property is partitioned. There are no strict rules regarding adoption. In succession, the eldest son used to get a larger share, but the rule is not so strictly observed now-a-days.

Death

30. Burial was formally the practice. But of late some are taking recourse to cremation. The social stigma which ranks them low for

disposal of the dead by burial is said to have prompted the well-to-do among them to take to cremation. Dead bodies of persons dying of pox are buried and covered by twigs and leaves.

31. Before disposal, the arrival of all friends and relatives is awaited. The latter do not offer any presents on this day. A bier is made out of bamboo pieces in which the dead body is carried to the cremation ground. The eldest son officiates in the obsequies. The dead body is lowered and placed at a point of bifurcation on the road to the cremation ground where the eldest son puts fire on the deceased's mouth. He offers later some boiled rice. In the burial ground, the dead body is placed with its head pointing north and face upwards. In case of a deceased female, the face points downwards.

32. After returning from the burial ground, all friends and relatives of the deceased offer fried paddy to the deceased's household who supplement the stock and distribute the same among other members of the tribe. This is called *lia pana*. The same afternoon or the succeeding day *pita bhata* is arranged. On the third day all proceed to the burial ground where after due worship some foodstuff is offered to the spirit of the deceased. A piece of a bone is fetched from the pile of cremation which is thrown later into the river Rushikulya or the Ganges, Previously, the practice was to observe pollution for 11 days after burial. In some cases of cremation, these days, members of the tribe observe *Dasa*. On the 11th day all in the deceased's household are shaved, their nails are pared and for the first time after pollution they take ghee or non-vegetarian food. A Brahmin priest arranges *homa* and *sradha* and distributes sanctified ghee amongst all relatives. A tribal feast is arranged which is enjoyed by all concerned.

Language, literacy and education

33. The mother-tongue of the Kolis is Oriya though in their spoken language influence of Telugu is evident. Bilingualism is rare.

34. Though it is recorded that 17·7 per cent of the population of Kolis and Malhars are literates, it was learnt during enquiry that literacy has spread fairly wide among them. The informants could recall some in Aska who are graduates. Many were said to have passed matriculation. At least one was M. B. B. S. whose brother was a lawyer. Many teen-aged members of the tribe were found enrolled in the local schools.

The table below gives the literacy and education figures of the tribe districtwise according to 1961 Census.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	344	283	61	60	1	
Koraput ..	3	3	..	..	..	
Baudh-Khondmals ..	8	6	2	2		
Ganjam ..	66	40	26	26	..	
Sundargarh ..	13	6	7	7	..	
Puri ..	7	7	..	.	..	
Keonjhar ..	44	44	..	..	..	
Cuttack .	162	136	26	25	1	
Mayurbhanj ..	41	41	..	..	..	

Occupation

35. Most of the members of the tribe weave clothes. Very few of them possess their own plough and bullocks. Those owning land, let it out for share-cropping by others.

36. In weaving, mostly cotton yarns are preferred which are procured usually from the nearby market or co-operatives. The women members of the tribe assist their counterparts in most of the stages of the weaving operation. After purchasing the yarn from the co-operatives, the same is soaked in water by women. After this, the yarns are separated and rolled into bundles called *lundi*. Then the male members prepare *tasana* which is only an indigenous device of separating the threads. Then members of both the sex tie them on to the comb. Many women weave themselves or they may prepare *kanda* in an *arata*. Most of them weave in their own house. In the village under study, there seems to be no attempt at mechanisation or co-operativisation of the trade.

The table below presents the industrial classification of the Koli and Malhar working population according to 1961 Census.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF WORKERS

Category		P	M	F
Total Population	..	344	185	159
Workers:—				
I. Cultivators	..	42	42	..
II. Agricultural labourers	..	26	25	1
III. Mining, Quarrying, etc.	..	10	10	..
IV. Household industry	..	34	24	10
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	..	5	2	3
VI. Construction	..	..	..	..
VII. Trade and Commerce	..	2	2	..
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications	..	2	2	..
IX. Other Services	..	6	6	..
Total—Workers	..	127	113	14
Non-workers	..	217	72	145

Village Organisation

37. The head man of the tribe at the village level is called *Behera*. The *Behera* for the village under study stays in Pratappur. In all cases of marriage and divorce, securing his sanction after payment of some arecanuts, shells and annas two in cash is essential. The post of the *Kula Behera* is hereditary.

38. Once in 7 years their caste council sits where all the elderly members of the tribe

participate to decide matters of caste policy for the tribe as a whole. The last caste council was held more than a decade ago at Polsara. Prior to that, it was convened at Bellaguntha and Buruda. Such meetings usually continue for 2 to 3 days.

Religion and Festival

39. Tumbeswar Mahadeb at Pratappur who is also worshipped by Hindus is their Supreme deity. It is essential that before their caste council sits, the *Prasad* of Tumbeswar must be obtained. A legend goes that a member of the tribe who migrated from Digapahandi and settled at Pratappur came across a cow milching herself and constructed a temple there. Two of his sons were named Bada Tumba and Sana Tumba after the god who was named as Tumbeswar.

40. The next important deity is *Thakurani* of Polsara who is worshipped on the *Makara Sankranti* day.

41. The presiding deity of each household is called *Istadebata* or *Isana* who is worshipped in the kitchen. They are also offered specific worship on the *Makara* day. Either for worship of the *Thakurani* or the *Isana*, the services of a Brahmin priest are not requisitioned.

42. Besides *Makara*, they observe most of the Hindu festivals. They clean their loom and place it for worship on the day of *Ganesh Puja*.

Conclusion

43. The members of the tribe appear to be greatly accultured. In their social customs, they appear to have merged considerably into the mainstream. Their attitude to development and education is perhaps as enlightened as that of their caste Hindu neighbours.

References:

1. Russell R. V. Hiralal, The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces at India, 1916 Vol. III
2. Madras Census Report, 1961 Vol. 15 Part I

KOTIA

Kotias are little known tribe of Orissa who earn their livelihood mainly as agriculturists and labourers. Numerically a very small tribe with a total population of only 3,559 according to 1961 census, they are preponderant mainly in the Police Station area of Mathili of Koraput district.

2. This organisation studied the tribe in village Korapali which lies at a distance of 6 miles from Mathili.

3. The Madras Census Report, 1901 (1902 : 163) mentions Kottiyas as a set of Oriya cultivators found mainly in Vizagapatam Agency. Their total population has been shown as 12,333. Adibasi (1963-64:182) describes Kotias as supposed to be identical with Kutia Khonds. They are included as a scheduled tribe in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1956.

4. The informants in the village under survey have Kotia, Naik and Pujari as their titles. The study indicated that the tribe is more allied to Bhumias than Kutia Khonds. In fact, when encountered about the name of their tribe, some stated initially that they are Bhumij. Later, they came up with the name of their tribe as Kotia and added that Kotias and Bada Bhumias are almost identical tribes and that inter-marriage between both is possible. They further asserted that Kotias do not entertain daughters in marriage from among *Sana* Bhumias. There were reported concentration of Kotias in villages Timisput, Kadapadar, Durukajodi, Bimanpali, etc., in Mathili Police Station and in the village under survey there are Bada Bhumias with Pedda, Kope, Pidinde and Pati as titles.

5. It was emphasised that they do not take water from the Koyas and Khonds and that with the latter they know of no relationship or affinity in the past.

6. They are settled in the village under study from many generations. But they learnt it from their ancestors that they came from Nandapur side of the same district many years ago. They are known by the neighbouring tribes as Katia, Khatia, Kutia and Kotia.

7. The motivation behind their urge to align themselves with the Bhumias is obscure. Their aspiration to upgrade their status in tribal society may provide the cause but in any case a more complete study on their inter-relationship is perhaps necessary.

Geogkraphical distribution and population

8. Their total population in the State according to 1961 census is 3,559. The sex ratio is 928 females to a thousand males. They are essentially a rural community.

9. It appears from the Madras Census Report, 1931 that their total population was 15,616 in 1931. In 1961, this appears to be 3,559. The reasons for this apparent fall in

population is not known. The reasons may be many and one may be that some of its members may have identified them as Bhumia during enumeration in 1961.

10. Of the total population in the State, almost 50 per cent numbering 1,734 have been returned from Mathili Police Station alone. Koraput district alone has a population of 3,447 and the remaining few lie scattered in the districts of Kalahandi, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Puri, Balasore and Ganjam. Police Station areas having more than 10 per cent population are Mathili, Nandapur and Padwa in Koraput district.

The table below gives the districtwise population as returned in 1961 census.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District	P	M	F
Orissa ..	3,559	1,846	1,713
Kalahandi ..	13	6	7
Koraput ..	3,4 7	1,790	1,657
Sambalpur ..	44	23	21
Bolangir ..	14	8	6
Ganjam ..	1	..	1
Puri ..	39	18	21
Balasore ..	1	1	..

Houses and living condition

11. The houses are usually two-roomed, one is used as the store ande the other as bed and kitchen. The latter room is usually divided into two by a law mud wall. A sizable verandah adjoins the bed room. Bamboo, timber, mud and straw are the usual components for house building. Some construct ceilings with timber or split bamboos, the upper part of which is used for storage of sundries. Most of the houses have two doors only, one is for the front entrance and the other for the rear exit.

12. Before construction of a house, the Disari is invariably consulted. A small peg is posted at the spot and on this turmeric paste is dabbed. A chicken is also sacrificed in honour of the earth goddess named *Mati Padmini*. The general condition of the houses appear sanitary. The walls are painted with cowdung and red ochres. The courtyards and the surroundings are cleaned regularly.

13. They usually live in joint families. Sons after marriage stay with their parents till the latter's death or separate earlier in case of contingency. Land is seldom partitioned as even after separation land is held in joint cultivation. Often, a separate room is constructed for the married son within the same old premises.

Food

14. Beef and pork are held as taboos. Rice and ragi constitute their staple food. For at least a sizable part of the year they depend on forest roots and tubers like *Pita kanda, Dari kanda, Balia kanda,* etc. *Mahula* flowers and mango kernels are also collected and stored for consumption during these difficult days.

15. Their cooking medium is *tola* oil extracted from *mahula* seeds. *kusum* oil or *alsi* oil. Onions, chillies, garlics and other spices are used to enrich the curries. Tamarind and salt are also liberally used. All kinds of fish and meat are relished. Dried fish and flesh of tortoise are taken as delicacies. Earthen pots bronze vessels and leafe cups called *danas* made out of *sargi* leaves are the usual kitcher equipments.

Dress and Ornaments

16. Two napkins are all that a Kotia male wears. Women use saris about 3 yards in length, but while going to *hat* or any other village, they wear longer saris. Their cloths are woven mostly by the Dombs. Children above 6 to 7 wear *gochi* or *koupin.*

17. Kotia males do hardly wear any ornament. Old ornaments like *kadu* and other brass and aluminium ones are being slowly replaced by golden ornaments and glass bangles. The ornament for the nose previously was *nangulu.* This is being increasingly replaced by *khanja* and *phuli* On the nose, they use *nothu* and *dandi,* and in their neck *kala sorisa mali* and *nanpatti.* On their wrists, they wear aluminium and glass bangles and for the anklet, *pahnri* Tattooing is not popular. One comes across Kotias who have put on golden *nolis* of their wife on the latter's death. On the date of marriage, the Disari helps them wear sacred threads, but not much of sanctity appears to be attched to this, as many Kotias during investigation were found without it.

Birth

18. A parturient woman of the tribe ordinarily works till the day of child birth and few restrictions are imposed on her food or movements. She is forbidden from taking molasses, banana and sweets. No separate arrangement for a lying-in-room is made and birth takes place in one of the living rooms. An old experienced woman of the tribe helps in delivery. She cuts the umbilical cord with an arrow if it is a male child and with a knife in case of a female child and buries it alongwith the placenta under the eaves in the backyard. She is paid annas four as remuneration and is fed on the day of purification.

19. Immediately after child birth, both the mother and the new born are given a hot water bath after being anointed with turmeric paste. The mother is given *pala kanda,* a tuber to eat and then hot boiled rice with salt.

20. Pollution continues for 9 days. On the 10th day both the mother and the child take a bath. The house is cleaned. After purification, two back-beaded strings are tied down on the neck and the waist of the child. It is believed that this goes to ward off evil spirits. The name-giving ceremony also takes place on this date. The Disari aids in name-giving. No special feast is arranged.

Puberty

21. On attainment of puberty, a girl is segregated for 3 days. On the dawn of the 4th day she is taken out, is givin a bath and a new cloth to wear.

Marriage

22. Generally three types of marriage occur : marriage by compulsion, by consent and by negotiation. It was reported that incidence of the last category of marriage is large.

23. In *Udulia* form of marriage, the boy and the girl in love run away. The father of the girl then visits the house of the boy and blames the father of the latter for the entire episode. The father of the boy usually fixes up a date and requests the father of the girl to pay a second visit. During this visit, the latter is given one *putty* of rice, one goat and a fowl. A feast is held and members of both the parties participate.

24. In *Jhinka* form of marriage which is settled by compulsion, the girl is taken away forcibly by the boy who brings her down to his house. The consent of the girl has to be obtained later and this is most important as without it she has to be released to join her father. If her consent is secured before her father's visit, the latter is presented with rice, fowl and goat and the marriage is solemnised.

KOTIA

Village of study :

KORAPALI
P. S. Mathili
Dist. Koraput

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Christaprema Bagha, Teacher, Korapali L. P. School
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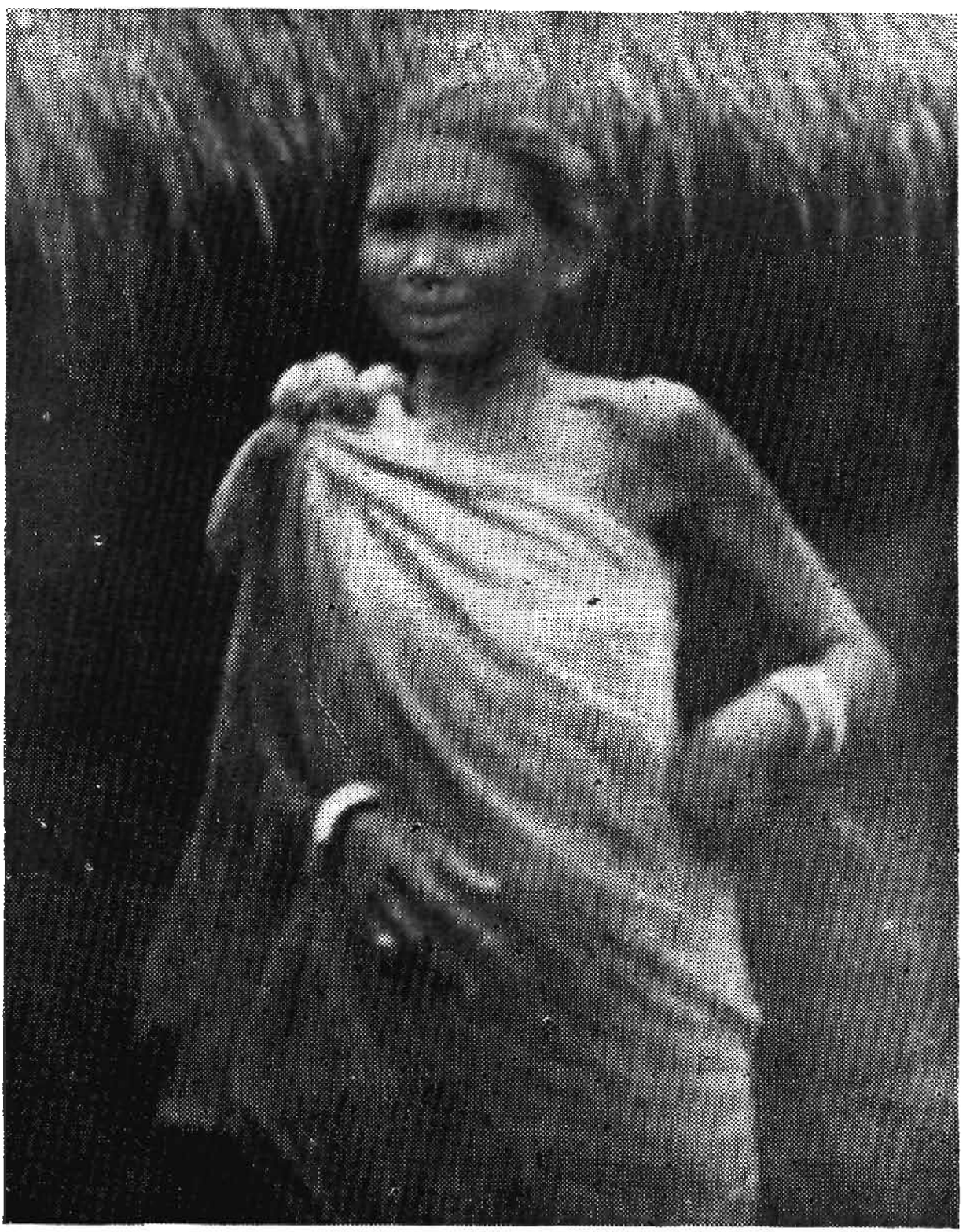
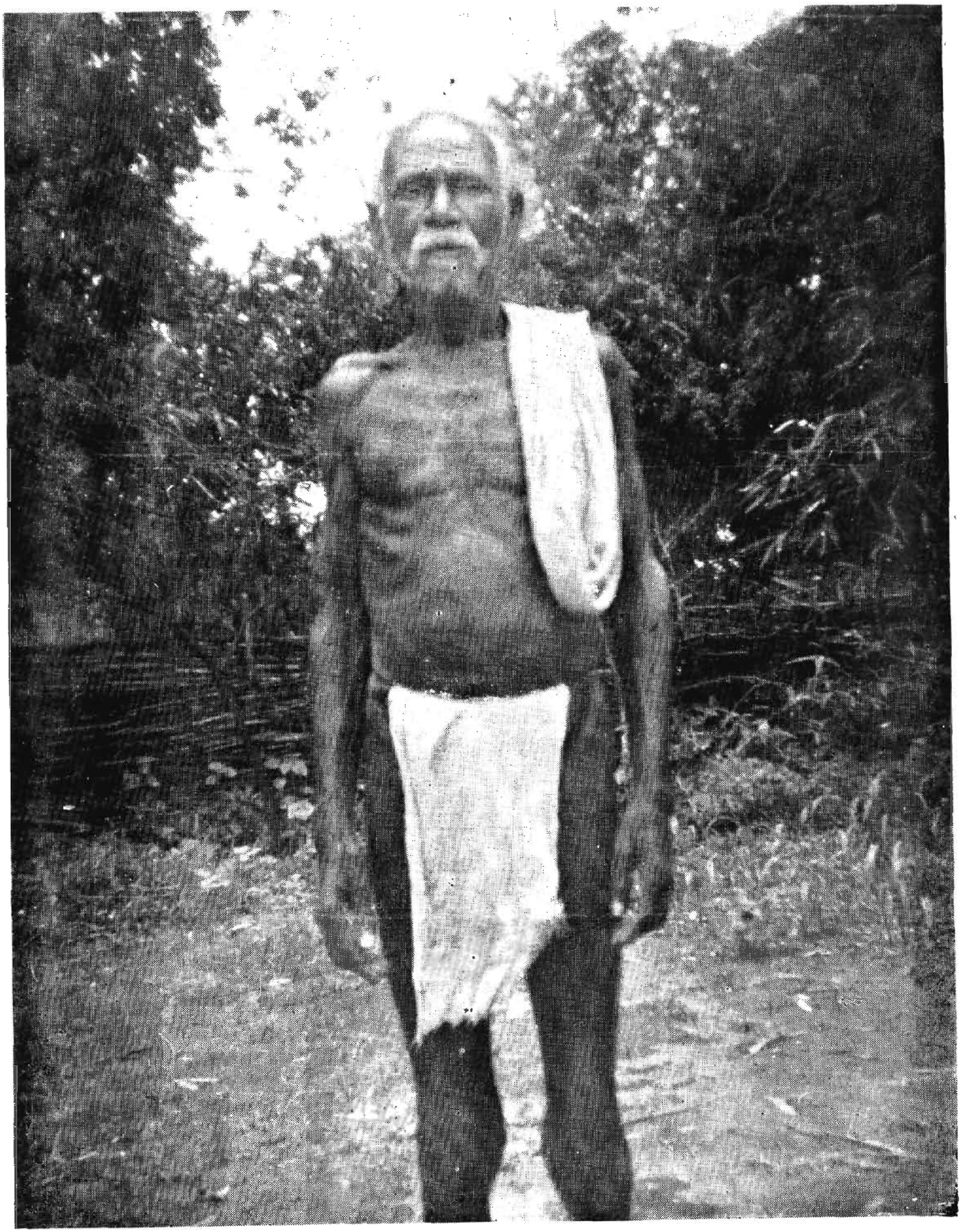
3. Shri Padmanav Pujari, S/o. Narasinha Pujari
4. Shri Bhagaban Pujari, S/o. Late Gobinda Pujari
5. Shri Raghunath Naik
6. Shri Jagannath Kotia
7. Shri Gobinda Kotia
8. Shri Mangala Kotia
9. Gurubari, W/o. Bhagaban Pujari



An old lady



An old man

25. In marriages settled through negotiation, the father of the boy takes the initiative and visits the girl's house. In his next visit about 8 days after, he, accompanied by the Nayak carries flattened rice and molasses which when accepted by the girl's parents confirms the latter's consent. This is formally announced to all concerned. A third visit by the father of the groom settles the date for marriage once for all. *Magha* and *Phalguna* are usually the months when most of the marriages are solemnised. The date for marriage is, however, settled in consultation with the Disari.

26. On the morning of the marriage day, five persons of the groom's village visit the house of the girl with treacle and flattened rice. All of them return on depositing the articles in the house of the bride except two who come back the same evening with the bride and a number of persons of the bride's village. They are accommodated in the groom's village in a separate shed and arrangements for their food are made by the father of the boy. On the advent of *lagna* or the propitious time for marriage as prescribed by the *Disari*, the father of the boy presents to the father of the girl one *putty* of rice, a goat, four earthen pots, one fowl and one gourd. A feast is made out of these commodities and is enjoyed by all concerned. The bride and the groom then sit on a raised platform under the shed specially constructed for the purpose. The Disari officiates in the marriage. A piece of cloth is drawn between the bride and the groom. At *lagna* time the Disari puts the leg of the groom on that of the bride and the intervening cloth is also taken away. The Disari then pours water on their heads. Members of both the parties anoint turmeric paste on each other and enjoy the night in great revelry.

27. Four days after marriage, the bride and the groom visit the house of the bride with some persons of the groom's village. The friends and relatives return soon after but the newly-wed couple continue to stay on for 3 to 4 days.

28. Marriage of widows and divorcees occur. It appears to be the rule that if a married woman forsakes her first husband to marry another, the first husband has to be compensated with double the amount spent by him for the marriage. In case of a repetition, the corresponding cash amount gets doubled. It was reported that this social law is designed to discourage the practice of polygamy. Marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter or the maternal aunt's daughter is possible.

Death

29. The arrival of the caste Nayak is awaited before disposal of the dead. The dead body is washed in tepid water, is anointed with turmeric paste and oil and its hairs are combed. Mourners of both the sex accompany the deceased till the outskirts of the village where the bier is lowered. The bangles of the widow are broken at this place and women are allowed to proceed no further. Burning appears to be the rule though bodies of children and of those dying of epidemics are buried.

30. The dead body is placed on the funeral pyre with its face upwards and the head pointing east. The maternal nephew lits the fire, then proceeds to some water spot and says : "Your house is on fire from today". The mourners then return home and sprinkle water on each other with a mango leaf. Initial purification starts with distribution of milk and oil.

31. The second stage of purification starts on the fifth day when members of the deceased's household visit the cremation ground. A small image of the dead is made out of rice. A turmeric smeared cloth covers the same. Three Kendu (Diospyros melanoxylon) twigs are crossed. A new earthen pot with water is placed on it from which water trickles down through a hole and falls right on the bosom of the image.

32. Yet another stage of purification is observed in *Dasa* or *Buda*. The ritual was stated to be excessively an expensive proposition, four to five *putties* of rice and a few goats have to be arranged to feed all friends and relatives. There is naturally no fixed date for this and the one finally settled is a matter of arrangement and convenience.

Language, literacy and education

33. According to 1961 census figures, Oriya is the mother-tongue of the tribe. On observation, they were found to be communicating among themselves in a slightly corrupt form of Oriya. Bilingualism is rare.

34. Percentage of literacy is 6·3 which is low. In the village under survey, not even one could be cited to have passed Middle School standard but about 30 students were reported to be studying in the primary schools.

The table below gives the figures on literacy and education based on 1961 census.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa	3,559	3,335	224	215	9	..
Kalahandi	13	10	3	3	..	.
Koraput	3,447	3,258	189	180	9	..
Sambalpur	44	23	21	21	..	..
Bolangir	14	11	3	3	..	..
Ganjam	1	1	..	..	..	..
Puri	39	31	8	8	..	..
Balasore	1	1	..	..	..	..

Occupation

35. Members of the tribe are essentially agriculturists. In the area under study, most of them have taken to settled form of cultivation. Those owning little or no land take to agricultural labour and wage-earning. Catching of fish appears to be their subsidiary occupation. Fish traps and nets of various types are used for the purpose. Fish is also dried and preserved for use.

The table below gives the industrial classification of population according to 1961 census.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

Category	P	M	F
Total population .	3,559	1,846	1,713
Workers:			
I. Cultivator ..	1,282	898	384
II. Agricultural labourer ..	401	316	85
III. Mining. Quarryng, etc .	10	6	4
IV. Household Industry .	24	22	
V. Manufacturing other than household industry. .	.	..	..
VI. Construction	1	1	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	4	2	2
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications .	1	1	..
IX. Other Services ..	120	62	5
Total Workers	1,843	1,208	635
Non-workers	1,716	638	1,078

Village organisation

36. The headman of the tribe designated as Nayak is consulted in matters of social disputes and conflicts. One Bansi Nayak, the headman of the tribe in village Korapalli is assisted by another person called Chalan. There is no formal caste organisation. On enquiry it revealed that the informants have not heard of a caste meeting having been held in the recent past. Other functionaries of the tribe are Pujari or the worshipper, Disari the sorcerer and Sirua the exorcist.

Religion and festival

37. Members of the tribe appeared to have adopted Hinduism to a certain measure as many of them worshipped Hindu gods and goddesses and observed many Hindu festivals. Their most important deity is *Mauli Debata* whose shrine lies under a *Kalu tree Nisanigida* is considered as the goddess of smallpox and is worshipped in *Chaitra* (March-April) with sacrifices of goats and fowls *Mauli* is worshipped in *Chaitra* in a similar fashion.

38. Their most important festival is *Chaitra* Parba. This is observed in great revelry and merriment for a period of seven days. There is no fixed date as such and the villagers observe the festival as and when the same is fixed up by *Disari*. They take mango for the first time and do not stir out for work during the entire period of the festival. *Nua-khia* is observed in *Sravana* on a Monday.

References.

1. Madras Census Report, 1901
2. Madras Census Report, 1931
3. Adibasi No. 3, 1963-64

KULIS

The tribe is named Kuli and not Kulis as mentioned in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes List (Modification) Order, 1956. They are like Koli, weavers by occupation though it was claimed by many that years ago, their main occupation was carding of cotton. The dumb-bell of the bow used for the process of carding is known in some areas as *kula*. It was surmised by some that Kuli, the name of the tribe might have been derived from this dumb-bell. The Kulis identify themselves as Mehera or Tula Bhina.

2. This organisation studied the tribe in village Harbhanga of Baudh-Khondmals district. Here Meher is their title. Some Kulis in the neighbouring Daspalla area use Behera as the title.

3. The Brahmins serve them in their marriages and death obsequies. Though in Daspalla, Khondmals and Sonepur side barbers and washermen are reported to serve them, this is not so in Baudh and Athmallik areas. They are no more taken as untouchables in the village under survey but years ago, it was claimed, the position was different.

Geographical distribution and population

4. Their total population in the State according to 1961 census is 1, 609. Of this, the majority lie in the districts of Bolangir and Sambalpur. Their sex ratio is 1,238 females per thousand males. The total urban population is only 176. The police station areas having more than 10 per cent of the population are Patnagarh (349), Saintala (242) in the district of Bolangir and Padampur (196) in the district of Sambalpur.

5. Members of the tribe in the village under study stated that they establish marriage relationship with the Kulis in Daspalla, Baudh, Athmallik and Sonepur areas. In Baudh subdivision their distribution was sparse. But in Loisingha and Saintala areas of Bolangir district they claimed to be in much larger concentration.

The table below gives the districtwise population of the tribe.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District	P	M	F
Orissa ..	1,609	719	890
Sambalpur ..	629	234	395
Bolangir ..	716	362	354
Baudh-Khondmals	264	123	141

Houses and living condition

6. In the area under study, the Kulis live in the same hamlet with members of the Gouda, Suda, Kansari, Teli, Dhoba and Jyotish castes. This was reported to be the position in some of the neighbouring multiethnic villages.

7. The usual regional pattern is adopted in the construction of their houses. Three to four rooms for each house one of which is earmarked for housing the loom and a spacious backyard with a kitchen garden where tobacco, vegetables, mustard and many other crops are grown are features common to many houses. Cow-sheds are located at a distance. Narrow verandahs are provided on all sides of the house. Ceilings are provided with wooden or bamboo frames plastered in mud. The walls are made of mud and the frame of the roof made of wooden and bamboo posts is thatched in straw.

8. Before laying the foundation of a house, a wooden post decorated with mango leaves and vermilion is posted at the centre. A *puja* is performed and some ghee and molasses mixed in milk are poured into the pit where the post is pitched. An auspicious day is chosen for occupation of the house. A Brahmin priest performs **homa** on this day and food is cooked in new earthen pots. Those who can afford distribute sweets among children.

9. Their living condition looks sanitary. The precincts of the house are cleaned regularly and the walls and the courtyard are dabbed in cowdung water.

Dress and ornaments

10. In their dress and ornaments, the Kulis exhibit very few distinctive features. A coarse cotton dhoti or sari constitute the common dress. Some weave their own clothes whereas others purchase them from nearby *hats* or shopping centres.

11. Women use silver *Bandria* and glass bangles on their wrists, *ganthia, phasia* and *jhalka* on their ears, *guna, naka-putuki* and *panapatri* on their nose and *pohala mala* and *suna mali* on their neck. All these ornaments are made of gold or silver. *Panjal* was once popular as an adoration for their ankles but this is no more in use.

12. Females tattoo their limbs though the practice seems to be no more popular. They too smear vermilion over their forehead. In their hair dressing, they adopt the common regional pattern.

Food

13. The Kulis abhor beef, pork and carrion. Rice and mandia constitute their staple food. Pulses and vegetables of all varieties are taken alongwith the kinds of fish and flesh that are available. Mustard oil, chillies, onion and mustard seeds are items of common use in cooking. Drinking liquor is said to be rare, but chewing tobacco and betel is common.

Birth

14. The expectant woman is forbidden from taking too much of sweet or sour items of food. She should not visit a religious place and is forbidden from crossing a river or stream. Birth of a baby occours usually in a separate room. An old experienced woman of the tribe assists the parturient woman in delivery. She cuts the umbilical cord with a knife and buries it at the backyard under the eaves after some male member of the household digs a pit for the purpose. She is administered powder of neem leaves, garlic, dried ginger and *pipali* which are believed to hasten up the process of healing. She is given hot boiled rice with boiled vegetables for six days after birth. Both the mother and the child are kept segregated for six days when the first stage of pollution ends. The mother and the child are given a bath and the former wears a new cloth. Oil and turmeric are presented to both of them by the neighbours. A feast is arranged where the indigenous poridge *(khiri)* and cakes *(pitha)* are served. The second stage of pollution continues for 21 days at the end of which the house is cleaned and all earthen pots in use substituted by new ones. It is only after the second stage of purification is over that the mother is allowed entry into the kitchen. On the 21st day, the child is named by a Brahmin. *Nama sankirtan* is arranged. Those who can afford, arrange an additional feast for children besides the general feast. Some seek the services of an astrologer for preparing a horoscope for the child.

Puberty

15. Segregation for a period of 7 days is usually observed for the girl attaining puberty. The practice now-a-days is to treat the matter with a veil of secrecy. The girl at the end of 7 days takes her bath in some nearby tank or stream and wears a new cloth. The rigour of segregation in subsequent menstruations has greatly diminished as the woman suffering from the disability can now take to cooking on the same day after bath.

Marriage

16. The tribe has broken up into a number of exogamous septs called *gotras*. In the village under study, all the members of the tribe belong to the *Bela gotra*. In neighbouring villages, there are members of *Khara* (serpent), *Neula* (mongoose), *Kalasa* (pitcher), *Bagha* (tiger) and *Chauta gotras*. Marriage within the same *gotra* is prohibited. Previously child marriage was said to be common. This, of late, has yielded place to marriage of adults.

17. Widows and divorcees are permitted to settle down with a second husband though no formal marriage with all its rituals is allowed. Sororate is practised. Marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter is preferred, but the same with no other kin is allowed.

18. It was said that marriage occurs seldom by force, and that few marriages are held by consent. Most of the marriages are settled by negotiation at the initiative of the father of the boy who first deputes a mediator. The bride price is initially settled which includes golden ornaments for the bride, at least Rs. 100/- in cash and about 3 pairs of saris for the bride and her mother.

19. After both the parties agree on the quantum of bride price, a formal betrothal ceremony takes place in the house of the bride. The price is paid here to the parents of the bride.

20. Marriage takes place in the house of the bride. A Brahmin priest officiates in all the rituals. The bridegroom comes to the house of the bride alongwith his guardian, friends and relations. The usual rituals of *homa* (libation), union of the palms and marriage feast take place. On the day after marriage, the bridegroom returns to his house with the bride and his party.

