

CHAPTER III

PEOPLE

POPULATION

The total population of Puri district as returned by the Census of 1971 was 2,340,859, of whom 1,183,838 were males and 1,157,021 females. It comprises 4 subdivisions with 29 police stations. The population of each subdivision and police station is given in the following table as per the 1971 Census. ¹

Subdivision/police station	Males	Females	Total population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<i>Puri Subdivision</i> ..	454,161	444,871	899,022
Puri Sadar P. S. ..	55,248	53,302	108,550
Brahmagiri P. S. ..	49,712	51,032	100,749
Satyabadi P. S. ..	56,561	56,636	113,197
Nimapata P. S. ..	59,140	58,452	117,592
Gop P. S. ..	50,518	49,398	99,916
Kakatpur P. S. ..	55,975	55,112	111,087
Pipli P. S. ..	42,949	42,446	85,395
Delang P. S. ..	31,897	31,985	63,882
Krushnaprasad P. S. ..	13,094	12,896	25,990
<i>Bhubaneshwar Subdivision</i> ..	208,650	186,860	395,510
Bhubaneshwar P. S. ..	17,038	16,505	33,543
Capital P. S. ..	14,057	13,238	27,295
Baliana P. S. ..	27,689	27,898	55,587
Balipatna P. S. ..	37,252	37,355	74,607
Chandaka P. S. ..	16,972	16,286	33,258
Jatni P. S. ..	34,452	31,277	65,729
<i>Khurda Subdivision</i> ..	230,938	236,881	467,819
Khurda P. S. ..	62,728	63,618	126,346
Begunia P. S. ..	37,952	39,741	77,693

1. Census of India, 1971, Orissa, Part II-A, General Population Tables pp. 56-57.

Subdivision/Police station	Males	Females	Total population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Bolgarh P. S.	27,352	28,182	55,534
Banpur P. S.	55,460	57,594	113,054
Tangi P. S.	47,446	47,746	95,192
<i>Nayagarh Subdivision</i>	290,089	288,409	578,498
Nayagarh P. S.	53,352	51,385	104,737
Nuagaon P. S.	13,803	13,442	27,245
Odagaon P. S.	35,333	34,927	70,260
Sarankul P. S.	34,658	34,569	69,227
Khandapara P. S.	31,510	30,714	62,224
Fategarh P. S.	37,965	38,513	76,478
Daspalla P. S.	30,079	29,903	59,982
Gania P. S.	11,591	11,501	23,092
Ranpur P. S.	41,798	43,455	85,253

The table below shows the decennial growth of population of the district from 1901 to 1971.* Growth of Population

Census year	Males	Females	Total	Decade variation	Percentage decade variation
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1901	661,556	667,197	1,328,753	..	..
1911	669,596	685,246	1,354,842	+26,089	+1'96
1921	581,333	637,463	1,218,796	-136,046	-10'04
1931	649,791	700,764	1,350,555	+131,759	+10'81
1941	701,153	758,410	1,459,563	+109,008	+8'07
1951	776,718	798,654	1,575,372	+115,809	+7'93
1961	930,543	934,526	1,865,069	+289,697	+18'39
1971	1,183,838	1,157,021	2,340,859	+475,790	+25'51

*Census of India, 1971, Orissa, Part-II-A, General Population Tables, p. 110

(8 Rev. — 15)

The net variation of population during 70 years (1901--1971) in the district has been 1,012, 106, i. e., the population has tended to double.

The population of the district was 975, 911 at the Census of 1872. The next Census undertaken in 1881 recorded an increase of 17.6 per cent. This may be due to better enumeration in the second Census. In 1891, the Census returned 1,221,859 persons registering a growth of 5.6 per cent during the decade 1881—91. This meagre growth of population was attributed to adverse conditions like failure of crops, floods, and cyclone in the year 1891. The next decade 1891—1901 restored the rate of growth by 9.4 per cent in spite of food scarcity in 1897. The nominal growth of 2 per cent in the decade 1901—11 was followed by a drastic reduction of 10.04 per cent during the decade 1911—21 owing to flood, drought and the influenza epidemic of 1918—19. Consequently there was decrease in population when the Census was taken in 1921. The population of the district came down from 1,354, 842 in 1911 to 1,218, 796 in 1921 with a decrease of 136,046 souls or 10.04 per cent. However, quick recovery was noticed in the decade 1921—31 when the population was increased by 10.81 per cent, the highest during the last fifty years.

The decades 1931—41 and 1941—51 recorded moderate growth of 8.07 per cent and 7.93 per cent respectively. The period 1951—61 has registered the growth of population by 18.39 per cent which was due to agricultural development, good yield of crops and marked improvement in public health. The last decade 1961—71 has recorded the highest growth of 25.51 per cent. Thus the district has crossed the State average growth of 25.05 per cent. The reasons for the growth of population are generally the excess of births over death, and the general improvement in public health and personal hygiene. Another important factor for the increase of population is the migration of a large number of persons from other districts of the State and outside the State to the State Capital at Bhubaneswar where a large number of educational institutions, State and Central Government Offices are functioning. The industrial and commercial developments at Puri, Sakhigopal, Pipli, Bhubaneswar, Jatni, Khurda, Tapanga, Kalupara Ghat, Chilka, Balugaon, Odagaon, and Khandapara have also attracted many workers to these places.

The average density of population, according to the Census of 1971, is 230 persons to the square kilometre which is more than the State average of 141. The urban density is 1,653 persons per square kilometre. The highest average density per square kilometre is found in Bhubaneswar subdivision (423) and the lowest (147) in Nayagarh

subdivision which is one of the most under-developed areas of the District. Among the police stations, density is the highest in Jatni police station (498) due to the inclusion of Jatni town and the Bikashnagar area with a population of 25,119 and 4,775 persons respectively. It is the lowest in the Krushnaprasad police station (34).

In rural areas, the density of population is the highest in Balipatna police station (457). Among towns, Puri, the pilgrim centre and the district headquarters, tops the list with 4,316 persons per sq. km. and Nayagarh ranks last with 335.

Of the total population of 2,340, 859 persons, 2,111,712 live in rural areas and the remaining 229,147 persons live in urban areas. The rural/urban population ratio thus comes to about 9 : 1.

According to the Census of 1971 there are 4,336 inhabited and 571 uninhabited villages in the district. The rural population is 2,111,712 (1,055,669 males and 1,056,043 females) giving an average of 487 persons per inhabited villages as against 428 in the State of Orissa. The proportion of rural population to the total population in the district is 90.21. This is lower than similar proportion in the State which is 91.59 per cent. In the following statement, the proportion of different size of villages to the total number of villages and the population of such villages to the total rural population (in percentage) is shown according to recent Census.*

Villages with population of	No. of villages	Percentage of No. of villages to total No. of villages	Rural population	Percentage of rural population to total rural population of the district
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Less than 200 ..	1,357	31.29	141,012	6.68
200—499 ..	1,582	36.49	528,417	25.02
500—999 ..	948	21.86	664,988	31.49
1000—1,999 ..	342	7.89	461,442	21.85
2,000—4,999 ..	100	2.31	274,274	12.99
5,000—9,999 ..	7	0.16	41,579	1.97
10,000 and above ..	..	..	..	..

The statement discloses that the proportion of small villages (with a population less than 500) stands the highest with 67.78 per cent of the total villages. Villages of this category accommodated 31.70 per cent of the total rural population of the district. These figures, though significant, have registered a fall when compared to the 1961 Census figures (75.24 per cent and 39.60 per cent respectively). Correspondingly an increase in the percentage of medium and large sized villages is noticed. This phenomenon indicates the steady progress made in the rural areas.

Urban
Population

The urban population of 229,147 (128,169 males and 100,978 females) is spread over five towns, viz., Puri (72,674), Bhubaneswar (105,491), Jatni (29,894), Khurda (15,879), and Nayagarh (5,209). The proportion of urban population to the total population of the district is 9.79 per cent. The corresponding proportion for the State is 8.41 per cent, and for the country 19.91 per cent. In Orissa, three districts, viz., Ganjam (11.32 per cent), Sambalpur (12.02 per cent), and Sundargarh (23.25 per cent) have higher proportion of urban population than Puri.

The number of towns has increased from one in 1901 to five in 1971. Puri was the only town in the district from 1901 to 1941. Bhubaneswar and Jatni acquired urban status in 1951. Thus the Census of 1951 has recorded three towns. In 1961, Khurda and Nayagarh were added to the existing three towns.

The following statement gives an idea of the growth of urban population of the district since 1951.

Town	Population		
	1951	1961	1971
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Bhubaneswar	16,512	38,211	105,491
Puri	49,057	60,815	72,674
Jatni	9,975	16,068	29,894
Khurda	..	12,497	15,879
Nayagarh	..	5,815	5,209

The analysis of the statement shows that the population of all the towns grew steadily during the period 1961—71 except Nayagarh, where the population recorded substantial fall (10.62 per cent). The factors responsible for the decrease in population might be due to droughts and migration of people to neighbouring areas in search of employment..

Of the five towns, Bhubaneswar, the State Capital, has more than doubled its population during last ten years. This is mainly due to the concentration of a large number of State and Central Government offices, private firms, Banks, educational institutions, the newly started Industrial Estate, etc. in and around the Capital city.

As a result of the partition of the country large number of persons from West Pakistan (present Pakistan) and East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) were displaced not only geographically but also socially and economically. They were settled in different parts of the country. The total number of such migrants from 1946 to 1951 to Puri district was 2,106 (1,035 males and 1,071 females) of whom 1,508 have settled in rural areas and 598 in urban areas.¹ For their rehabilitation Government has provided grants and loans. They also get preference in recruitment to public services.

Displaced persons

The distribution of population by age and sex according to the Age Census of 1961 is noted below.²

Age-group	Males	Females	Total	Percentage of district population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
0—14 ..	357,561	359,296	716,857	38·4
15—34 ..	297,333	304,935	602,268	32·3
35—59 ..	224,534	212,189	436,723	23·4
60 and above ..	50,547	57,971	108,518	5·8
Age not stated ..	688	385	1,073	0·1

The statement shows that children in the age-group 0—14 constitute 38·4 per cent of the total population while the persons in the working age-groups 15—34 and 35—59 constitute 55·7 per cent. Old persons of 60 years and above have been recorded at 5·8 per cent. The rest 0·1 per cent could not state their age. The sex-wise analysis reveals that the percentage of females (11·4) in the age-group 35—59 is less than that of the males (12·0). In the age-group 60 and above, greater survival of the females than males is noticed.

¹ Census of India, 1951, Orissa, Part-IIA, pp. 148—151

² District Census Handbook, 1961, Puri, p. 14

Of the total population of 2,340,859, the males constituted 50.57 per cent and the females 49.43 per cent in 1971. This yielded a sex ratio of 977 (females per 1,000 males) against the similar ratio of 988 for the State as a whole. The following statement presents the sex ratios of Puri district from 1901 to 1971.*

Census Year (1)	No. of Females per 1,000 males		
	Rural (2)	Urban (3)	Total (4)
1901	1,013	902	1,009
1911	1,034	733	1,023
1921	1,109	775	1,097
1931	1,087	815	1,078
1941	1,091	808	1,082
1951	1,041	810	1,028
1961	1,023	788	1,004
1971	1,000	788	977

According to the Census of 1901, the sex ratio of females of the district was 1,009 (per 1000 males) which rose to 1,097 in 1921. Thereafter, it declined to 1,078 in 1931. Next Census showed a little improvement in sex ratio but successive Censuses indicated downward trend. Thus the sex ratio is unfavourable to females owing to the influx of males from outside the district. It is clear from the statement that sex ratio of females in the rural areas is always higher than that of the urban areas of the district. The low ratio of females in the urban population is due to the fact that the males are employed in economic activities for earning their livelihood and, as such, there is greater amount of concentration of male population in all the towns of the district.

The volume of migration was very low in the district up to 1951. After that the number of migrants increased due to urbanisation. In 1961, the migrants to this district constituted 5.5 per cent of the total population of whom 1.2 per cent were born outside the State. The majority of the migrants from outside the State hail from Andhra,

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

West Bengal and Bihar. The distribution of population on the basis of place of birth is as follows.*

Place of Birth	Males	Females	Total	Percentage to total population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Persons born at the place of enumeration.	837,385	454,314	1,291,699	69·2
Persons born elsewhere in the district of enumeration.	58,379	413,387	471,766	25·3
Persons born in other districts of the State.	23,533	56,732	80,265	4·3
Persons born in other States in India.	8,016	6,692	14,708	0·8
Persons born in countries outside India.	2,120	2,096	4,216	0·2
Unclassifiable	1,230	1,555	2,785	0·2

The predominance of females in all the categories of migrants excepting those coming from outside the State indicates that they have migrated consequent to their marriage. Participation in economic activities may be a secondary cause. Majority of the males appear to have moved out of their birth places for economic pursuits.

According to the 1961 Census 20 languages are spoken in Puri district of which Oriya is the predominant language and is spoken as mother-tongue by 1,796,364 persons or 96·29 per cent of the total population. This percentage is much above the corresponding figure for the State which is 82·25 per cent. Urdu, Telugu, Bengali and Hindi languages have small percentage of speakers. The number of speakers of the remaining languages is negligible. Among tribal languages, Kui is important.

* District Census Handbook, 1961, Puri, pp. 15-16

The following statement gives the distribution of population according to language in the Puri district at the time of 1961 Census¹.

Name of mother-tongue (1)	Males (2)	Females (3)	Total (4)
Bengali ..	6,315	6,413	12,728
Burmese ..	..	1	1
English ..	55	47	102
Gujarati ..	171	145	316
Hindi ..	3,107	2,534	5,641
Kannada ..	25	8	33
Khond/Kondh ..	150	175	325
Kui ..	3,620	3,953	7,573
Malayalam ..	90	121	211
Marathi ..	59	7	66
Marwari ..	93	72	165
Nepali ..	152	95	247
Oriya ..	894,576	901,788	1,796,364
Persian ..	1	..	1
Punjabi ..	246	57	303
Savara ..	51	31	82
Sindhi ..	13	4	17
Tamil ..	66	50	116
Telugu ..	9,761	7,170	16,931
Urdu ..	12,112	12,105	24,217

Bilingualism

The 1961 Census shows that 74,806 persons or 4.01 per cent of the total population used subsidiary language in their day to day life in addition to their mother-tongue². As many as 11 languages are spoken as subsidiary languages. The most important among these are English (32,388), Oriya (21,175), Hindi (13,766), Bengali (5,509) and Telugu (1,092). Among the Modern Indian Languages, Oriya claims the highest number of persons speaking a language subsidiary to the mother-tongue, i. e. 48,058, of whom 29,079 persons prefer to speak in English, 11,998 in Hindi, 5,017 in Bengali and 1,092

1. District Census Handbook, 1961, Puri, p. 243.

2. Census of India, 1961, Vol. XII, Orissa, Part-II-C., pp. 126-132.

in Telugu. The remaining 872 persons occasionally use Kui, Kondh, Sanskrit, Burmese and Gujarati as subsidiary languages in their daily life. It is worth mentioning here that most of the *pandas*, the pilgrim guides and agents of Puri speak many languages which include Oriya, Hindi, Bengali, English and the important south Indian languages.

The Oriya script is in vogue all over the district. In olden days some letters of the Oriya alphabet were written in a different script known as *karani* to facilitate writing on the plam leaf with the help of a *stylus* or iron pen. Most of the old Oriya records and palm leaf manuscripts make use of the *karani* script, but now it has fallen into disuse. Even the tribals who speak Kui, Khond or Savara language prefer Oriya script while writing their dialects. The people speaking other Indian languages use their respective scripts. The non-Indian settlers use their standard scripts.

Script

The district has a predominant Hindu population. The 1971 Census shows that 2,290,349 or 97·84 per cent of the district population were Hindus. The Muslims numbered 46,395 or 1·98 per cent and other religious groups together constituted only 4,115 or 0·18 per cent. The following statement gives distribution of population by religion.*

RELIGION

Name of Religion	Number of followers		
	Rural	Urban	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Hindus ..	2,071,168	219,181	2,290,349
Muslims ..	39,316	7,079	46,395
Christians ..	1046	2,229	3,275
Sikhs ..	11	534	545
Buddhists ..	73	45	118
Jains ..	98	51	149
Other Religions and persuasions. . .	..	28	28

* Census of India, 1971, Paper 2, Religion, pp. 60-61.

(8 Rev.—16)

The rural-urban break up indicates that the less numerous communities such as Christians and Sikhs flourish mainly in urban areas. The Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Jains are the communities found mostly in rural areas. The 1971 Census further discloses that the percentage decade growth rate (1961—71) is the highest among the Jains (272.50) followed by the Sikhs (162.02), Muslims (31.44), Hindus (25.38), and Christians (22.84). The Buddhists have recorded the lowest (12.38).

