

**Religion and Rituals in the Changing Context: A Study among the Bonda of
Malkangiri District, Odisha**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Anthropology,
University of Hyderabad, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement**

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in

ANTHROPOLOGY

Submitted by:

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DECLARATION

I CHANDINI BAG, hereby declare that the work embodied in this dissertation entitled **“Religion and Rituals in the changing context: a study among the Bonda tribe of Malkangiri district, Odisha”** was carried out in Khairput block, Malkangiri, by me under the supervision and guidance of Dr. George Tharakan C, Department of Anthropology, University of Hyderabad. This is an original and independent research work and it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Place: Hyderabad

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Date: 30/06/2019

(17SAHL06)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled “*Religion and Rituals in the changing context: a study among the Bonda tribe of Malkangiri district, Odisha*” is a record of bonafide work done by **Chandini Bag**, towards the partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of master of philosophy (Anthropology) in the Department of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad, under my guidance and supervision. This dissertation has not been submitted previously in part or in full to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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Chapter – 1

Introduction

Religion and ritual have a very significant role in human society. Religion consists of both beliefs and rites which represents the sacred and the action aspects of religion (Durkheim, 1915). He said that the “ritual as the means by which collective beliefs and ideas are simultaneously generated, expressed, and affirmed as real by the community” (Bell, 1992).

Religion maintains the life forces and fertility of the earth, and ensures the precise relationship with the invisible world, whether of deities, ancestors, spirits, or other supernatural forces. The supernatural concept differs from people to people and one society to other society. For some people, it may be composed of god, goddesses, ghosts, and spirits and for other peoples it may be an neutral power which controls everything in this world. For the primitive people religion is composed of the control of demons who cause disease and death and other evils, mostly in the worship of nature and spirits of dead ancestors. Religion plays a role in social control which does not rely on law alone. If someone does a good thing, one earns a good position in a particular culture. If, on the other hand, someone does the bad thing, they may suffer punishment through supernatural powers. There is also a connection between myth and religion. Mostly myths are full of tales of various supernatural beings, which reflects individual society in various ways.

Overall, each and every religion consist of the shape of beliefs and rites. Rites consist of the custom according to a authorised manner of some actions designed to establish contact between the performing individual and the supernatural power or powers. Beliefs constitute the static part of religion, and rites the dynamic part. The beliefs are put into practice by the performance of rites. Man faces many difficulties and crisis from dawn till dusk of his life. Some of these can effectively be dealt with by the man himself, while some are beyond his power and understanding. Once the situation goes

beyond the level of explanation, people resort to various ritualistic performances to overcome the crisis. Evans-Pritchard (1937, 1956) says, “some rites are concerned with changes of social status and the interaction of social groups”. The occasions for such rites, which Evans-Pritchard calls ‘confirmatory’, are remarkably similar all over the world, may it be primitive or modern society. In most cases, these rites are performed on three occasions, at birth, at marriage, and at death. People are not greatly concerned with the spiritual effects of these rites, yet the fact must reflect a general feeling that these events ought to be in some way sacralized (Mair, 1972).

Majumdar and Madan (1986) in their book *An Introduction to Social Anthropology* stated that “religion is the human response to the apprehension of something, or power, which is supernatural and supersensory. It is the expression of the manner, and type of adjustment effected by a people with their concept of the supernatural”. Religion had been considered as a result of civilization until Tylor (1871) gave convincing proof that “primitive societies have their own versions of religious activity, not very different from that of civilized societies”.

Religion and rituals are interrelated. At present religion has become a very sensitive subject. In a tribal society, religion has to play an important role in the establishment of peace and security in society. The anthropologist has always been concerned with the cultural change among the primitive or savage groups before being “spoiled” or altered by excessive contact, and are also concerned with change as initiated because of contact and intrusion. So, social change will occur when changes in religion take place. Thus, the subjects of change in religion and rituals have always been important. In the present scenario, religion change has become a common feature of most of the tribal society (Saikia, 2017).

Anthropology of Religion

Religion is an key component of the human condition. Some researchers have claimed that religion as an important part of an individual’s culture and some other researchers have concentrated on how ritual itself as a culture. But the most important is how researchers conceptualize these terms. There are an innumerable explanation and

interpretations done by scholars on religion which is based on definition, meaning and the function of religion by specializing on the ritual rites, and supernatural beliefs.

Charles Darwin (1871) in his book *The Descent of Man*, claimed that “human beings are descended from apes, leaving no room for God’s direct creation of humans”. “The leading Social Darwinian Herbert Spencer introduced the theory that all things, animate and inanimate, move from simpler to more differentiated complex forms, from homogeneity to heterogeneity. According to Spencer, religion arose from the observation that in dreams the self can leave the body. The human person, therefore, has a dual aspect, and after death, the spirit or soul continues to appear to living descendants in dreams. The ghosts of remote ancestors or prominent figures eventually acquired the status of gods. Tylor agreed with Spencer’s social evolutionary views and in part with his notion of the dream origin of religion but preferred to emphasize the role of the soul in his account of religious origins” (cited in Segal, 2009).

E.B. Tylor in his book “*Primitive culture*” (1871) defined “religion as the belief in spiritual beings and asserted that the development of religions from one stage to the next is universal throughout the world’s cultures i.e. animism, totemism, polytheism, monotheism”. Hazra observes in ‘*Kolam of Yeotmal*’ (1983) that “the Kolams of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh have a number of gods and goddesses, ghosts and malevolent spirits”. James Frazer (1890) compares “the myths, magical practices, and religions of the world’s cultures throughout history and developed the social evolutionary model of magic, religion and science”. Robert R. Marett (1899) developed the concept of more ancient supernatural force that he labeled “animatism”.

Emile Durkheim (1912) suggests that “religion consists of both beliefs and rites which represents the sacred and the action aspects of religion. He focused on Australian aborigines where each clan has a sacred, totemic animal or plant and totemism provides systems of order and classification’. By participant observation, Malinowski (1925, 1935 and 1944) collected data from the Trobriand Island people to find the function of religion in the broad functionalist approach. He found that “they turned to magic when practical knowledge had reached its limits. Religion functions in conjunction with practicality. His model focuses on how social institutions serve the biological and

psychological needs of individuals”. Evans-Pritchard (1937, 1956) tried to incorporate the importance of broader structural forms of social organization and how economic, historical, and environmental factors are reflected in the belief system of Nuer and stated that religion is a ‘symbolic representation of the social order’. But Radcliffe-Brown (1952) through “comparative methods focused on how society functions at the macro, structural level. He says a society’s ‘fixed’ religious beliefs and practices to maintain social order. He proposes his theory on the social function of religion i.e. religion is everywhere an expression in one form or another of a sense of dependence on a power outside us, a power which we may speak of as a spiritual or moral power. He again connects the significance of family and lineage in religion by exploring the importance of ancestor worship as a prime form of the religious system. He says structural processes can be observed and documented with greater scientific validity than the psychologically oriented processes of Malinowski’s model of functionalism” (cited in Segal, 2009). For Weber (1956), “religion dealt with the centrality of the notion of the supernatural, religious ideas, attitudes, actors and institutions and examining the relationship of the religious and secular domains”.

In Vidyarthi’s (1962) edited book *Aspects of Religion in India Society*, he includes “articles on various aspects of tribal and peasant religion of different communities of India”. In Harper’s (1964) book entitled *Religion in South Asia*, “various approaches to the study on religion from an anthropological point of view have been discussed”.

Clifford Geertz (1973) asserted that “anthropologists must deeply analyze and thickly describe cultures and their symbols through the interpretive model in order to make difference understandable. He argued that religions are too particularistic with regard to events, individuals, and groups to be understood through functionalist theories”. For Levy-Bruhl (1975:100), “religion belongs to pre-logical thinking, characterized as it is by the experience of non-material realities, whereas medicines would be classified as part of logical thinking, as a response to the empirical world”. Lévi-Strauss (1978) explains “myths reveal common storylines that can be used to understand the limited number of ways in which human beings interpret the world” (cited in Segal, 2009).

For Byron Good (1994), by contrast, “there is a close relationship between science, including medicine, and religious fundamentalism. He seeks to collapse the distinction between the realm of the sacred (religion) and the realm of the profane (science). The relationship between them turns in part on the concept of belief”. Firth (1996) says that “a religious system represents one way of obtaining a framework for handling fundamental problems of social organization for reducing uncertainty and anxiety, for increasing coherence in human relationships, for assigning meaning to human behavior, for providing justification for moral obligation”.

Freud (1927,1930,1939,1971) wrote “five main works that provide psychoanalytic perspectives on religion: *The future of an illusion* (1927), *Totem and Taboo* (1930), *Civilization and its discontents* (1930), and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), *Obsessive actions and religious practices* (1971). Among the topics that Freud discusses are religious behavior in the form of ritual and sacrifice; religious experience in the form of mysticism and the ‘oceanic feeling’; and religious belief in the form of taboos, God images, and general religious aspirations”.

In the Indian context, many scholars have also examined the lifeways of the different communities resulted in a good number of notable monographs. The great anthropologist Rivers (1906) systematically studied “the Todas, a remarkable polyandrous tribe of Nilgiri hills, India, where he also explored their religious life”. Bouguet’s (1966) book “*Oraon Religion and Customs* had contributed considerably towards the study of religion in India”. Dube’s (1977) “*Tribal Heritages of India: Vol. I*, is one of the prominent works where he meticulously described the lifeways of a few tribes including their religion”.

Anthropology of rituals

The conflicting accounts of scholars on the primacy of religious ritual and belief were a major theme in the earlier days of the studies. When people like Tylor and Frazer proposed that it is the belief that is the base of the religious system, others like Robertson-Smith (1899: 23) argued for the primacy of rituals over belief.

Arnold van Gennep (1908) gave “the term ‘rites of passage’ which refer to life cycle or life crisis ritual concerned with a change of status in the lives of individuals and groups. He proposed that all rites of passage have a threefold structure i.e. separation, transition, and incorporation”. Radcliffe-Brown (1952) proposes “the idea of certain sentiments that exist in the minds of people and religious rites are the symbolic expression of such sentiments and through participation and sharing people produce some kind of togetherness. Most of the earlier works that followed the functionalist paradigm had tried to find out the purpose- what a ritual is for the people and how it works”. Earlier notable works on sacrificial rituals (Robertson-Smith, Hubert and Mauss, and even Freud’s work on totemism) suggested that it is an avenue where people make contact with gods. Gordon George (1956) defines “ritual as a form of communication with profound social consequences, and for him, a ritual is just a symbol”.

According to John Beattie (1966), a ritual is something which is expressive and symbolic in nature and it contrasts with activities in science with its irrational procedures. Catherine Bell identifies ritual as an ‘action’ and in religious systems, it is contrasted with beliefs, symbols, and myths which are the conceptual aspects (cited in Bell, 1992). The English anthropologist Mary Douglas, particularly “in ‘*Purity and Danger*’ (1966) and ‘*Natural Symbols*’ (1970), has focused on the relationship between social form and religious expression. She explained about societies maintaining order through functional classifications, for example with religious mandates that specify what is ‘pure’ and permitted, and what “pollutes” and what is taboo”. Victor Turner (1969) emphasizes that “the function of ritual is to maintain social solidarity and cohesion”.

Jennings (1982) also supports “the idea of the symbolic nature of the ritual and proposes that it is a way of transmitting and gaining knowledge through a display of performance involving various participants and observers”. David Cheal (1992) emphasizes “the communicative aspect which produces a sense of unity among the participants”. Asad (1993) points out that “ritual is now regarded as a type of routine

behavior that symbolizes or expresses something and, as such, relates differentially to individual consciousness and social organization”.

Catharine Bell (1997) made “a careful analysis of the anthropological tradition in the study of religious rituals and identified the basic genres of ritual actions which produced a systematic classification of rituals. Bell observed six characteristics of ritual action and states that every ritual shows these general categories. The six characteristics according to Bell are rites of passage, calendrical and commemoratives rites, rites of exchange and communion, rites of affliction, feasting, fasting, and festivals, and political rites. This typology based on categories of ritual action would help a researcher who is trying to explore a religious ritual in its entirety. Most of the definitions of religious rituals portray the symbolic and communicative nature of such acts”.

Studies on religious change

Ogburn (1922) talked about “cultural lag”. He says “culture takes time to catch up with technological innovations such as social problems and conflicts are caused by the lag”. Bose’s (1927), Das’s (1927), Chattopadhyay’s (1935), and Hutton’s (1961) study on diffusion and Ray’s (1928) study on “changing Oraon religion depicting acculturation may be mentioned as works on religion”. In this context, Bose’s (1941) study on the Hindu system of tribal absorption is worth mentioning. Ghurye (1943) says that “some of the tribes are so Hinduized that they have assimilated as different castes at different levels. The names of some of the recent day castes and subcastes betray tribal origin”.

Majumdar (1950) studied “the Ho tribe in which he developed the concept of Bonganism. In India, the anthropologists initiated the study of religion by evaluating different religious concepts of religion among various communities of the country”. A classic example of such studies is Srinivas’ (1952) book entitled *Religion and Society among the Coorgs*, of South India, where “he developed the concept of sanskritization. Srinivas correlates the ritual with the social structure of the Coorg society”. In the study of villages in Uttar Pradesh, Marriott (1955) and Redfield’s “ideas on ‘social organization of tradition’ and ‘little and great tradition’ had helped immensely in the

study of religion”. In the same study, Marriott also developed “the concept of universalization and parochialization”.

According to Malinowski (1961) “religious change is a species of cultural change in general, which defines as the process by which the existing order of a society, that is, its social, spiritual, and material civilization, is transformed from one type to another”. T.C. Das (1962) says “Indian tribal society change slowly and rapidly under the pressure of internal and external forces. The external forces which evaluate changes in the tribal culture of India are particularly the new education and missionaries; and other important ones are transportation and communications, market towns, administrative Centre, Government, welfare organization and institutions, cinemas etc”.

Raha and Mahato (1985) probe into “the changes taking place in the Kinnaurese religion especially because of the contact of Kinnaurese with the administrators, teachers, businessmen, traders, laborers, and contractors”.

Mahapatra (2000) studied “the changing religion and worldview of some Indian tribes”. M.C. Behera book “*Tribal Religion: Change and Continuity*” (2000) contains numerous papers on various aspects of religion. “It focuses on the syncretic religions of various tribal communities that emphasis on syncretic characteristics, that have emerged over time in spite of the influences of propaganda and other dominant religions on tribal religious traditions, either by the process of symbiosis or acculturation (as Hinduism on tribal religions), or in superposition (as Christianity)”.

Significance of the study

In every happenings of life, supernatural powers plays an important role in the community. Therefore, the rites and rituals are performed to appease the spirits. To understand the entire community, it is important to understand its religion and rituals which helps to examine things. There are several factors which are causing changes in the tribal religion. The present study has focused on the Bonda community which is coming under 13 PVTG of Odisha. The religion and rituals of the Bonda have a unique social and cultural context scenario. The worship of *Khanda* (sword) is an identity marker of Bonda religion. There has been no focused study has been done on the

institution of the religion of Bonda. The present study has given an in-depth insight into the religious belief system, nature of rituals existing in the area. By studying the detailed ethnography of religion, it is helpful to understand the Bonda's social life and their cultural traditions; how they shape, sustained and transform themselves.

Conceptual framework

The present study has an understanding of the role of religion and rituals in the Bonda community of Malkangiri district of Odisha. The study reveals that religion and ritual are structured by different socio-cultural and economic factors and vice versa. The existing anthropological theory attempts to define the relationship between religion, ritual and social and cultural aspects of their community life and analyses the changing religious rituals. In the present study, Malinowski's (1925, 1935 and 1944) functional approach has been used to understand the meaning of various rituals and the changes in the religion and rituals based on. It includes the myths associated with each of the performing cults, origins associated with general rules and codes in carrying out the ritual. The functional meaning of the ritual has been analyzed which look at a broader context of the social organization level. An investigation at the organizational level has to incorporate the inevitable changes happening to religion and ritual. The study explores the overall functioning of religious rituals in Bonda society and the process of change by which people create and recreate a religious belief system for their own needs.

Objectives

1. The main objective of the study is to attain a detailed ethnographic understanding of Bonda religion and ritual.
2. The study also tries to understand the factors causing changes in their religion and ritual.
3. The study looks into the bearing of religious change on Bonda's life.

Methodology

In the present study the data were collected by primary and secondary sources. The field work data are the primary source. Field work is the most important aspect of the ethnographic study. For secondary sources, material from available literatures was collected through review of research work from books, journal, etc.

a. Selection of the place

The research work mainly focuses on the process of change and growth in the religious and ritual life of Bonda within the boundary of Khairput block, Malkangiri district. Bonda tribe is mostly seen on Bonda Hill, Malkangiri district of Odisha. In the area of Khairput block, there are four panchayat and thirty villages. Within the area of Mudulipada Panchayat, Seleiguda village is selected as part of my field study. Sileiguda village is 1 km from Mudulipada. This village was selected based on its conveyance and proximity to Bonda hill. The basic household data were collected from 39 households. The researcher tried to spend more time with the Bonda to get more qualitative data.

a. Fieldwork

Fieldwork was carried out for two months between March to April 2018. This period is basically famous among the community for the festival called *Chaita parab*. On this occasion male members of their family go for the annual hunt and starts eating new mango, sowing paddy and minor millets. The specialty of this festival is the males would not come to the village without hunting any animal. On this festival, villagers sing and dance until they come from hunting. After returning of them the pujari and shaman do worship to the forest deity.

b. Rapport building

It was very difficult to reach the Bonda community, without any contact. The researcher took the help of Bonda development agency (BDA) and Odisha PVTG Empower and livelihoods improvement program (OPELIP) to get access to the Bonda community of Seleiguda. To make the rapport building process easier a meeting was

fixed with Bonda people to make initial contact by the welfare extension officer of BDA who came with the researcher. He introduced the researcher with the Seleiguda villagers. This meeting was very helpful for the researcher, but it took some days to get a good rapport with people there.