21. In case of child marriage, the bride is sent back to the house of the parents on the fourth day of the marriage. After she attains puberty, her parents on an appointed day accompany her to the house of the groom where they leave her with presents. A feast follows. The Brahmin priest offers libations and performs the accompanying rituals.

22. Sons after marriage continue to stay with their parents in a joint family. This at times continues till the death of the parents. It is only when the size of the family grows into unmanagable proportions or when signs of discord or disharmony set in that partition occurs.

Death

23. The dead are both buried and cremated though burial is said to be more common a practice. Bodies of those dying of cholera or smallpox are thrown away in an open place.

24. The dead body is carried in a stringed cot to whose legs are tied a few leaves of *tulasi* (sacred basil) and plantain. A burning earthen lamp is also carried alongwith an earthen pitcher and a winnowing fan. Copper coins and fried paddy are thrown on the way to the burial ground.

25. The dead body is lowered on to the ground at the outskirts of the village where the eldest son touches fire on to its face. He returns home thatafter. But if it is proposed to dispose of the dead body by cremation the eldest son accompanies the procession up to the cremation ground.

26. Both in burial and cremation, the head of the deceased points towards north. In case of a male, the face points upwards and in case of a female, it is downwards.

27. After disposal of the dead body the pall-bearers return home after a purificatory bath. They purify their body further with the smoke of burning neem leaves. Food is not cooked in the house of the deceased on the day of death and members of the household take their food out of the cooking of other members of the tribe.

28. Pollution is observed for 11 days. At the end of the third day they observe *tela* when members of the deceased's household

anoint oil on their body. It is from the third day onwards till the eleventh day that the wife of the deceased offers food to the departed soul

29. The purification ceremony is observed on the 10th day when male members of the household get themselves shaved near a tank or river. A Brahmin priest officiates in the purification ceremony. On the 11th day, *homa* is performed by the Brahmin priest A feast is arranged where non-vegetarian food is served to all members of the tribe. Another *homa* is performed on the 12th day when a feast with vegetarian food only is served. On this day the spirit of the deceased is invited whose foot-prints are marked over sand spread in a room.

Language, literacy and education

30. According to the figures of 1961 census, all the members of the tribe in the districts of Bolangir and Sambalpur have Oriya their mother-tongue, whereas most of the Kulis in the district of Baudh-Khondmals have Kui as their mother-tongue. In the village under study, none of the Kulis knew Kui and all of them had Oriya as their mother-tongue. In the 1961 census, many with Kui as the mother-tongue have been returned as speaking Oriya as a subsidiary language and some with Oriya as their mother-tongue have been returned as speaking Hindi.

1 Of the total population 15·8 per cent are literate. The informants could recount a boy of village Tileswar who has passed Matriculation but none were stated to have gone up to the college level. A number of boys from the village under study were enrolled in the local primary school.

The table below gives the literacy and education figures of the State arranged districtwise

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(*Source* : 1961 Census)

District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Orissa ..	1,608	1,354	255	171	83	1
Sambalpur ..	629	531	98	58	39	1
Bolangir ..	716	592	124	95	29	.
Baudh-Khondmals ..	264	231	33	18	15	.

Occupation

32. Weaving is their main occupation in which members of both the sex are employed. Majority of them take to this household industry. The other weaving caste in the area under study is Bhulia who were reported by members of the tribe to be more efficient in the art. Almost every Kuli house in the village under study has a loom. The main items of product are coarse cotton dhotis and saris. Agriculture serves as a subsidiary occupation for them.

The table below gives the industrial classification of population according to 1961 Census.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

Category	P	M	F
1	2	3	4
Total population ..	1,609	719	890
Workers:			
I. Cultivators .	188	123	65
II. Agricultural labourers ..	79	47	32
III. Mining & Quarrying, etc. ..	..	..	..
IV. Household Industry	525	299	226
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..	..	..	..
VI. Construction .	2	2	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	1	..	1
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications ..	..	..	..
IX. Other Services	72	10	62
Total Workers ..	867	481	386
Non-workers ..	742	238	504

Village organisation

33. In Baudh subdivision, the ex-State Ruler in the pre-merger period had designated some as Mehers who served as village chiefs of the tribe. It is said that the Raja Sahib had adorned their heads with saris as a mark of honour. Their last caste council sat about a decade ago in village Kuleswar in Athmallik subdivision and about 14 to 15 years ago in village Pataka in the same subdivision. They have another functionary, called *Handibaraga* whose main function is to invite members of the tribe for disposal of the dead. He too runs errands in matters of convening meetings for arbitration of social disputes. The Meher or the village chief is also designated as *Malik*. The caste council elects the headman of the tribe. The *Malik* at the village or regional level decides all disputes and matters of social concern.

Religion and festival

34. Their chief deity is *Biswakarma* who is worshipped in the month of *Kartika* on the *Deepavali* day. Besides, they worship *Mangala, Durga Baruala,* their *Istadebata* and *Pitabali*. All these deities are worshipped on important festivals and other occasions.

35. Their main festivals are Diwali and Dasahara when they worship Biswakarma

References:

1. Adibasi No. 3,1963-64

KULIS

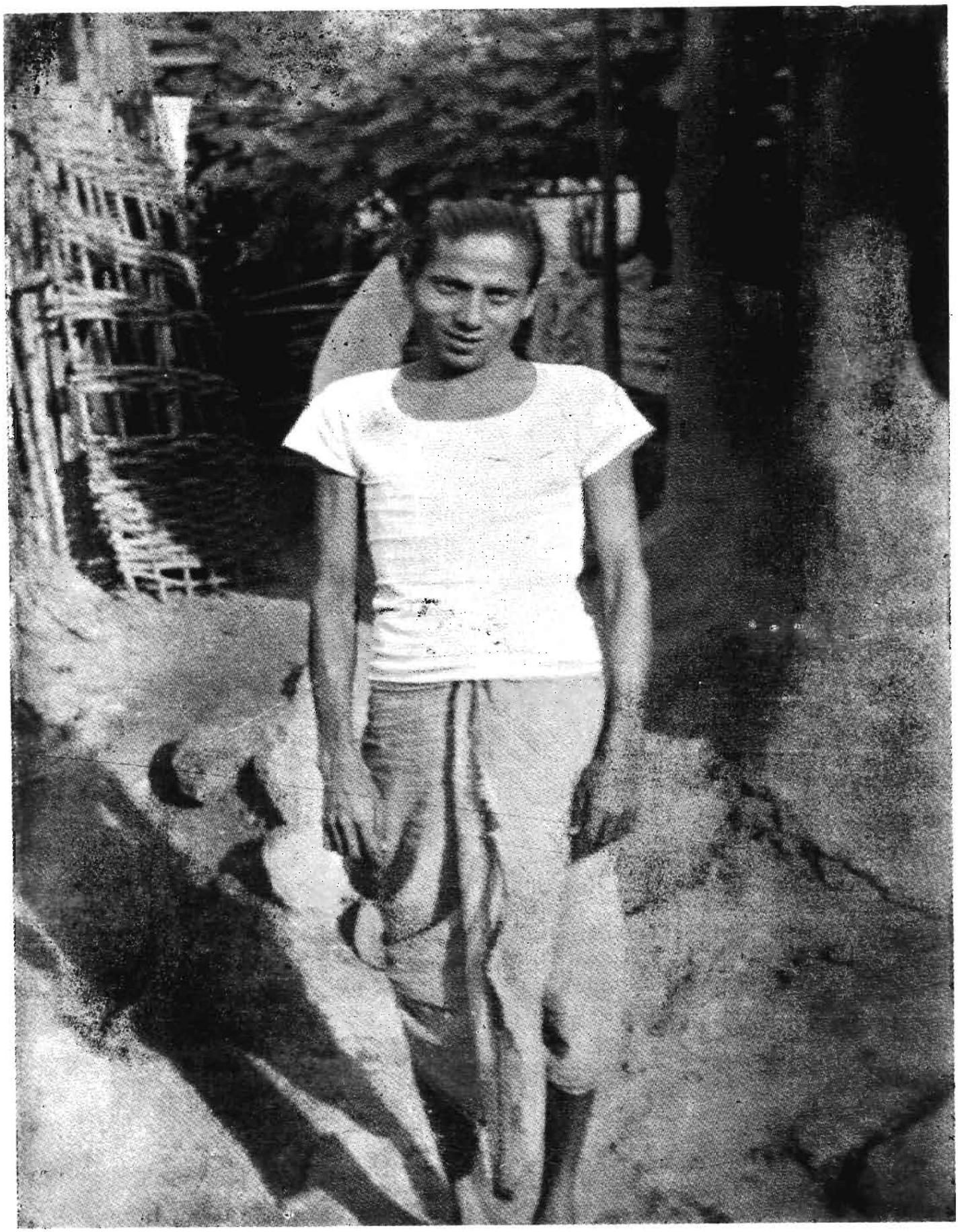
Village of study :

HARBHANGA

P. S. Harbhanga
Dist. Baudh-Khondmals

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Padmaloc ıan Mohapatra, Tahsildar
2. Shri Pandab Meher, S 'o. Sara Meher
3. Shri Dhanu Meher, S/o. Narayana Meher
4. Shri Trinath Meher, S/o. Dhanu Meher
5. Smt. Duhita, W/o. Judhisthira Meher
6. Shri Dhaneswar Meher



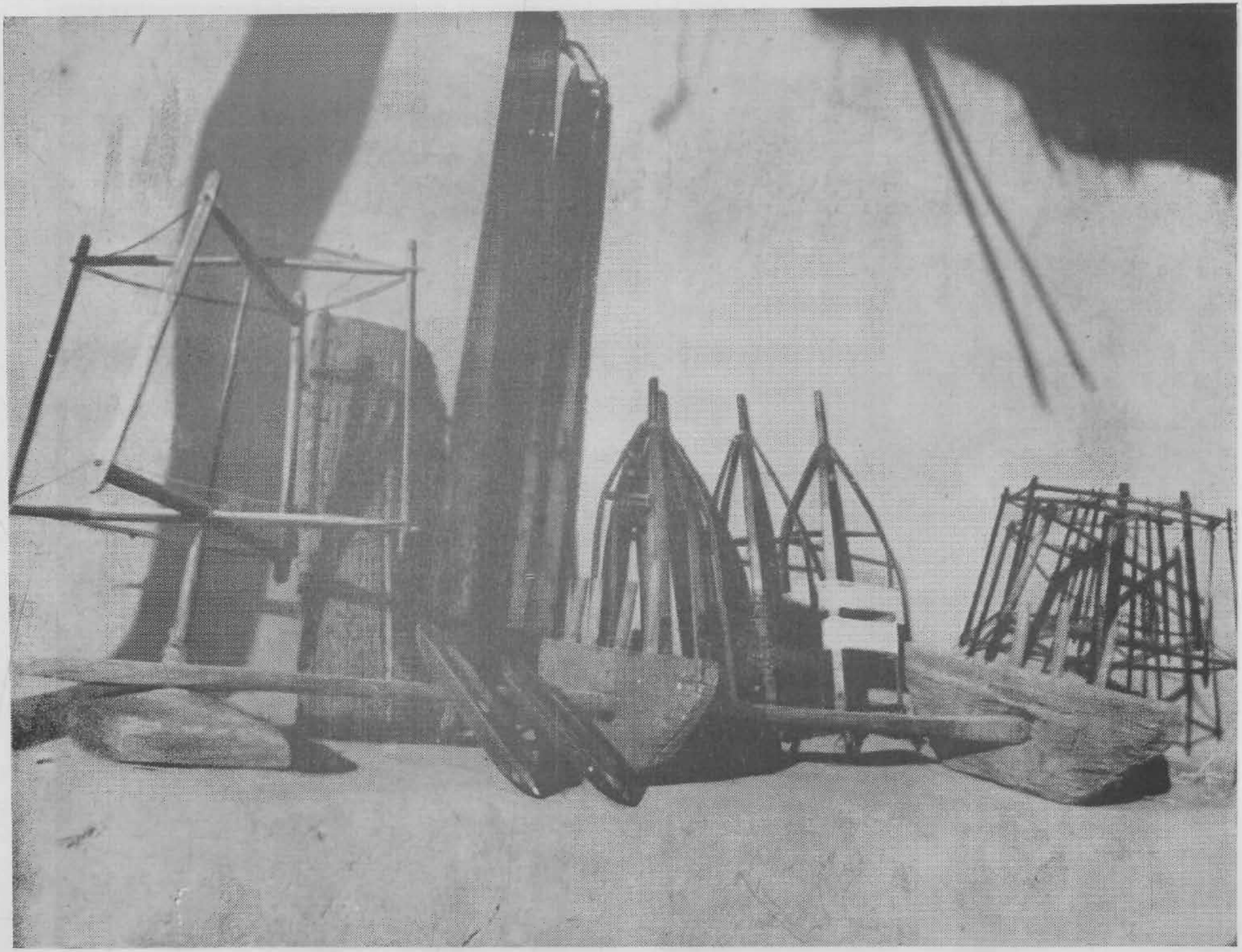
Front view of a Kulis youth



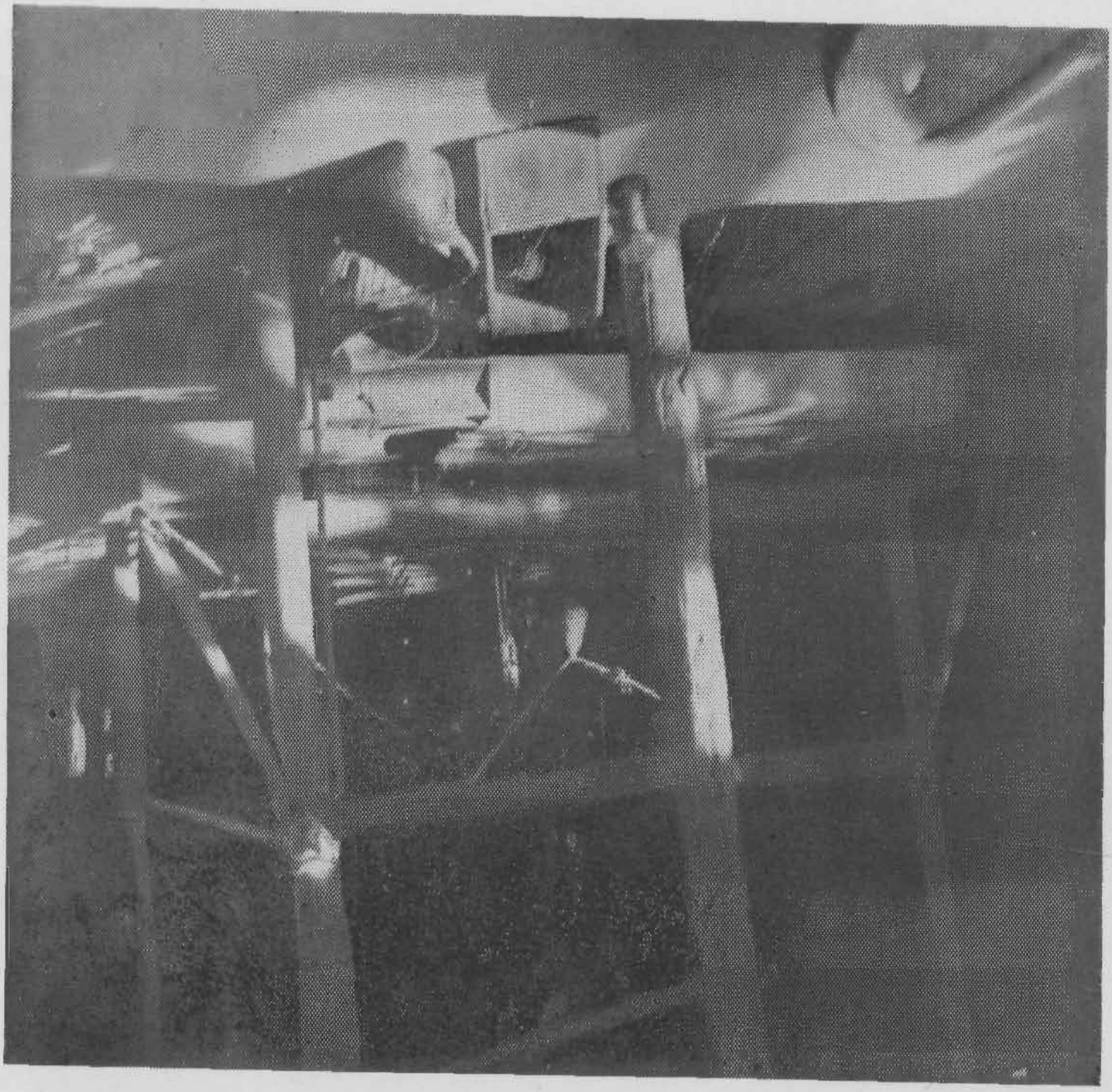
Two Kulis women



A woman with her grand child



The weaving equipments—Bharana, Kuncha, Pania, Natei, Lari and Purani



A view of the loom set inside the house

PARENGA

Village of study :

BODOSOGORO
P. S. Machkund
Dist. Koraput

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Artatrana Pujari, S/o. Ramanath Pujari, Forester
2. Shri Bhagaban Sarabu, Forest Guard
3. Shri Badanaik Angara, S/o. Sunkra
4. Shri Guru Kirsani, S/o. Sama Kirsani
5. Shri Ghansi Pujari, S/o. Soma Pujari
6. Shri Sahu Mangala, S/o. Sahu Sunkra
7. Shri Ghasi Gamal, S/o. Sunkra Gamal

PARENGA

In village Barasagar of Machkund police Station in the district of Koraput selected for study of the Parengas, the members of the tribe identified themselves as Parenga Parojas and stated that they were a tribe inferior to the Gadaba Parojas in the social hierarchy. Though in their social traits and characteristics the Parengas hold a lot in common with the Gadaba, it revealed on local enquiry that they are two seperate tribes and that it would be apparently a mistake to consider both the tribes as one and the same tribe. When Parengas fetch a Gadaba girl for marriage with any of their boys, they kill goats and fowls for a feast and a Panchayat is convened for consideration of her induction into the caste. But the reverse process, as they claimed does not occur. Both these tribes retain the tradition of weaving the *kereng* cloths though this, in a way, is slowly dying out with the Parengas. Both observe *gottar* ceremony as a mark of respect to the dead.

2. The word Paroja as is well known is too loosely woven a term which is accepted for use by many tribes. There are Parenga Parojas, Gadaba Parojas, Kandha Parojas and Jadia and Kanda Parojas. The Parengas accept water from the Gadabas, Khonds and Jadias, but do not accept it from the Savaras. Thurston (1909 : Vol. II : 243), (1909 : Vol. VI: 155)mentions Parengas as one of the five subdivisions of the Gadaba. Bell (1945 : 75) classes Parengs, Didais and Bonda Parojas as the principal Munda tribes of Koraput district. Parengs speak Munda language which Professor G. V. Ramamurti of Parlakhemundi thinks to be very closely akin to that of the Savaras of the Parlakhemundi Maliahs. The women were a kilt woven of fibre, but different in pattern from that of the Gadabas in that it is thinly striped on a white or dingy white background while the Gadaba cloth is broadly striped in various colours. The Census Report of Madras (Vol. XII : Part 1 : 1912 : 164) quotes Mr. C. A. Henderson for whom Parenga Gadabas are one of the three sections of the Gadabas. The other two are Bonda Paroja and Guttab or Bodo Gadaba. According to him, the Parengas are inferior and possibly more mixed than the Bodo Gadaba. He thinks that the language of the Parengas is not so nearly related to that of either the Bondas or the Guttab as they are to each other. He regards them as an offshoot of the Savaras and that being like the Gadaba in appearance and probably in some of their customs and by no means dissimilar in language they have got the latter name in Jeypore.

3. The origin of the tribe is shrouded in obscurity. In spite of faithful enquiries. it was difficult to get any legend or tradition regarding their original migration. There are no subdivisions among members of the tribe. But they are broken up into a number of exogamous septs as *Antal* (cobra), *Khilla* (tiger), *Pangi* (vulture) and *Golari* (a kind of serpent).

Geographical distribution and Population

4. According to the 1961 Census, almost the entire population of the Gadabas (6,801) is returned from the district of Koraput but for a handful of less than a hundred who have been returned from Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts. Their sex ratio is 1,051 females to a thousand males. They are exclusively a rural community as none of them have been returned from urban areas. The Machkund and Nandapur police stations of the district of Koraput contain

more than 10 per cent of the population : Machkund (2,955) and Nandapur (2,252).

The table below presents districtwise population :

Table 1

POPULATION

(*Source* : 1961 Census)

District	P	M	F
1	2	3	4
Orissa ..	6,801	3,316	3,485
Koraput ..	6,702	3,262	3,440
Keonjhar ..	83	40	43
Mayurbhanj ..	16	14	2

Houses and living condition

5. Their houses lie in irregular clusters and no systematic pattern appears to guide their method of settlement. The houses are small and usually two-roomed, one is used for bed and the other for store. A single door-way and no windows appear to be the characteristic feature of all the houses. Somewhat wide a verandah is provided at the front. The walls are made of split bamboos and wattles plastered with mud. The roofs are thatched with straw.

6. The Disari of the tribe is consulted for fixing an auspicious day for laying foundation of a house. The usual custom of depositing unbroken grains of rice at the four corners of the site and some at the centre is taken recourse to for assessing the nature of the site. If the grains are found in tact the next morning, the site is considered suitable. The goddess *Nansiri Thakurani* is worshipped before first occupation of the house.

7. The domesticated animals reared in most of the households are cattle, bullocks, pigs, goats and fowls. Almost all of them own their own lands. A small pit at the centre of the house is used for de-husking paddy with a solid rod called *ghorana.*

8. Besides the room for bed and store, a separate room is ear-marked for the presiding deity of every household called *Mahapuru* or the *Istadebata.* There is no compound wall for any of the houses and no garden either for kitchen or fruit is laid. Their living condition is not insanitary. The surrounding of the houses are kept fairly neat. The walls of their houses are gaily painted either with white, yellow or dark ochre. Cattle sheds are built separately and those are cleaned daily. *Cowdung* alongwith all other rubbish are put into a pit for subsequent use as manure.

Dress and ornaments

9. Their dress is proverbially poor. Previously, they used to prepare their own cloth called *kereng.* The tradition has died down long since. Their *kereng* differs from those of the Gadabas in its narrow border and still narrow stripes against a white or dingy-white background. In the village under study not a single person was found wearing the dress and on enquiry it was learnt that this traditional dress has been completely given up. No plausible reason could be ascribed to it except that the influence of the outside culture might have induced them to give it up. They have now taken to hand-woven and mill-made coarse dhotis and saris. Many of their members use shirts and banians. Children also wear small dhotis and saris.

10. Most of the ornaments of women are made of brass or nickel. Some have taken to golden ornaments. The ornaments for the ear are *nangul* and *bauli* of gold and for the nose *mudi* of gold. Some use golden chains on their necks, others have silver *khaglas and kala mali.* Their wrists are adorned by silver *khadu,* glass bangles and *gendu.* Use of anklets called *khadu* once so popular have been given up. The male members wear golden rings on their nose and

ears and silver rings on their fingers. Some use *saru mali* on their neck. Castor, *tola* and *kusum* oil are used for the hair-do. They do not tattoo their limbs.

Food

11. Rice,*mandia, suan* and mango kernels are the main items of food that sustain them throughout the year. Beef, pork and flesh of buffalo are popular with members of the older generation. But it was asserted that the youngsters have been gradually eschewing these items of food. They take rats, hares, sambars, crabs and all other kinds of fish and flesh.

12. Two meals a day is the usual practice. The morning meal consists of boiled rice and *mandia* gruel. The evening diet consists of *mandia* gruel, *landa* (rice-beer) and rice gruel.

13. Members of both the sex drink liquor freely. Usually *mahula* wine or the juce of *salapa* (Carryota urens) are purchased and rice-beer or *mandia landa* is either purchased or prepared at home.

Birth

14. The expectant woman is forbidden from taking *landa* or intoxicating liquor in any form. She too is forbidden from taking rice gruel, flesh of wild boars, jack fruits and pumpkins. The bed room is usually set apart for the delivery. Though old women of the tribe assist the parturient women in delivery, only one old and experienced woman of the tribe remains within the lying-in-room. She cuts the umbilical cord with a knife or a blade. The mother of the new-born buries it with the placenta beside a fence. The child after delivery is anointed with oil and turmeric paste and is bathed.

15. Pollution is observed for 7 days at the end of which a ceremony called *Handidharni* is observed. During the period of pollution both the mother and the new-born are kept segregated. Hot boiled rice with boiled vegetables are served to the mother. On the 7th day both the mother and the child take a purificatory bath. The Disari names the child after touching some rice on to his hands about a month after the *Handidharni* day. The old woman helping in delivery is presented with a piece of sari alongwith a fowl, some liquor and cash to the extent of Rs. 5/ On both the *Handidharni* day and the day of name-giving ceremony either goats or fowls are killed according to capacity for a feast in the household.

Puberty

16. Segregation is observed for the girl attaining puberty till the menstrual flow stops. At the end of the period she is taken to the nearest stream of river for a bath where the Disari also offers worship.

Marriage

17. Marriage within the same exogamous sept is forbidden. Adult marriage is preferred and cases of child marriage are rare. One can marry his father's sister's daughter but wedding with the father's brother's daughter is strictly forbidden. Divorcees and widows are allowed to remarry with the sanction of the society. A widow can remarry her deceased husband's younger brother. If she chooses a different partner, the second husband has to pay *randi jhola* which may range from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 200/-. The priuciple is that the amount spent by members of the deceased husband's household has to be compensated in part, if not in full.

18. Marriage may occur by capture or by consent. Many marriages are settled by negotiation called *Raibadi*. In marriages by capture, the young men of the tribe called *Dhangadas* bring a girl by force to the house of one of their mates whose choice is she. In *Udulia* or *Raji baha* that is marriage by consent, boys and girls elope for a day or two and then return for the ceremony to be solemnised. All these peculiarly are post-harvest phenomena as their toil for survival seldom allows them to indulge in marital luxuries prior to the period of harvest.

19. In *Raibadi* form of marriage, the parents of the boy visit the house of the girl to ask for her companionship for their boy. The parents of the girl have the choice to disagree. But in case they give their consent tentatively to the proposal, about a week after, two other mediators from the boy's side are deputed with liquor and *landa* to the girl's house. Friends and relatives at the latter's place are fed with these presents. After the mediators' return the Disari consults the almanac and finalises the date for the marriage. Friends and relatives of the boy's side visit the house of the girl on the day prior to the marriage. *Jalapatra* or *Jalatanka* which is the other name for bride price and which includes Rs. 300 in cash, some clothes, 5*mans* of rice and a good lot of *landa* are also carried by the members for payment.

20. Marriage formally takes place in the house of the boy. A feast is arranged at the girl's house with contributions from both the sides. A platform is arranged with a shed above which has five supporting posts of mango or *jamu* (Engenia Jambolana) trees. Near each post is arranged a pillar of earthen pots. The girl is taken thrice round the central post. She is then taken into the house to wear a new sari. After this, in the accompaniment of her girl friends she joins the return procession to the boy's house.

21. The marriage function is solemnised in the house of the boy and here the Disari officiates. A platform is raised. Songs, music and dances continue. The bride and the groom are seated on the platform. The parents, of the grooms his friends and Disari thne offer *chaula tika*. Thatafter presents are offered in cash. Both of them hold each other's hand. A feast then follows where goat's meat and *landa* are served. The bride on reaching the house of the groom is given a new earthen pot wherein she fetches water. Some food is cooked with this water and is served to all relatives and friends attending the marriage in small bits.

22. Unmarried boys and girls of the tribe sleep in separate dormitories. Though in the village under study the dormitory system was non-existent, it was learnt on enquiry that the dormitory of the girls is kept in charge of an elderly widow and an old man remains in charge of the dormitory of the boys. Here the boys and the girls learn songs and dance and in course of communal dances, the boys get the opportunity to select their partners.

23. Boys after marriage continue to stay with their parents. Partition occurs only when they have children and the size of the family becomes unwieldy and large. Even after partition, the system of joint cultivation of land continues.

Death

24. The dead are disposed of both by burial and burning. Persons dying of small-pox are buried. The body of expectant women on death is disposed of by burning.

25. The dead body is washed in tepid water after being anointed with turmeric and oil and then it is wrapped with a new piece of cloth. The news is disseminated to all friends and relatives who assemble at the hous of the deceased. The funeral procession starts after the bier is prepared with split bamboos called *Dandia*. Somewhere midway to the cremation ground at a place called *Bejrana*, the rope tying the body to the bier is cut. All friends and relatives place an anna or two in the name of the deceased. On the way back from the cremation ground at this Bejrana, a new piece of cloth is cut into pieces and some coins of small denominations are wrapped up in each of these pieces to be offered to all friends and relatives.

26. A pyre of fuel wood is arranged or a pit is dug where the dead body is placed with its head pointing north and face upwards. The fire is set to the pyre generally by the brother-in-law of the deceased. On the day of cremation some amount of boiled

rice, *landa* and *handia* are offered near the *Bejrana* to the memory of the deceased. The next day all friends and relatives proceed to the cremation ground and in case the dead body is half burnt, they ensure that it is consumed fully. A fowl is killed and cooked and alongwith the *landa* is offered to the deceased near the cremation ground.

27. *Pita buda* is observed six months or a year after. A goat, fowls, about 10 *mānas* of rice and *landa* are arranged by the deceased's household. All friends and relatives are invited to a feast who on their turn bring rice, *landa* and goats. The members of the deceased's household abstain from using oil with food for a month or two after the death.

28. Like Gadabas, members of the tribe also observe *gottar*. This is observed once in about three years. Three years ago, it was observed in a neighbouring village called Tinningput. The next choice of place is Baringput. The *Phanja bhais* of a particular village bring liquor and *landa* and feed members of another village. Members of the tribe belonging to the latter village invite them to gottar on a particular date. On this date they bring leaf plates in which are served food by the host members of the tribe They return to come back again in the evening where for the whole night dances continue. Next morning they are offered goats, rice and *landa* which they cook and eat. A part of the food is carried to the burial ground and is offered near the head of the deceased to his memory. Some of the *Phanja bhais* take buffaloes and tie them on to posts in a field. After offering food to the deceased, others join them. Dances and songs continue in the field where buffaloes have been tied for the whole day. All members of the tribe of the neighbouring villages join the festive occasion. Crowbars, spades, combs, mirrors, new cloths and *Jhampis* or *ghagudis* are tied on the male buffaloes and the she-buffaloes are decorated with earthen pots, chains, *kereng*, anklets, combs and mirrors. One of the buffaloes is killed there which the *Phanja bhais* dispose of by eating themselves or by selling. The remaining buffaloes are given over to the *maitras*.

Language, literacy and education

29. According to 1961 census, the regional language Oriya is the mother-tongue of many of the members. A little over 11 per cent speak their tribal language Parenga. In the village under study, the Parengas speak their own Parenga Bhasa. The Gadaba language is unintelligible to them.

30. Bilingualism is rare. Only 1·6 per cent of the population are literate and only 2 have gone up to primary or junior basic level. The informants stated that in another village about 15 students have been enrolled in the local primary schools. But none have gone beyond Class II or III.

The table below gives the literacy figures of the tribe arranged districtwise.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa ..	6,801	6,695	106	102	2	2
Koraput ..	6,702	6,596	106	102	2	2
Keonjhar ..	83	83	..	..	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	16	16	..	..	..	.

Occupation

31. Agriculture is the mainstay of members of the tribe. Most of them take to shifting or dongar cultivation. Wet cultivation is rarely taken recourse to. They grow mostly rice, ragi and suan. Vegetables like brinjals, tomatoes, pumpukins, etc., are grown for sale in the nearby weekly markets.

The table below gives the industrial classification of population according to 1961 Census.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

Category	P	M	F
Tot l population ..	6,801	3,316	3,485
Workers:			
I. Caltivator ...	2,608	1,753	855
II. Agricultural labourer ..	578	283	295
III. Mining Quarrying, etc ..	12	2	10
IV. Household Industry ..	11	10	1
V. Mauufac uring other than household industry ..	..	..	..
VI. Const uction ..	..	..	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	..	..	..
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications ..	..	..	..
IX. Other Services ..	138	55	83
Total Workers ..	3,347	2,103	1,244
Non workers ..	3,454	1,213	2,241

Village organisation

32. The headman of the tribe at the village level is called Naik. The Challan who is a member of some scheduled caste assists him in day to day matters. All issues relating to marriage, divorce and other social disputes are referred to the Naik who seeks at times the assistance of elderly members of the tribe to settle up social disputes. Their regional head is called Bhata Naik. The Bhata Naik for the village Barasagara and other neighbouring villages belongs to village Sagara. The informants stated that their caste council also sits once in a few years.

33. All kinds of unnatural deaths like death by tiger bite, fall from a tree, by burning or drowning are held as taboos by the society. Members of the household in such a case are outcasted. It is only when they undergo penance that they are accepted into the caste and their normal social intercourse is restored. Those marrying Gadaba, Jhadia or Khond *dhangdis* are also outcasted. Such matters are usully referred to the *Naik*.

34. The *Naik* had traditionally attained a high place in Parenga society as he was the agent of the zamindar at the village level for collection of land revenue. He was also held responsible for maintenance of law and order and for dissemination of crime intelligence to the nearest police station. After abolition of zamindaris, his influence has waned considerably and he stands considerably dwarfed in stature.

Religion and festival

35. In the village under study, *Nageswari* or *Nangseri* is the *Nisani* of the village. Within a mango grove under the shades of a few creepers are located about half a mile from the village the deities *Nageswari*, *Budha Bhairab* and *Mangaputia*. All worships are conducted by the tribal Pujari at this place called *Mahaprabhu*.

