CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, RITUALS AND FESTIVALS OF HOLEYA COMMUNITY

From historical records and ethnographic studies we find that all societies have some form of religion though specific beliefs and practices vary widely — some groups attribute power to ghosts and ancestors; others to supernatural forces, some see their gods as benevolent others see them as mischievers, hostile or indifferent, some seek affirmation of their faith in solitude and wilderness; others erect pyramids, cathedrals or other monuments and maintain hierarchical priesthoods to inter code with the divine.

Religion thus existed from the earliest phase of history. Archeological remains from stone age to Mohenzodaro speak the existence of religion. The process of civilization brought a change in religious ideas as indeed in everything.

Religion is a subject of great concern even in advanced societies of today, where futility of science has often compelled man to search for God or Supernatural power, so that his faith in order of things is not absolutely lost. Science is based essentially on an cause effect theory and certain natural laws or axioms. Religion is based on simple faith imbued with a sense of supernaturalism. Therefore,
religion is a fundamental expression of man and society, ordinarily implying devotion to a supreme being or beings. It is generally used to describe man’s relation to divine or superhuman powers and the organized system of beliefs and worship in which these relations have been expressed.

Anthropologists and Sociologists have been deeply concerned with the origin of religion and have tried to establish several theories about it. Max Weber in the Modern times has given a more systematic explanation of religion. He believed that to define religion or to say what it is, it is not possible at the beginning of the discussion but can be expected at the conclusion of the study" (Sinha, 1977, 12). According to him, the essence of religion can hardly be determined by providing definitions. It may because religious feelings are so personal and difficult to describe objectively that any definition of religion will necessarily seem inadequate. Nevertheless, some definition is desirable as a starting point for analysis. Sinha aptly says, "Religion is that cultural tradition in continuity of a people that makes them live their life with a unquestioning belief, and with a sense of absolute dedication to some unforeseen superhuman element controlling their destiny, yet remaining beyond their reach" (Sinha R.: 1977, 5). According to Radcliff Brown "the function of religion is group solidarity and integration of a society depends for its existence on the presence
in the minds of its members of a certain system of sentiments by which the conduct of the individual is regulated in conformity with the needs of the society. Moreover, religion serves as an important factor for high moral as well as for the balance of the individual personality. The religious outlook of the people dominates the peoples intellectual emotional and practical life. It is difficult to locate any aspect of their life which is not permitted with and given colour by religion, general social life all the economic as well as free time or recreational life, all are guided and governed by religious approaches and it norms" (Radcliff Brown, 1922: 519).

Emile Durkheim defined religion as, "A unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things into a single moral community all those who adhere to those beliefs and practices (Emile Durkheim, 1947: 47). Evans Pritchard defined religion "As a social phenomenon something general, traditional and obligatory" (1959:5).

Religion is one of the broad groupings of the cultural complex. It completes the adjustment of man in his society by providing security against unknown persons and forces which disturb him. It is the pivot of all human activities and is closely associated with life from conception through birth to death. Religion plays an important role in regulating their social life. Religion has two inter-related constituents, the religions beliefs
and practices. Belief is the mode of conception and ritual the mode of action, the rituals are the starting points of major actions of a society. They throw light on social relations expressing the structural arrangements of the society. They are the part of inter personal communicative system. They are the symbols and representations, and they have the religious sanctions. Above all rituals are the means to achieve certain individuals and community ends. Though they are observed they are not necessarily binding on individuals. And this is so more particularly in the present fast changing world. Most of the rituals are either partly given up or partly simplified. In other words, at its simplest, religion is the belief, in the supernatural. It refers to the existence of supernatural beings which have a governing effect on life.

Religion may very well be said to constitute the whole life of the Holeya community. They believe in various deities, ghosts and spirits guiding every walk of their life. They are religious minded or more strictly speaking superstitious. They have a strong belief in the existence of deities and spirits. The Holeya community worship the sanskritic gods (Vegetarian Gods and Goddesses) of all Indian Hindu Phenomena and also the local deities (Non vegetarian God and Goddesses) among the Holeya community.
in Bidar District. The deities have been classified on the basis of vegetarian god and goddesses and non-vegetarian god and goddesses in the following table.

**TABLE NO. 35**

DEITIES AMONG THE HOLEYA COMMUNITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetarian Gods</th>
<th>Non Vegetarian Gods</th>
<th>Vegetarian Goddesses</th>
<th>Non Vegetarian Goddesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shrishaila</td>
<td>Meghasha</td>
<td>Khokalemma</td>
<td>Margamma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandarapur</td>
<td>Mosaba</td>
<td>Shetikawwa</td>
<td>Mapurtai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basaveshwara</td>
<td>Samstani</td>
<td>Laxmi</td>
<td>Laxmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallarlingeshwar</td>
<td>Ghordi Ismail Khadri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veerabhadreshwar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Devamma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manik Prabhu</td>
<td></td>
<td>Udbal Yellamma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakkamprabhu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narasimha Jhira</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanuman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Holeya people propitiated a wide variety of deities from the high gods and goddesses in Hinduism in their various manifestations, incarnations and identifications, to local ones presiding over epidemics such as small pox, cholera, plague, witches, black magic, and others who had an intimate association with lineages and households.

Indeed, the number and variety of deities seemed bewildering
at first but was much lesser if they were grouped into a few categories on the basis of well recognised principle.

There was specialization among the deities and the degree of specialization varied from deity to deity. For instance, the deities presiding over epidemics were the most specialized of all and they were propitiated elaborately during epidemics or at their periodical festivals. It was their job to protect the village community from the epidemics in return for propitiation. Before modern public health measures reached the villages, epidemics, were frequent, killing substantial numbers. The generic name for the deity presiding over epidemics was 'Maragi Hovalli', due to the fear of life they worshipped the following gods and goddesses in Holeya community in Bidar district.

**THE Mode of worship:**

The following is the traditional mode of worship, of the gods, goddesses and godling is different in different taluka. However, Holeyas worshipped occasionally, seasonally, and annually but hardly regularly. Even deities which are kept, in the house are not worshipped daily but are worshipped on the full moon day, new moon day, and on the occasions of festivals.
MARGAMMA:

Margamma is a universal goddess among the Holeya community in Bidar district. Some times she is merely referred to as amma or 'mother' goddess. Margamma brings epidemic disease like diarrhea, cholera and plague if community people neglect her. It was due to fear the Holeya community had a separate temple for Margamma at their colony and one person of their caste acts as priest. Forty years back an epidemic spread in the village Madakatti. Sign of their disease was simple. When cats died, Holeyas were sure that disease is going to be spread. People vacated their colony and shifted to their fields for one and a half months. Before vacating the colony a few people died already. In two families all members including children died 'Vangshumbayit', meaning the entire family cam to an end. This made them mad, they did not know what to do, what not to do. The whole community people gathered and discussed, and took the decision to propitiate Margamma by arranging 'Karoya'. Holeya women prayed Margamma as 'Tai, Amma', 'mother', to take care of their family. In sudra they would sacrifice one cock to the deity on coming newmoon day and kept 'Modup' 5 paise and turmaric roots in a piece of new cloth and kept inside the earthen pottery.

When the date of 'Karoya' was decided all people in the community contributed according to their ability.
In that amount community "Momekari" (leaders) Matreya, Bhotaleya, Singhya, Agashya gone ahead to purchase sheep and be-buffalo, green bangle, green saree, incense. Then they met carpenter to prepare cradle for Margamma. They brought earthen pot and earthen lid, vermillion, turmeric etc.

After this collection they clean the temple of the Margamma, they level the ground and sprinkle water to the compounds of temple, white-washing outer wall was done by women.

A day earlier, they invite the caste Bhagat, Potaya and Jani. After their arrival they stay in Meterays house, where they will be provided, toddy dinna. People invite their relatives to participate in the "Kareya".

Performance of Kareya starts early in the morning. It begins with Madigas, beating drums. In front of Margamma the pooja materials he-buffalo, sheep, green saree, green bangles, cradle, are kept. The lamps are brought to the temple of Margamma and the idol is decorated. They come with 'Arti' Botaya and Jani who would dance in front of 'Tai' mother the drum beater will beat the d.