Hinduism

According to the 1971 Census, 97.84 per cent of the people in the district profess Hinduism. Most of the tribes also profess Hindu religion in spite of their individual beliefs in totemism, magic, and sorcery. Referring to the Hinduization of the aboriginals, O' Malley wrote, "The process of Hinduization is apparent even at the present time in the case of the tribes and castes of Orissa. In many cases they consist of two sections, one frankly Animistic and the other Hindu. Thus, the Kandhas of Puri have lost all knowledge of their language, are completely Hinduized, and in every way resemble the lower Oriya castes. Not only do they look on themselves as good Hindus, but they are regarded as such by their orthodox Hindu neighbours, who will put up in their villages, or stay in their houses, although they would consider themselves polluted by doing so in the case of the Savars, Bauris and other aboriginal races". They also believe in the existence of the malevolent and benevolent spirits. The malevolent spirits are supposed to be the cause of death and diseases and, as such, they are appeased by the offerings of fowls and goats. The Kandhas of Banpur *mals* venerate the cow and observe almost all Hindu fairs and festivals. In Nayagarh subdivision, the Kandhas worship their village goddesses known as Sulias, Brahmandei, Sitala and Tarkei. In the event of a villager being killed by a tiger or leopard, they throw away the idol and another is replaced. In this connection they also dismiss the concerned priest.

O'Malley has made a broad generalisation of Hinduism in the following terms: "There is probably no religion in the world which allows so much freedom of religious conviction..... Hinduism, in fact, is more a social than religious organisation. It includes all shades of faith: monotheism, pantheism, agnosticism, atheism, polytheism, and fetishism. So long as a Hindu conforms to the customs and practices of his society, he may believe what he likes" ¹. The Hindus, in general, are polytheists. Their religion is ritualistic and the worships of gods and goddesses is considered as supreme religious virtue. All over the district there is a large number

1. Census of India, 1911, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Sikkim, Part--I, Report by L. S. S. O' Malley, p. 266.

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

Almost every village has its own tutelary deity known as Grama Devati who presides over the welfare of the community. The Grama Devati is usually represented by a piece of stone smeared with vermilion. Carved images are also worshipped in some villages. The Grama Devati is worshipped on the occasion of every religious ceremony and also on special occasions like the outbreak of epidemics, marriage, etc. Generally persons belonging to Sudra caste (Bhandari, Mali, Raul or Dhoba) and tribal people (Saora, Kandha) act as *sevak* or priest. They get remuneration from the villagers for their service. These village deities are also worshipped as Durga and Jogini. The worship of the *Grama Devati* is conducted with great pomp and show on the Mahastami day of the Durga Puja festival. At some places goats and fowls are sacrificed to appease the deity.

The people in the villages still believe in *kalasi*. *Kalasi* is a man or woman who is periodically possessed by the spirit of a deity and pronounces inspired oracles. When a person is being influenced by *Thakurani* or spirit of a deity, he begins to tremble with dishevelled hair. At that time he tells the wishes and decrees of the *Thakurani* to the public. When the spirit leaves, the person again acts as a common man or woman. During the time of calamities the villagers perform special Puja before the village deity. They burn incense, light wick, beat drums, and offer *pana* (a sweet drink). These steps are taken for causing the spirit of a deity to descend upon or possess a particular person, with a view to hear the deity's wishes and oracles. After hearing the bad or good news the villagers again perform ceremonies to propitiate the deity.

The aboriginal origin of the Grama Devati worship can be traced from the following note:

"It seems hardly open to question that this worship of the malevolent spirit, through the medium of shapeless stones, is an offshoot of the fetishism of the aborigines. It still includes, though to a restricted extent, the sacrifice of animals, which is one of the most

characteristic features of aboriginal worship; and the offering of fowls, which are so rigorously excluded from the houses of the upper classes of Hindus, can hardly be said to be anything else than an aboriginal practice. The restriction of the priestly function to the Sudra castes is another link in the chain of circumstances which indicate the aboriginal origin of this form of worship. While the Brahman stood aloof, the mass of the people, leavened in their lower strata by the aborigines, adopted the faith which, by its easy explanation of the origin of evil, appealed most strongly to their simple minds. The Brahman could not, however, long stand against the popular current which thus set in, and he eventually invented more refined forms of worshipping the same malevolent spirit”¹.

Sun worship appears to be very important in the district. The temple at Konarak was erected in honour of the Sun God. The higher caste people worship Him daily while bathing and a libation of water is made in his honour. Many abstain from eating fish or meat on Sunday which is ceremonially observed as it is the sacred day for the Sun God. The Earth is described as the holy Mother of all living things and the giver of all good. She is regarded as a benign female deity. The people worship the Earth goddess during agricultural operations. When a calf is born the Gaudas (milkman caste) allow the first drop of milk from the cow to fall on the ground in her honour. Besides the Earth and the Sun, the planets like *Sani* and *Rahu* are also worshipped on certain occasions. *Sani*, regarded as the son of Surya Devata (Sun God), is supposed to be very malevolent. He is believed to have great influence over the destiny of man. On ritual occasions he is represented by an earthen pot filled with water. Thursday is considered to be the auspicious day of goddess Lakhmi and is observed with religious devotion mostly by the women-folk. They refrain from eating fish or meat on Thursday.

The Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), Banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*), Bel (*Aegle marmelos*), and Tulsi (holy basil) are held sacred by the Hindus. In almost every Hindu household there is a *chaura* or a sacred place where Tulsi is planted and worshipped. Every evening, lighted wicks are offered by the housewife before the *chaura*.

The followers of Mahima Dharma or Alekha Dharma in Puri district are mostly found in Chandanpur, Konarak, Balipatna, Bhubaneswar, Khurda, Nayagarh, Khandapara and Daspalla. They believe

1. Note on the Gram Devati or tutelary village deity of Orissa, by Babu Jamini Mohan Das, J. A. S. B., vol. LXXII, pt.—III No. 2, 1903 Quoted by P. T. Mansfield in Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteer, Puri, 1929, pp. 84-85.

in one God, i. e., Param Brahma, the Supreme Being. He is indescribable, indivisible, and invisible. He is believed to have created the universe. The founder of this cult was Mahima Gosain whose name, parentage, age, and place of birth are not known. His disciples believe that he is an incarnation of Param Brahma. He appeared at Puri in 1826 A. D. and passed away at Joranda in 1876 A. D. (For a detailed account of this cult see-Orissa District Gazetteers, Dhenkanal, published in 1972).

Siva is the most popular among the gods in the Hindu pantheon. Because of his benign qualities, Siva became a very popular god among the common people. The followers of Saivism worship Him in the name of Lingaraj, Lokanath, Shankar, Mahadev, Nilakantha, Rudra, etc. Bhubaneshwar is well known for the famous temple of Lord Lingaraj and is reckoned as one of the chief centres of Saivism in the country. Lokanath at Puri is no less venerated than Lord Jagannath by the people of the locality. Siva shrines with Siva's trident at the top adorn many villages especially the Brahmin Sasans of the district. Usually Siva is represented by the Phallic symbol, the *Linga* and the *Yoni* enshrined in the temple. Siva-ratri is the principal festival of Lord Siva. Sital Sasthi, which marks Siva's marriage with Parvati, is celebrated with great pomp and show in the district. On this occasion unmarried girls observe fasting to be blessed with husbands like Siva, and married women perform rites in the hope of getting children. The devotees of Lord Siva use three horizontal lines of sandal wood paste on their forehead as religious mark and wear *rudraksha mala* round their neck. Saivism was made popular in the 9th Century by Shankaracharya. He established one of his four Mathas at Puri which still exists. Saivism

Sakti is conceived as the divine mother and the consort of Lord Siva. Among the common people Sakti is often the presiding deity of fertility cult. In the district, Sakti is worshipped in several forms such as, Mangala at Kakatpur, Ramachandi at Konarak, Bimala at Puri, Bhubaneshwari at Bhubaneshwar and Bhagabati at Banpur. These are important places of Sakti worship in the district. The Sakta deity is also seen in many villages in the form of folk goddesses. Saktism

The rituals to be observed, the sacrifices to be offered, and the mantras or magic texts to be uttered in order to secure the efficacy of the worship, etc., are laid down in a series of magico-religious writings known as Tantra. The goddess Durga is known to be benevolent while Kali is terrific and blood-thirsty. In the Kalika Purana sacrifice of human beings is recommended and numerous

animals are enumerated as suitable for the purpose. Animal sacrifice is still performed at many Sakti shrines of the district on the Mahastami day of the Durga Puja festival.

Vaishnavism

Vaishnavism is the predominant religion of the people of Orissa. Jagannath is regarded as the incarnation of Vishnu and the existence of his famous temple at Puri has exerted a powerful influence on the popular faith. A number of Vaishnava saints and prophets like Ramanuj, Ramanand and Kabir visited Puri to propagate their cult and founded *mathas*, but the real prophet of Vaishnavism in Orissa is Shri Chaitanya, who made it the religion of the masses. Chaitanya was born in Nadiya (West Bengal) in 1486 in a Vaidik Brahmin family. His father Jagannath Mishra was a famous Sanskrit pandit of Jajpur in Orissa. He had migrated to Nadiya which was then a famous centre of Sanskrit learning and had settled down there. Shri Chaitany lived for long eighteen years at Puri and passed away there in 1533 A.D.

The teachings of Chaitanya put emphasis on Bhakti or fervent devotion to God as the true road to salvation. He recommended Radha worship and taught that the love felt by her for Krishna was the highest form of devotion. Sankirtan or singing the name of the Lord to the accompaniment of music is considered to be a great form of worship. The doctrines of Chaitanya found ready acceptance among the people of Orissa, by whom he is regarded as an incarnation of Krishna and Radha. In the words of Sir W. W. Hunter, "The adoration of Chaitanya has become a sort of family worship throughout Orissa. In Puri there is a temple specially dedicated to his name, and many little shrines are scattered over the country. But he is generally adored in connection with Krishna; and of such joint temples there are three hundred in the town of Puri, and five hundred more throughout the district. At this moment, Chaitanya is the apostle of the common people. The Brahmans, unless they happen to enjoy grants of land in his name, ignore his work. In almost every Brahman village the communal shrine is dedicated to Siva; but in the village of the ordinary husbandmen, it is Krishna who is worshipped with Radha, and Chaitanya who is remembered as the great teacher of the popular faith.*

Chaitanya was a great reformer and his cult represents a revulsion against the gross and debasing religion of the Tantras. He accepted followers from all sections of the society irrespective of caste and

*Sir W. W. Hunter's Orissa

vehemently opposed the practice of animal sacrifice. A peculiarity of Chaitanya's cult is that the post of the spiritual guide or *gosain* is not confined to the Brahmins.

The strict followers of Chaitanya are known as Gaudiya Vaishnavas. The holy places of this cult are Nabadip, Chaitanya's birth place; and Brindaban, the scene of Krishna's sports with the milkmaids. The great religious ferment created by the preachings of Chaitanya and his disciple Jagannath Das, the famous author of the Oriya Bhagabat, gave rise to several sub-sects in Orissa who are commonly termed as Utkaliya Vaishnavas. Their main centre of adoration is Jagannath.

Among the Hindus of the district a microscopic section belongs to the Brahmo Samaja. The Brahmos are monotheists. There is a Brahmo Mandira in Puri town named as "Universal Religious Mission of the New Dispensation". This was established in the year 1930 with the efforts of the local Brahmos and the Brahmos of Calcutta who usually come to Puri during summer. On every Sunday evening Brahmos gather in the Mandir and read the vedic texts and discuss on it. They observe the foundation day of the Brahmo Samaja and the birthday of Raja Rammohun Roy.

Brahmo
Samaja

Two sections of Muslims, namely, the Sunnis and the Ahmadis are found in the district. The majority of the Muslim population of the district belong to the Sunni sect. The Sunnis believe in offering Fatcha at the shrines of the spiritual heads. They abide by the teachings of one of the four Imams (guides) of which Imam of Abu Hanifa is being followed by all. Ahamadis or Kadians are in negligible minority in Puri district, and are found only in village Kerang under Khurda police station. They do believe in Hazrat Muhammad, but not as the last prophet and say that one Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed has come after Hazrat Muhammad which the Sunnis do not accept. However, in general, both the sections of Muslims have faith in God. According to the Sunnis, Muhammad is the last prophet and there will be no prophet after him. They accept the Quoran as the Holy book of the Almighty God. It is believed that Sahi Mosque of Narsinghpur under Pipli police station and Sahid Sahi Mosque of Maludkhas under Krishna-prasad police station were built during the reign of Emperor Sahajahan.

Islam

According to the Census of 1971 the Christians in Puri district numbered 3,275. They are mainly divided into two denominations, viz., the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. The latter denomination consists of the Church of North India and the Baptists. In the district of Puri there are Catholic Churches at Puri, Jatni and Bhubaneshwar. The Protestant Churches are located at Bhubaneshwar,

Christianity

Pipli, Puri, Khurda, Jatni, Bahilipada (Pipli police station), Asrayapur (Bhubaneswar police station), Minchinpatna (Chandaka police station) and Banamalipur (Balipatna police station).

According to Mansfield*, the Baptist Mission was established at Puri by the efforts of Dr. Claudius Buchanan, Vice-Provost of the College of Fort William, who visited the town in 1806, and witnessed the great Car Festival. Being a zealous Christian, he strongly advocated the establishment of some Christian institution near the temple, as a result of which in 1822 Cuttack became the centre of missionary activity with an outstation at Puri. The first Baptist Missionary at Puri was Revd. William Bampton, who arrived from England in 1822 and died at Puri after nine years of service in Orissa. The first Oriya convert was a Brahmin, who was baptized in 1828.

Sikhism

The Sikhs residing in the district are mostly immigrants from outside the State. They numbered 545 according to the Census of 1971 and are mostly found in the urban areas. Their concentration in Bhubaneswar town is comparatively more than other places. There is one Gurudwara at New Capital, Bhubaneswar, which was established in 1960. In addition to the above, there are three Gurudwaras or Nanakpanthi *mathas* at Puri founded sometime in the 15th century on Guru Nanak's pilgrimage to Puri. These Gurudwaras are being run by Udasis. The Sikhs believe in one God, and in a classless and casteless society. They follow the teachings of the ten Gurus and the Saints enshrined in the holy book of the Sikhs, "The Granth Sahib".

Buddhism

According to the Census of 1971, the Buddhists constituted only 0.04 per cent of the population of the district. Some of them are immigrants from outside the State, and reside mostly in the Bhubaneswar subdivision. Dhauligiri, the site of the famous Kalinga Rock Edict of Asoka is only 7 km. away from Bhubaneswar. It was here that the famous Kalinga war of Emperor Asoka was fought in which Asoka won the military victory, but Kalinga won the spiritual victory leading to the initiation of Asoka to Buddha Dharma. Thereafter Asoka dedicated himself to the propagation of Buddhism far and wide. In the year 1972, the Kalinga-Nippon Buddha Sangha constructed an elegant santi-stupa over Dhauligiri. There is also a nice Buddha Vihar set up by the Japanese. At Bhubaneswar, the Mohabodhi society of India has a branch and the Buddha Vihar with the holy Bodhi tree is gradually developing as a Buddhist centre in the Capital city.

* P. T. Mansfield—Bihar and Orissa District Gazetteers, Puri, 1929, pp. 79—80.

The Jains are a microscopic community in the district accounting for 0.01 per cent of its total population as against 0.03 per cent for the State as a whole. This religion preaches austerity, control of mind and passions, *ahimsa* and renunciation of worldly pleasures and attachments to attain liberation. Jainism flourished in Orissa under the patronage of the great Emperor Kharavela of Kalinga (2nd century B. C.) and his successors, the traces of which are still to be found in the hills of Khandagiri and Udayagiri near Bhubaneswar, which are honeycombed with Jain caves, built between third and first century B. C., in which the worship of Parsvanatha is more prominent than that of Mahavira.

At present Jainism has almost disappeared from the district, although a few Jains are still to be found in Bhubaneswar, Jatni and Khurda.

Caste plays an important role in the socio-economic life of the people of the district. For a detailed description of each caste, caste-wise population figures are essential. But since 1951, no enumeration in regard to different castes is being made in the Censuses. In the absence of such statistics, much of the valuable information relating to the life and economy of the people could not be incorporated in the present work. However, a general discussion of the traditional social structure, customs and religious beliefs of some of the castes is given below.