36. Of their festivals, mention may be made of *Pusa Punia*, *Chaita* and *Bandapana*. On Pusa Punia day, they take great care of their cattle who are washed and anointed with turmeric. Good food is offered to

them. In *Chaita Parba,* they worship *Nangseri.* Goats and fowls are sacrified. The festival continues for 8 to 10 days when they go on communal hunting. This is also the occasion for eating the mango fruit for the first time. *Bandapana* which is observed in *Sravana* is the occasion for taking the gourd twigs for the first time.

37. The members of the tribe are great lover of songs and dances. The main instruments to whose accompaniment they dance are *dapu* or *drums, tamaku, ghumra* and *bansi* or flutes. They dance the *Dhemsa* in the *Chaitra Parba* and during *Pusa Parba* they dance *Lathibudia.* In Dhemsa a couple of hundred persons stand in a circle holding each other's hand and dance in rhythm to the accompaniment of the music. In *Lathibudia,* two persons hold small sticks in hand and dance to the rhythm of the beating of the sticks. Satpathi (Adibasi 1963-64:166) mentions about *Gottar* dance and songs when all dance with swords and sticks. He also mentions *Ghumura* dance where flute, *gini* and *thal* are used. *Dudunga* dance is said to be not so popular with them as it is with the Parojas and Gadabas. The following *Kindri gita* in *Chaitra Parba* is taken from this source.

"Gad Kandi Kandi Kania Bausa

Babu Kale Kalikate

Chaita Masar Kinderi gita

Gouteba gote gote.

Ga ga Mor

Ga Kertan

Ga Teba Suni Dekhu.

Tumari Amari Ekani Tile

Pade Pade gai Dekhu

Gaileru Babu, Chhank Thibu

Nohile Garahu

Jibu—Chaita Parb Mai galkar."

References :

1. Thurston E—Castes and Tribes of Southern India. 1909, Volumes II and VI.
2. Census of India, 1911, Madras, Vol. XII, Part I.
3. Adibasi 1963-64. No. 3.

PENTIA

The Pentias are numerically a small tribe of cultivators and agricultural labourers concentrated in the districts of Koraput and Mayurbhanj. In village Benasur of Bhairavsingpur police station, Koraput district which was selected by this organisation for study of the tribe, its members identify themselves as Pentia or Penthia and some call themselves as Holvas. Others place Holvas on the same status as Pentias and admit that marriage relationship between both the tribes is possible. Some others asserted that social relationship in any form with the Holvas of Mathili police station, in the same district is not allowed by their caste rules.

2. Members of the tribe were reported to be preponderant in the following villages of Bhairavsingpur police station.

Benagaon, Mardamal, Piteiguda, Pardhaniguda, Latiguda, Chandalguda, Antalguda, Bhaliaguda, Dangarkarchi, Paknādula, Bairiput, Gumagaon, Ranigarh, Singibandh, Kanhuguda. Dabuguda, Dhuntiguda, Patarput, Podaduburi, Badaduburi, Anchala.

3. The Madras Census Report, 1901 (Part I : 1902 : 174) records them as "Oriya cultivators in Vizagapatnam Agency; also called Holuva." Satpathy reports (Adibasi : 1963-64 : 161) that they are said to have migrated from Bastar State now under Madhya Pradesh and later settled at Pentikona, their name having been derived from the latter place.

4. The informants in the village under study, however, were ignorant of their origin. They claimed to have settled in this region for at least the past three generations.

5. The tribe is broken up into a number of exogamous septs like *Nageswar* and *Subarna* in the village under study. Other septs in the neighbouring villages are *Bagha* (tiger), *Surya* (Sun) and *Kachhap* (tortoise).

6. They accept water from the hands of Rana, Bhumia, Paika, Kirasundi, Omanatyas, Gauda, Saora and Bhottara. The castes and tribes with whom such social intercourse is denied are : Doms, Chandal, Gadaba, Paroja and the Khonds.

7. Those among them who can afford requisition the services of Oriya Brahmins to officiate in social rituals. They have free access to the village temple and the village well.

Geographical distribution and population

8. The total population of the tribe in the State is 9,656 according to 1961 census, but their distribution in widely divergent areas of Koraput and Mayurbhanj raises many questions on their origin. These two districts contain 42 and 40 per cent of their all-State population respectively, the rest lying sparsely scattered in the districts of Keonjhar, Baudh-Khondmals, Dhenkanal, Cuttack and Sambalpur, with only a solitary soul returned from the district of Puri.

The table below gives the districtwise distribution of their population.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	9,656	4,899	4,757
Koraput	..	4,112	2,067	2,045
Sambalpur	..	24	18	6
Baudh-Khondmals	..	551	277	274
Dhenkanal	..	369	182	187
Puri	..	1	1	..
Keonjhar	..	685	370	315
Cuttack	..	61	16	45
Mayurbhanj	..	3,853	1,968	1,885

9. They are a rural community as only 55 of them have been returned from urban areas of the State. Their sex ratio is 971 females to a thousand males.

10. The following police station areas are inhabited by more than 10 per cent of their population :

Bhairavsingpur police station in Koraput district and Bangiriposi and Betnoti police station areas in Mayurbhanj district.

Houses and living condition

11. The Pentias live in separate hamlets. In village Benasur, there are about 10 houses of Pentias who stay in a hamlet separate from the habitation of Paikas, Karanas and Brahmins, the other residents of the village. In village Jhuntiguda also, they live in a separate hamlet. In rare cases, however, the Pentias stay together with members of other castes or tribes with whom they hold social intercourse.

12. The choice of an auspicious site was previously being determined by burying rice in the traditional way. These days, they consult *panji* and choose the day for laying the foundation. Before construction is started they dig at the spot at least thrice and offer worship with flower, sandalwood and incense. They also consult the *panji* before first occupation of the house. The well-to-do among them invite 10 to 15 persons and feed them.

13. The design of their houses resemble that of their neighbours. Most of the houses are provided with verandahs in front. The walls are generally constructed with mud or with a plastering of mud over split bamboos and wattles. The structure of the roof consists of bamboo or wooden poles thatched with straw. Ceilings are provided by spreading bamboos on the walls. Windows are rare. A single door-way with shutters of wooden planks serves as both entrance and exit. The room with the de-husking pedal lies to a side of the compound which has usually a compound wall.

Dress and ornaments

14. They are poorly dressed. The common dress of a male is a dhoti which at times is so short that it hardly covers the knees. The dress of a woman is a sari with no undergarments. The ornaments mostly of silver and occasionally of gold popular with members of the tribe are *noli* and *phuli* for the ear, *dandi* for the nose, *pohala mali* and *suna mali* for the neck, *khadu* and glass bangles for the wrist and brass or aluminium *paunris* for the ankle. Their hair do also presents no distinctive feature. Some women tattoo their limbs, particularly the arms and the leg. Tattooing is no more popular and there is no social law making it obligatory.

Food

15. They are avowed non-vegetarians who take all kinds of fish and flesh except beef and pork. Rice, *mandia, suan, gurzi, kangul,*

jandri and mango kernels are the local cereals and fruits taken throughout the year. These, of course, are supplemented by other roots and fruits gleaned from the forests. *Mahua* flowers like mango kernels are preserved for use during the rains.

16. *Mahul* and *salap* wine are popular. Distillation at home is said to be rare. They usually purchase their daily requirement of liquor. They catch fish with *Bisarchapa*, a trapping device, from their paddy fields.

Birth

17. Antenatal care of the mother is seldom taken and few restrictions as to her food or movements are imposed on her during the pre-natal period. Birth takes place in a part of the house and no separate arrangement for a lying-in-room is made. An experienced elderly woman of the tribe is called in to render necessary assistance during delivery. She cuts the umbilical cord with a knife and buries it alongwith the placenta in the backyard. The mother takes her bath on this spot till the name-giving ceremony is over. She is administered boiled *kulthi* water as a medicine. In the diet prescribed for her, sour things are forbidden and bitter things are given instead to ease the process of healing. Of vegetables, brinjals, lady's-fingers and dried fish are also forbidden to be served in the food.

18. The stage of pollution continues till the umbilical stump wilts off. After usual cleaning and bath, she is allowed to cook from this day. Either *Ekusia* is observed on the 21st day or the purification ceremony takes place on the 7th or the 9th day according to the prescriptions of the almanac. The Disari of the tribe consults *rasi* and *nakshyatra* and proposes a name for the child which is accepted. The ear-boring ceremony takes place about 6 months after birth. The bore is meant for the *noli*. No formal feast is arranged either on the 7th, the 9th or the *Ekusia* day.

Puberty

19. On attainment of puberty, a girl is kept segrated for 9 days. During the period none is allowed to see her face except her mother who feeds her. At the end of the period of pollution, the Disari takes her to the river where she takes her bath and wears a new cloth. The Disari offers some worship in the presence of 10 to 12 aged members of the tribe. *In subsequent menstruations, segregation* is observed for 7 to 9 days only with much less rigour.

Marriage

20. Many marriages in the tribe occur through love and consent. After the boy and the girl make up their mind to marry, the boy arranges to obtain the consent of his father who later sends presents consisting of rice, dal, vegetables and 50 to 60 rupees in cash to the parents of the girl. The marriage is solemnised in the house of the boy and with the presents offered, a gala feast is arranged in the house of the girl.

21. There is no strict rule of preference for marriage with any kin except that marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter is permissible. But marriage with paternal or maternal aunt and paternal uncle's daughter is forbidden. In case a widow remarries, her deceased husband's brother claims as compensation Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 from the second husband. But no such compensation is claimed in *case of marriage of* a divorcee. Polygyny is rare.

22. In marriages arranged by negotiation, the parents of the boy send fried and flattened paddy and molasses as presents to the house of the girl. Previously, a good amount of liquor was also being sent alongwith. A few exchanges of visits are reciprocated by both

the sides before the *kanya mula* or *kanya-tenta* which usually varies between Rs. 180 to Rs. 100 is fixed. In some cases only those who can afford usually pay some dowry to their son-in-law. *Sagarta* is the other name for compensation claimed from the new husband in case a woman chooses to accept a second husband. The bride price or *kanya-tenta* is generally paid prior to marriage, the date for which is fixed up by the Disari. Either the members of the bridegroom's side return home after the feast in the bride's house for the rituals of marriage to be solemnised in the house of the former or marriage takes place in the house of the bride when *kanya tenta* is given. In both these cases, the Disari officiates as priest. A few hours before *lagana*, the Disari makes the groom wear sacred threads. He performs *homa* and joins the right palms of the couple which is called *hata ganthi*. A marriage pendal is constructed where a screen is drawn between both to be removed at the time of *lagana*. In the platforms at either the bride's or the groom's place, five pieces of raw wooden posts are used.

23. They have no preference for joint family as such, but partition seldom occurs immediately after marriage. It occurs usually much later owing to more than one reason like increase in size of the family or family feuds and dissensions. In many families, brothers manage to stay in joint mess and property for years in harmony.

Death

24. Those who can afford to provide fuel burn their dead. Others bury them. The arrival of all friends and relatives is awaited after which the body of the deceased is brought out and carried in a bier made of split bamboo pieces. The mourners present offer new clothes. The body of the deceased is lowered at a place somewhere on the way between the house and the burial ground. Some amount of paddy and rice grains and a small earthen lamp are placed at each of the four corners of the bier. The women members of the procession return home from the spot. At the burial ground, the dead body is placed with its head pointing north and face upwards. In both burial and burning, the eldest son puts fire on to the mouth of the deceased. They wait on till the dead body is fully consumed. On their return after bath, the pall-bearers take rice and gruel in the household of the deceased consecutively at least thrice.

25. *Pita* ceremony is observed on the third day when friends and relatives are invited and entertained to a feast where non-vegetarian items of food are served. The eldest son and wife of the deceased are forbidden from taking any non-vegetarian food for at least a period of 10 days. On the 10th day, members of the deceased's household go to the nearest water spot where they take their bath after a shave and paring of nails. Those who can afford also requisition the services of the Brahmins or the barbers. All those present wear either sacred threads or new napkins. A feast is also arranged where all friends and relatives are invited.

Language, literacy and education

26. They have no separate language of their own and the majority speak Oriya as the mother-tongue. There is only a sprinkling of Ho and Kui speakers. Very few are bi-lingual.

27. Only 5·9 per cent among them are literate of which only 6 have gone up to matriculation or higher secondary standard. That the percentage of literacy is so low was also borne out amply during local enquiry. In the village under survey, only 5 to 6 students have been enrolled in the local primary schools.

Table No. 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa ..	9,656	9,085	571	482	83	6
Koraput ..	4,112	3,950	162	162	..	..
Sambalpur ..	24	19	5	5	..	..
Baudh-Khondmals ..	551	513	38	33	5	..
Dhenkanal ..	369	344	25	25	..	..
Puri ..	1	1	..	..	..	..
Keonjhar ..	685	638	47	32	10	5
Cuttack ..	61	61	..	..	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	3,853	3,559	294	225	68	1

Occupation

28. They are mainly agriculturists who take to cultivation in the plains. Shifting cultivation is rarely taken recourse to. Many of them without land take to wage-earning. Some take to small trades in the neighbouring Hats. The women members of the tribe assist their men in cultivation.

The table below gives the industrial classification of workers according to 1961 Census.

Table No. 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION.

Category	P	M	F
Total population ..	9,656	4,899	4,757
Workers:			
I. Cultivator ..	2,590	1,619	971
II. Agricultural labourer ..	1,040	530	510
III. Mining and Quarrying, etc. ..	151	144	7
IV. Household Industy ..	740	385	355
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	5	3	2
VI. Construction ..	1	1	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	24	9	15
VIII. Transport, Storage and Co mmunications ..	6	6	..
IX. Ot er Services ..	627	389	238
Total Workers ..	5,184	3,086	2,098
Non-workers ..	4,472	1,813	2,659

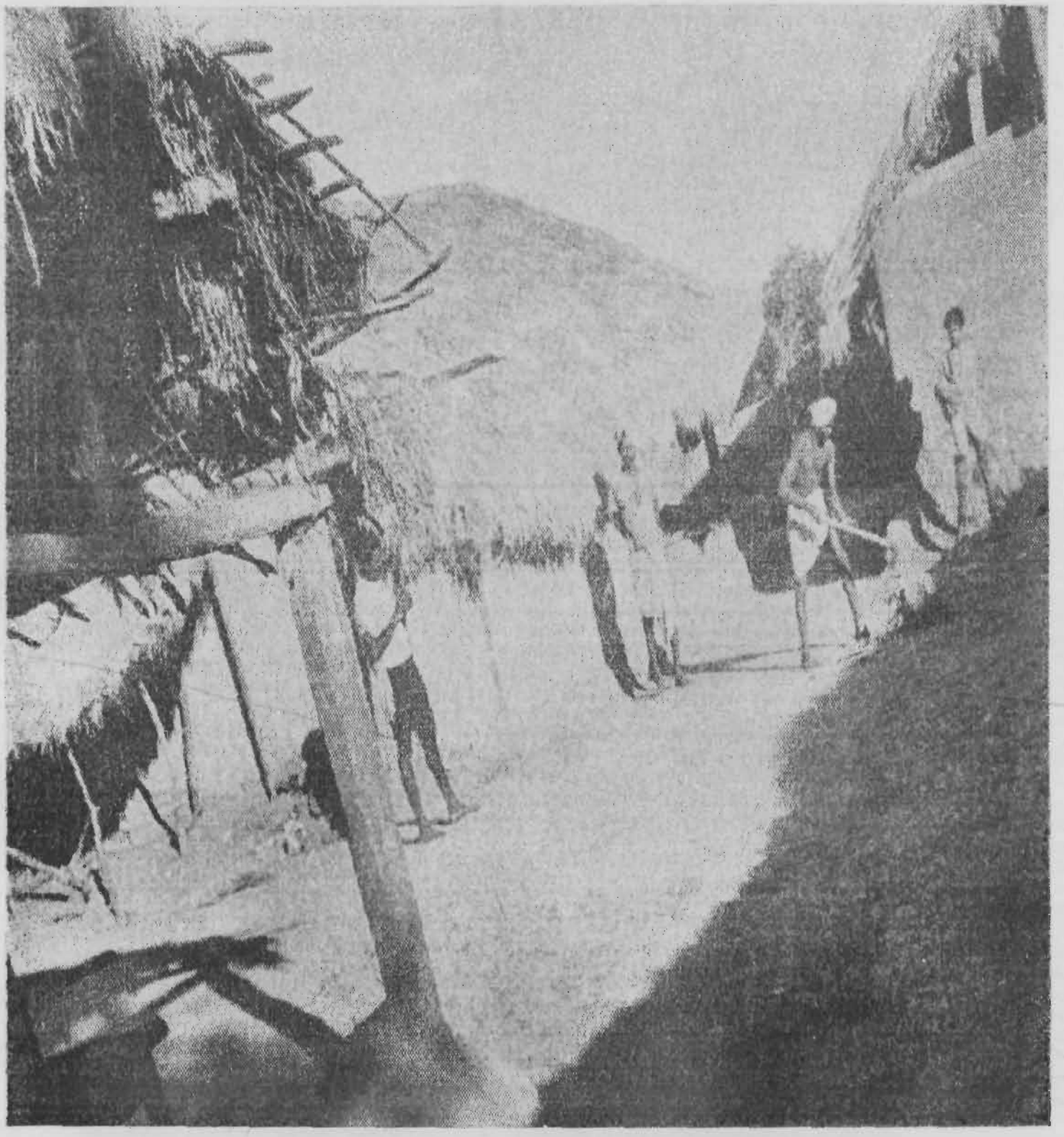
PENTIA

Village of study :

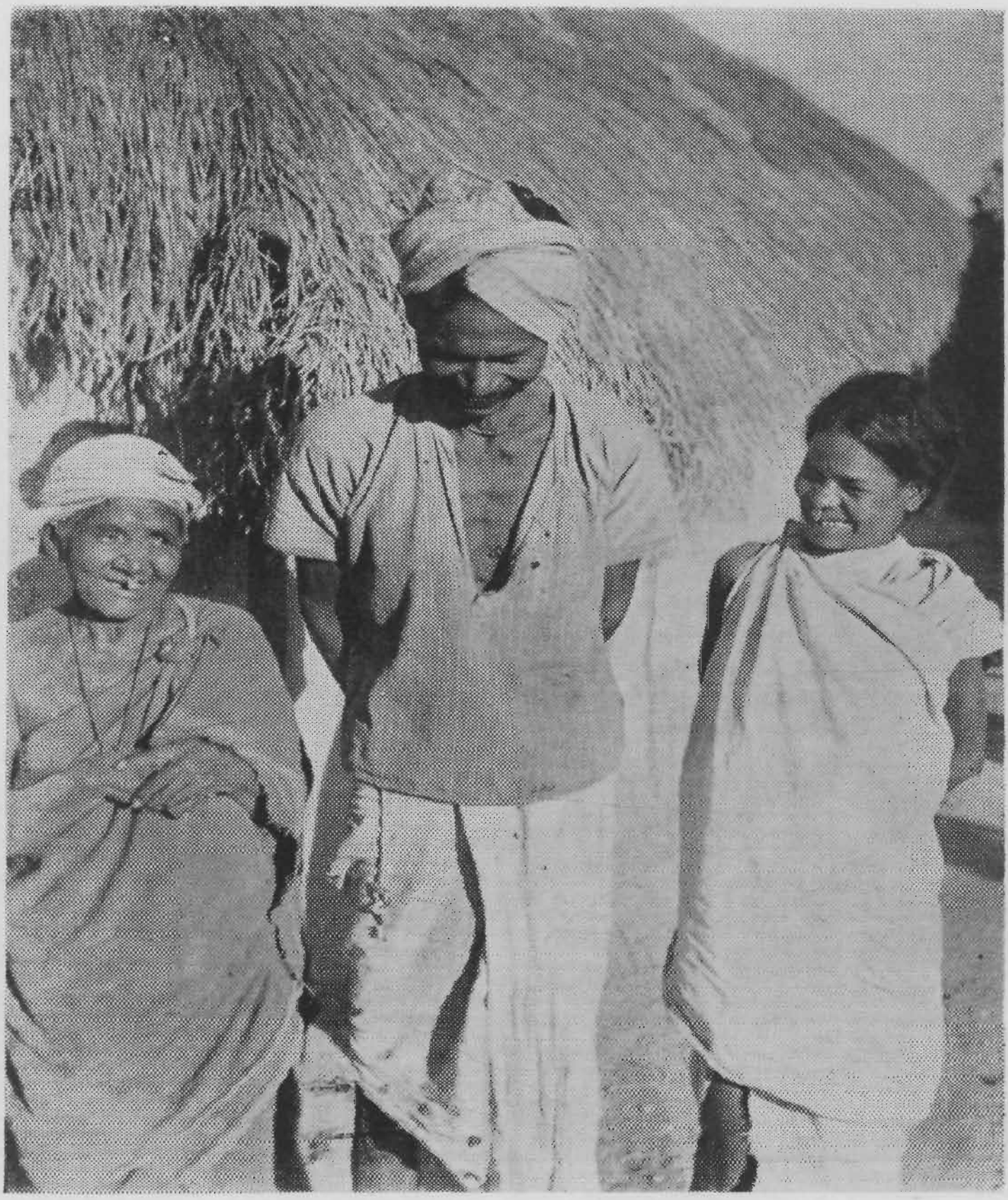
BENASUR
P. S. Bhairavasingpur
Dist. Koraput

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri S. Bhaskar Rao, R. I., Benasur
2. Shri Raghunath Nayak, S/o. Badagara Nayak
3. Shri Nilambar Nayak, S/o. Trailokya Nayak
4. Shri Trailokya Nayak
5. Smt. Jaiti Naikani, W/o. Basudev Naik
6. Smt. Usuma Devi, W/o. Dhanurjay Holva
7. Shri Raghunath, his wife and mother Daimati



A typical Pentia house



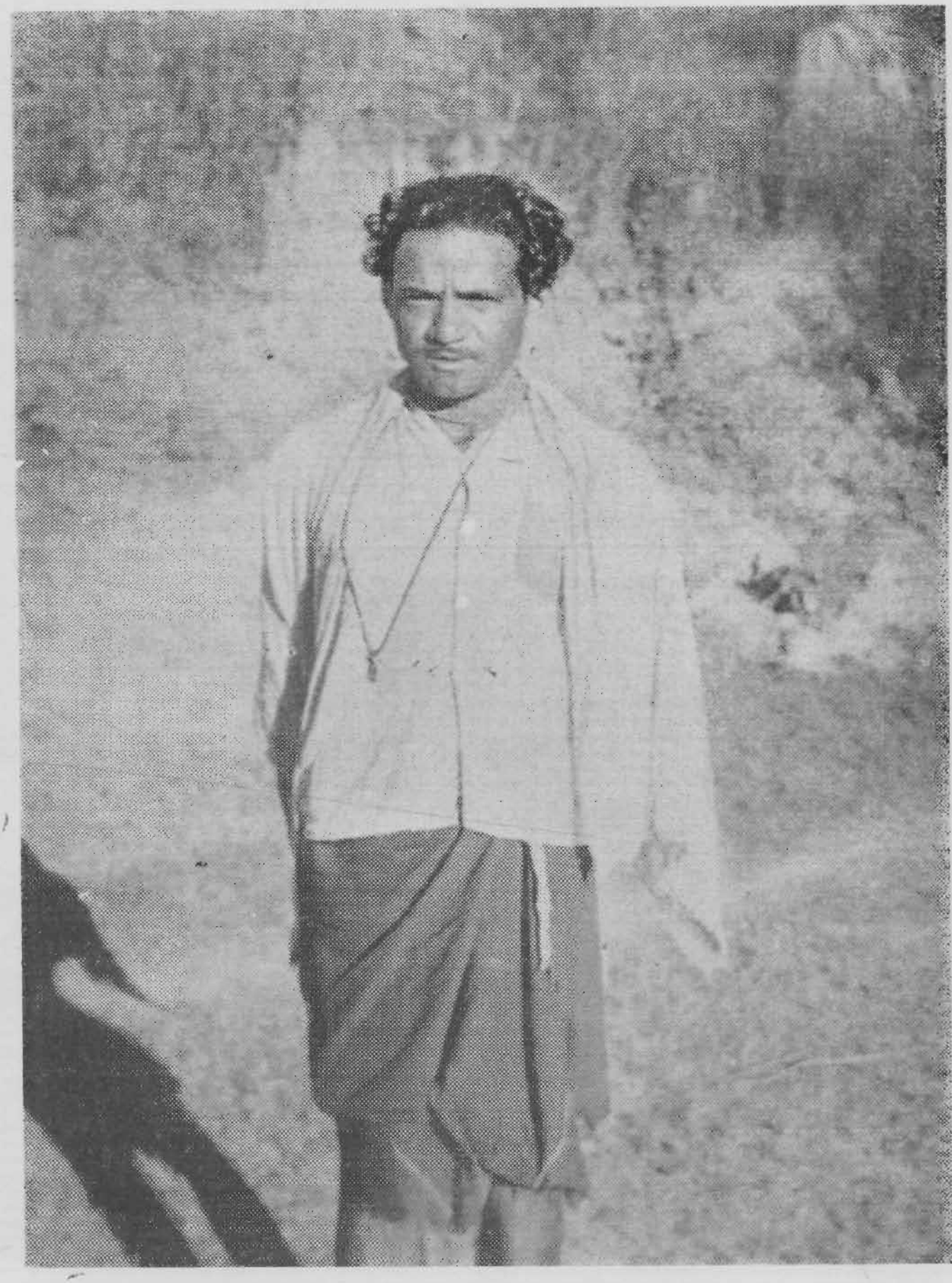
A Pentia with his wife and mother



A Pentia mother with her children



A Pentia woman carrying water from the village well



A Pentia youth

Village organisation

29. The tribal head at the village level is called Bhata Naik. In all important matters of social concern, a group of elderly persons aid the Bhata Naik in taking decisions. A member of the tribe named Challan assists Bhata Naik in convening caste meetings and in attending to errands. They have barbers and washermen of their own tribe who too are important social functionaries to reckon with. Any person whose sore develops maggots is out-caste from society and only after the same is healed up that he invites the Bhata Naik, Challan, the barber and the washerman and entertains them to a good feed with presents of new clothes and cash. Other members of the tribe have also to be fed. Similarly, one who kills a cow is excommunicated. It has to be remembered that the importance of these traditional village heads is fast waning with the rise in importance of elected members of the panchayat under the Orissa Grama Panchayat Act.

30. Their village Jani who is usually a member of the Paroja tribe worships Samalei Thakurani. The Disari functions as the exorcist

Religion and festivals

31. Samalei Thakurani is their most important deity whom they worship on all important occasions with sacrifice of fowls and offering of sweets and cocoanuts. When epidemics like smallpox and cholera break out, the Thakurani is worshipped with the belief that it is only she who can curb the outbreak.

32. A brief account of their festivals is given below :

Nua khia is observed in the month of *Bhadraba* on an auspicious day specially chosen for the purpose. This is observed in order to mark the occasion of the first taking of rice. Goats are purchased and killed for festive food and Samalei Thakurani is worshipped on the occasion. *Amba-Nuakhia* is observed in the month of *Chaitra* when the mango crop of the year is taken for the first time. *Pousa Purnami* is another important festival when the *Nisani* or the home deity is worshipped. On the *Diwali* day the cattle in each household is given *khechudi* and all the neighbouring castes and tribes join to kill a goat in front of the Samalei Thakurani. *Chaitra Parab* is observed in the month of *Chaitra* when male members go out hunting after worshipping Sankalei Thakurani with sacrifices of goats.

33. The members of the tribe are great lovers of dance and music. There are specific songs and dances for each occasion. During marriage and *Chaitra Parab,* boys and girls join together to dance to the accompaniment of music and drums. The musical instruments consist of *dhola, tamuka, tidibidi* and *maidi.* During marriage occasion and *Chaitra Parab* girls from one village visit another where with the boys they indulge in dances for hours.

References :

1. Madras Census Report, 1901, Part I
2. Adibasi No. 3, 1963-64

RAJUAR

The Rajuars or Rajualas, as they are locally called, are a small tribe of cultivators and agricultural labourers concentrated mainly in the district of Mayurbhanj. Dalton (1960 : 314) calls them a mongrel tribe who in Bihar connect themselves with the Bhuiyas. According to him, the Rajwars in Sirguja declare themselves to be fallen Kshatriyas and the Rajwars of Bengal admit that they are derived from the miscegenation of Kurmis and Kols. The latter are looked upon as very impure by Hindus who will not take water from their hands. According to Risley (1891 : Vol. II:192), the Rajwars of Bihar told Buchanan "that their common ancestor was a certain Rishi who had two sons. From the eldest are descended the Rajwars, who became soldiers and obtained their noble title ; from the younger are descended the Musahars, who have obtained their name from 'eating rats' which the Rajwars reject." The suggestion of affinity with the Musahars seems to support Colonel Dalton's statement that the Rajwars connect themselves with the Bhuiyas, for Musahars and Bhuiyas are certainly closely related, if not one and the same. Another story about the origin of the tribe as collected from a tradition current with the Rajwars of Manbhum has been narrated by Risley, according to which the latter came from Nagpur. Russell (1916 : Vol. IV : 471) says that in the Central Provinces the Bhuiyas have a subcaste called Rajwar which leads one to think that the Rajwars are an offshoot of the Bhuiyas, as they themselves say, in Bihar. The substitution of Kol for Bhuiyas in Bengal need not cause much concern in view of the great admixture of blood and confused nomenclature of all the Chotanagpur tribes. In Bengal, where the Bhuiyas have settled in Hindu villages, and according to the usual lot of the forest tribes who entered the Hindu system have been degraded into the servile and impure caste of Musahars, the Rajwars have shared their fate, and are also looked upon as impure. But in Chotanagpur the Bhuiyas have their own villages and live apart from the Hindus, and here the Rajwars like the landholding branches of other forest tribes, claim to be an inferior class of Rajputs.

2. In the context of the above facts as collected from the work of various authors, an account regarding the origin of the tribe and their views on the inter-ethnic affinity as gathered during field study in villages Totapada and Ektali of Balisinga P. S. of Mayurbhanj district is given in the following paragraphs.

3. The Rajuars of village Totapada who call themselves Rajualas claimed origin from Kshatriya descent and stated that their ancestors called themselves Bayan Raju. They claim that their social affinity with the Bhuiyas is still very intimate. The Rajualas asserted that their ancestors placed them on equal footing with the Bhuiyas as a consequence of which even today they freely exchange water, food and social visits with the Bhuiyas. They, however, stoutly refused that they had at any time any social link with the Kurmis or Kols.

4. The Rajualas in the village under study referred to their original home as Dhalabhumi, Sikharabhumi and Tungabhumi from where they had migrated to Handibhanga of Suliapada Police Station of the same district. They have settled in village Totapada for the last few generations.

5. It was stated that there are Rajualas in villages Totapada, Asanakhali, Gobindpur, Patagadi of Muruda Police Station and in villages Satasagaria and Ektali of Baisinga Police Station In most of these villages the Rajualas have either a separate hamlet or they stay in multi-ethnic villages with other castes and tribes. In village Totapada, for example, they stay together with Bhumij and Karua. They establish social relationship with Rajualas in villages Ambdiha, Jamda. Kalajhari, Ashna and Rahanikudar of Bamanghati subdivision.

6. Risley (1891 : Vol. I: 193) gives details of the internal structure of the caste with some of the totemistic sections which according to him may be taken as certainly indicating Dravidian descent. The Rajualas studied in the field were confronted with the sub-castes and sections as mentioned by Risley. They, however, denied knowledge of their existence and stated that they are divided into *gotras* or exogamous septs like *Kashyapa, Nageswar* and *Sankha.*

7. The Rajualas do not accept water from the Bathudis, Santals and Koruas who are their neighbouring tribes, but as stated earlier, they accept water from Bhuiyas. They are served by washermen, barbers and *ghatia* Brahmanas. They are allowed access to Hindu temples and to the village well.

8. Roy and Ram are their titles. Parmanik is the title which some suffix to their names by virtue of being caste Behera or heads.

Geographical distribution and population

9. A very small tribe with a **total** population of only 1,018 in the State, **they** are concentrated mainly in the district of Mayurbhanj excepting 62 persons who lie scattered in the districts of Koraput, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Puri and Balasore. Their sex ratio is 783 females to a thousand males. Their urban population is only 15. Baisinga (436), Khunta (231) and Rairangpur (148) are the police stations in the district of Mayurbhanj which have more than 10 per cent of the population.

The table below gives the districtwise population of the tribe.

Table No. 1

POPULATION

(Source: 1961 Census)

District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	1,018	571	447
Koraput	..	11	7	4
Sambalpur	..	22	11	11
Sundargarh	..	4	4	..
Puri	..	15	6	9
Mayurbhanj	..	956	533	423
Balasore	..	10	10	..

Houses and living condition

10. A Naika or *Naika Pandita* of the Rajuala tribe or of any other tribe is consulted before laying foundation of a house. Usually the *Naika* presides over the function. Some quantity of ghee, however little, is offered as libation by the *ghatia* Brahmin on the day of first entry into the house called *Pratistha.* New earthen pots are usually arranged for use on the occasion.

11. The houses are usually single-roomed with a partition at the centre, if necessary. Verandahs are provided usually to the front. Most of the houses have a compound fence.

The walls are made of mud and the frame-work of the roof is laid with bamboo or wooden poles and bamboo wattles interlaced in between. The roof is thatched with straw. Each house has only one door-way that serves as both entrance and exit. No windows are provided. A large family has separate houses within the same compound all facing the inner courtyard and with a common fence all around.

12. There are separate sheds for the cattle and for the dehusking pedal. A part of the room or the verandah is earmarked and partitioned for the kitchen. In the list of material equipments are included stringed charpoys, agricultural implements, enamel and bell-metal cooking utensils, earthen pots for storing water, grains, etc.