After that the decorated he-buffalo is brought to the temple, Poteya (Bhagat) brings the sheep which he kills by his teeth and chants mantras in front of Margamma. Then a dare person will kill the he-buffalo. Matreya, Bhotalya,
Singhya, Agshya, should be present at the time. The head of the animal would be kept in front of the Margamma and blood is sprinkled on her idol. Then individuals and all devotees gathered there offer the sacrifice such as cock, and then male and female present there wave Aarti (in front of Margamma praying Tai Kapadu Namge – take care about our community.

Afterwards food is prepared and served to all along with toddy which is enjoyed by all. Poteya and Jani, would kill the he-buffalo in front of idol, which everybody enjoy. Remaining food is buried in front of Margamma.

**DEVAMMA:**

This temple is located outside the village. It is believed that Devamma is responsible for causing small pox and chicken pox. To avoid these epidemics Holeya people send their offerings to deity leaven, Khichadi, Jugar Candy and dried dates after propitiating the deity, the person suffering from small pox and chicken pox, disease would be given leaven, Khichadi or curd. Then lamp is lit in earthen date in front of deity for nine days or 7 days according to the advice of Bhagat.

**KHOKALAMMA:**

This temple is by the side of Hanuman temple at the village entrance. This deity is considered as responsible
for the children's cough and Pneumonia. To avoid the disease every evening people lit lamp in front of deity.

**SHE ETAKAWWA:**

She is considered as a deity whose task is to decide the child's fate, on Aideshi.

**AMBABAI:**

Ambabai is a most popular deity and is believed to be very powerful in Holeya community. If she is disregarded or neglected, she would bring epidemics like leprosy, wounds and boils at any time. In case if anybody suffers from the above said diseases, they pray Tai 'Mother' and make promise of visiting to the place of deity 'Tallak' (Tuljapur) and tie 'Mudupu' (25 paise with turmeric roots in new cloth) and they will keep it in earthen pot. Then they will assure that they will beg 'Joga' on every Tuesday and Friday, until family visits her place. In Holeya community we can see few devotees in local terms call them 'Bhotya'. After bath every Tuesday and Friday the Bhotyas beg 'Joga' in some village or sometime they would go to neighbouring villages as a devotee. After propitiating the deity they present sweet oil, coconut, flower, incense, bhandar, turmeric powder. They will return home after darshan of the deity they will return. Any one in the community who sees the person returning from Tuljapur, bows down because they believe that goddess is accompanying him.
After one week they have a special pooja for sending the Goddess back. On that day whole family take bath, clean the house with applying cowdung. That night Gondal is arranged. Sheep is sacrificed and kith and kin were visited for good. After dinner whole night tumultuous (Gondliga) tells story of Devi and her adventurous activities.

**YELLAMMA:**

She is worshipped before marriage could take place in the family generally tonsure ceremony is performed in Yellamma temple at Udbal.

**LAXMI:**

Laxmi is goddess of riches. To get riches people worship her.

**MEGSHA:**

Megsha is a messenger of the god and he controls the rain. This deity is worshipped only in one village, i.e. Madakatti in Bhalki Taluka. At the time of worshipping a sheep is sacrificed. The follower of this deity tie black thread around their neck.

**MOSABA:**

Mosoba is worshipped when a person is suffering from dieriba. People believe that by worshipping Mosoba they get riches.
SAMSTANI:
The Holeya people worship to (Graveyard) Samstani at the time of marriage (relevant only in few families). Worshipping grave yard means worshipping ancestors. At the time of Deepavali festival some people Aaurad and Basavakalyan and after worshipping Samstani, they get back after offering food. Then it is brought in the form of prasad and is mixed with serving food. Others interpret this practice as inviting their ancestors for marriage, generation and receiving blessings to the younger.

HANUMAN:
Hanuman is a common god in all Holeya colony. It is believed that Hanuman protects the settlement from all the dangerous troubles.

GHORDI ISMAIL KHADRI:
Ismail Khadri is popular deity in Bidar district. Worship of this deity is carried out on Thursday. It is believed that this saint fulfills the wishes of his devotees if they take oath in the name of this saint.

Apart from worshipping these gods and goddesses, they worship Shrishaila Mallikarjuna, Basaveshwar, Veera-Bhadreshwara, Manik Prabhu, Bakk Prabhu, Nursimha Jhirhe, Mailar Mallanna, Balaji, Dattatreya wishes. Some of Holeya family go on pilgrimage. It is a recent trend
developing among Holeya community to visit holy places. It is due to the continuous contact with the upper caste Hindus. They have started worshipping the above mentioned deities and offer coconut, incense flower sweet dish etc.

Many members of the older generation got 'Lingadhurana' and 'Diksha' from local Swamiji under the impact of Basaveshwara and influence of great Sharana called Molinge Maharaya during 12th century. Most of them refer to 'Moligi Maharaya' as their liberator from the exploitation. In Basavakalyan, Humnabad, and Bidar talukas most of the Holeya women wear the 'Chawaka' around their neck. Every morning men and women apply vibhuti on their forehead. In fact they serve temples and Maths in terms of Manual labour such as levelling the grounds, sprinkling water to the compounds of temples and maths white washing outer walls during Jatra and other special occasions. But they never got any opportunity to touch Swamiji's feet in local upper caste temple.

HOUSEHOLD DEITIES AMONG HOLEYA COMMUNITY:

Each family has a household deity whom they worship regularly apart from above mentioned gods and goddesses. The worship of household deity is impartial as it suggests that the followers of common gods belong to one lineage. The table given below brings out the deities worshipped by the families as household deities.
### Table No. 36

**Household Deities Among Holeya Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the deities</th>
<th>Worshipped by Resident</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laxmi</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>47.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambabai</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>24.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udbal Yellamma</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustari S...awwa</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailar Mallanna</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ismail Khadri</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandhari Panduranga</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghsha</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanuman</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahapurtai</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the household deities existing among the Holeya community. Each household has at least one or two deities as household deities. Though they worship all but the household deities occupy an important place in their day to day living. The important events in family are associated with household deities. Such as Chawala ceremony, marriage ceremony etc. It is noticed that most of the Holeya families have Laxmi as their household deity (47.06%). The next is Ambabai with
24.04%. The rest of the households worship the other deities mentioned in the table.

**RITUALS AMONG THE HOLEYA COMMUNITY:**

Rituals are very important in every society. Without them it is difficult for an individual to move from one social position to another social position. Sociologists and anthropologists are interested in the study of the rituals and practices of various groups and communities. They have considered birth, puberty, marriage and death as life crises. On these occasions the family undergoes new experiences and hardships. The friends, kinsmen and other community of society depends on the observance of them. Such rituals and practices have been regarded by Arnold Van Ganepa as 'Rites of passage'.

Like other communities the Holeya also observes the ritual practices in their own way. According to Hindu Dharmashastra, a householder has to perform many rituals but normally he observes only those which are essential to overcome to the crisis of life. These rituals start when the child is in the womb and complete in death ceremony.

The people of the Bidar district call these rituals as nama, nista, karma, karya. These words signify the magico-religious meaning behind these rituals.
The birth rites are very important because a new born has to be incorporated into the family/caste/community. The birth rites have been categorized into two parts. First part consists of those rituals which are observed before the birth of a child by the expectant mother. They are called as pre-birth rites. The second part consists of rituals which are observed after the birth of a child. These are known as after birth rites.

**PRE-BIRTH RITES:**

The pre-birth rituals of Holeya community have been stated as under:

1. Chorcholi
2. Bayakeoota
3. Kubasa Todasadu

**CHORCHOLI:**

The chorcholi, ceremony is observed when a woman is pregnant for the first time, during the third month of the pregnancy either at the natal or conjugal home. This is performed by the parents of the pregnant woman. On that day a simple feast is given to the family members. They also ritually present two blouse and five bangles to her. The entire expense of this ceremony is born by the parents of the woman.
**BAYAKEOOTA:**

The 'Bayakeoota' or 'Bankloota' is observed during the fourth month of her pregnancy. In this period the women occasionally experiences nausea. Hence she becomes weak. Her parents will be informed of her state. This message when reaches the parents of the women, varieties of dishes are prepared and taken to the house of their daughter with a view to make her eat well and bear the hardships of pregnancy. Care is taken to prepare those dishes which are liked by her.