The Badhers are scattered in all parts of the district. They worship *Briswakarma*, which literally means the maker of the Universe. They work on wood and prepare various kinds of agricultural implements and wooden furniture. Some of them also work as cultivators.

The Badus are a class of non-Brahmin temple servants at the Lingaraj temple, Bhubaneswar, and are distinct from a class of Brahmin *sevaks* in the temple known as Garabadus. Their sacred duty in the temple includes cleaning the cella, and bathing and dressing the deity. Their usual surnames are Samantara, Badu Mahapatra, Mahapatra, Singhari, Badu or Batu, and Makadam. During his life time every male member of a Badu family undergoes three rituals : ear boring, marriage and god-touching, of which the last ritual qualifies him to perform temple services. This ceremony is usually held after the marriage is solemnised. On all these occasions, the kith and kin are feasted. All Badu families receive their traditional remuneration from the endowment for their services in the temple. The Badus also act as guides to the visitors and the pilgrims. They arrange the boarding and lodging of their clients (Jaiamans) in addition to ritual performances in different sacred places. After the establishment of the new State Capital at Bhubaneswar in 1948, some of the Badus have taken to other occupations like tailoring, shop-keeping, government service, domestic service, automobile engineering, etc.

Bhandari The Bhandaris are also called Barika or Napita. They are barbers by profession. Their service is indispensable on the occasion of marriage, birth and death. They get remuneration both in cash and kind. In towns they maintain hair dressing saloons. The barbers are usually divided into three classes, viz., Kanamuthia, Chamamuthia and Lamahata. The Kanamuthia barber carries his hair cutting and savings implements in a bag of cloth, whereas the Chamamuthia carries them in a bag of leather. Those barbers who carry lighted torches on ceremonial occasions are known as Lamahata.

Bania The Banias are makers of gold and silver ornaments. They also make fancy articles of silver, copper and brass such as anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurine. They are divided into two sub-castes namely Putuli Bania and Sunari Bania. Usually the Putuli Banias sell spices and herbs. Their number in the district is insignificant compared to the Sunari Banias who deal in gold.

Brahmin The Brahmins of the district can be broadly divided into two classes, viz., Srotriya or Vaidik, and Asrotriya or non-Vaidik. The former includes the Sasani Brahmins whose traditional occupations are teaching to students, acting as spiritual guides, domestic priests, and temple priests. The latter group includes Sarua or Paniari, Panda, Jujari, Suara or Deulia, and Marhia. They are mostly agriculturists. Growing and selling of vegetables, acting as cooks, and officiating as priests to lower caste people are their chief traditional occupation.

The Srotriyas do not intermarry with the Asrotriyas.

The Mastan Brahmins are supposed to be the earliest Aryan immigrants to Orissa from the North in the Pre-Buddhist period. According to O'Malley* "The Vedic religion of nature-worship was introduced by the Aryan immigrants who made their way into Orissa in the early centuries. This cult, however, was largely modified by the primitive belief of the surrounding aboriginal population and by the want of communication between Orissa and the more highly civilized country of Northern India. Consequently, so corrupt did the religion of these Aryans become that the Brahmins of Madhyadesh, the home of later Vedic religion, called them Vratyas, and refused to recognize them as Brahmins or Kshatriyas. Their descendants have probably survived in the modern Mastan Brahmins".

* L. S. S. O'Malley-Bengal District Gazetteers, Puri, 1908, p. 87.

The non-Brahminical occupations and titles of this category of Brahmins mark them out as a class quite distinct from the rest of the Brahmins in Orissa. They are also called Balabhadra-gotri Brahmins.

The Brahmins neither dine with other castes nor accept water from any lower caste people. All Brahmins, whether Vaishnavas or Saivas, observe ten *Samskaras* (rites), namely, *Garvadhana*, *Punsavan*, *Simantonnyan*, *Jatakarma*, *Namakaran*, *Annaprasan*, *Chudakaran*, *Upanayana*, *Samabartan* and *Bibaha* at different periods of life. These rites are believed to purify a person, but not all of them are, in practice, observed by all at the present day. Most of the rites are performed now at the time of Upanayana or assumption of the sacred thread. In addition to these ceremonies all the Brahmins perform funeral ceremonies and the annual *sradha* (memorial rites). The Brahmins are also expected to perform the daily observances such as recitation of Veda, worship of Brahma in Trisandhya, performance of Jajya, etc. Due to the western influence and the spread of modern education traditional caste barriers are becoming less rigid. Now intermarriages among the Srotriya, Asrotriya and even Mastan Brahmins are not infrequent.

The Chasas form the main agriculturist class in the district. Most of them possess land and some work as agricultural labourers. They are divided into four caste groups, viz., the Orh, Benatiya, Chukuliya and Sukuliya; the Benatiya stands first in rank and the Chukuliya is the lowest. According to the custom, all the sub-castes may not eat cooked rice together. The Orh or Oda Chasas, it is alleged, were the first of the tribes who settled in Orissa and began to cultivate the soil, and they claim that the country is called Orissa after them. The Benatiyas are said to have descended from the early settlers who first made the land fit for cultivation by clearing away the *bona* grass. According to Sir H. H. Risley, they are non-Aryan in descent, but he has not given any reason for describing them as such. They employ Brahmins for religious and ceremonial purposes. Chasa

The traditional occupation of the caste is painting. In Orissa, the land of Jagannath, life centred around temples. Temples directly fostered handicrafts which were essential to the festivals. These festivals are still held and attract millions of pilgrims every year. There are Chitrakara Sebakas in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri who paint the deities after Snana Jatra, and paint the cars and decorate them with painted idols during the Car Festival. Their services are also required at the numerous festivals held in the temple throughout the year. Chitrakara

The Chitrakaras of Puri and its neighbourhood are famous for painting *pattachitra* by an indigenous technic. There is a settlement of such Chitrakaras in a village called Raghurajpur near Chandanpur in Puri district. The *pattachitras* depicting Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and other gods and goddesses of Hindu mythology; picture cards (called Ganjapa), and painted toys prepared by them, speak eloquently of the well developed folk art of Orissa. They are now appreciated all over the country and abroad.

There are also Chitrakara sevakas in the Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneshwar. They decorate the car at the Ashokastami festival and attend to other similar duties during temple ceremonies. The Chitrakaras are served by Brahmins.

Daita

The Daitas are only found in Puri. They are believed to be the descendants of the Brahmin Bidyapati and the Savara princess Lalita. They form an important class of Sebakas in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri, and remain in sole charge of the deities from the Snana Jatra up to the end of the Ratha Jatra. During this period they perform the worship of the deities. Customarily the Daitas transfer the 'Bramha' or the inner contents of the deities from the old images to the new at the time of Naba-kalebara. Due to the nature of their employment in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri, they are now regarded as equal in rank to other high castes with whom they occasionally intermarry.

Darji

The Darji belongs to the tailor caste. Originally tailoring profession was a monopoly of the Muslims. The Darji caste in Orissa is mainly divided into two groups, viz., Kayastha and Sudra. The former consists of the immigrants from Bengal who have taken to sewing and have gradually crystallized into a separate endogamous group. The Sudra Darjis appear to be recruited from various castes. They rank higher than the Kayastha Darji and water is accepted by the higher castes from them. The usual surnames of Darjis are Mohapatra, Mahanti and Das.

There are Darji Sevakas in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. They sew dresses etc. for the deities on ceremonial occasions. The Darjis of Pipli, in Puri district, are famous for their applique work. They prepare beautiful applique umbrellas, canopies and fans (*taras*) which are used in the temples on ceremonial occasions. The beautiful applique canopies of different sizes and the garden umbrellas prepared by them are master-pieces of their traditional craft and have found a good market both inside and outside India.

The Gaudas are the pastoral caste of the district, corresponding to the Goalas of Bengal and Bihar. They rear cattle and deal in milk products. Nowadays, some of them are found to have given up their traditional calling and have taken to trade, agriculture and service. They worship Lord Krishna and trace their descent from His dynasty. Dolapurnima (full moon day in the month of Phalgun) is their main festival. On ceremonial occasions they worship cows and sing ritual songs relating to Lord Krishna. The caste is divided into five endogamous divisions, viz., Gopapuria, Mathurapuria, Solakhandia, Mania, and Tanla. The Tanla sub-caste is looked down upon as the lowest in rank. The others do not accept cooked rice or even drinking water from them. Their touch is also avoided. But other four sub-castes observe no such restrictions among themselves. Ever since 1955, the Gopapuria, Mathurapuria, Solakhandia and Mania have been working in unison for the greater interest of the caste, but they still do not intermarry. For religious and ceremonial purposes they engage Brahmins.

Gauda

The Gurias are scattered throughout the district. There are four sub-castes, namely, Bhadarakhi, Haladia, Jhumka and Maira. Except Jhumka sub-caste, females of other three sub-castes do not use any ornaments for their nose. Customarily they worship Ganesh on the day of Ganesh Chaturthi. Traditionally they are the confectioners of Orissa. Many of them are also agriculturists and hold land as occupancy royats.

Guria

The Jyotishas are also known as Naik, Graha-bipra and Ganak. They are astrologers by profession. The Jyotishas used to rule the life of the community, and their influence has not waned even today. Customarily they prepare the horoscope of the new-born babies, and study the horoscope of the prospective bride and groom to find out the suitability of the match. Along with the priest, their presence is essential on the occasion of marriage. They fix up the auspicious moment for the performance of different ceremonies and rituals. They used to read out the almanac daily before the village deities and also in the houses of the well-to-do villagers. They are served by Brahmins.

Jyotisha

The Kahalia is the name of a small caste group found in Puri. Their caste name has been derived from the musical instrument called *kahali* which they play in the temples. They belong to the Vaishnava sect and are served by Brahmins.

Kahalia

The Karans are known as the writer caste of Orissa. It is stated that the Karans fulfil the same functions in Orissa as the Kayasthas in Bengal and Bihar. They are a prosperous and influential caste in Orissa and rank next to the Brahmins. A Brahmin officiates at

Karan

their religious functions. They are divided into four septs, viz., the Krishnatreya, Sankhayayana, Bharadwaj, and Naga. Marriage in the caste is regulated according to the table of prohibited degrees in vogue among higher castes. This caste is very flexible. Many persons of some non-Brahmin castes after attaining certain status in education and wealth claim to be Karans.

Kansari

The Kansaris derive their name from *Kansa* (bell-metal) and are found in considerable number at Balakati, Bhainchua, Kantilo, and Nayagarh. They make utensils and ornaments of brass and bell-metal, and earn their livelihood by exporting these articles to other places. They are not regarded as clean caste, but enjoy the ministrations of Brahmins. They worship the brass scale and weights on the Dasahara day. The Kansari is said by some to be the same as Thatari.

Keuta

The Keutas or Kaibartas are fishermen by caste. They are divided into more than half a dozen endogamous groups, viz., Dhibara, Niari, Rarhi, Machhua, Siuli, Kedar, Girigiria and Nauri. The Dhibaras ply boats and fish in the rivers. The Niaris, apart from fishing, prepare flattened rice. The Rarhis prepare flattened and puffed rice. The Machhuas only catch fish. The Keutas observe 'Chaita Parba' as their caste festival on the full-moon day in the month of Chaitra (March-April). During this festival they worship as goddess Baseli an improvised horse made with a painted wooden head and bamboo frame covered with cloth. A man gets into the empty bamboo frame and lifts the improvised horse with straps hung from his shoulders. Holding the reins of the horse in his hands, he dances to the tune of drums and *mahuri*, an indigenous musical instrument. This is known as Ghodanacha or 'horse-dance', which is a popular folk dance of Orissa. The Keutas also sing from mythological texts and from the works of rustic composers on the occasion.

Khandayat

The Khandayats form a substantial section of the population of the district. Regarding the origin of the word Khandayat, there are two prevailing opinions. The general view is that it means swordsman (from *khanda*, a sword). The other explanation is that Orissa was formerly divided into *khandas* or groups of villages corresponding to the *pargana* of the Muhammedan times. Each *khanda* was governed by a headman called *khandapati*, which was subsequently corrupted to Khandayat. Whatever may be the etymology of the name, it is admitted that the Khandayats belong to the warrior class and are the descendants of the people who formed the landed militia under the ancient Rajas of Orissa. As members of the militia, the Khandayats had to serve as soldiers in

times of war, and in return they were given lands under strictly military tenure. Their characteristic occupation having gone, they have now taken to various professions. Many of them depend upon agriculture as a means of livelihood.

The Khitibamsa or Matibamsa is a caste peculiar to Orissa. Their usual surname is Naik, but they are quite distinct from the Jyotisha caste who use the same surname. The community is divided into three sections mostly on the basis of the occupations they follow. The Khitibamsa or Matibamsa *abadhans* used to teach children in *chata-salis* or village schools. A section of the community take *Mangala*, the goddess of smallpox, from door to door and thereby earn a living. Another section took to weaving. There was no marital relationship between the different sections, but these restrictions have considerably slackened nowadays.

The community traces its origin to the clay figure made by Anadi or Eternity, the great Mother, who endowed it with life and learning, and directed that its descendants should be called Matibamsa and should teach the children in schools.

They claim 'Adi Shakti' as their sept, and caste symbol 'Khadi' or a piece of soap stone with which the children in the past wrote on the earthen floor of the village school. They hold Lord Lingaraj of Bhubaneshwar in high esteem and offer special Puja on the Ekadasi day following Ashokastami. In the district of Puri the Khitibamsas are mostly found in Bhubaneshwar, Khurda, Puri Sadar, Pipli, Nimapara, Khandapara and Daspalla.

The Kshatriyas belong to the royal and warrior class. They observe Upanayan and are ranked next to the Brahmins in Hindu caste hierarchy. They are few in number, and generally rich.

The Kumbhars belong to the potter caste. The term Kumbhar is derived from the Sanskrit *kumbhakara*, *kumbha* (water jar) and *kara* (maker). They prepare various types of earthen pots and toys. They also supply large number of earthen pots called *kurua* (earthen pots) to the temples of Lord Jagannath, Lingaraja and other temples of Puri district. Their service in this respect is indispensable. Women of the caste wear brass armlets called *bahi kharu* and ornaments for nose called *guna*. They observe *kurala panchami* and *odhana sasthi* on the 5th and the 6th day respectively of the bright fortnight of the month of Pausa. On this ceremonial occasion they also worship their implements.

Kumuti

The Kumutis, who are mainly confined to Puri and Nayagarh, are said to have migrated from Ganjam. They maintain their marital relations till today with their caste fellows of the Ganjam district. Usually they prefer the daughter of their maternal uncle for marriage. Most of them are traders and shop-keepers, and a few are cultivators. The Brahmin priest performs all their rituals, but water is not accepted from them by higher castes.

Mali

The Mali literally means gardener. Selling of flowers and garlands is their principal occupation. The Mali Sebaka of the Kapileswar temple at Bhubaneswar is known as Malia. Due to insufficient income from their customary calling most of them have adopted other professions to earn their livelihood.

Natha Yogi

The Natha Yogis live on begging from door to door with a gourd vessel. Conventionally they sing songs relating to the religious preacher Govinda Chandra ; Data Karna, and others by playing on a string instrument called *kendara*. Their usual surname is "Natha". About Nath-cult and Nath-Yogis late Pandit Nilakantha Das wrote as follows¹:—

"They are physicians by profession and are also called Yogi Vaidyas (Physicians of the Yoga practice). Their principal item of achievement is to make proper use of mercury in medicine. This they say their forefathers achieved through Yoga. Mercury they call the semen of Mahadeva. From this, in their practice of Yaga, they found out elixir of life (Mruta Sanjivani), a medicine which makes dead men and animals live again. Even now it is they who know the proper use of mercury in medicine. The Nathas, Nath-Yogis, Natha Vaidyas or Yogi-Vaidyas are a very important class of people in Orissa. The name Natha in all forms as noted above is well known. They are also mostly worshippers of Siva. But some of them have taken to Vaishnavism, and now call themselves Vaishnavas, most probably Gaudiya Vaishnavas, after the 16th Century".

Nolia

The Nolias are found in large number in Puri, Arakuda, Nua-gaon, Manikpatna, and some other places in the district. They have migrated to this district from the South particularly from Andhra and Tamil Nadu. They are fishermen and reside near the sea-coast. There are two sub-castes : Jaliya and Khalasi. The former are fishermen, and the latter work in sea-going vessels.

¹. Orissa Historical Research Journal, Vol. VIII, No. 1, p. 23.

The Nolias profess to be the followers of Ramanuja and worship Baruna, the Hindu Neptune. Flowers and sweetmeats are offered to Baruna before launching a boat or casting a net. They are expert swimmers and possess good physique. They usually attend the surf-bathers at Puri and other places on the sea-coast and numerous lives have been saved by their skill.