Food

13. Beef, pork and flesh of buffaloes are held as tabooed food by the Rajualas. They too do not touch carrion. Meat and fish are taken by them according to availability.

14. Rice is their staple food. All other available cereals and pulses are also taken. Three meals a day is the common practice. In the morning cold-watered rice is taken with a pinch of salt or with some fried edible green leaves or an onion. At noon and at night, they take hot boiled rice with some side dishes of vegetables and fish or flesh according to availability. They prepared *handia* at home an drink the same or offer it to the deceased ancestors and friends. Liquor extracted from *mahua* flowers called *mahuli* is purchased as a drink. Mustard oil or *tolo* (oil extracted from *Mahua* seeds) are used as the cooking medium. Chewing tobacco or smoking *ganja* (sunhemp) is popular with most of the members of the tribe.

Dress and Ornaments

15. The usual dress for the males is a short *dhoti* round their loins which hardly suffices to cover their knees. A portion of the cloth at the front is further tucked on at the left. Some persons wear *lungis* and others wear banians. Shirts are reserved for special occasions. Rajuala women wear *saris* which may be 4½ yards in length and 1 yard in width. Use of under-garments is rare. On festive or ceremonial occasions women wear petti-coats and blouses. Children up to five usually go naked. Small *dhotis*, *saris*, jackets, frocks and shirts are worn by school going children. Widow members of the tribe are forbidden from wearing *saris* with borders.

16. Ornaments once popular with female members of the tribe are silver *phula* and *champakali* for the ear though these ornaments are seldom used now. Ornaments for the nose are *nolaka* and *phuli* of silver. Those once popular far the neck were *kanthi* and *mala* but necks of women to-day usually go naked. On the wrists women wear silver *bala* and *chura*. Some too wear *katri Baju* on the arms which was once popular is no more in use. Those who can afford, however, wear *bala* of silver on their ankles and silver rings on their toes. Previously women of the Sapua Kela caste used to tattoo the body of their women. The limbs chosen were the hands, forehead and chest. The practice is no more popular now-a-days. The hairs are combed regularly with coconut oil and the hair knob at the back usually occupies a central position.

Birth

17. The expectant mother is forbidden from taking a particular variety of fish locally called *dhaudi* and fish caught by angling. She should not take mushrooms growing on ant-hills. Crossing a river is also forbidden. She is further not allowed to go alone to a tank or a river for bath or for fetching water.

18. No separate lying-in-room is made and delivery occurs in a portion of the living room. Either an old and experienced lady,

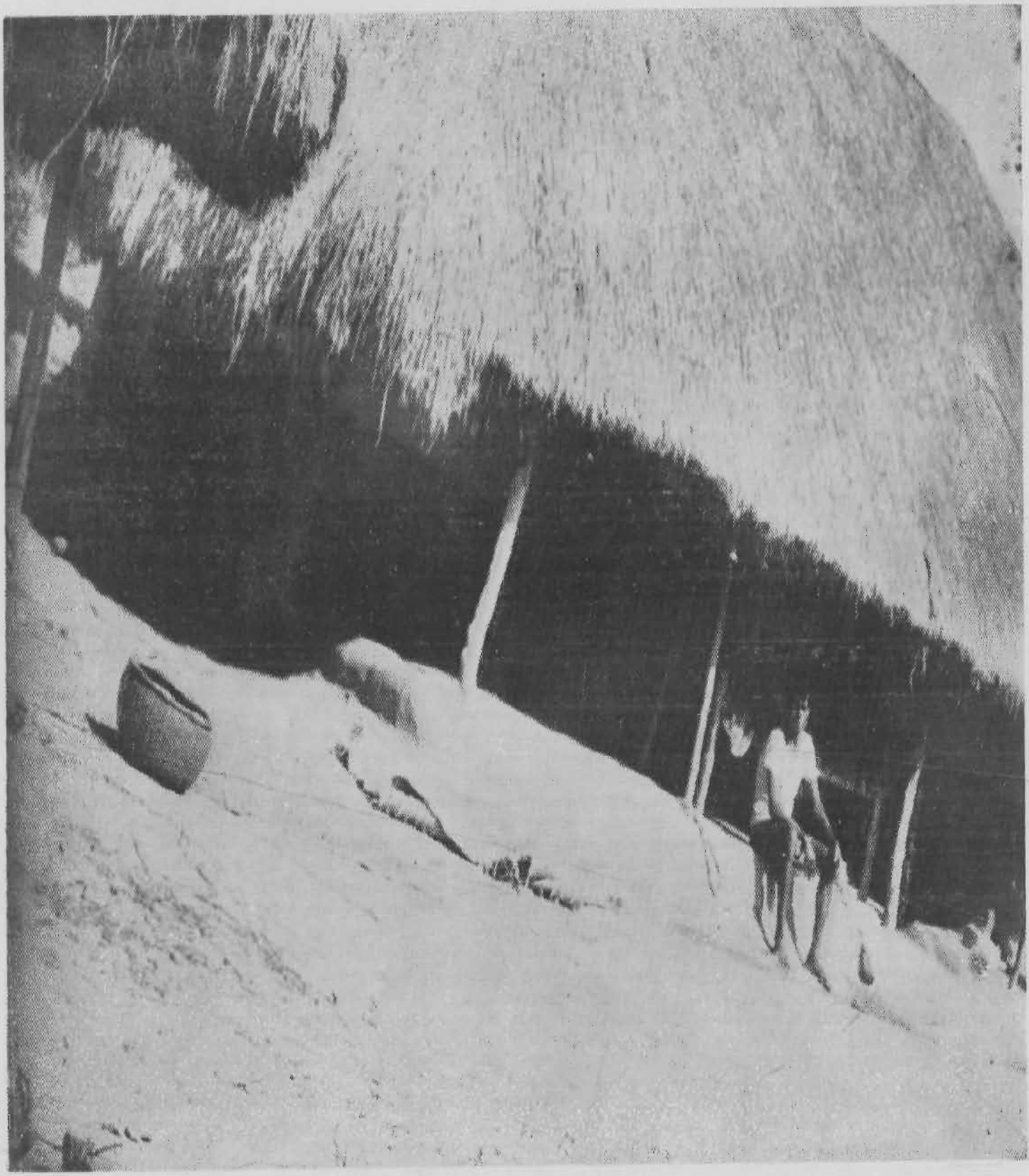
RAJUAR

Villages of study :

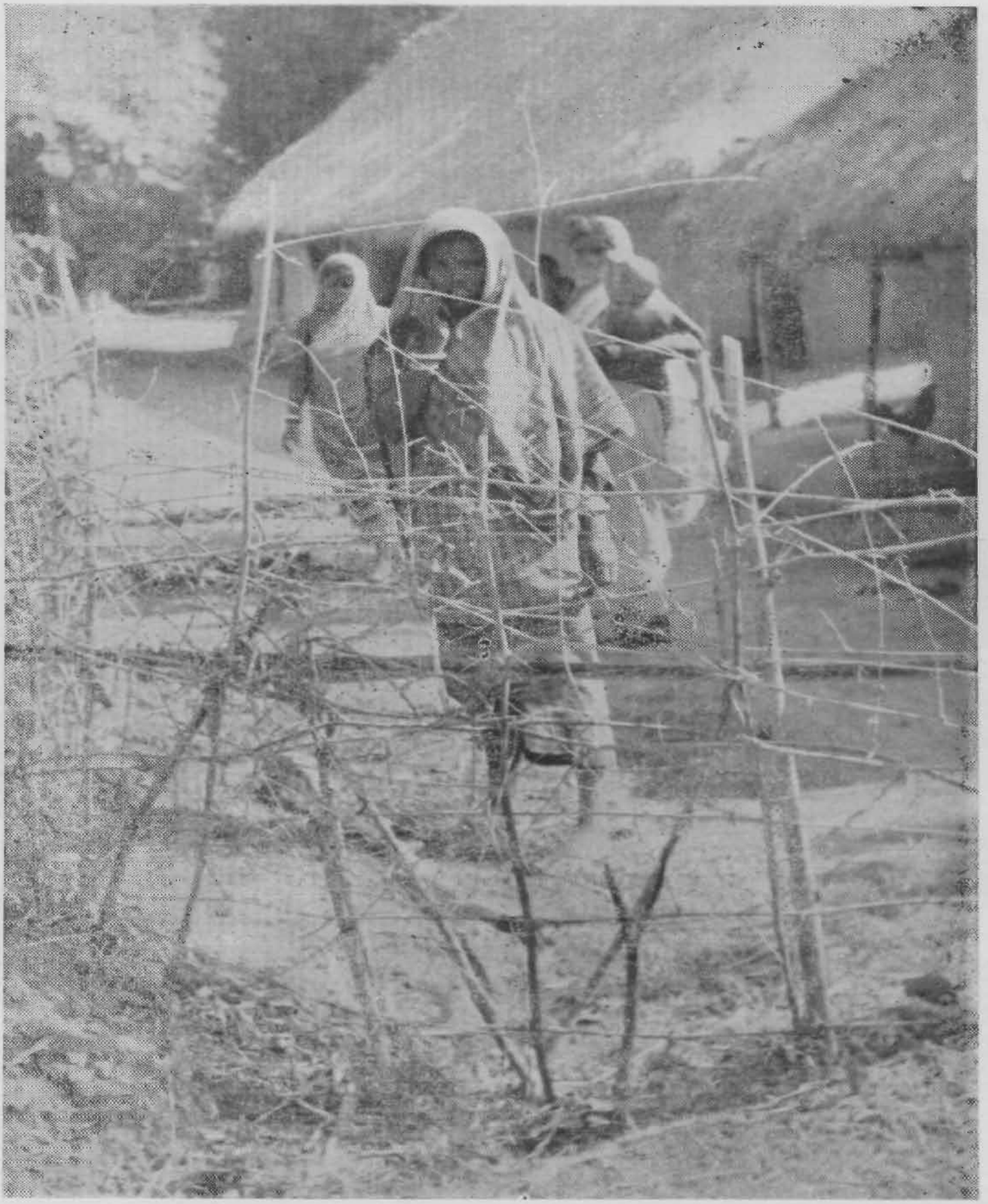
1. EKTALI
   P. S. Baisinga
2. TOTAPADA
   P. S. Baisinga
   Dist. Mayurbhanj

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

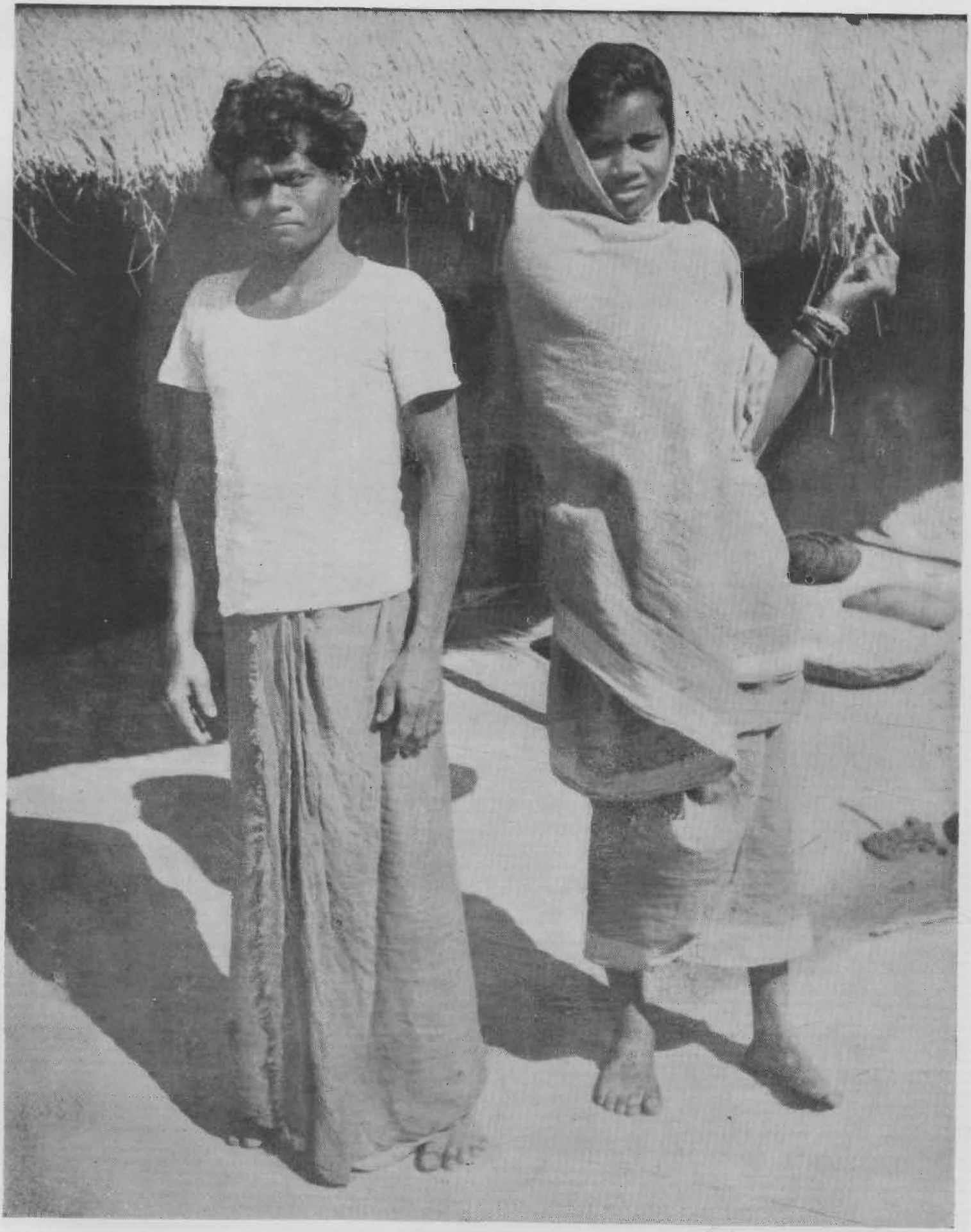
1. Shri Banasar Raj, S/o. Nari Raj
2. Shri Dukhia Raj, S/o. Banasar
3. Shri Sona Raj, S/o. Bona Raj
4. Shri Gora Raj, S/o. Banasar
5. Shri Kali Charan Raj, S/o. Abhiram Raj
6. Shri Bhagerau Ram, S/o. Daria Ram
7. Shri Surendranath Sahu, Teacher, Totapada Sevashram
8. Shri Trilochan Das, Head Pandit, Totapada Sevashram
9. Shri Janu and his wife



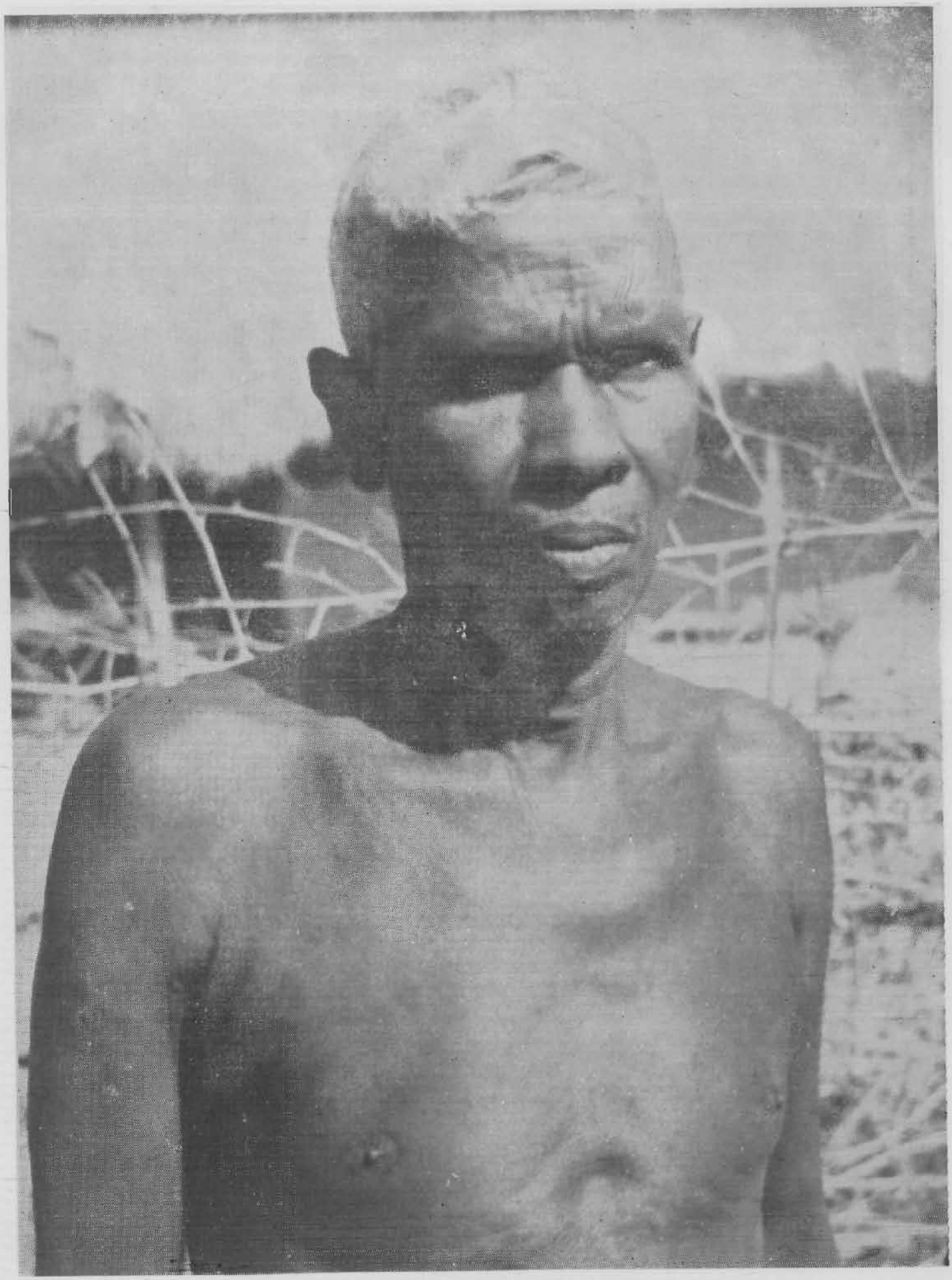
A typical house



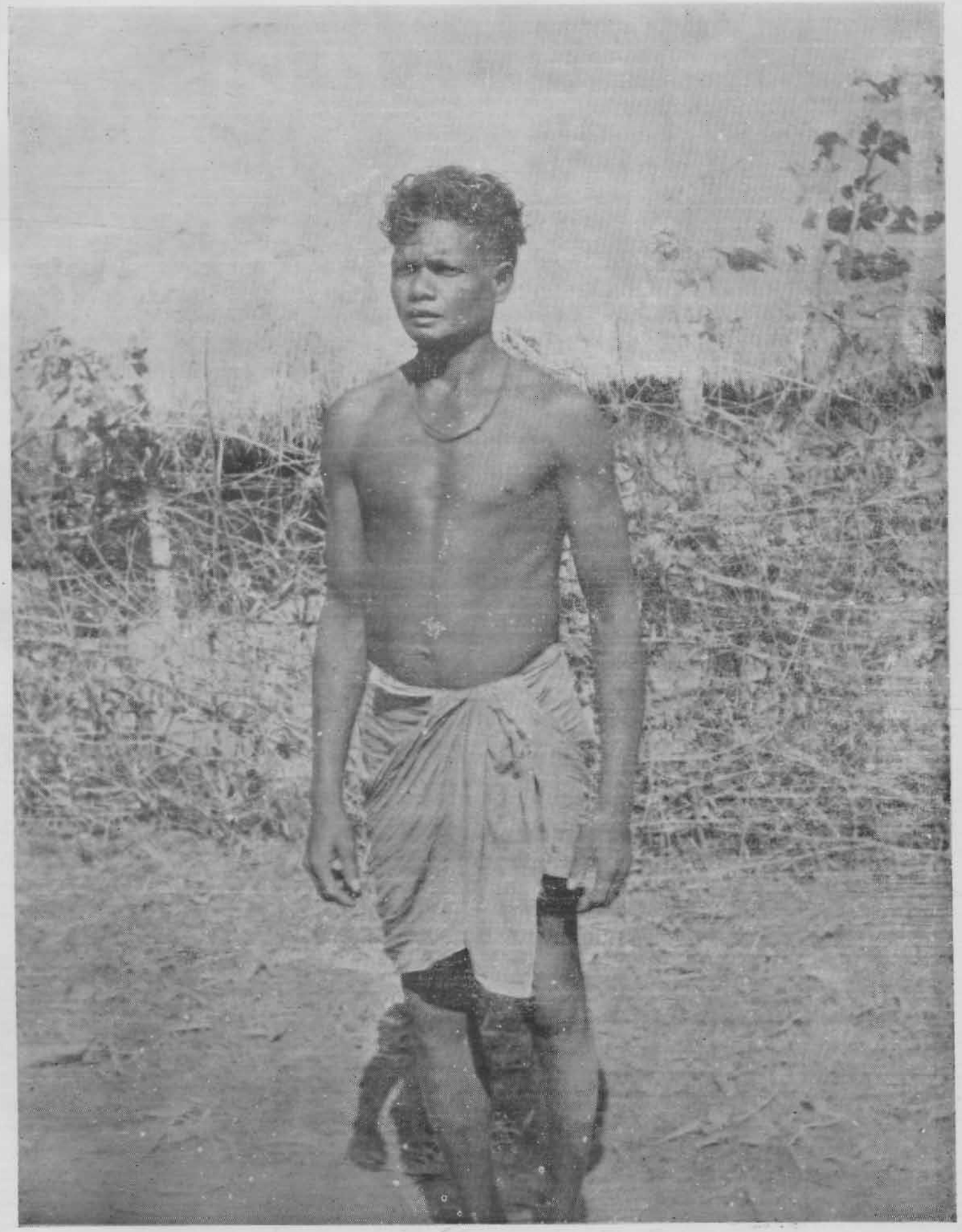
A house scene



A Rajuar couple



An old Rajuar



A Rajuar youth



Some Rajuar school children with their teachers

of the couple are tied together with a new piece of cloth which is later untied by the sister-in-law of the bride. This seems to be the binding portion of the marriage.

29. A tribal feast called *Desakhia* is arranged where non-vegetarian food is served. If marriage takes place in the morning the groom with the bride returns home by the same evening. On the 7th day of marriage another tribal feast is arranged in the house of the groom.

30. A family generally consists of a married couple and their unmarried children. Though no strict rule exists making separation of the sons after marriage binding, in most cases sons after marriage stay with their parents and usually after the latter's death, they separate. In many cases the sons stay in separate mess and property during the life-time of father due to difference of opinion or family quarrels.

Death

31. Both burial and cremation are taken recourse to for disposal of the dead, and the dead body in no case is thrown away. Dead bodies of small children and of all those dying of smallpox, leprosy and cholera are buried. The abdomen of a pregnant woman is incised, the womb is separated and buried separately. Either a gourd, a pumpkin or the inflorescence of a banana plant is buried alongwith the mother if she dies after child birth.

32. The death news is disseminated to all friends and relatives who assemble in the house of the deceased. A bier is constructed with six pieces of bamboo poles. With the funeral procession is carried a basket, a pitcher and a spade. The son of the deceased leads the funeral procession. The eldest son, if present, lits the funeral pyre. The dead body is lowered at a spot at the outskirts of the village where food is offered to the departed till the *Dasa* day.

33. Both in burial and cremation, the dead body is kept with its head pointing north and face upwards. The body is washed with a pot of water fetched by the son of the deceased from a stream or a tank. It is wrapped with a new piece of cloth. Its forehead is anointed with vermilion and sandal-wood paste. The pall-bearers and mourners return home after complete consumation of the body.

34. At the end of the first stage of pollution for 3 days *pita* is observed. A feast is arranged on the occasion where a few neem leaves are added to the food served. The second and the final stage is observed on the 10th day called *Dasa* when apart from cleaning of the household, a shave, bath and paring of the nails, worships are offered at the ghat by the Brahmin who arranges a homa on the 11th day. A feast is arranged on the 11th day for members of the tribe. On the day of death, the members of deceased's household are not to cook in their own house but are to be fed by others who will cook for them. For all the 10 days either the eldest son or his wife offers food to the deceased at the outskirts of the village. In some cases, on the Dasa day, the eldest son throws into the water source the bone of the deceased. The nail of those who are buried is collected to be thrown into the *ghat* on the 10th day.

Language, literacy and education

35. Oriya, the regional language, is the mother-tongue of all the members of the tribe. Influence of Bengali to a very small extent on their intonation is noticeable perhaps due to their nearness to Bengal or perhaps because of their migration from this region years ago. Bilingualism is rare.

36. 11·8 *per cent* of the population are literate of whom nearly 28 persons have gone up to primary or junior basic standard acco rding to 1961 census. In the villages under study, none have gone up to the matriculation standard. In village Totapada, one was reported to have passed M. E. standard and about 6 to 7 students were said to be in the primary school.

The table below gives the literacy and education figures districtwise:

Table No 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source:1961 Census)

District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa ..	1,018	912	106	78	28	..
Karaput	11	10	1	1	..	..
Samblpur ..	22	15	7	5	2	..
Sundargarh ..	4	4	..	..	..	..
Puri ..	15	15	..	..	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	956	858	98	72	26	..
Balasore ..	10	10	..	..	..	..

Occupation

37. Agriculture and agricultural labour are their main occupation. Most of them own so little land that it does not sustain them for the year. They out of sheer economic necessity. therefore, employ themselves as landless labourers and wage-earners. Very few of them know masonry, carpentry or any other trade.

The table below gives the industrial classification of workers, according to 1961 Census:

Table No. 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF WORKERS

Category	P	M	F
Total population ..	1,018	571	447
Workers			
I. Cultivator ..	292	218	74
II. Agriculturai labourer ..	209	120	89
III. Mining and Quarying, etc. ..	13	13	..
IV. Houshold Industry ..	36	5	31
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..	..	..	..
VI. Construction ..	..	..	..
VII. Trade and Commerce ..	13	13	..
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications ..	..	..	..
IX. Other Services ..	..	..	..
Total workers ..	563	369	194
Non-workers ..	455	202	253

Village Organisation

38. The head of the tribe at the village level is called *Parmanik* who is assisted by the *Chatia*. There is no member of the tribe to act as a priest or exorcist. There is no caste council. In case of important social disputes, all *Parmaniks* of a region may confer or they may convene a council at some temple or religious place where members of other castes or tribes are also invited to give their verdict.

Religion and festivals

39. The Rajualas worship *Gara Chandi, Situli* and *Durga*. Other deities worshipped are *Mahadeba, Basuli, Andhariudi* and *Kali*. In some villages, there is a *Dehuri* of the Bhumij tribe who offers worship to *Gara Chandi* for them.

40. They observe most Hindu festivals and by far their most important one is *Makara* which is observed for 2 days starting with the first day of *Magh* (January-February). During the festival, they offer goats as sacrifice before the *Gan Thakurani* or the village deity. Both the days are spent in great revelry and merriment to the accompaniment of dance, music and drinks. Members of the tribe wear new cloths after the ceremonial dip in some nearby spring.

41. *Chaitra Sankranti* or *Ambanua* is observed in the month of *Chaitra* when they take mango for the first time. The date of another festival called *Nua khia* is fixed according to convenience. *Bandana* which is observed the day after *Kali Puja* is the occasion for worshipping the cattle wealth. *Karam* festival is observed in the month of August when a *Karam* twig is fetched. The same is transplanted at the *Jatra* place which is usually at the crossing of two village roads. *Handia* or rice beer is drunk freely during the period.

42. *Salui Puja* so popular with some tribes in the neighbourhood is not observed by the Rajualas.

43. Though the tribe is greatly fond of dance and songs, they do not have any indigeneous musical instrument except *madala*. *Kathi nacha*, a form of dance with sticks is popular with members of the tribe.

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THARUA

Village of study :

PITHAHATA
P. S. Berhampur
Dist. Balasore

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE :

1. Shri Paban Behera
2. Shri Damodar Behera
3. Shri Jagannath Behera
4. Shri Anadi Charan Behera
5. Shri Durlav Behera
6. Shri Arjun Behera
7. Smt. Suna Dei, W/o. Baghrai Behera
8. Shri Satrughna Behera, S/o. Madha Behera
9. Shri Pabani Behera, S/o. Dhirjya Behera



