CHAPTER VI

The Puberty Ritual And Socialization Process of Veddas

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THE PUBERTY RITUAL AND SOCIALIZATION PROCESS OF VEDDAS

6.1 Adolescence

Adolescence is an era in the historical sense. A dictionary defines “era” as “a period extending from an epoch and characterized especially by a new order of things”. Here the epoch, defined as “the starting point of a new period, especially as marked by striking events”, is puberty, marked by striking biological events that signal the initiation of the sequence of biochemical, physiological, and physical transformations of child into adult (Eichorn 1972: 84).

The term “adolescence” is derived from adolescens, the present participle of adolescence, to grow up or to grow from childhood to maturity (Eichorn 1972: 85).

Adolescence usually occurs between the ages of 11-18 or 19 years in the case of both males and females. The age of attainment may vary in a child in relation to his or her physical growth, food consumption, climate conditions and the influence of heredity.

A number of changes both external and internal take place in a child when he or she is on the verge of attaining adolescence. Physical and mental changes are brought about by the hormones produced in the reproductive glands. Adolescence begins as a result of the sensitive state that gradually keeps on developing within the genitals because of the action of these hormones. The chief reproductive organs of the female is known as the ‘ovaries’ while that of the male is known as the ‘testicals’. With the development of these two organs begins the production of ovum, sperm and hormones. Through this process, the growth of the features of the sexual organs and that of the secondary sexual features and their maturity begins to take shape, and thus occurs the initial menstruation rhythm where females are concerned, and the seminal emission process where males are concerned (Hadfield 1951: 171 - 172).
According to Ford and Beach (1951: 171-172) the physiological changes and development during puberty can be concluded thus. "Adolescence is the period extending from puberty to the attainment of full reproductive maturity. Different parts of the reproductive system reach their maximal efficiency at different stages in the life cycle; and, strictly speaking, adolescence is not completed until all the structures and processes necessary to fertilization, conception, gestation and lactation have become mature."

For many thousands of years man has been aware of certain adolescent phenomena and of variations in human behavior with age. Aristotle, however, is usually cited as the first source of detailed records of adolescent development. He also described the physiological and psychological characterization of adolescence (See Eichorn 1972: 85).

Subsequently, G. Stanley Hall (1890-1924) in the late 19th and beginning of 20th centuries presented his treatise on adolescence. Hall’s text (1904) on adolescence actually appeared first, and with its publication the psychology of adolescence may be said to have entered adulthood. Furthermore, epitomized in the title---Adolescence: Its Psychology and its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education---are the multidisciplinary affinities that continue to characterize the psychology of adolescence (Eichorn 1972: 84).

Hall explains psychological development on the basis of his ‘theory of recapitulation.’ The essence of recapitulation theory was influenced by Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution. According to Hall’s recapitulation theory every individual during his development passes through stages which stimulate and correspond to the developmental stages of human evolution, from early animal like primitivism through an era of savagery, to civilized life characterized by maturity. Hall thus divided human development into different stages: ‘infancy’ recapitulates animal like primitive stages ‘childhood’ is the second phase of human development followed by the stage termed ‘youth.’ After this stage we have the ‘adolescent’ phase and finally the adult who recapitulates civilization corresponding to maturity. Hall conceptualizes adolescence as a period marked by great ‘storm and stress.’ This period recapitulates the period of human evolution which is marked by turbulence (Hall, quoted in Grinder 1970; Eichorn 1972).
According to Grinder (1970), the major drawbacks of Hall’s theory can be pointed out as thus: 1) Hall ignores the influence of culture and overemphasizes the role of physiological functions in human development. 2) Hall views adolescence as a period of intense ‘storm and stress’ arising from instinctual upheavals and 3) Hall considered adolescent growth as saltatory i.e. sudden and abrupt rather than as continuous and gradual.

A year after Hall’s ‘adolescence’ appeared, Freud published his first essay on adolescence in 1905. Freud described in broad outlines the phases of psycho-sexual development in the Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, and offered the first psycho-analytic concept of puberty: he applied the genetic principle to the period of puberty. As early as 1898, Freud has already stated that it is erroneous to suppose that the child’s sexual life begins with the onset of puberty.

Psycho-analysis has always spoken of two prominent periods in the development of sexuality, namely, early childhood and puberty. Both phases emerge under the tutelage of physiological functions, such as nursing in infancy and genital maturation in puberty. Instinctual drives at the dawn of life enlist the perceptomotor apparatus for the reduction of tension. Consequently the child soon becomes inextricably interwoven with his environment, on which need gratification depends. The long duration of the child’s dependency is what makes man human. In this process the development of memory, causality, conscience, and fantasy make thinking and conflict possible. Thus abundant alternative solutions to the pressures of instinctual drives make their appearance. The variability of the object of instinctual drives has always been described by psycho-analysis as almost infinite, while the aim has a far greater constancy (Freud, quoted in Blos 1962:3).

But Freud’s libidinal genetic model places less emphasis on adolescence as a formative period than does Hall’s phylogenetic theory. Nevertheless, resolution of the psycho-sexual conflicts of adolescence, the last phase of the genital stage, are necessary for complete, healthy adult functioning. Puberty reactivates and intensifies both genital and pregenital impulses. If genital maturity is to be achieved, the individual must free himself of the heterosexual attachments appropriate to early stages and the homosexual attachments of latency and early pubescence. Altruistic relationships to the love object must substantially replace narcissism Freud saw the source of adolescent rebellion. In the need for the adolescent to become emotionally independent of his parents. Emotional instability,
anxiety, moodiness, and aggressiveness stem from feelings of inadequacy to meet the conflicting demands of powerful motivational forces and the societal restrictions on their expression that by this time have been quite well internalized. To Freud belongs the credit for germinating two concepts that currently enjoy widespread, nonpartisan popularity. The first is the effect of bodily changes on the self-image, both through self-perception and the influence of social interactions. The second is the developmental task, foreshadowed in libidinal forces and attachments to be overcome. Stemming also from Freud is the substitution of the principle of the coexistence and integration of phases for a simple succession of stages (Freud, quoted in Eichorn 1972: 87-88; See also Freud’s Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality Vol. 7 1953: 123, 245).

Moreover, Freud provides an important perspective on adolescence based on his theory of personality development. As earlier mentioned sexuality is the frame of reference for Freud’s theory and also on the development of human personality. Freud realized the importance of childhood in the psycho sexual development which is characterised by infantile sexuality and the transformations of puberty.

But Freud’s theory on psycho-analysis has been severely criticized by many feminists. According to Walsh (1987: 19), it is correct to say that no theorist has been the target of more feminist criticism than Sigmond Freud. For example, Hannah Lerman (1987: 39-56) says, Freudian psycho-analytic theory fails to meet the prerequisites for a feminist theory of personality. Further she states, that she has not found any more current perspective from within the psycho-analytic establishment neither the work of current women’s issues theorists nor that of the ego psychological and object relations theorists that significantly improves upon the original Freudian formulations in terms of the criteria by which we are judging theoretical view points. Shahal Chehrazi (1987: 22) notes, Freud himself also repeatedly stated that this ideas regarding female psychology were incomplete and required further investigation.

Though most of the scholars accepted Freud’s theory as a significant contribution. For instance, according to Juliet Mitchell (1947), the psycho-analytical theory of Freud’s has been distorted by many feminist critics (Archer & Lloyed 1985: 105). Fritjof Capra (1988: 178) notes in his famous book titled, The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture, Freud’s contribution was truely extraordinary, considering the state of psychiatry in his time. For over thirty years he sustained a continuous flow of creativity that
culminated in several momentous discoveries, any one of which would be admirable as a product of an entire lifetime.

In extending ego psychology, Anna Freud (1936) also gave more attention and importance to adolescence. At least with respect to this period, she used a stage framework already established (and still prevalent) among non Freudian European developmental psychologists. This sequence consists of three major stages, each subdivided into three phases. The first phase of the last two stages is marked by negativism and a "loosening" and instability of psychic organization. Thus, prepubescence become the time of greatest emotional upheaval; at puberty the turmoil subsides. Anna Freud attributed the prepuberal disturbance to a rise in diffuse libidinal energy. Alleviation results from the focusing of impulses and the utilization of two defense mechanisms particularly characteristic of adolescense-asceticism and intellectualization (Freud, quoted in Eichorn 1972: 88-89; see also Freud 1969).