The Paiks are most numerous in Khurda subdivision. The word "Paik" is derived from the word "Padatika" or infantry. In the past Paiks were recruited from various castes of which the Khandayats formed the majority. At present, some of them claim to be Kshyatriyas. Though economically backward, they are very much conscious of their social prestige.

The Pathurias are mostly found in Puri town. They are said to have played an important role during the construction of the temple. They have acquired the technical skill from their predecessors and are expert in restoring ancient carvings, making architectural decorations and images. Though economically backward, most of them have not yet deviated from their traditional occupation of stone carving.

The Pataras or Kapurias trade in silk cloth and cotton yarn. They string necklaces, and used to sell cotton or silk bands (phuli) formerly used by women and children for tying up their hair. The weaving of coloured silk cloth seems to have been their original occupation. They have four sub-castes, viz., Phulia, Tasaria, Dandia and Jagati. They are Vaishnavas and specially venerate Lord Bala Deva or Balabhadra. Worship of the deity is ceremonially performed on the full moon day called Gamha Purnami. On this occasion they also worship their implements such as *Chhuri*, *Ankura*, *Pata*, etc. They are served by Brahmins and water is accepted from them by the higher castes.

The Sudhas or Suds are mostly found in Ranpur, Nayagarh, Daspalla, Khandapara and the Khurda area of the district. Agriculture is their principal occupation. They believe that in the days of yore their ancestors were working as soldiers. They worship a deity called *Pancha Khanda*, i.e., the five swords, with offerings of goats and fowls, and their tutelary goddess is Khambeswari, represented in the form of a wooden pole (*khamba*). The Sudhas are divided into four sub-castes, (i) the Bara or high Sudhas, (ii) the Dehri or worshippers, (iii) the Kabat-Konia and (iv) the Butka. Among them the Bara Sudhas rank highest.

Teli

The Telis are the oil-men of Orissa, but many of them are tradesmen. The three sub-castes among oilmen are Haldia, Khari, and Baldia or Thoria. The first two press oil by indigenous method and trade in it. The Baldia or Thoria Telis trade in turmeric which is carried from place to place with the aid of bullocks. The Haldias rank the highest and the Baldias occupy the lowest position.

Tulabhina

The Tulabhina is the cotton spinning caste of the district. Some have taken to cultivation. They have a special instrument for spinning which they call *lathi*. They are not treated as clean caste, but are served by Brahmins and rank much higher than the weaving castes.

SCHEDULED
CASTES

According to the Census of 1971¹, the population of Scheduled Castes was 316,831 (158,574 males and 158,257 females). This constituted about 13.58 per cent of the total population of the district. Of the 53 Scheduled Castes returned in 1961², the most numerous were Bauri (87,288), Pana (35,354), Dhoba (32,345), Kandara (25,537), Hadi (23,039), Bhoi (21,369), Dewar (6,534), Tanla (4,408), Dom (3,839), Tiar (3,593), Bariki (2,973), Dandasi (2,774), Khadala (1,970), Chamar (1,951), Siyal (1,838), and Katia (1,605). The above 16 Scheduled Castes comprised 96.9 per cent of the total population of the Scheduled Castes in the district.

They are concentrated in the rural areas of the district to the extent of 93.82 per cent. The 1971 Census also recorded the highest Scheduled Castes population in the Puri Sadar subdivision (147,768) and the lowest in the Khurda subdivision (34,879). Similarly the proportion was more in the police stations of Puri Sadar (17,738), Satyabadi (17,989), Nimapara (24,624), Gop (19,040), Kakatpur (18,596), Pipli (18,257), Delang (11,363), Baliana (14,883), Dalipatna (18,842), Khurda (10,985), Banpur (10,282), Nayagarh (10,957), Odagaon (11,743) and Daspalla (12,989).

In 1961³, the literate and educated persons among the Scheduled Castes numbered 35,770, forming 13.51 per cent of their total population in the district. It is estimated that literacy is confined to 18.33 per cent of the population in the urban areas

1. Census of India, 1971, Orissa, Part—II A, pp. 322—332.

2. District Census Handbook, 1961, Puri, pp. 270.

3. Ibid, p.246

whereas rural areas claim only 13.3 per cent. Further analysis revealed that 22.81 per cent of males and 4.35 per cent of the females were literate. This indicated that education has spread very little among the females.

At the time of 1961 Census,¹ 28.99 per cent of the workers among the Scheduled Castes were cultivators, 32.93 per cent agricultural labourers, 11.2 per cent engaged in household industries and 18.36 per cent in other services. The rest were employed in trade, commerce, transport, construction, mining, quarrying, etc. Those persons engaged in unwholesome activities like scavenging, tanning, curing of hides and skins account for 0.85 per cent of the total Scheduled Castes population of the district.

Examining the marital status of the Scheduled Castes population by their broad age-groups it is found that the number of married persons in the age-group 15-44 is the highest in both the sexes while large number of widows are found in the age-group 45 and above. Presence of married persons in the age-group 0-14 indicates the existence of child marriage in spite of all efforts to eradicate the evil practice.²

The Bauris are the predominant Scheduled Caste in Puri district. Their population, according to the 1961 Census was 87,288, out of which 84,716 persons lived in rural areas. They are to be found in almost every village in the coastal districts. They live in separate groups. They were at one time untouchables. They make good farm labourers. Their I-Q (intelligence quotient) is not low. From time to time social and political movements spread among them. But nothing take root. During one of the elections the Bauris of Bhubaneswar and neighbouring villages formed themselves into a political group called "Kuji Congress", but it did not last long. A religious movement known as "Nirvedia" started among them. Their leader who died two years ago had declared that he would come back to life after 21 days and his body should be preserved for that period. Thousands collected to see the body from day to day until it became such a danger to health that local authorities had to remove the body and dispose it off. Some of the visitors even made gifts which went to a woman, who had been living with him. Another religious movement called "Trinath" (three God-heads) attracts them in large numbers, the

1. District Census Handbook, Puri, 1961, pp. 246-247

2. Ibid. pp. 21-22

main object of attraction being smoking of Ganja. Being economically dependant on their employers some times contractors exploit them for local intrigue.

They are divided into endogamous sub-castes, viz., Mahabhoi, Tanhara, Ghumura, and Buna. The Mahabhoi Bauris claim to be highest section among the Bauris. They are mostly stone cutters and agricultural labourers. Nowadays some of them have taken to other avocations. The Tanhara Bauris are believed to be next to the Mahabhoi Bauris in social scale. They are mostly found in Nayagarh and Ranpur police stations of the district. They work as agricultural labourers. Some are also engaged at times in mat making. The Ghumura Bauris usually play on a kind of drum known as Ghumura in socio-religious functions. The Buna Bauris occupy the lowest position in their society. Weaving is their traditional occupation.

The Bauris live in houses mostly made of mud and stone wall with thatched roof having no windows. Those who are economically better off have constructed ventilated houses. They do not employ Brahmin priests to perform rituals connected with birth, death and marriage. The Bauris have their own caste priest called Baishnab or Gosain. They have also their own barber. He is known as Behera. The post of Gosain and Behera are hereditary. They do not depend on Dhobas for washing their polluted clothings. The Bauris do not sacrifice hen, goat or sheep in any ritual to please the deity.

As regards education of the Bauris, it was found in 1961 Census that 11.52 per cent of their total population were literates. There was none with college education.

Dhoba The strength of the Dhobas (washermen) in the district was calculated to be 32,345 in 1961. They reside mostly in the rural areas. Their traditional occupation is washing of clothes and wood-cutting. On ceremonial occasions their services are indispensable. In order to maintain their livelihood some of them have opened laundries in towns. At Bhubaneswar, besides their services to the public, they also wash the dresses of the deities in the Lingaraj temple for which they are paid by the temple authorities. As they are educationally backward very few among them are found in government services.

Dom In the 1961 Census, 3,839 persons were enumerated as Dom or Dama of whom 8.75 per cent were described as literates. They weave bamboo baskets and act as drummers on ceremonial occasions.

They customarily tend pigs and claim to be the original inhabitants of Puri. The Ghusurias who reside to the south of the Brahmani river consider themselves superior to those living north of that river. These two groups do not inter-marry. They are not served by the Brahmins. They have their own priests called Baishnab. They worship deities to ward off epidemic diseases such as cholera and smallpox. Out of 309 Ghusurias, 11.97 per cent were reported literate in the Census of 1961. Ghusuria

The Gokhas are found mostly in the coastal districts of Orissa. Their population was 905 in Puri district according to the 1961 Census. Their main occupation is fishing. They use *shalua* made of bamboo sticks and do not usually fish with nets. Their women-folk sell fish. Some have abandoned their traditional occupation and have taken to agriculture. Some also serve as *Palki* bearers. In 1961, literacy among them was confined to 31.27 per cent. Gokha

The Hadis are mostly found in the rural areas of the district. According to the 1961 Census, they numbered 23,039. They worship Hindu gods and godlings. They have their own community priests who perform marriage and other ceremonies. Their traditional occupation in the urban areas is to clear night soil from latrines. Most of them work as cultivators and agricultural labourers. They also act as drummers in social functions of the high caste groups. Due to the untiring efforts of Mahatma Gandhi they have been to a great extent emancipated socially, economically and educationally. In 1961, only 0.13 per cent of them were found literate. Hadi

Irika, Idiga or Chelia Gola, is the name of a small community of the district. They are said to have come originally from Ganjam. Their main profession is to rear goats and sell milk, *ghi*, and vegetables. According to the 1961 Census, their population was calculated to be 185 in the district. Irika

The Kandaras are found in all the Tahsils of the district. They numbered 25,537 in the 1961 Census. Many of them were engaged as village Chowkidars. A large section of them now depend upon agriculture to earn their livelihood. The name Kandara is said to be derived from their skill in archery (Kanda means arrow) and in former times they and the Panas formed the rank and file of the local militia. Their women are very industrious. Despite the facilities provided by the Government they are still backward in education. They worship all the Hindu gods and goddesses like other high caste Hindus. Kandara

Katia or
Khatia

Out of 3,357 Katias or Khatias in Orissa, 1,605 were found in Puri district according to the Census of 1961. Fishing is their main occupation. They perform several ceremonial functions like other high caste Hindus of the locality. The barbers and washermen do not serve them.

Kela

The Kelas are a low caste of fowlers, jugglers, and beggars. Originally they were a nomadic people believed to have come from South India. They are divided into five sub-castes, viz., Nalua, Sapua, Matia, Gandia and Sabakhia. With the exception of the Naluas, they speak a language which is a peculiar mixture of Oriya and Telugu. The Naluas entrap birds; the Sapuas are snake charmers, the Matias are wage earners and the Sabakhias or omnivorous ones are professional beggars. The old men of the caste act as priests. The population of the Kelas in the district as recorded in 1961 Census was 697 of which only 0.14 per cent were literates.

The village Patia with a substantial Kela population was transferred from the Cuttack district to the Bhubaneswar subdivision of Puri district in 1969. The Patia Kelas are mostly snake charmers. Some have taken to agriculture. After harvesting is over they go to different parts of the State with their snakes kept in *pedis* (boxes) and earn a living by snake charming and begging. They also invariably carry with them a trained mouse called 'Govindi Musa' in a small box. The children are very fond of seeing the antics of the mouse.

Mahuria

Number of persons belonging to this community is very few in the district. Their name is derived from the wind instrument called *Mahuri* in which they play on the occasion of marriage and other social and religious ceremonies. Their females make and sell ropes. They are said to be akin to Hadis and Doms.

Pana

The Panas form the second largest Scheduled Caste community in the district. They are divided into numerous endogamous groups or sub-castes. Their original occupation is said to be weaving but they now mostly work as labourers, drummers, cane-weavers, and many of them have taken to cultivation. Though Hinduised, they still retain some traits of their animistic past and pay reverence to the deities which are supposed to be the goddesses of epidemics. The Panas have their priest called Baishnab who officiates on all ceremonial occasions.

Siyal

The Siyals are toddy-tappers. In 1961, 1,838 persons of this community were enumerated in the district of which 13.38 per cent were literates. There was only one matriculate among them.

The Scheduled Tribes population of the district which was 67,474 in 1961 increased to 86,591 in 1971, thus registering a growth of 28.3 per cent in a decade. According to the Census of 1961, there were 29 Scheduled Tribes in the district of which the principal tribes were Kandha, Saora, Shabar, and Kharia. These four tribes constituted 94.62 per cent of the total tribal population. SCHEDULED
TRIBES

The concentration of Scheduled Tribes was the highest in Nayagarh (40,220), and the lowest in the Puri Sadar subdivision (1,470). The police stations such as Daspalla (14,905), Khurda (12,096), Bali-patna (7,547), Ranpur (6,379), Odagaon (5,230), and Banpur (5,144) claimed comparatively more tribal population than other police stations of the district.

Their principal economic activity is agriculture and most of them are agricultural labourers. In addition, household industry and other services are also found to be prevalent.

Educationally they are backward. Hardly 10.2 per cent of the tribals were educated in 1961.

The Census report of 1961 further discloses that the proportion of married persons in both the sexes is the highest in the age-group 15-44 while the maximum number of widowed persons are found in the age-group 45 and above. The small number of married persons in the age-group 0-14 indicates gradual disappearance of child marriage.

The Khonds, Konds or Kandhas are the most important and numerically the most significant tribe in the district. The Kandhas in the district are mostly concentrated in the Banpur *mals* and in the ex-State areas of Nayagarh, Daspalla, and Ranpur. According to the Census of 1961 * the Kandhas numbered 31,845, of whom 15,779 were males and 16,066 females. Kandha

Generally the Kandhas are dark in complexion but some fair persons are also found among them. They have short but broad noses and high cheek bones. They are stout and muscular, and in stature somewhat below medium height. Both men and women are simple, frank and naive in character. They are also noted for their fidelity and hospitality.

*District Census Handbook, 1961, Puri, p. 282

The mother tongue of the Kandhas is Kui, but all the Kandhas of the district know and speak Oriya. According to the 1961 Census, 27, 282 Kandhas were found to be illiterate and 4,563 literate. Most of the Kandhas depend upon cultivation and agricultural labour for their livelihood.

The Kandhas are divided into three classes: (1) Desia Kandha, (2) Dangaria Kandha and (3) Kutia Kandha. There is no restriction among the various groups in ordinary social relations such as touchability, eating, and accepting water, but there are restrictions regarding marriage unions. In the Kandha society marriage is settled after bride price is fixed. Generally it is paid in the form of cow, buffalo, rice, paddy, etc. The man who is unable to pay it is asked to work under his would-be father-in-law's house until required quantity is realised. A prevalent form of Kandha marriage is a show of kidnapping. The bridegroom and his friends make a show of force and carry away the bride. The bride's party also make a show of resistance and withdraw. Widow remarriage is in vogue. Divorce is allowed on certain grounds such as adultery, laziness in household duties, barrenness, and quarrelsome nature.

By and large, the Kandhas follow Hindu customs and rites. They observe several festivals round the year, the festivals at the time of sowing and harvesting being considered important. Their chief deity is Dharani Deota or Earth goddess. She is also known as Tana Pennu.

Saora

Numerically the second important tribe in the district is the Saora. They are also known as Savara, Saura or S'ara. They live mostly in rural areas. Their total strength was 26,188 (12,567 males and 13,621 females) in 1961.

Among the Saoras marriage within the village is prohibited; and they do not countenance cross-cousin marriage. They are divided into a number of endogamous groups. The Saoras used to prefer polygamy. They considered more than one wife as a sign of prosperity in the field of agriculture and greater accumulation of food grains. Now the practice of polygamy among the Saoras has changed, but due to their hardiness and industrious habits the Saora women have a distinct and important position in their society.

The Saoras follow Hinduism. They also worship dead ancestors and observe a number of ceremonies at different stages of cultivation and perform several religious rites for curing diseases. Generally they offer pig, buffalo, fowl and liquor to the deities. Various kinds of pictures are drawn on the walls of the houses in honour of the dead, to avert disease, and to promote fertility.

In 1961, there were 1,461 literates (1,368 males and 93 females) among them in the district of whom only 49 had primary education.