A typical house scene



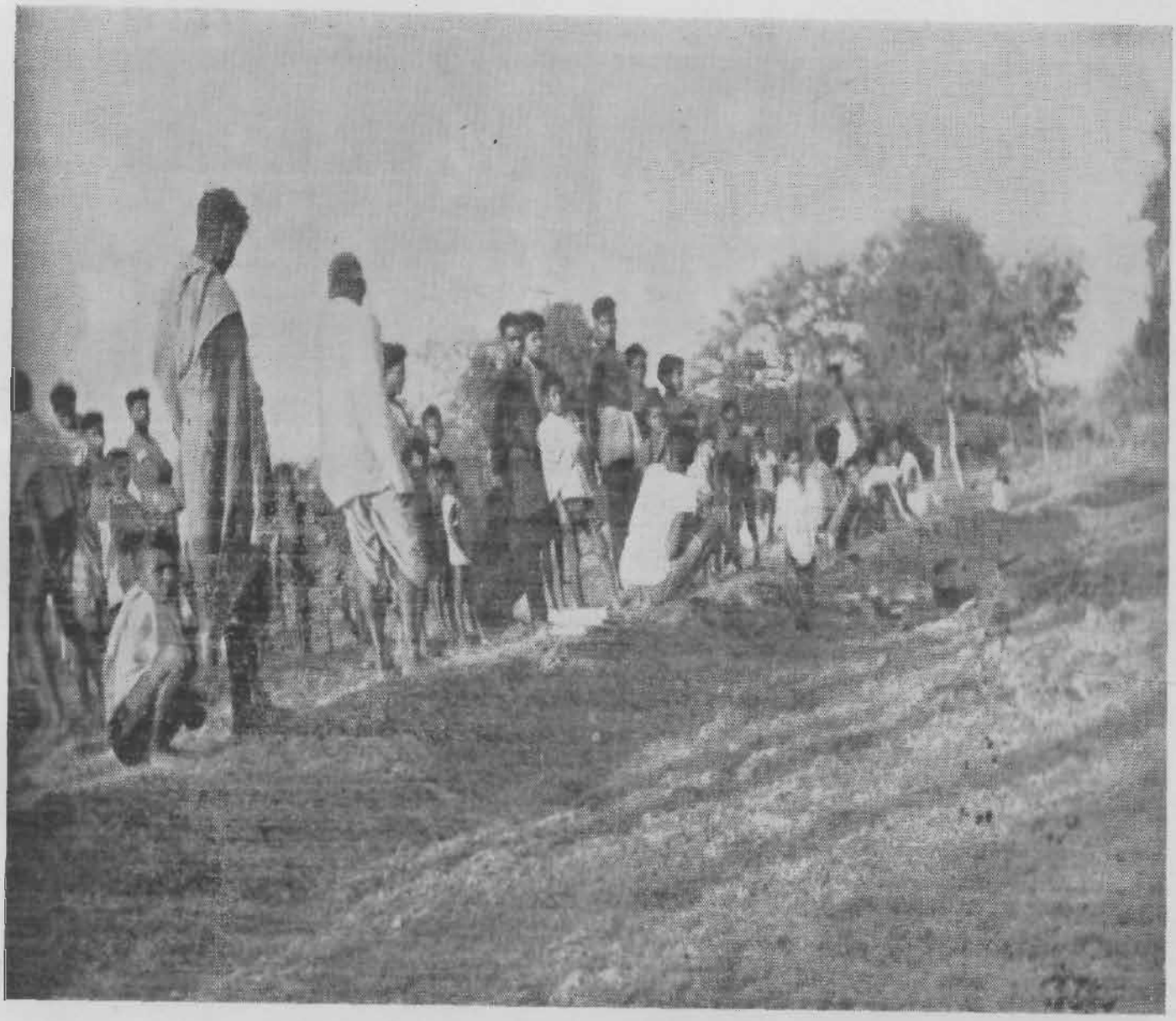
A Tharua woman



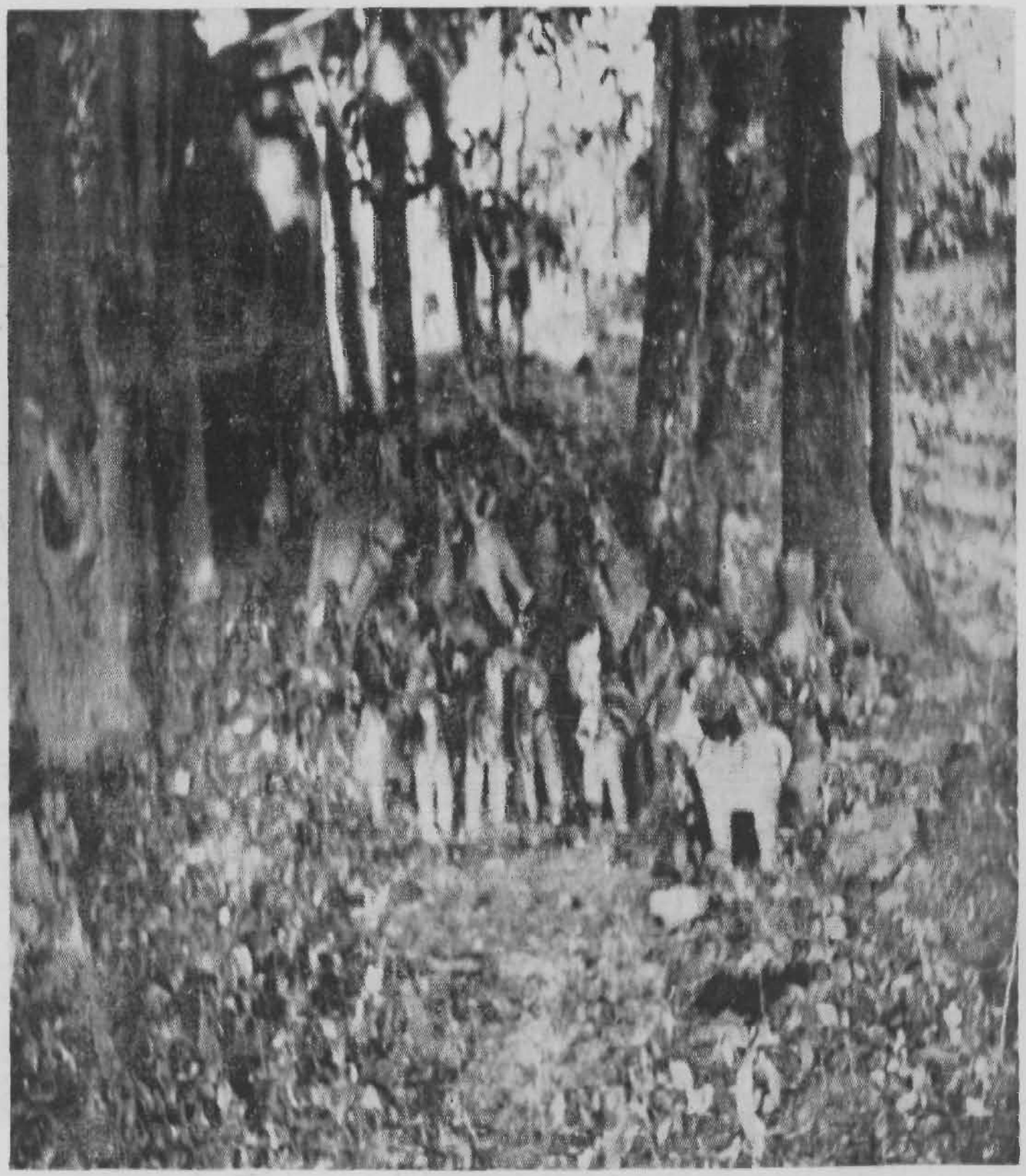
Tharua women and children



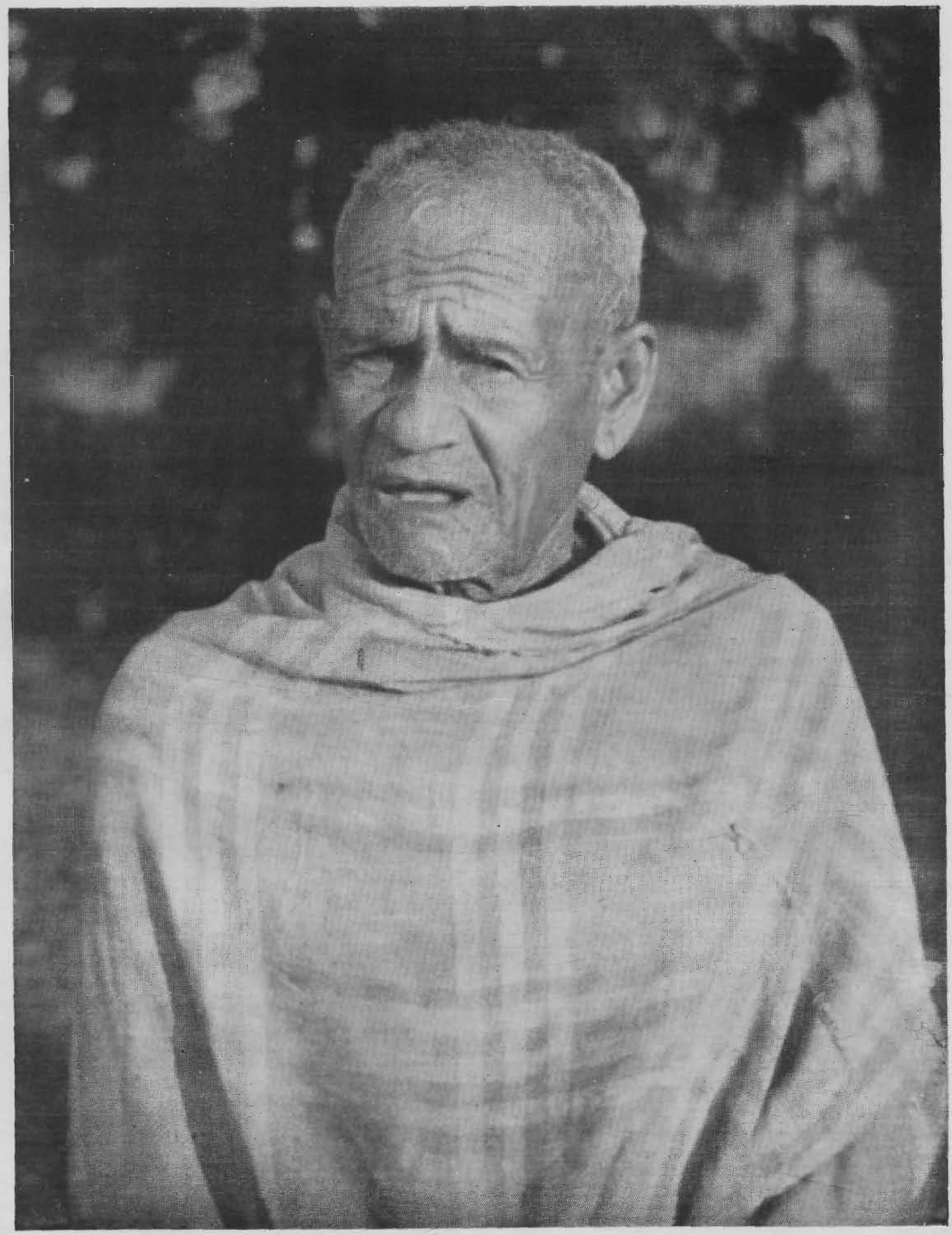
A Tharua young man preparing cakes during Magha Parva



A part of the Magha Parva gathering



Raudia Thakurani



An old Tharua

THARUA

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes List (Modification) Order, 1956 mentions the tribe as Tharua which seems to be an epithet all too common for assignment to those who do not communicate in Oriya, the regional language but adopt a *thara* or a tribal dialect among themselves. The members of this very small tribe were found to be communicating among themselves in Oriya rather freely though they admitted that years ago their dialect was an admixture of Oriya and Bengali and that even today, a tinge of Bengali is discernible in their intonation.

2. The tribe was studied in village Pithahata of Berhampur Police Station in Balasore district. It appeared on enquiry in the neighbourhood that the members of the tribe were known to the outsiders as Tharua with two distinct divisions among them, viz., Tharua Bindhani and Tharua Kumbhar. The former are blacksmiths who prepare various kinds of agricultural implements whereas the latter work as potters. Their title are Bindhani and Behera respectively and their *gotra* names are Anaki and Sal respectively.

3. Members of the tribe in the village under study indentify themselves as Maghia Kumbhara and exhibit a strong detest for the word Tharua. They assert that they are not members of any scheduled tribe and that they are Aryans. They claimed that they do not accept water from members of any of the neighbouring tribes like Santals and Bathudis nor do they accept water from the single Jhadua Bindhani household in the village who was indentified as a Tharua Bindhani by outsiders.

4. In support of their claim that they are Aryans and do not belong to any Scheduled Tribe, the members of the tribe asserted that they do not have to seek permission of revenue authorities before transferring land to non-tribals. On enquiry it was gathered that the law forbidding transfer of property by a member of any scheduled tribe which was in operation in other scheduled districts of the State had not been enforced in the ex-State of Nilgiri. Consequently members of the various scheduled tribes were not obliged to take permission of the prescribed authority before selling their landed properties. This had created confusion in the minds of the tribals whose counterparts in the neighbouring district of Mayurbhanj had to seek permission before alienating land in favour of a non-tribal.

5. It was learnt that under the common division *Sala macha* which is an endogamous unit, there existed exogamous *kutumbas* or *bansas* like Dhakitanga, Ahadar, Kanyari, Bhuiyan, Tetenga, Kachhima, Latha and Supala.

6. Members of the tribe are served by barbers and washermen though till recently Brahmins refused to serve them. Brahmins from village Markundi in Mayurbhanj district officiate now in their social functions.

Geographical distribution and population

7. The total population of the tribe in the State according to 1961 census is only 310. Of this, 195 are returned from the Nilgiri subdivision of Balasore district. The rest

lie sparsely sprinkled in the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Cuttack, Bolangir, Koraput and Sundargarh. Police Stations containing more than 10 per cent of the population are Nilgiri (195) and Harichandanpur (62) in the districts of Balasore and Keonjhar respectively. The sex ratio is 1,052 females per thousand males. Their urban population is only 2.

The table below gives the sexwise and districtwise distribution of the population.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source: Census 1961)

District	P	M	F
Orissa	310	151	159
Koraput	3	3	..
Bolangir	4	1	3
Sundar garh	2	..	2
Keonjhar	87	40	47
Cuttack	6	6	..
Mayurbhanj	12	7	5
Balasore	196	94	102

Houses and living condition

8. In village Pithahata, about 30 households of Tharuas live in a separate hamlet along with 1 Tharua Bindhani, 1 Santal and 2 Harijan households. It was learnt that there are members of the tribe in villages Jamuna and Bahabandh of Balasore district and villages Markundi, Talapada, Pratappur, Dukura and Chunudiha of Mayurbhanj district. In most of these villages, members of the tribe were reported to stay in a separate hamlet away from other castes and tribes.

9. Most of the houses have a compound fence all around. The walls are built of mud and the roof is thatched with straw. Many of them have ceilings made of wooden planks and bamboo poles plastered with mud. A single door-way and no window is the characteristic feature of every house. Verandahs are provided on all sides. The paddy husking pedal is usually located in a portion of the verandah. Cattle sheds are either built at a distance or are located in an extension of the roof at one end of the house. Being artisans by tradition, they build a separate house for locating their workshop. The shade of a tamarind or banian tree serves the purpose.

10. Before selection of site for construction of a new house, the owner visits the site at night time unnoticed by others and buries some rice in a leaf cup at the proposed site. Next morning if the grains are found intact the site is considered suitable. During occupation of a house, a *homa* is performed by the priest and all friends and relations are entertained to a feast where non-vegetarian food is served.

11. Their living condition is not insanitary. The floor of the house is cleaned regularly with cowdung water. The surroundings and the cow-shed are also kept neat. Their household equipments consist of a few aluminium and bell-metal utensils, earthen pots, bamboo baskets and some agricultural implements like axe, spade and sickle. A wooden cot or a stringed charpoy is found in some households.

Dress and ornaments

12. Poorly dressed in a small dhoti or sari, members of the tribe preserve banians, shirts and coloured saris for festivals and special occasions. A *chaddar* or a wrappet commonly accompanies dhotis of males.

13. Ornaments worn by women are few in number and design. *Kana phula* of gold for the ear, necklaces called *rupa champakadi* and *sooki mala* for the neck.

bangles and *bala* of silver for the wrist and *bala* for the ankles are the common ornaments of women. Male members usually go without any ornament. Women after marriage use vermilion on their foreheads. Some paint their feet with *alta,* a kind of red paint. Tattooing the limbs which is said to have been once very popular with the women folk has been given up.

Food

14. Beef, pork and buffalo flesh are considered as unclean and therefore as prohibited items of food. Flesh of goat, sheep, fowl, pigeon, duck, other game birds and animals and all varieties of fish are taken according to availability. They take three principal meals a day, once in the morning, the other at noon and the dinner is taken shortly after evening. Dishes prepared out of dried fish is a favourite delicacy. *Tol* oil extracted out of *mahua* seeds is used as a cooking medium along with onions, garlic, mustard and turmeric. Some use mustard oil as the medium for cooking. *Handia* or rice-beer is prepared at home. *Mahua* liquor is seldom used. Smoking and chewing tobacco and betel leaves are habits all too common with members of the tribe.

Birth

15. Before a child is born, the brother of the expectant woman carries presents of food and delicacies to her house. On arrival of the presents, women including the old and aged members of the tribe are invited to a feast. Few restrictions are imposed on the expectant woman as to her food and movements. She is forbidden from taking eggs and twin fruits.

16. Delivery takes place in a separate room which is ear-marked for the purpose. An old and experienced midwife of either the Dom or Bhumij tribe attends on the parturient woman. She is given saris, rice and some amount of cash remuneration

17. The midwife cuts the umbilical cord with an oyster shell. The cord and the the house by the midwife. A bit of turmeric is also buried along with. The new-born is bathed immediately. The mother is given fried paddy, fried rice and garlic, ect., as food. During subsequent days, she is given potato, garlic in larger quantities, hot rice, ghee and a kind of vegetable called *kunduri.* Powder of dried ginger and Pippali is also given. A heap of fire called *antudi jala* is arranged within the lying-in-room.

18. The first stage of pollution continues for 9 days. The ashes out of the *antudi* fire is thrown away, the house is cleaned and all take bath after a shave and paring of nails The mother, however, is not allowed access into the kitchen till the second stage of pollution is over on the 21st day after bath. An astrologer of some neighbouring caste prepares the horoscope for the child. He too presides over the name-giving ceremony.

19. The ear-boring ceremony is initiated only after the child attains the age of 10 to 15. Members of the tribe have their religious *guru* called *gosain* who is stated to be somewhere in the district of Ranchi in Bihar. He was said to be a Baishnab. On his arrival once in every two to three years about Rs. 5/- to Rs. 10/- is collected per oven (household) for expenditure on the entertainment of the *gosain.* Two or three Bansas have a common *gosain* who administers *karno mantra* to their children.

Puberty

20. A girl on attainment of puberty is kept isolated for about a week on the expiry of which she is given a new sari to wear after bath. During subsequent menstruations a woman is not allowed to touch the cooking utensils. She will not touch paddy or rice either. Male members of the household manage the cooking without her aid.

Marriage

21. Both child marriage and adult marriage are prevalent within the tribe. In case of child marriage, the girl continues to stay in her father's house till she attains puberty when she is brought to her father-in-law's house with a lot of presents. Marriage by capture or by consent are reported as rare. A widow can arrange *thain*, i.e., she can settle with another person but she cannot marry him in the real sense of the term. The same principle applies to a divorcee.

22. Most of the marriages are arranged by negotiation between the parents of both sides. The father of the groom who takes initiative carries the proposal to the house of the bride. The bride price which was previously Rs. 50/ in form of gold or golden ornaments has been raised to Rs. 90/-. In a marriage, the father of the girl has also to offer such presents as heavy utensils like *bela, gara,* etc. In some of the more modernised forms of marriage, cycle and watches are also being offered as dowry. Marriage takes place in the house of the bride. A Brahmin priest presides over the ceremony The washerman and the barber also serve on this occasion. On a day called *naga dina, naga* is finalised. The bride price is paid on this day. Marriage feast is arranged in the bride's house on the date of marriage but in the groom's house on the 4th day. After the girl returns to her father-in-law's place subsequent to marriage, games of *kauris* are also played at the latter's place.

Death

23. Burning is the rule and only those dying of infectious diseases are buried. One dying of pox is thrown away. Bodies of small children are buried. In case of death of a pregnant woman, her womb is incised for the foetus to be separated. The dead bodies of both are buried separately.

24. The dead body is carried to the cremation ground on a charpoy. On arrival of all friends and relatives, the dead body is anointed with oil and turmeric paste. The eldest son puts the fire on the face of the deceased father in the cremation ground. He too offers food to the memory of the deceased for 10 days at a place midway between the village and the cremation ground where the dead body had been lowered Before placing fire on the deceased's mouth, he places there a 4 anna bit.

25 *Pila* is observed the succeeding day when *neem* leaves with boiled rice are served to all concerned. On the 10th day called *Dasa,* the household is served by the barber and the washerman. Brahmins are fed on the 11th day when a general feast is also arranged for all members of the tribe. Usually, bones are not collected for disposal in a river or a stream, except by those who can afford this form of disposal in the river Ganges.

Language, Literacy and Education

26. The mother-tongue of the tribe years ago was an admixture of Oriya and Bengali Though the influence of the latter language continues even today to a small extent, they can communicate freely in Oriya with the outsiders. According to 1961 census figures, the regional language Oriya is the mother-tongue of the tribe which is spoken by all. This is also established by field study. Not a single member of the tribe can speak a language subsidiary to the mother-tongue.

27. Only 5·5 per cent of the population numbering 17 persons are literate. Not a single member has been returned in the 1961 census as having read up to primary or junior basic standard. It was, however, ascertained during enquiry that many of their children have been enrolled in the local U. P School and about 4 students are in the Dihirakul M. E. School in Balasore district. A few were reported to have read up to Matric standard

The table below presents the literacy figures of the tribe arranged districtwise.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

State/District	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
Orissa	310	293	17	17	.	..
Koraput	3	3	..	..	..	..
Bolangir	4	..	4	4	..	..
Sundargarh	2	2	..	..	..	.
Keonjhar	87	85	2	2	..	..
Cuttack	6	2	4	4	..	..
Mayurbhanj	12	11	1	1	..	.
Balasore	196	190	6	6	..	..

Occupation

28. Belonging essentially to an artisan class, the Tharua Kumbhars prepare earthen pots. Majority of them devote to this household industry. Agriculture, however, is their subsidiary occupation.

The table below gives the industrial classification of population, according 1961 census.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

Category	P	M	F
Total Population	310	151	159
Workers :			
I. Cultivators	49	49	..
II. Agricultural Labourers	21	20	1
III. Mining, Quarrying, etc.	..	..	..
IV. Household Industry	77	62	15
V. Manufacturing other than household industry	..	..	..
VI. Construction	2	2	..
VII. Trade and Commerce	1	1	..
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications	..	..	..
IX. Other Services	12	4	8
Total Workers	162	138	24
Non-workers	148	13	135

Village Organisation

29. The headman of the tribe in the regional level is called *Behera* whose jurisdiction extends to about 8 to 10 villages. Besides, an informal caste head is selected for each village who decides petty social disputes. Disputes of larger proportions relating to divorce, marriage, etc., are decided by the *Behera* in a tribal council attended by all the

village heads. It is customary to convene a tribal council almost every year in the month of *Magh*.

Religion and Festivals

30. By far, their most important deity is *Biswakarma* who is worshipped with great ado during the *Biswakárma* festival which falls sometime in September. During the festival they worship their potter's wheel by smearing it with vermilion and sandalwood paste. New clothes are put on and the festival day is spent in feasting and merrymaking Fish and flesh are prohibited items of food during the festival.

31. For the general prosperity of the village, they worship other deities like *Raudia, Thanamatho* and *Maisasuri.*

32. Besides the *Biswakarma* festival they observe *Makar Sankranti* or *Magh Parab.* During the festival they worship *Raudia* with sacrifice of fowls. Feasting and merrymaking goes on in the open fields neighbouring the *Raudia*. Other Hindu festivals observed are *Raja, Gamha* and *Kali Puja.*

HO

Village of study :

DHANGIRIMUTTA
P. S. Badampahar
Dist. Mayurbhanj

HO

The results of investigation by this organisation clearly indicate that Ho and Kol are synonymous at least in the district of Mayurbhanj where in the village Dhangrimuta of P. S. Badampahar, the study was undertaken. According to Majumdar (1950: 18) "If there be any word that the Hos dislike most, it is the popular epithet Kol by which they are known to the outside world. Whether the word is derived from Sanskrit Kola meaning a pig, as Dalton has suggested, or from the word 'Horo', which in course of time has assumed different forms, viz., 'Koro'. 'Kola', 'Kol', it is difficult to decide but it is certain that the word has an unhappy connotation and is, in popular use, a contemptuous term which designates all those savages that cumber the ground. A Ho loathes to be addressed as Kol, and when this happens he will shrug his shoulders and mutter indignantly in protest. Similarly a Ho woman resents being addressed as Kui. Yet the words have come to stay.

2. Whereas the above depict the state of affairs in the Kolhan estate where Mr. Majumdar had worked, the word Kol is not held as that contemptuous in Mayurbhanj. Interview with a number of Hos revealed that they do not resent to accept both the terms as synonymous. According to many of them, the word 'Kol' is not so current in Bihar as it is in Orissa. One informant stated that his great grandfather had migrated to Mayurbhanj from Khadbandh near Jhinkpani in Singhbhum district and that his father used to pay rent in Chaibasa whereto he used to accompany him. It is a fact that many of the Hos settled in Mayurbhanj have migrated only during the last few generations ; and that most of them would prefer to be called as Hos rather than as Kols.

3. The Census Report of Mayurbhanj, 1931 corroborates the above contention as it makes no efforts for separate enumeration. The Tribal Research Bureau of the State Government have placed Kols, Kol, Kolha and Kolah-Kol-Loharas as a part of the Ho tribe. The President's order enumerating the list of scheduled castes and tribes place Hos and Kols separately and both these have also been enumerated separately during the 1961 census. As to their origin and affinities, the discussion in the note on Kols need reference. Only a few words from Majumdar's 'The affairs of a tribe' are pertinent and need be quoted.

"The Hos do not have any tradition of being the earliest settlers in Kolhan. Their affiliation to the Mundas, in language and culture, may mean that they branched off only a few centuries ago. Many of the villages in Kolhan are originally reclaimed by other castes, and in their southward expansion, the Hos appear to have eliminated the original Khuntkattidars. The Settlement Report of Kolhan (1919) (pp. 17-18) says, "The Hos certainly came into the Kolhan from the north or north-west and the whole of North Kolhan, including the northern forest Pirs, is pure Ho country except for a fringe along the eastern boundary particularly in Thai, Bharbhariya and Lagra Pirs which appear to be newer than the Pirs to the north and contain an admixture of Santals, Bhumij, Gonds, Bhuyas and Gowalas."

5. Ho is a title borne by the names of many. Other titles current among the tribe are Hembram, Birua, Sinku, Budioli. Kodadar, Hasda, Gunduia, Purti, Gagrai, Dorai, Buru, Mahaburu, Tiu, Pingua and Hesa Pingua.

6. The Santals refer to the Hos or Kols as Mundas whereas other caste people of the neighbourhood call them as Kols or Hos.

Origin

7. The legend regarding the origin of the tribe is the same as narrated in the note on Kols. The supreme deity, *'Sing Bonga'* is supposed to have been self-created who later created earth with mountains, vegetation and then the first pair of living beings.

Geographical distribution

8. The Hos narrate no tradition about their original home or migration. They admit to have descended from the common family of the Mundas and refer to their original home at 'Chutianagpur' from where they state to have migrated to Singbhum, Saraikella, Kharswan, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. It has been stated earlier that the majority of the Ho immigrants of Mayurbhanj hail from the Kolhan estate in Bihar. A part of the Kolhan estate was an integral part of the State of Mayurbhanj till 1837. It is for this that the Hos of Mayurbhanj claim to be autochthones of Mayurbhanj.

Population

9. The Hos, at present, lie scattered almost in all the districts of the State except in Ganjam and Baudh-Khondmals. They are numerically preponderant in the districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar and in the remaining nine districts, they lie sparsely scattered.

10. Their total population in the State (vide Table 1 below) is 43,323 and the number of females per thousand males is 1,033.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

State/District	P	M	F
Orissa	43,323	21,313	22,010
Koraput	62	28	34
Sambalpur	74	59	15
Bolangir	841	438	403
Baudh Khondmals	..	..	..
Ganjam	..	..	..
Sundargarh	785	419	366
Dhenkanal	2,006	983	1,023
Puri	109	53	56
Keonjhar	9,044	4,394	4,650
Cuttack	2,113	1,162	951
Mayurbhanj	27,090	13,155	13,935
Balasore	1,172	607	565

11. No correct statistics about their population in the earlier censuses is available, thus making it difficult to pronounce any judgment about the general trend of population. Their total population in the census of 1931, however, is estimated at 184,331 which when compared to the 1961 census figures appear to be exceeding four times. In absence of any valid reason to account for such a drastic fall in their population during the last three decades, it may as well be presumed that the figures for 1931 include the Kol population which have been separately enumerated in the 1961 census.

12. Jashipur, Raruan and Badampahar police station areas of Mayurbhanj district have each returned more than 10 per cent of the Ho population of the State. Among other areas, Anandapur P. S. of Keonjhar

district records a population of 3,486 which is about 8·04 per cent of the all-State population.

Houses

13. The Hos have villages exclusively to themselves though in some villages, they put up side by side with other scheduled castes and tribes.

14. The houses are built very neatly. Each hut has gables and narrow verandahs on three sides with one slightly wider to the front. Each hut is partitioned by a wall with one door only for both the rooms.

15. The walls are made of mud. Occasionally stones are placed withhin the walls. Coloured fluids of red and yellow ochre adore the neatly dabbed walls in numerous artistic patterns that reflect their aesthetic sense. Each house has its compound fenced with green hedges or sometimes with mud and stone walls. Separate sheds for cows and domesticated animals are built near the bed room.

16. The roofs are ordinarily thatched with dry stalks of paddy on wood and bamboo framework. Some have tiled roofs.

17. The huts are all rectangular, the dimensions varying according to the means of the owner. The smallest hut measures $13\frac{1}{2}' \times 7\frac{1}{2}'$ and the largest measures $25\frac{1}{2}' \times 10\frac{1}{2}'$. The Dhenkis or paddy husking pedals are installed in a corner of the cattleshed or in a projecting wing of the hut.

18. The Hos usually sleep on stringed charpoys. There are as many charpoys as there are members in a household. Old clothes sewn together constitute their bed. Persons of means use pillows, others use improvised ones of bundles of straw. Mosquito curtains are used by advanced and well-to-do members of the tribe.

Food

19. Rice is their staple food. Dhenki-dehusked rice is used; no washing is done before putting it into the steaming water. No gruel is allowed to be thrown out but all of it is saturated. Fried leaves of horse-radish, onions and garlic, chillies, and a pinch of salt are all that are required to constitute the side dish.

20. Dried fish, red-ants, termites, crabs, fish of all varieties and snails are relished by the Hos. They take sheep, goats, hares, deer, fowls, pigeons, ducks, geese, snipe, and other game birds. They take beef and pork though its use is becoming increasingly a taboo.

27. Of all her toilets and decorations, the Ho fast at about 8 A. M. consist of cooked rice soaked in cool water, with some fried leaves of *sajina* or other edible leaves. The second meal is taken immediately after midday. Hot rice and some cooked vegetable go to constitute this meal. Dal of some pulse, fish or meat are additional dishes. The evening meal also comprises the same items.

22. With culture contact, the Ho women can prepare cakes now and fish and meat in the modern process. *Kachada oil* extracted from 'Mahua seeds' constitute their cooking medium. Milk and milk food are seldom used.

23. The Hos drink '*handia*' and wine distilled from 'Mahua' flowers. The former serves as an intoxicant and a beverage; and is a must be to accompany all festivals and ceremonies. Tea is becoming popular in market places.

Dress and ornaments

24. Men generally are very scantily dressed. A short cloth is enough that is tied at the waist, the ends being passed on and secured near the end of the spine to allow free movement. The more well-to-do members wear a loin cloth at home ; and when going out wear dhotis, jerseys and shirts. A coarse but long cotton sari with a coloured border that is draped round the waist, caught up and then thrown carelessly over the shoulder is the common garment of

a woman. The mode of wearing the sari shows off the feminine figure to perfection and leaving all the limbs free, the long strip that hangs over the shoulder adds its touch of grace to all their movements. They use no veils.

25. Children up to the age of four or five go nude. Men wear fine white dhotis with shirts, jackets, etc., during festivals. Young women use blouses and petticoats purchased from the weekly markets.

26. Like others, Ho women love ornaments. Hair pins of floral designs made of silver and nickel are used on the head. Nose pins and nose rings of various designs, gold and imitation gold ear drops and ear rings; chains and necklaces of gold and silver for the neck, bangles, bracelets and armlets of silver and nickel for the arm and the wrist, anklet of silver, and rings of gold silver or nickel for the fingers or toes are other ornaments used by their women folk.

27. Of all her toilets and decorations, the Ho woman takes maximum and particular attention of her hair-do. The hair is gathered up in a knot to the right of the back of the head and is adorned with the scarlet flowers of *Palasa* and *Simul* or the pale yellow flowers of the *sal*.

Birth

28. Ho women take to normal daily routine of labour till child-birth. Many are therefore, reported to be born in the fields while their mothers keep busy. No new hut is erected as a lying-in room. A wing or corner of the house is set apart. A professional 'dai' of the Ghasi caste is called to attend on her alongwith one or two experienced elderly women of the family. The umbilical cord is severed by the father with a sharp arrow-blade and is kept in a broken bit of an earthen pot. The mother and child are washed. The umbilical cord is buried under the caves of the lying-in room and the placenta is buried in the backyard of the house by the father. The baby is given honey and goat's milk till it feeds upon the mother's breasts. The mother is given fried rice and garlic as diet after a few hours of the delivery. From the second day onwards, she is given hot rice, dal and cooked vegetables twice a day.

29. No. restrictions are imposed on the movement of the mother. She comes out and attends to all household work from the second day but she attends to cooking only after the name-giving ceremony is over. This ceremony takes place 10 or 12 days after birth. The wife's brother and mother are invited. The former comes with some presents for the new born. Usually the name of the grand-father or grand-mother is chosen, but with the change of times new names like *Daroga, Sipahi, Mahanty, Karan, Jamadar*, etc., are being given. Girls are often named after the name of the day of the week on which she is born, viz., Sombari, Mangli, Budhuni, Gurubari, Sukuri and Suni. The mother wearing a new cloth sits with the child in her lap and some elderly persons of the tribe propose the name for acceptance.

Marriage

30. Adult marriage is the rule. The quantity of bride price consisting of many heads of cattle is an oppressive feature for the grooms which has to be counteracted by the beauty and attractiveness of girls.

31. A *dutam kàrji* or marriage broker is selected from among the tribe who carries on the negotiation. Visits are exchanged by either party and omens met across are seriously considered. Lowing of cattle, bleating of a goat, barking of a dog, appearance of a squirrel, mongoose or snake, hopping of a hopper, meeting of wild animals, dropping of a branch from a tree, meeting a person easing himself, seeing an empty pitcher, cutting of wood, throwing of meat or refuse, etc., are some of the inauspicious omens.

32. *Ganan* or bride price is the pivotal factor in a marriage. The demands of bride price is formidably prohibitive these days.

It varies from two heads of cattle, two pieces of clothes, and Rs. 50 in cash to 20 to 30 heads of cattle, several pieces of cloths and Rs. 200 in cash.

33. The quantum of bride price is never discussed in so many words. Balls of goat dung usually symbolise the number of rupees desired.

34. On the date of marriage, the bride is escorted to the bridegroom's house by the female friends amidst much singing and dancing. Her father, family friends and relatives make a procession behind. They are received half way. The bride and the groom are then seated on new low wooden stools (*Pidha*) at a place previously cleared, swept and plastered with cow dung and earth and decorated with mango leaves woven into chains.

35. There is not much of a ritual. The bridegroom pledges the bride pouring some of the liquor *(handia)* from his cup of *sal* leaves into hers. The compliment is returned. The groom then applies vermilion on the forehead of the bride. This completes marriage.

36. A grand feast with *handia* and *mohua* wine then follows. The bride is then received inside the house first by her mother-in-law with the presentation of a big leaf-cup of *rasi* (the liquid porfion of *hāṇḍia* highly intoxicating). The bride drinks to the health of her mother-in-law and aunt-in-law.

Marital status

37. The demand of bride price in Ho families rises with the rise in status. The institution of bride price has thus assumed such alarming proportions and has so much been mixed up with the issue of family prestige and tradition that many a Ho girl remain unmarried all their lives. It was learnt that forcible application of vermilion on the forehead of a maiden in a fair or market is also rare because of the stake inherent in such a practice involving additional amount of bride price.

38. Widow marriage and divorce of the wife are allowed. In the former case, bride price is nominal but there must be a sumptuous tribal dinner with potations of *handia.* This is called *Randi Erandi* Sororate and levirate are allowed. Cross-cousin marriage, parallel cousin marriage or marriage with sister's daughter are not allowed. Marriage within the same *sib* is also forbidden.

Death

39. The Hos generally bury their dead. Immediately after death of a tribesman, all elders and the headman arrive to arrange for disposal of the dead. None other than the successors, agnates and tribesmen of the deceased are allowed to touch the dead body. The stringed charpoys *(Parkoms)* inverted with the legs up are used as the bier. The funeral procession is led by the eldest son of the deceased with the pall-bearers and other mourners following.

40. The dead are buried not far from their homesteads. On reaching the burial ground, the dead body is lowered down to the ground where it is kept with the head southward. A large pit is dug and some paddy and rice are thrown into it. The dead body is then kept in the pit wrapped up in his own cloth with the bier arranged alongside. Paddy, rice, turmeric, *kachada* oil, goat dung, cow dung, utensils, clothes and cash of the departed are buried along with. Exception is made in case of gold and silk clothes. A small pot of *mera* (undiluted *handia)* is kept in a corner of the tomb. The pit is then filled with earth initiated by the eldest son. A huge uncut slab of stone is placed over the pit to mark the grave and to prevent *desecration.* Formerly another huge piece of a stone was being kept at another place beyond the village site in memory of the dead. The practice is no more current.

41. The *Kamani* or purification ceremony takes place on the 21st day. On this day, the blood relations shave themselves and women pare their nails. All the houses are cleaned. All take their bath in the bathing ghat.

42. Another ceremony called *Umbul Adar* then follows which aims at inviting the departed spirit to return to the house. The survivors of the departed strike two plough shares against each other shouting "Come! let us go out. How long do you intend to stay out ?" Such return, it is believed, leaves its mark in form of foot prints of birds, beasts or insects on ashes spread on the floor Deities are propitiated if the return is not effected easily.

43. In the event of death of a pregnant woman, the husband gives an incision with a sharp razor in the abdomen and removes the foetus. The woman is burried with a gourd or pumpkin beside her. The foetus is buried in another pit. Leprosy, cholera and smallpox patients are thrown away.