The Bonda speak among them in Remo language but while interacting with outsiders or villagers some of them speak in Desia as well as in Odia. Since the researcher knew Desia and Odia language interacting with them and to gather data became easy. While gathering data that everyone had doubts about the purpose of the researcher, and even they had gossips that the researcher is a government officer. But the researcher clarified to everyone that she does not belong to any government officials and has nothing to do with governmental work. After knowing this everyone became very cooperative and supportive to the researcher.

c. Tools and Techniques of data collection

The household schedule was the primary source of collecting community data. The household schedule covered different aspects of the study including religious customs, and cultural traditions, about participation in their communities, their views on maintenance their culture and tradition, uses of modern technologies in society, continuation of practices in the daily activities like agriculture, hunting, gathering, etc, and also the demographic details of the respondents. Questions related to the changes in religion and ritual was also included. A village map was also prepared separately.

Participant observation is major tool where the researcher tried to understand the culture of the people by observation through participation in their daily activities. The Focus group discussion helped to get a wide range of opinions from a group of people pertaining to religious, socio-economic and political relationships between neighboring groups.

In-depth interview was also carried out with individuals during household survey using a detailed checklist. The data were collected among different age groups. Life histories also collected from different people for a better understanding of their cultural tradition. Data relating to religious beliefs, rituals, festivals, etc., were also gathered from women

and men separately. The researcher also interviewed government officials of Bonda development agency (BDA) and Odisha PVTG Empower and livelihoods improvement program (OPELIP) in order to get their view on Bonda community in general. Data relating to changes and development in their culture were gathered from secondary data like articles, monographs, government organizations, etc.

d. Analysis of Data

The fieldwork was successfully conducted by the above tools and techniques; and the collection of data had been analysed, interpreted, and tabulated by the anthropological methods. The qualitative data collected were analysed by using content analysis. The household data pertaining to demographic details, data relating to education, social organization, etc., are analyzed.

Limitations

This study has certain limitations like any other study would have. As a non-Bonda, the researcher has tried to collect the Bonda culture objectively. One of the most important limitations was time constraint. The duration of the fieldwork was not sufficient to explore all the objectives in depth. The limited availability of research literature on the specific tribe has become a limitation. During fieldwork the specific conditions on field area has also become barrier for the collection of data.

Chapter scheme

The first chapter outlines the objectives of the study, methodology and the tools used to gather data to full fill the objectives. This chapter discusses the contribution of different scholars on the theme of the research. This chapter also points out the limitation of this study and outlines the chapter schemes.

The second chapter provides the ethnographic profile that deals with the details of the community and its location. It presents data on demography, education, food, housing, health, social organization, religion, material culture, economic organization, and political organization.

The third chapter gives detailed ethnographic understanding of Bonda religion and their world view. They worship Hindu Gods and Goddesses, such as Shiva, Jagannath, etc along with their traditional gods and goddesses like Patkhanda mahaprabhu, Hundi, Singraj, etc. They are conducting the festival every year, and worship all the Gods and Goddesses. In general, this chapter tries to understand the role of religion in the economic domain, social and cultural domain.

The fourth chapter discusses the life cycle rituals such as birth, puberty, naming ceremony, pregnancy, marriage, and death ceremony. It tries to show the rules of the rituals according to the Bonda people. It also discusses festivals, their belief system, offering and sacrifices, and religious specialists (priests, shaman and medicine man). It also deals with the relations of Bonda with the other caste people.

The fifth chapter is about the changes in religion and ritual. This chapter discusses the cultural traits which Bonda people borrowed from other culture. The Bondas are influenced by Hindu religion. It also discusses the impacts of religious change in Bondas lives.

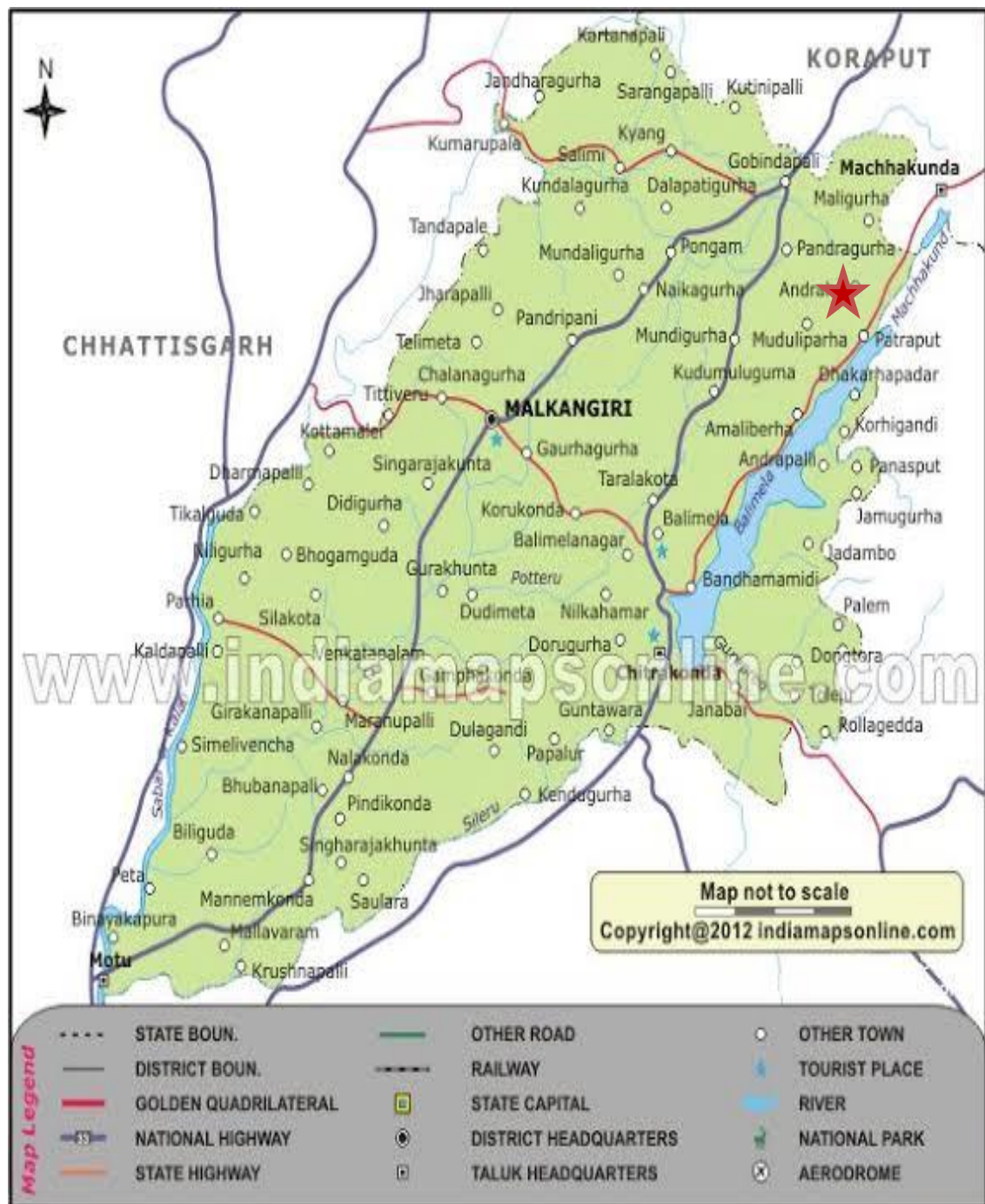
The last and fifth chapter is the conclusion and attempts to make few generalizations on the Bonda community's religion and rituals followed by them today and the changes in their outlook.

Map 1.1 Map of Odisha



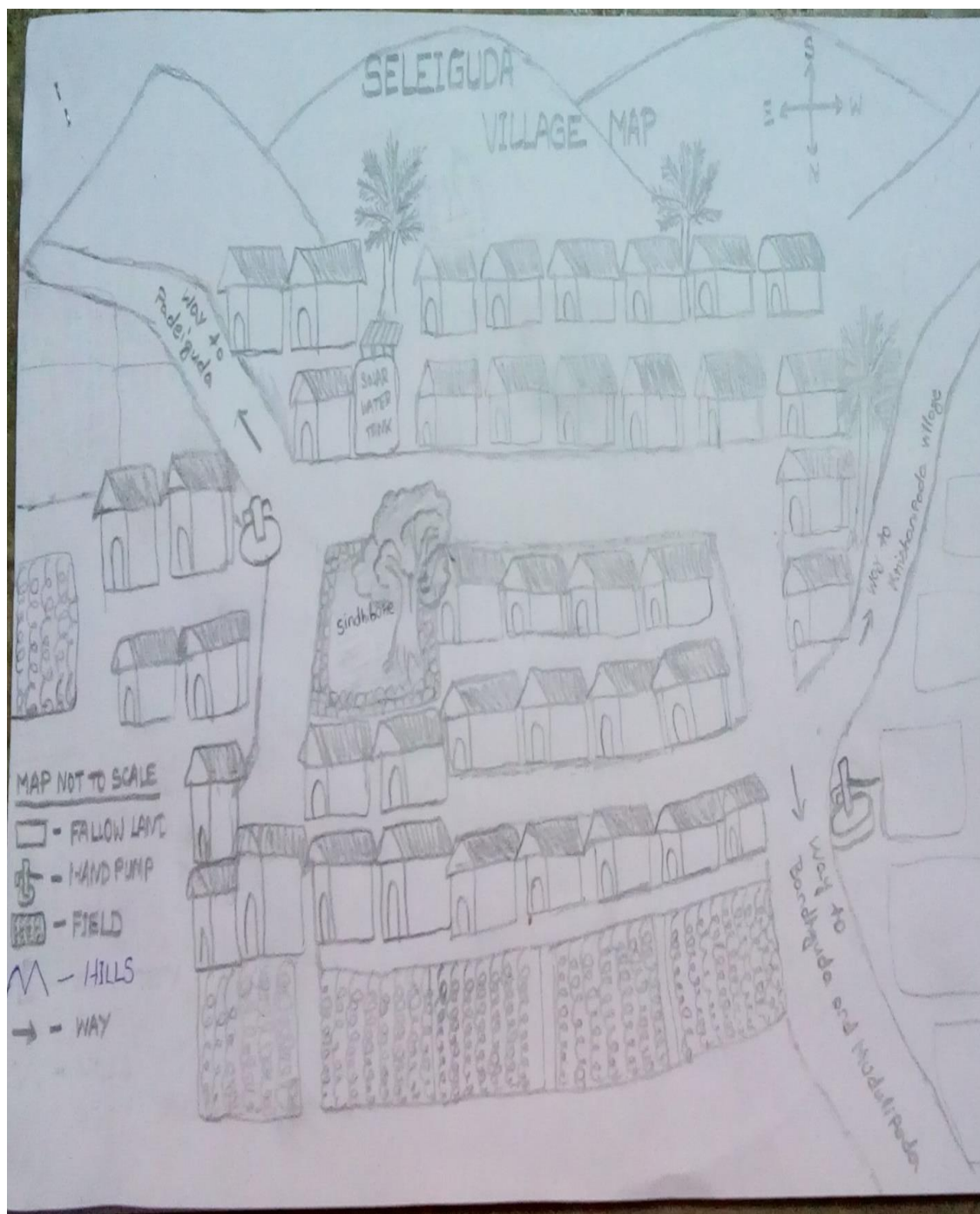
(Source: www.mapsofindia.com)

Map 1.2 Map of Malkangiri



(Source: www.indiamapsonline.com)

Map 1.3 Seleiguda village map



(Source: author)

Chapter-2

The Ethnographic Profile

The Malkangiri district is a very remote part of Odisha state. The region of Malkangiri has an essential distinctive feature, which characterizes the cultural tradition and pattern of the different tribes living here. The geographical area of Malkangiri is 5,791 square K.M. It lies between 17 degrees 45' north to 18 degrees 40' north latitudes and 81 degrees 10' east to 82 degrees east longitude. Roughly this district is triangular in shape. Some of the most beautiful locations in the district are the backwaters of Balimela Dam, Satiguda Dam, and Bonda Ghati. Bonda Ghati is situated in the Khairput Block of Malkangiri district of Orissa. Mudulipada, Rasbeda, Badadural, and Andrahal Gram panchayats covering the 30 Bonda villages constitute the Bonda habitat. Mudulipada is 15 km away from the Block headquarters, Khairput. Sileiguda village is located at 1 km from Mudulipada.

The people

According to census 2011, “the population of Malkangiri district is 613,192 of which male and female population are 303,624 and 309,568 respectively. The average literacy rate of the district is 48.54%, out of which 59.07% male and 38.28% female are literate. The male literacy rate is more than the female in the district” (Census, 2011).

In Malkangiri district the Bonda have established their settlement at Bonda hills/ *Bonda ghati*, in Khairput block. In Khairaput Block, they live in 30 villages which are present in the Bonda hills at a height of 3000 feet. According to the Bonda Development Agency (BDA) in 2010 approximately 1780 households are present in these 30 Bonda villages. The total population of the Bonda tribe is approximately 6676. The number of women is more as compared to that of men among the Bonda people. The village Seleiguda comes under Mudulipada grama panchayat and Khairput block. The village consists of 35 households.

The Bonda

The Bonda considered as one of the most primitive tribes of Orissa. Most of them resides in Khairput Block of Malkangiri District. They call their tribe people as “*Remo*” which means “Man”. Their origin and federations are unknown. But it can be assumed that they are members of a group of Austro-Asiatic tribes who took shelter in the hill regions lying in the northwest of Machhkund river, in the remote past. They speaks their own “*Remo*” language which has no script. The “*Remo*” belongs to the Mundari group of language. They are divided into two groups i.e. lower Bonda and upper Bonda. The lower Bonda live in the lower part of the hills in the multi-cast/tribal villages and the upper Bonda resides in the mountain area and hill ranges. Some of the most important features of the Bonda are dormitory organization; excessive drinking of palm wine; rude and ruthless manner of expression; the spirit of independence and sense of freedom; criminal propensity; and unconventional dress pattern.

Some Anthropologists consider the Bonda as an offshoot of the Gadaba tribe a much larger tribe of similar racial and cultural affiliation. Henderson describes the Bonda as one of the three tribes into which the Gadaba are divided. (Elwin: 1950)

Demographic profile of the study village

According to the 2010 survey of the Bonda Development Agency, the population of the Seleiguda village was 140, out of which males comprised 51 and females 89. During the fieldwork, the household census of the Bonda village was conducted in 2018. It was found that the total population of the Bonda is 206. Males comprise 89 and females 117.

Table 2.1 shows the total population of Bonda by age and gender. It shows that the children population under the age of 1-10 is higher than another age group. It also shows that the females population is higher than that of males. Sex ratio is important factor to measure the equality between males and females in a society at a given point of time.

Table 2.1 Demography of different age groups

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
1-10	26	32	58
11-20	10	22	32
21-30	15	23	38
31-40	10	20	30
41-50	20	11	31
51-60	7	6	13
61-70	1	1	2
70>	0	2	2
Total	89	117	206

Climatic condition

The climate of the Bonda hill is characterized by hot summer which is favorable for agriculture and horticulture. The year is divided into three seasons. The winter season (Rung Ag) from October to February is followed by the summer season (*yan*) from March to June. The period from July to September constitute the rainy season (*Dak Guruta*). The hill experiences an average maximum and minimum temperature of 130c and 300c, respectively. The relative humidity is very high during the rainy season. The average rainfall is 2096 mm (Tahsildar office file, Chitrakunda).

Flora

The natural flora of Bonda hill is classified into four categories: (1) Dense deciduous type – In the dense deciduous forest the dominant tree species are found in varying proportions, like *Adina cordifolia*, *Cleistanthua collinus*, *Terminalia alata*, *Syzvgium cumini*, *Madhuca indica*, *Mitragvna parviflora*, *Bombax ceiba*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, etc. (2) Shrubs type – The species being *Ziziphus mauritians*, *Phvllanthus emblica*, *Lagerstroemia parviflora*, *Woodfordia eruticosa*, *Cipadessa baccifera*, etc. (3) Grasslands type – The grasslands which are used mainly for fodder grass which is sold, the main species being *Roshta*, *Kusali*, etc. (4) Open type – The species being *Lanlana*

cainara, *Phoenix acaulis*, *Diospyros melanoxylon*, *Phyllanthus emblic*, *Woodfordia fruticosa*, *Mimosa rubieaulis*, etc.

Other main crops are pulses like *Biri*(*Phaseolus mungo*), *kolatha*(*Dolichos biilorus*), *Jhuranga*(*Yiena catjang*), *Semi*(*Vida Jaba*), etc; rice (*Orvaza sativa*) of different indigenous varieties, *Suan*(*Panicum miliare*), *Mandia*(*Eleusine coracana*), *Kankra Akhin*(*Momordica dioica*), *Maka*(*Zea mays L.*), *Kangu*(*Setaria italica*); Oil seed like *Alasi*(*Uizotia aboissinica*), *Kusum* (*Eruca sativa*). The main fruits are mango, Jack fruit, papaya, guava, etc. The main vegetables are Pumpkin, Beans, tomato, Bottle gourd, Brinjal, cabbage, etc.

Fauna

The Bonda hills are home to many species of birds that are attracted towards its natural resources. The main species are home sparrow (*Passar domestica*), partridge (*Erancolinces*), green Pigeon (*Treron phoenicoptera*), crow (*Corvus splendense*), owls (*Tvto alba*), doyal (*Copsvchus saularis*), myna (*Strnus tristis*), koyel (*Eudvnamis scolopaceus*), wood pecker (*Dinopium bengalensis*), peacock (*Pavo cristatus*), dove (*Franc linus sps*), kite (*Milvus migrans*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), Cotton teal (*Nettapus coromandelianus*), whistling teal (*Dendrocvena jaranica*), vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), heron (*Ardea*), sandpiper (*Trinea glariola*), parrot (*Psittaccua eupatria*), water hen (*Galloperdix spodicea*) etc. The most commonly found wild animals are wild goats (*Sulnp*), wild rabbit (*Gutu*), wild boar (*Gubuh*), wild fowl (*Sising*), bear (*Gimesh*), Sambar (*Seram*), deer (*etam*), Jackal (*Kulu*), leopard (*Sana sukusa*), Tiger (*kukusa*), monkey (*Ghesak*) etc. The main reptiles found at the hills are Russel's viper (*Vipera russeli*), python (*Python molurus*), gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*), house gecko (*Hemidactylus brooki*), wall lizard (*Hemidactylus flaviaividis*), tree gecko (*Hemidactylus leschenaulti*), cobra (*Naia naja*), king cobra (*Naja hannah*), etc. The Bonda mostly domesticate cattle (*Gaitang*), pigs ((*gubuh*), goats (*gime*) and dogs, etc.