The strength of Shabars or Lodhas in the district was 4,468 (2,165 males and 2,303 females) in 1961. They are educationally backward. Most of them earn their livelihood by cultivation and as agricultural labourers. They worship the Hindu deities. Shabar

The 1961 Census enumerated 1,344 (661 males and 683 females) Kharias in Puri district of which about 19.71 per cent were literate. They are found chiefly in rural areas and profess Hinduism. Most of them depend on agriculture and agricultural labour for earning a livelihood. Kharia

The Hindu pregnant woman observes various taboos for safe delivery and protection from attack of evil spirits. She has to observe also a number of restrictions during pregnancy. During the period of solar or lunar eclipse she is not permitted to cut anything and see the eclipse. She is not allowed to sleep in the courtyard or under the tree. She usually wears amulets to ward off the evil eye. She is neither allowed to draw water from the well nor permitted to work on husking pedal. CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES Birth

During this period she is entertained with various kinds of food. If her desire is not fulfilled then it is believed that saliva will drip from the mouth of the would be child. She is kept cheerful and is generally given the types of food she wants. This kind of fulfilment of desire of a pregnant woman is called *sada*. It takes place generally during the 5th or 7th month of her pregnancy.

When labour pain starts she is usually taken to a lying-in room called *antudisala*. A mid-wife belonging to a low caste or an old woman of her caste is called to attend her. She continues to stay in *antudisala* till the end of the rituals held on the 12th day. Torn shoes, broomstick or branches of *siju* trees are suspended in front of the lying-in room to ward off the evil spirits. After delivery the navel chord of the child is cut with the help of a sea-shell, blade or knife and the placenta is disposed of in a ditch made outside the house. Among the higher castes,

the mother is regarded as polluting for a period of 21 days, and among some of the lower castes it is maintained for 6 or 12 days. During that period fire is kept burning in a pot in the lying-in room day and night for five days. It is believed that unless the room is kept at a high temperature, the child may be an invalid or liable to catch cold throughout his or her life. The mother may also suffer from pneumonia. And also it is said that the fire is supposed to possess magic power to save mother and child from the influence of evil spirits. In addition to this, hot and dry fomentations are given to the mother and the child for speedy recovery and strength. The mother is also given concoction of which the main ingredients are hot spices, such as long pepper and dry ginger. She is also given fried rice (*chura*) and fried garlic.

On the fifth day after the child's birth, a ceremony called *Panchuati* is held, when fried rice is distributed among the kith and kin. On the sixth day a ceremony called *sasthi* is observed in which *Sasthi Devi* is worshipped. In the evening a representation of the goddess is made with cow-dung mixed with earth in which six *cowries* are stuck. These are placed on the wall of the lying-in-room and Puja is performed before it by five women. At night, it is believed, the destiny of the child is fixed up by the goddess. A stylus and a few palm leaves are also worshipped on this occasion. The palm leaf is used for writing the horoscope of the child. A ceremony called *uthiary* is observed on the 7th day after the child's birth. On this day the new born baby and the mother take first purificatory bath. She takes second purificatory bath on the 12th day and is allowed to change her room. On the 21st day *ekoisa* or the naming ceremony is celebrated with Satyanarayan Puja amidst much rejoicing. The child is given a name on this day. The next important ritual among the Hindus is *Mundan*, i. e., shaving the head when the child is one year old. Ear-boring and *Bidyarambha* (i. e., beginning of the educational career of the child) ceremonies are usually celebrated when the child attains the age of four years, four months and four days. *Upanayan* or sacred thread ceremony of the male child is performed in case of Brahmin and Kshatriya children in their early adolescence.

Among the Oriya Christians, on the 7th day after delivery, 'uthiary' ceremony is observed. On this occasion mother and the mid-wife wear new clothes. On the twenty-first day of the child's birth the Christians observe the thanksgiving ceremony. On that day friends and relations are invited to participate in the function. The next important ritual is Baptism. Before this, all children receive religious instruction in an institution called Sunday School. When

they come of age, of their own accord they believe that Jesus Christ is their Saviour. Then they enter into Baptism and are accepted as members of the Christian Church.

Among the Muslims, just after the birth of a child, the eldest male member of the family present at home generally recites the *azan* (sacred verses of God) near the ears of the new-born child. The mother observes pollution for a period of forty days. During this period she abstains from regular prayer. On the sixth or seventh day the child's head is shaved. Next ritual is *aqiqa*. It is generally held after forty days. In this ceremony one he-goat is sacrificed in case of a female child and two he-goats in case of a male child. The meat is distributed among the relatives and the poor for the well-being of the child. The Bismillaha ceremony of the child is observed between the age four and five. The priest recites verses from the Quran and the child repeats it. This marks the beginning of the educational career of the child. They circumcise (*khatna*) their male children at the age of 7 or 8.

Marriage is one of the ten *sanskars* of the Hindus. Eight types of marriages are known to have been prevalent among the Hindus since ancient times. These are Brahma, Daiva, Arjya Prajapatya, Asura, Gandharva, Rakshasa and Paishacha. In recent times, among the Hindus, only Prajapatya and Asura type of marriages are in vogue. Marriage

Generally marriage is settled after the examination of the horoscopes of both the bridegroom and the bride by the astrologer. He predicts whether the stars of both are in harmony or not. If the horoscopes of the couple are found compatible then the marriage takes place on an auspicious day according to the almanac. The religious rites connected with marriage are generally the same among all the Hindus. The principal rites are *kanyadana* and *panigrahana*.

In Muslim society the bridegroom goes to the bride's house in a procession. He is received by the bride's people. Generally in the presence of both the marriage parties the *meher* is decided. Then the bride's guardian with two other witnesses takes the consent of the bride and they declare her opinion. After that the Sermon of the *khutba-e-nikah* is recited by the *kazi* and the marriage is performed. The marriage is recorded in a register maintained by the *kazi* and signed by the bride, bridegroom and witnesses.

The Christian marriages are solemnised in the church. On the wedding day the bridegroom goes to the church in a procession. The bride also goes to the church with her friends and relations. There the bride and the bridegroom swear as husband and wife.

and exchange marriage rings. The marriage is concluded after the bride, bridegroom, two witnesses, and the marriage registrar sign in the Marriage Register approved by the State Government.

Mortuary Customs

After the death of an individual in Hindu society the corpse is covered with a piece of new cloth. Then the body is carried on a bier by the members of his *kutumba* to the cremation ground. On the way to cremation ground *khai* and *kaudi* are thrown by the chief mourner or *karta*. Nowadays, instead of *kaudi* coins are used. The dead body is usually cremated on the bank of a river. In Puri, it is cremated near Swargadwar, situated near the sea-shore. It is believed that if a person will be cremated there his or her soul would rest in peace in heaven. The dead bodies of the new born, the children up to five or six years of age, lepers, and persons who die of small-pox or snake-bite, and sannysis or ascetics are usually buried. *Mukhagni* or lighting of the funeral pyre is performed by the eldest son of the deceased, and in his absence, by another son or the nearest male member of his *kutumba*. Certain restrictions are maintained by the members of the *kutumba* with regard to food. Oil, ghee, turmeric and non-vegetarian diet are not taken during the pollution period.

The *sudhi*, an important ceremony of death, is performed on the 10th day. The shaving and nail paring of the members of the *kutumba* are done on this day. The *karta* performs *tarpan* and *pinda* to the deceased and the family priest utters hymns for the salvation of the deceased soul. On the 11th day food, which were restricted during the period of mourning, are allowed to all concerned.

The Christians usually cover the dead body with a new cloth after cleaning it by water. The dead body is kept in a wooden-coffin. If the deceased is an unmarried person, the coffin is covered with white cloth and a black cross mark is put on it. In the case of a married person, the coffin is wrapped in black cloth. The dead body is laid in the grave with head towards the west. On the same day, the pastor, the friends and relatives go to the residence of the deceased to console the members of the family and to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

The Muslims recite verses from the Quran at the time of death. After death, the villagers and the dear and near ones are informed of the death. Then the dead body is given a bath at a covered place. After bath, the dead body is covered with white cloth (Kaffan) and camphor is sprinkled. Then it is placed in a bier (Tabut). The relatives and villagers of the deceased carry the dead body to the graveyard where the last prayer (Namaj-e-Janaja) is offered. Then they

place the corpse in the grave dug for the purpose with its head to the north and face to the west, i. e., towards 'Kaba'. Then the grave is closed with earth and the Imam recites verses from the Quaran and persons accompanying the dead body also pray for the departed soul. On the 4th, 10th and 20th day there is group Quran reading, poor feeding and prayer for the departed soul. On the 40th day the death pollution ends. On that day Quran is recited in groups and poor feeding and alms giving takes place for the salvation of the departed soul.

The traditional division of Hindus into castes, though basically still intact, has lost much of its social rigidity due to the impact of western education and industrialisation. The drive of Mahatma Gandhi against the social disabilities of the untouchables has broken the barriers between the high castes and the untouchables. As untouchability is now punishable under law, people of various castes do not hesitate to take food on a common table in restaurants and hotels. Spread of education among the people and appointment of persons belonging to backward classes in public services have shrunked the traditional differences between various castes. Moreover, inter-caste marriages are now tolerated. Under these circumstances the old Hindu social structure based on caste is undergoing a steady change.

Inter-caste
Relations

The tribals of the district maintain their individual identity based on clans and dialects, but they have cordial relationship and reciprocity among themselves. Sometimes, marriage between the members of two different tribes, though not socially approved, is tolerated after the observance of due ceremonies.

The cult of Jagannath reigns supreme in Orissa, more so, in the district of Puri where the magnificent temple of Lord Jagannath is located. During the past few decades, new religious leaders like Shri Aurobindo and Shri Maa of Pondicherry, Sathyasai Baba of Puttaparthi, Swami Sivananda of Divine Life Society, Thakur Anukul Chandra, Thakur Nigamananda, Aviram Paramahansa of Karamala (Brahmagiri police station), and Namacharya Shrimad Sachidananda Das alias Baya Baba of Shri Nrusingha-tikiri Matha of Kendrapara have exerted considerable influence mostly on the intelligentsia of the district. Mintu Maharaj of the Universal Peace Mission, Dadaji, and Pagalananda Baba have also some followings amongst the educated and well-to-do. The teachings of these new religious leaders or *gurus* are not different from the basic tenets of Hinduism. At many places, study circles, Bhajan Mandalis, and other religious functions are being organised to propagate the teachings of these religious leaders. At Bhubaneswar, the Aurobindo Bhavan has been

New Religious
Leaders
and Move-
ments

constructed and a school called the Institute of Intergral Education has been founded to educate children in the line envisaged by Shri Aurobindo. A temple dedicated to Radhakrishna, Siva and Annapurna has been recently constructed in Unit-IX of Bhubaneswar by Shri Baya Baba where *akhand-kirtan* is conducted round the clock. Trinath Mela, a less expensive form of worship of the Hindu Trinity : Bramha, Bishnu and Maheswar, which is popular in Orissan villages, is also gaining popularity in the urban areas of the district. Offering of *ganja* or hashish to Lord Siva is an indispensable ritual of this worship, and most of the participants of the mela smoke it as 'prasad'. Many small Trinath shrines have sprung up on the roadside at Bhubaneswar.

Property and Inheritance

As regards property and inheritance, the Hindus of this district are governed by the Banaras School of Mitakshara Law. But the Bengali residents follow the Dayabhaga system. The Muslims follow the Hanafi School of Mohammedan Law. The Hindu Succession Act, passed in 1956, is applicable equally to the sections following the Mitakshara and the Dayabhaga School of Hindu Law.

In the ancestral property of a Hindu the sons take equal share with that of the father. Daughters have no right. If there is a partition between the father and the son, the mother takes a share. After the death of the father, his share in the ancestral property is equally divided amongst the sons and daughters. In the self-acquired property of the father, sons and daughters have equal share. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, has conferred the right on the daughters, prior to that they had no right.

In spite of the fact that the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, has been enacted long back, in practice, the provisions of the said law do not appear to be fully implemented and the former practice of excluding females continues without much change.

Joint-family

Joint-family system is very common in Hindu society. It is the responsibility of the head of the family to look to the needs and requirements of the members of the family, to get the younger members married at proper time, offer oblations to the dead and to propitiate tutelary deities. The joint income of the family is spent after all the members according to their needs. The widowed, the orphaned, the aged and the disabled are duly looked after. The joint-family system thrived well in an agrarian society, but with gradual urbanisation and industrialisation, many are now leaving their ancestral seats for better employment opportunities elsewhere.

A large number of joint-families have thus begun to disintegrate. With the passage of time, individualistic tendencies are growing and the younger members of the family are becoming more particular about their own needs and comforts in preference to other members of the family and wish to be separated. Despite these modern trends, joint-family system still survives, though the spirit of sacrifice and regard for common welfare have considerably slackened.

With the fixation of land ceilings under the Orissa Land Reforms Act, an important change has taken place in the structure of big land-owning families. To evade the provisions of the Act, total holdings have mostly been divided among the members of the family, but this has not always resulted in a break in the joint-family.

Prior to the implementation of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, polygamy was permissible in Hindu society. But it is legally banned at present under the Act. The Christians are monogamous, but the Muslims follow polygamy.

Marriage and
Morals

Hindu marriage is regulated to a large extent according to *gotra*. Usually the *gotra* of one's father is taken into account when a marriage is contemplated. But this kind of restriction is no longer followed strictly in recent times. Any marriage outside of one's caste is considered as a gross violation of social norms. But these intra-caste restrictions are gradually decreasing, and inter-caste marriages are found to have increased, though to a very limited extent, among the educated persons especially in urban settings.

Dowry system is in vogue since long. In recent years to get a well-educated and well-placed bridegroom the parents are paying more dowry either in cash or in kind. This practice causes great hardship to many poor parents. There are also instances of enlightened bridegrooms who refuse to accept dowry. To eradicate this social evil, the Dowry Prevention Act was passed by the Indian Parliament in 1961. The Government of Orissa is taking steps to mobilise public opinion against dowry system. The Dowry Prohibition (Orissa Amendment) Bill, 1975, which was introduced in the State Assembly has since been passed. The Act provides for stringent measures for eradicating this social evil.

Among Muslims, marriage between cousins is not prohibited. Generally the first cousin is preferred. Polygamy is restricted up to four wives, but most of the Muslims are monogamous.

Marriage customs are found to have considerably changed with the spread of education, various enactments, and pressure on purse.

A number of social practices like horoscope examination of the

bride and the bride-groom, and *nirbandha*, which were rigidly observed in the past, are not strictly adhered to nowadays. The practice of child marriage has disappeared, and the age of marriage has increased in all caste groups.

Civil Marriage

Registration of marriages under the Special Marriage Act, 1954 is very rare in Puri district. It is reported that only 90 marriages were registered during the period of ten years from 1963—72.

Widow remarriage

Widow re-marriage is forbidden among the Brahmins and other higher caste groups. Among the lower castes, however, there is customary sanction for widow re-marriage. Marriage of the widow with a junior levirate is usually preferred.

The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 guaranteed a widow's share in her husband's property. Though widow re-marriage is looked down upon by the society, nowadays stray cases of widow re-marriage do occur, mostly in the educated section of the society and are tolerated.

Divorce

Divorce was unknown to Hindu marital code as marriage was considered a religious sacrament. But among some low caste people divorce is permissible by custom. The common grounds of divorce are sterility, impotency, neglect of household duties, and adultery. Divorce is permitted among the Muslims and Christians. The Special Marriage Act of 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 allow divorce, but the tradition-bound people are usually averse to it. The following table shows the number of civil divorces recorded, cases allowed, and cases disallowed in Puri district from the year 1967 to 1972.

Years	No. of Civil divorces recorded	Cases allowed	Cases disallowed
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1967	18	10	7
1968	10	7	4
1969	8	2	2
1970	8	6	4
1971	10	6	2
1972	6	5	3

The position of women was very high in the Hindu society of ancient days. According to Manu gods reside in those households where women are respected (ସତ୍ତ୍ୱାଦିଷ୍ଟୁ ସ୍ତ୍ରୀମନ୍ତେ ରମନ୍ତେ ତତ୍ତ୍ୱେବେଦଃ). Women were also able rulers and brave fighters. History of India is replete with the names of such heroic women. A galaxy of women like Tribhuban Mahadevi, Prithvi Mahadevi, Dandi Mahadevi, Bakula Mahadevi and Dharma Mahadevi of the Bhaumakara dynasty had ruled Orissa in the 8th -10th centuries A. D. But the status of women, however, declined after the Muslim invasion of the country. *Pardah* or seclusion of women came into vogue as a measure of safety and protection. Among the higher castes *pardah* is still considered as a mark of social prestige, but with the spread of modern education it is fast disappearing.

The place of women in society and their economic dependence

In rural areas, women of low castes, in addition to their domestic work, help their male partners in agricultural operations. They also earn independently by working as field labourers. Household industry also provides employment to some. In urban areas the women are mostly dependent and do not take part in any economic activity. Out of the total number of 41,505 female workers enumerated in the district in the 1971 Census, 36,363 were from rural areas. Thus it is evident that the females, in general, are more dependent on the males in urban areas than in rural areas. Economic stress and strain of modern life have, however, forced the educated urban women to take to various professions. Many of them are now serving as teachers, doctors, clerks, typists, telephone operators, receptionists, etc.