The next day the pregnant woman is taken to her natal home for a change. After staying for four days or a week, she is sent back to her husband's home.

**KUBASATODASODU:**

This rite is observed in the eighth month of the first pregnancy of a women 'Kubasatodasodu' means presenting of a blouse piece by brides father to both his daughter and son-in-law.

Usually this ritual takes place in the bridegrooms house. The bride's father visits bridegroom's house along-with his neighbours and relatives. While coming to bridegroom's house he brings new cloths to be presented and other necessary common dieties. Then he arranges a grand feast to the community people. It is performed by majority of families while some do not practice it.
On the auspicious day the ceremony will be arranged by inviting the relatives and friends. The drum beater is called to beat the drum. The women folk sing songs relevant to the occasion. Flowers are brought from Hugar who is a higher caste person in the village. Before the couple sit at the place where the ceremony takes place, he says 'Namaste' or 'Jaibheem' to all who are participating in the ceremony. The 'Hodeki' (new clothes) places in a fan in front of them, are given to the couple.

**TABLE NO. 37**

**PERFORMANCE OF PREGNANCY RITUAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study reveals that out of (250 householders) (210) householders perform the rite of Kubasa Todasodu'. The remaining (40) householders are not performing this kind of ritual because of some bad experiences undergone by them earlier. They had the feeling that if the rite is performed they will be failing some kinds of problems such as miscarriage. It is noticed that in (25) families the cases of still born babies were experienced.
RITUALS AFTER BIRTH:

There are several rituals to be performed after the birth of a child among Holeya community. They are as follows:

1. Removal of Umblical cord
2. Bachchala Hakuvadu
3. Aideshi
4. Mailagi Tegivadu
5. Chuchadu (Burning)
6. Ganga Pooja
7. Naming Ceremony
8. Piercing of ears
9. Giving first food
10. Tonsure Ceremony

1. REMOVAL OF UMBLICAL CORD:

Sulagitti or Midwife assists at the time of delivery as a local nurse. She is the only woman who knows better treatment for a delivered woman. She cuts the umbilical cord by a sickle soon after the child is born. Then the midwife sprinkless cold water on the infants head. People believe that by doing so the child will be normal otherwise the child will be mad.

After the delivery the omens are observed by the midwife. Those omens are sometimes bad for the midwife.
Sometimes they may be bad for the family while sometimes they may be auspicious for all.

If the new born child comes out pach with umbilical cord to the neck of it, it will be good to the family. In future such a child may buy a number of animals. But such a child is considered as not good to the midwife. In such case they have to put gold in her mouth. If gold is not available in their house 'Tali' is used to put in midwife's mouth.

After the delivery, on the first day placenta is put in an earthen pot with Jawar or Wheat, and ash and is kept under the cot of the delivered woman. The placenta is buried next day in the 'Bachala' (bath room) where thrown out of the house. They believe that if some animal eats that the child grows like that animal.

**BACHACHALA HAKUVUUDU:**

Second day of the delivery a separate bath room or 'Bachchala' will be prepared only to give bath to 'Banti' and her child. If they take bath in a common bath room they believed that the child may bet eye-sore.

After the first bath of the infant, it will be kept in a fan. The fan will be kept in front of a sweet oil lamp. Then water is poured on the mother and a sickle and a small bunch of neem trees are given in the hands of
the mother to ward-off the fear of demons. It is believed that demons are afraid of the mother who has sickle and the bunch of neem tree in her hand.

After the performance of the above rituals the midwife takes head and was given her fees. Then the house is cleaned. Due to poverty they use a single room as both dining and bathroom.

The common food of 'Bananti' is rice, ghee without salt. This food is continued upto five days of delivery. 'Bananti' 'Bol' is also given to her with Jaggery as a medicine.

MAILIGI TEGEYUVADU:

After the ninth day of this ceremony the house is white washed and all the family members including mother and child take 'bath'. One of the members of the family gets a water vessel from well and hand it over to mother. After performing Pooja she takes the vessel on her head and enter the house keeping her foot on a small piece of kindled coal which is placed near the threshold of the house. It is the symbol of purification of mother after delivery.

AIDESHI:

Aideshi is a ritual which takes place on fifth day of the delivery. On this day all clothes of the mother
are washed and both 'Bananti' and Sulagitti' take ritual heired bath, the oil lamp made of wheat floor, is kept on the place where the child is born.

On this day Settiki is worshipped. A vessel is placed filled with water on jawar. By its side a small piece of stone is put along. With beads, pepper, a crousoat and seed nutmeg, (Halakadga), anklet (Kadgi), eyeliner (Kunchi) hood cap (Kulayi) head gear, a sickle (Kobberi gund) cornet of coconut, alongwith the (Udadhar) a cotton thread also will be kept if the child is male.

Five lamps are used which were made by the wheat floor. One lamp is kept in the place where the child is born and other lamps are to be kept near the childs bath room and Pooja of bath room is made with vermilion, turmeric. The consecrated water is sprinkled on the feet of invitees to avoide entry of evil spirits in to the home. 'Gugri' is given to the invitees which is made from wheat, jawar and grams, mixed.

This night, people believe that goddess 'Settiki' comes are given bath with the water that was kept in the vellel for Settiki Pooja.

On the sixth day the vessel containing placenta is buried in the pit of the bathroom which was dug on the second day of the delivery.
After five days later of this ceremony the deit will be changed. 'Bananti' starts to eat 'Sattisl' food like curry and kadabu cake which is prepared by the jawar. They start clothing the child.

CHUCHADU (TOURN):

This ritual is practiced on eleventh day after the delivery (Sulagitti and wife makes born marks on the stomach of the child with the help of hot needle. Six lines are marked around the umblical cord, two are above and two are below one each on both sides of the Umblical cord. For services, the 'Sulagitti' gets Jawar, one rupee and twenty five paise. If this is not done the child may suffer from stomach ache was the belief of the people.

GANGA POOJA:

Twelve days after the delivery, this ritual is practised by bringing water from the well into the kitchen and the resumption of this particular duty is dramatised his 'Ganga Pooja'.

Before going to 'Worship' 'Ganga' she takes bath, and wears new clothes. She goes to worship 'Ganga' along with neighbouring children. At that time she carries Jaggery, grains, ground nuts, jaustics and childs clothes
that is 'Kushina Arabi'. While worshipping 'Ganga' 'Bananti' makes a frog out of the clay and place it by the side of the well. The pooja starts by applying vermillion, lighting oil lamps which are made of wheat flour and filled with oil and wick. She prays Goddess Ganganima 'Tayee Ninag Hang Neerin Jhari barated hang manag halin Jhari barli' meaning she should pour her breast milk to her child like water, spring, to bringing prosperity. The purpose of 'Ganga Pooja' is to get sufficient milk to feed the child. She prays Ganga to give milk to her breast so that the child grows without trouble. Then she washes the childs uncleaned clothes and fetch water from the well in a vessel. The vessel is kept on the ground in between while entering in the house.

After coming to the house 'Bananti' sprinkle water on her breast before feeding the child.

Hanuman Pooja:

After forty fifth day of the delivery another ritual is performed that is worship of Hanuman, who is considered as 'energy god'. While going to Hanuman Pooja 'Bananti' dresses the child with new clothes and one black dot is put on the cheek of the child and applying eylin to the childs eye to ward off evil eye. If it is not put on, they believe the child may suffer from some troubles
like unnecessary weeping causing some inconvenience to the mother. They take assistance from some higher caste person for Hanuman Pooja as they do not enter the temple. The pooja is performed by lighting incense sticks agarbatti's oil lamps breaking coconuts which are carried by the 'Bananti'. The half of the coconut and some vermilion flowers is returned to 'Bananti' as a 'Devar Prasad'. After this 'Bananti' returns back to her home.

Generally a woman is confined to the home for two months or more and is freed from all routine duties. But this is not followed among Holeya as they are very poor and cannot afford. For earning their daily bread they have to go for work. Therefore, they cannot take rest or confined to house for a long time.

**Naming Ceremony:**

Usually when a new baby is born to a mother for the first time, her parents experience a great happiness. The delivery takes place in her parents house. On twelveth day the baby is given a name. At that time a few rituals are observed and after a month or so, she will be taken to her husband's house. The practice is that the grand father of the baby will go to bring the mother and child. In case the grand father is not alive, the other near relatives particularly brother under takes this task. The Naming ceremony of child takes place in the house of her husband.
on fortyfifth day of its birth.