Material Culture

In the course of time and space, their traditional material items also undergo changes. Some traditional appliances are still used by them and some has been restored by the

modern tools and appliances which are used by them. Their material appliances are also different from each other on the basis of religion, occupations, hunting-gathering practices and other cultural aspects.

They have various kinds of indigenous weapons which they use for self-protection and hunting animals. They use a thrusting weapon which is known as Umbar (Spear). The Bonda males always carry their *wa* (Bow) and *omb* (arrow) with them while going for hunting. They use *yunchuek* (knife) for cutting and piercing. They use Axe for cutting wood and for hunting an animal. For cropping hair they use *kantarai* (scissors), *nuiboh* (Blade) is also used for shaving. Another type of knife *Liasw* is used to chop the bamboo slices. For reaping crops they use *orein* (sickle). They use a boring tool like *suji* (Needle) and *nubu* (griller). They use striking tools like *gunuh* (hammer), and *kutni* (pestle). They also use digging tools like *unkur* (shovel), *uns* (spade), *unso* (khurpi). They make broomstick, winnowing fan and baskets which are very extraordinary. In every house winnowing fan made of bamboo, slits have been found. The Bondas have various musical instruments like drums, Tamak, Khinding, and Kusang. Gunungu is a low sweet sounding musical instrument which is played by the female folk. They make Singhar or trumpet with Bison horn. They use very limited Utensils in their houses. Earthenware vessels, aluminum, bell metal, and brass pots are found in their houses. Various types of bamboo baskets are found in their Houses. A large container made of bamboo slits called karaka is very important for storing grains. For the measurement of things, they use measuring baskets such as Kimch, Tumba, Tanke, Latama, Langurmu, Damung, Dasung. In some of the well-settled families' uses of the lantern, torch and umbrella have been found. Recently the Bonda started using metal boxes to keep their dress, radios, tape recorders, etc. in it. It is also found that the use of a bicycle is very frequent in Bonda hills.

Education

There are two Govt. High Schools at Mudulipada (Govt. H&T.W. High School, and girls high school, Mudulipada). There are total nine primary schools located in the different village's i.e. Dantipada, Badapada, Dumripada, Bodbel, Andrahal, Patraput, Bondapada, Kirsanipada, and Pindhajangar. Only two primary schools which are

located at Dumripada and Andrahal are functioning. There are 8 Anganwadi centers in 30 Bonda villages but only 5 centers, namely Kirsanipada, Bandhaguda, Dumripada, Andrahal, and Badapda are functioning. Due to the absence of school teachers and school building the rest of the schools, centers are not functioning.

Education is an important aspect which helps in the development of most of the community. For the wellbeing of the community, an increase in literacy is the biggest strength. The table given below demonstrates the present educational status of the village Seleiguda. Table 2.2 reveals that there are more number of boys attending school as compared to girls. There are very fewer boys who have attended intermediate and graduation level education. Apart from this, the illiteracy rate is high among the villagers i.e 116.

Table 2.2 Education status of Seleiguda villagers

Education	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate (including below 5 years child)	45	71	116
Up to lower primary	12	9	21
Up to upper primary	16	9	25
Up to high school	21	15	36
Up to intermediate (+2)	7	0	7
Up to graduation	2	0	2
Up to post graduation	0	0	0
Total	103	104	207

Leisure

Elwin wrote, work is shared by both men and women, but the women labor more and for longer hours in addition to work in the field for cleaning. They have to fetch water

and cook and care for the children and whenever they are free they must be at the loom. This statement by Elwin has found to be true in the studied village Seleiguda. Mostly Bonda men enjoy more leisure time than women. From morning till night women labor hard by doing their works both inside and outside of their houses. If they find a little free time, they spend it at the loom or with their neighbors. There are no continuous programs of work for men, but they have certain seasons in the year where they keep themselves engaged. The men spend most of their time drinking under the saga Palm trees and gossiping in neighbor's house or in the bachelors' dormitory. The Bonda children spent most of their time playing.

Food

The Bonda eat both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. Mostly the staple food of the Bonda is gruel (unfra) prepared from ragi (mandia). They prefer other important foods also in their diet like Khet-Jana (Jana), Dhana (Kerang), suan (Rigder), Kakara Akhi (Punui), Makka (Jana), Kangu (wider), Rice (Kiang). Among pulses, they eat Kandula (Gibegang), Jhurung (Gibegang), Biri (Rmnak), Dongor Rani (Musuri), Kalatha (Kala/h), Beans (Gang), etc. Among non-vegetarian food, they consume meats of the pig, buffalo, fowl, goat and different types of wild birds and animals. They also eat different types of local fish and dry fish. The Bonda consume some remarkable insects as their food like Sindhri Poko (Burai), To-penga (A-tik). They prefer vegetables like Sweet Potato (*Nangal Kanda*), Green banana (*Un-sungdd*), Green Jackfruit (*Anku-suin*), Pumpkin (*Kumuda*), Bottle gourd, Papaya (*Amrul*), Brinjal (*E-am*), Tomato (*Beja*), Potato (*Ahi*), Raddish (*Mulct*), Green mango (*Uli*). They cook all kinds of food with Salt (*Buti*), Turmeric (*Sangsang*), Chilli (*Merchi*), Onion (*Uli Rasima*), Garlic (*lull Rasuna*), and Mustered (*Sersu*).

Among the Bonda people from all age and sex groups consume alcoholic drinks. The most common drinks are shalopa (Sago-palm juice), pendorn (unfiltered beer prepared from cereals), Sagur (beer prepared from both cereal and different types of fruits, which is filtered).

Housing and settlement pattern

The Bonda houses of the Bondas are generally of rectangular shape. The joints of the two walls are right-angled. They start the wall from the surface of the earth and they do not keep any base under the earth. The structure of wall is made of only mud with some wooden pillar and some houses of a bamboo latticework smoothly plastered with mud. The roof is made with bamboo, clay tiles and local grass (*piri*). The doors are made up of wood. There is no window in the room. Most of the Bonda Houses consist of a single room with three-sided veranda. One side of the veranda is kept for pigsty with a separate entrance and on the opposite veranda is kept for goat and fowl. They keep only one main entrance of the house. The rest of the veranda is used for grinding husking of grain, cooking, cleaning rice and millet, etc. There is no separate kitchen inside the house but mostly, the *chullah* (stove) is found inside the house where they cook. Above the hearth, there is a set of hanging wooden rack where they keep drying fish, new grain, animal skins, meat or tobacco, etc.

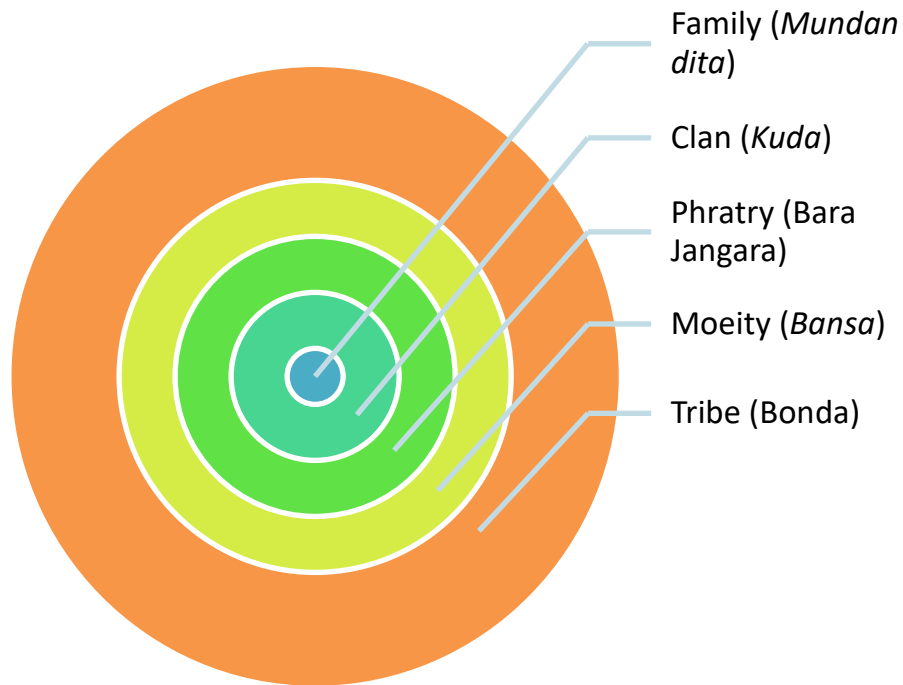
Language

Language is the identity marker for the Bonda. They speak their own language “*Remo*” which does not have any script and merely exist in oral tradition. Whenever they meet with other local caste people they speak in Desia or Odia language. But when they interact within their community they speak in their dialect i.e. *Remo*.

Social organisation

The Bondas social organization shows the pattern of very strong relationships between individuals and social group. The Bondas social organization divided into five i.e. mundan dita, kuda, bara jangara, bansa and Bonda. Bonda is the biggest organization which divides them into bansa, bansa divides them into bara jangara, bara jangara divides them into different kudadas, kuda divides them into mundan dita which is the smallest organization. This division has showed in a diagram and described below.

Diagram 2.1 Division of Bondas social organisation



Family

The family is the elementary social institution of the Bonda. Once a member of the family gets married he/she establishes an independent family. It comprises a man, his wife, and their children. After marriage, the sons build their own houses in the same village and daughters go to settle down in the house of their husbands. The Bonda mostly follows patrilocality and sometimes patrilineal in respect of inheritance of property. The father receives a bride price when his daughters get married.

Kinship

Bonda people use different kinds of terms of address. They call mother as “*Jong*” and father as “*Ba*”, and for grandfather as “*Tata*” and for grandmother as “*Jah*”. There are so many terms used for different kinship relations which are mentioned in the following Kinship table 2.3 and diagram 2.

Diagram 2.2 Kinship terms of Father side

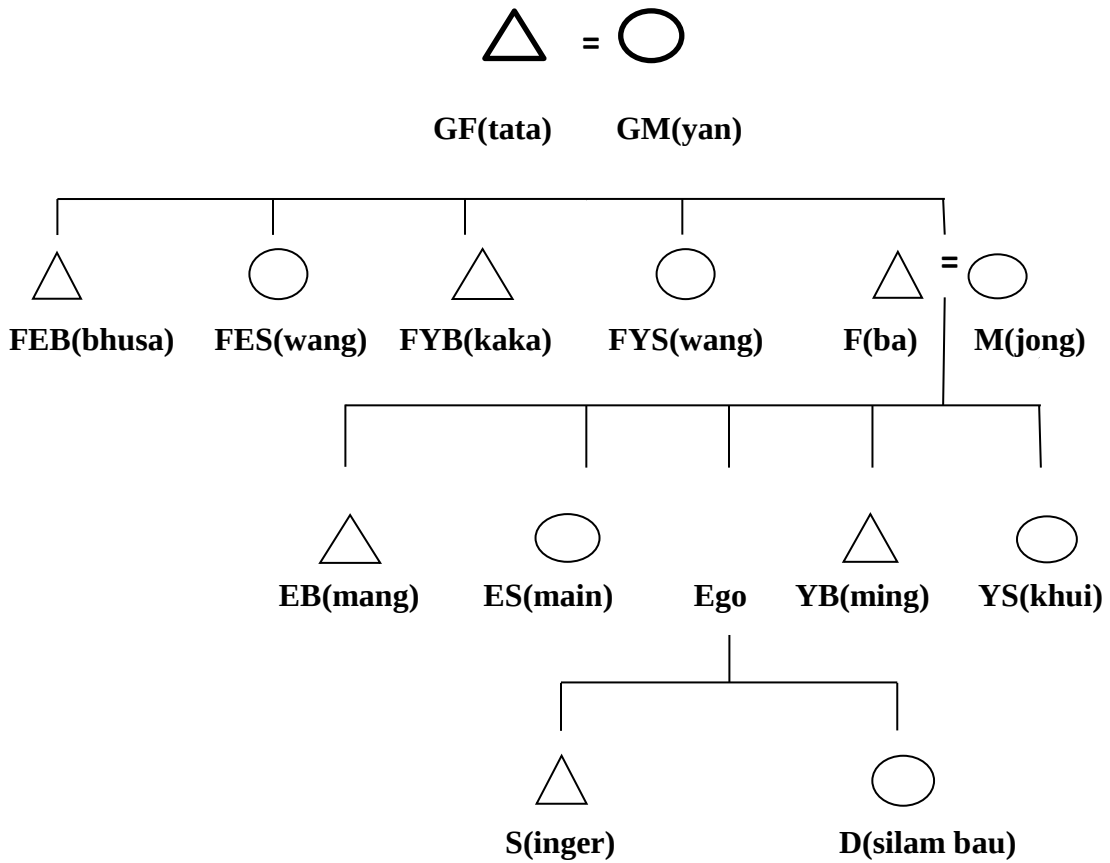


Table 2.3 Other kinship terms used by Bonda in daily life

Kinship terms	Meaning of kinship terms
<i>Mamu</i>	Mother's Brother (elder/younger)
<i>Wang</i>	Mother's sister (elder/younger)
<i>unkur</i>	Husband
<i>kuni</i>	Wife
<i>Arju</i>	Son in law
<i>Ukuin</i>	Daughter in law
<i>Dadi</i>	Grandfather (maternal)
<i>Ming</i>	Grandmother (maternal)

<i>Kiaar</i>	Mother in law
<i>Inkuin</i>	Father in law
<i>Iklain</i>	Grandson/ Granddaughter

Clan

The Bonda call their clans as ‘Kuda or Manda’, which are nothing but exogamous patrilineal clans. The exogamous patrilineal clans are Badnaik, Challan, Sisa, Dhangda, Majhi, Kirsani, Muduli, etc. It has been found that recently a few other Kudas have come up such as Dora, Jigiii and Mandra, etc. The Bonda's traditional autonomous villages and their lifestyle are maintained by three traditional functionaries i.e Naik, Challan and Barik. The Naik plays his role as the village chief, challan as the organizer of village meeting and barik as the village messenger. The barik doesn't belong to Bonda community but belongs to the Domb caste.

The Naik is very knowledgeable and expert elderly person in the village. At sindhibore the naik presides over the village council meetings. The cases which are violating social customs, traditions, and conventions are brought to the assembly and decided. He announces punishment to the offender according to the gravity of the case.

Phratry

A wider group of 12 Bonda villages known as Bara jangara group or soru bhai group. The people of this group tied brotherhood relationship with one another. They eat the same sacrificial food which is restricted to members of the two village.

Moiety

The bigger exogamous unit among the Bonda is called Bansa (moiety), which divides the Bonda tribe into two blood groups i.e. Ontal (cobra) and Killo (tiger). Among these two groups, the people of the Cobra group are countless. The Bansa by the name itself implies that the people are totemistic. There is a belief that the member of the Tiger Bansa should never kill a tiger and the member of the Cobra Bansa too observes taboo for killing a cobra.

Descent

The Bonda society follows the principle of unilinear decent, which point up the father's side of the family. The Bonda family is patrilineal, which point up the members inherited their social identity through the father's line. The Bonda achieved their patrilineal kinship membership by birth only and a Bonda man gets his name, property, liabilities, family secrets, social status from his father and it continues from generation to generation.

Marriage

Among the Bonda, monogamy is the most pre-eminent type of marriage. They follow fixed lineage and exogamous patrilineal clan. Marriage is strictly prohibited between the same clan and lineage. Lineage is considered as a group of persons consisting of the descendants of the same ancestor. They have a strong belief that marriage between the same clan may bring evil consequences not only to the couple but for the entire village. There is a dormitory system for acquiring mates among the Bonda of which marriage by negotiation is mostly present. There are a number of social sanctions associated with the marriage among the Bonda. The given table shows the marital status of Seleiguda village.

Table 2.4 Marital status of Seleiguda village

Age	Married	Unmarried	Divorcee	Widow	Total
1-10	0	59	0	0	59
11-20	5	27	0	0	32
21-30	30	8	0	0	38
31-40	28	0	0	2	30
41-50	30	0	0	1	31
51-60	9	0	0	4	13
61-70	1	0	0	1	2
70>	0	0	0	2	2
Total	103	94	0	10	207

From the above table, it is found that only 104 people are unmarried in Seleiguda village which includes children, unmarried, divorced and widowed. In those 59 people comes under the age group of 1-10 (children). And others 103 people are married.

Religion

The Bonda's religious beliefs and practices are surrounded by totemism, nature worship, taboo, sorcery, animism and ancestor worship and recently they have begun practicing of Hinduism. The Bonda believes in a 3 tier system of existence i.e. hell, heaven and spatial existence. The Bonda have believed in the creation of the universe by a supreme power. They believe that their deities living on the earth can be found in heaven. The Bonda also believe in reincarnation. The Bonda are traditionally animistic. Earlier, they used to feel the existence of gods and goddesses in stones, trees, mountains, and streams and worshipped accordingly. The religion of Bonda has been discussed more in details in chapter-3 Bonda religion.

Political Organization

In every Bonda village, there is a headman whom they called as *naik*. Pre-eminently for a period of 3 years, the *naik* holds the office. Thereafter a new *naik* is selected by the elders of the village. The main function of the *Naik* is to maintain the village assembly and adjudicate the cases regarding the village. There is a *challan*, who assists the village *naik* in all his functions. The post of *challan* is hereditary but the post of *naik* is not hereditary. There is a *barika*, who works as a messenger. He carries information from his village to other villages. The village *barika* belongs to the *domb* community and his post is hereditary.

A group of twelve villagers form an alliance called, *Bara-Jangar* over which there is a headman who called as *badnaik* or *raja*. The post of *Raja* is not hereditary. He holds the post on a term basis for a period of three years. On the day of *Magha* festival, they do a selection of *badnaik*. The post of *pujari* is hereditary. For the family maintenance and for his service, *pujari* gets 15 kg. of food grain at the time of harvest from each household. There is another person who is called *disari* who fixes all the dates for different festivals at the village level. He also performs various rites and rituals. *Disari* is also specialist in herbal medicines and works professionally as a sorcerer who knows

many magical performances and methods of curing diseases. Although the Bonda have their own political system it has found so many cases of murder and assaults are reported in the police station from the Bonda community. The Bonda are also characterized by aggression and criminal propensity.