Prostitution has been banned in the country by law. In the district of Puri there are no organised brothels, but stray cases of prostitution and trafficking in women are at times reported. At Puri there were regular brothels at Chudanga Sahi on which about 27 persons depended for their livelihood. These brothels have now been liquidated.

Prostitution, drinking and gambling

Among the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes country liquor is usually used. There are foreign liquor shops mostly in the urban areas and those who can afford go in for it. Drinking habit appears to be on the increase in the district. What is more alarming, the habit is spreading even among the younger folk. The police only organise raids when there is large scale distillation which affects social hygiene and the crime position.

Gambling was a popular pastime for some usually during the Dasahara and Kumar Purnima festivals. This practice is gradually vanishing due to police surveillance. They organise periodic raids to detect cases under Orissa Prevention of Gambling Act, 1954. During fairs and *melas* people at times indulge in minor types of gambling.

HOME LIFE
Types of
Dwellings

According to the Census of 1971, there were 4,78,875 houses in the district, of which 4,20,510 were found in rural areas and 58,365 in urban areas. The distribution of houses based on the Census report and the uses to which they are put in Puri district is given below:

Types of houses	Number
1. Houses vacant at the time of house listing	29,170
2. Occupied houses used as:	
(i) Residence	3,40,280
(ii) Shop-cum-residence	3,990
(iii) Workshop-cum-residence including household industry	5,840
(iv) Hotels, Sarais, Dharmashalas, Tourist homes and Inspection bungalows.	995
(v) Shops, excluding eating houses	14,995
(vi) Business houses and offices	2,750
(vii) Factories, Workshops and Worksheds	5,660
(viii) Restaurants, sweetmeat shops, and eating places	1,875
(ix) Places of entertainment and community gathering (Panchayat Ghar), excluding places of worship.	1,985
(x) Places of worship (e. g., Temple, Church, Mosque, Gurudwara, etc.)	14,545
(xi) Others	56,790
Total houses	4,78,875

The statement reveals that the majority of the houses are used as residence. Shops excluding eating houses constitute the second largest group, and the lowest category includes hotels, sarais, dharmasalas, tourist homes and inspection bungalows. The number of latter category of houses in Puri district is the highest in comparison with other districts of the State. The number has gone up from 671 in 1961 to 995 in 1971. The increase is due to the ever increasing rush of pilgrims to Puri where the famous temple of Lord Jagannath is situated.

In this district houses with mud walls and thatched roofs are commonly seen. Most of the houses in the rural areas are made with mud walls whereas houses with brick and stone walls are common in urban areas. Similarly roofs made of corrugated iron, zinc or other metal sheets, asbestos sheets and concrete are rarely seen in rural areas but they are found in large scale in the towns. Roofs in general are of gabled type. The thatched houses can be classified into two types according to the nature of the thatch, e.g., one type is the ordinary variety with one thatch only, and the other has a ceiling made of bamboo or wooden planks and earth underneath the thatch. The latter variety is called *Atu*. It is strong, durable and requires more investment. The impact of economic development, contact with outside world and availability of building materials such as cement, iron rods, metal sheets, asbestos sheets, brick, lime and stone etc. have brought about some changes in the traditional method of construction of houses in rural and urban areas. As such, more and more people are now being interested to have pucca and reinforced concrete-roofed houses.

The building materials for the houses of the people of low income groups are mud, bamboo, reeds and tiles. The tribals residing in the Khurda and Nayagarh subdivisions build their settlements on undulating lands, on the top or on the slopes of hills. Tribes like Kandha and Saora who are mostly dependent on forest for their living prefer to remain in its proximity. They keep their hamlet neat and clean. Their huts are very small in size and the space inside is scanty for a family to live in.

People in urban areas use various types of furniture for a comfortable living. Well-to-do families usually possess sofa sets, chairs, teapots, dining and study tables, bedsteads and other furniture made of wood or steel according to their need, taste, status and capacity. They also possess radio sets, preferably transistor sets, dressing table, refrigerator, electric stove, pressure cooker, sewing machines, wall clocks, ceiling or table fans. People belonging to the lower income group remain content with a chair or two of ordinary type, a cot, a stool or a bench. The poor families in the villages have no furniture, but only mats. People living near forests use string cots which are light and portable. The use of mosquito curtain is more common in towns than in villages. In the past, *sindhuka* (a kind of wooden chest) was a favourite furniture in many households, but now it has become obsolete due to the availability of steel almirahs and iron chests.

Furniture
and Decora-
tion

Although the houses of the people are built with mud or brick walls and thatched roofs they present an aesthetic appearance. The walls of dwelling houses are smeared with cowdung and sometimes with red-earth or yellow-coloured paste. On marriage ceremonies and on special occasions the houses are decorated with care. On all Thursdays, especially during the month of Margasira, *alpana* designs are made on the floor and door steps to welcome the goddess of wealth. The doors of the houses are often artistically carved with geometrical and floral designs and also with figures of birds and animals. Proficiency in *alpana* or *chita* was considered to be a pre-requisite of the Hindu housewife and the tradition still survives in the rural areas. Apart from *alpana* designs, houses of well-to-do families are also decorated with door and window screens, decorative mirrors, flower pots, door mats and table lamps. Some of the house walls are also decorated with photographs and calendars bearing pictures of gods and goddesses, eminent leaders of the country and also film stars.

In Puri district the climate is hot for most part of the year and makes the body perspire profusely. Hence, thin cotton clothes are used by the people.

Generally men in rural and urban areas wear *dhoti*. Some of them also use *lungi* and *gamchha*, *Dhoti* worn with *kachha* (one end of the cloth passed between the thighs and tucked up at the back) is the style prevalent in the district. The poor people do not generally wear any upper garment in rural areas. The peasants usually wrap a piece of *gamchha* or towel round the head while working in the field. Due to external contact, nowadays people use European garments such as trousers, shirts, coats, etc. These garments are not only found in the urban areas but also have infiltrated into the rural areas. Trousers, pants, shirts and bush shirts are commonly used by those who attend offices and educational institutions.

Women, irrespective of caste and social condition, wear *sari*. Women in urban areas wear *sari*, blouse and petticoat, but in rural areas *sari* is used to cover lower as well as the upper part of the body. Differences are also noticed in the mode of wearing *sari*. Married women of the district veil their head as a custom.

As foot-wear most of the people in the urban areas use shoes and slippers. The cheaply available hawai slippers have become popular both in the urban and the rural areas. Wooden sandals are used only by men. The use of turban as head gear is not prevalent in the district. Among the poor people in the villages *Jhampi*, a palm leaf covering for the head, and palm leaf umbrellas are commonly

used for protection from sun and rain. A palm leaf covering for the head and body during rains known as *pakhia* is also in common use in the villages among the field labourers and the poor people. But nowadays there is a growing tendency for the use of cheap cotton umbrellas.

The women of the district use various kinds of ornaments for decorating their body. These ornaments are made of gold, silver, copper, brass, glass beads, plastic, etc. People belonging to low income group prefer to wear copper, brass, bell-metal and plastic ornaments and glass beads. The rich and higher income group people use silver and gold ornaments. The design, size, weight and contents of the ornaments differ from time to time and from community to community. The ornaments used in the past were generally simple in style and heavy. But those in vogue at present are much lighter, refined and sophisticated in design. However, the principal indigenous ornaments of the district are: *Chaurimundi*, *Mathamani*, *Sinthi*, *Mundafula*, *Alaka*, *Malikadhi* for head; *Mala*, *Chapasari*, *Hara*, chain, *Gopa* for neck; *Noli*, *Phasia*, *Pendifula*, ear-ring, *Jhara* for ear; *Notha*, *Guna*, *Basuni*, *Nakafula*, *Dandi*, *Nuluk* for nose; armlet, *Tada*, *Taita*, *Bida* for arms; *Kacha*, *Khadu*, *Chudi*, *Bahuti*, *Batafala*, *Ruli Bala* for wrist; *Antasuta* and *Chandrahara* for waist; *Paunji*, *Ghagudi*, *Pahuda* for ankle; *Goda mudi*, *Jhuntia*, *Chingudi Chopra* for foot. Some of these ornaments such as *Ketakirekha*, *Alaka*, *Chapasari*, *Gopa*, *Noli*, *Malikadhi*, *Tada*, *Taita*, *Bida*, *Batafala* and *Pahuda* have become obsolete among the upper classes. *Chaurimundi*, *Mathamani*, *Phasia* and *Chingudi chopra* are now confined to a very few people. Among the prevalent ornaments the name of *Sinthi*, *Hara*, chain, ear-rings, armlets, *Kankana*, *Chudi*, *Ruli*, *Paunji*, ring, and *Godamudi* may be mentioned.

In the past, certain ornaments were commonly used both by the males and the females. These included *Gopa* round the neck, *Noli* on ears, *Khadu* for the wrist, silver *Antasuta* on waist and *Mudi* (ring) on one or more of the fingers. In recent years men have ceased using all these ornaments except the rings.

Women in rural areas generally wear *Suki*, *Adhuli*, and *Tanka Hara* round the neck; *Khadu*, *Ruli* of silver or gold on the wrists, and *Pahuda* on the ankle. Instead of ear-rings women in rural areas wear heavy *Noli* or *Pendifula* on ears. The nose ornaments known as *Notha*, *Guna*, *Basuni*, *Dandi*, *Nakafula*, and *Nuluk* are used by them to some extent. They also use heavy silver rings called *Godamudi* or *Jhuntia* on toes.

Women in urban areas generally avoid heavy ornaments in preference to light and elegant ones. They adorn their ears with attractive ear-rings or precious stones set in gold. Round their neck, they wear a gold necklace or chain with a locket attached to it. Most of the womenfolk at present do not use nose-rings. Bangles of gold, glass, and plastic are commonly used by the women. Gold rings of different designs, often set with precious or imitation stones are used.

In recent times, the extent of the use of gold and silver ornaments has been affected by the soaring prices of these metals. Moreover, the use of gold has further been restricted by the enforcement of the Gold Control order of 1963.

Food and Drink

Rice is the staple food of the people. But on account of scarcity of rice for the rising population, government is procuring wheat in larger quantities and advising people to substitute rice for wheat. In urban areas wheat has entered the household for the evening meal. But most of the people of the district live on boiled rice, *dal* and vegetable curry. They also take *pakhial* (boiled rice left over night-steeped in an excess of water). *Chuda* (flattened rice), *muri* (puffed rice) and *khai* (pop rice) make their favourite tiffin. Various savoury preparations of meat, fish, lobster, crab and eggs; sweets, curd and other milk products are usually consumed by the well-to-do families. Dry fish is mostly consumed by the poorer section as the price is cheaper. It is the main source of protein for them.

The people of the district also prepare various kinds of *pitha* (rice cakes) on festive occasions. The common cooking medium is mustard oil. Some people also use groundnut, til, pesi (lin-seed), sunflower oil for cooking purposes. Only on festive occasions people use cow and buffalo ghee and various brands of hydrogenated oil.

Drinking of tea has become very popular among all classes of people. Traditionally, in an average Oriya household, *pana* or betel is usually offered as a mark of courtesy when a guest comes to the house. Now in most cases tea is offered along with *pana*. Even in rural areas tea has become popular. Home brewed rice beer called Handia and toddy are generally used by the low class people. Nowadays, both country spirit and foreign liquor are sold openly, and drinking habit is on the increase in all the strata of the society.

Smoking of tobacco is very common among the males. The tribals and other low class people smoke country cheroot made of raw tobacco rolled in *sal* leaf. *Bidis* and cigarettes are also widely consumed by the people. Chewing of betel is common in the district.

Some people are also addicted to opium, *ganja*, and *bhāng*. Drinking of *bhāng* is very popular in the district. The preparation and drinking of *bhāng* is almost a ritual among the people connected with the temple of Jagannath at Puri.

The important centres of pilgrimage in the district are Puri, Bhubaneswar, Konarak, Kakatpur, Satyabadi, Kaipadar, Banpur, Atri, Kantilo, Odagaon and Sarankul. Details about these centres are given in Chapter-XIX (Places of Interest).

COMMUNAL
LIFEPilgrim
Centres,

Various types of dances are prevalent in Puri district. These are held during socio-cultural and religious functions.

Communal
Dance

Debadasi means a maiden dedicated to a deity. She is expected to sing and dance before her deity on the appointed time. The tradition of dedicating dancing-girls to Hindu shrines is very ancient. A number of religious texts, stone inscriptions and copper plate grants bear testimony to the consecration of maidens in honour of gods and goddesses.

Debadasi or
Mahari
Dance

It is not known when the system of Debadasi started in Orissa. There is, however, evidence that it existed in the middle of the 11th century A. D. Queen Kolavati who built the temple of Brahmeswar at Bhubaneswar in 1060 A.D., left a stone slab in which, among other things, she stated that she had appointed Debadasis for Lord Bramheswar. The Megheswar temple inscription of Bhubaneswar which has been removed to the Ananta Basudeva temple compound, also testifies the appointment of dancing girls. None of them exist today. It is not known how long they continued.

The system of Debadasi, however, still continues in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. The Debadasis are also known as Maharis. They are initiated to the order after an imaginary marriage with Lord Jagannath. In this ceremony a piece of new cloth is taken from Lord Jagannath and tied round the neophyte's head, after which she begins her service.

The Debadasis are divided into several groups according to their services, such as, Nachuni (female-dancer), Bhitara Gauni (female singers of the inner sanctuary), Bahara Gauni (female singers who sing outside the inner sanctuary); Patuari, whose duty is to dance during the ceremonial procession of the deities; and Gaudasani (whose duty is to fan the Lord). Only one of the Debadasis named Kokila Prabha is now in active service. She was initiated to the order at the age of 9. She sings, but does not dance. She sings during the Bada Singara (bed-time) of the deities standing at the Kalaghat Dwara. Debadasi

dancing in the Jagannath temple stopped 20 years ago apparently because no young Debadasi dancer was available. The young Debadasis are taking to other professions than dancing. One of them is now serving as a teacher and another is engaged as a nurse. Of the order of Debadasis at the Puri temple the following five exist today: Kokila Prava Debadasi, aged 46 ; Taramani Debadasi, aged 71; Haripriya Debadasi, aged 61; Indumati Debadasi, aged 36; and Sasimani Debadasi, aged 36. Kundamani Debadasi who was 80 died in the year 1974.

Debadasis are not to marry. They are forbidden to enjoy the company of men. They used to reside in a street called *Mahari Palli* or *Anga Alasa Patna*. Two officers called Mina Nayak and Sahi Nayak were appointed to look after their morals. They lived at the two ends of the Mahari Palli.

At one time Debadasis had lands allotted to them, but not an inch exists now. The only remuneration which Kokila Prava gets is two pieces of Matha Puli (a kind of cake) offered to Lord Jagannath worth about three quarters of a rupee. She is naturally proud of her remuneration or *khei*.

In one inscription of the Jagannath temple at Puri, King Pratap-rudra Deva (early 16th century A.D.) issued orders for the performance of dancing at the time of *Bhoga* from the end of the evening *Dhupa* till Bada Singara or bed time of the deities. It was ordained that the dancing girls were to learn the singing of poet Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* only. Apparently the dance must be illustrating the text of the song from *Gitagovinda* which mostly depicts the dalliance of Radha and Krishna. Thus, the dancing must have been highly sensuous.

Debadasis are not only attached to the Vaishnava shrine of Jagannath at Puri, but also to the Shakti Shrine of Mangala at Kakatpur in the Nimapara Tahsil. There are a few Debadasis at Kakatpur who still continue the system. They are commonly known as *daris* (prostitutes). They dance in the temple as well as on other social and religious functions.

The Debadasi dance or Mahari dance of Puri was one of the loveliest forms of Indian dancing. The artistic principle and technique of this dance are most significant for us today, as they provide the basis on which the modern Odissi dance has developed. The Maharis danced strictly according to the classical code of Odissi dance. They followed the *talas* as prescribed in the *shastras* and

performed *bhava* only from the *Gitagovinda*. The Debadasi, prior to her performance, paid obeisance to the deity and then bowed to the Rajguru. Then she began dancing to the accompaniment of *veena*, *mardala* (Pakhawaj) and *gini* (small cymbals). The dance that took place in the Natamandira (Dancing Hall) during the morning offering of *bhoga* conformed to pure dance, i. e., *nritta*. There was no song accompaniment to this dance. The whole performance was a real piece of aesthetic dedication to the Lord. After the dance was over, the devotees used to roll over the ground where the Debadasis had danced. The second dance took place during the Bada Singara or bed-time of the Lord when the dance was expressional. The songs accompanying the dance were taken from the *Gitagovinda* alone.