Language, Literacy and Education

44. The majority of the Hos speak their own language 'Ho', which is their mother-tongue. More than 25 per cent of the population have adopted Oriya as their mother-tongue. A few speak Mundari and Kui. A sizeable number of those speaking Ho, can also speak Oriya but very few of those having Oriya as their mother-tongue can speak any other subsidiary language.

45. It is learnt on field study that some have picked up Hindustani by virtue of their contact with other people in factories and workshops. Their children, in the district of Mayurbhanj are learning Oriya in schools.

46. The percentage of literacy among the tribe is 7·1. This compares not unfavourably with the percentage of literacy of the scheduled tribes as a whole as against their total population. Of the total number of literates, 789 have gone up to primary or junior basic level and only 26 have gone up to Matriculation stage and above. The Table below gives detailed districtwise figures on literacy and education.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

State/District	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa ..	43,323	40,252	3,071	2,256	789	26
Kalahandi ..	27	13	14	5	9	..
Koraput ..	62	62	..	..	..	..
Sambalpur .	74	66	8	8	..	.
Bolangir ..	841	722	119	113	6	.
Baudh-Khondmals ..	..		..	..	..	..
Ganjam ..	..	..	.	.	..	..
Sundargarh ..	785	639	146	109	28	9
Dhenkanal ..	2,006	1,890	116	80	34	2
Puri ..	109	105	4	1	2	1
Keonjhar ..	9,044	8,776	268	240	25	3
Cuttack ..	2,113	1,985	128	109	18	1
Mayurbhanj ..	27,090	25,025	2,065	1,389	666	10
Balasore ..	1,172	969	203	202	1	

Occupation

47. The Hos of Mayurbhanj are essentially agriculturists. Many take to agricultural labour due to insufficient or no land in their possession. A good number work in factories, mines or quarries. Those educated take to service mostly in Government offices and schools. Some are reported to have joined the police and army. The table below shows the distribution of the population by workers and Non-workers.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

Category	Population	M	F
Total Population ..	43,323	21,313	22,010
Workers :			
I. Cultivator ..	16,114	8,713	7,401
II. Agricultural labourer ..	4,472	2,082	2,390
III. Mining, Quarrying, etc. ..	1,279	661	618
IV. Household industry	593	316	277
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..	58	41	17
VI. Construction ..	43	37	6
VII. Trade and Commerce. ..	26	8	18
VIII. Transport, Storage and Communications	128	59	69
IX. Other Services ..	1,366	793	573
Total Workers ..	24,079	12,710	11,369
Non-workers ..	19,244	8,603	10,648

Religion

48. Many Hos, while believing in *Sing Bonga*, worship all Hindu gods and goddesses. They also have their *Jahira*, that patch of their holy grove, where they worship their gods. The Hos like the Santals spend their whole lives in fear and dread of evil spirits. A special malignant spirit seems to watch over almost every conceivable action.

49. If there is not the required dose of rain, it is a sure sign that Marang Buru is angry. Nothing will propitiate him but the sacrifice of a large-sized black he-goat. The Dehuri makes the offering and sacrifices the goat.

50. They have great belief in the Hill spirits and witchcraft. Bisam Thakurani, Kalimuhin and Dwarsuni are spirits who bring calamities for men.

Festival and recreations

51. The Hos are so greatly Hinduised that they have adopted many of the Hindu festivals. Most of their tribal festivals are also related to the stages of agricultural operations. Akshaya Tritiya, Salui Puja, Makar Sankranti, Sahrai or Bandana, Gamha Purnima, Raja Sankranti and Karam *Nat* are some of the festivals observed by them; the Sahrai or Bandana being by far their most important festival.

52. Their main hobby was hunting in deep woods with bow and arrows. This has changed with the change of times. Dancing in the moonlit nights with drums and flutes is precisely their main recreation.

Village organisation

53. The Hos have no caste organisation at present. Previously, they had their head in the Kolhan estate in the district of Singhbhum in Bihar. Any social dispute,

now-a-days, is decided upon by all the adult householders who assemble and after a hearing, inflict fine or other forms of punishment on the guilty. If a man touches the wife of his younger brother or the elder sister of his wife, he is called upon to atone for the sin by payment of a fine which is paid readily for expenditure in a feast and carousal of *handia*. Anyone seeking divorce against his wife, has to adduce evidence and if the same is convincing, divorce is sanctioned. Alimony is paid, if the divorce is on grounds of sterility or disease. The council also frames rules for the better guidance of the society. It sits at least once every year at the headman's house.

References

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4. Dalton E. T.—Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal
5. Census of Bengal, 1901—Part I Report
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MAHALI

Mahali as included in the list of scheduled tribes for Orissa in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1956, are named as Mahli or Mahili by Russell and Hiralal (1916:Vol. IV: 146) and as Mahili or Mahali by Risley (1891 : Vol. II : 40). The latter author mentions Mahali as a sept of Birhors in Chotanagpur and Mahali as a synonym for Mahili who are a sept of Kohars in the same area. They are referred to as Mahli in Prasad's Land and People of Tribal, Bihar (1961 : 143).

This organisation studied the tribe in villages Jashipur and Sanaraikali of Khunta police station in the district of Mayurbhanj.

2. Risley describes the Mahali as a Dravidian caste of labourers, palanquin-bearers, and workers in bamboo found in Chotanagpur and West Bengal. Comparing the totemistic clans of the Mahalis with those of the Santals, he seems to warrant the hypothesis that the main body of the caste is a branch of the Santals drifted from the parent stock at a recent date. According to him, the exact causes of the separation are lost in obscurity which enshrouds the early history of all tribal movements. Basketry and palanquin-bearing, in his opinion, are economic pursuits deemed as degrading by the Santals and the very acceptance of such occupations might have given the first impulse to the formation of the new group. On the same basis of the totemistic clans, however Russell and Hiralal have felt inclined to connect Mahalis with the Mundas. According to them, there is great similarity between 7 septs of the main body of the Mahalis with analogous septs in the Munda group. They are further of the view that the Santals and Mundas no doubt were originally one tribe and that Mahalis derived from both of them perhaps became a separate caste owing to their having settled in the villages more or less of the open country. Colonel Dalton (1872:313) describing about Bedyas, a wandering gipsy-like tribe of jugglers, fortune-tellers, rope-dancers, beggars, wanderers and bird-killers of Bengal district says that they too sometimes call themselves Manjhi and Mahali. It has to be borne in mind that though their economic pursuit is inferior in nature to that of many other castes or tribes, they assert themselves as superior to many. For example, they would refuse to accept water from Doms, Pans and Koruas who too take to basket weaving.

3. They appear to have no myths or legends relating to their origin, history and migration. At least the informants confronted during the field study could not mention one. The Mahali villagers of Sanaraikali, P.-S. Khunta in the district of Mayurbhanj stated that they have settled in the village for the last two generations and prior to that, their forefathers had migrated from Singbhum district of Bihar and from Nayabasan in Midnapur district of West Bengal.

4. They accept water from Bathudi, Bhuyan, Majhi, Bhumij and Mundas but refuse to accept it from Dom, Kolha, Pan, Tanti or Karua. The Santals curiously do not accept baskets of daily use-like *kula*, *dala*, etc., from the Doms particularly never on any ctremonial occasion. They would get it only from the Mahalis. Even if they get a basket from Dom, the rim is got made by the Mahalis in some parts of Midnapur..

5. An educated teacher belonging to the tribe claimed that the Mahalis met at Gidhni in West Bengal about 8 years ago and prior to that they had conferred once in Calcutta Those of the tribe reported to be knowledgeable about their origin and history impressed it on them that they were originally a fighting race under the Marahattas and that they had at no time in the past, any connection with the Santals. Subsequently, they migrated to Bihar and Orissa where they got mixed up in the hill fastnesses with the Santals and gradually took to their ways and language. To illustrate their distinctiveness from the Santals he, however, quoted with authority that Mahalis in West Bengal do not know Santali at all and that they do not even accept water from them. This is, however, not borne out from the 1961 Census figures of West Bengal which returns about 5,000 Mahalis having Santali as their mother-tongue.

Geographical distribution and population

6. According to 1961 Census the total population of Mahalis in the State is only 7,016 which is 0·17 per cent of the total tribal population of the State. The sex ratio is 1,010 females to 1,000 males. They are essentially a rural community as only 327 members of the tribe reside in urban areas.

7. The area of maximum concentration is the district of Mayurbhanj which contains, according to 1961 Census, 55·46 per cent of their population. The district to follow is Sundargarh with 21 per cent and the remaining 23 per cent lie sparsely scattered in the remaining districts of the State barring Ganjam, Cuttack and Puri where none have been enumerated. Table 1 below gives detailed districtwise figures of population returned in 1961 Census.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source : 1961 Census)

State/District		Persons	Males	Females
Orissa	...	7,016	3,491	3,525
Kalahandi	..	182	79	103
Koraput	..	947	464	483
Sambalpur	..	221	134	87
Bolangir	..	24	16	8
Baudh-Khondmals	..	28	14	14
Sundargarh	...	1,474	690	784
Dhenkanal	..	30	13	17
Keonjhar	..	177	73	104
Mayurbhanj	..	3,891	1,981	1,910
Balasore	..	42	27	15

8. There is no single police station containing 10 per cent or more of their population in the State. Bangiriposi police station of the Mayurbhanj district, however, has the distinction of having maximum population of 515 which is 7·34 per cent of their total population. The population of the tribe for the State as a whole during earlier censuses is not available. The same available for the district of Mayurbhanj do

not, however, go far to warrant any firm conclusions about the population trend. In 1901, their population in the-then State of Mayurbhanj was enumerated at 2,169. This, however, recorded a rise of 84 per cent in the course of three decades and stood at 3,993 in 1931. In 1961, the population has come down to 3,891. The factors leading to the such decline in population in this single district of maximum concentration is difficult to explain in absence of corresponding figures for other districts and for the State as a whole.

9. In the villages under study the Mahalis stay in hamlets exclusively inhabited by them and separated from hamlets of other castes and tribes by fairly large distances. Enquiries about the neighbouring villages with concentration of Mahalis resealed that in most of the villages they stay with other castes and tribes in the same village but their houses lie to a side separated from those of others. In the village Purunapani, for example, there are Bhuiyas and Kolahas with Mahalis who have their houses to a side. In Bholagadia where they live with Santals, Bhuiyas, Gudias, etc., they have built their houses to a corner little isolated from the rest. In the village called Dukura, their houses were reported to be in the midst of houses belonging to Pans, Dhobas and Khandayats.

10. Before selection of a new site, they put some rice, paddy, cowdung water and vermilion at the spot. They watch these items of articles next morning and if any loss in quantity of cowdung is detected, an ill-omen of the cattle wealth is indicated. If there is loss of paddy or rice, the phenomenon is considered ominus for loss of harvests. On the date of entry into the house called *hap dam,* they worship their dead ancestors.

Houses and living condition

11. Their living condition is as poor as that of the neighbouring tribes. A typical hut measure about 16′ in length and 7′ to 8′ in width with a height of 7′. The houses have usually no verandah on either side. A single-roomed house is usually partitioned by a mud wall, a part of it is used as kitchen and the other is set apart for bed and store. The houses have a single door made of split bamboos strongly woven together. Windows are conspicuous by their absence. There are, however, seemingly prosperous persons in the community, the material culture of whose household differs greatly from this typical scene. The Chotrai or the Padhan, in one of the villages under study has a large cow-shed with a large number of cows and buffaloes. He has dogs of good pedigree and a small unit of a poultry farm. The house is rather very elaborate in design and constructed with high and wide verandah. The houses of a few others are also of elaborate design.

12. The walls are built of mud and the roof is thatched with straw. Fowls, dogs, pigs and cattle are the popular domesticated animals for whom sheds are put up at one end of the house. Stringed charpoys, bell-metal and aluminium utensils and a few earthen pots are the main material equipments. Most of them take food in leaf cups and plates.

13. Each household has at least one set of tools to be employed in basketry, their main occupation. A more elaborate picture of this industry is given in the foregoing paragraphs. Almost each household has a neat little yard to the front often enclosed to be used for basket-making. A clump or two of bamboo plants in this yard is but a common site.

Dress and ornaments

14. Their dress differs very little from those of the neighbouring Santals. Saris about 8 to 10 cubits long, either hand-woven or mill-made but coarse is the common garment of a Mahali woman and a short dhoti or napkin, about 5 to 7 cubits in length is worn by the male members. The manner of

wearing the Saris is like that of the neighbouring Santals. The dress of some appears extremely modern and up-to-date. Some youngsters were found putting on drain pipe-type of trousers and T-shirts, others were found using towels and lungis. Children up to 5 or 6 usually go naked. Children wear short dhotis, saris, nickers or frocks.

15. In case of women, hairs are usually tied into a knob to the right of the back of the head. This is called *sud*. Sometimes they plait their hairs and out of the twisted plaits produce a knob called rod. Small girls love to leave the plait dangling at the back. Such a plait is called *galaon*.

16. The use of golden ornaments by women is rare but of silver is common. In their wrists, the women use white bangles called *churi* and those of thinner varieties called *bala*. On their arms, they use silver *baju* whose construction is at times extremely elaborate. *Taka mala* and *guji mala* are worn on their necks. In their ears they use *kana phula* and on their hair-dos they use *sudbaha*. Golden ornaments, if ever used, are put on their nose in the shape of nose-rings and nose-tops. Often a simple black cotton cord is worn round the neck The women are fond of tattooing. This is done on their foreheads and arms after marriage.

Food

17. They take beef and pork though the use of the former is gradually becoming unpopular. Mustard oil is the medium of cooking. They prepare *handia* (rice beer) at home by using *bakhar* (root of a type of grass locally called *Ranu*). Powdered rice is usually mixed up with dried powder of *ranu* root and balls of *bakhar* are prepared. Being essentially non-vegetarians, they take fish, meat of goats and sheep. Pork is more extensively taken than beef. Snails, crabs, termites and red-ants are also taken when available. All edible forest tubers and fruits are relished. *Kachada* oil extracted from the *mahua* fruits is used by some as a cooking medium. They are not fond of milk or milk products. Tea is popular among them as a beverage.

Birth

A parturient woman has strictly no restrictions imposed on her regarding her food or movements prior to child birth. She is only prohibited from going to the *Jahira* and from touching a dead body. She does not take a twin fruit either. It is a curious custom that fish caught in traps (Jhimiri) while they descend down a slope are taken by pregrant women while those caught in the process of ascending are eschewed. The popular belief is that fish caught in the process of ascending up, if taken, would make the delivery uneasy and difficult.

19. No separate arrangement is made for a lying-in-space. A corner of the house is cleaned for the purpose. A midwife of the Mahali tribe attends on the expectant mother in confinement. On the 9th day she is given 25 paises, some food and *handia* to drink. The midwife cuts the umbilical cord of children of both sex with an arrow blade. The father of the new born buries the cord with the placenta near the threshold of the lying-in-room. Hot fomentation is applied to the child as well as to the mother. The latter is administered garlic which is believed to relieve her pains. Immediately after child birth, the house is dabbed with cowdung and all clothes are washed. No fire is set in the lying-in-room though the practice is all too common with the neighbouring castes and tribes. The mother is given *ghee*, if available, that helps in healing.

20. Pollution continues for 9 days. On the 9th day the child is given a name. Usually the grandfather's name or grandfather's brother's name is chosen. To a pot of water they throw a rice grain uttering the name of *Dharam Devata*. Two other grains are thrown in the names of the elder and the younger brother of the grandfather. The one that is touched by *Dharam chauli* is accepted for the nomenclature of the child.

Marriage

21. Both child and adult marriage is practised by Mahalis. Generally adult marriage is preferred but traces of child marriage exist as is evident from the 1961 census records. To quote Risley "Mahilis marry their daughters both as infants and as adults, but the former practice is deemed the more respectable, and there can, I think, be little doubt that in this, as in other castes on the borders of Hinduism, the tendency at the present day is towards the entire abolition of adult marriage." In the village under study it was learnt that the following forms of marriage are prevalent.

(1) *Duar Bapla*—This is the other name of marrige by negotiation. The marriage takes place in the house of the bride.

(2) *Ar Itut* (*Ar*-to drag : *Itut*-to rub)—This form of marriage wherein the girl is forcibly dragged and the boy rubs vermilion on the girl's head as a mark of completion of the ceremony of marriage was greatly prevalent a decade ago. But this form of marriage has slowly died down and the informants claimed that during the last decade, marriage of this category has seldom occurred. In such a marriage the tribesmen from the bride's village used to go to the groom's village where they used to be entertained by the father of the groom in a gala feast. Killing of a goat for this feast was a must be. It was explained that this form of marriage led to obvious frictions and confusion. The practice is therefore being discontinued.

(3) *Tunki Dipil*—Due to poor economy of the household the pareats of the girl who cannot afford to meet the expenses arrange this form of marriage. This form of marriage requires no ceremony in the house of the girl. She is taken to the boy's house where the marriage is solemnized.

(4) *Nyapam Bapla*—Such marriages occur with the tacit consent and prior love of the boy and the girl.

22. In absence of a definite survey as to the extent of occurrence of each such form of marriage, an attempt was made to assess their relative frequency from local sources and it revealed that marriage of the third category was rather frequent. In this form, only 4 to 6 old persons from one side visit the house of the other party where they are fed sumptuously. The custom of bride price is prevalent. According to Risley, the customary bride price paid for a Mahili girl was supposed to be Rs. 5 though the amount was liable to vary according to the means of the bridegroom's parents. The same today stands at Rs. 80.

23. Risley mentions a peculiar practice. On the wedding morning, before the usual procession starts to escort the bridegroom to the bride's house, he is formally married to a mango tree, while the bride goes through the same ceremony with a *mahua*. At the entrance to the bride's house the bridegroom, riding on the shoulders of some male relation and carrying on his head a vessel of water, is received by the bride's brother, equipped in similar fashion, and the two cavaliers sprinkle one another with water. The bride and bridegroom are then seated side by side on a plank under a canopy of sal leaves erected in the courtyard of the house, and bridegroom touches the bride's forehead five times with vermilion, and presents her with an iron armlet. This is the binding portion of the ritual. When a husband divorces his wife he gives her a rupee and takes away the iron armlet which was given to her at her wedding.

24. The custom of widow marriage and divorce is prevalent. Sororate and levirate are also practised. Monogamy appears to be the rule.

Death

25. Burial is the rule and instances of cremation are rare. The dead body is carried in a bier made in the form of a ladder with six pieces of bamboo poles. Relations and tribesmen are the pall-bearers and none other than those belonging to the tribe are allowed to touch the dead body. Usually the eldest son of the deceased leads the procession. On its way to the burial ground, the bier is lowered down and kept over the ground at a crossing of roads.

26. A pit is dug to size. The eldest son gets a pitcherful of water from the nearest stream in which the body is bathed after being anointed with turmeric paste and oil. A piece of new cloth is wrapped round the body after which the eldest son puts a mark of vermilion over the deceased's forehead. The body is then carried into the pit and is placed with its head pointing north. The eldest son first throws a handful of earth into the pit. The process is repeated by the pall-bearers. All those attending the burial then take a purificatory bath and return to the house of the deceased where they are fed with fried rice along with salt and onion. Pollution is observed for 10 days. On the 10th day, a feast is thrown to the tribesmen. Members of the household shave and take a purificatory bath. In case of cremation, a bone piece is obtained from the cremation ground and the same is placed in turmeric water. Those who can afford to throw it in the river Budhabalang or Subarnarekha throw it on the same day. Some others are reported to proceed even to Triveni. Those who bury the dead also fetch a bone piece 6 to 8 months after burial. The bone is placed in the turmeric water and a bit of *handia* is offered as worship in memorial of the dead.

Language, literacy and education

27. They speak mahili language. This, according to Grierson's classification, is a language belonging to Santali group of Munda Branch. More than half the members of this tribe belonging to Mayurbhanj district speak this language. The Mahalis of other remaining districts speak Oriya as their mother-tongue. A few have taken to Santali and other languages as their mother-tongue.

28. Only a few can speak a language other than their mother-tongue and majority of them, however, are those who have Mahali as the mother-tongue and yet can speak Oriya. A few are, however, Bengali and Telugu speakers.

29. As per 1961 Census, of the total population of 7,016, only 6 per cent numbering 412 are literate and educated. Only 4 of them have read up to matriculation or higher secondary standard and 75 have read up to primary or junior basic standard. Table below gives the districtwise break-up of the statistics relating to literacy and education.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source: Census 1961)

State/District	Total population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or higher secondary and above
Orissa ..	7,016	6,604	412	333	75	4
Kalahandi ..	182	177	5	5	..	..
Koraput ..	947	931	16	16	..	..
Sambalpur ..	221	198	23	23	..	..
Bolangir ..	24	23	1	1	..	..
Baudh-Khondlmas ..	28	27	1	1	..	..
Sundargarh ..	1,474	1,352	122	107	13	2
Dhenkanal ..	30	—	..	..	..	..
Keonjhar ..	177	165	12	9	3	..
Mayurbhanj ..	3,891	3,663	228	167	59	2
Balasore ..	42	38	4	4	..	..

MAHALI

Villages of study :

1. BISOI

   P. S. Bisoi
   Dist. Mayurbhanj

2. SANARAIKELI

   P. S. Khunta
   Dist. Mayurbhanj

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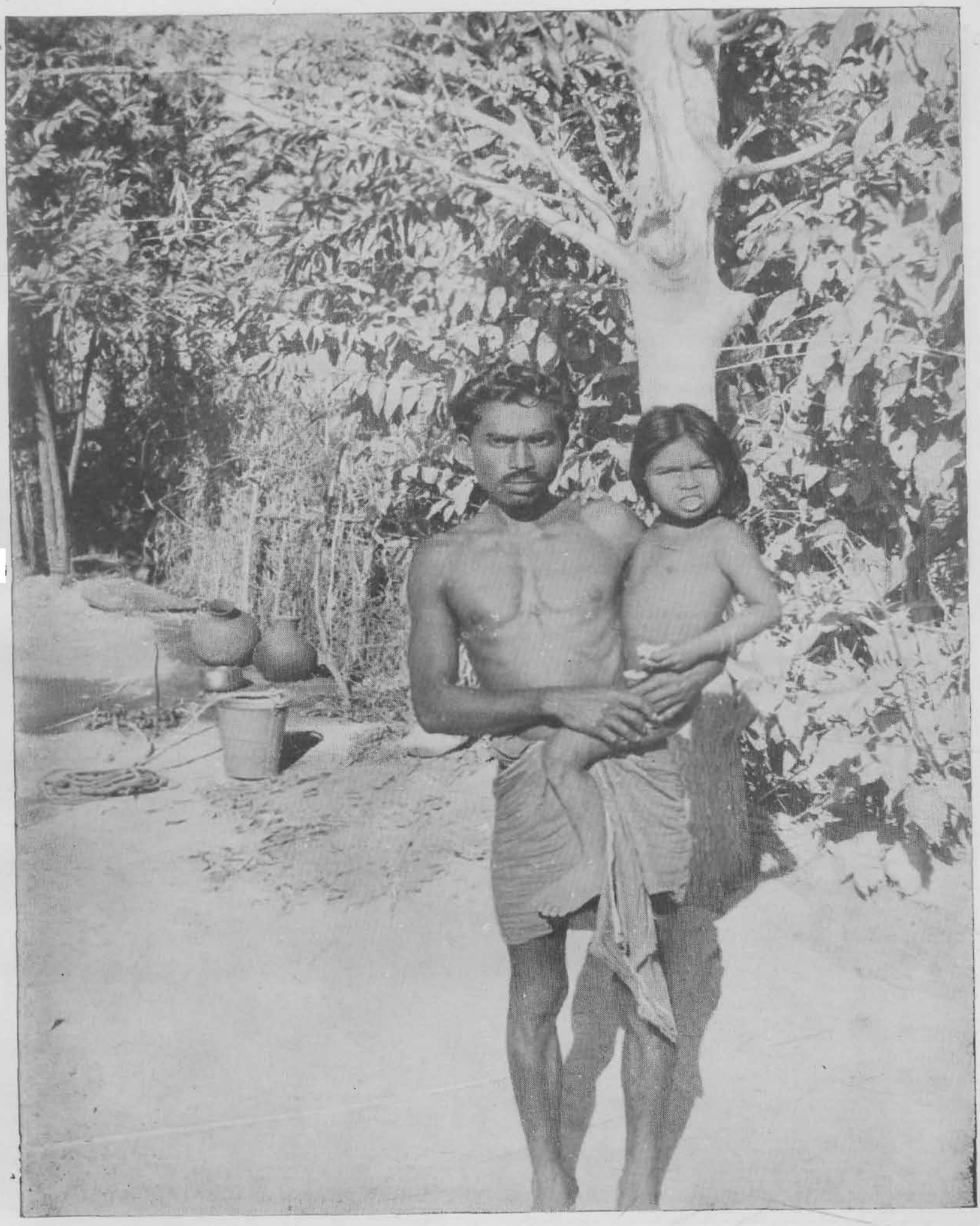
5. Shri Sanmangla Bisra, S/o. Gadi Mahali
6. Shri Durga Charan Murmu
7. Shri Chotrai Bisra (Padhan)
8. Shri Salkham Mahali, S/o. Late Shyam Mahali
9. Shri Gundi Mahali, S/o. Badamangla Mahali
10. Smt. Melo Dei, W/o. Butus Mahali
11. Shrimati Dei, W/o. Hatiram Mahali



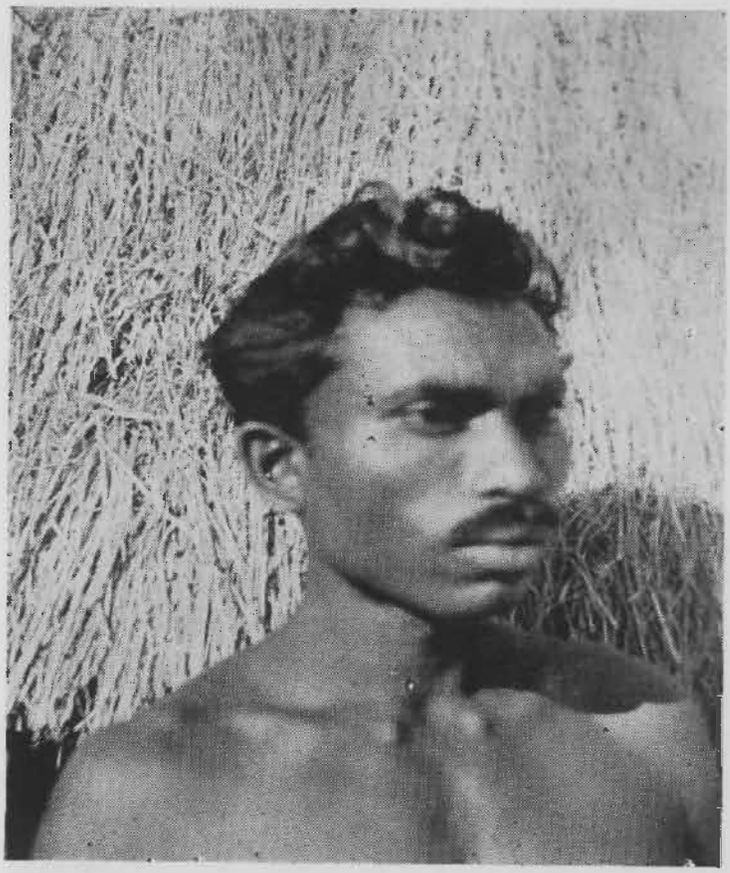
Brother and Sister



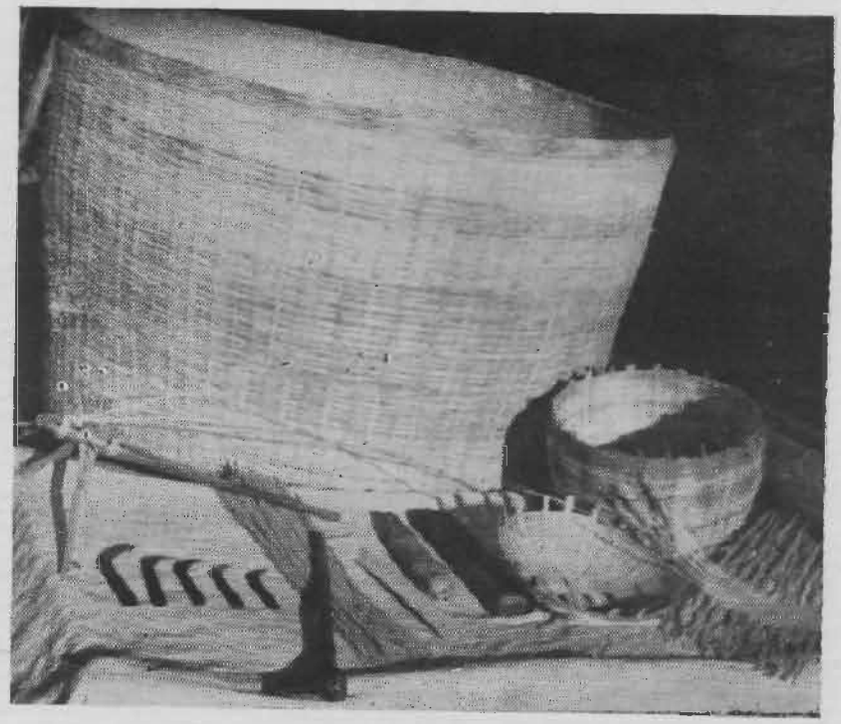
A Mitsil woman with her ornaments



A Mahali youth with his daughter in arms



A Mahali youth—close-up view



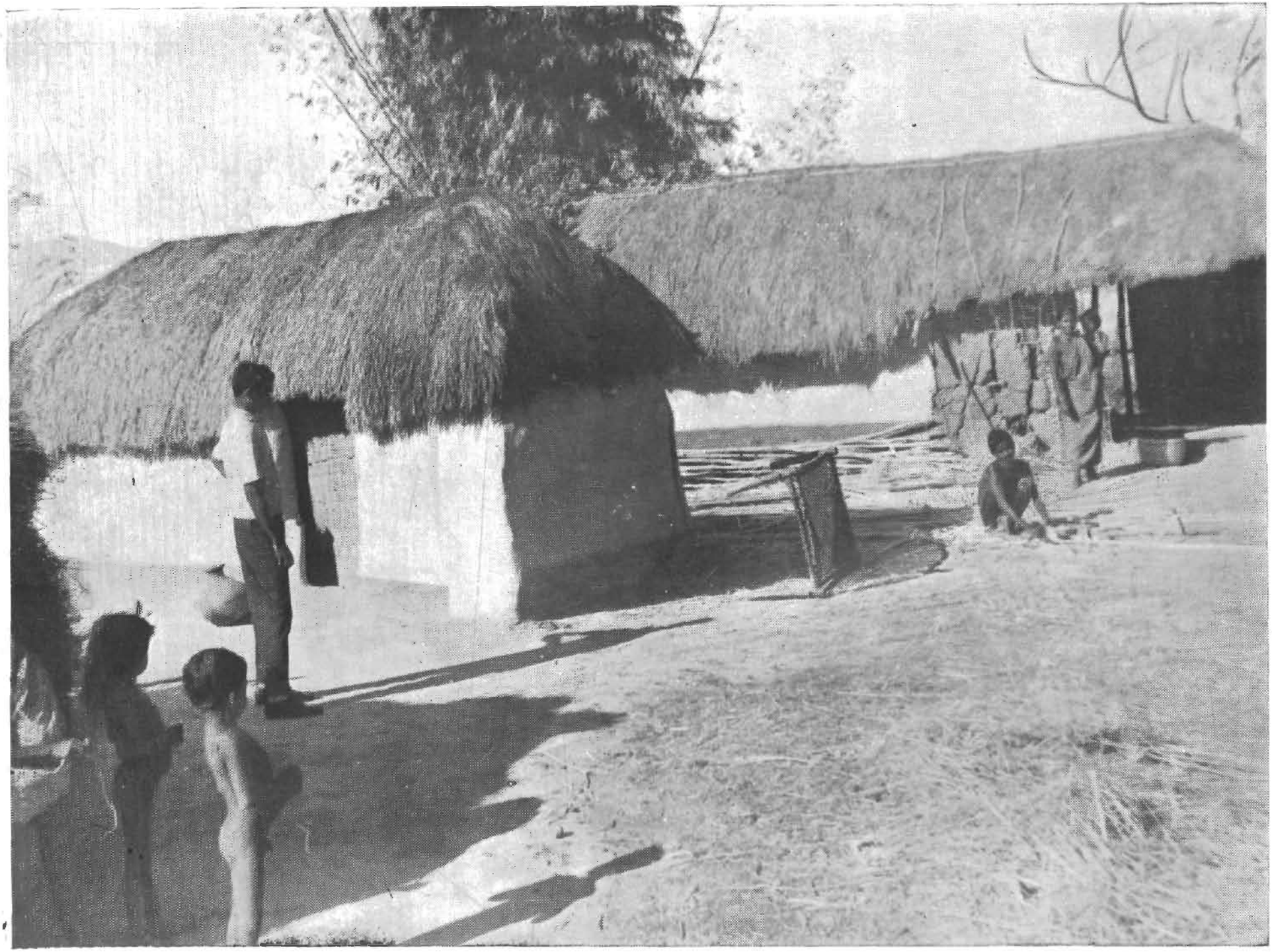
Tools and bamboo products



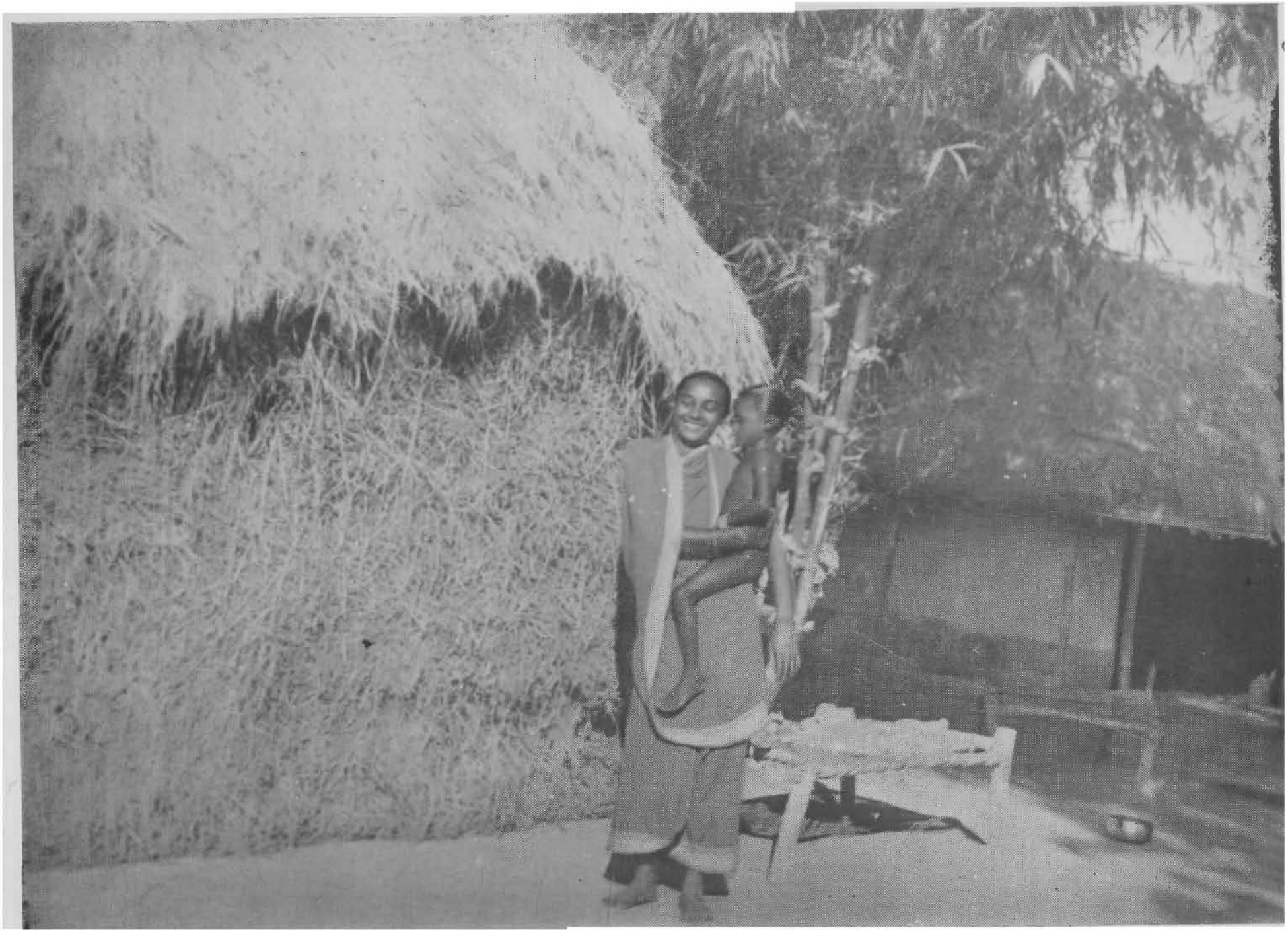
Close view of Jahera with Maniko Tureiko, Babaji



Jahera—a distant view



A village scen



A Mahali woma

Occupation

30. The table below compiled on the basis of 1961 Census data on industrial classification of population will show that 58·2 per cent are workers and the rest are non-workers. Of the workers, majority are engaged in household industry. In fact, basket-making and bamboo work constitute their main household industry. They do not grow bamboo themselves. They either purchase them from the local dealers or procure them on payment from the neighbouring forests. Women appear to be more adept in the art than men and the girls after the age of 9 or 10 are trained to take to this industry. Boys of the same age group are, however, employed in rearing cattle.