Economic organization

The Bonda's economic life is distinguished by its dependence on hunting, food gathering and cultivation (settled and shifting) with other activities like livestock rearing and wage earning, etc. They practice shifting cultivation in the hill-slopes along with wet cultivation in the valley lands. They also depend on food-gathering and hunting for their economic subsistence. Barter is carried on with outsiders to a large extent. For their own consumption, they do a proper schedule of cultivations like they grow rice in the wetland (Paddy land area), Ragi and millets in the swiddens (Hill slope area). Some of the Bonda people rear goat and pig both for sacrificial purpose and for sale. For plowing the wetlands and uplands they use bullocks but they do not rear cows. In most of the houses rearing of local variety of poultry, birds are very common.

The Bonda are largely dependent on the forest which provides them with food, fuel, fodder and construction materials, etc. They do lots of collection of edible leaves, fruits, roots, shoots, flowers and mushrooms in different seasons. The Bonda supplement their diet with non-vegetarian food items by hunting and bird catching in the forest. When they go to the forest for hunting they kill jungle peafowl, deer, porcupine, fowl, hare, wild boar, wild goat, and rabbit, etc. They do teamwork under the leadership of an expert hunter for the hunting of bigger animal.

Health and Hygiene

The Bonda are less aware of their health and hygiene. Children of the 0-8 age group do not brush their teeth regularly. Most of the Bonda male and female of middle age use *Dai Kathi* (twig) to clean their teeth. But above 50 years old age people do not clean their teeth regularly.

The Bonda children of 0-8 years used to take bath once after 2-3 days during rainy and winter season. Men and Women of middle age take bath daily during winter, but during

rainy Season they do not bathe regularly, they take bath on alternate days. Above 50 years old men and women take bath once between 2-3 days in both the seasons.

Chapter- 3

Religion and Worldview of Bonda

Introduction

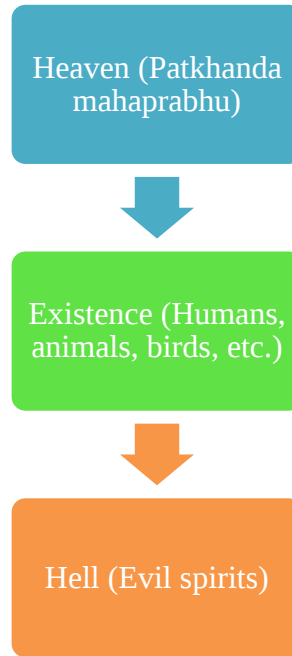
According to Somasundaram (1950), tribal religion is composed of three elements – the worship of gods and spirits, the rituals, and the totemic ceremonies. The concept of the relationship of the spiritual beings with the doings of men involves the idea of supernatural power, and this idea has given rise to the notion of fate which means the power of an impersonal force. To Majumdar (1961) “this vague concept of power which has been shaped by the magician, the sorcerer, the priest and even the tribal chief to endow the qualities of animate and inanimate objects or spirits and godlings enters into material and objects of man’s environment and provides the sanction immaterial of taboos, customs, rules and restrictions, group mores and conduct”. According to Vidyarthi (1963), the tribals worship different spirits. The power of spirits is so great that the faith of the tribal witch-doctor is yet unshaken. This sacred belief in the spirits has led to animism. For them, animals, plants, trees, ponds, rivers, stones, hills, etc. are all abodes of spirits. The tribal believes that “disease, famine, scarcity of water, low fertility of the soil, low production of crops, high incidence of deaths, etc., all these happen only when the evil spirits are not worshipped properly and the sacrifices are not made timely”. Émile Durkheim (1965) gave an idea of sacred/profane dichotomy which considered as “the central characteristic of religion”. He defined "religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden." In Durkheim's theory, “the sacred things are those which are protected and isolated by prohibitions. The profane things are those to which the prohibitions apply, and they must keep their distance from sacred things”.

Concept of spirits

In this context, religion plays a very important role among the Bonda community which represents a mixture of primitive and traditional beliefs and practices. Their religious beliefs and practices are surrounded by totems, nature worship, taboo, animism,

sacrifices and ancestor worship. Recently they added practicing of Hinduism. The Bonda believes in a three tier system of existence i.e. hell, heaven and spatial existence which is given in the followed diagram 3.1.

Diagram 3.1 Three tier system of existence



They believe that their deities living on the earth can be found in heaven. Their supreme deity is Patkhanda Mahaprabhu who has its abode in heaven. They believe Patkhanda Mahaprabhu takes a decision for the soul, whether the soul would merge as an ancestral spirit or as an evil spirit, ghost, and demon. His decision is also based on the soul of the person, whether the person has a habit of breaking any social norm or not. If the soul of the person has broken more social norms then it gets a place as a ghost or evil spirit and if it is less then it gets a place as an ancestral spirit. The Bonda people believe in two types of spirit: benevolent spirits and malevolent spirits which is discussed in the table 3.1 and described below.

Table 3.1 List of spirits

Benevolent spirits	Malevolent spirits
Patkhanda Mahaprabhu	Lamta Chuan

Hundi/Bursung	Doliang
Kapur Chuan	Garbada
Singraj	Kamini
Renungbar	Gunam
Uga	Kaliarani
Sadar or Sindibore	Kiding sagar
Muldei	Raskoda

Benevolent Spirits

For prosperity and happiness, the Bonda villagers worship some of the benevolent spirits collectively. These deities are worshipped in the individual household, village level or local area. The local priest (*sisā*) or sometimes the medicine man (*dishari*) propitiates the deities. They call these deities in different terms of names respectively. They also believe their well-wishers are their ancestors who must be worshiped on a festive occasion. Otherwise, their ancestors get angry and they have to face illness, crop failure and unnatural death of animals, etc. The Bonda of the Seleiguda village worship the following deities.

a. Patkhanda Mahaprabhu (supreme deity)

The Bonda believe that Patkhanda Mahaprabhu is the inventor of the universe. They believe that the origin of Patkhanda Mahaprabhu is also related to Ramayana. After completion of 12 years of banishment, while Lord Rama was returning to Ayodhya, he halted for some days in the Bonda hills. So the Bonda gave hospitality to Rama, Laxman, and Sita. At that time the hill was very dense, full of wild animals and it was very dangerous for people to live there. Lord Rama gave a sword which was believed to be a form of Patkhanda for the protection of their life from the wild animals. This sword is three feet in length and six inches in width. Afterward, it became the supreme deity of the Bonda people. These people believe their supreme deity *singi-arke* (sun-moon) is symbolized as Patkhanda Mahaprabhu and they also considered the sword and the banyan tree in which the sword is kept as sacred. This sacred place is situated in

Mudulipada village and whoever crosses the place offer some coconut or money in the name of Patkhanda. They worship thrice in a year; during *Chaitra Parab* (April-May), *Dasahara parab* (September-October) and *Push parab* (December-January) under the banyan tree for the better crops.

Apart from Patkhanda mahaprabhu they worship other deities too. In the village level, they worship village deities named *Hundi or Bursung*, *Kapur Chuan* and *Singraj*. They worship *Uga* and *Renungbar* as their forest deities. The hills like Baliparbata, Biniparbata, Tulasi Pahada, etc. are also called as the abode of several deities. They worship *Dhartani* as the deity of the cowshed.

b. Hundi/Bursung (village deity)

The *Hundi or Bursung* is the Bonda's earth goddess and village goddess. The goddess is represented in the form of four stone slabs. They worship the goddess every month in a special hut. The *Hundi* is installed by the *dishari* when the village settlements start and are worshipped by a *pujari* every month. They worship the goddess to bring prosperity to their village. They offer eggs, vermilion, rice and incense to the goddess.

c. Kapur Chuan (stream deity)

The *Kapur Chuan* is the Bonda's deity of the stream. It is also known as *Sitakund* or sacred pool. This pool is situated near to east of Mudulipada village. This pool has three sections. In the first section, the Bonda installs their female deity, *King Buda*. In the second section, they believe that the deity provides drinking water to the people. In the third section, they use the water for bathing. The Bonda worship *Kapur Chua* in the month of *Chaitra* (April-May). The deity is worshipped by the *pujari* on behalf of unmarried girls for their healthy life. They offer only fish and eggs to the deity.

d. Singraj (forest deity)

The Bonda worships *Singraj* as their forest deity which is placed under a *simli* tree. They worship the deity in the month of *Srabana* (June-July), *Diwali* (September-October) and *Chaitra* (February-march). The *pujari* worships the deity to get rid of bruises created of burn injuries. They offer goat, pig, rice and joss sticks to the deity.

e. Uga (forest deity)

The Bonda worship *Uga* as their forest deity who is the wife of Singraj. The deity is placed under a *simli* tree. They worship the deity in the month of *Chaitra* (April-May). The *pujari* worships the deity to get rid of bruises created of burn injuries. They offer joss sticks, fowl and egg from each family to the deity.

f. Renungbar (forest deity)

The Renungbar is the forest deity of the Bonda, represented by the stone wall facing at the entrance of the Bonda hills. People belonging to other castes also believe in *Renungbar*, but they call Renungbar as *Dalkhai devi*. It is believed that whoever crosses the road should offer *dal*. The Banspara village is near to the boundary wall. The *pujari* of Banspara village worships the deity near the boundary wall in the month of *Chaitra* (April-May). The *pujari* prays to the deity not to bring scourge and pestilence to the village. They offer three pigs, incense and vermilion to the deity.

g. Sadar or Sindibore (village deity)

The Sadar is a stone made platform at the center or entrance of the village. The Bonda use the place of Sadar for meeting held by the panchayat members and as a dancing ground for the village boys and girls. There is a spirit called *Kiding sagar* which is in the form of a musical drum. They worship the deity in the month of *Chaitra* (April-May) and *Diwali* (September-October). The *pujari* worships the deity for the betterment of the village. They offer fowl, rice, vermilion and joss sticks to the deity.

h. Muldei (ancestral spirit)

Muldei is the ancestral spirit of the Bonda. The deity is represented by a small piece of wooden post. They keep a special place beside the main pillar of the sleeping room in everyone's house for the deity. They worship Muldei in the sleeping room on all festive occasions and during prolonged sickness. They offer fowl, incense powder and rice to their deity for the wellbeing of the family members.

Malevolent Spirits

The Bonda people have many beliefs and fears regarding deities and demons. The Bonda villagers worship the malevolent spirits because they believe that these spirits are responsible for the diseases. They believe in evil spirit called *Kamini*, *Gunam*, *Raskoda*, etc. who are responsible for diseases. The Medicine man (*dishari*) plays an important role here as he tries to appease the evil spirits by performing some rituals. The Bonda of the studied village worship the following malevolent deities.

a. Lamta Chuan (stream spirit)

The Lamta Chuan is the spirit of the stream for the Bonda people. They worship the spirit when young girls suffer from menstrual problems and difficulties. The *dishari* worship the spirit to save the young girls from the diseases. He offers rice, turmeric, and egg to the spirit.

b. Doliang (tree spirit)

The Bonda believe Doliang is the spirit of the jackfruit and mango tree. They worship the spirit when any one of the villagers vomits blood. They believe when Doliang spirit gets angry with villagers at that time they face these problems. The *dishari* worship the spirit to save the man from vomiting blood. The *dishari* use peacock feathers, rice and incense powder to cure the man.

c. Garbada (Land spirit)

The Garbada is the spirit of Low land for the Bonda people. If anyone from the village suffers from stomach trouble they come to the *dishari*. He offers eggs and red clay balls to the spirit for the better health of the diseased person.

d. Kaliarani

The Kaliarani is the spirit of low land paddy fields. The spirit residing on the rock near to Sitakund is known as Kaliarani. It is a female spirit. If any person of the village suffers from an abnormal illness they call the *dishari* to save the person from abnormal illness. He worships the rock by offering rice, incense powder, and a pig.

e. Kiding sagar

The spirit of the musical drum is known as Kiding sagar. In the month of *Chaitra* (April-May) the *pujari* worships the drum at the Sindibore during the ceremonial hunting. He offers rice, joss sticks, egg, and a pig to save the people from the wild animal when they go for hunting.

f. Gunam

The Gunam is the spirit of an unsatisfied soul for the Bonda people. It is both a male and a female spirit. They call the *dishari* to worship the spirit in the house of the victim when a pregnant woman is upset. He offers the spirit some rice and a goat to save the pregnant women from any sort of abnormality. In some cases, they also call the shaman or *gurumai* to make the victim's spirit free. He offers rice, incense powder, peacock feathers, a fowl and an egg to the spirit.

g. Kamini

Kamini is the spirit of a female who died during her pregnancy or during childbirth. This spirit attacks people when she needs something from them. The Bonda people call *dishari* to worship the spirit and offer a cock or a fowl. But this spirit does not harm any pregnant woman or children.

h. Raskuda

Raskuda is the spirit of a male who died because of the attack of wild animals. This spirit stays in the forest. The spirit attacks people when he needs something from them. The Bonda people call the *dishari* to worship the spirit and offer a cock or a fowl.

It is analysed that the Bondas believe in benevolent spirit and malevolent spirits who regulates their lives in one or other ways. They have a clear cut idea about the gender of the spirit. They believe that each and everything in the world has a good and bad sides. It is same in the case of spirits also. Mahaprabhu choose the soul according to the karma of the humans and merge their soul as ancestral spirits or ghost. When a person faces any type of diseases they first worship malevolent spirits instead of worshipping

benevolent spirits because they have the notion who is responsible for the diseases can only cure them.

Life after death and Bondas belief system

The Bonda have belief in life after death. After death of a person, the soul stays among them as an evil spirit or ancestral spirit. On festive occasions, they appease and offer food to their ancestors and evil spirits for the wellbeing of their family. They believe that Patkhanda Mahaprabhu takes all the decision for the soul after the death of a person, whether the soul would merge as an ancestral spirit or as an evil spirit, ghost, and demon. His decision is also based on the soul of the person, whether the person has a habit of breaking any social norm or not.

The Bonda people also have a belief that good things and bad things are always associated with the divine will of Patkhanda Mahaprabhu. If someone suffers from any disease, it is believed that Mahaprabhu is angry with him. In the Bonda *ghati* the sago palm trees are highly valued and a person who gets large quantity of juice from sago palm trees is believed to be blessed by Mahaprabhu. If someone commits any crime, the man is considered to be cursed by Mahaprabhu. There are different ceremonies and festivals which they organize on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, as they believe these days are considered auspicious. The Bonda's communal hunting also takes place in the month of *Chaitra* (February-March) because in this month games are available in plenty for hunting.

It is a belief among the Bonda people that whatever is written in their destiny is bound to happen even though there are some preventive measures that can be taken by the *dishari* to minimize the evil effects. The Bonda people attach an iron amulet to their body to protect them from evil eyes. The objects like iron instruments are believed to protect them against evil eyes. It is believed that the evil eyes effect can be avoided if one abides by the social norms.

Religious cosmology

“The anthropological record indicates that all cultures compose stories to account for the origin and nature of the world, and these stories have, according to Mathews, an important function in orienting human beings within the world” (Fiona Bowie 2006).

Bronislaw Malinowski’s work “the Trobriand Islanders (New Guinea) led to his identification of the close connection between myths and social institutions. Myths are related to practical life and explain existing practices, beliefs, and institutions by reference to tradition; they are “charters” of social customs and beliefs”. From ancient time the Bonda also have the belief in the nature of cosmology. They have mythical stories about the functions of the world, the creation of the earth, the creation of human beings and the creation of gods.

The myth related to the creation of the earth and Bonda origin

The Bonda believe that before the creation of earth there was water around all the places. At that time mahaprabhu had a crow who roamed around the water. One day the crow saw two human beings (brother and sister) floating on a big basket. When the crow informed mahaprabhu about the human beings, mahaprabhu immediately asked the crow to bring an earthworm. He scratched the earthworm and brought out some earth and from that he created the world. He asked the brother and sister to stay on the earth and asked them to get married. But the brother and sister hesitate to get married. After that mahaprabhu asked *maa thakurani* to affect both the humans with smallpox so that both cannot recognize each other’s face as brother and sister and get married to each other’s. The mahaprabhu succeeded in his plan as the humans married each other.. From them, twelve daughters and twelve sons came to the earth. Their race was Bonda. After the creation of the Bonda, all the other people were created.

The myth related to the creation of gods

The Bonda people say men were made before Gods on the earth. They did not appease and make sacrifices to gods at that time. In those days people were very rich and engaged themselves in cultivating, eating, drinking and sleeping. But one day

mahaprabhu grew worried about the people behavior and called the god to stay with them for six months. During these periods he offered fruits, milk, etc. due to which god was impressed and decided to stay back among those people. There was a man called Sethi Sisa (friend of *Mahaprabhu*) who arranged all the things for gods. He gave names to all the gods by placing them towards North-East direction in house, village, water streams, forest, etc. The Sethi sisa gave food to all gods by collecting food from the villagers. After some time gods were not satisfied with their fruits and asked for meat. And the people started sacrificing animals to gods and became poor again.

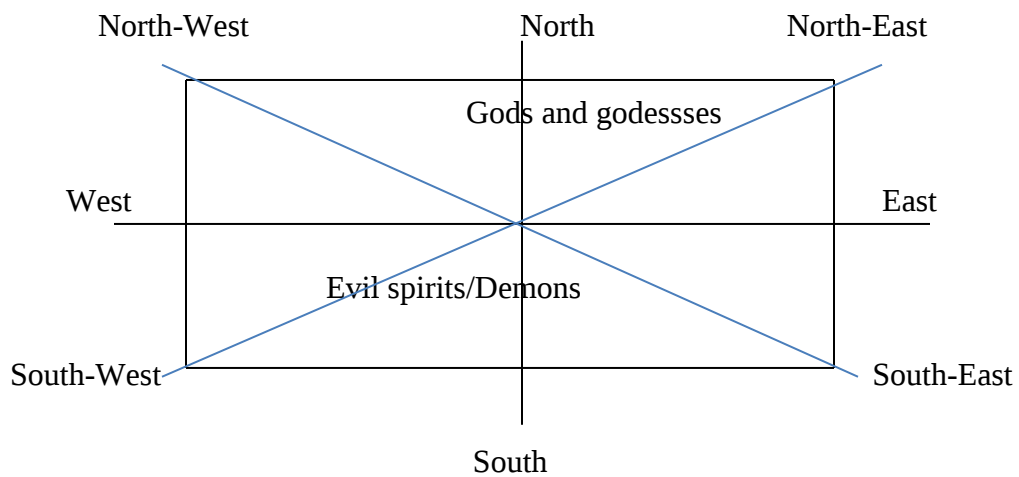
The myth related to Bonda women dressing

The Bonda people say that Lord Rama, Laxmana, and Sita during their banishment of fourteen years had taken rest in Bonda *ghati*. One day when Sita was bathing alone naked in the water stream, a group of Bonda women saw Sita and laughed at her. Sita felt insulted by this and cursed the women so that their head gets shaved off and as a result their body shall not be covered by long hair and they shall stay naked. The Bonda women begged Sita to forgive them but the curse could not be taken back by Sita. So Sita tore her saree and gave a portion of it to cover up their lower body. Since that day the women follow the words of Sita and do not keep long hair and wear only little cloth on the lower body. They named the water stream as Sitakunda. The water stream is still present near to Mudulipada village. At that place the footprint of Sita on a large stone slab is visible. In the month of February, all the Bonda people worship the footprint and appease the deity.