At the time of cradle ceremony, Bananti's father will buy three sarees. One for midwife, one is to keep in the house and another saree is for 'Bananti'. Next time when she goes back to her father's house, she will be offered another saree which is already kept in the house. This ritual is observed strictly.

The cradle is to be decorated with the flower and toys. They have to keep five 'naivedya' four of them will be kept in all the four corners of the cradle and one is in the centre. Under the cradle they spread grain. On that they keep the vessel containing holy water. The stone is also decorated with vermillion and put by the side of the vessel.

The vessel and the 'Sattikevva' are worshipped by applying vermillion and termine. Then the 'Tale' is tied to that vessel. After that five lamps of wheat flour are kept before the 'Sattikevva'. Then a saree is presented to Bananti and hoodcap and shirt are presented to the child.

All the women of the community are invited for naming ceremony. Usually the paternal aunt gives the name to the new born. The rites starts with passing the baby from hand to hand across the cradle by the women. While
passing the child, the women who stand on one side of the cradle say 'Sadeva' and the other reply by saying 'Mahadeva'. If the child is female women say 'Ganga-Gouri', after-waids they put the child in the cradle. The Aunt calls out the names of gods or ancestors in child's ear, five times. As she does this, the other women pat her back with that 'Kappirotti' made out of wheat flour.

After naming the child, married women take the 'Naivedya' to the doddi(wise) or clan house. While taking 'Naivedya' they are forced to take their husbands name. When this ceremony is over 'Kappirotti' is given to the paternal aunt. She takes it and goes under the pendal to eat, that rotti and then she comes back to join the group. Then all join for lunch.

After the first child's mother distributes 'Guggri' without making any noise or sound. She pours guggeri in their hem of saree. Women who received 'Guggri' also is not supposed to talk to baby's mother. This precaution is taken in order to make the future of the child safe.

Whenever an individual commits any kind of misbehaviour like adultery and stealing the people say that the mother of that person has made some mistakes while distributing 'Guggri'.
Next morning the aunt comes with garlies and beads in the cloth which she took at the time of naming ceremony along with kappirotti and throws them in the cradle.

**PIERCING OF EARS:**

The ear boring is not practiced by all families, only a few of them do this after forty fifth day. On an auspicious day the child is brought to Goldsmith (Oora-Agasale) for piercing of ears. Goldsmith takes Rs. 1.25, one blouse piece and one coconut carnet filled with sugar.

Most of the community people call for ear boring to the 'Mannigar'. Mannigar are the petty businessman who wander from village to village in order to sell beads and copper anklets. People think that piercing of the ear of the child whether male or female is essential. In case the child's ear is not pierced, the bite of scorpion may lead to death. Because of this fear a few people pierce the child's ear very soon. Some well-to-do persons have another ear piercing at the time of marriage. The upper side of the right ear is pierced and his relatives bring the pong means Gold ring to be fixed in the ear. Usually his father-in-law gets it for the groom.
ANNAPRASAN:

Giving solid food for the first time to the child. The child is given solid food to eat after six months of its birth, and this food usually consists of cooked rice and vermicelli (Savigi). This food is fed on an auspicious day or on the festival day like, Dasara, Divali, Ugadi etc.

In case mothers milk is not sufficient to child the solid food is given even earlier. If the mother conceived before weening off of the child the solid food is given earlier.

Before giving cooked food to the child first they put some honey on child's tongue, so that the child becomes active and would talk very soon is their belief.

TONSURE CEREMONY:

The cutting of the child's hair for the first time, has to be done on an auspicious day in a ceremonial way. This ritual is observed between the month of January and May.

Tonsure depends upon the 'Harike' conditional promise. They will put it before an idol by praying like this. 'If my wife becomes pregnant then the new born child's hair will be cut in your presence'. In case they pray Muslim god, as well as Hindu, they promise to sacrifice sheep or sweet dishes. If house holds deity is 'Manilaxmi'
'Uditumbeteen' and 'Gubbadkuri Kodateeni'. I will sacrifice pregnant sheep before Lakshmi if my wife gives birth to a son. This depends upon the kind of 'Harake' or benediction one makes.

Most of the people among Holeya community worship Muslim God. They sacrifice either a pair of sheep or a single sheep to Ismail Khadri. This ceremony is conducted when the child becomes one and a half year old. This ceremony is performed on the auspicious day that is generally on Thursday.

In the early morning all family members get ready with necessary things like food grains, utensils to cook and a sheep for the sacrifice. All food grains and utensils are carried out in bullock carts.

After reaching the place all people take bath and they call (Mulla) (future) for cutting the sheep for which he is paid Rs. 71/=. Then women cook bread and curry.

For offering sheep, the family head carries the skin of the sheep on his head Dhatti (new cloth to god), flower garland, encense are presented to the God. After worship new clothes are presented by both husband and wife of girls parents. Then they have food and return back the same evening to their place.
CHUNGADI HOCHCHADU AND KIRAGUNI UDASADU:

There is a particular ritual among Holeya Community which consists of presenting new clothes to a child when he becomes seven or nine years old. If it is a male child the ceremony is called 'Gungadi Hochchadu', in case of a girl it is known as 'Kiraguni Udasadu'.

When the ceremony is fixed, grandparents buy new clothes and blanket 'Ghunde' for the child and Saree Blouse piece, turban, towel, coat, dhoti for child's parents. To give first to the people in their daughters village, they bring grams, jaggary, wheat flour with them from their own village. All the relatives are invited to their daughters' house as the ceremony is normally celebrated there. In the morning they prepare sweet cakes with the help of other women in the Holeya community.

KIRAGUNI UDASADU:

For a girl the maternal grand father parent or maternal uncle makes a presentation of a small saree (Kiragunis) and a blouses. For this ceremony the other performances are the same as in the case of Ghungadi.
PUBERTY RITUALS:

The first appearance of menstruation is a significant event in the life of a girl. During this period she is supposed to be polluted and she is kept in seclusion. She has to observe certain taboos. The father and mother of the girl will go to swamiji a higher caste religious man or Sooth Sayer. Swamiji asks all the details about girls menstruation. He will be briefed about 'Hora Panchi' (Out doors) or Olapanchi (In doors). Then swamiji will suggest the number of days the rituals are to be observed and the types of rituals they have to perform.

If it is 'Hora Panchi' is considered dangerous to the girls husbands family. If it is Olapanchi it is considered dangerous to the members of her parents family. Hence the swamiji suggests the ritualistic remedies to overcome the danger.

a) OLAPANCHI:

It is indoors or olapanchi some offerings are to be made like steel and copper in dana. People believe in it strongly. For instance in a family of Kashinath where his daughter matured indoors or olapanchi, he could not make any offerings as suggested by swami due to poverty and after a few days he decided betrothal for his daughter. Soon after the function is over he died for
not performing indoors ritual olapanchi sutaka properly. This is what the respondents narrated.

In another instance after the death of Kashinath his daughter took ash from fire place (hearth) to brush her teeth and kept the remaining ash on the roof. Within two hours that ash burnt the roof. People believe that if purificatory rituals are not performed properly, their life will be in danger.

b) HORAPANCHI:

If girls maturation time is identified as it is dangerous to her husbands family. The case of Sumitra is given to stress the head for the observation of rituals – Simitra, a native of Bendakundi was married to a man belonging to Madakatti. After her marriage, within a week two buffalowes died in her husbands house. People believed that this has happened because her father has not performed the puberty rituals properly when it was identified as 'Horapanchi'. That is why he was held responsible for these happenings and was made to perform the rituals in the form of giving alms of black cloth and Jawar to beggers.