Constructing an identity, first recognized by psycho-analyst Erik Erikson (1950, 1968) as the major personality achievement of adolescence and as a critical step toward becoming a productive, happy adult. Constructing an identity involves defining 'who you are', 'what you value', and 'the directions you choose to pursue in life.' This search for self is the driving force behind many new commitments to a sexual orientation, to a vocation, and to ethical, political, religious, and cultural ideals.

Erikson regarded successful psychosocial outcomes in infancy and childhood as paving the way toward a positive identity formation. According to Erikson there are eight stages of human development, the first four occur during infancy and childhood, the fifth stage during adolescence and, the last three stages during adulthood, extending up to old age. Adolescence is the fifth stage in the development of personality, it is marked by 'identity Vs identity confusion'. During adolescence the individual begins to sense a feeling of 'identity' reflected in his or her perception of uniqueness as an individual as well as a member of the society. During 'adolescence' the individual becomes conscious of his or her individual characteristics, this is 'identity formation' and it is dependent on the 'ego' in its conscious and unconscious elements. During this stage of 'identity formation' in an adolescent, because of the difficult or critical nature of transition from childhood to adulthood, there is bound to be an element of confusion. Identity confusion results from a lack of synchronization between individual's identity and the social expectations to which
the individual is subjected. This state of 'identity confusion' can cause feelings of isolation, anxiety and indecisiveness, the individual may hence feel that he is regressing rather than progressing, the individuals behaviour is inconsistent and unpredictable during this chaotic state. The term 'identity crisis' refers to the necessity to resolve the transitory failure to form a stable identity formation "meets its crisis in adolescence" (Erikson 1965:13). In an 'identity crisis' the individual faces an increasing irreversibility of his or her choices, he/she may feel the society is forcing him/her to take decisions. This is seen by the individual as an inescapable turning points for better or for worse. Better here means successful socialization for stable identity formation, worse refers to a prolonged identity confusion (Erikson 1968:160).

Although current theorists agree with Erikson that questioning of the self's values, plans, and priorities is necessary for a mature identity, they no longer refer to this process as a 'crisis'. The term suggests a sudden, intense upheaval of the self. For some young people, identity development is traumatic and disturbing, but for most it is not. Exploration better describes the typical adolescent's experience. Identity formation usually proceeds in a very gradual, uneventful way (Erikson, quoted in Berk 1996:448).

Also, Erikson described the negative outcome of the adolescent period as identity diffusion. Some young people appear shallow and directionless, either because earlier conflicts have been resolved negatively or society restricts their choices to ones that do not match their abilities and desires (Erikson, quoted in Berk 1996:448).

Accordingly Erickson's theory on adolescence can be summarized thus. Erikson first recognized identity --- the formation of a coherent set of values and life plans as the major personality achievement of adolescence. Four staturess of identity describe the degree of progress an adolescent has made towards forming a mature identity. Identity achievement and moratorium are adaptive statuses associated with positive personality characteristics. Teenagers in a long-term state of identity foreclosure of diffusion tend to have adjustment difficulties (Erikson, quoted in Berk 1996:452).

Piaget distinguishes three major periods, each with a number of subdivisions, beginning with the infant's undifferentiated world of reflexes and terminating, during adolescence, in a formal, logical system of combinatorial operations. Piaget has discussed the relationship between cognitive and affective development. The latter is parallel to
interdependent with, cognitive organization, another perspective on the same structural
system. In particular, it pointed out that the intellectual transformations of adolescence
imply concomitant social transformations and a complete reorganization of the personality
(Erikson, quoted in Eichorn 1972 : 90).

Piaget also remarks that, neither the cognitive nor affective changes of adolescence
are related to puberty. Neural maturation and experience underlie the former. The latter is
initiated when the child begins to assume adult roles; thus adolescence is defined as a social
transition. Instead of accepting adults as superior and dominant, the adolescent sees them as
equals and sees the adult world as one he may enter and change. Whenever a new cognitive
structure is evolving, thought is egocentric, i.e., subjective and undifferentiated. The
adolescent tries as much to adapt the world to himself as the converse. His self-assertion,
plans to reform society, and imitation of heroes do not include an understanding of the views
of others. He fails to recognize that some adult activities are not yet possible for him. Such
lack of differentiation necessarily produces conflicts and what appears to be deliberate
rebellion. Experience within the peer group and in an occupation brings about the
“decentering” prerequisite to objectivity and multiple perspective (Piaget, quoted in Eichorn

Sudhir Kakar applies psycho-analysis to Indian culture by looking at Hindu infancy,
childhood and adulthood in order to show how these are shaped within a specific cultural
context. In his book titled, The Inner world: A Psycho-Analytic Study of Childhood and
Society in India (1996), kakar explains the emergence of the psychological themes out of
the interplay between universal processes of human development and the Indian cultural
milieu. For karkar (1996 : 2), identity has other connotations, perspectives which extend
beyond the individual and the social to include the historical and the culture. Also
considering the psychology of Erik H. Erikson, Kakar (1993 : 2-12) has shown the
traditional Hindu view and the stages of life and Ashramadharma. Here he says, both
schemes see human development in terms of stages of life, each of which contributes a
specific strength, with the strengths (and the stages) integrated into a functional whole, the
object of which is self-realization and transcendence. In both theories, the individual at any
stage of life is not viewed in isolation, but in interaction with the sequence of generations
and in shared mutuality.
In fact, as Kakar has shown ‘Adolescence’ however, is a category of a socio-cultural construct, and as such is socio-cultural specific. Adolescence has to be located in the socio-cultural environment hence, in cultural anthropology and cross-cultural researches also had a major impact on this universal phenomenon.

Late in the 1920s, Malinowski, Benedict, Margaret Mead and others set out in a more systematic fashion to bring anthropological methods to bear on culture and personality development during adolescence. Their data forcefully challenged the assumptions of universality explicit or implicit in recapitulation of Hall’s and Freudian theory.

The first researcher to point out the wide variability in adolescent adjustment and the contribution of social and cultural factors to it was anthropologist Margaret Mead (1901-1978). In 1926, she traveled to the Pacific Island of Samoa, returning a short time later with a starting conclusion: Samoan adolescence was free of all the characteristics that made it hazardous for young people and dreaded by adults in complex societies. Because of the culture’s relaxed social relationships and openness toward sexuality, adolescence, Mead (1928:308) reported, “is perhaps the pleasantest time the Samoan girl (or boy) will ever know”. Mead offered an alternative view - one in which the social environment was judged to be entirely responsible for the range of teenage experiences, from erratic and agitated to calm and stress-free.

But later researchers, who looked more closely at Samoan society, found that adolescence was not as smooth and untroubled as Mead made it out to be. Derek Freeman’s (1983) Critique of Margaret Mead’s Coming of Age in Samoa has prompted one of the most heated debates in recent anthropological memory. Mead’s defenders have generally accepted the view that she saw Samoan as a romantic paradise. But later researchers argue that a careful reading of Coming of Age shows quite a different picture. In their re-analysis revealed, Mead’s work emerges as complex and somewhat enigmatic, with facile conclusions standing in contrast to much rich and sensitive ethnography. They highlighted what Mead actually said, pointing out the notable discrepancy between the popular perception and her actual account (see Freeman 1983; Feinberg 1988: 656 - 662).

However, Whiting and et.al (1986) consider, still, Margaret Mead’s work had an enormous impact. According to them, today we know that adolescence is neither biologically nor socially determined, but rather a product of the two. In line with Mead’s
observations, young people growing up in 'simpler' societies generally experience a shorter and smoother transition to adulthood (Berk 1996: 189).

But most of the time, adolescence is not absent. A study of 189 tribal and village cultures revealed that almost all had an intervening phase, however brief, between childhood and full assumption of adult roles (Berk 1996: 190). Moreover cross-cultural research reveals that exposure to sex, education about it, and efforts to restrict the sexual curiosity of children and adolescents vary widely around the world.