It is analysed that the Bonda believe in the system of hell, heaven, and existence. Their *mahaprabhu* resides in the heaven and he is the creator of universe and humans. It has also observed that they believe god and goddesses are also there in the human form. The Bondas claim that their relation to mythological story Ramayana which shows their relation to Hindus are not recent. According to them men were made before gods on the earth and there was no rooms for gods and goddesses. First Human beings got established on the earth then they gave some place to gods. The same was claimed by Charles Darwin (1871) that “human beings are descended from apes, leaving no room for God’s direct creation of humans”. It has also observed that the Bonda are having the

calculation of things based on their world view which is given in the below diagram. The Bonda believe gods and goddesses resides facing towards North-East; and evil spirits resides facing towards South-East. According to this, they construct their house entrance towards North-East with the believe that the god can visit their houses any time and bless them.

Diagram 3.2 The auspicious directions for Bonda



Sacred places

Patkhanda and Hundi are regarded as the most sacred among the places which have been already discussed above. Sadar or Sindibor is present in every Bonda village where they observe all their festivals. The Bonda hill is mostly known for its sacred places like Sitakunda, Ammakunda, and Patkhanda.

a. Sitakunda

Sitakunda is regarded as a holy place where the presence of lord Sita has been felt long ago. When Lord Rama, Lakshman, and Sita came for 14 years of banishment they had taken rest under a tree. One water stream was there near to that place where she was taking a bath. That water stream was later called as Sitakunda by the name of Sita. There is a human footprint on the flat rock near to the pond which the Bonda claims is that of Sita. The area is prohibited to take bath but the Bonda people can take drinking

water from Sitakunda. If any displacement of rocks is made then the *pujari* gets the dream in the night about the person who did it. The next day the *pujari* tells the concerned person to appease the deity by sacrificing a fowl or goat.

b. Ammakunda

Ammakunda is the holy place of Amma Damaldei Devi who is the wife of Patkhanda. This place is surrounded by a cave and water stream. Recently the Bonda have started to worship Shiva linga inside the cave. There are different types of fish that can be found in the water stream. The Bonda believes that those fishes are the forms of different gods and they do not eat those fishes. If someone tries to harm those fishes they get punished by the god. This place attracts visitors because of its natural beauty. While going to Ammakunda all the visitors take biscuit, puffed rice, etc. to feed the fish and offer coconut and banana to Lord Shiva.

Sacred foods and sacred objects

It is observed that in most of the rituals the Bonda offers *arua* (sun-dried rice) to their deities. To impress their deities and spirits they sacrifice different animals like goat, lamb, buffalo, pig, and fowl. They satisfy the ghost and demon by offering eggs and fowls. In magico-religious rites only they offer liquor otherwise they do not offer liquor to their deities. They do not offer cow milk to their deities and do not consume also because they believe milk is only for the calf.

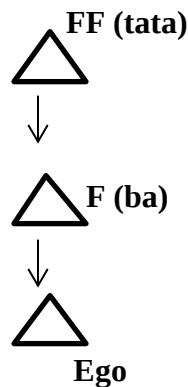
The Bonda community respect the Patkhanda sword and drum of the *pujari*. They considered it as sacred and having supernatural powers. In normal days they do not touch the sword and drum. During festive occasions, the *pujari* brings down the sword and drums, so people can appease it. They believe that the mango leaf has also the power to remove an evil spirit. The leaves and roots of the palm tree have reproductive power. They wear iron bracelets to remove evil spirits.

Religious rites

Among the Bondas, religious functions were assumed by certain important persons like *gurumai* (shaman), *pujari* or *sis*a (priest) and *dishari* (medicine man). The shaman is

known as *gurumai* among the Bonda community. The position of *gurumai* is not hereditary. They prefer *gurumai* to cure their diseases through magico-religious practices. The *gurumai* first start his treatment from the forehead by applying ash and checks the pulse of the diseased person by chanting words/mantras to know about the various diseases. Sometimes the *gurumai* provides treatment to cure of spirit possession. The priest is known as *sisā* or *pujari*. Among all the religious functionaries *pujari* or *sisā* position is known as the highest position with the responsibility of worshipping Patkhanda Mahaprabhu, Hundi and other deities. Every year at the time of harvest the priest receives 15 kg of food grains from every family for his services. The *sisā* is always a male person in the village. The medicine man is known as *dishari*. The *dishari* is always a male person in the village. The Bondas call the *dishari* for village level festivals, at the time of marriage and other ceremonial activities. For every ritual, he brings his peacock feathers with him. According to the nature of worship, he gets the payment in cash. The post of the *dishari* is hereditary, but if in case the descendant of the *dishari* family is unable to learn the work responsibility of *dishari* then any other person of the village with the knowledge of *dishari*'s responsibilities is selected for this position. The below diagram shows the patrilineal inheritance of *sisā* and *dishari*.

Diagram 3.3 Patrilineal inheritance of 'sisā' and 'dishari'



Avoidance and Taboo

Food taboo

The Bonda have some restriction on food whereby people should not eat before the festival and before eating they must offer it to their deity. Tubers and *Siali* creeper are not eaten until the observance of *Push parab*. The fruits like jackfruit and mango are eaten after the observance of *Chaita parab*. The Bonda do not eat animal meat in the *Chaitra masa* (March-April) and they do not eat leaves of arum, pumpkin, tuber in *Sravana masa* (July-August). They do not smoke, drink and eat during the ritual period. When the *pujari* comes to perform the ritual, he should not consume any kind of food and drink from his wife's hand, since they believe that it might pollute him.

Religious Taboo

During *Chaita parab*, the first two days, they do not touch cow dung because they believe that spirit visits the cowshed in these two days. If somebody touches the cow dung in these two days then their family will get attacked by Raskuda (evil spirit). During these days they do not take a bath in the morning. They take a bath in the evening by applying castor oil on their body as a preventive measure. There is another taboo during *Push parab* which prevents them from touching agricultural work for the first three days and nobody goes to the forest on these days. They have believed that during these days if somebody does not obey the taboo then wild animal might attack the village.

In the Bonda community, they do not address the names of *pujari*, *gurumai*, and *dishari* who are associated with religious functionaries. They are known for their role in the religious functionaries who are more respectful. So the wife also addresses her husband by teknonymy using the name of their son or daughter, but not by his name.

Sexual Taboo

During menstruation, women are forbidden from sexual intercourse because they consider it as impure blood. After the birth of a child, the mother is forbidden from sexual intercourse for one year. They believe that it promotes better growth of the child.

There is a taboo for men also that if he has to perform any rituals then he should not have sexual intercourse from the previous day.

It is found that the Bonda who inhabit the interior forests still follow their primitive pattern of living. The Bonda worshipped and identified different types of deities or supernatural forces. The Bonda religion is a mixture of ancestor worship, nature worship, animism, totemism, and taboo. But the Bonda people who are in contact with the plains came across with some elements of Hinduism.

It is analysed that according to Bondas stones, water streams, trees, etc are sacred. These sacred things has certain forbidden rules. For them sacrificing animal and birds are sacred. They believe sacred things are pure and everyone should not touch it. The same was given by Durkheim (1965) in his theory “the sacred things are those which are protected and isolated by prohibitions. The profane things are those to which the prohibitions apply, and they must keep their distance from sacred things”. It is observed that when they worship the sacred symbols, it indirectly regulates their society. They believe for the functioning of the society there should be limitations among the people. Likely, they follows certain taboos which regulates their lives in different way. And for the functions of these religious rituals and rites certain important positions are given by them in the form of *pujari*, *dishari* and *gurumai*.

Good omen and bad omen

The Bonda interprets the omen in a very different way. If the person of a family dies with lots of pain, it is auspicious for them because they believe the more pain to the dying person brings happiness in that year and the family gets more crops. They believe that if a rabbit or peacock cross the road while a bride arrives to the groom’s house for marriage, it is inauspicious to them. It is believed that the bride brings unhappiness to the groom’s house. When the men go for hunting expedition if they see a menstruating woman it is inauspicious to them. They give up the program of hunting expedition for that day because they believe that no games will be available for the day. If a person going out of the home and he/she gets an injury, they avoid going out for that day because they feel it is a bad omen and the person would not get success in the work if

he goes out. While going to bed at night, if a person hears the sound of an owl, it is inauspicious to them for which they throw one spoon of salt outside the door.

Sin and punishment

The Bonda possess the concept of hell and heaven. They believe Patkhanda mahaprabhu takes all the decision for them. If the person has broken more social norms then it gets a place as a ghost or evil spirit after death and if it is less then it gets a place as an ancestral spirit. But in the village level, naik, the headman of the village takes care of the village if someone breaks the norms. There are some types of punishment which are discussed in the following table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Lists of punishments

Crime	Types of punishment
Murder	The villagers do not keep any relation with the person. The guilty has to leave the village with his/her family.
Defamation	In front of the village people he/she has to give a fowl or cock as fine or penalty to the victim and apologize for their mistakes.
Robbery	He/she has to return double the amount as fine or penalty.
Assault, Adultery	He/she will be forced to marry the victim.

Indigenous knowledge

The most common diseases found among Bonda are Malaria, skin and eye diseases, gastrointestinal disorder, worm infection, and bronchitis. They have a different view of the cause of diseases and treatment. They believe that most of the sufferings are attributed due to the anger of the supernatural powers, witchcraft, and sorcery. They believe that persons who do not follow the rules of the society and those who break taboos and neglect supernatural powers are bound to suffer from various diseases.

For the treatment of all these diseases, they mostly follow their traditional methods. The *dishari* has the rudimentary knowledge about treatment of some minor diseases with the help of medicinal plants found in the forest. For minor bleeding, they apply the powder of the green coating of the bamboo shoots diluted in lukewarm castor oil or ashes of a piece of cloth burnt. For a burn injury, they apply a paste prepared from the bark of a plant called *Jagal*. For insect bite, they use a type of soup prepared by boiling *kangu*, minor millet. For the treatment of fever they give a mixture of leaves of a creeper called *harat*, bark of a tree called *raugh*, *bhilaichilli* fruits and salt thrice a day. For the treatment of cold and body ache they give a mixture of grinded *bhilai chili* fruit, mustard, and sesame together to eat. For indigestion, they give the bark of a plant called *dana* baked in *siali* leaf and apply it over the abdomen of the patient. For toothache, they give the roots of a creeper called *rupa* added with dried rice to the patient to eat. To cure scabies they first wash with little warm water then apply the paste made from the leaves of the *gunduri* tree added with turmeric. If all these treatments are found ineffective and the person suffers from a complicated disease, they believe that it is caused by some supernatural power.

It is analysed that they believe more pain to the death person brings happiness and it is auspicious. But in Hindu culture this is not considered as auspicious and it is believed that death of a person does not give happiness to anyone. It is also found that the Bonda follow the same in their life where they believe more hardwork or pain gives better life. They also believe that who is responsible for the crime has to get punishment. Among them if someone boycott from the village, he can never get back his social status. The

dishari's rudimentary knowledge about treatment of some minor diseases with the help of medicinal plants shows their dependence on nature.

In this chapter, it is concluded that the Bonda people have belief in benevolent spirits and malevolent spirits which regulate their surroundings. They worship their traditional gods and goddesses, Patkhanda mahaprabhu, Hundi, Singraj, etc. and conduct festival every year, and worship all the gods and goddesses. They have their own creation of myths regarding their origin, earth, religion, etc. which are superior to them. The sacred things are very auspicious to them. For the function of social order they are following certain taboo respectively.

Chapter-4

Rituals of Bonda

Introduction

Arnold van Gennep (1909) has coined the term "rites of passage", where he mentions rites, by which individuals are eased through the difficulties of transition from one social role to another. He stated that all these rituals are segmented into three successive elements called separation, transition and reintegration. Mary Douglas(1966) in *Purity and Danger* says “in some societies, for instance, menstrual pollution is feared and there are elaborate rules dealing with menstruation. In other societies, menstruation is virtually ignored and has little symbolic significance. One society may be preoccupied with death and its ritual avoidance, while another pays little attention to it”. There is, however, according to Douglas, appositeness about the relationship between body symbolism, pollution beliefs, and the nature of a particular society.

In most of the societies’ beliefs, practices, rituals, birth, marriage, death, etc. are treated as important crisis rites among the human groups, which is important part in the individual and community life of the members of the society. The Bonda also observes some of the crises rites with all the detailed rituals. This chapter discusses the various rites basic to the life cycle of the Bonda and associated rituals and festivals.

Birth ritual

The Bonda believes that pregnancy is one of the most important stages of their married life. They feel that getting pregnant after marriage is a matter of pride. At the time of delivery, they do not allow male members inside the room. The childbirth takes place inside their living room which is assisted by some of the experienced women of the clan along with the girl’s mother-in-law. In case of any difficulties in labor they immediately call *dishari* to propitiate the evil spirits for smooth delivery of the baby.

After the birth of a child, they cut the umbilical cord (*lundi*) with the help of a knife. They apply turmeric on the naval stump of the mother to get relief from pain and they use it for the fastest healing. They put all the waste cord and placenta in an earthen pot

and buries it close to the doorstep. Then they give a bath to the newborn child with turmeric and castor oil paste.

After this, on the ninth day, they perform purificatory rites where the *dishari* sacrifices a chicken or goat. In a leaf bowl, the *dishari* collects some drops of the sacrificial blood and in another bowl some rice and mango twigs. He brings all these stuff to the childbirth room and applies three blood marks on the wall to make it pollution free. He keeps some twigs of mango tree on the roof of the entrance to prevent entry of evil spirit. Added to this, he also sprinkles water on the family members and relatives with the twigs of a mango tree. Then the head of the family offers rice, chicken, and liquor to their ancestors and inform their ancestors about their new family member. After the offering is complete, the members of the family and relatives can have their meal.

On the 15th day of child birth, they perform *dubokaig* ceremony where the father of the child visits the child's maternal uncle to inform about the birth. According to the Bonda tradition, the maternal uncle sends a hen with the child's father if the newborn is a girl or a cock if it is a boy. When the child's father reaches to the house they cook these items and eat with their clan members. They do not have any name-giving ceremony. On the day of child birth they name the child after the day of birth. For instance, if the day of birth is *Samabar* (Monday) then the child will be named as *Sama* or *Samabari*; *Mangalabar* (Tuesday) as *Manglu*; *Budhabar* (Wednesday) as *Budhu*; *Gurubar* (Thursday) as *Gurubari* or *Guru*; *Sanibar* (Saturday) as *Sani*; *Rabibar* (Sunday) as *Rabi*. Among the Bonda, many people have been found to have similar names. After that when the child becomes 3 years old they celebrate the first haircut ceremony.

If a woman does not conceive a baby after marriage, they prefer to call the *dishari* rather than consulting a doctor. For the effective conception, the *dishari* performs some of the necessary magico-religious rites and gives some herbal medicines to the lady. If this treatment does not work, then the man can get married to another woman to conceive a child.

Taboos during pregnancy

Some of the cases observed during fieldwork regarding the pregnancy taboo is mentioned below.

Mangala Krishani, aged around 30 years, from Seleiguda village, ate the head and feet of the sacrificial animal when his wife Mungli Krishani, aged around 30 years, was pregnant. The Bonda have a belief that men should avoid eating the head and feet of the sacrificial animal when his wife is pregnant. If they neglect the taboo, the soul of the animal may harm the unborn child. The village neighbors warned the man not to do so again. They told him that these actions may affect his baby in the mother's womb. After the birth of the baby, it was seen that the left leg of his son was not functional. The new born baby's left leg seemed smaller than its right one. The baby died after a few days of its birth. The villagers believe that due to the breaking of the taboo by Mangala Krishani, and for eating the head and feet of the sacrificial animal his son became disfigured and did not survive.

In another case Sunki Challan, aged around 30 years, from Seleiguda village, ate mango and jack fruit during her third month of pregnancy. The Bonda have some restriction that during pregnancy a woman should take care of her diet by avoiding brinjal, mango and jack fruits. Her neighbors warned her not to eat. But she ate unknowingly which affected her baby and it resulted in the miscarriage of the baby. After that incident, she is unable to give birth to a child. The villagers believe that due to neglecting the food taboos, she was not able to deliver the baby. Now Sunki Challan feels that because of her mistake she lost her baby.

It is observed that among Bonda, community restrictions are not only for women but also for men. When wife is pregnant, the men should avoid eating the head or feet of the sacrificial animal. A woman during pregnancy has to take care of her movements like she should not touch the corpse and she should not go to the burial ground, also she should not roam outside her house during the solar or lunar eclipse. They believe that if they neglect the taboo the soul of the animal may harm the unborn child. Most of the father and mother do not feel anxiety about the child birth but they feel more anxiety

when the taboos are not followed properly or the ritual of child birth is not performed well.

Here it is analysed that the sayings of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown about primary ritual is true i.e. “He tends to perform actions which have no practical result and which we call ritual. But he is not simply an individual. He is a member of a society with definite traditions, and among other things society determines the form of the ritual and expects him to perform the ritual on the appropriate occasions. There is, however, evidence from our own society that when ritual tradition is weak, men will invent ritual when they feel anxiety” (cited from Homans 1941). In Bonda community also when a woman feel difficulty in labor or a woman is not conceiving a baby they invent to perform some magico-religious rites for the satisfaction of their anxiety. The existence of the rituals and beliefs associated with rituals makes them anxiety free.

The Bondas do not perform any specific rituals when a girl experience her first menstruation. But there is a rule for the girl that she should not come out of their house for 5-7 days. And there is no specific rituals performed for the boys when he reaches into adulthood. After maturity of the boys and girls, they become the formal member of the *dhangdi gruha* (dormitory life).