Table 3

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION

(Source: -Census 1961)

Category	P	M	F
Total population ..	7,016	3,491	3,525
Workers:			
I. Cultivator ..	1,137	733	404
II. Agricultural labourer ..	476	269	207
III. Mining, Quarrying, etc.	22	3	19
IV. Household Industry	1,951	858	1,093
V. Manufacturing other than household industry ..	84	64	20
VI. Construction ..	15	15	..
VII. Trade and Commerce	..	..	..
VIII. Transport Storage and Communications ..	12	12	..
IX. Other Services ..	387	169	218
Total workers ..	4,084	2,123	1,961
Non-workers ..	2,932	1,368	1,564

31. They cut bamboo to size and then with a locally made instrument called *ghoda* (stand) they scrape the bamboo piece with *katus* (long knives) and *budia* and prepare *bisidi* or bamboo plates. Some of the products need a skilled hand and great industry. They make *chala* (a basket serving the purpose of a sieve for handia), *gandu* (a tool). *charni* (a sieve for rice) and *theka* or *jhanka* (basket) and *dilimi* (a large size basket for storing paddy or rice). They also prepare screens, fence, fish traps and broom-sticks. The products are sold in the local markets or *hats* either for cash on in barter for foodgrains.

32. Next to this household industry comes agriculture and agricultural labour. Very few of the tribe own land themselves and some work as share croppers but the majority work on wage as agricultural labourers. Collection of jungle products for their own consumption, hunting and fishing are other economic pursuits though not frequently resorted to.

Village organisation

33. The tribe has no permanent organisation to settle caste disputes. Minor disputes are settled by the heads of all households conferring together. Elderly persons of neighbouring communities are invited to aid in settlement of intricate issues. Offenders are often fined and the same is usually utilised for a tribal feast.

Religion and festival

34. Speaking on their religion, Risley (1891 : II) says that the same is a mixture of half forgotten animism and Hinduism little understood. But in 1961 Census, they have been returned as Hindus. Like Santals. *Marang Buru (Marang*-great : *Buru*-hero) is their supreme deity. The god to rank next in importance is *Huding Buru (Huding* means small). Very akin to the Santals, they worship most of their deities under a sal grove called *Jahira* not far from the village. In the village under study, the *Jahira* contains the following gods.

(1) *Bana Kuanri*, who is to be promised the offer of a sacrifice or worship before the tribe proceeds on hunting.

(2) *Maneiko Tureiko* is worshipped for good crops and harvest.

(3) *Babaji* is responsible for the peaceful life of the tribe.

(4) *Bada Chandi and Ranga Chandi Thakurani*—These goddesses are believed to ward of such infectious disease as smallpox. They are offered worships during illness and epidemics.

(5) *Sima Bonga*, a goddess who is believed to ride a high horse and keeping nocturnal vigil over the boundary of the village prevents evil spirits from having access into the village.

35. At home, they, on every ceremonial occasion pay reverence to the soul of the dead. They also worship *Lord Mahadeba* during *Bandana* festival. The other deities worshipped are *Ahira* and *Garaya* whose images are specially constructed for worship.

36. The festivals of the Mahalis as observed in the village of study are detailed below :—

Sarhul—This is observed in the month of January-February when the '*Sal*' trees blossom. The younger members of the community set out with drummers and in the midst of dance and song, they pluck the flowers. The Mahalis do not pluck new *Sal* leaves of the season prior to observance of this festival.

Karam Porob—During the festival in the month of August, the twigs of a *Karam* tree is worshipped. The views of the festival is to cherish good luck throughout the year. They place the same twig at an open space in the village lane and dance around. The women come in the evening with earthen lamps and move round the twig.

Bardara or Sahrei—are observed in the months of October-November. The guests are entertained sumptuously with cakes and handia.

Gamha Porob—The Mahalis usually wear new sacred thread during this festival. The Baishnabs present them with this thread and areca-nut.

Besides the above, *Makar Sankranti* in observed in the month of January.

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MATYA

Village of study :

1. SANDA

   P. S. Parjang
   Dist. Dhenkanal

MATYA

The Matyas are numerically a small tribe sparingly distributed in at least 10 out of the 13 districts of the State. According to 1961 Census, their population in the State is 5,711. The name of the tribe is stated as 'Mattiya' by Thurston (1901 : 49) and Bell (1945 : 79) and as Mattia in the Census Report of 1901 for Madras. It is spelt as 'Matya' in the list of tribes for Orissa contained in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1956. In this Act, in the lists relating to neighbouring States like Bihar, West Bengal or Madhya Pradesh, the tribe does not find mention.

2. Bell (1945 : 60) classes the hill tribes of Koraput district into three categories : the Dravidian, the Munda or Kolarian and thirdly such tribes and castes whose origin and affinities are uncertain, but whom tradition pronounces to be settlers of many centuries standing in the district. In this third and the last category is included the Matyas whose name proclaims them to be sprung from the soil on which they live. In fact, the Matyas of north Malkangiri claim to be autochthonous, though they have no tribal dialect nor have they traits and characteristics as primitive as that of the Dhruvas and Gondias among whom they live. It is for these reasons that some consider the Matyas as later arrivals.

In the Madras Census Report, (1871 : 227) it is noted that the Matyas are 'altogether superior to the Kois and to the Parjas (Porojas). They say they sprang from the soil and go so far as to point out a hole, out of which their ancestors came. They talk Uriya and farm their lands well'.

3. The Madras Census Report, 1901 describes the Matyas of Vizagapattam as the hill cultivators from the Central provinces who are stated in one account to be a subdivision of the gonds. Some of them wear the sacred thread because the privilege was conferred upon them by the former Rajas of Malkangiri, where they reside. They are said to eat with the Ronas, drink with Porojas, but smoke only with their own people. In Ganjam, on the other hand, they are apparently earth-workers and labourers.

H. H. Risley (1891 : 81) places 'Matias' as a sub-caste of Bagdi in Bengal who are cultivators and earth-workers.

4. The Matyas surveyed by this organisation are also a class of cultivators and earth-workers. They belong to the village Raghunathpur in Parjanga P. S. of Dhenkanal district. Facts contained in this report may, therefore be taken as representative of Matyas in this region.

Population trend

5. Their total population in the State, according to 1931 Census, was 7,538 with 5,776 in Koraput and the rest in Ganjam district. The corresponding figures for 1941 and 1951Censuses are not available. In 1961, their total population in the State has been reduced to 5,711 and in Koraput district alone, it has come down to 1,119 which is less than 20 per cent of the population recorded in 1931.

6. It may be that the tribe, compelled by its traditional occupation of earth-work, has

spread to districts where it was non-existent in 1931. But there are no apparent reasons to account for this reduction in the over-all population of the tribe in the State. This however, might be due to large scale emigration or due to some anomaly in their birth or death rates, or it may be the cumulative effect of these and many other reasons. But whatever might be the cause, which is a subject for more thorough investigation, the fact remains that this rate of reduction is portentous and needs to be taken note of.

7. It may be added that the all-State population of 5,711 in 1961 Census includes the return from the districts of Dhenkanal (2,505), Mayurbhanj (64) and Keonjhar (569). The population in these ex-State areas were not taken into account for the purpose of computing the population figure for 1931. As such, it would appear how alarming has been the fall in population figures of the tribe during the last three decades. It appears from earlier Census Reports that Matya is a caste in South Orissa adjoining Telugu area. The present distribution shows two areas of concentration, viz., areas adjoining Andhra Pradesh. It appears that under the name Matya, two different communities have come in, one is Matia which has affinity with the Bagdis a Scheduled Caste, the other is Matya which has affinity with Gond, a Scheduled Tribe.

Geographical distribution

8. The district of Dhenkanal has the highest concentration of Matyas with 43·86 per cent of the total population in the State (vide Table I below). Of this, Parjang Police Station has the largest number of Matyas in any single police station of the State. The distribution in descending order in the remaining districts is as follows. Koraput 1,119 (19·59%), Keonjhar 569 (9·96%), Ganjam 386 (6·76%), Balasore 364 (6·37%), Baudh-Khondmals 222 (3·89%), Puri 195 (3·41%), Cuttack 190 (3·33%), Sambalpur 97 (1·70%) and Mayurbhanj 64 (1·12%). In Koraput district, their preponderance is large in the police station areas of Semiliguda, Malkangiri and Mathili. They are, however, very sparsely sprinkled in the remaining areas of the State.

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source 1961 Census)

District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	5,711	2,961	2,750
Kalahandi	..	..	..	..
Koraput	..	1,119	567	552
Sambalpur	..	97	11	86
Bolangir	..	..	..	..
Baudh-Khandmals	..	222	98	124
Ganjam	..	386	188	191
Sundargarh	..	..	..	..
Dhenkanal	..	2,505	1,331	1,174
Puri	..	195	100	95
Keonjhar	..	569	296	273
Cuttack	..	190	100	90
Mayurbhanj	..	69	49	15
Balasore	..	364	221	143

Division of the tribe

9. According to Thurston (1909 : v : 49) whose account is based on the note of C. Hayavadanarao, the caste is divided into four totemistic septs, namely, Bagh (tiger), Nag (cobra), Cheli (goat) and Kachima (tortoise).

From the Matyas in the village under survey, it was gathered that there are four subdivisions of the tribe named Chasa Matias, Telenga Matias, Munda Matias and Sabara Matyas. The Matyas of the village under survey belonged to the first subdivision and they did not intermarry with the Sabara Matyas resident in Bijasahi village of Kamakhyanagar Police Station. Whether they intermarried with the other two subdivisions could not be stated with any degree of certainty. It was further learnt that the Matyas are divided into three exogamous gotras, *Gajerha, Netra,* and *Ganda* who hold the surnames as Behera, Padhan and Majhi respectively.

Houses

10. The houses of Matyas present very few characteristic features. To a large measure, the house types of the neighbouring Caste Hindus appear to have been adopted. These are usually built in mud with sloping straw thatches, the hamlet comprising the houses is separately located at one end of the village. The houses are arranged in rows usually east-west-ward with at least a two-roomed house for every family. The rooms are not spacious and therefore, both are used for bed store and kitchen. Verandahs are often provided at the front and adjoining the inner courtyard and the walls are painted with red soil

Dress

11. In the village under study, their garments are perhaps as elaborate as those of the caste Hindus. Dhotis, saris, napkins, banians, shirts and towels are in common use. The female folk usually manage with two saris, either handloom or mill-made. Two dhotis and a napkin are the common garments. Children play naked up to six or seven but beyond this age, they change over to small dhotis or saris. The females are not in the habit of using any under-garment. A sari only is good enough for them. In winter, coarse *chadars* are commonly used.

Ornaments

12. Ornaments made of silver, brass and aluminium are of common use. Brass ornaments for the hand and fingers are *khadu, tada, katch* and rings. Only a few well-to-do use silver ornaments. The ornaments for the nose are *noli, phasia, dandi* and *nakaputuki* of gold and those for the head are hair flowers, *gopikathi* and *chaurimundi*. Kada made of brass or aluminium are worn in the ankle and brass rings are put on the toes. The members use a golden stick on their perforated ear lobes till they marry.

Food

13. The Matyas are essentially non-vegetarians. Rice is their staple food. Besides, they take varieties of cereals and pulses like black gram, *kulthi, kandul*, gram and *chana*. They have also adopted such food items as flattened or fried rice with seeds and cakes. They use oil liberally and take to items like mustard seeds, onion, chillies and many other condiments in day to day cooking. Ghee and costly spices are used only on festive occasions. They are fond of tamarind. Among the birds and animals whose meat they relish mention may be made of fowl, peacock, wild fowls, ducks, doves, mongoose, dear, sambar and pork. Beef is prohibited. Handia, an indigenous preparation of liquor, country liquor, date palm and palm juice are liberally taken, though by virtue of their nearness to caste Hindus the habit of drunkenness is stated to be on the wane.

Birth

14. No restriction of food is imposed on the expectant mother during the pre-natal period. She is given adequate rest and her movements are kept closely under watch. An old woman of the caste having experience serves as a midwife during child birth. No separate room is earmarked, but one of the bed rooms is converted for the lying in purpose. In case, there is only one room, a corner is set apart. A heap of fire and broom-stick, etc., are collected within the room. Both the mother and the child get a wash a few hours after child birth. The umbilical cord, etc., are buried at some out-of-the-way place. Fish, meat, green leaves, etc. are not given to her. On the other hand potato, hot rice and brinjal, etc., are served as items of a strictly vegetarian diet. Purification occurs in two stages. The first is 12 days after child birth when the remnants of the naval cord wilts off. The mother takes a bath and washes her belongings. After this, both the mother and the babe can be touched by the outsiders and household duties to a limited extent are

entrusted to the mother. The final purification comes about on the 21st day when the name-giving ceremony is performed and a feast is given to friends and relatives. Both the mother and the child are given new garments and ornaments to wear according to the capacity of the household.

The following is an account of the name-giving ceremony as narrated by the members of the tribe.

A pot of water tinged yellow with turmeric paste is taken. Two grains of rice are brought out by dehusking some grains of paddy and either the father or the grand-father of the new born drops the grains on turmeric water after calling out a certain name. If the grains float to meet, the name called out is confirmed. This is repeated until the name is confirmed.

Marriage

15. Absence of bride price or dowry among the Matyas is a significant characteristic to be reckoned with. A marriage is fixed up usually through negotiation; and other forms of marriage are rather rare. The father or any other guardian of the boy approaches the father of the girl with sweets, fruits and vegetables and with 4 to 5 other castemen of his village, moots the proposal. If the father of the girl agrees, an astrologer is consulted and then a date is fixed up by consent. The headman of the village officiates in the marriage cerecony which is performed on a Vedi (altar) in the bride's house. The groom returns home with the bride the day after the marriage and on the fourth night the first formal meet between both of them is solemnised.

16. Inter-caste marriage is not allowed. Polygyny is admissible but not polyandry. Child marriage is rare. Widow marriage and marriage after divorce is allowed. In the latter case, the castemen sit together to decide the divorce and permit the woman so divorced to marry. Usually no elaborate paraphernalia accompanies such a marriage. A simple caste feast is only given. Though liquor is a must be on such occasions as marriage, its use in liberal doses is avoided now-a-days. Pork is reported to be the favourite flesh on such occasions.

17. No ceremony is observed during puberty. Pollution during menstruation lasts for 4 to 5 days when the girl concerned is kept segregated.

Pre-marital sex life is considered a tabboo. Neither child marriage nor child betrothal is preferred. Intra-gotra marriage is not admissible. The marriage with mother's sister's daughter and Father's sister's daughter is admissible.

Marital status

18. That the system of child marriage exists, is discernible from the 1961 Census figures. There are 19 males and 25 females with 1 of widowed and 4 of divorced or separated status in the age-group of persons below 14 years of age. Nearly 18·96 per cent of the males and more than 9·01 per cent of the females within the age-group of 15-44 have not married. The corresponding figure, however, stands greatly reduced in the age-group above 45.

Death

19. The dead are either burnt or buried. There is no rule as such, though it was explained that availability of fuel determines the disposal of the dead. It seems more likely that previously burial was the more common method of disposal of the dead and now as a result of social mobility, they try to practice cremation more frequently. Children after death are always buried. The funeral procession and the formalities connected with it largely resemble those of Hindus. Mahaprasad is administered to the dead and while carrying the bier, fried paddy and copper coins are thrown. They further inhale the smoke of burnt *neem* leaves on return from the funeral. In burials, the dead body is placed with its head to the north and the face upward. The very opposite practice is followed in case of females. The son of the deceased puts the fire on the face of the

deceased and encircles the body seven times. Pollution continues for 11 days. Apart from restrictions imposed on diet, the relatives of the deceased neither shave nor anoint oil on their bodies during the period of pollution. On the date of purification, the male members of the family shave and take ghee and honey before taking their food. The village headman officiates in the purification ceremony. The castemen and relatives are invited to a feast where the first offering of food is made to the deceased.

Language and literacy

20. It is borne out from the Madras Census Report, 1871, that the Matyas speak Oriya. The same is confirmed by R. C. S. Bell when he says that the Matyas have no tribal dialect. 1961 census figures show that though the majority of them speak Oriya, 235 persons out of the total population of 5,711 speak the Matya language. Only 537 persons speak in Telugu and 348 persons speak in Kui. It was learnt from the Matyas interviewed that they use their own dialect in their homes whereas outside, they talk in Oriya. Their intonation and accent in Oriya appeared free from mixture with their dialect and speaking the former language, they can be mistaken as members of any other Oriya Hindu castes. The Matya according to Grierson's clarification is a language of Eastern group which is derived from outer sub-branch of Indo-Aryan Branch belonging both to Indo-European family and Aryan sub-family.

21. The percentage of literacy appears poor. Only 376 persons or 6·6 per cent of the total population 5, 711 are literate. Out of this, only 21 have gone up to primary or junior basic level and 1 has gone up to the stage of matriculation or above. The maximum percentage of lieracy is in the district of Mayurbhanj.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

Source: 1961 Census

District	Population	Illitterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa ..	5,711	5,335	376	354	21	
Kalahandi ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Koraput ..	1,119	1,081	38	38	..	..
Sambalpur ..	97	86	11	11	..	..
Bolangir ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Baudha-Khandmals ..	222	201	21	19	2	..
Ganjam ..	386	363	23	20	3	..
Sundargarh ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Dhenkanal ..	2,505	2,299	206	192	13	
Puri ..	195	188	7	7	..	..
Keonjhar ..	569	569	10	9	1	..
Cuttack ..	190	175	15	13	2	..
Mayurbhanj ..	64	52	12	12	..	..
Balasore ..	3 4	331	33	33	..	..

Occupation and economic life

22. It may not be out of place to mention here that the term Matya is used both in the sense of a stable caste or tribe and as a generic term for people engaged as earth diggers. In the first sense the term is used for different communities—one may be the marginal caste of Dhenkanal district and the other a marginal tribe of Koraput district. In the second sense, existence of earth diggers as a distinct occupational group would presuppose existense of the agricultural community who would engage these earth diggers as distinict occupational group. Prior to Oriya settlement, there must have existed non-Oriya agriculturists who would use a term to indicate their occupation. Presently the Matyas in the village under study lead a settled life clearing forests and reclaiming land. Agriculture constitutes their chief occupation though many of them work as day labourers on wages. They are often first contacted for any earth work undertaken in the neighbourhood and they too offer too work on wage. Among household industries which yield seasonal income mostly for their female folk mention may be made of ma-making with date palm leaf.

Table 3

Industrial Classification of Population

Category	P	M	F
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Total Population ..	5,711	2,961	2,750
WORKERS :			
I Cultivators ..	1,410	1,080	330
II Agricultural Labourers ..	859	469	390
III Mining, Quarrying, etc. ..	11	9	2
IV Household industry ..	185	51	134
V Manufacturing other than household industry.	47	..	47
VI Construction ..	2	2	..
VII Trade and Commerce ..	5	5	..
VIII Transport, Storege and Communication.	4	4	..
IX Other Services ..	406	266	230
Total workers ..	3,019	1,886	1,133
Non-workers ..	2,692	1,075	1,617

Village organisation

23. The village organisation appears to be democratic as in each Matya village, a caste panchayat exists to resolve all disputes. The villagers nominate one headman named *Behera* who acts as the Chairman of the Panchayat. One or two members from among the villagers are nominated to assist him. The office of the headman is hereditary in a way, as it is the practice that unless the son of the *Behera* behaves erratic, he usually succeeds his father. In the village under survey, the Behera of the Matya Sahi continues to hold office for the last 20 to 30 years. The meeting for the tribe as a whole is convened every year, though not very regularly. The venue is usually at 'Mahabirodi' of Dhenkanal district. The *Beheras* and the *Bod Behera* (the head of Beheras) contribute to the success of these meetings. Reported cases of breach of social rules and taboos and important caste problems are discussed in a congregation of about 500 persons.

The Caste rules have been embodied in a manuscript book form named '*Matya Niyamabali*' which guide the code of conduct of members of this tribe.

Festivals and recreations

24. The Matyas participate in such Hindu festivals as *Dasahara, Ratha Jatra* etc., organised either in the village or in the neighbourhood. *Pousa Purnami* is their most important festival.

There is hardly any form of social recreation for these people except an indulgence in festivals and other occasions of community

interest when people gather and discuss about common problems. The female folk find no form of recreation or entertainment. The children take to country games.

Religion

25. The Matyas worship a host of deities, both in their homes and by the community as a whole. *Brahmani Dei, Petabali* and *Gram Debati* are some of the deities worshipped by them. Sacrifices of he-goats and fowls are made on special occasions to catiate the deities and to fulfil the views *(Manasika). Trinath Mela,* a worship popular among the caste Hindus is also performed by them.

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ORAON

S. C. Roy (1915:1) assigns to the Oraons of Chotnagpur the first rank in intelligence and social progress. They too claim the honour of having introduced the use of the regular plough into the Chotnagur plateau.

2. The Oraons in their own language call themselves as *Kurukhs*. The origin of this national name of the Oraons is sometime traced to one of the mythical hero kings called *Karak*. The term *Karak* has a close resemblance to the Sanskrit root *Krs* which means, to plough. In the State of Orissa although the Oraons are sometimes called Dhangars by their neighbours, they describe themselves as kisans, cultivators or Koras diggers; they are also known as Dhangar Koras. In fact, differnt occupations followed by the Oraons in different localities have secured for them from their neighbours different names. This has created sub-sections of the tribe among whom inter-marriage is no longer permitted. It is suggested by Roy (1915 : 13) that the name Oraons is derived from Raona-put which might have been ascribed to them because of their extraordinary prolificness. If the name was conceived with contempt by those who coined it, the Oraons of our generation tell a story more complimentary to themselves by which they seek to account for the name. The legend runs that they were born out of the blood of an ascetic in meditation for ages. The Bhaya-Bhayin having been born of the blood of chest of the holy ascetic. their descendants came to be known as Uragon Thakurs or Uraons. Later when the Oraons fell from the high state and began to eat indiscriminately both cleaned and uncleaned food, they came to be called simply as Oraons.

Origin and affinities

3. The traditions of the people point to the Deccan as their original home. Philologists trace a connection between Kurukh and the Tamulian languages of Southern India, the Malto, Kui or Khond and Gondi of Northern India, and the Brahui of Beluchistan. All these languages were first classed together by Bishop Caldwell under the generic name of Dravidian and the name has since been extended to these and other peoples in an ethnological sense and have gained currency as such. Oraons, at any rate, appear to be both linguistically and ethnologically a Dravidain tribe. Although more than one theory has been propounded by eminent anthropologists and philologists to connect the Indian Dravidians linguistically and ethnologically with races outside India, no convincing reasons have so far been adduced to show that they came to India from outside and were not real autochthones of the peninsula nor do the traditions of the Dravidians appear to mention any country outside India as having ever been their home. The similarity of the story told by the Oraons as to the origin of the name 'Oraon', with the story given in the Ramayana as to the birth of the monkey king Sugriva would confirm the view that their forefathers had the monkey for the tribal totem and confirm part of the aboriginal army of the Aryan hero of the Ramayana. Dalton is of the opinion that the traditions of the Oraons connect them with the western caste of India either with Gujarat or with Konkan, the low land strip along western portion of Bombay presidency lying between the range between Western Ghats and the sea as their cradleland. This theory of Dalton

was accepted by Caldwell. Some authors are of opinion that they came from the Carnatic up the Narmada river and settled in Bihar on the banks of Son. Due to pressure from various forces they are said to have wandered eastward along the central range of hills forming the backbone of the Peninsula. There, with the newly acquired knowledge of agriculture, they gradually settled down on the fertile valleys of some great rivers like the Narmada for a while and thence moved towards Northen India due to over-population or external pressure or some other reasons, and lastly settled in the Rhotas plateau or Kaikur hills in Sahabad district. During the Muhammadan invasion they were forced out from this settled habitat, and are said to have been split up into two divisions and moved in two different paths—one under the leadership of their chief settled at the Rajmahal hills after making their journey through the course of the Ganges and the other led by the younger brother of the chief, took possession of the north-east portion of the plateau of Chotanagpur after following the route through the valley of Son, Palamau and the bank of the river Koel. According to Roy, Dalton etc., the Male or Maler and the Pahira tribes of the Rajmahal hills are closely connected with the Oraons and speak an allied language (1915:11-12). But according to Dr. S. S. Sarkar, the Oraons who entered the Chotanagpur plateau centuries ago found the country occupied by Birhors, Korwas, Mundas, etc., whom they defeated by virtue of their technologically superior and better equipments. They lived in the north-east portion of the Chotanagpur plateau in amity with the Mundas for some time. But with the passage of time their superior equipment, better intelligence, better knowledge of agriculture and a rapid multiplication due perhaps to the better food secured through agriculture, they became gradually predominant in the north-western and the central parts of the plateau and made extensive clearance which they brought under plough. According to Roy (1915:37) "the conservative Mundas, so long sole masters of the country were too proud to brook rivalry and retreated in hauteur to the southern and eastern parts of the plateau". The Oraons thus occupied this territory though in some of the villages the relics of the old Munda culture are still available. It is after leading a settled life for a good length of time, some of them start migrating seasonally and/or permanently to different urbanised, industrialised or tea-plantation areas of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and/or Madhya Pradesh as labourers, due to economic hardships and other socio-political reasons.

Population trend and distribution

4. The strength of the tribe in Orissa in 1931 stood at 83,326 and in 1961 it increased to 1,29,061 thus registering a rise of 54·88 per cent. The tribe is mainly concentrated in the district of Sundargarh which comprises the former princely States of Gangpur and Bonai. It is interesting to note that the total population stood in the Orissa Feudatory States at 59803 in 1915 (Roy : 485).

Table 1

POPULATION

(Source : Census 1961)

State/District		P	M	F
Orissa	..	129,061	63,761	65,300
Kalahandi	..	3	2	1
Koraput	..	..	..	..
Sambalpur	..	12,129	6,257	5,872
Bolangir	..	4	3	1
Baudh-Khondmals	..	—	..	..
Ganjam	..	..	..	..
Sundargarh	..	114,103	56,098	58,005
Dhenkanal	..	20	12	
Puri	..	11	3	8
Keonjhar	..	1,003	475	528
Mayurbhanj	..	1,783	906	877
Balasore	..	..	..	..

5. Of the 129,061 Oraons in the State as *recorded in 1961 Census* 1,14,103 hail from the district of Sundargarh and 12,129 from the district of Sambalpur. The remaining population lie scattered in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Cuttack, Puri, Dhenkanal, Bolangir and Kalahandi. In the latter five districts, the population is negligible. A comparison of the figures of 1941 and 1961 shows that there has been no significant migratin of the tribe from one district to the other within the State and that the concentration in the districts of Sundargarh and Sambalpur have increased considerably all these decades.

Physical and racial characteristics

6. The following account of the physical appearance of the Oraons are taken from Roy (1915 : 80). "Although the natural beauty of health, cheerfulness, and simplicity, invests the Oraon youths of both sexes with a certain comeliness, Oraons of either sex, when past middle age, are generally ungainly in appearance. In fact, the Oraons have got a termed 'low' features. They are a short-statured, narrow-headed (dolicho-cephalic) and broad-nosed (platyrhine) people. The colour of their skin is dark brown often approaching black, their hair is black and coarse with an occasional tendency to curl ; and although wooly hair is rare, it is not altogether unknown. Although the hair is plentiful on the Oraon's scalp, it is usually less plentiful on his cheeks and lips, and still less so on the chest, back and legs. Such beard and moustache as he has, generally begin to appear rather late, ordinarily not before a lad is out of his teens. The chest is well developed and so are the calves of his legs. The eyes are medium-sized and occasionally small, the colour of the iris is dark, and there is no obliquity in the axis of the eye-lids. His jaws are somewhat projecting lips rather thick and the nose is depressed at the root." According to Roy, the inference drawn by Sir Herbert Risely from out of the indices from 100 Mundas that there was no difference of physical type between the Mundas and the Oraons is open to serious doubts. Roy further asserts that the practice common among the aboriginals, some aboriginals and other caste Hindu neighbour to mould and manipulate artificially the features of a new born babe raises grave doubts as to the values of anthropometry as a test of race in India.

7. Two interesting points have been mentioned by Roy in connection with the physical anthropology of the Oraons. These are the blue patches sometimes found on the persons of Oraon infants, and a blue pigmentation found on the tongue of many Oraons, male as well as female, young as well as old. The blue lines seem to be merely veins and therefore are of no anthropological interest. The blue patches, on the other hand, are more interesting but much less frequent. Some of the blue patches are permanent and are known as *Janam Khoda* or 'natal tattoo-marks' and others are lighter in colour and disappear within a year or two after birth.

8. The blue or violet pigmentation on the tongues of Oraons appear to be much more frequent and unlike the blue lines and patches on the chest and arms, this pigmentation on the tongue appears to develop with age and is found more often and more prominently in grown-up persons than in young children. Mr. Roy's statistical examination brings such pigmented tongues to have been found in about a third of the number of Oraons examined. The following description by Dr. Maynard has been agreed to by Roy. "In some cases the fungiform papillae were each surrounded by a blue or brown rim, giving the tongue a curious speckled look; in others there were irregular blue or black blotches, simple or multiple, and varying in size from a two-anna bit to a rupee on the dorsum or along the edges of the tongue."

Division of the Tribe

9. According to Roy, the prevent social organisation of the Oraons is an image of the archaic organisation of the ancient Oraon

hunting communities adapted to the needs of the more complex agricultural village-communities of later days. In those days totemism was the basis of social and political organisation and for purpose of exogamy the whole tribe is to this day divided into a number of clans or *gotras*. Individual totems, sex totems, or associated totems are unknown. The fauna and flora of their past and present habitats naturally supply the bulk of the totem names. Mr. Roy mentions names of 16 beast totems, 12 bird totems, 14 fish and other aquatic totmes. 1 reptile. 19 vegetable, 2 mineral, 2 place and 2 split totems. The Oraons retain very few traditions as to the origin of particular totem names.