Only old women are allowed to wash the girls stained clothes at the time of menstruation. Young girls, and young women are prohibited from washing. They believe it will affect the young ones.
Normally rituals are observed from nine to sixteen day. On the first day of menstruation she is given bath by five married women. She is not allowed to enter kitchen and alter. The matured girl is made to sit in the corner of the house for nine or sixteen days. During these days women folk of the neighbourhood gather together in the girls house, every evening, give her head bath and put vermillion on her forehead and flowers are wreathed on her head. The girl afterwards is made to sit in the corner of the house. Women sing songs after waving sacred long which is the daily routine till nine or sixteen days are completed. On the last day of the ritual the house is white washed. The clothes are washed. Afterwards relative like maternal uncle and aunt are specially invited, for they have an important role to play while performing puberty ritual. On the last day the girl is given head bath by applying turmeric all over her body. She is also fed boiled rice, ghee and vermilli. If it is a well to do family they prepare, 'Yachcha' which consists of coconut cardamoms, poppy seeds cloves, nutmeg, mixed with sugar and ghee. This is provided to the girl considering her condition on par with the woman who has given birth to a baby. So they believe it would help the girl to keep her health intact. The poor people provide at least five coconuts and sugar to the girl.
If the girl is married in child-hood the ritual will be observed for sixteen days. On the last day of the rite, the husband, father-in-law and mother-in-law are called to attend the occasion for celebrating 'so baned ceremony' (consummating). The girl and her husband are given new clothes (Hodaki) and grand feast is given to the people of the community. Sixteen days rituals are not to be seen as child marriages are rare now a days.

During these days in the evening women cut jokes and do mimicry to feast the girl as to show how she would talk with her husband, behave with father-in-law and mother-in-law, in their house and vice-versa.

After giving her head bath, the new green saree and green bangles are presented for wearing on the last day which frees her from the state of pollution. In case of unmarried girl her maternal uncle and aunt bring a new saree for the girl and other necessary commodities for giving a grant feast to the community people to mark the end of ceremony. Women who have attended the programme every evening are especially invited for the last day function which is followed feast. A saree is presented to a women who has helped the girl during the first menssuation. At the end, 'Arati' (waving of sared lamp to the girl) waved and songs are song to mark the end of the ritual.
DEATH RITUALS AMONG HOLEYA COMMUNITY:

The last important ritual of life crises is connected with funeral. According to Bunnep (1960, 140-VII) funeral is more a rite of incorporation and transition them separation. The family which looses a person permanently has to change its relations and status in the group or society and arrange for reintegration.

The main objective of this ritual is to commemorate dead person. Generally dead body is laid down in the house directing his legs towards east and head towards west except megsha who keep the corpse south north direction. Then knee bones are broken to fold the legs. Sickle is kept on the stomach and fire is made in the corridor to restrict swelling stomach and bad spirit respectively. 'Samsudi' i.e., death message is sent to all relatives and friends.

Abir, Gulal, new clothes, coconut scent are brought and kept on the roof for they cannot be taken into the house. The price of the cloth is not asked while purchasing 'Koddih Arbi' (cloth for corpse).

The corpse is given ritual bath. Water should be brought by the eldest son as per the norm of this community. While giving bath the eldest daughter first pour water on the corpse, mother, sons and other daughters follow. The corpse is wrapped in the new cloths brought by
the members of the family, and is seated at the left side of the house facing the east of the north. Perfumes are sprinkled on the body to overcome the smell of decay; sticks and inscence are also lighted. Arati is kept before the corpse. Rupee coin is cemented on forehead of the corpse by the members of the family first, then other coins by relatives. Drum beaters dance beating the drum and they have to stick coins to their forehead which are thrown on the ground by relatives, without touching hands. It continues until the bier is lefted.

The community people dig the grave, wood is brought and bier is made by the community carpenter. It is decorated lavishly. It is seated on the bier and a little jawar and coin of twenty five paise is fixed his (Udi). The people shout, the name of house hold deity like 'Yelkat', 'Yelkapge' 'Pandari Govardar Vithal'; and Bolo Bheem Bhagavanki Jai; Bolo Gautam Budh Bhagavanki Jai (two slogans are new which bowerd recent from the impact of Maharashtra). While lifting the bier to the grave yard. The eldest son holds 'Kich' fire megha families take the corpse in sleeping position to the cemetery. The people change shoulders one by one to the bier upto 'Visara' a central place between house and the grave yard.
The bier is descended from the shoulders and kept on the ground and then the 'Udi' is untied to spill jawar and twenty five paisa on the ground. Then the bier once again is lifted and carried to the grave for burial. In case unmarried person died, the corpse is taken in sleeping position to burial place.

DISPOSING RITUAL:

The grave is dug of 5'x3' for sitting position of the corpse and 7'x3' for the corpse in sleeping position. A piece of gold, grass and water is poured into the mouth of corpse by the eldest son at the time of burial. If dead is 'muttaidi' metron 'Serugu' hem of saree and turban in case of man would be cut and taken to keep it is the house. However 'Patta' remarried wives hem of saree is not taken. In case of pregnant women and 'Dananti' the corpse is cremated for it is strongly believed, that they may become ghost and pester the family.

AFTER DISPOSAL RITUAL:

After placing the dead body in the grave all people male and female children pour soil to cover and close it by putting stones. Abir, Gulal, sticks and wick are thrown on the grave. The community priest distributed 'Patti' to the people and spells or mantras are chanted. Afterwards, he declares that the dead
person has gone to heaven holding the fale of black cow. Then all people throw patricies on the ground and coconut is broken at the end and kept on it.

All people afterwards sit at the distance to distribute the money among the people who have worked for the occasion on their own, treating it as their duty. 'Aiyari' rupees are given in the hands of the community elderly person to give them to the relatives. The coin cemented by the members of the family is traditionally given to the eldest daughter, second is to the distance relative as doddi 'henninamana'; Dum beater are called to get the 'mana'. If he is single 'Holiya' he gets nine rupees, in case 'Myala' (group) they get minimum fifty one rupees. Grave diggers get thirteen rupees, carpenters eleven rupees. Nulaki Madiga five rupees, Bhootya, Vugya, Swami one rupee and twenty five paise each as 'mana'. However, the poor one is permitted to pay anything that is possible for him. Afterwards some people leave for their village from the spot itself. Remaining relatives, members of the family and the community people come back to street wash their feet and faces on the well before going to the dead persons house to see the lamp lighted. Till all the people come back an elderly woman of the family sprinkle the mixture of cowdung and water on the place where the person breathed his last, and put a brass full of consecrated water and bunch of neem leaves in it.
Wick in sweet oil is also lighted beside the vessel on the ground. All the people who have attended the funeral come to the house to have the sight of the lamp and sprinkle the water from the brass vessel over their shoulders with the help of neem twig and bow their heads and return home. Afterwards, all the family members take bath. Other people do the same in their houses and enter into the house by touching fire from their feet to avoid 'Sootak' i.e. pollution.

When the news of the death of a person reaches the community members, they give up their work and mourn for the sad demise of the person until the dead body is buried they do not resume their routine work. In the evening they prepare food and have their meal. Neighbours provide food to the members of the bereaved family.

HALU HAKAD DINA: (Milk pouring Day)

There is a practice of observing the day of pouring milk. This ritual is usually on third day after the death of a person. On that day all the members take head bath. The house is cleaned by the cowdung. The food items which the dead person liked most were prepared. Liquor, betel and tobacco are also taken with the food to the grave yard in case the person was addicted to those habits during the life time. Kins of the dead person
participate in this ritual. They go to the grave yard in the same direction in which the corpse was taken. The food like rave, sugar etc. are taken in cups to place on 'Visava'. Then they proceed to the grave yard where they keep all the items and wait until a crow comes and eats them. If crow eats soon after the things are kept on the grave it is thought the departed person had his place in the heaven. Otherwise, it is believed that person still have worries about his family. So to satisfy his soul blood relatives like sister, borther, daughter and son pray humbly to the dead that they would look after his family and he need not worry. Then crow comes and eats the food which symbolises that the dead person is satisfied and gone to the heaven. After that they return home, wash their feet and faces and sit mourning in the corridor. In case of child, on this ritual only 'Panchakhajja' and milk are provided on grave.

SATTIN DINA: (Death Day Observation)

The purpose of this ritual of incorporation the sharing of the food, after funeral and commemoration is to a '"reunite all the serving members of the group with each other, and sometimes with the deceased in the same way that a chain which has been broken by the disappearance of one of its links be rejoined".'
For the last two decades people have adopted this ritual. This ritual is performed on the twelth day after the death. But now usually it is celebrated on the fifth day after the death. Before it is to be celebrated the house is cleaned by white washing and the members of the family take head bath and prepare food. They take the food to the grave and offer 'Naivedya'. In this ritual the mutaiidi 'Serugu' or the turban is kept on the altar and worshipped. The 'Mutaiidi Serugu' is not to be given to anybody, for it is considered as house-hold deity, who cannot be displeased by sending her off the house. Then with that 'Serugu' hood cap is made for small children. The feast is given in commemoration of dead person to those who have helped during the burial. By giving feast to a few people it is believed that the soul of the dead will be satisfied. After the feast is over, the Bhajan is arranged for the whole night.