Marriage ritual

For Bonda, marriage is one of the most important institutions. It is one of the essential crisis rites in the life cycle of Bonda. They believe marriage balances the relations of the mated pair to each other, their kinsmen, offspring, and the community together. The Bonda have their *dhangdi gruha* (dormitory life) which plays the most important role in their marriages. All unmarried girls and boys spend most of their time in the dormitory. In this dormitory, they interact with each other through singing, dancing, chatting, gossiping and can also choose their life partners.

It is found that they follow two types of marriage i.e arranged marriage and marriage by capture. They do not concern much about pre-marital pregnancy in their society. If this type of case arises, they go to panchayat and the boy who is responsible for the pregnancy has to marry the girl. The Bonda have selective time for their marriages.

They keep marriage after the harvest in the month of *Pusha* (January- February) because at that time all the people will be free from agricultural activities. They fix date for the marriage in the dormitory itself. The boy's father and ten members of his lineage go to bring the girl with them. The girl along with one of her friends comes to the groom's village but not to the groom's house. She stays in the girl's dormitory for four days because she has to impress the boy that she is capable of working. Then on the fifth day, she and the boy starts for her village where the boy has to stay for 4 days in the boy's dormitory. After that five women from boy's side come to the girl's house to take them back. Next day they come back to their village with the girl's relatives and family members. The girl's family brings rice and meat along with them to give it to the groom's family. After reaching the groom's village they welcome the girl by sprinkling turmeric water on her feet and putting rice paste on the forehead. Then the *sisā* (priest) takes them inside the *hundi* and perform certain rituals. After that, a friend of the boy takes him inside the house and the girl's friends also take her to the same room. After that, they are recognized as husband and wife. Then the bride cooks rice in a new earthen pot for their ancestors where the offering are given by *dishari*. They perform the *puja* so that their ancestors should also know that a new bride came to their house. After that, all the family members and their relatives can have the food cooked by the bride. All the guests give blessings and also gifts to the bride.

After the third or fourth day of the marriage, the bride price will be paid. They give bride price in the form of a cow or bullock or pig. Then the couple visits the bride's house for three days. On this day the bride's family provides a feast to all their relatives and guests. On the next day, the groom leaves the bride in her parents' house and goes back to his village. After a few days, he visits to bride's house to take her back to his house.

It is analysed that for Bondas marriage is an institution which connects one village to another village and gives a new social relation to them. Their *dhangidi gruha* works as a marriage bureau and it is also observed as a class room where the unmarried boys and girls learns more about their culture from their elders. In the studied village it is observed that among the Bonda couples, most of the husbands are younger than their

wives because most of the Bonda do not have exact calculation about their age. And another reason for a Bonda woman getting married to younger boys is that a younger man can give economic support during their old age.

Death ritual

Among the Bonda, the practice of both cremation and burial can be found for the disposal of a corpse. On the pyre, they keep a mat and next to it they keep the wrapped corpse with a white cloth on it. At that time all the family members cry loudly. After that, the eldest son or any male agnate brings some of the woods from their verandah to set fire to the pyre which means they are giving some share of their house to the soul (*atma*). Only men carry the pyre to the burial place. In the case of a deceased female, they keep all her sarees and ornaments on the pyre. If it is a male then they keep his clothes, knife, bow, and arrow, etc on the pyre.

To make the corpse pollution free, they cut hair and nails and then keep it in a leaf bowl over the pyre which they can set on the fire. After this, they leave the place and direct go for the purificatory bath because they believe the spirits may be bewitched at any time. It is believed that the soul does not get ‘moksha’ until the final pollution day or *dasa*.

If someone dies in the family, the whole day of the deceased family do not cook anything. They have their food from the neighbor’s house. At the evening they cook rice in a new pot and the male member of the family take it to the cremation ground to offer the spirit. After returning, the eldest son of their family sacrifices an egg to their ancestral spirit (*muldei*) to make all the houses pollution free. He mixes the egg with water and sprinkles it with mango leaf on the house roof.

On the third day, they perform *bud* ceremony where the wife of the deceased goes to the cremation ground with some ladies to collect piece of bones on a bamboo. They do this to know whether the death is normal or due to sorcery. If the bone is fragile then it is a normal death and if not then the death is due to sorcery. When they come back with ashes, the shaman receives them by sprinkling the egg on them. After that, he throws the egg mixture on their roof which makes them spirit free.

On the tenth day, during their last stage, they perform *kingdak* ceremony, During this ceremony they invite their relatives and serve them rice and pork. The two women of the clan go to cremation ground to offer food to the ancestors. In the evening, the elder son and some men go to the cremation ground to pour a jug of water over the ashes. At night, they perform *orpa* rite where a younger girls of the family sits over a big stone decorated with an axe, mango bark, and mango twigs, etc. The girls cut the mango bark with an axe to make themselves spirit free. The Bonda believe that the spirit attacks the young girls very easily. After all these, they end the death ceremony with a big feast.

Here it is analysed that the Bonda society maintains social order by specifying purity and impurity. For them cutting of hair, nails and taking purificatory bath are the symbols of purity which is very much similar to Hindu culture. Not only this, they also believe in getting moksha of a soul which has also found in Hindu culture. They sprinkle egg mixture to make the house pollution free. Here egg is the symbol of purity for Bondas which is opposite of the Hindu society. For Hindus egg is considered as non-veg which is impure. The same has been explained by Mary Douglas (1966) as appositeness about the relationship between body symbolism, pollution beliefs, and the nature of a particular society.

‘Friendship’ ritual

The Bonda believe that Friendship should be always pure. *Moitra* is the word which is known for the Bonda friendship. This relationship does not limit to two persons of the same community but it can be extended to other communities also. For the continuity of their friendship, they need to inform the *dishari* (medicine man) first. On one of the friend's house *dishari* performs certain rituals where he worships earth goddesses and *Hundi* to get a blessing for their friendship. They offer one coconut and some flowers to their gods. At the end of the ritual, they give clothes to each other as a friendship gift. After all, this procedure both the friends can attend functions at each other's place. It is observed that this ritual conveys Bonda peoples trust and faith on others.

Rituals associated with hunting and agriculture

It is found that Bonda are mostly engaged in hunting and agriculture. They go for hunting and bird catching in the forest to supplement their diet with non-vegetarian food items. They employ several traditional methods in group hunting. Before going to the forest, they perform some of the magico-religious rites and then go for hunting. The weapons which they use in hunting are bow and arrow, knife and heavy axe. Sometimes they take dogs along with them to accompany the hunting party. They have different devices for hunting different games. They encircle those areas where they know the animals might be taking shelter. Some of them will beat the bushes, while others are ready to shoot the animal. Whenever an animal is injured, they follow till they catch it. They hunt in forests for fowl, deer, hare, wild boar, wild goat, and rabbit. They do teamwork under the leadership of an expert hunter to hunt for bigger animals. On special or ceremonial hunting expeditions whenever any game is trapped, they equally share it after necessary magico-religious rites are performed and a limb is reserved for the hunter whose weapon hits the animals first.

In these days it is observed that the Bonda mostly dependent on agricultural activities. They start their agricultural activity by the procedure of the seasons and the cycle of festivals and ceremonies which is discussed in the following table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Agriculture calendar

Month	Food Production Activity	Agricultural ceremonies
January	Reaping and threshing of the rice, ragi and others.	<i>Sume-gelirak</i> is a festival where village priest worship the land and initiates the task of cutting small millets and cleaning podu land. Merer-susum, the first bean eating ceremony of the year takes place at this time.

February	Seed beds prepared in jhola lands and rice is sown. Ploughing begins for clearings of hills.	<i>Gunom</i> ceremony which is the Ceremonial beddings, takes place.
March	The villagers do ploughing and transplanting of rice-seedlings. Heavy work needed in the field.	No specific ritual
April	Work in open and irrigated fields gets over by this time. Fire is set in podu land.	<i>Giag-gige</i> is a festival which begins from full moon of <i>chaitra masa</i> and lasts for one week. The first fruits eating of mango takes place. It is now permissible to sow ragi in the field.
May	Cleaning of podu hills continue. Unburnt wood is collected. Millets are sown.	No specific ritual
June	Rain begins at this time and ploughing of land starts.	Before sowing process, the <i>pujari</i> worship to promote fertility in the field and offers fish and rice to the ancestral gods. They plant Eleusine corocana, panicum milliare, Panicum italicum, Cajanus indicus, Dolichos biflours, cucumbers, gourds and castor

		plants,etc. in the field.
July	Women weed the podu land.	<i>Gersum-gige</i> is the feast to remove sprouting shrubs, mango kernels and gourds. <i>Gadar-gige</i> celebrated to protect cattle from diseases.
August	Weeding in fields continues. The crops are regularly guarded by villagers. Women collect bamboo shoots. Harvesting of sauna starts from third week.	No specific ritual
September	<i>Alsi</i> (<i>Guizotia abyssinica</i>) sown in the field.	First fruit eating feast of maize takes place.
October	Milletts are reaped.	Ceremonial feast.
November	Crops are guarded day and night.	<i>Gewur sung</i> festival is observed where they do two days celebration for the betterment of crops.
December	Reaping of rice, millets, and crops in the cleared hills.	First eating of siadi fruits and beans.

Festivals

It is found that the Bondas start their new year with many rituals and recreation. Among them, the most important festivals start with *Chait Parab* (March-April), *Bandapun*

(June-July), *Dasahara* (August-September), *Gewarsung* or Diwali (October-November), *Pushparab* (December-January) and end with *Magha parab* (January-February). The following table shows the list of the festival they follow and the description of the festivals also given below.

Table 4.2 List of festivals

Calendar month	Month according to the Bonda	Festival celebrated	Remarks
March –April	<i>Chaitra</i>	<i>Chaita parab</i>	Celebrate this festival for eight days during the annual hunt.
June-July	<i>Srabana</i>	<i>Bandapun</i>	Observed for three days where they start eating <i>Kunda</i> , <i>Kangu</i> , <i>Panglung</i> , <i>Lahi</i> , and <i>Sariap</i>
August-September	<i>Aswin</i>	<i>Dasahara</i> or <i>Kumbuguda</i>	Celebrated for one day where they worship the sword
October-November	<i>Kartik</i>	<i>Gewarsung</i>	Celebration of two days for the betterment of crops and welfare of the villagers.

December-January	<i>Pusha</i>	<i>Pushparab</i>	Celebration of eight days where they start eating rice, <i>Siadi</i> fruits, beans etc.
January-February	<i>Magha</i>	<i>Magha parab</i>	Celebration of three days before sowing of paddy and different millets.

a. Chait parab

The Bonda begins their year with *Chait parab* in the month of March-April. The *Dishari* fix a date to start their hunting program. On this occasion male members of their family go for the annual hunt and starts eating new mango, also sow paddy and minor millets. On this occasion, they hang eleven mangoes inside their houses in different places. On the day the head of the family takes bath early morning and in a new earthen pot (*muta*) cooks food like rice, dry crab, and dry fish. They sacrifice a red fowl at *Muldei* (deity). After that, they sprinkle blood over the food and then serve it with new mango pieces to their ancestors. They cook the sacrificed fowl and serve it as a *prasad* to others with mango.

After having food, the villagers play drums, *turi* or *singhar* at the *Sindhabor* to assemble the male members, who arrives with hunting implements and the crowd from their village. The *pujari* sacrifices, a fowl to satisfy the forest deity. Thereafter the men can start their journey towards the jungle together. These males would not return to the village without hunting any animal. In this festival, the villagers sing and dance until they return from hunting. The heads of their families go to their respective fields with paddy, ragi, and *suan* seeds. The *gurumai* and *pujari* accompany them for the worshipping of the forest deity. The *pujari* breaks an egg over the seeds and offers this to the forest deity with *arua* rice. The shaman keeps peacock feathers in each plot which

helps to fight with the evil spirits. After that, they sow the seeds in their fields and keep some seeds aside for the coming years.

b. Bandapun Parab

The Bondas celebrate *Bandapun Parab* in the month of July- August. On this occasion, they worship the earth deity *Bursung* in the village and before that the first eating of *kunda* (pumpkin), *kangu*, *panglung* (orange), *lahi* (root) and *sariap* (arum) is performed. They prepare a clay platform with a thatched roof in front of the village deity which is called *hundi*. The *pujari* and shaman plays an important role on this occasion as they worship all the forest deities and spirits. They offer incense to all the deities and spirits. Then the *pujari* and *gurumai* move into trance state one after the other and get possessed by *Bursung*. After gaining consciousness they sacrifice a white fowl to their deity and smear the sacrificial blood on everyone's forehead. Then they circulate the seeds which can be mixed with other seeds to preserve for sowing. As night falls, they gather round and eat cakes prepared by individual households.

c. Kumbuguda (dashahara)

The Bonda celebrate *Kumbuguda* in any one of the Mondays in the month of September-October (*Aswina masa*). On this occasion, they worship a sword which represents *Patkhanda Mahaprabhu*. The *pujari* plays a major role in this occasion too. He brings down the sword from the banyan tree to worship it before washing it with turmeric and vermilion. Facing north, the priest invokes mahaprabhu and Durga maa. Then all the villagers offer sweets, coconuts, molasses, and banana to the sword. At last the *pujari* distributes the ceremonial food (*prasad*) to the people and replaces the sword on the banyan tree.

d. Gewarsung or Diwali

The Bondas celebrates *Gewarsung* festival which the non-tribal people call Diwali, in the month of October- November (*kartika masa*). On this occasion, they worship *Bursung* for the betterment of crops and welfare of their villagers. Every individual of the village clean their houses with cow dung. All the villagers make a small platform which they clean with cow dung. They decorate its four corners with mango twigs. The

pujari plays an important role here. He places the *arua* rice in the middle of the platform. All the villagers offer banana, molasses, coconut and sweets to the deity. At the end of this, the *pujari* sacrifices a goat or a pig. After that, he sprinkles the blood over the deity. Then they start cooking of the sacrificial animal and serve it to all the villagers.

e. Push parab

Push parab is celebrated by the Bonda in the month of December – January (*Push masa*). On this occasion, they worship *Bursung* to save their crops from wild animals. They start it on a Tuesday and it continues for eight days. They cook *siadi* fruit, rice, beans, and some tubers and roots in a *muta*. Then the head of the family appeases their ancestral spirit by offering food at eleven spots of the house after which all the clan members can eat the food. From afternoon till evening they perform a ritual where all men bring sago palm branches from the forest and all the women are invited by the *pujari*. Then they start beating each other with sago palm branches to ward off diseases. The one who wins the game has to give grain beer (*pandam*) to the loser.

On the third day, they invite the village panchayat to solve all the problems in their village. The village leaders like *Challan*, *Pujari*, *Naik*, and *Barik* distribute the grain beer equally among all the villagers. At night, the village leaders along with the shaman visit everyone's house along with the drum beaters. The shaman swings a bundle of peacock feathers at the walls of everyone's house to protect them from evil spirits. The day ends with the young boys of the village entertaining the village leaders through dancing.

f. Magha parab

Magha parab (susk) is celebrated in the month of January –February (*magha masa*) when the entire crop has been harvested and stored in the house of the villagers. This occasion is celebrated in the Mudulipada village. It is a three-day program where all the *naiks* of the villages come with *arua* rice and a fowl each. Then the *pujari* applies vermillion marks on their foreheads. Other ritual objects are arranged by the villagers. After that, all the village members come to Mudulipada and the villagers welcome them

with music, drums, etc. The priest cleans the front yard of his house with cow dung where he places a big heap of paddy. He places two smaller heaps of rice near to the bigger heap which represent their god *hundi* and *Patkhanda mahaprabhu*. The priest chants *mahaprabhu* for blessings and the shaman waves his peacock feathers around to free the village from the evil spirit. They sacrifice twelve fowls to appease the *hundi devata* and sprinkle the blood on the heaps of paddy. The *naik* of Mudulipada gives a cup of paddy from that to every other *naik* of the villages to be distributed equally among their villagers. After that, the priest, all the villagers and the drum beaters come to the place of *patkhanda mahaprabhu*. Then a meeting is held to replace their *badanaik* and *pujari* according to the people's wish. After the selection of *pujari*, he brings down the sword and washes it with turmeric water. Then he makes twelve marks of vermilion on the sword which represents twelve disciples of *patkhanda*. Then all the *naiks* come and touch their paddy to the sword for a better yield. After this, the shaman enters a trance and dances wildly as part of their ritual. Then the *pujari* sacrifices an animal. In the evening, they entertain themselves by dancing, singing, and feasting.

The traditional festivals are observed among them are basically to appease their benevolent spirits for the betterment of their social and economic life. It has also found that Bonda new year starts with *chaitra masa* and ends with *magha masa* which is quite similar to Odia Hindu calendar.

Radcliffe-Brown (1952) proposes the idea of certain sentiments that exist in the minds of people and religious rites are the symbolic expression of such sentiments and through participation and sharing people produce some kind of togetherness. The same has observed in the field work that the rituals and festivals brings hopes, happiness, and togetherness among the Bondas. At the time of festivals, they meet their relatives after a long back and all the people sit together and consume food. The festivals not only gather community people together but also makes strong bonds with other caste people which can be seen at the *patkhanda yatra*. It not only shows togetherness of people but also the religious rites are symbolic meaning of Bondas closeness towards the water streams, mountains, hills, trees etc. Most of the rituals of the Bondas are related to nature.

Food rituals

The Bonda people consume two principal meals - one in the afternoon and another at night and during the agricultural season an extra meal in the morning is consumed. The Bonda dietary habit is dependent largely on the availability of various types of food stuff and festivals observed. Their food habit also varies from one season to another season. On festive occasions, they eat rice with a non-vegetarian dish, *dal* or vegetable curry. They do not prefer drinking milk or eating milk products.

They have several taboos associated with food in their community. Nobody can eat newly harvested wild fruits before the celebration of *Push parab*, mango and jackfruits before the *Chaita parab* and newly harvested rice before the *Magha parab*. They should not eat fruits and vegetables which drop down from the plants on the ground. If someone goes against this rule then it is believed that *mahaprabhu* gets angry and something bad might happen to their family. The Bonda do several magico-religious rites for extracting juice from the sago palm tree. The priest is invited to perform the worship at the time of planting a new tree and they sacrifice fowl to the forest deity for better growth of the plant. The same ritual is also done by the priest when the juice is to be tapped for the first time and to increase the alcoholic content of the juice. Whenever a person is consuming liquor, he has to drop a little of the liquor on the ground in honor of earth goddess.