Finally, the above mentioned perspectives and studies in psychology and anthropology reveal us that the 'adolescence' is a human construct which can be considered as a physiological, psychological and sociological episode in life.

6.2 Socialization

In psychology and the social sciences, the term socialization describes the acquisition of culturally appropriate behaviour, attitudes, and values. Socialization can be studied at a variety of levels. It can take the form of studying the values and attributes that are widespread in society --- in other words, the stereotypes and social representations available for transmission to succeeding generations (Archer and Lloyd 1985: 257-258). In fact socialization, at any age, is a twofold process that must be viewed from the vantage of the group as well as the individual. For the group, socialization is a mechanism through which new members learn the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, and the interpersonal and other skills that facilitate role performance and further group goals. From the perspective of the individual, socialization is a process of learning to participate in social life. Any structure of social interaction requires minimally stable and predictable behaviours on the part of all participants that must be learned initially or developed over time. The process does not include all changes in personality and behaviour that may occur in response to biological change and decline or to personal idiosyncratic experiences, but only to the learning that is relevant to social behaviour and or role enactment (Mortimer and Simmons 1978: 422).

Many psychologists, sociologists and cultural anthropologists draw their attention to the process of socialization of individual's. Therefore there are different approaches as well as various aspects to a particular approach to this area of study. Almost all of them have
distinguished two stages of socialization namely primary and secondary socialization. Since the present study is on puberty ritual and socialization of Veddas, I will mainly concentrate on the secondary socialization while giving only a brief account on the primary socialization.

I have already mentioned earlier about Peter L. Berger’s theory about how culture in its totality is constructed and maintained by the dialectical interplay between individual and the socio-cultural world. This dialectic is summarized by the interaction of what Berger calls, three simultaneous moments in a continuing dialectical process: externalization, objectivation, and internalization. It is through externalization that society is a human product. It is through objectivation that society becomes a reality sui generis. It is through internalization that man is a product of society.

The larger dialectical process of externalization, objectivation and internalization is not a sequential but a simultaneous phenomena at the collective and the individual levels. Yet in the life of every individual there is temporal dimension in that at birth he or she is not a full participant of society but a potential one. The starting point for the individual is internalization -- the appropriation of the reality of culture into subjective consciousness. Through internalization, the individual becomes a member of society. The process through which internalization occurs is called socialization -- 'the induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it'. For a conceptualization of the process of socialization, Berger is careful to distance himself from Freudian or psychiatric models which implicitly or explicitly posit a normative conception of reality and of the self. He follows closely the intellectual cues offered by G. H. Mead and Cooley and the symbolic interactionist school of social-psychology. In their book, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* Berger and Luckman (1976 ed: 130) describe this process.

a. Primary Socialization

Primary socialization is the first and most important socialization an individual undergoes and it is in this process that he becomes a member of society. The child learns to take on the roles and the attitudes of significant others. Gradually he is able to abstract the roles and attitudes of concrete significant others to a generalized other, society. This process is largely concurrent with the internalization of language. Language is the principal means.
by which an individual becomes a member of a social world and through which the world becomes and continues to be plausible. What Berger and Luckman highlight in all of this is the fact that in the same process whereby the individual takes on the roles and attitudes of others, he or she also takes on their world. Identity as an objective location in a certain world can be subjectively appropriated along with that world. Society, identity, and reality in general are all solidified in consciousness in the same process of internalization / socialization. Berger notes what is usually absent from most symbolic interactionist writings, namely that socialization and the process of identity formation always take place in the context of a specific structure. Inasmuch as roles mediates the knowledge and meanings of specific institutional configurations to the individual, the substance of identity will therefore reflect the social structural conditions from which it emerges. Though Berger does not develop this line of thought at length, he does point to the way in which class, racial and ethnic peculiarities, gender, and so on, play a critical role in the shape and substance of individual identity (Withnow and et al 1984 : 44 ; and see also Berger and Luckman 1976 ed : 150 - 157).

It is at once evident that primary socialization is usually the most important one for an individual, and that the basic structure of all secondary socialization has to resemble that of primary socialization. Every individual is born into an objective social structure within which he encounters the significant others who are in charge of his socialization. These significant others are imposed upon him. There definitions of his situation are posited for him as objective reality. He is thus born into not only an objective social structure but also an objective social world (Berger and Luckman 1976 ed : 151).

Berger notes what is usually absent from most symbolic interactionist writings, namely that socialization and the process of identity formation always take place in the context of a specific social structure. In as much as roles mediate the knowledge and meanings of specific institutional configurations to the individual, the substance of identity will reflect the social structural conditions from which it emerges. Though Berger does not develop this line of thought at length, he does point to the way in which social class, racial and ethnic peculiarities, genders, and so on, play a critical role in the shape and substance of individual identity. Social structure also is a factor in the relative 'success' of the socialization process --- success only defined in terms of the relative symmetry between objective and subjective reality (Berger and Luckman 1976 : 150 - 157).
Next Berger states, that, it should hardly be necessary to add that primary socialization involves more than purely cognitive learning. It takes place under circumstances that are highly charged emotionally. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that without such emotional attachment to the significant others the learning process would be difficult if not impossible. The child identifies with the significant others in a variety of emotional ways. Whatever they may be, internalization occurs only as identification occurs. The child takes on the significant others’ roles and attitudes, that is internalizes them and makes them his own. And by this identification with significant others the child becomes capable of identifying himself, of acquiring a subjectively coherent and plausible identity (Berger and Luckman 1976: 151 - 152).

Indeed, identity is objectively defined as location in a certain world and can be subjectively appropriated only with that world. Put differently, all identification take place within horizons that imply a specific social world. The child learns that he is what he is called. Every name implies nomenclature, which in turn implies a designated social location. To be given an identity involves being assigned a specific place in the world. As this identity is subjectively appropriated by the child, so is the world to which this identity points. Subjective appropriation of identity and subjective appropriation of the social world are merely different aspects of the same process of internalization, mediated by the same significant others. And also the primary socialization creates in the child’s consciousness a progressive abstraction from the roles and attitude of specific others to roles and attitudes in general (Berger and Luckman 1976: 152).

The formation within consciousness of the generalized other marks a decisive phase in socialization. It implies the internalization of society as such and of the objective reality established therein, and, at the same time, the subjective establishment of a coherent and continuous identity. Society, identity and reality are subjectively crystallized in the same process of internalization. This crystallization is concurrent with the internalization of language. Indeed, for reasons evident from the foregoing observations on language, language constitutes both the most important content and the most important instrument of socialization (Berger and Luckman 1976: 153).

While explaining how the objective reality can readily be translated into subjective reality, and vice versa, Berger points out, that no individual internalizes the totality of what is objectivated as reality in his society, not even if the society and its world are relatively
simple ones. Further he says, in primary socialization there is no problem of identification. There is no choice of significant others. Society presents the candidate for socialization with a predefined set of significant others, whom he must accept as such with no possibility of opting for another arrangement. Since the child has no choice in the selection of his significant others, his identification with them is quasi-automatic. For the same reason, his internalization of their particular reality is quasi-inevitable. The child does not internalize the world of his significant others as one of many possible worlds. Therefore Berger remarks, it is for this reason that the world internalized in primary socialization is so much more firmly entrenched in consciousness than worlds internalized in secondary socializations (Berger and Lukman 1976: 155-156).

Thus Berger and Luckman explain how in primary socialization then the individual’s first world is constructed. In their own words Berger and Luckman (1976: 157) conclude as follows:

Socialization is never total and never finished. This presents us with two further problems: First, how the reality internalized in primary socialization is maintained in consciousness, and second, how further internalizations—or secondary socializations in the later biography of the individual—take place.

b. Secondary Socialization

According to Berger and Luckmann secondary socialization is the internalization of institutional or institutional-based ‘sub-worlds’. Its extent and character are therefore determined by the complexity of the division of labour and the concomitant social distribution of knowledge. Then Berger further explains, of course, generally relevant knowledge, too, may basically distributed—i.e., distributed in the form of class-based ‘versions’—but what we have in mind here is the social distribution of ‘special knowledge’—knowledge that arises as a result of the division of labour and whose ‘carriers’ are institutionally defined. Forgetting for a moment its other dimensions, we may say that secondary socialization is the acquisition of role-specific knowledge, the roles being directly or indirectly rooted in the division of labour (Berger and Luckman 1976 ed: 158).