Out of (250) families seven 'Megeya' families observed this ritual in slightly different manner. They sacrifice the sheep on 'Sattindina' to give feast to the people instead of sweet and they follow all other rituals as in the case of remaining other families.

FESTIVALS:

According to Oscar Lewis (1958) 'Any analysis of Indian festivals whether it be historical or functional
should be based upon description of the ceremonial cycle'. The festivals celebrated by the Holeyas throughout a year result in a cycle. It is observed that festivals are based on beliefs connected with activities of deities and special occasions. There are many festivals performed by Holeyas families.

Recently they have started celebrating Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Birthday, 14th April and death anniversary on 6th December as festivals and these two are very important for them now a days.

Food is exchanged among relatives, friends and neighbours on festivals like Deepavali, Ugadi, Yallamasi and so on. During these festivals Holeyas get special food from people belonging to the higher castes.

The various ritual practices and customs observed during the festivals express the kinship relations among the people. The festivals may create tension as well as cohesion in the group. Different religious groups have prejudices and hatredness towards each other on some occasions. There are conflicts over their rights and privileges and this brings tension during the Holi and Ambedkar Jayanti.

These festivals also establish relationships between man and man on the other hand. On the festival days,
the deity in whose honour the festival is observed is specially worshipped. Thus these festivals are both natural and social in their character.

The Hindu festivals form a calendar into twelve solar months. Further every month is split in two divisions that is the bright half and the dark half. The bright half starts with the new moon and the dark half with the full moon. New moon and full moon. On these days house is cleaned and some sweet is prepared and deities at home are worshipped. Moon days are festive occasions. Each has two weeks and each week in turn has seven days. Further full moon and new moon days. Days of festivals, days of eclipse of moon and sun are supposed to have magical effect in their character, auspicious and supernaturally powerful.

The festivals can also be classified on the basis of sex and age groups. For example Nagarpanchami, Gauri Hunni, Deepavali are festivals of women. Sankranti, Holi and Dasar are festivals of men. Recently among the Holeyas community regarding the festivals we notice some change. Irrespective of small or big, male or female they are celebrating two occasions Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's birthday on 14th April and death anniversary on 6th December. Budha-purnima are celebrated by all. A few festivals celebrated by Holeyas are given below:
UGADI:

This is the most important festival celebrated by the Holeyas as New Years day in the month of Chaitra. Each and every Holeya family whether rich or poor celebrates this festival. A few days before the Ugadi, the wells are white washed with lime. On the day of Ugadi all members take bath by early in the morning and clean the houses, decorate the floor by using cowdung. The house head or son brings Bhuski (a kind of plant) and all family members take ritual bath by putting Bhuski under the feet and pour water on head, and wear new clothes, poor family wear their clean clothes. The special preparation on the occasion namely 'Bevu' is prepared with fresh margosa flowers and jaggery and is tested by every one in the family before taking the food on that day. They believe that 'Bevu' represents apparently to make people realize and reconcile to the fact that life is a combination of sorrow and joys, to be faced by them in the years to come. Sweet cakes and ladu are prepared during the night. In the morning feast, Goddess Maragamma and Hanuman are worshipped before having meals. The neighbours are invited to the feast. In the evening the Holeyas gather near the temple in the village for hearing the panchanga. Some senior member of the village give the ideas and the happenings of the coming year which the people hear with curiosity.
This festival has a special significance for the Holeya cultivator. He insugurates the annual cultivation by ploughing five or nine round in field, on the Ugadi day as it is considered to be auspicious. The plough and bulls are worshipped by applying vermillion. Ugadi is important for all labouring class and masters as the accounts are settled usually from Ugadi to Ugadi.

The next day of the festival poor people discuss with land lords about their working contracts, eg., sending their child as cow heared at or serving on contract basis as bonded labour.

Dr. AMBEDKAR'S JAYANTI:

On the 14th April the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is celebrated in a grand scale. This has become a festival for the Holeya people. So they try to buy new dresses, prepare sweets and worship the portrait of Baba Saheb. No one goes for work on this day. Bhajan is arranged in the community hall where candles are lit before the portrait of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The bhajan will continue till morning. In the bhajan songs about Baba Sahebs life are sung. Now this festival has acquired a national character.
AGI HUNNI:

This full moon day which falls in the month of Vaishakha (April-May) is observed in a very simple manner. On this day all the families sow the seeds of cucumber, in front of their houses to make seedlings, of (250) respondents 25% agricultural families who have 5 to 11 acres of land have sown chilly seeds along with cucumber to make the seedling (agi) to a plant them in their fields. Hence this festival is known as agi hunnive meaning making seedlings.

KAR HUNNI:

This festival is popular in the Humnabad taluka and Bider and some parts of Basavakalyan, Bhalki and Aurad. It is not celebrated on gran scale. This festival is associated with agricultural occupation. 75 house holders who have cows and oxen, worship them as deity.

ASHADH EKADASHI:

This festival is observed in the month of Ashadh (June-July) on the eleventh day of the month. The devotee of Vithal of Pandarpur keep fast on this day. Among the (250) samples (25) families observe this Ekadashi. Among well to do visit Pandharpur also. Next day a feast is prepared to break the fast.
This festival is observed in the month of Shravan (July-August) and is mainly considered as women's festival. Newly married daughters are brought for the festival to their natal home on this day. The serpent God (Nag) is worshipped in all the houses. The image of serpent god is made on wall by putting dots of vermillion and turmeric. A garland made of cotton is put on the serpent god and coconut is broken before it. On this day milk and roasted corn which is prepared specially are offered to the God. Cakes are prepared for the feast. This festival provides much scope for recreation and merry making. All age and sex groups indulge in playing games, especially swinging (Jocaldi) which is an important part of this festival. All women of the family wear new clothes on the occasion. All women gather in the afternoon to play 'Bhulayi' (they make a circle by holding hands of each other) where in they sing songs about important events.

HOLLA:

This festival is celebrated in the month of Shravana (July-August). It is more popular in the taluka of Bhalki and Aurad. The whole community celebrate this festival - 'Codabali' and sweet cakes are prepared on this festival. But not all the Holeya families observe it. Very few families celebrate who having cow and oxen.
Cattle are washed and worshipped. Higher caste people take a procession of oxen around Hanuman temple, in which Holeyas are not allowed to take part. Therefore they just decorate cows, oxen and buffaloes in the house with 'Matati' and 'Canda'.

On the next day of festival the Holeya families in Aurad, Bhalki and Basawakalyan go to the higher caste peoples houses for begging stale food. Next day they celebrate 'Kari' by cutting the he buffalow which was brought by the community contributions. Butcher will be called the execute if afterwards, he is given one share, 'Pala'. The remaining meat is distributed among the community people in the form of 'Pala' share. Grand feast is arranged in a few houses. Men also enjoy liquor and toddy in the evening and cut jokes.

SHRAVANA:

During the month of Shravana (July-August) out of (250) households only (25) families propitiate in this month their families avoid non-vegetarian food, for this month is considered as sacred and auspicious. Remaining (225) families do not practice this ritual due to their occupations. One person each from these (25) families will be on fast on Monday. He eats only in the last night and drink tea on the last Monday. Cakes are
prepared to celebrate shravana and break fasting on the last day. They worship Pandharpur Vithal and Rukmini.

**RAKHI Poojatma:**

This festival is observed in the month of Shravana (July-August), while celebrating the festival every sisters tie the 'Raakhi' to their brothers. While tying 'Raakhi' they use to put vermillion on their foreheads and some sweet will be put on their mouths. But this festival is not popular among the Holeya community in rural setting it is metate from upper caste.