10. The following account of the social and material conditions of the Oraons is based on the study of the tribe by this organisation in village Kuturia of Rajgangpur P. S. in the district of Sundargarh.

Houses

11. The Oraons live with other caste people in a separate hamlet. There is no fixity of system regarding lay-out of the houses. Usually they lie scattered with a village street. Most of the houses are one-roomed, the common size being 18'×7½' with a partition wall at the centre, one part is used as the store and the rest for bed and kitchen. The store room usually is smaller in size. There is one entrance to the house and one has to pass through the bed room. The height of the wall at the centre is about 6' and the roof being sloped on either side the height of the wall diminishes to 3½'. Verandahs of about 2½' wide and 1½' high are constructed in front of every house. Door frames made of sal wood are used. Roofs are made of bamboo, straw and occasionally of *naria* tiles. At times, a part of the roof of the house is extended for cow-shed, but those having more number of cattle erect an additional row of houses close to their residence. Courtyard is protected by green fencing. Another green fence is put up to protect the compost pit, straw heap and garden put up to the rear side of the house.

12. The Oraons follow their traditional custom for selection of a new site. Four pits are dug on four corners of the tentatively nominated site and heaps of rice grains are kept in each pit. A fowl or a pigeon is sacrificed on the occasion. The pits are covered and next day any reduction in quantity is accepted as ominous. Monday, Wednesday and Friday are considered as auspicious for laying the foundation when incense burning and offering of fowl and wine is made. On the day the construction work is over, friends and relatives are invited, offering of homa is done with fowls and wine as offerings. New cooking pots are used and the house god is first worshipped.

13. The Oraons are meticulously neat in maintenance of their houses. Almost twice a weak the floors and walls are washed by cow-dung. The surroundings are also kept sanitary. Housewives take immense care to keep the courtyard and he surrounding clean. The fire-place, cooking pots and utensils are regularly brushed. The cow-sheds and the compost pits lie close to the residence. Fowls, goats and other domesticated animals are given shelter either in the store or bed room to protect them from he ravages of the wild animals.

Food

14. Rice is their staple food. Besides, they take such other millets as *Jhari* and *Guruji*. Three meals a day is the rule; though poor people go without the morning meal. Milk and milk products are alien to their diet. They take all kinds of meat including beef and pork. Such of the roots and fruits as are grown by them or are collected from the neighbouring forests are taken. *Daru* or country liquor and *handia*

are their favourite drinks. The flesh of monkeys is taboo for all and that of totem is taboo for the respective sept.

Dress and ornaments

15. Though not scantily dressed, the Oraons manage with limited clothes. A pair of saris 10 to 12 cubits long for women and a pair of *dhotis* with a towel are all that are required. In festive occasions or market days, the women put on coloured saris and undergarments. Similarly, shirts, banyans, and towels are put on by males on such occasions. Coarse *chadars* protect them from the hard winter days. For poorer folk gunny bags, mats or a heap of fire serve as all the protection from the cold.

16. The Oraon women use cheap and heavy brass or silver ornaments. The ornaments for the hands are *kataria* and *bandaria* made of silver, *bala* made of aluminium. Besides *khagala* made of silver or aluminium, necklaces made of wooden or glass beads adore their necks. They had perhaps no ornament originally for their nose. It is only recently that some have learnt the use of *guna* made of gold. The ornaments for the ear are *ganthia, jhalaka, kanaphula,* all made of gold. Rings and *jhuntia* made of silver or brass are used on their toes or fingers.*Paunri,* made of brass or silver is the ornament for the leg but this is used only on special occasions. *Gojikathi* made of brass is the ornament for the head Young men particularly those who are newly-wed wear *phasia* made of gold in their ears and *bala* of silver in one hand.

Birth

17. No restriction is imposed on either of the parents during the pregnancy of a woman. The prospective mother takes to her usual burden of work even at a late stage of pregnancy. No special lying-in-room is erected. A part of the bed room is set apart for the purpose. Experienced ladies of the tribe or of Munda tribe attend on the woman during labour. They are rewarded with utensils, food-materials, and a cloth on the date of purification.

18. Soon after child birth, the baby is administered a tepid water bath. The mother takes *kulthi* water which is believed to minimise the body-aches after child birth. The umbilical cord is cut with a knife and together with the placenta is buried in a pit near the home where the mother and the child take their bath till the date of purification . The mother usually goes without food for two days and remains on a diet of boiled water only.

19. The first stage of purification comes on the 7th or 8th day when the remnant of the naval cord wilts off. Besides a wash for the mother and the child, the house is cleaned and all earthen pots and pitchers are replaced by new ones.

20. The sacred water made out of a mixture of copper coin, sacred basil leaves and turmeric water are sprinkled throughout the house and on all household members including the mother and the child, as a measure of purification. The child is given to wear one waist belt of thread and the mother puts on new clothes.

21. The name-giving ceremony is performed on this day. At the centre of a cleaned stretch is kept an earthen pot filled with water. A name is proposed and along with it are thrown one grain each of rice and sesamum into the water. If they float jointly, the same is accepted. Otherwise, a fresh name is proposed.

Puberty

22. Girls, on attainment of puberty are kept segregated for 6 to 9 days. Though no restriction of food is imposed, her food is served in separate utensils. On the date of purification, she takes her bath and then

attends to normal household duties. The period of avoidance in subsequent menstruations is 4 days only.

Marriage

23. Adult marriage is the rule. The differnce of age between the husband and wife is often very small and in widow and divorce marriages, the gap vanishes completely sometimes yielding place to women being senior in age to men.

24. Before commencement of a negotiation for marriage, the caste priest is consulted. Their age-old practice to ascertain the suitability of a bride is as follows: Some castemen sit together and propose a particular bride. Some place is cleaned by dabbing with cowdung and on both sides of the cleaned space, two pits are dug. Into the pit are put equal numbers of grains of rice. A line is drawn on a piece of altar and two grains of rice are kept on a line at a short distance. A fowl is sacrificed and then the movement of both the grains is closely watched. If they offer the illusion of uniting (though it is apparently absurd for rice grains to walk and unite), this is deemed as auspicious.

25. The custom of bride price is prevalent which is usually Rs. 7·50 in cash and a few bottles of liquor to be served to the bride's castemen and relatives. After this is given, the date for betrothal is fixed up for which Mondays and Wednesdays are considered eminently auspicious. On the date of betrothal, the party from the bride's house visit the house of the bridegroom with eight pieces of clothes, some bottles of liquor, etc. They are, however, fed sumptuously thrice to four times by the bridegroom's side which is indeed an expensive proposition for the latter.

26. Marriage functions continue for four days. All castemen and relatives of the bridegroom arrive on the first day and preparing the altar and the shed, they sing and dance merrily. The home and village deities are worshipped with fowls, pigeons and liquor. The marriage procession including the bridegroom and members of either sex then start for the bride's village. Another procession from the bride's side with the bride's parents receive them near the latter's village. Marriage is solemnised on the altar, after which the groom joins the songs and dances. On the third day, they return to the groom's house. On the fourth day, the couple go together to have a ceremonial bath where the bridegroom pours a vessel of water on the head of the bride. Honey-moon is observed on this night.

All the formalities are not gone through in case of widow marriage or marriage after divorce.

Marital status

27. The proportion of males and females not marrying with the age-group of 15—44 appears considerable keeping in view the total population. Their number, of course diminshes greatly in the age-group above 45.

28. The custom of payment of alimony to the first husband by the second in cases of marriage after divorce is reported to exist. Polygyny exists but the reverse phenomenon is rare.

Death

29. The Oraons bury their dead, and usually have in each village, a separate crematorium. The dead body is carried in a charpoy by castemen and relatives. The dead body is moved seven times round the pit and then placed in with its head pointing north ; and face upwards. Some place it in a sitting posture. The pit is then covered with soil and boulders and thorny plants are put at the top as a protection against the ravages of animals.

30. The party returns to the home of the deceased and take oil, turmeric and liquor. They are fed for a day by the household of the deceased. The first stage of purification occurs on the 5th day; whereas the caste feast and calling of the departed soul is done even after months and years. But after the first stage of purification, the family is freed from all social restrictions. A grand feast is held on the last day of purification. Caste priest, *Siria,* arranges a libation and the departed spirit is called.

Language and literary

31. 1961 census figures show that out of the total Oraon population of 129,061, quite a large percentage numbering 57,381 have Oriya as their mother-tongue. Of the balance, 48, 882 have Kurukh or Oraon and 22,798 have adopted other languages by their mother-tongue.

32. It is interesting to note that only 2,381 of the total number of Oriya speakers know a subsidiary language of which again, Hindi speakers constitute the majority. But of the total Kurukh or Oraon speakers, as many as 11,718 know a subsidiary language and a large majority of these people know either Oriya or Hindi.

33. The percentage of literacy among the Oraons is 9·7 per cent which compares favourably with that of the scheduled tribes against their population as a whole. Of the 12,527 literates, 2,188 have gone up to primary or junior basic level and 133 up to matriculation or higher secondary stage and above. The Table below gives detailed districtwise figures on literacy and education.

Table 2

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

(Source : Census) 1961

State/District	Population	Illiterate	Literate and educated	Literate without educational level	Primary or Junior Basic	Matriculation or Higher Secondary and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Orissa ..	129,061	116,534	12,527	10,206	2,188	133
Kalahandi ..	3	2	1	1	..	.
Koraput ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sambalpur ..	12,129	10,915	1,214	987	215	12
Bolangir ..	4	1	3	3	..	..
Baudh-Khondmals ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ganjam ..	..	—	..	..	..	..
Suudargarh ..	114,103	102,987	11,116	9,067	1,928	121
Dhenkanal ..	20	20	..	..	..	..
Puri ..	11	11	..	..	..	..
Keonjhar ..	1,003	921	82	76	6	..
Cuttack ..	5	3	2	2	..	..
Mayurbhanj ..	1,783	1,674	109	70	39	..
Balasore ..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Occupation

34. Only 47·8 per cent of the total population of the Oraons are workers. This appears rather low. Majority of the workers are cultivators and a few depend on agricultural labour. Very few take to mining, quarrying, household industries or other services. The table below shows the distribution of the population by workers and non-workers.

Table 3

Industrial Classification of Population

(Source: Census, 1961)

Category (1)		Persons (2)	Males (3)	Females (4)
Total Population	..	129,061	63,761	65,300
Workers:				
I Cultivators	..	47,592	30,932	16,660
II Agricultural Labourers	..	5,100	2,381	2,719
III Mining, Quarrying, etc.	..	473	136	337
IV Household Industry	..	2,587	963	1,624
V Manufacturing other than household industry	..	636	558	78
VI Construction	..	243	141	102
VII Trade and Commerce	..	43	24	19
VIII Transport, Storage and Communications	..	485	285	200
IX Other Services	..	4,555	2,659	1 896
Total Workers	..	61,714	38,079	23,635
Non-workers	..	67,347	25,682	41,665

Religion

35. The Oraon religion represents a combination of indigenous beliefs and practices and Hinduism. Their pantheon consists of one High God, namely, *Dharm* who is manifested in Sun; *Mahadev,* the tutelary deity of the spirit doctors called *Bhagats, Chandi,* goddess of hunting etc. They also worship Hindu deities along with Hindus and observe several Hindu festivals. They offer food to the dead ancestors at different religious festivals. Their own priest is called *Naega.* They believe in the existence of a number of spirits who bring disease and death. When any misfortune befalls on a man, he at once consults a *Mati* or *Ojha* and acts according to his advice.

36. The home deities of the Oraons in the village under investigation are *Amua* and *Dombua* and their village deities are *Bungart Surana, Budha* and *Surgal.* On invariably every ceremonial or festive occasion, the home deities are worshipped with fowl, liquor and other food items. The village deities, similarly are offered sacrifices and worshipped on special occasions.

Festivals and recreation

37. Most of the festivals of the Oraons, like other tribals synchronise with their agricultural operations. They have also adopted some Hindu festivals due to culture contact A list of their important festivals is enumerated below.

38. *Muthi-chhina*—Otherwise called Akshaya Tritya, is observed in the month of Baisakh to mark the beginning of the agricultural season. Sowing operations start on this day. The heads of the households carry a basket full of paddy covered with a new cloth to the paddy fields and sowing seven handfuls of paddy, they plough the field for the first time. Liquor, meat and fish are taken in liberal quantities and *khiri,* a porridge is prepared in every home.

39. *Bihuda Jatra*—On any Monday, Wednesday or Friday of the month of *Asadha,* the Oraons sacrifice fowls, pigeons and liquor before their village deities and spend the day in singing and dancing. Bihuda operations in the field start only after the observance of this festival.

40. *Gamha Purnima*—This is observed every year on the full moon day of Sravana when the cattle and bullocks are fed with Mahula and salt and their horns anointed with oil and turmeric. People rejoice in singing and dancing.

41. *Nabanna*—The festival is observed on a Monday or Wednesday of *Bhadrab* and is common to all communities. On this day people take new rice. The agricultural implements are adorned with rice powder and the bullocks are fed with good food and cakes. People drink and dance in merriment.

42. *Diali*—This is observed on the 15th day of *Kartika.* Boiled rice and *biri* is offered to bullock as articles of worship along with other items of food such as cakes. The hoofs of bullocks are washed with liquor. The home deities are worshipped.

43. *Margasira Jatra*—An important festival of the Oraons, this is observed only in important villages. A wooden pillar decorated with new cloth is put by all villagers within the four pillars marking the corners of the place of worship. The communal dance continues for the whole night.

44. *Pusa Purnima*—The festival marks the end of all festivals connected with the agricultural operations.

45. *Phaguna Jatra*—This is observed on some auspicious day in the month of Phalguna to mark the first taking of Mahula flower, kusuma flower and mango. Some call it the Mahula Jatra.

46. The Oraons have no other forms of recreation except their community songs and dances where members of either sex join. Their occasional visits to the market places and relatives' houses add change to their monotony.

Caste organisation

47. The Oraons have a caste council for every village which is headed by the headman named *Sian.* The *Sian,* who also acts as the village priest in all social functions, is assisted by old and leading members of the tribe in settling social disputes. His job is honorary but for matters like widow marriages and marriages after divorce, when the parties pay him some amount.

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9. Adibasi No. 3 — 1963-64

OGP-MP—(Census) 6—1,000—6-9-1971

ORAON

Villages of study :

1. KUTURIA
   P. S. Rajgangpur
   Dist. Sundargarh
2. GARVANA
   P. S. Rajgangpur
   Dist. Sundargarh

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6. Shri Gandu Bhagat, S/o. Lakha Bhagat
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8. Shri Tulsidas Bhagat, S/o. Jhaba Bhagat
9. Shri Somre Oraon, S/o. Mangna Oraon
10. Shri Majhia Oraon Landa, S/o. Bindhu Oraon Landa
11. Shri Buti Oraon, S/o. Kinu Oraon



An Oraon on the way to his field

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(as on 17th February 1964)

AGARTALA—Laxmi Bhandar Books & Scientific Sales .. (Rest.)

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2. Wadhawa & Co., 45, Civil Lines .. (Reg.)
3. Banwari Lal Jain, Publishers, Moti Katra .. (Rest.)
4. English Book Depot, Sadar Bazar, Agra Cantt. .. (Rest.)

AHMADNAGAR—V. T. Jorakar, Prop. Rama General Stores, Navi Path .. (Rest.)

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2. Chandra Kant Chiman Lal Vora Gandhi Road .. (Reg.)
3. New Order Book Co., Ellis Bridge .. (Reg.)
4. Mahajan Bros., Opp. Khadia Police Gate .. (Rest.)
5. Sastu Kitab Ghar, Near Relief Talkies, Patthar Kuva, Relief Road .. (Reg.)

AJMER—
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2. Rajputana Book House, Station Road .. (Reg.)
3. Law Book House, 271, Hathi Bhata .. (Reg.)
4. Vijay Bros., Kutchery Road .. (Rest.)
5. Krishna Bros., Kutchery Road .. (Rest.)

ALIGARH—Friends' Book House, Muslim University Market .. (Reg.)

ALLAHABAD—
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4. Ram Narain Lal Beni Modho, 2-A, Katra Road .. (Reg.)
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2. Seth Law House, 8719, Railway Road, Ambala Cantt. .. (Rest.)

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2. S. Gupta, Agent, Govt. Publications, Near P. O. Majith Mandi (Reg.)
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ASANSOL—D. N. Roy & R. K. Roy, Booksellers, Atwal Building (Rest.)

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2. S. S. Book Emporium, 118, Mount Joy Road .. (Reg.)
3. The Bangalore Press, Lake View, Mysore Road, P. O. Box 507 (Reg.)
4. The Standard Book Depot, Avenue Road .. (Reg.)
5. Vichara Sahitya Private Ltd., Balepet .. (Reg.)
6. Makkala Pustaka Press, Balamandira, Gandhinagar .. (Reg.)
7. Maruthi Book Depot, Avenue Road .. (Rest.)
8. International Book House P. Ltd., 4-F., Mahatma Gandhi Road .. (Reg.)
9. Navakarnataka Pubns. Private Ltd., Majestic Circle .. (Rest.)

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BHAGALPUR—Paper Stationery Stores, D. N. Singh Road .. (Reg.)

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1. Superintendent, State Government Press
2. Lyall Book Depot, Mohd. Din Bldg. Sultania Road .. (Reg.)
3. Delite Books, Opp. Bhopal Talkies .. (Rest.)

BHUBANESWAR—Ekamra Vidyabhaban, Eastern Tower, Room No. 3 .. (Rest.)

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2. Charles Lambert and Co., 101, Mahatma Gandhi Road .. (Reg.)
3. Co-operators Book Depot, 5/32, Ahmed Sailor Bldg. Dadar .. (Reg.)
4. Current Book House, Maruti Lane, Raghunath Dadaji St. .. (Reg.)
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7. Lakkani Book Depot, Girgaum .. (Reg.)
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13. D. B. Taraporewala Sons and Co. (P) Ltd., 210, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji Road .. (Reg.)
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24. Dowamadeo and Co., 16, Naziria Building, Ballard Estate .. (Rest.)
25. Asian Trading Co., 310, the Miraball, P. B. 1505 .. (Rest.)

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1. Chatterjee and Co., 3/1, Bacharam Chatterjee Lane .. (Reg.)
2. Dass Gupta and Co. Ltd., 54/3, College Street .. (Reg.)
3. Hindu Library, 69 A, Bolaram De Street .. (Reg.)
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21. Scientific Book Agency, Netaji Subhas Road .. (Rest.)
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8. Kailash Law Publishers, Sector 22-B .. Rest.)

CHHINDWARA—The Verma Book Depot .. (Rest.)

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2. Cuttack Law Times .. (Reg.)
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4. D. P. Sur & Sons, Mangalabag .. (Rest.)
5. Utkal Stores, Balu Bazar . (Rest.)

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1. Jugal Kishore & Co., Rajpur Road .. (Reg.)
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3. Bishan Singh and Mahendra Pal Singh, 318, Chukhuwala .. (Reg.)
4. Utam Pustak Bhandar, Paltan Bazar .. (Rest.)

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13. Dhanwant Medical & Law Book House, 1522 Lajpat Rai Market .. (Rest.)
14. University Book House, 15, U. B. Bangalore Road, Jawahar Nagar .. (Rest.)
15. Law Literature House, 2646, Balimaran .. Rest.)
16. Summer Brothers, P. O. Birla Lines .. (Rest.)
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KOLHAPUR—Maharashtra Granth Bhandar, Mahadwar Road .. (Rest.

KOTA—Kota Book Depot .. (Rest.)

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5. Universal Publishers (P) Ltd., Hazratganj .. (Reg.)
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7. Palani Parchuram, 3, Pycrofts Road, Triplicane .. (Reg.)
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9. V. Sadanand, The Personal Bookshop, 10, Congress Building, 111, Mount Road .. (Rest.)

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2. Vivekananda Press, 48, West Masi Street .. (Reg.)

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MANGALORE—U. R. Shenoye Sons, Car Street, P. Box 128 .. (Reg.)

MANJESHWAR—Mukenda Krishna Nayak .. (Rest.)

MATHURA—Rath & Co., Tilohi Building, Bengali Ghat .. (Rest.)

MEERUT—
1. Prakash Educational Stores, Subhas Bazar .. (Reg.)
2. Hind Chitra Press, West Kutchery Road .. (Reg.)
3. Loyal Book Depot, Chhipi Tank .. (Reg.)
4. Bharat Educational Stores, Chhipi Tank .. (Rest.)
5. Universal Book Depot, Booksellers and News Agents .. (Rest.)

MONGHYR—Anuasandhan, Minerva Press Building .. (Rest.)

MUSSOORIE—
1. Cambridge Book Depot, The Mall .. (Rest.)
2. Hind Traders .. (Rest.)

MUZAFFARNAGAR—
1. Mittal and Co., 85-C, New Mandi .. (Rest.)
2. B. S. Jain and Co., 71 Abupura .. (Rest.)

MUZAFFARPUR—
1. Scientific and Educational Supply Syndicate .. (Reg.)
2. Legal Corner, Tikmanio House, Amgola Road .. (Rest.)
3. Tirhut Book Depot .. (Rest.)

MYSORE—
1. H. Venkatramaiah and Sons, New Statue Circle .. (Reg.)
2. Peoples Book House, Opp. Jagan Mohan Palace .. (Reg.)
3. Geeta Book House, Booksellers and Publishers, Krishnamurthipuram (Rest.)
4. News paper House, Lansdowne Building .. (Rest.)
5. Indian Mercantile Corporation, Toy Palace, Ramvilas .. (Rest.)

NADIAD—R. S. Dessay, Station Road .. (Rest.)

NAGPUR—
1. Superintendent, Government Press & Book Depot
2. Weastern Book Depot, Residency Road .. (Reg.)
3. The Asst. Secretary, Mineral Industry Association, Mineral House (Rest.)

NAINITAL—Coural Book Depot, Bara Bazar .. (Rest.)

NANDED—
1. Book Centre, College, Law, General Books, Station Road .. (Rest.)
2. Hindustan General Stores, Paper and Stationery Merchants, P. B. No. 51 .. (Rest.)
3. Sanjoy Book Agency, Vazirabad .. (Rest.)

NEW DELHI—
1. Amrit Book Co., Connaught Circus .. (Reg.)
2. Bhawani and Sons, 8. F, Connaught Place .. (Reg.)
3. Central News Agency, 23/90, Connaught Circus .. (Reg.)
4. Empire Book Depot, 278, Aligani .. (Reg.)
5. English Book Stores, 7-L, Connaught Circus, P. O. B. 328 .. (Reg.)
6. Faqir Chand and Sons, 15-A, Khan Market .. (Reg.)
7. Jain Book Agency, C-9, Prem House, Connaugh Place .. (Reg.)
8. Oxford Book and Stationery Co., Scindia House .. (Reg.)
9. Ram Krishan and Sons (of Lahore), 16/B, Connaught Place .. (Reg.)
10. Sikh Publishing House, 7-C, Connaught Place .. (Reg.)
11. Suneja Book Centre, 24/90, Connaught Circus .. (Reg.)
12. United Book Agency, 31. Municipal Market, Connaguht Circus (Reg.)
13. Jayana Book Depot, Chhaparwala Kuan, Karol Bagh .. (Reg.)
14. Navayug Traders, Desh Bandhu Gupta Road, Dev Nagar .. (Reg.)
15. Saraswati Book Depot, 15, Lady Harding Road .. (Reg.)
16. The Secretary, Indian Met. Society, Lodi Road .. (Reg.)
17. New Book Depot, Latest Books, Periodicals, Stationery and Novelles, P. B. 96, Connaught Place .. (Reg.)
18. Mehra Brothers, 50-G, Kalkaji .. (Reg.)
19. Laxmi Book Stores, 42, Janpath .. (Rest.)
20. Hindi Book House, 82, Janpath .. (Rest.)
21. Peoples Publishing House (P) Ltd., Rani Jhansi Road .. (Reg.)
22. R. K. Publishers, 23, Beadon Pura, Karol Bagh .. (Rest.)
23. Sharma Bros, 17, New Market, Moti Nagar .. (Reg.)
24. Aapki Dukan, 5/5777, Deb Nagar .. (Rest.)
25. Sarvodaya Service, 66A-1, Rohtak Road, P. B. 2521 .. (Rest.)
26. H. Chandson, P. B. No. 3034 .. (Rest.)
27. The Secretary Federation of Association of Small Industry of India, 23-B/2, Rohtak Road .. (Rest.)
28. Standard Booksellers and Stationers, Palam Enclave .. (Rest.)
29. Lakshmi Book Depot, 57, Regarpura .. (Rest.)
30. Sant Ram Booksellers, 16, New Municipal Market, Lody Colony (Rest.)

PANJIM—
1. Singhals Book House, P. O. B. 70, Near the Church .. (Rest.)
2. Sagoon Gaydev Dhoud, Booksellers, 5-7 Rua, 3, Ide Jameria .. (Rest.)

PATHANKOT—The Krishna Book Dept, Main Bazar .. (Rest.)

ATIALA—
1. Superintendent, Bhupendra State Press
2. Jain and Co., 17, Shah Nashin Bazar .. (Reg.)

PATNA—
1. Superintendent, Government Printing (Bihar)
2. J. N. P. Agarwal and Co., Padri-Ki-Haveli, Raghunath Bhaban (Reg.)
3. Luxmi Trading Co., Padri-Ki-Haveli .. (Reg.)
4. Moti Lal Banarasi Dass, Bankipore .. (Reg.)
5. Bengal Law House, Chowhatta .. (Rest.)

PITHORAGARH—Maniram Punetha and Sons .. (Rest.)

PONDICHERRY—M/S. Honesty Book House, 9, Rue Duplix .. (R.)

POONA—
1. Deccan Book Stall, Deccan Gymkhana .. (Reg.)
2. Imperial Book Depot, 266, M. G. Road .. (Reg.)
3. International Book Service, Deccan, Gymkhana .. (Reg.)
4. Raka Book Agency, Opp. Natu's Chawl, Near Appa Balwant Chowk .. (Reg.)
5. Utility Book Depot, 1339, Shivaji Nagar .. (Rest.)

PUDUKOTTAI—Shri P. N. Swaminathan Sivam and Co., East Main Road (Res

RAJKOT—Mohan Lal Dossabhai Shah, Booksellers and Sub-Agents Reg)

RANCHI—
1 Crown Book Depot, Upper Bazar .. (Reg.)
2. Pustak Mahal, Upper Bazar .. (Rest.)

REWA—Superintendent, Government State Emporium, V. P.

ROURKELA—The Rourkela Review .. (Rest.)

SAHARANPUR—Chandra Bharata Pustak Bhandar, Court Road .. (Rest.)

SECUNDERABAD—Hindustan Diary Publishers, Market Street .. (Reg.)

SILCHAR—Shri Nishittosen, Nazirpati .. (Rest.)

SIMLA—
1. Supdt., Himachal Pradesh Govt.
2. Minerva Book Shop, The Mall .. (Reg.)
3. The New Book Depot, 79, The Mall .. (Reg.)

SINNAR—Shri N. N. Jakhadi, Agent, Times of ndia, Sinnar, (Nasik) .. (Rest.)

SHILLONG—
1. The Officer-in-charge, Assam Govt., B. D.
2. Chapla l ook stall, P. B. No. 1 — (Rest.)

SONEPAT—United Book Agency .. (Reg.)

SRINAGAR—The Kashmir Book shop, Residency Road .. (Reg.)

SURAT—Shri Gajanan Pustakalaya, Tower Road .. (Reg.)

TIRUCHIRAPALLI—
1. Kalpana Publishers, Wosiur .. (Reg.)
2. S. Krishnaswami & Co., 35, Subhash Chander Bose Road .. (Reg.)
3. Palamiappa Bros. .. (Rest.)

TRIVANDRUM—
1. International Book Depot, Main Road .. (Reg.)
2. Reddar Press & Book Depot, P. B. No. 4 .. (Rest.)

TUTICORIN—Shri K. Thiagarajan, 10-C, French Chapal Road .. (Rest.)

UDAIPUR—
1. Jagdish & Co., Inside Surajapole .. (Rest.)
2. Book Centre, Maharana Bhopal Consumers' Co-op. Society Ltd. .. (Rest.)

UJJAIN—Manak Chand Book Depot, Sati Gate .. (Rest.)

VARANASI—
1. Students Friends & Co., Lanka .. (Rest.)
2. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series office, Gopal Mandir Road, P. B. 8 (Reg.)
3. Globe Book centre .. (Rest.)
4. Kohinoor store, University road, Lanka .. (Reg.)
5. B. H U. Book Depot .. (Rest.)

VELLORE—A. Venkatasubhan, Law Booksellers Reg.)

VIJAYAWADA—The Book and Review centre, Eluru Road, Governpet .. Rest.)

VISAKHAPATNAM—
1. Gupta Brothers, Vizia Building .. (Reg.)
2. Book Centre, 11/97, Main Road .. (Reg.)
3. The Secy. Andhra University, General Co-op. Stores Ltd. .. (Rest.)

VIZIANAGARAM—Sarda and Co. .. (Rest.)

WARDHA—Swarajeya Bhandar, Bhorji Market .. (Reg.)

For Local Sale

1. Govt. of India Kitab Mahal, Janpath Opp. India Coffee House, New Delhi
2. Govt. of India Book Depot, 8 Hastings Street, Calcutta
3. High Commissioner for India in London, India House, London, W. C. 2

Railway Bookstall holders

1. S/s A. H. Wheeler & Co., 15, Elgin Road, Allahabad
2. Gahlot Bros., K. E. M. Road, Bikaner
3. Higgenbothams & Co., Ltd., Mount Road, Madras
4. M. Gulab Singh & Sons Private Ltd., Mathura Road, New Delhi

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Foreign

1. S/s Education Enterprise Private Ltd., Kathamandu (Nepal)
2. S/S Aktie Bologat, C. E. Fritzes Kungl, Hovobokhandel, Fredsgation-2 Box 1656, Stockholm-16 (Sweden)
3. Reise-und Verkehrsverlag Stuttgart, Post 730 Gutenbergstra 21, Stuttgart No. 11245, Stuttgart den (Germany West)
4. Shri Iswar Subramanyam, 452, Reversite Driv. Apt. 6, New York, 27 NWY
5. The Proprietor, Book Centre, Lakshmi Mansons, 49, The Mall, Lahore (Pakistan)

On S. and R. Basis

1. The Head Clerk, Govt. Book Depot, Ahmedabad
2. The Assistant Director, Extension Centre, Kapileswar Road, Belgaum
3. The Employment Officer, Employment Exchange, Dhar
4. The Asst. Director, Footwear Extension Centre, Polo Ground No. 1 Jodhpur
5. The O. I/C, Extension Centre, Club Road, Muzaffarpur
6. The Director, Indian, Bureau of Mines, Government Of India, Ministry of Mines and Fuel, Nagpur
7. The Asst. Director, Industrial Extension Centre, Nadiad (Gujarat)
8. The Head Clerk, Photozincograhhic Press, 5, Finance Road, Poona
9. Governmnet Printing and Stationery, Rajkot
10. The O.I./C. Extension Centre, Industrial Estate, Kokar, Ranchi
11. The Director, S. I. S. I. Industrial Extension Centre, Udhna, Surat
12. The Registrar of Companies, Narayani Building, 27, Erabourne Road Calcutta-1
13. The Registrar of Companies, Kerala, 50 Feet Road, Ernakulam
14. The Registrar of Companies, H. No 3-5-83, Hyderguda, Hyderabad
15. Registrar of Companies, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Shillong
16. Registrar of Companies, Sunlight Insurance Building, Aimeri Gate Extension New Delhi
17. Registrar of Companies, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, Link Road Jullundur City
18. Registrar of Companies, Bihar, Jamal Road, Patna-1
19. Registrar of Companies, Raj. & Ajmer; Shri Kamta Prasad House, 1st Floor, 'C' scheme, Ashok Marg, Jaipur
20. The Registrar of Companies, Andhra Bank Building, 6, Linghi Chetty Street P. B. 1530, Madras
21. The Registrar of Companies, Mahatma Gandhi Road, West Cott. Bldg P. B. 334, Kanpur
22. The Registrar of Companies, Everest 100, Mrine Drive, Bombay
23. The Registrar of Companies, 162, Brigade Road, Bangalore
24. The Registrar of Companies, Gwalior
25. Asst. Director, Extension Centre, Bhuli Road, Dhanbad
26. Registrar of Companies, Orissa, Cuttack Chandi, Cuttack
27. The Registrar of Companies, Gujarat State, Gujarat Samachar Building Ahmedabad
28. Publication Division, Sale Depot, North Block, New Delhi
29. The Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, New Delhi
30. The O.I/C., University Employment Bureau, Lucknow
31. O. I/C., S. I. S. I. Extension Centre, Malda
32. O. I/C., S. I. S. I. Extension Centre, Habra, Tabaluria, 24-Parganas
33. O. I/C., S. I. S. I. Model Carpentry Workshop, Piyali Nagar, P. O. Burnipur
34. O. I/C., S. I. S. I. Chrontanning Extension Centre, Tangra, 33, North Topsia Road, Calcutta-46
35. O. I/C., S. I. S. I. Extension Centre (Footwear), Calcutta
36. Asst. Director, Extension Centre, Hyderabad
37. Asst. Director, Extension Centre, Krishna Distt. (A. P.)
38. Employment Officer, Employment Exchange, Jhabua
39. Dy. Director In charge, S. I. S. I., C/o Chief Civil Admn. Goa, Panjim
40. The Registrar of Trade Unions, Kanpur
41. The Employment Officer, Employment Exchange, Gopal Bhavan, Morena
42. The O. I/C., State Information Centre, Hyderabad
43. The Registrar of Companies, Pondicherry

OGP—MP-Mono Correcting—(Census) 6—1,000—24-4-1972