Secondary socialization requires the acquisition of role-specific vocabularies, which means, for one thing, the internalization of semantic fields structuring routine interpretations and conduct within an institutional area. At the same time ‘tacit understandings’ evaluations
and affective colorations of these semantic fields are also acquired. The ‘sub - worlds’ internalized in secondary socialization are generally partial realities in contrast to the base-world acquired in primary socialization. Yet they, too, are more or less cohesive realities, characterized by normative and affective as well as cognitive components (Berger and Luckman 1976: 158).

In fact, the theoretical approaches to the adult socialization process are quite diverse. Since the socialization accomplished in childhood is clearly insufficient for adulthood, scholars have drawn their attention to this field of study.

In contemporary role theory (Merton 1957; Brim 1966; Turner 1974), socialization is seen as a process of acquisition of appropriate norms, attitudes, self-images, values, and role behaviours that enable acceptance in the group and effective performance of new roles (Mortimer and Simmons 1978: 429).

Another conceptualization, which we call “generalization theory” (Seeman 1967; Kohn 1969; Schoeller 1972; Inkeles and Smith 1974; Kanter 1977) hypothesizes that the socialization of attitudes, values and ways of thinking is abstracted and generalized from the modes of successful adaptation to daily life pressures and situations (Mortimer and Simmons 1978: 429).

In symbolic interactionism, socializees constantly create new meanings, develop their own understandings and definitions of the situation, and structure ambiguous social settings to meet their goals and solve common problems (Cottrell and Geer, quoted in Mortimer and Simmons 1978: 430).

The above mentioned approaches also explain, how the individual is shaped to the new roles and is adapted to the important life situations by the process of socialization.

Coming back to Berger, we can see how the rudiments of legitimatary apparatus are often accompanied by ritual and material symbols. For example by considering the difference between foot soldiers and cavalry he explains the procedures involved in the initiation of a horsemen by ceremonies, material symbols and fetishism (See Berger and Luckman 1976: 158-159). Thus there is a great deal of socio - historical variability in the representations involved in secondary socialization. Then Beger says, in most societies,
however, some rituals accompany the transition from primary to secondary socialization (Berger and Luckman 1976: 159).

The reality accent of knowledge internalized in primary socialization is given quasi-automatically. In secondary socialization it must be reinforced by specific pedagogic techniques ‘brought home’ to the individual. The degree and precise character of these pedagogic techniques will vary with the motivations the individual has for the acquisition of the new knowledge (Berger and Luckman 1976: 163). Indeed, the puberty ceremony also can be identified as a similar kind of pedagogic technique which socializes and presents new knowledge to the individual by the rituals and symbols.

The more these techniques make subjectively plausible a continuity between the original and the new elements of knowledge, the more readily they acquire the accent of reality. The facts that the processes of secondary socialization do not presuppose a high degree of identification and its contents do not possess the quality of inevitability, can be pragmatically useful because they permit learning sequences that are rational and emotionally controlled. But because the contents of this type of internalization have a brittle and unreliable subjective reality compared to the internalization’s of primary socialization, in some cases special techniques must be developed to produce whatever identification and inevitability are deemed necessary (Berger and Luckman 1976: 163-164). That’s why Berger remarks, that the primary socialization is more effective and long lasting than the secondary socialization. And also says, in secondary socialization the present is interpreted so as to stand in a continuous relationship with the primary socialization.

Berger and Luckman’s approach on socialization can be summarized thus. Society is a human product. Reality is a social construction. Socialization implies the possibility that subjective reality can be transformed. To be in society already entails an ongoing process of modification of subjective reality. Modifications take place through institutions, conversion to new religion, pedagogic techniques such as rituals, ceremonies, fetishism and so on. Transformations occur through modifications. Therefore, transformation involves a discussion of different degrees of modification. By near-total transformation the individual ‘switches worlds.’ Since subjective reality is never totally socialized, it cannot be totally transformed by social process.
6.3 The Puberty Ritual And Socialization Process of Veddas

We have so far taken into consideration the customs etc., which are followed when a Vedda girl attains age and the various attitudes held by the Sinhalese and other tribal societies spread all over the world in relation to the custom of puberty. Thus, we were able to observe a number of varying similarities and dissimilarities in the conducting of customs among communities in pertinence to the attainment of puberty.

The physical characteristics that emerge as a result of the inter-mixture of similar races are inborn traits. Yet, rather unfamiliar characteristics that emerge forth as a consequence of an inter-mixture of cultures are not inborn in those societies unlike the aforementioned complex physical characteristics. The culture is bestowed upon them just as much as one begets a child or some property inherited by one's parents. A child begotten, inherits the culture akin to his or her race by the society itself. In other words, certain matters he or she assimilates and undergoes training from the parents. Certain other facts are learned from the society and from the school environment (Wickremasinghe 1947: 22).

It is possible for us to get an understanding of the anthropological significance of this custom which has been in operation among the Vedda society for a long period of time and how it has been utilised in the process of the socialization of a female child. Through this we could get a glimpse of the outstanding features of the Vedda culture and the existence of the human species.

We have already mentioned that this community practises the custom of guiding and informing a girl nearing her period of attainment of age, well in advance. In this manner the elders are successful in instilling an understanding about this biological phenomenon within the girl. In certain instances, whatever understanding a child possesses about the biological aspect of this phenomenon, the first menses and the experience of the emission of blood associated with a certain amount of shock in them. The extent of this shock in the main depends on the mental state of the individual. If the sexual development were to take place at a stage when the child's mental capacities had still not developed, the child is not in a position to understand properly the 'change' that so took place. Therefore, the responsibility of educating the female adolescent about this sexual growth rests on her mother, inclusive of other elders. It is the female child who has to undergo this trauma more than the male.

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child. In this connection, while the first menses happens to be the instance which creates such a terror, cases where the child had gone to the extent of committing suicide or losing the mental equilibrium as a consequence of this mental shock has been recorded from time to time.

Helen Deutsch (1946: 123) describes an incident in the following manner of a 15 year old girl who jumped into the river Seine by attempting to commit suicide as recalled by Havelock Ellis recorded from a news item appearing in a French newspaper. This girl was then rescued and presented to the police chief. At this point, what the girl explained was that she was suffering from an unidentifiable disease which made her lose interest in living further. On examination, of course, it was revealed that this ‘unidentifiable disease’ was nothing other than the menstrual discharge which is common to all females at the time of their puberty.

Further, a girl 14 years of age, on the second day of her first menstruation began to suffer from terrible mental anguish. When she was escorted to the Vienna Psychiatric clinic, she went in laughing and dancing. While her cheeks were full of rough, her hair was dishevelled. She began to raise her skirt and utter obscene words. The word ‘Politik’ was constantly on her lips. When she was found suitable for clinical treatment, it was revealed that this word meant nothing other than the coining of the two words ‘Polizei’ and ‘Dick’ (meaning, to bloat or get fat). While this word ‘Polizei’ was a term that brought fear to prostitutes in her homeland of Austria, the term ‘Dick’ conveyed an interpretation which signified ‘conception’ (Deutsch 1946: 143).

What one could gather from this is that the phenomenon of attaining age, when not properly understood as a normal biological process, to what extent it could go in creating so much of an unbalanced mental reaction in a young girl. If even girls who have the opportunity of facing experiences in a society which could be called complex undergoes such mental aberrations, the possibility of girls living in a ‘simple’ society devoid of such experiences and which affords only a minor social interaction is indeed immense. Since the Vedda elders guide their females youngsters about puberty well in advance prevents such a shock in the minds of the girls, it is also a vital point of importance in the case of adolescent socialization to make the girl understand that this phenomenon is nothing but the result of a natural process.
The moment it is revealed that a girl in the Vedda society has attained age, the preliminary custom that is performed is to take her under a milking-tree and attend to the procedure of dispelling negative influences to which she may be subjected to. It is a message that gives a suggestion to the girl about the dispelling of evil negativities that could afflict those such as her own parents, brothers and sisters, kindred, cross-cousins, sisters-in-law and brother-in-law. This procedure proclaims the importance of living without inflicting negative influences on her kith and kin. The dangers and calamities that could be fall a girl who has attained puberty are many. Subsequent to this psychical and biological phenomenon, obligation of living in a manner that harms no friends and kindred is drilled in.