**Jokumaran Hunni:**

This festival is observed in the month of Bhodapada (August-September). Jukumar takes his birth in the family of after the immersion of Ganesh. The women from Kabbaliga family carry the idol of Jokumari in basket round the village to receive alms. Holeya people also give alms to them and get in return-eye-liner from the idol of Jokumar. People believed that the Jokumara is the deity of rain and femility. The holeya people observe the death rituals of Jokumar, while observing the rituals they cleyed their houses and floors.

**Dasaara:**

For this festival the house is white washed, all clothes including bed sheets, blankets and rugs are washed.
All the utensils are also cleaned without leaving a single article at the house. This festival is celebrated in the month of Aswin (October).

This festival is performed in two ways. Some people follow nine days 'Ghatasthapana' and others observe the fire five days 'Ghata Stapana' depending upon the 'Harake'. It is observed that three families establish 'Ghata' for nine days, for this 'Madana' is brought in patrolige for seedlings.

On the first day sweet oil lamp is lighted before Goddess Ambabai which will continue until nine days are over. Every day one member of the family takes bath and worship Goddesses Ambabai, ritually, sacred water is poured in vessel and vermillian and turmeric are applied to it.

During these days certain restrictions are to be observed strictly, while cleaning the house cloth is used instead of broom. Sexual inter-course is strictly prohibited. Every morning all members of the family take ritual bath and beg 'Joga'. They are not supposed to use cots and pillow.

On the last but one day of this festival 'Hadgi Tumbadu' is performed. On this day millet cakes and curry are prepared. Cock is sacrificed to Ambabai, if it is not
available, coconut is broken. Hadagi is brought from neighbours and is filled with millet, curry and cakes. Wick lamp and sticks are lighted while they say 'Udha' 'Udhai' afterwards 'Kadaguni' are tied before the goddess.

On the last day 'Ayudha Pooja' is performed wherein weapons are worshipped. Small children bow down to their father and mother. Some people keep fast on the last day of festival and accept only milk. Such people are generally known as 'Janani Bhotaya'.

This ritual is traced back to the episode in the 'Mahabharata' where Pandavas were believed to have got their weapons back from goddess 'Banni Mahankali' after their exile of twelve years was being completed. Holeya people think they are descendents of Pandavas.

In the evening of 'Manahbi' all male members return home with banni and cob where of corn and mother and other women of the great with waving aarti when women ask what they have brought? On that they reply that they have brought gold and silver and is repeated for five times. Afterwards, banni is exchanged. Young ones touch the feet of elders to seek their blessings. Similarly wife touches her husband's feet. Banni is also exchanged among friends and neighbours.

On the next day saplings on the alter are taken to fields before pandaras are kept others leave them in stream.
SHIGI HUNNI:

Shigi Hunni (the full moon day) is named after goddess Ambabai. On this day floor is cleaned and all take ritual head bath and go for 'Joga' to five house. The feast is arranged on the day by costing special dishes.

DEEPAVALI:

This festival is celebrated for 5 days but Holeya celebrate only 2 days on the next day of the new moon day. Cow boys make 'Puttaka' to tie in the necks of cattle and sheep go on singing songs from house to house. This will continue for five days. For that singing the boys get a rupee or even more from each house.

Holey community people do not celebrate 'Chaturdashi' but only they celebrate 'Padya'. On that day cooked rice with milk and water is put on the thatch of the house in the cup 'Donni' for crows. If crows eat the food, people think that their ancestors are satisfied. Married daughter are invited to their netal home for the festival. Sisters and mother wave a 'Arti' the father and brother and other guests invited on the occasion and cotton thread is given for tying in the waist. The brothers present blouse piece, saree bangles or money to the sisters. Afterwards, vermicilli, sugar, milk is served to them. Next day in the morning animals are made to cross the five kindled by the of gingili as they believe that
by doing so animals will not suffer by any contamination.

**GOURI HUNNI:**

This festival is purely meant for women and girls and it comes in the month of 'Kartik' (October). This hunni is observed in the name of goddess Gouri.

On Mahaahi day a small hole is dug in the corridor and cow dung is sprinkled. The mortar is decorated with the flowers, the lamp is lighted and songs are sung. This is continued until five days. On the last day 'Huggi' is prepared for the feast, girls sing Gouri songs every day. On the last day they put Gouri into the well.

**CHATTE:**

This festival is observed in the month of Margasira (November-December). On this day people clean their houses by cowdung and they bring all kinds of vegetables to prepare 'Bharata' 'Chattak Khara'. Among (250) samples (61) families yearly go on pilgrimage to Mallar Mallanna on the occasion of Chatti.

**SIXTH DECEMBER:** (Death anniversary of Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar)

In Holeya community majority of people know in detail about Ambedkar's birth and death, but they have only heard about him. Among (250) respondents 92% know
just about his death and birth. Remaining 8% stated that they do not know about him.

On this day to remember and express their sincere thanks to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and his untiring efforts for the upliftment of down-trodden people. Speeches are arranged by eminent scholars; Bhajana are arranged. Through such programmes, the leaders try to educate people and make efforts to know Ambedkar's ideas.

YELLAMASHI:

This festival comes in the month of Pushya (December-January). This festival is celebrated especially by agriculturists to worship Lakshimi in the fields. Among (250) house-holds 31 families of the Holeya celebrate the festival. They prepare Bhaji, amble and Kichadi for this festival. Rest of people go to their masters house where they are working and participate with them in the festival.

All the cooked food is carried to the field, with family members and invited people. Before the food is served to the guest, Lakshimi is worshipped by a consecrated water and lamp, then coconut is broken. Two persons go around the field saying 'Huliga Huliga' one person sprinkling water on crops and second person say 'Chalan Paligya' and there is food throughout the field. Then they take in the field in front of the Lakshimi.
SANKRANTI:

This festival falls in the month of 'PUSYO' (January). It is customary to take bath after 'Jigali' is being rubbed over the body. This festival is celebrated for two days on the first day that is 'Hannumakkala' Bogi. Women take head bath and eat sugar, cucumber, groundnut and jujube. Similarly on the next day 'Gandasara bogi' (men take head bath and eat the same fruits). People exchange 'Ellu and Bella' (Til and Jaggery) among themselves to avoid (bad events) 'Sankranti pepeedai'. It is believed that sankranti peedda if affects a person will suffer (bad events) will suffer for three years. Hence people try to forget all bad happenings of the past and establish new relations by distributing Til and Jaggery (sweets).

GODI ERISO HUNNI:

This is celebrated on the full moon day during the month of Magha (January-February). As the crops are ready during this period, it has a symbolic significance. The cobs of wheet, jawar, kurdi etc., are brought by Holeya agriculturists from the fields and are tied to the threshold of the front door. On that a couple is invited for the feast. A new saree is given to the lady invited for food to wear on that day.
SHIVARATRI:

This festival is observed in the month of 'Palguna' (February-March). This festival does not have any pomp and grandeur. Devotees of Shiva observe fast on this day. Out of (250) only (25) households observe the ritual. The fast is broken in the evening by taking fruits and milk. The next day special dishes are prepared to commemorate the event.

HOLI:

'Holi' is a festival of colours which comes in the month of 'Palguna' (February-March). 'Kamadeva', the god of amorous love is burnt on this festival. Festival starts with the installing of idols of 'Kanna' on the full moon day. He is ceremonially burnt in the public place. Except 'Manadavaru' family other prepare cakes in the morning. The 'Mana' receiving householders make 'Naivedya' in the evening. For they have the privilege of giving fire to the 'Holi'. It is only after fire is given by them 'Holi' is burnt. Before this all women came with fire, cow dung cakes, and sacred lamps in their hands. Even higher caste people cannot light fire to 'Holi' unless they get fire from Holeya's 'Holei'. Therefore, Malipatil of the village comes to the Holeya galli or (wada) or Holegari with 'Seraparu' and offers jawar, blouse piece and coconut as 'Mana'. These things are poured
into the hem of dhoti of holeya leader. Holi is a festival that gives out let to tension of the routine children along with men by using valgar language. In the night children and men eat coconut and grains roasted in the 'Holi fire' believeing that the waist and teeth become strong by eating grains roasted in Holi.

According to the information collected from Holeya respondents it is said that the 'Kamadeva' quote the source who belonged to the Holeya community raped many of the higher caste women until those people exasperated. Therefore one day all of them gathered toget­her and murdered him then sprinkled the blood of 'Kamadeva' on each other which is now symbolically celebrated by sprinkling colour on one another. (Oral recorded through the old respondent at field).