As a composite art it gives due representation to all the four forms of *abhinaya*, viz., Angika, Bachika, Aharya, and Sattwika. The costume prescribed by *Abhinaya Chandrika*, a treatise on Odissi dance written by Maheswar Mohapatra in the 15th century A. D., was followed by the Debadasis of the Jagannath temple. But the manner in which they tied the *sari* was different from that adopted by others. The *kanchula* used by them was also of a peculiar type. It was usually of black or red colour with a 'V' shaped *zari* border in front. The ornaments bore the influence of the South as well as those prescribed by the *Abhinaya Chandrika*. To mention a few, Kakara and Regada for each side of the head, Mathamani for the middle part of the forehead, Kapa for the lower part of the ears, Chapasarika, a necklace worn tight at the neck; Kankana for the arms, Karakankana for the wrists, Bengapatia with Kinkini for the waist, and Chapuani and Nupura for the feet are used. The most popular design of coiffure is *puspachuda*, a hair-knot decorated with a garland of flowers, the favourite hair-do of Oriya women in the past.

After a glorious tradition of several centuries, the Debadasi dance suffered many lapses during the last several years due to various political and ecclesiastical reasons. However, the Odissi dance of today is the outcome of the strenuous efforts made by dedicated young dancers to revive the dying art of Debadasi dance as it was practised in the Jagannath temple at Puri and illustrated in the statuesque poses in the innumerable temples of Orissa.

Gotipua literally means a single boy. A dance which is performed by a single boy dancer in female costume is known as Gotipua Nacha or dance. But in actual practice, the dance is mostly performed in duet. Two Gotipuas dance together or one dances while the other one rests. When the dance of the Maharis slowly declined due to various reasons, the class of these boy dancers was created to carry on the tradition.

Gotipua
Nachā

The Gotipuas dance in Odissi style, but their technique, costume and presentation differ from that of the Maharis. The singing is done by the Gotipuas themselves. The songs are generally the compositions of Vaishnava poets of Orissa on the dalliance of Radha and Krishna. On the occasion of certain religious festivals at Puri, such as, Chandan Jatra and Jhulan Jatra, their performance is considered indispensable till today. During Jhulan Jatra most of the well-known Gotipua parties assemble at Puri and perform their dance at different temples and *mathas*. They are not allowed to dance inside the temples. Usually they perform the dance in the courtyards or outer buildings of the temples and *mathas*.

Some Gotipuas also perform *Bandha Nrutya* which is full of acrobatic poses and movements. For performing this dance a dancer must have to go through rigorous physical training at a tender age under the strict guidance of a *guru*. "Though not strictly an item of Odissi it is still performed by the *Gotipuas* and a few girl artists of Orissa. The difficult and intricate poses of the body with suppling of various limbs are known as *Bandha* in Oriya, so the dance with these poses is called *Bandha Nrutya*"*.

A Gotipua party consists of four or five members and the *guru* always remains in charge of it. He also sings and plays on the harmonium. Other members of the party are two accompanists, i.e., a Mardala player and a Gini player, and one or two boy dancers. It is interesting to note that most of the *gurus* of the present day Odissi dance were Gotipua dancers in their young days.

It is likely that as far back as the 1st century B. C., dance, music and theatricals flourished in the area comprising the present district of Puri. But due to lack of records, it can not be asserted that the dance of the 1st century B. C., as represented in the caves at Udayagiri, is the Odissi dance of today. However, some ancestral link grown thin with the passing of time can be established. Otherwise, what we come across in the next stage of Orissan temple-art, after a lapse of nearly seven hundred years, could not be explained.

The Odissi dance with its characteristic technique and lyrical grace has established itself as one of the major dance forms in India. In the words of Dr. Charles Fabri, the famous Indologist and art critic, Odissi is "one of the most perfect classical systems of Indian dancing surviving"**. He also observed that "Odissi is a more pristine, a more

* Odissi Dance, by D. N. Patnaik, p. 63

** Dr. Mayadhar Mansinha—The Saga of the Land of Jagannath, p. 125
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carefully preserved primitive form of *natya* and is nearer to the ancient Indian classical temple-dancing as it was known 700 or more years ago***. In fact, Odissi is the traditional dance of Orissa practised for centuries by the Debadasis in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. Many of the technical poses and attitudes of Odissi are faithfully preserved in the innumerable sculptures that adorn the Orissan temples.

The poses, steps and movements of Odissi dance have been classified and codified. Though essentially a *lasya* dance, it also includes elements of *tandava* in its technique.

Pakhawaj, *gini* (a pair of small cymbals) and a flute are the usual musical accompaniments of the Odissi dance. Sometimes violin is added.

In Odissi, different items, viz., Mangalacharana, Batu Nrutya, Pallavi, Abhinaya, and Mokshyanata are observed chronologically. Mangalacharana, an invocatory piece, forms the opening item. Batu Nrutya is held in honour of Siva who is also known as Batuka Bhairava. Pallavi means to elaborate, and is applicable to the dance as well as the music which accompanies it. The movements and the music in this item are extremely graceful and lyrical. Abhinaya is pure demonstration of the emotions contained in the song or lyric that accompanies the dance. In Odissi the dancer never sings. The songs sung are mostly the compositions of the medieval Vaishnava poets of Orissa depicting the love of Radha and Krishna. This is one of the most important items of Odissi in which the performer interpretes the song in movements which transcends into a poem-in-action.

Abhinaya Chandrika, a treatise on Odissi dance, written in the 15th century A. D., carries detailed instructions on the costume, ornaments and make-up of the dancer.

The Chaiti Ghoda dance is performed by the fisherman community on the full-moon day of Chaitra. This dance is mostly prevalent in Kakatpur, Nimapara, Gop, Satyabadi, Khurda and Banpur areas of the district. On this day the fisherman community worship goddess Baseli, who is believed to be horse-headed. So the horse dance becomes a necessary part of their invocation to the goddess. In this dance there is a horse made with bamboo sticks and cloth. The head of the framed horse is wooden and richly decorated with flowers.

Chaiti
Ghoda
Nach

* Ibid p. 125

There is a big cavity inside the framed horse and a man enters into it and fixes the horse up to his chest. Then he dances, displaying the movements of a horse. Two more characters, a man and a woman, sing songs and dance with the horse-dancer. Sometimes a clown is also introduced, who provides humour during the performance. *Mahuri* and *dhol* are the common musical instruments used in this dance.

Danda
Nacha

The Danda Nacha is a ritual dance. Though there are no strict class distinctions for the participants in this dance, only people of the lower class take part in it. The dancers are called *bhokta* (Bhakta or devotee). They are 13 in number in a group. The chief is called the *pat bhokta*. In this dance Lord Shiva is invoked as the principal deity and prayers for His blessings are said.

Different types of movements of legs, arms and shoulders are the distinctive features of the dance. Dancers wear saffron coloured clothes and wear anklets and small bells as girdles. They dance to the sound of a big drum. Members of the orchestra sing religious and other types of songs as accompaniment to the dance.

Gauda
Nacha

The Gauda Nacha is performed by the Gauda or Gopal (cow-herd) caste people of the district. During the Dola festival they perform this dance. Young Gopal boys dance on the occasion striking each other's sticks in a rhythmical manner. They also wear *ghagudi* or small bells as girdles which produce a musical effect. *Blowing of Singha* (buffalo's horn) and playing on flute usually accompany the dance. While dancing, they sing songs relating to Lord Krishna and His consort Radha.

Kela-Keluni
Dance

The Kela-Keluni dance is prevalent amongst a nomadic class of people known as Kela. Excepting for a few months of the year they remain out of their homes. Originally they are snake-charmers and bird-catchers. They have taken to dancing as one of their professions. They move throughout the district earning their livelihood. In their dance the Kela plays a peculiar instrument known as *dhuduki* which produces a peculiar sound. He dances with the Keluni (his wife) and also sings songs.

Mostly it is a duet dance. The principal movements are of the buttocks and the knees. The songs they sing are of a special type and popularly known as Kela-Keluni Geet. In some parts of Orissa this dance is known as Dhuduki dance.

This is not the type of Naga dance prevalent in the North Eastern Naga Nacha Frontier Agency, but a traditional folk dance of Orissa prevalent in the district of Puri. In this dance the dancer is dressed like a warrior, equipped with sword, shield, dagger, a big bow with arrows and other weapons. He wears a heavy headgear and ties small tinkling bells on the ankles and thighs. The heroic gait and the ferocious look of the Naga dancer are awe-inspiring. The dancer must be young and physically very strong to dance with the heavy weight of the weapons and the peculiar habiliments. Usually two persons take part in the dance. Musical instruments called *jodinagara* accompany the dance.

Naga Nacha forms an important item during the Rama Navami festival or *sahi jata* observed in the *sahis* or streets of Puri town in the month of Chaitra (April-May). Like all Hindu dances the Naga Nacha has also a religious significance. According to scholars, the dance has some relation with the Tantric Naga Cult. Lord Jagannath is dressed as Naga or Nagarjuna on the year when Panchaka is observed for six days instead of five. At Puri, before the Naga dance *puja* is offered to Dakshina Kali and the weapons of the dancer are worshipped. Then the dancer worships god Nrusingha for his blessings.

Naga Melan or the assemblage of Naga dancers is held in the village Nuasasan on the day of Nrusingha Janma. It is observed in the village Haripur, Balanga, Balisahi and Balakati on the full-moon day of Baisakha. In the village Rupadeipur the Melan is held on the Champaka Dwadashi day.

The Paika dance is a martial dance of Orissa. It is generally Paika Nacha practised in Khurda and Nayagarh subdivisions of the district. This type of dance is performed by a warrior class, known as 'Paika'. The primary aim of this dance is physical exercise, and the infusion of courage in the dancing warriors. In ancient times this was a rehearsal for battle.

It is a group dance. In the beginning the Paika dancers appear one by one in quick steps, holding *khanda* (sword) and *dhal* (shield). Then they salute the presiding deity of war and begin dancing. All of them shout "hai" "hai" for excitement. They also utter some "Boli" (rhythmical words) in order to raise the tempo of the dance which is accompanied by two earthen drums known as "Tikura". When the drums are played in high tempo the dancers dance and fight among themselves so quickly that any dancer committing the slightest error in timing is certain to be injured.

This dance of fighting is marked by its explosive vitality. So, a dancer takes part in this performance only after a long practice. The costume of this dance is that of a typical Oriya warrior of the past and most colourful.

FASTS AND FESTIVALS

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

Aanla Nabami

The Aanla Nabami is observed on the ninth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Karttika (October-November). On this day thousands of people gather at Satyabadi and visit the temple of Sakhi Gopal. The feet of Radha, the consort of Sakhi Gopal, which remain covered throughout the year are allowed for public view only on this day. In some places people observe the festival by worshipping Vishnu under an Aanla tree. Aanla is a myrobalan.

Asokastami

The Car Festival of Lord Lingaraj is celebrated at Bhubaneshwar on the Asokastami day, i. e., the 8th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Chaitra (March-April). On this day Chandrasekhar (the proxy of Lord Lingaraj), Rukmini and Basudeva are driven in a chariot to Rameswar temple, situated at a distance of about 1.5 km. from the Lingaraj temple. The Car is called Rukuna Ratha after goddess Rukmini. The return Car Festival occurs on the fifth day. A large number of people from Bhubaneshwar and the nearby villages congregate to witness the festival.

Asokastami festival is also celebrated at Banpur, Gambhari-munda and Govindapur in Banpur police station, and at Dia and Kapileswar in Tangi police station.

(Details about this festival are given in Chapter XIX, Appendix-I, Bhubaneshwar).

Baruni Snana

The Baruni Snana is observed on the 13th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Chaitra (March-April) if it happens to be a Saturday or Satavisa Nakshetra. If the day happens to be both

Saturday and Satavisa Nakshetra then it is called *Mahabaruni joga*. On the day of Baruni and Mahabaruni many people take their holy dip in the sacred rivers and the sea.

On this occasion thousands of people congregate at Balapur in Satyabadi police station and take their holy dip in the river Bhargavi. They also pay oblation to their ancestors and visit the Balunkeswar Siva temple at Baral which is not far off. This festival is also observed at Tinikudi in Sadar police station, Bhandisahi in Kakatpur police station, and Padmabati in Fategarh police station of the district.

The Bhagabat Melan is a popular festival in many parts of the district, observed during the bright fortnight in the month of Baisakha (April-May). Almost in every village in Orissa there is a *Bhagabata-ghara* where the *Bhagabat pothi* or the palm leaf manuscript of the Bhagabat is worshipped. These *pothis* are ceremoniously brought in processions from different villages to the place of *melan* or meeting, and worshipped.

Bhagabat
Melan

On the sixth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Baisakha a Bhagabat Melan is held in the village Atharabhang (under Pipli police station) with great pomp and show and lasts for four days. The *bhagabat pothi* of 22 villages and the local goddess Chhateswari are worshipped on the occasion. A fair is held at the place for four days where hundreds of people congregate.

The Chandan Jatra is observed at Puri, Bhubaneswar, Satyabadi and many other places in the district. It starts from Akshya Trutiya, the third day of the bright fortnight in the month of Baisakha (April-May). At Puri the festival lasts for 21 days (A detailed account of the Chandan festival at Puri is given in Appendix I to Supplement I, Jagannath).

Chandan
Jatra

In some places, unlike Puri, the festival is celebrated for a period of ten or seven days.

The Da-ana Chori is the name of a festival observed on the 14th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Chaitra (March-April). The significance of the festival is that on this day Shri Krishna with Balaram had stolen Damanaka or Da-ana tree from the garden of Kansa. The festival is observed gorgeously in the village Ghoradia in Delang police station.

Da-ana
Chori Mela

Durga Puja
and
Dasahara

The Durga Puja and Dasahara festivals are celebrated during the bright fortnight in the month of Aswina (September-October). The Durga Puja continues for four days from Saptami up to Dasami. People also worship their vocational implements on these days and stop work in the workshop. Clay images of goddess Durga are worshipped at many places in the district with great pomp and splendour of which mention may be made of the celebrations held at Puri, Bhubaneshwar, Jatni, Khurda and Nayagarh. At Puri this festival is called *gosani jata*. The Gosani or Durga images constructed at Puri are of colossal size with distinctive iconographic features. The 10th day of the festival is called Dasahara. On this day the images are taken out in procession for immersion in tanks or rivers.

Durga Puja is also celebrated with due ceremony at several Sakta shrines in the district of which the worship of Mangala at Kakatpur, Bhagabati at Banpur, and Bimala at Puri deserve special mention. Animal sacrifice is also performed at these places. Dasahara has a special significance to the warrior caste. They worship their old weapons of war and exhibit physical feats on the occasion. Their heroic forebears used to start on fresh military expeditions during this season of the year.

Dola Jatra

Dola Jatra is an important festival in the district. This festival is observed in two different ways. One is called Raja Dola. It is observed from the day of *phagu dasami* up to *phagu purnima*. The other is called Panchu Dola. It is observed from the next day of *phagu purnami* to *chaitra krushna panchami*. On this occasion the image of Shri Krishna is placed in a decorated Biman and carried in procession to the accompaniment of music. This is the main festival of the people belonging to Gauda Caste. They worship the cow and play Naudi (a play with sticks) by singing songs relating to Radha Krishna.

The festival is observed with due ceremony in the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. At Balanga Harirajpur, Banpur and Itamati Panchu Dola is observed on a grand scale. A large number of people congregate at these places to witness the festival and many temporary stalls do brisk business on the occasion.

Janmastami

The festival which is celebrated in honour of Shri Krishna's birth day is known as Janmastami. This falls on the 8th day of the dark fortnight of Sravan (July-August). A large number of people go to the temples where the birth ceremony of Lord Krishna is observed. Many devout Hindus observe fast for the whole day.

At Kakatpur the Jhamu Jatra is observed for about a month in the month of Chaitra (March-April). According to a legend goddess Mangala hid herself in river Prachi to avoid the attack of Kalapahada. After some days, the Sevayats were told about it in a dream. The search was made accordingly in the first Tuesday of the month of Chaitra, and the goddess was recovered on the last Tuesday of that month. Since then Jhamu Jatra is being observed for the whole period of the search, i. e., from the 1st Tuesday of the month of Chaitra up to the last Tuesday of the month. On the last Tuesday a trench 4 ft. long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ft. wide and $1\frac{1}{2}$ ft. deep is dug in front of the temple of goddess Mangala. It is filled with charcoal and kept ablaze. Traditionally some Sevayats of goddess Mangala walk over the fire at noon for about 4 to 5 minutes. For performing this service they enjoy landed jagir from the temple.