During the custom of puberty is given to the cross-cousin sister and cross-cousin brother. Even here, a number of things are conveyed to the girl. From this point onwards, the girl is made to understand that the closest individuals in her life as well as those responsible are the two parties mentioned before. In this manner, while the two of them too become her guardians, it also reminds them of the responsibility of the cross-cousin relationship on behalf of the girl. The customs performed by the cross-cousin brother on the occasion of the puberty ritual, brings forward the opportunity of a marriage proposal in the form of her future partner for this young and tender girl. While such a message is conveyed to both the girl who has attained puberty as well as the cross-cousin brother, they are thus also protected from committing the folly of going in search of other partners for the same purpose, and in this way he inevitably assumes the protector's role on behalf of the girl until such time marriage is consumed between the two parties.

Attaining puberty or age is a rites of passage. This moment of opening of a new chapter in the life of a girl is nevertheless the turning-point of her life too. It is for this reason that the elders take a hand in the responsibility of socializing the girl in making her a sociably complete individual. A girl is subjected to socialization at her puberty through the process of making her an individual suitable to the social life she lives in. In order to achieve this target, the elders make use of customs and rituals in a realistic form.

Through the study of how the Kili Pela unrolled in the custom of puberty, we understand the manner in which this custom has been utilised to socialize a girl of that society to harmonise with such a society. In the past, the Kili Pela for an adolescent Vedda girl who attained age was erected in a solitary location about 20 or 30 feet away from the hut in which she lived. The Vedda community who led a life in the environs of the forest
inevitably had to live in darkness and solitude with wild animals. This development which
takes place in a physical form brought with it a mental tremor, and therefore the mental
environs has contributed towards making a fine structure in order to mould her future. It is
for this reason that the elders of that time from that point onwards provided the necessary
guidance to pluck up courage to live in this natural, yet rugged environment with the
responsibilities which she had to invariably bear in her existence by erecting the Killi Pela
some distance away from the original hut in which she lived. This was all the more
confirmed by the act that nobody kept companionship for her solitude within the Kili Pella;
thus leaving her all to herself. However, as time passed by, the forest where her ancestors
were born became a place alien to them. The jungles were cleared and streets began to
appear here and there. Equally so, since the wild beasts too began to diminish in number,
the frightening atmosphere of the jungle became less of a problem. In the meantime,
because of intermingling with the neighbouring Sinhalese community, they succumbed to
external influences in no time. In this manner, if the socio-economic existence in which
they so far lived and safeguarded were to vanish, what meaning is there in instituting a girl
on the old customs and thereby socializing her? As a consequence, they too, like the
Sinhalese, gradually began to construct the Kili Pella within the vicinity of their own hut.
As time went on, they took leave of it and began to leave the girl who attained puberty in a
place in the house reserved entirely for her.

Keeping the girl who attained puberty within a restricted period of time in solitude is
a popular custom. It has been noticed that this is a habit followed by both the Sinhalese and
the Veddas as well as by many societies around the world. The foremost purpose behind this
custom is the purpose of instilling the change and responsibility of the new life which was
bestowed on her as a result of her becoming an adolescent. This could be defined as a
practical strategy that is made use of to make her understand the transition that takes place
between the period of childhood and youth. The childhood girl who is full of rugged
behaviour in that age then is confined to a temporary solitary stage as a result of a certain
physical change that occurs within her. While she understands that through this process she
has been subjected to a certain change, she frees herself from this solitude by inheriting a
fresh identity, a status and many duties. It is observed how through this custom of confining
the girl into solitude through the custom of puberty, it has been successful in inevitably
instilling this sense of responsibility in the adolescent girl.
On the other hand, after this transformation that the girl naturally faces, a new sense of responsibility. Through the custom of bringing home the girl (introducing her to the society) after being temporarily isolated, emphasis is laid on this responsibility. This custom further helps immensely in reminding the parents and elders that a large role of fresh duties have to be carried out on behalf of the adolescent and that they should be aware of its responsibilities. At the same time, the entire society tends to look at the adolescent with a new attitude when she steps inside the home after spending some time in a solitary hut. Further, at that time, during menstrual periods when the flow of blood was in operation, unlike the present day there was no habit of using sanitary towels or loin cloths for that matter. These things may have come into practical vogue among tribal communities such as the Veddas only recently. Within a female’s lifetime (12 - 55 years) the event of menstruation takes place about five hundred times. As a result of this, in every instance when the menstrual cycle began to operate, she had to live a secluded and secret life away from social attachment. The first guidance given to this was by the custom of keeping the girl in solitude on the occasion of her puberty.

The taboos which are enforced at puberty such as not setting eyes on males, laughing or talking aloud were so enforced for the purpose of carrying across the message of this new transition deep into the girl’s thoughts as much as the aforementioned custom and thereby building up a character of modesty in her. From here onwards the manner in how the social relationships should be maintained is focussed upon. Since unnecessary intimate connections with the male folk after a girl’s puberty would bring about peril, the motive behind this custom is to make her understand about it and to create a sense of fear and shame within her mind. As such, this procedure speaks of the importance of keeping a distance from the opposite sex and further, a guidance for this purpose is given through this custom to her. This guidance instills a sense of self-control as well as a sense of modesty and decency. Since the only male who takes prominence in the custom of puberty is the cross-cousin brother, he is named by the society as the only male who is to get closer to the girl so far as the condition of the custom of puberty is concerned.

The Vedd folk now believe that in order to prevent the girl who attained age moving about in solitude, even when she is to go out to fetch firewood or water, she should be accompanied at least by a girl even much younger to her. This procedure is to operate for at least three months. This consideration obviously did not exit earlier, when the kili pela was constructed at distance. However, as the society began to get more and more complex.
they had to pay attention to the customs of the Sinhalese community for the purposes of socializing a girl who had attained puberty along with the change that took place within the social organization. Nevertheless, now it has come to a stage where they can no longer pin faith even on their own people. It is further noticed that the Vedda community no longer is prepared to offer group protection to a girl who has attained age. Due to this reason, the Vedda community inevitably had to adopt the attitudes of the Sinhalese community. On the other hand, during the past it was believed that demons cast their evil eye on a girl who attained age, which was based on a religious foundation. As the Vedda worshipped the demons, they believed that it was vital to keep them in harmony. However, now, more than the idea that demonic influences are a danger to them, one observes that a definition of social control is embedded in it. The Veddas too believe like the Sinhalese that demonic influences could affect the girl when she rests in solitude because of the threats that could befall her if she were to be left in such lonely circumstances. Why is it that the Kili Pela is now not erected far from the girl's lodging-place? During my field-research, on questioning a respondent about this point, what she revealed was that present-day boys unlike those of the past are not to be relied upon; and therefore it would be wise to either keep the girl within her own house itself or keep her in a location where she could be observed by the householders at a seeing distance. What we can assume from this is that, the necessity to safeguard her from demonic influences and the necessity to connect the ritualistic concept further is to protect the girl from social adversities, more than the religious beliefs. What is expected from this belief could be the idea of creating a social order through such a process and maintaining group solidarity.

On all instances when the menstruation cycles begins, subsequent to the initial menses at puberty, the Vedda woman is expected to spend her time in a Kili Pela constructed outside her lodging-place. Even here it is noted that they have made use of a religious belief. Since the 'devil box' within the lodging-place could be subjected to pollution, they say that it is required to spend the time inside a hut during the menstrual period in this manner. The exercise thus performed at the first menstruation by spending time in solitude is further extended right through the lifetime. As quoted once, the use of the loin cloth during the menstrual flow came into effect only from recent times. It is for this reason that she had to spend her time in a secluded place all throughout the period when the menstrual flow was in operation. It was deemed inauspicious to attend to any cooking in the house during such a period since it was unclean where the woman was concerned. In order to conceal this fact from the male folk, her offspring and her brothers and sisters to spend
moment of introducing her to the society, and all the further customs followed after that point is thus well displayed to us.