Next day is a morning day. The buffalo is cut by the butcher to distribute beaf among the community people for the 'Kari' celebration people drink liquor and 'Toddy' and bother people. The disturbance caused by Holeya in the community is tolerated on that day.

MOHARRUM:

This festival is celebrated according to 'Lunar' calendar for five days. Imam Hussain is the grandson of Mohammed was put to death in the plains of 'Karbala' after
being denied food and water for three days. Moharrum is observed in his honour. On the Moharrum day symbols of Imam Hussain and his family known as 'Alams' are taken out in the procession by the Muslims to a nearby well.

During Moharrum Holeyas go to Muslim houses to get alms. At that time they utter 'Ghavane Bhanvanse'.

First night which is called and night of killing 'Khatal ratri' people of the community prepare Biriyani and Chongi for the occasion. They offer to deity either cooked food or raw materials for food. Some people who have taken promise (Harake) offer Dhotti (Cloth) and Silver house on this occasion. After returning home Holeya people offer prayers for five time by saying 'Ayumu Hussaini'. The Muslim community people participate in the 'Namaz' which is arranged in honour of Hussain Basha throughout night.

The people of Holeya community fear the god very much. They believe that if a person does not observe the festivals, rituals and do not keep the promise, he will suffer from miseries and misfortunes. They have many incidences of such happenings. As they are ignorant and cannot think rationally, they correlate the incident with slight change in the observance of festivals or rituals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Festival</th>
<th>Month Hindu Calender</th>
<th>Month English Calender</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ugadi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambedkar Jayanti</td>
<td>Chaitra</td>
<td>March - April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agi Hunni</td>
<td>Vaishaka</td>
<td>April - May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kara Hunni</td>
<td>Jestha</td>
<td>May - June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mannethin Amavashi</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Akad Ekadashi</td>
<td>Ashada</td>
<td>June - July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nagar Amavasi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagar Panchami</td>
<td>Shravan</td>
<td>July - August</td>
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<td>Hola</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shravan Somavar</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rakhi Purnima</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jokumar Hunnive</td>
<td>Bhadrapada</td>
<td>August - September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ghat Dasara</td>
<td>Ashwiji</td>
<td>Sept. - October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shigi Hunnive</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepavali</td>
<td>Karteeka</td>
<td>October - November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gouri Hunnive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatti</td>
<td>Margashira</td>
<td>November - December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Punnetithe</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellamashi</td>
<td>Pushya</td>
<td>December - January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makar Sankranti</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ghodi Yerasohunnive</td>
<td>Magha</td>
<td>January - February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shivaratri</td>
<td>Phalguna</td>
<td>February - March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holi</td>
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</table>
CHANGES IN THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, RITUALS AND FESTIVALS OF HOLEYA COMMUNITY:

The foregoing analysis brings out the change that has occurred in the sphere of religious beliefs, rituals and festivals of Holeya community. The Holeya community is undergoing a change. The overall nature of religious change shows that it is slowly losing the Hindu culture. The analysis shows that the superficial aspects of the alien culture are accepted first and then the society turns towards the core value of their culture. The changes are mostly due to contact with Maharasthra Buddhist and through the process of acculturation. In early times Holeyas are living in a cluster of houses forming separate Holeya localities. The high castes do not stay in that localities occupied by Holeyas. Holeyas were not allowed to enter into the interior parts of the village. These Holegari or (Harijanwada) looks like tiny homlets which are almost disconnected from the main village. Higher caste never allowed them to worship the god and goddesses which are located in the middle of the village. They had no courage even to sit in front of the temple corridor except in their locality. Now a days people are entering into the temple which is located in the village. This has led to some sort of change in the structure of the religious organization. In Holeya community presently various changes are taking place in
The question was asked to respondents, Do you favour conversion to new religion? Out of (250) samples, 50.0% said yes, 49.2% said no. The table indicates the attitude towards new religion.

**TABLE NO. 39**

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE NEW RELIGION AMONG HOLEYA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following are the changes noted down in this connection:

In the past, deities like Maryamma Yellamma, Sammavva, Shetikevva etc., were held responsible for causing as well as preventing certain diseases.

To cure the disease and to prevent them, these people were practicing animal sacrifice. In later years, with the gradual discovery, availability and utilization of new medical facilities, the old concept of disease causation and cure have been re-defined. The appointment of health agent, the establishment of Health Centre and facility of regular dispensary in near by Taluka, weekly
visits by and trained doctors have brought considerable change in the outlook of Holeya. It has also helped in diffusing the scientific knowledge and explanation of diseases and cures. This has helped in declining the importance of worship of traditional deities in the context of prevention and cure of diseases.

Traditionally to get rid of diseases and natural calamities, the role of Potya, Jani, and Jantya was very important. But at present, they also take the help of doctors. People are loosing faith in Potya, Jani and Jantya who are considered as important in curing diseases. Today even uneducated Holeyas give scientific explanation regarding natural phenomena and life and death and family planning. Birth control practices have helped to decrease the significance of religions explanations regarding birth, death and causation and cure of diseases etc.

Traditionally varieties of deities were worshipped by the Holeya some of them are Ambabai, Samstani, Yellamma Margama, Hussan Basha, Mavalali, Latad Sab, Ismail Khadri, etc. But now due to contact with Budhist system of the pattern of worship has changed. Now they are giving importance to the worship of Dr. Ambedkar and Goutam Budha. Many of the Holeya people reported that traditional deities are powerless and their spiritual powers have become less but faith on Dr. Ambedkar's treasuing is increasing.
Traditionally, each Holeya Keri has temples of different deities but now the temples are in ruinous conditions only few old women worship them. Instead of temples they are erecting statue of Dr. Ambedkar at their locality and every year on 14th April and 6th December is the death day are celebrated.

Formerly Holeyas worshipped the incantation of Vishnu i.e., Krishna, Panduranga, Rama who are supposed to be Hindu gods but now they are not worshipping and not singing Bhajanas and Kirtanas.

Many of the Holeyas were visiting Pandarpur, Tuljapur, Mallar Mallanna (Karnataka). The purely Maharastrian gods goddesses, Holeya people worship and observe fast on the eve of 'Ashad Ekadashi', Shravan Somavar, Ekadashi, Mahasivaratri, but now these practices are becoming less. Instead of practicing them they are visiting every year Nagapur 'Diksha Bhumi' where Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism.

The Holeyas worship the Hanuman, the Hindu deity, by installing it at their locality. They treat him as the protector of Holegeri. It is also useful in magical mantras. But the faith in Hanuman is also on decline.

Traditionally, they worship of Shiva (Mahadev). A Holeyas observe fast on the eve of 'Mahashivaratri' specially more women than men. But now it is becoming very less among women.
Mosobha, the Hindu deity, was worshipped by Holeyas. It installed in the field to guard and yield more crops. They use to sacrifice the goat to Mosobha but now a days nobody observes it.

Holeyas are not free of the influence of Muslim religion. They do worship Muslim gods like Ismail Khadri, Ladlesab etc. The beliefs in them also is becoming very less among the Holeyas.

The Holeyas have given up many superstitions, beliefs and taboos, observed during the period of pregnancy like boundary crossing, entering marriage pendal, avoiding eclipses crossing of water where the dead body is washed, pregnant daughter of pregnant daughter-in-law should not be in the same house. Then after birth taboos, mansturation, and the marriage taboos are declining comparatively. Most of delivery would take place in Government Hospitals. After three children they are also undergoing family planning. The Hospital is not a suitable place to observe superstitions and taboos. So due to city contact gradually their attachment to superstitions has come down.

Their faith on ghosts evil eyes and black magic have become weak.

There were many superstitions prevalent among the Holeya community which are not seen at present e.g.,
wearing the turban in marriage was a compulsion but now the custom of using turban is out of date. Crossing of the cat gazing, own crossing, empty pot or basket and spade, were considered as bad omen.

Relative isolation from the outside world was responsible for the persistence of traditional beliefs in earlier time. Of late, however, the impact of various agencies of change and the introduction of new ideas had led to a noticeable differences in the traditional attitudes, religious beliefs, ritual practices and festivals of the Holeya community in Bidar district.
REFERENCES