Jhamu Jatra

A big fair is held at Kakatpur on the occasion which is attended by thousands of people. About 400 stalls are opened. Generally wooden furniture, agricultural implements, mats, stone materials and stationery articles are brought for sale.

Fire walking ceremony is also observed on the 1st Baisakha (13-14th April) at a number of places in Bhubaneswar. The other places of the district where this ceremony is observed, are Aiginia in Bhubaneswar police station; Balia Sasan and Gopinathpur in Nimapara police station; Dhumalo, Narsinghapur Hat and Davar in Gop police station; Sathilo in Baliaanta police station; Khajuripada in Tangi police station; Khurda in Khurda police station; Sanapada, Krushnasaranpur and Govindapur in Begunia police station.

The Jhulan Jatra or the swing festival of the deities Radha-Krishna is held from the 10th of the bright fortnight in the month of Sravana (July-August) to the full-moon day. It is observed at many places in the district, but with great pomp in the temple of Jagannath and in the Mathas located at Puri.

Jhulan Jatra

The Kali Puja is observed at many places in the district on the 14th day of the dark fortnight of the month of Karttika (October-November) when clay and straw images of goddess Kali are set up and worshipped. Ceremonial worships are also performed on the occasion at various Shakti shrines in the district.

Kali Puja
and Diwali

The new-moon day of Karttika is known as Dipavali Amabasya or Paya Amabasya. On this day the Hindu householders in remembrance of their ancestors perform *sradha* and bid farewell to them with lighted sticks (Kaurnria) in the first watch of the night. Every

home is decorated with twinkling *dipas* (clay lamps) in the evening. Display of fire works has formed an indispensable part of Dipavali celebrations.

On this day the new commercial year begins for the Marwaris and other North Indian business communities. They open new account books and enjoy the festival with feasting and merrymaking.

Kumar
Purnima

The full-moon day of the month of Aswina is called Kumar Purnima. On this day Kumarotsava or the festival of youth is observed. "This festival", writes Dr. Mayadhar Mansinha, "appears to be the remnant of a youth cult in ancient Orissa. Kumar is Kartikeya, Lord Siva's son, symbolising, beauty, youth, bravery and military leadership..... It is fascinating to think that the ancient Oriyas had taken up this supreme symbol of youth for an annual poetisation, highlighting the excellence of youth-cult in the nation's consciousness"*.

On this day the unmarried girls do fasting and wear new clothes. They worship the rising moon before the *tulasi chaura*. Bhoga offered to the full-moon is called *chanda*. Unmarried boys and girls also establish friendship by offering *chanda* to each other and call each other by that name. The *tulasi chaura* is decorated by the girls with various floral designs on the occasion and also on the evenings preceding the full-moon. The girls sing songs typical to the occasion and play *puchi*, which is a kind of frolicking game. The whole night is relieved with song, dance and merrymaking. Nowadays, variety performances and other cultural programmes are being organised on the occasion, mostly in the urban areas.

Magha
Saptami

The Magha Saptami Mela is held at Konarak on the 7th day of the bright fortnight of Magha (January-February). The three deities, namely, the Dakhineswar Deb from Kurujang, the Isaneswar from Kunja, and the Tribeniswar from Madhipur come to Chandrabhaga during the small hours of Sasthi. Previously the deities used to come in grand processions, but with the abolition of Zamindaris the pomp and show have vanished. Nowadays, the sevakas bring the deities in a simple ceremony. The river Chandrabhaga has now been silted up. The pilgrims take their holy dip in a pool of water which is supposed to be the ancient bed of the river, after the deities have done so. The ceremonial bath is performed in the early morning of Saptami.

*The Saga of the Land of Jagannath, by Dr. Mayadhar Mansinha, p. 29

After taking their holy dip at Chandrabhaga the pilgrims usually come to worship the Nabagraha images installed near the Konarak temple. According to legend *Samba*, the son of ShriKrishna, who was suffering from leprosy was cured after taking bath at Chandrabhaga on the Magha Saptami day. The duration of the fair is two days. To meet the requirements of the pilgrims, more than one hundred temporary stalls are opened at Chandrabhaga and Konarak.

The Government used to pay a sum of rupees fifty to meet the expenses of the procession of the three deities, but this has been stopped. The Revenue Department spends money for removing sand from the bathing Ghat. Special police arrangements are made during the fair to maintain law and order. The Public Health Department usually makes arrangement for the supply of drinking water to the pilgrims.

The Magha Saptami is also observed at Khandagiri near Bhubaneswar. It is popularly known as Khandagiri *mela*. Many temporary stalls are set up for the occasion and thousands of people attend the *mela*. It continues up to the full-moon day.

On the day of Makara Sankranti, Makara Jatra is held at many places in the district. This is observed in a grand scale in the village Atri, situated at a distance of 13 km. from Khurda. The temple of Hatakeswar Siva is situated near the Atri hot spring. It is believed that people get cured of their diseases and their desires are fulfilled by worshipping Hatakeswar.

Makara
Jatra

About 20,000 people gather here every year on the occasion. People get an opportunity to enjoy the festival as it takes place at the end of the harvesting season. Sanitary arrangements during the fair are made by the Public Health Department.

This is an important agricultural festival in the district observed for three days, i. e., from the last day of the month of Jyaistha called 'Pahili Raja' up to the 2nd day of the month of Asadh, known as Bhuindahan or Bhumidahan. The first day of the month of Asadh is called 'Raja Sankranti'. Mother Earth is supposed to be *rajaswala* or under menstruation for these three days and all agricultural operations like ploughing, digging, sowing, etc. are suspended for the period. In Hindu households, cooking is stopped on the first and the 3rd day of the festival and girls are forbidden to walk on earth with bare feet for the three days. The day preceding 'Pahili Raja' is observed as the day of preparation for the festival. Various kinds of dishes, *pithas* or rice cakes and sweets are prepared. Raja is chiefly a festival

Raja

of feasting and merrymaking. The young men play various outdoor games, the girls enjoy the swing and sing songs, and the elderly people play dice and cards. The festival ends on the day following 'Bhumidahan' when Mother Earth is given a ceremonial bath. This is called *Basumati Snana*.

Rama Navami

Rama Navami is observed on the ninth day of the waxing moon in the month of Chaitra (March-April) in memory of the birthday of Rama, the celebrated hero of the Ramayana. This festival is observed with due ceremony in the temple of Jagannath at Puri. Lord Jagannath is dressed as Rama on the occasion and worshipped.

Rama Navami is also observed at some other places in the district of which the celebrations held at Odagaon and Daspalla need special mention. The famous shrine of Lord Raghunath is situated at Odagaon. Rama Navami is celebrated here with great pomp and show for fifteen days. Thousands of people, mostly from the districts of Ganjam and Puri, congregate here for the occasion. Many special buses ply from Aska and Nayagarh to carry the pilgrims. At Daspalla this festival is popularly known as 'Lankapodi' and is observed for a fortnight. The last day is the culminating point of the festival. Colossal paste-board effigy of the ten-headed Ravana is erected. It is packed with crackers and explosives. The festivities conclude with Rama shooting fiery arrows into the effigy which explode the crackers put inside it. The festival at Daspalla attracts thousands of visitors from far and near. The rulers of Daspalla ex-State patronised this festival. Now it is managed by the Endowment Department of Orissa Government.

Ras Purnima

The Ras Purnima, also known as Panchaka festival, is held during the last five days preceding the full-moon in the month of Karttika (October-November). Many devout Hindus, especially women, observe Karttika as a sacred month and live on *Habishanna* or one strictly vegetarian meal a day. A light or lamp called *akasdipa* is also kept suspended on a high pole every evening in the month of Karttika. The Panchaka or the last five days before the full-moon is considered most holy. Large number of people from different parts of the State and the adjoining tracts assemble at Puri during Panchaka. The festival is also observed at various other places in the district. A distinctive feature of the celebration of the festival on the full-moon day is that in the early morning thousands of men, women and children after taking their holy bath in the rivers or tanks float toy boats made of the outer layer of banana trees or *sola-pith*

with lighted lamps fixed to them. Flowers, betel leaf, arecanut, etc. are placed on the toy boats. While floating the boats the people utter these words :

Aa, ka, ma, bai, pana gua thoi
Pana gua tora, masaka dharama mora.

This sailing of toy-boats is supposed to be in memory of the past maritime activities of the Oriyas who sailed to the Eastern Archipelago and to other parts with the advent of the favourable wind during this time of the year.

The Ratha Jatra or Car Festival of Lord Jagannath is held on the second day of the bright fortnight in the month of Asadh (June-July). Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra, and Sudarsana are brought from the main temple and placed in the chariots. After *chherapahanna* ceremony, the chariots are pulled by hundreds of devotees from all parts of India. The spectacular procession starts from the *singhadwara* of the temple to *Gundicha Ghara*. After a stay for a period of seven days at *Gundicha Ghara* the deities are carried back to the temple. This return car festival is known as *Bahuda Jatra*. Besides the world famous Ratha Jatra at Puri, the festival is also observed at other places in the district of which mention may be made of those observed at Nayagarh, Ranpur, Daspalla and Bhubaneshwar. Details about the Car Festival at Puri are to be found in Appendix-I to the Supplement I, 'Jagannath'; and in the Supplement II, Naba-kalevar of 1969 and the Car Festival. Ratha Jatra

The Sidheswar *mela* is held near the Sidheswar temple of Gopinathpur under Tangi police station. It is held on each Sankranti day. The gathering for the *mela* generally starts from the previous night and continues till the afternoon of the next day. Sidheswar
Mela

This is observed in honour of Lord Siva. On the day of the *mela* a good number of people gather from the neighbouring areas. Traders also make a brisk business in clothes, iron ware, building materials, articles made of bamboo, etc.

Sivaratri is celebrated in all the temples of Lord Siva on the 14th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Phalguna (February-March). At night the proxy of the Lord is taken round the temple and devotees remain awake throughout the night. In the midnight a lamp called 'Maha Dipa' is taken to the top of the temple and is kept burning throughout the night. The devotees watch this ceremony with keen interest and break their fast after it is over. This festival is observed with great pomp and splendour in the Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneswar, Lokanath temple at Puri, and Ladukeswar temple at Sarankul. Thousands of people congregate at these places on the occasion. Sivaratri

Sunia

Sunia is celebrated on the 12th day of the bright fortnight in the month of Bhadrav (August-September). Traditionally this marks the beginning of the Oriya new year as the regnal year of the Gajapati Maharaja of Puri is counted from this day. Sunia was being observed with much eclat by the Rajas and the Zamindars in the past, who used to receive *bhetis* or presents from the *royats* and the artisans in their Zamindari. With the abolition of the feudal system the importance of Sunia has been considerably minimised. It is still observed with a simple ceremony by the old feudal families and the Raja of Puri.

Tribeni Jatra

The Tribeni Jatra is held each year at Bhapur in Balipatna police station. In the early morning of the new-moon day of Magha (Magha Amabasya) people from far and near come to Tribeni, i. e., the confluence of the rivers Sola, Manikarnika and Prachi for taking a holy dip (Buda).

Gokarneswar temple is situated at a distance of 1 km. from this place towards the east of Prachi river. Bilweswar temple stands on the west of Prachi. The people after taking their holy dip visit the temples.

This fair starts from the new-moon day (Tribeni Amabasya) and lasts for about a fortnight. Thousands of people attend the fair. Wooden furniture, stone materials and various other articles are brought for sale in the fair.

Trinath
Mela

The three deities worshipped as Trinath are Brahma, Bishnu and Siva. For very many centuries these three together were worshipped as Trinath in individual households to which people were invited. The householder may be having Trinath Mela once in a year, but very rarely more than twice. The householder would hold such a congregation for a special purpose such as a wish fulfilled. The only ingredient required for Trinath Mela are one pice worth of oil (illuminant) one pice worth of betel leaf and one pice worth of ganja (marijuana). Although this is laid down in a booklet in verse called "Trinath Mela", nowadays a Trinath Mela may cost as much as Rs. 100.00 of which Rs. 50.00 may be the cost of ganja which can be smoked by the crowd. Usually the clay pipe in which ganja is smoked is passed from hand to hand until every one has smoked in the assembly. Many of the smokers smoke drawing the smoke through an improvised pipe made with the fingers. By the end of the Mela the ganja pipe may have touched a hundred lips. Although in the past it was held occasionally in households, during the past 20 years the worship of Trinath is held

at many places. In Bhubaneshwar N. A. C. area, mostly through the efforts of the small shopkeepers and the poor working class people nearly a dozen and a half little masonry Trinath shrines by the roadside have cropped up where a small crowd may collect in the evening to hear some Bhajan and smoke ganja. The congregation usually consists of a large number of the poorest people in the society. Brahmins may also attend and smoke the pipe which is being smoked by a sweeper sitting by his side. The Trinath Mela must have started as a classless and casteless democratic cult.

The Muslims, the Christians, the Sikhs, the Jains and the Buddhists of the district like their co-religionists in other parts of the country celebrate the festivals enjoined by their respective religions.

Festivals
among other
communities

The traditional rural pattern of religious entertainment constitute recitations from the Oriya Purans like Jagannath Das's Bhagabat, Balaram Das's Ramayan, Sarala Das's Mahabharat, Oriya Hari-bansa or other religious texts. A Purana Panda is usually engaged to recite the sacred books in the evening which is attended by the villagers. Singing of Bhajan or Kirtan accompanied with musical instruments like *khanjani*, *gini*, *murda* or harmonium is also another popular form of entertainment of the people. The modern ways of entertainment have not much affected this traditional pattern of folk entertainment, especially in the rural areas. Occasional acrobatic feats, monkey dance, bear dance and snake charming performed by itinerant professional groups also provide entertainment to the people.

Recreation

Fishing is another rural pastime. Cock fighting is popular mostly among the aboriginals. The festivals and other social functions round the year never leave the people in want of mirth. They also enjoy *pala*, *daskathia*, *suanga*, *jatra*, *gotipua nacha* and itinerant cinema shows occasionally performed in the villages. Radio sets supplied by the Government to different institutions of the district also provide recreation to rural folk.

In urban areas cinema is a common source of entertainment. Out of the eleven cinema houses in the district there are three in each of the towns of Puri and Bhubaneswar. The remaining five are at Nayagarh, Khurda, Jatni, Nimapara and Balugaon. Besides many jatra, opera and theatre parties in the district, there is one permanent professional theatre party at Puri with almost regular daily shows. Sometimes, circus parties, magic shows and exhibitions provide entertainment to the people. There are several recreational clubs and associations functioning at different places in the district which provide entertainment to their members.

Among parks and gardens found in the district, the Botanical Garden and the Zoo at Nandankanan is most important which attract large number of visitors. Nandankanan, the Barunai hills near Khurda, Khandagiri, and Bhuasuni near Bhubaneswar. Kalijai in the lake Chilka, and Kantilo on the river Mahanadi in Khandapara Tahsil are some of the famous picnic spots in the district. A large number of students and other people go to these places for sight seeing and picnic.

Hotels and restaurants are also places for social gathering and amusement. At Puri and Bhubaneswar there are good hotels and restaurants that attract tourists and visitors.

From recreational and religious points of view, the other famous places in the district are Bhubaneswar, Dhauli, Konarak, Kakatpur, Puri, Chilka, Banpur, Barakul, Sarankul, Odagaon, and Atri.

The abolition of Zamindari has brought a rational system of land revenue collection and the cultivators are now assured of their right over the land they cultivate. With the abolition of intermediary interests in land direct contact between the Government and the tenants has been established. This has helped in emancipating the tenant from agelong subordination to the Zamindar. Under the changed circumstances, the common man feels more secured and free and there has been palpable changes in his social and material outlook.

Different systems of land management and land administration were prevalent in the ex-States of Ranpur, Nayagarh, Khandapara and Daspalla which now form part of the district. They were mostly governed by the executive orders and instructions issued by the Durbar Administration from time to time. There does not seem to have any codified tenancy laws in existence in these ex-States, as a result of which the tenants were subjected to various extortions. Besides, commensurate with the feudal order, various service tenures were in vogue which kept such tenure-holders in a state of semi-slavery. With the merger of the ex-States in the province of Orissa on the 1st January 1948, and the subsequent abolition of all intermediary rights on land, this age-old feudal system came to an end.

The traditional leadership of society usually came from the Rajas and the Zamindars, but under changed circumstances they have lost their old social prestige and status. With the spread of education and new intellectual awakening, leadership in the rural areas is gradually passing into the hands of the common man.

Impact of
the abolition
of Zamindari
on
Social life