6.4 Puberty Rituals and Socialization Among Various Societies

As individuals progress through the life cycle, there are dramatic changes in role expectations. Benedict (1938) has noted that some sequential age roles are sharply discontinuous; that is, there are contradictory expectations associated with earlier and later roles. For example, the child is socialized to be nonresponsible, submissive, and asexual; while the adult is expected to be responsible, dominant, and sexually active. To accomplish this transition, some socialization after childhood is necessary (Mortimer & Simmons 1978: 425).

Among nearly all tribal people (North and South American Indians, Australians, the New Guinea tribes, all Africans and etc.) various ceremonies often severe and painful are performed for the young girls and boys at the time of puberty to initiate them into adulthood. Writing on puberty rituals among various societies, I hope to show the continuity through the life cycle of the socialization process according to separate socio-cultural milieu.

a. The African Tribals

When an African Bushman girl begins her menstruation, she notifies it to her mother as well as the elderly women in her village (Silberbauer 1963: 12-24). At this moment she is left in solitude in a hut, not sheltered by branches overhead. The husband (in these communities child marriages are a common feature) of the girl leaves the hut in which they live, and goes to a tree found somewhere towards the centre of the village area, and joins the company of other unmarried males.

Early morning on the fifth day, while helpers of the group flock around the girls hut, they escort the husband of the girl too with them. The only male present in all subsequent rituals is the husband. Initially, the root of a Beefa plant is broken up into small pieces, and is stuck strongly towards the end, and between a slit, strip of wood which has been placed between the two soles of the feet of some female. The helpers then take portions of this plant resembling a build of radish and wash the couple clean, and subsequently shave the heads of the two simultaneously, as is found suitable. According to the belief of the
Bushman, if they were to come in contact with menstrual blood, it would be as if the beasts in hell were let loose and that the person would be destroyed in a most horrible manner. Under such circumstances, the hut in which the girl stayed, is isolated, and is never to be used for any purpose after that. Shavings of the Beefa plant and particles of the hair are deposited and left in this hut.

Once the Beefa shaving is done, tattooing takes place. While the women use a blade to pinch the couple with the thumb and index finger, they go on to make one slit which is sufficient enough to make the blood to ooze forth. While the husband and wife are marked alternatively, it is so carried out from head to toe. The blood oozing forth from each of those cuts is then taken and rubbed against the corresponding cut on the other partner. As a result of this blood-mixture, the blood from such an action is considered as the man and woman combining symbolically as a couple. And it is not only a powerful symbolic feature, it is also regarded as a ritualistic procedure by the Bushmen. Once the custom is over, the couple is considered as two individual, united and compatible to each other. The ash and roots of the herbal plants used during the rituals are rubbed against the cuts on the skin. While the influence of the blood mixed with the ash is strong, it goes to establish the prosperity and happiness of both partners.

The aforementioned tattooing process concludes with the cuts being made on the back of the body. During this period, the elders engage in giving advice to the girl. Once the ceremony is celebrated, with great rejoicing, the husband leaves with his wife to their hut. Here, their bodies are painted in befitting colours, and harmonious to each other, with a combination of a red dye, and oil obtained from the earth. While the purpose of this is to display the beauty of the painting itself, the nature of the designs depend on the preference resting within the females during the process of painting. Subsequent to this act, the girl is called back to her house and handed over to her father. In the instance of marriage, the couple lives with the parents of the wife. Finally, the rest of members of the group adorn the couple with various ornaments.

Female circumcision is common among many African tribals. Aidid and Ruhela (1994: 203 - 207) state 135 years ago that Sir Richard Burton had recorded in his book titled: First Footsteps in East Africa such as Somalis, Abysinians, Nubians and Galla tribal women had to undergo rigorous circumcision during their attainment of puberty. The two authors remark these customs are still prevailing there.
Numerous customs are carried out among the Bemba of Zambia too in relation to the attainment of puberty. Audrey I Richards (1931) who carried out an extensive study in this respect has compiled a book entitled, *Chisungu: A Girls' Initiation Ceremony among the Bemba of Zambia*.

Among the Bantu (Bemba) community of Zambia, when a girl attains age, she notifies about this to a woman elder to her. Because of a cold climatic condition, once information of puberty comes to be known, they take the girl to a conflagration. Among the customs indulged in at such instances, certain differences are to be noticed. From among the ceremonies conducted on such an occasion the daring ceremony of *udsolwela* where some seeds are cooked by fire and the girl herself takes them and eats them before they become cold is performed. At another ritual, the girl is washed by some medicine prepared in a special pot, and the girl is expected to drink it. The minimum isolation period among the Bantus may be just one day. In certain instances, it may be more. During this period, the girl is given millet porridge several times, cooked by the lighting of a fresh fire. This custom of attainment of puberty is explained by Richards as the usual Bemba system of making a person uniting with one's folk after having passed through a strange or dangerous situation (Richards 1982 ed : 52 - 111).

Subsequent to this, the girl then awaits a suitable time to participate in the 'Chisungu' celebrations. This festival has been depicted as a process of offerings associated with matrimony. It is so considered because it is conducted prior to marriage. The girl's marriage partner is selected before the 'Chisungu' celebrations is held. This partner is expected to carry out a number of duties at the celebrations. It is he who is called upon to bear a part of the expenses incurred by the female holding this celebrations. What the Zambian tribal folk mainly expects from the 'Chisungu' ceremony is protection for the young people from mysterious calamities occurring at the first sexual intercourse in the marriage which takes place with attainment of puberty of the girl. While the bridegroom is granted permission to do this, whoever prevents him from this act is considered as someone polluting the 'Chisungu'.

As described by Audrey Richards, eighteen huts are erected away from each other in nearby bushes in order that the celebration be comfortably held. Over forty clay symbols are utilised for this purpose. The walls of the huts are painted with nine types of designs. One could witness a host of incidents packed with suspense during this when special
offerings are made. Since non-stop drumming accompanied with dancing continues day and night, the spectators invariably become wary. A woman known by the title of Nacimbusa, under whom the major part of the activities of the puberty celebration is conducted occupies a prominent place on this occasion. She should not only be a very elderly female in their society, but should also be a clever midwife, and in addition be, naturally, a member of their own tribes.

A selection of the collection of translated ‘Chisungu’ songs from those recorded on tape by Richards are given here. The first song sung when the girl is escorted to the ‘Chisungu’ hut is as follows:

Tuingle shyani ?
Tuigle mimpempe.
Nga bakolwe.

The translation goes as follows:

How are we going in?
We are going in as through a tunnel
into a dark place.
We are going in like monkeys (Richards 1982 : 187).

The word ‘Mimpempe’ is used in this song. It denotes the idea ‘shoots of grass’. What it signifies is that one enters a secret place through it. Its inside connotation is that the girl enters a secluded place, away from the external world. According to Richards, the term ‘monkeys’ here denotes symbolically that, these animals are clever at stealing on behalf of their flock. Since the author here does not state what those tribal members really mean by it, it has not been possible to delineate its proper sense.

In the morning hours of the final day of the Chisungu, the Lion Song is sung:

Ualele Chisungu.
Ualele nkalamo.

The translation is as follows:

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You have slept with the Chisungu child,
You have slept with the Lion (Richards 1982: 198-199)

It is perilous to sleep with a girl who has attained age. It is akin to a danger faced at the hands of a lion. It is the Lion Song that advises the young man that it is unsafe for him to sleep with the bride, devoid of any proper protective arrangement.

I have here chosen the song sung with pots on the head, from among Chisungu collection of songs depicted in Richard’s book.

A particular pot of clay with holes drilled into it is used in this connection. It also has a lid on it. A wicker has been lit in this clay pot. The girl is expected to stand balancing the pot of clay on her head. At this point, the group who is with her, sings the referred to song:

Ulekashye ntanda bushiku,
Ulantuka ukashika.