Musical instruments associated with rituals

The Bonda have several musical instruments which they use in festivals and rituals. There are various types of drums like *tamak*, *khinding*, and *kushong*. The *tamak* is an earthen-ware instrument with the head covered with cow skin. It is a very large type of drum. *Khinding* is a cylindrically shaped drum of the dhol type. One of its face is covered with goat skin which they beat with their hand and the other face is covered with cow skin which they beat with a stick.

Tolia is a kind of guitar with one string played with fingers. *Kushong* is similar to the *Tolia* but is played with a bow like a violin. Flutes are made of bamboo. The Bonda girls use little mouth harp made of bamboo. *Gunugu* is a low sweet sound which is

created when played upon. It is observed that everyday in *dhangidi gruha* they play all these music instruments except *singhar* because it is played on the auspicious day. *Singhar* or trumpet is made of bison horns and is played during the hunting expedition and in communal dances during various festivals.

Dance tradition and costumes during rituals

It is observed that dance is an integral part of Bondas' entertainment. When boys and girls become young they join as members of youth dormitory. In dormitory all the members spend their maximum time dancing, singing and chatting. They dance for themselves to enjoy on different occasions by wearing colorful dance costumes i.e *gosi* (male) and *ringa* (female). The boys play musical instruments and the girls hold a bunch of peacock feathers and dance to that tune.

The Bonda think it is a necessity to cover the lower part of the body while they keep their upper part exposed. The traditional cloth of the young males is made of a loin-cloth is known as *gosi* with a red border line. But some of the Bondas wear shirts and pants nowadays which covers their body. The male child remains nude till the age of five, after which they use *langota* (a torn cloth) till the age of 9-10 years and after that, when they are matured they start using the *gosi*. The Bonda women's traditional attire is a self-made skirt which is known as *ringa* or *nadi*. The cloth is striped color and woven from fibers by the Bonda women. When a female child reaches the age of 5-6, they start wearing a *ringa*. Mostly they do not use any other dresses with *ringa* to cover up the upper part of their body. These days the Bonda women are introduced to cloths like 'nighty' in the daily market. Some of the women used to wear 'nighty'. The Bonda women weave their traditional clothes. They use the bark of the *Koda* plant, and through a detailed process that includes drying, beating and soaking the bark in water, the dye is prepared. After the yarn is made and color dyed, they weave the clothes in their traditional looms. In present days they purchase colorful cotton threads from markets. Basically, they put on this *ringa* during ceremonial fests or while going to weekly markets. The change has been seen in some peoples dressing but they still remember and follow the cursing taboo which was imposed by goddess Sita, according to a mythical story.

The Bondas like to decorate themselves with varieties of ornaments. The Bonda women use head bands on their shaven head which are termed as *turbo or kurtop* made of brass and *lobeda* made of beads. They use the *khagla* made of an aluminum band in eight to ten pairs to put around their necks; along with a bead necklace *mali*. The *mali* also covers up their breasts. They wear brass bangles on both their hands, 5-6 in number as wristlets. The men wear earrings which is locally termed as *limbi* made of brass, and finger rings made of aluminum which is locally termed as *orti*. Nowadays, the young girls have a fancy for golden colored ornaments.

It is analysed that music, songs and dance are very essential part to entertain their life. Through music and dance they not only gives entertainment but also gives training to their upcoming generations. Through songs they gives some kinds of social message to all. The new generations do observation and participation while elders are performing. Overall this is the learning process. The same was supported by Jennings (1982) the idea of the symbolic nature of the ritual and proposes that it is a way of transmitting and gaining knowledge through a display of performance involving various participants and observers.

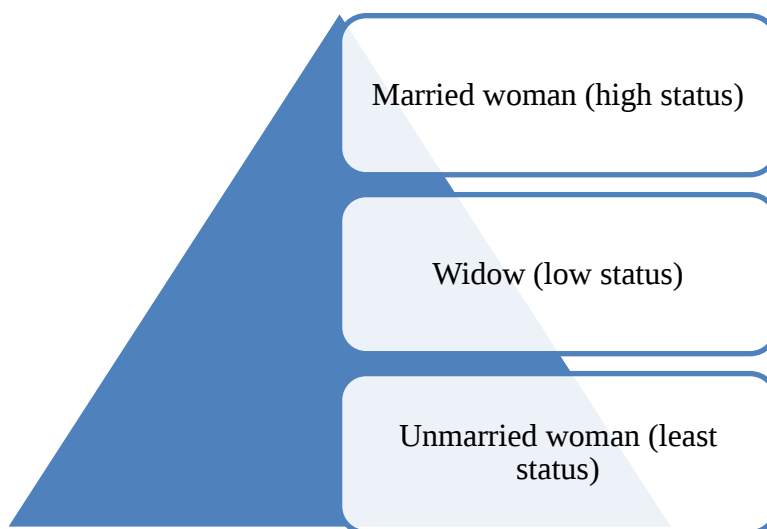
Status of women in religious rites

The position of women in the religious field is essential in Bonda life and culture. A Bonda husband is not allowed to perform in certain religious rites without his wife. Likewise a Bonda wife do not perform any ritual without her husband. The participation of women in all auspicious ceremonies is specially marked. In marriages, the Bonda women play an important role where all the Bonda women of the Grooms family goes together to bring the bride. Without Bonda women, the bride will not come to the groom's village. Among Bonda they do not prefer to give any ritual role to a widow. But in every rituals they can participate.

Here it is found that married woman has a higher ritual and social status than a bachelor ledy which is showed in the diagram 3. The married women are regarded as auspicious person. According to them a marriage changes the status of a woman. A widow does not have the same status as a married woman. If a widow remarry a Bonda man then

she again gets back her social and ritual status. This process relates to “Van-Gennep’s triadic model of the rites of passage i.e separation, transition and reintegration” (Turner, 1969).

Diagram 4.1 Ritual status of woman



Thus, from the above chapter discussion it can be concluded that the Bonda people have various rites and rituals basic to their life cycle which maintains their social order. The function of these rituals and festivals balances their social, economic and religious life. By doing certain rituals they maintain their strong relationships with each others.

Chapter-5

Changing Religion

Most of the change in human society such as change of idea, food, religion, house pattern, language, fashion, etc. brings a new structure to society. It resets the new social relationships. A society can be benefitted by social change because it brings many developments in the fields of technology, economy, education, etc. But all change may not be advantageous. It is the same with the tribal communities which are changing due to several factors rapidly. The process of acculturation of the tribal communities is not recent. In most of the cases, it has found that the assimilation of entire tribes into the Hindu fold. Ghurye (1943) says that “some of the tribes are so Hinduized that they have assimilated as different castes at different levels. The names of some of the recent day castes and subcastes betray tribal origin”. T.C. Das (1962) says “Indian tribal society change slowly and steadily under the pressure of internal and external forces. The external forces which evaluate changes in the tribal culture of India are particularly the new education and missionaries; and other important ones are transportation and communications, market towns, administrative centre, government, welfare organization and institutions, cinemas and other forms of recreations”.

For Bonda community, religion is interlinked with their process of life, their day-to-day activities, and their ethical and material life. They are mostly dependent on the deities and spirits in every aspect of their life, they do not start a day without praying to their deities and spirits. Recent contact of Bonda with the neighboring non-tribal communities and different development personnel has brought many changes in their lifestyle.

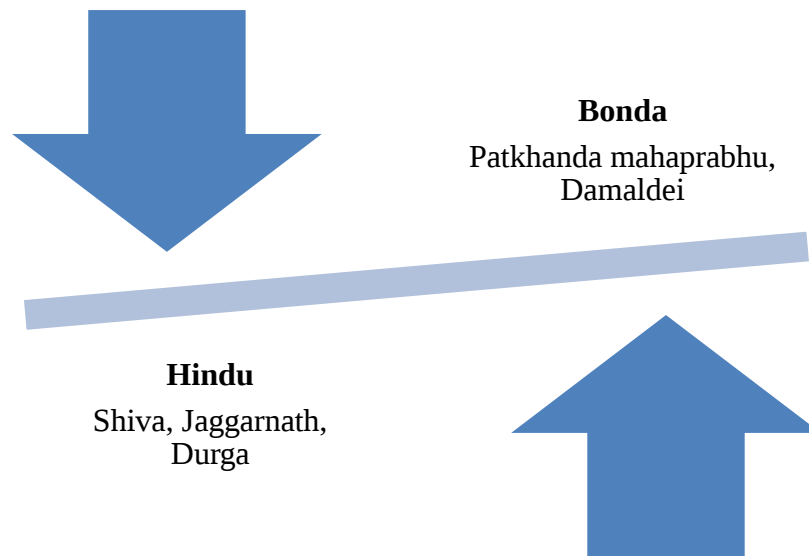
Influence of Hinduism

Bonda people during their interaction with outside communities come in contact with different religious groups and individuals. The Bonda people were approached by different religious people such as Hindus and Christians. At Bonda ghati there is a place called Andrahal where Christianity influence has been found. The Bonda people of

Sileiguda village were mostly influenced by Hinduism. Most of the elder people follow their traditional religious beliefs. Due to the settlement of caste people nearer to Bonda hills, the Bonda people are coming close to others. It has found that other caste people also believe in their god *Patkhanda mahaprabhu* and *Damaldei* which makes them united religiously. It has found that other caste people also join them in *Patkhanda yatra* of Mudulipada, held in the month of April and May. The caste Hindu people got influenced and started believing in *Patkhanda* and *Damaldei* by seeing Bonda survival skills in the hills. They believe that *Patkhanda* blesses them to stay in Khairput near to Bonda hills.

Some of the Bonda said that when they got introduced to neighboring hindus, they liked their new ideas and thoughts which made changes in their habitats. As a result, the Bonda has obtained a large number of cultural traits from their hindu neighbors. Shiva temple, Jagannath temple are found near to Mudulipada. The Bonda started believing different Hindu deities like Durga, Shiva, Jagannath, etc. They celebrate Hindu festivals like diwali, dashara, sivaratri, osha (fasting), etc. along with their community festivals. It has been observed that some of the people were carrying certain flowers and coconut for performing rituals along with them while going to the temple. It has also been observed that the Bonda do worship by uttering the names of different gods and goddesses in Odia language. The Bonda used to sacrifice the animals to please the deities and spirits but now a days change are seen like giving preference to offer *gud* (jaggery), fruits like mango, *nadia* (coconut), etc. to their deities and spirits. Although there are belief in hinduism within their community, but there is no major religious dispute or conflict among them between their traditional and Hindu religious practices. The Bonda representing ethnic communities are liberal in religious matter. The over all studies says there are two way process of religious change among Bondas and Hindus which is showed in the given diagram 5.1.

Diagram 5.1 Two way process of religious change



Traditional belief system

In the area, some extent people are now more conscious of their traditional ways of rituals and culture. People who are educated and exposed to the outside world they want to preserve the traditional culture of their forefather. Although the Bonda people are influenced by Hinduism their belief system of the traditional life and the symbols and meaning they consist are very much influenced by the way of traditional thoughts that signifies the meaning everything which is around them. One example about the continuity is a place called *Ammakunda* in Bonda *ghati* where the water never runs dry even in the summer season and the people believe that the fishes of the stream are the forms of gods who always avail them water. That is the reason why the people never eat fishes from the stream of *Ammakunda*. Although they would not eat fish from the stream of *Ammakunda* but due to the influence of Hindu people they started eating fish which is available easily in the market.

Even after the influence of Hinduism they still have fear of the evil spirit. The people think water streams, trees, mountains are still ruled by the evil spirit and going against nature will invite sickness. Even for many village people, with the coming in contact

with Hindu culture there have been changes in every aspect of life including their social worldview.

Marriage system

The social organization suggested a number of norms which lasted over the whole social life of the people and it regulates more or less strictly in their social relations. The traditional social norms are followed in all domains of life among the people of Bonda which is continued from their past. It has found that for the Bonda, marriage has been a respected institution; on the other hand, divorce is not there. Marriage is strictly prohibited between the same clan and lineage. But they have the belief that marriage between the same clan may bring evil consequences not only to the couple but for the entire village.

The patriarchal structure of the Bonda society is still persisting. They have not changed their rules of exogamy, inheritance and decent. But in these days the marriage by capture is less frequent among the Bonda than before which has reduced due to the improvement of economic condition and rising of consciousness among the people. The kidnapping of the bride has also reduced which also reduced the quarrel and conflict among two groups. But there are some exceptional cases where marriages were arranged by themselves. The Bonda marriage ritual takes place in the bride's house which is similar to Hindu marriage ritual.

Traditional festival and rituals

There are some continuity seen in the form of festivals. The festivals of the Bonda are associated with sacred religious rituals and there were some codes of conduct for all festivals. The major festivals celebrated in the traditional life and which still celebrated are *Chait parab* (March-April), *Bandapun* (June-July), *Dasahara* (August-September), *Gewarsung* or Diwali (October- November), *Pushparab* (December-January) and ends with *Magha parab* (January-February).

There are some rituals and festivals which have been introduced to them after coming of Hinduism. These festivals are those festivals and rituals which have to do with

religion, the religious festivals of the traditional religion. The festival of *Ratha yatra* or chariot festival which has been celebrated in the Mudulipada village that involves a public procession with deities *Jagganath* (Vishnu avatar), *Balabhadra* (his brother), *Suvadra* (his sister). The *Sivaratri* festival is also celebrated by the Bonda people which is observed by remembering *Shiva* and chanting, fasting, and meditating on morality. The devotees of Shiva remain awake all night.

Food pattern

The Bonda eat both vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods. Mostly the staple food of the Bonda is gruel (Unfra) prepared from ragi (mandia). In non-veg, they consume meats of the pig, buffalo, fowl, goat and different types of wild birds and animals. They also eat different types of local fish and dry fish (*sangsang*), chilli (*merchi*), onion (*uli rasima*), garlic (*lull rasuna*), and mustard (*sersu*). Among the Bonda, the entire age and sex group use alcoholic drinks. The most common drinks are *sapung* (Sago-palm juice), *pendorn* (unfiltered beer prepared from cereals), *sagur* (beer prepared from both cereal and different types of fruits, which is filtered).

The change has also found in the food pattern of the Bonda community. They have left eating beef which shows their mobility in maintaining the relationship with Hindu people. They believe if they eat beef, their god will get angry at them. In normal days they drink *sapung*, *pendorn*, etc, but on ceremonial ritual, they do not even touch the liquor drinks except death ceremony.

Offering Pattern

The Bonda people offer sun-dried rice to the deities. Liquor is restricted to be used in all the rituals. But they offer liquor to their ancestors at the time of death ritual. From the very beginning, they used to sacrifice various animals like cow, buffalo, goat, lamb, pig, and fowl. But after getting influenced by the Hindus they are avoiding to eat cow and buffalo. This is because as they follow Hindus and they believe cow as their mother and they should not eat them. Eggs are also offered to the deities. Different colors of fowls are sacrificed for different deities and spirits. In these days instead of sacrifice some of them are more likely to prefer coconut, joss stick, and flowers to their deities.

Even when the researcher visited the *patkhanda mahaprabhu*, Bonda people suggested going with coconut. The Bonda believes that the one who is omnipresent can see everything and blesses their people if they do something for the deity.

Naming pattern

Earlier Bonda did not even know when they were born. A naming ceremony is not celebrated by the Bonda and they do not consult any Brahmin for their child's name as Hindus do. The Bonda give their child name on the day he/she is born. The names they give are related to week days names like *Sama*, *Mangala*, *Budha*, *Guru*, etc. They believe giving names by different days is easier for them to call and remember. It has found almost of the Bonda has similar names. Now a days they also started giving names of their child based on hindu god's and goddesses's names like Rama, Shiba, Parvati, etc. They found it more modern to call someone by these names.

Awareness about their dressings

As mentioned in Chapter III, Bonda women do not wear much cloth and always shave their head. They were cursed by Sita and from that day onward these women were using only little cloth to cover the lower body. But these days there are changes found in their dressing pattern. The old woman still follows the sayings of Sita but the new generation of women love to wear modern cloths and keep hair open. When this new generation came into contact with hindu people, they started wearing 'nighty', very rarely wear saree and keep long hair. The woman says they look prettier in long hair. They started using 'nighty' because their traditional cloth called ringa is costly compared to nighty and it is very cheap in the market at rupees fifty. It is observed that the Bonda people changed their lifestyle according to their availability and comforts.

Bondas attitude towards modern medicines and traditional healing

It is found that the Bonda maintain a very 'unhygienic lifestyle' that is why every time they suffer from diseases like scabies, cold, cough, etc.. They say Goddess Sita had also cursed Bonda women not to take bath for a lifetime. They obey the sayings of Sita not to take a bath. When the women of Bonda community take bath, the clothes are completely, removed and taken, which is happens very rare according to culture.

Mostly the Bonda do not go out of their habitat, for any type of disease they prefer shaman's treatment. They strongly believe that they would be surely cured by shaman treatment. When simple traditional treatment does not work by *gurumai*, he performs the most complicated rite called *dakuigige* where a cow is to be sacrificed to the deity for removal of disease. There are so many cases which have been found resulting in their death.

During olden days, the hospital was at long distance from their habitat. So, they were not accessible to hospital treatment. But now, because of the modes of communications and transportation access hospital has become easy. After the establishment of the hospital at Mudulipada the Bonda people started taking modern medicines which is provided to them in the hospital. The Bonda development agency has also taken initiatives to provide ayurvedic and allopathy medicines by consulting doctors. The Odisha Govt. with the help of lady social workers-initiated awareness programme about medical services and its uses. Still, their first preference are *gurumai* and *dishari*, if it does not work, then they go to the hospital which is situated near Mudulipada village. As the hospital is nearer to them they say that so many people have recovered from many diseases. The Bonda also started taking bath regularly by the influence of others and maintaining their hygienic lifestyle.