The translation is:

You gaze at the stars at night,
You revile me obscenely (Richards 1982 : 201 ).

As it is not appropriate to display in full, it is the female’s blood that is symbolically portrayed by the light emanating from the holes punctured in the pot of clay. The act of a man swearing upon the body of a menstruating wife being regarded the most contemptible act, goes to prove as to what extent these folk are frightened of a female’s blood.

Margaret Mead (1928, 1935) could be quoted as an anthropologist who has carried out comprehensive research on the customs of attainment of girls’ puberty in relation to many societies. As quoted by Mead (1960 ed : 73-74) the ceremonies performed at the first menstruation of girls among the Arapesh society in New Guinea takes place in the house of the girl’s husband. It should be noted here that it is child - marriages that occur in this society. The girls’ brothers or their close cousings (males) occupy pride of place at this event. They construct a strong ‘menstrual’ hut for her. The girl should maintain herself at this hut in a special way. She is expected to sit, placing her feet in front with the knees
lifted; and under no circumstances should she sit cross-legged. Her clothing too is removed. If the clothes are new, they are given to others. But, if old, they are cut into pieces, burned and destroyed. This is done not because the clothing is polluted, but in order to reverse the conditions associated with the girls' past.

Those attending to the girl are old women who are her own relatives, or relatives of her husband. They perform a special custom on his occasion. They apply nettles all over the girl's body, so that the nettles keep pricking her. A larger leaf of the nettles is then taken, and she is instructed to wrap it up in the form of a tube, after which she is to insert it into her own vagina. This is a guarantee for the enlargement and development of her breasts. On the third day, she is to come out from the hut, and stand leaning against a tree, while one of her mother's brothers tattoo various designs on her shoulders - blades and buttocks. This is however done in a tender manner, which is, that unlike the usual New Guinea system of applying soil or lime at least for the tattooing marks to last for the next tree or four years. During the said period, for those who are interested in finding out whether she is suitable for marriage, there are welcome to inspect these tattooed marks. Each day, women indulge in the process of applying nettles on the girls body.

Though they think that it would do good for the girl to fast during this period for four or five days, if these women who observe her very carefully notice that the girl happens to fall into a weak state, they then step her fasting from there onwards. Though fasting gives strength, since prolonging it could result in death; they hasten with the arrangements of activities related to rituals meant to be done at the onset of puberty. However, they believe that the sanitary processes taking place within the 'menstrual' hut render assistance to bear-up the pains occurring at the first sexual intercourse.

And also African tribals follow special customs in the instance of boys attaining age or puberty. Here the writer would like to mention certain boys' puberty rites practiced by some tribes in Africa.

For developing courage and endurance African tribals practice mutilation, circumcision, flagellation, tooth filing, tooth knocking, tattooing and so on. Among the Gisu of Uganda, male circumcision plays an even more central role in the establishment of tribal bonding and identity: indeed, it is circumcision which, they believe, identities them as a people quite distinct from their neighboring cultures. The Gisu refer to themselves as
“Basani”, men, while other groups, because of their failure to circumcise, are lumped together under the label of “Basinde” -- boys (Morris and Marsh 1988 : 35).

The Gisu circumcision ritual, known as ‘Imbalu’, reflects the cultural importance attached to the act. The young males, some as old as their early twenties, are required to show no fear and to remain perfectly still while the foreskin is cut away and flesh stripped from around the head of the penis. The initiate must be like the warrior who conquers his fear through the belief that he has the inner strengths and resources to succeed against his enemies (Morris and Marsh 1988 : 37).

In the case of initiation of a young tribal male in Sudan, the painful incisions around the forehead must be endured without signs of physical distress or pain. When the wounds heal, they will leave behind the characteristic scars that identify the individual as a full adult member of his tribe (Morris and Marsh 1988 : 36-37).

Among some African tribes the last joint of the little finger is chopped off during the attainment of puberty. The Nuer peoples of the Nile cut a deep scar across the forehead of the young initiates: marks of it are found even upon the skulls of the dead. Many African tribes practice scarification, again in elaborate patterns of aesthetic and social significance (Padmashri and Shashi 1994 : 60).

b. The Indian Community

Narendra Nath Bhattacharyya (1980 : 1) who has done the most studies on Indian puberty customs states that, they accept puberty as the rebirth of a person. According to their culture, this is regarded as the ‘Dvija’ or as is twice born.

When taken as a whole, a female with menstrual blood as considered by the Indian society is unclean and someone not suitable for any auspicious activity or religious work. But, it must be mentioned here that, one also finds a section of the Indian society believing that menstrual blood or “Swayambhu kusuma” or “Raktha kandana” as the best thing that could bring happiness to a Goddess. In such societies, instead of entertaining a fear over menstrual blood, it has been bestowed with a symbol of worship.
The ancient belief about fertility was that menstrual blood happens to be the causative factor for bringing about many results. The earth and the woman are identified as having some special association with each other in relation to fertility. It is this condition that has given birth to the commencement of sexual customs, agricultural activities and other practical aspects of life. What is signified by this is the fact that, both the function of the earth and that of the woman is the same. Therefore the factors while contribute towards woman's fertility is believed to create fertility in the earth too.

There are number of examples. As recorded in the publication Indian Antiquary, immense importance has been given to the menstruation of Parvathi in many parts of India. Before the Bhils tribe begin their sowing, a slab of stone is placed in the yard, and vermillion is applied on it. What is conveyed by this act is that the earth derives productive energy through it, and that Vermillion is akin to menstrual blood. As mentioned in the book Further Excavations at Mohenjodaro, small figures appearing in certain Egyptian locations, in the Maltese islands, Cyprus and the Danube have been painted in red. Robert Briffault has explained in many records the connection that exists between vermillion plus red metals obtained from the earth and the products of nature. It is with this motive in mind that, red coloured powders and liquids are seen applied on the body during Indian sacred festivals (Briffault, quoted in Bhattacharyya 1980 : 17).

At the same time we should not overlook the fact that, there are Indian communities that regard menstrual blood as an extremely polluting and dangerous element.

But Brahmanical law books do not clearly mention whether a girl should stay isolated at the first menses and monthly menstrual periods. However they make mention that the girls should stay out of contact as a Dalit (a low-cast person) and appear in a highly timid form in the presence of Brahmans; and further, be out of sight from others as well as refraining from any form of social and religious activity. What one could gather from this is that, a girl attaining age is expected to stay isolated. As recorded in all these law books, the girl is considered to be unclean after her menstruation till the moment of bathing (Bhattacharyya 1980 : 19).

In all law books such as the Vyasa, Vruadharitha, Smruthi, Brahdhyama, Athri Smriti, Purana, Vamana, Shiva, Vyasa Samitha, Kurma, and Agni -- menstrual blood has been depicted as something that is patently destroying and sinful.
The book by the title of Parasara Smriti speaks of a special custom. It states that, if a girl had not been given hand in marriage by her twelfth year, her ancestors should drink the girl’s menstrual blood every month. The elder brother and parents who set eyes on such girl are said to end up in hell. Some others exclaim that if the girl’s father does not hand her in marriage before her first menses, the sin so committed is as similar to the sin committed by a person engaging in an abortion. In the same way, he repeatedly faces this sin each month when she menstruates during her unmarried period of life. (Bhattacharyya 1980 : 13-15).

The custom of attainment of puberty in Madurai and Thiththaveli in India also should be mentioned. The girl is bathed on the thirteenth day after her first menses, and she enters her house only after jumping over a pestle and a cake. The significance of this custom is that, something in the form of food should be left for a dog at the entrance of the house from where the girl enters. A terrific blow is dealt on the dog when it is in the process of eating. If the dog were to give out a strong yell, they believe that the girl would beget more and more children. If on the other hand, the dog does not make such a yell; then they believe that she would be devoid of children. Even the pots taken for use in connection with her are smashed into very small pieces (Bhattacharyya 1980 : 22-23).