Changes due to Technology

It has been found that for Bonda community dance and music are a very important part of the celebration of religious festivals, courtship, enjoyment and relaxation. For specific occasions, the Bonda have special dance performances. During this period the girls and boys exchange visits to other villages with their musical instruments and gifts. On this kind of occasions the villagers welcome visitors with food and later singing, dancing continues till late at night. With the changing context, the technology has brought massive changes in the culture of Bonda and has tried to make their normal life apart from dormitory life. In two ways the technology has affected the culture of Bonda, first it has demolished their traditional culture and secondly, it has supported their new culture. The introduction of new technology like music system, TV, Radio, etc. is one of the reasons for the destruction of their tradition. It has observed that majority of

Bonda share their opinions about why some people do not gather in dormitory. They said the modern entertainment has influenced some people a lot; the people spend their time with it than attending the dormitory. During the interaction with some of the younger girls and boys, it has found that they find modern entertainment more attractive than going to the dormitory. As a result of technological development, many people have been able to connect with the other world.

Political organization

To manage the internal problems of the Bonda society, they have a very strong traditional political organization. The *Naik*, *Chalan* and *Barik* are the main in running their political organization. But the judicial role of the traditional village council has faced little change after the establishment of a police station at Mudulipada. It has found that some of them started preferring to go directly to the police station for any type of conflict. But they face some problems too due to lack of knowledge about the modern jural system and different penal provisions of modern law.

Economic activities

In recent year the Bonda culture and economy has undergone many transformations under the impact of external agencies and interaction with Hindu people. Mostly the Bonda's economic life is distinguished by its dependence on hunting, and food gathering, but now they are changing their face towards other activities like cultivation (settled and shifting), livestock rearing and wage earning, etc. Now the Bonda people have introduced new methods in the field of agriculture and horticulture by OPELP. They have adopted the cultivation of high yielding varieties of paddy, wheat, and potato. But in the ragi cultivation, many people are not following the transplanting method in reference to their traditional style of broadcasting. The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides is not unknown to them. They do kitchen gardening to grow many new varieties of vegetable like cabbage, tomatoes, and radish, etc.

It has found that Bonda people sell their vegetables and *salopa* drinks at the weekly market. For the weekly market, they come down from Bonda hills to the lower area. Sometimes they also use the barter system also. Like, they give pulses in a leaf cup and

exchange rate for salt or something else. The Bonda woman also gets themselves engaged in breaking stones and they use it to make house and roads etc.

Bondas attitude towards education

Education has influenced the Bonda for getting a better living conditions. Although most of the Bonda are illiterate but it has found that most of the Bonda encourage their kids to go for schools and colleges for education. All these became possible because of the Government initiation. By employing various schemes and facilities the Government is helping the tribal people to get educated. It has found that the education level of the Bonda has also changing slowly due to modernization.

According to Malinowski (1961) “religious change is a species of cultural change in general, which defines as the process by which the existing order of a society, that is, its social, spiritual, and material civilization, is transformed from one type to another”. The same has been found in the Bonda society which transformed their social order. In this chapter it is analysed that Bondas worshipping Hindu gods and goddesses due to influence of Hinduism. At the same time it has also observed that local Hindu people are following patkhanda mahaprabhu. This shows their strong relationship and trust on each others community. For the above discussed changes in social, spiritual and material, it has found that there are four major factors causing changes i.e education, technology, social contact with local Hindus, Government schemes.

Impact on social life

The influence of education has changed the moral system which once existed in the Bonda community. But the other way it's uplifting their social, economic life. It has found that the person who is educated known as most respectful of all but the elder people think differently; to them whoever an elder is the wisest in the tradition of the Bonda community. In some situations it is observed that the conflict arises because of the generation gap.

The influence of new technology has also playing major role for the destruction of socialization process of the Bonda community. Among the Bonda dormitory is the place of acquiring knowledge where elders teach socialization and traditions. But the

new generation do not show any interest for the *dhangdi gruha* because of their engagement with T.V, radio, mobile, etc. Sometime it causes argument and creates disturbances between two generations. The exact situation has already explained by Ogburn (1922). He talked about “cultural lag”. He says “culture takes time to catch up with technological innovations such as social problems and conflicts are caused by the lag”.

In this chapter, it is concluded that the broad changes have been occurring among the Bonda of Seleiguda village with regard to their religious activity. The changes have taken place in their social, cultural, religious, and economic sphere. From these ongoing changes, it is observed that Bonda is trying to adopt Hinduism through a slow process due to contact with Hindu caste people. It is analyzed that all these Hindu cultural traits were borrowed and practiced by the Bonda as a process of assimilation and acculturation.

Chapter-6

Summary and conclusion

In the book *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (Srinivas, 1952), anthropologist Radcliffe Brown writes; “The study of religions can be approached in many different kinds of problems. For social anthropologists, or for some of them, one major problem is that of the social function of religion - how does religion contribute to the existence of society as an ordered and continuing system of relationships amongst human beings? It is recognized that religion is a binding force amongst individuals, and it would seem that the etymology of the word indicates this. The scientific problem is how religion does this; how, in other words, it functions. The problem is one of very considerable complexity, and it cannot be said that at present we know very much about this subject. The only method by which we can hope ultimately to arrive at an understanding of it is by a number of analytic descriptive studies of religions of diverse type, so that by systematic comparison it may be possible to arrive at some general theory”.

The present study entitled Religion and Rituals in the Changing Context: Among the Bonda Tribe of Malkangiri district, Odisha. The study population under consideration is Seleiguda village of Khairput block. The study had focused on the ethnographic profile of the Bonda, their religious beliefs, traditions, ritual patterns, and also the changing aspects of religion among them. Although various factors are responsible for such kind of change, the influence of Hinduism is the major cause. In this chapter the researcher precise the findings of the investigation and tries to give conclusions on the basis of changing pattern of religion and ritual performances of Bonda.

According to the present study the Bonda have great faith in their traditional religious beliefs. Their religious beliefs and practices are surrounded by totemism, nature worship, taboo, animism and ancestor worship and recently they added practicing of Hinduism. Some of the Bonda have started following christianity in Andrahal village has come to notice, but Other Bonda villages have influenced by hinduism. The Bonda

tribe believes in hell, heaven and spatial existence. The Bonda have believed in the creation of the universe by a supreme power. They believe that their deities living on the earth can be found in heaven. The Bonda also believe in reincarnation. Earlier, they used to feel the existence of gods and goddesses in stones, trees, mountains, and streams and worshipped accordingly. Earlier, they never worshipped idols but in these days they have begun to worship idols of Hindu gods and goddesses such as Siva, Jagarnath, etc., along with some of the other deities due to their cultural contact with the neighboring Hindus. It is concluded that they worship Hindu gods and goddesses along with their traditional gods and goddesses.

The Bonda believe spirits fall within two broad categories. One category includes benevolent spirits, while in the other category comprise of Malevolent spirits. Among them some of the sprits are human origin like ghost and ancestral spirits and they are anthropomorphic, i.e., conceived in the image of a person.

The Bonda rituals observed in two types, such as life cycle rituals and occupational rituals. The first type is performed to identify the different stages of life, while the second type is occupational in nature. Some of these rituals are observed in field and forest area, while the others are observed in village and community level.

It is observed that agriculture is the major occupation of the people in the study area. In Seleiguda village most of the Bonda follow their traditional methods of cultivation. But it has also observed that there are some of the people who engaged in various earning occupations and salaried jobs. Overall occupational changes have also taken place among the Bonda of Seleiguda village.

It is observed that the literacy rate of the Seleiguda villagers is also very low. Identity also can be traced through the language spoken by different caste people. It was found that *desia* is predominantly spoken language, in fact, Bonda has their own dialect which is distinct than other caste people. Bonda talks in *Remo* language within their community. It represents their identity marker.

Among Bonda, kinship also plays an important role to continue their social relationship has been found. Bonda people always show their unity in various formal and informal situations. Mutual understanding among the village people on kinship basis is an important device to tie over the problems at critical points. Their economic and social life explains the continuing functional importance of the kin group.

Among them, monogamy is the most pre-eminent type of marriage. But there are also some cases of polygamy found during the study. The Bonda are still organized on exogamous patrilineal clan. Marriage is strictly prohibited between the same *kuda* (clan). There is a dormitory system for acquiring mates among the Bonda of which marriage by negotiation is mostly present. There are a number of social sanctions associated with the marriage among the Bonda. It has also been found that among the couples, the boy is younger than the girl. The age difference is unique in Bonda marriage ritual which is opposite of the Hindu marriage ritual. In Hindu marriages, the boy is always elder than the girl.

There was also an attempt to understand the traditional culture of Bonda community in order to understand the changes that have occurred in the course of time in their lives. The socio-religious life of the Bonda is followed by their own traditions and is not much affected by any change in religious faith or other external factors. One of the identifying features of Bonda religious life is that in most of the rituals, they compulsorily made sacrifices. *Salopa* (juice of palm tree) is also an essential part of their religious life and it is restricted in certain rituals. It is observed that in certain rituals, they place one or more coconuts and decorate it with vermilion spots or mango twig like the hindus do. The Bonda started selling *salopa* in the market and it became local drinks in Khairput block which can be consumed by all the people. Hinduism had lots of impact on their social, cultural, and religious life. The traditions of the hinduism have been merged with the Bonda tradition. Likely, the Bonda tradition also accepted by the hindu people.

There are many Hindu cultural traits which can be found in Bonda traditions. But it has also found that the Bonda tradition assimilated to other cultures. At present Patkhanda mahaprabhu is their supreme deity who is related to Ramayana. Lord Rama gave a

khanda (sword) which is believed to be a form of Patkhanda for the protection of their lives from the wild animals. They believe their supreme deity *singi-arke* (sun-moon) is symbolized as patkhanda mahaprabhu. The Bonda villagers worship patkhanda mahaprabhu in his symbolic form of *khanda* (sword). It is analysed that all over India, the sword is worshipped by the Rajputs with lot of respect. In Odisha also it has found that the sword is worshipped by the Khandayat caste people. But among the primitive tribes, the custom of sword-worship is unique and the worshipping of Patkhanda has found as their identity marker. The Patakhanda is the self-respect of the Bonda people which connects their relationship with the tradition of Rajputs and Kshatriyas.

It has found that idol worship was traditionally absent in the Bonda society; but due to the influence of the neighbouring Hindus, idol worship made invasion to their culture. In the month of *Chaitra* (April-May) the Bonda people worship the forest deity renungbar, represented by the stone wall facing at the entrance of the Bonda hills. It is analysed that in western Odisha the deity's idol is worshipped as dalkhai devi. The idol of renungbar is also resembled with hindu deity Durga. The study reveals that Bonda has taken the idol form into their culture from local western Odisha's deity dalkhai devi and it shows their strong relationship with the local people.

The Bonda community has been affected due to changes in their religious tradition that have been taking place around them and it has impacted their culture both positively and negatively. In the study it is found that the religion is affected by different factors like socio-cultural, economic and other factors. Among all the factors that have affected the Bonda traditional rituals and culture, a major role is played by modern technology which has affected the lives of the Bonda. The Bonda has very entertaining dormitory life where all the girls and boys exchange visits to other villages with their musical instruments to spent some valuable time by singing and dancing together. But the technology has brought massive changes in the culture of Bonda and it has tried to make life more comfortable with the changing context. The change in their traditional dormitory life due to modern entertainment has also led to a change in different social-cultural dimensions of the Bonda.

There are various changes in their economic life due to the expansion of education, improvement of communication, and the influence of various external forces. It is noticed that remarkable occupational versatility among the Bonda from their traditional occupation of agriculture. The trend of changing ethnic identity is quite seen among the Bonda.

It is analysed that the components of hinduism have importantly become a part of their religious life. The trend of change that has taken place among the Bonda is presented in its character. The changes have taken place in their social, cultural, religious, and economic spheres and the religious change has impact in their social life. The culture contact between the Bonda and Hindus have developed to the emergence of certain definite changes in the lives of Bonda.

Similar situation can also be observed with other communities of Odisha. The Juang is one among 62 tribes of Odisha and also got influenced from the neighbouring Hindus and it is an ongoing process. N.K Bose (1953: 157) writes, “The significant fact is this, that the Juangs had started worshipping a Hindu goddess, although it was done in their own way. The bath in the morning, the offerings of sun-dried rice, the terms satya, devata, dharma, all prove how strongly Juang religious ceremonies have been influenced by those of the neighbouring Brahminical people. In nearly all respects, the Juangs are a tribe living outside the pale of Hinduism. They have their own language, which belongs to the Mundari group. No Brahmin or Vaishnava priest serves them; and they perform their marriage and funeral customs all by themselves. They eat beef and carrion, and are not considered by the Hindus to be one of the Hindu castes. Yet there is clear indication that Hindu religious ideas have penetrated into their culture. The Juang seem to be losing pride in their own culture and are adopting Hindu culture with a certain amount of avidity”.

Majumdar (1966) also found similar situation among the Garos. Here the traditional ways of socio-religious life of the Garos has influenced by Christianity. Majumdar (1966:30-31) writes, “Christianity has become one of the major factors in the changing life of the Garos. The number of Christian converts is increasing among the Garos. Though Christianity has interfered with social customs as little as possible, still the

portions of social institutions which are incompatible with Christianity have been abandoned by Christians and this has in turn entailed a readjustment of functions of some other social institutions”.

The study reveals that religion is one of the significant factors which regulate the Bonda society with the functions of life cycles rituals, agricultural rituals, taboo etc. It can be concluded that most of society has its construct in the process to accept changes. But in modern times religious change is not a circumstance of change in separation. Due to increasing contact of societies, no society has remained separated. In course of time the society is also changing. In the present study, it has been analysed that the overall functioning of religious rituals in Bonda society and the process of change by which people create and recreate a religious belief system for their own needs.

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Glossery

Local terms		English terms
Arua	–	Sun-dried rice
Bansa	–	Moiety
Bara Jangar	--	A group of twelve villagers from an alliance
Barika	--	A messenger
Challan	–	The person who assist the village Naik in all his functions
Chullah	–	Stove
Dai Kathi	–	Twig
Dak Guruta	–	Rainy season
Dal	–	A branch of tree
Data	--	The final pollution day of death ceremony
Dhangidi gruha	–	Dormitory house
Dishari	–	Medicine man
Ghati	–	Hills
Gosi	–	Male costume made of a loincloth with a red border line
Gurumai	–	Shaman
Khagla	--	Women put around their neck as necklace
Khanda	–	Sword
Kuda or Manda	–	Clan
Langota	--	A torn cloth

Limbi	–	Male used as earring which is made of brass
Lobeda	--	Made of beads which is used by Bonda women
Moitra	–	Friendship
Mundan dita	–	Family
Naik	–	Headman
Orti	–	Male used in their finger rings which is made of aluminum
Pendorn	--	Unfiltered beer prepared from cereals
Piri	–	Local glass
Rang Ag	–	Winter season
Remo	–	The language Bonda speak
Ringa or Nadi	–	Female skirt made of stripped color and woven from fibers
Sagur	--	Beer prepared from both cereal and different types of fruits
Salopa	--	Sago-palm juice
Sisa	–	Priest
Turbo or Kurtop	--	Headbands made of brass which is used by Bonda women
Yan	–	Summer season

Plates

Plate 1 Bonda children playing



Plate 2 A Bonda house



Plate 3 The sacred banyan tree

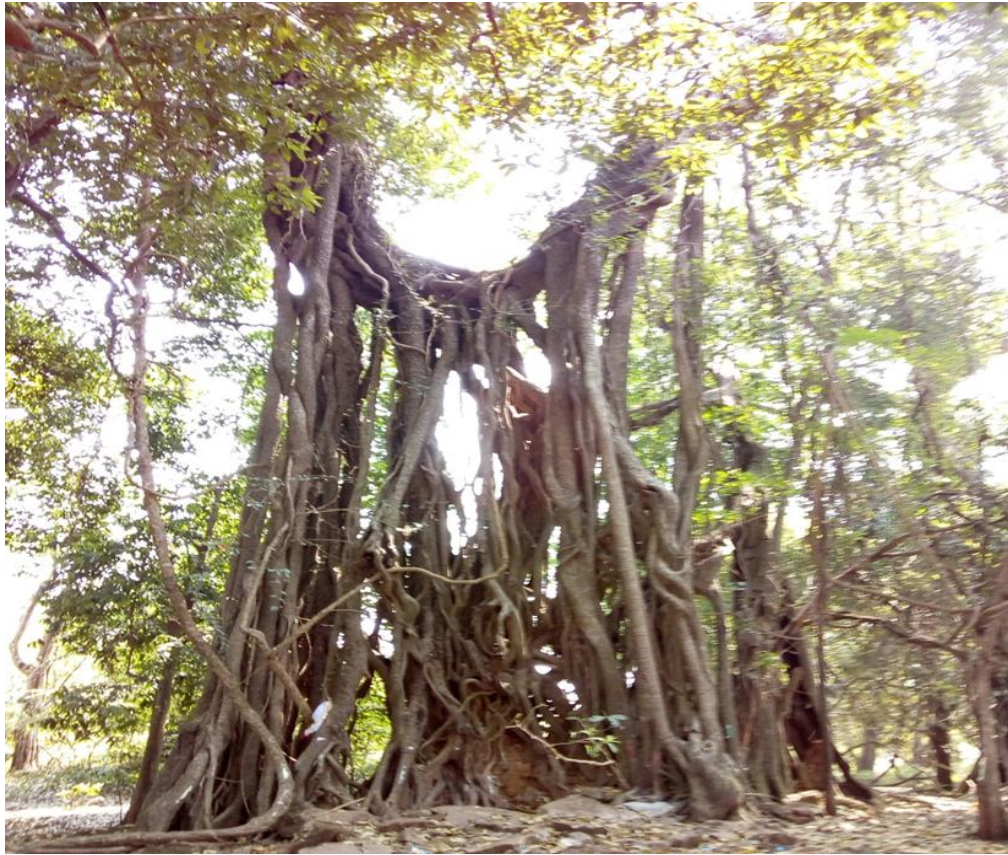


Plate 4 Renungbar or Dalkhai devi



Plate 5 Sindibore



Plate 6 Sitakunda near to Mudulipada village



Plate 7 Ammakunda



Plate 8 *Dishari* (medicine man) performing the ritual with peacock feathers and water



Plate 9 A Bonda man playing musical instruments during *Chaitra parab*



Plate 10 Siva temple near to Mudulipada



Plate 11 Jagarnath temple at Mudulipada



Plate 12 Bonda women in 'nighty' and saree



Plate 13 *Arua* rice arranged in leaf bowls as offering to their ancestors



Plate 14 Bonda women selling *salopa* drinks at Khairput market



Plate 15 Bonda women breaking stones (labour work)



Plate 16 Bonda woman carrying baby



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