S.C. Boas’s research has revealed that while the Indian cultural heritage and tribal life is directly associated with this custom, it assumes differing forms, depending on caste status. Bhattacharyya which explaining the differences existing among each caste and tribe, mentions that while there is no rule as to which complicated customs should be followed, the relevant customs followed are according to the strange attitudes coming down from ancient times in relation to the subject of menstrual blood. It is not the end result that operates as a consequence of the desires in relation to rituals that matter, but the procedures that is important in this case. When viewed on the whole, it is a similar form of process that every woman faces from the moment of her first menses.

Next I would like to mention briefly on the puberty rites in urban India. Regarding this Veena Das (1993 : 89-103) gives the following account on the puberty rites among urban Punjabis.
Among urban Punjabis the onset of menstruation is not 'announced' publicly by means of ritual. In fact, the Punjabi women treat menstruation as a private matter and try to ensure that the male members do not get an inkling of the state. They would be horrified by such public 'announcement' of menstruation either by means of ritual or by enforcement of taboos that are obvious to all (Das 1993 : 91).

Punjabi women do consider themselves impure during menstruation and are required to observe certain taboos, but in a discreet manner. For instance, a menstruating girl is required to refrain from touching preserves and pickles which, it is believed, would rot if she touched them. Though no part of the house is taboo for her, it is assumed that she will not offer worship during menstruation. Similarly, however young she is when she begins to menstruate, a girl should not sit on her father's or brother's lap when she is menstruating. What is of interest is that unlike the case of South India, a menstruating girl's state is never acknowledged or ritually announced to all members of the household. The taboos and the consequences of violating these are conveyed from senior female relatives to the younger ones and the girl is left to find her own excuses if faced with awkward circumstances (Das 1993 : 91).

The 'Upanayana' ritual is a Hindu male initiation ritual which has been practicing since early Vedic period. The rules and procedures are laid down in the Vedic texts the Dharmashastras.

The Upanayana ritual is a composite ritual, it symbolizes initiation into student life, initiation into religious life and initiation into manhood. This ritual has undergone historical evolution. During the earliest stage of its evolution it was a tribal puberty rite signifying a transition of an individual to the status of manhood. During the course of time the Vedic texts became crystallized and out of it emerged a different social structure. In early Vedic period females could perform the Upanayana ritual along with the males. During this time the scope of Upanayana ritual was extended to encompass initiation into religious life, as a precondition of studenthood. Gradually the females were excluded from performing the Upanayana ritual. So also only the upper castes: Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaisya could perform this ritual. This ritual took on overtones of religious initiation as a precondition of student-hood, however, this Brahmanical Upanayana ritual has retained traces of initiation into manhood. In the post-industrial society the Upanaya ritual is still performed however due to the tremendous socio-cultural and other changes in modern society, this ritual has
become a purely formal token-initiation into Brahmanhood. It is no longer representative of initiation into either religious education of adulthood.

An individual is called the ‘twice born’ after the performance of the *upanayana* ritual, twice born signifies the social birth of an individual and this entitles the individual to be admitted to the privileges of his caste and access to religious education. In *The Hindu World: An Encyclopedic Survey of Hinduism* (1983) presents the fifteen steps making the complete performance of the *Upanayana* ritual.

1) The boy wearing only a *kupina* or loin-cloth was brought before the *guru* or preceptor thus giving the name *Upanayana* to the whole ceremony.

2) In the *paridana* giving, the father request the *guru* to accept the boy as a *Brahmachari* student under his care, and then formally gives him into the custody of the *guru*.

3) The *guru* in turn bands the boy over to the care of the Gods Savitri, Pushan, the Asvins, Soma, Agni and Prajapati.

4) The *nama pricheha* ‘name asking’ the teacher asks the boy’s name and other particulars.

5) In the *Svikarana* ‘accepting’, the teacher extends his hand and touches the boy’s thumb, hand, or shoulder as a token of acceptance.

6) The teacher then offers the boy a *vaikaksha* (upper garment) made of cloth and also a lower garment *vasa*.

7) The *guru* ties around the boy’s waist the *mekla* ‘girdle’ made of triple cord. It was from the mantel and girdle that the sacred thread of the twice born evolved.

8) The *guru* gives the neophyte a *danda* or staff, symbolizing the beginning of his long journey to perfection.
9) In the angali-purana ‘palm filling’ the guru fills his cupped hands with water and empties them into the cupped hands of his pupil intoning mantras through out.

10) The asmarohana or ‘stone-mounting’ takes place, the guru commands the student to mount a stone and enjoins him, “Like this stone be steadfast and firm.”

11) This followed by the rite of dadhi prasana ‘curd eating’ in which the pupil is given some curd to eat, as a sign that he should clear his mind and inject what is taught.

12) In the aditya-darsana ‘sun showing’ the pupil is shown the sun and it is explained to him that the light of the sun should be his ideal in his quest for knowledge.

13) Then comes the Savitri varata or the rules governing the Savitri Gayatri mantra which is the climax of the upanayana ceremony only after this is the student formally taken in charge and accepted as a member of the twice born.

14) The Samidh-adana ‘firewood receiving’, consists of the placing of a piece of sacrificial wood by the pupil into the fire chanting the mantra ‘may fire put intelligence in me, progeny in me and luster in me’. This part of the ceremony symbolized the student’s right to tend the sacrificial fire and take active part in religious rites from now on.

15) The ceremony concludes with rite of agni pradakshina ‘fire circumbulation’, when the student walks around the sacred fire.

These fifteen steps generally mark the performance of the upanayana ritual.

c. The South American Indians

Rafel Karsten (1962 : 9-16) has carried out an extensive research on the customs relating to the attainment of puberty among the South American Indians. The mental process influencing women’s menstruation which these Indians appear unable to comprehend, has given rise to a number of supernatural mythical beliefs. It is the new moon, as a common belief that has influenced the Chako Indians towards this paranormal phenomena. As a result, though it is undoubtedly believed that the attainment of puberty in the case of a South American Indian girl is the commencement of the sex-life, initially it is the entry into a revolutionary development area which is exposed to child-birth as well as calamity of an
occult nature. Therefore, the preliminary celebrations of the puberty custom is but the protection from calamity and the aim of being permanently being protected from adversities attached to sexual activity in the future.

Those of the Macusis tribe of Guiana are known to beat the girl who has attained puberty with a whip. While the girl is bound to sit on a chair or slab of stone during the night hours after till about ten days since her first bath, her mother beats her with a slim whip. The girl is expected to bear-up this suffering without showing any signs of pain. This act is repeated at the second menses too, at which point it is discontinued.

Those of the Piaros tribe in Orinco of the North of South America too follow this custom of beating with a whip (Karsten 1962 : 9-16). Unlike the Macusis, they perform this act in the most dramatic manner. After leaving the Piaros girl in isolation for some days, a number of elderly women blindfold the girl; take her out from her place and tie her to a post. Due to the feeling that, with the advent of the new moon, devilish faces would appear and bring upon death by punishment, no woman is permitted to close in upon the girl. The prominent part of the festival is carried out by a few days, bringing with them items of coir rope, whips and flesh-skin, blowing musical instruments, dancing, singing and innovations while they beat the girl’s thighs with whips. The beating which begins rather slowly, then gradually aggravates. In this way they beat the girl’s thighs until they assume a bloodish red colour. They regard these wounds as those inflicted by the demons. There is also a person who sits on a side, and whose duty is to medically treat the girl’s wounds. Finally, the demonic soul that has come to attack the girl is set on fire. They light a fire beside the post where the girl had been tied, and then clasp each other’s waists and indulge in a dance, shrieking at the top of their voices, cursing the evil spirit. The male-folk begin to partake of an alcoholic drink prepared by the girl’s parents and make their invocations, yelling at the top of their voices.

A special series of customs is adopted by the Uaupes Indian when signs of the first menstruation are noticed in a girl of their tribe (Karsten 1962 : 9-16). The girl who has attained puberty is kept in solitude within the house for approximately one month; and during this period she is given a few scraps of bread and some water only, as her share of meals. On the ceremonial day, the parents and relatives assemble together, and the girl is escorted into their midst, stark naked. The special act referred to is that all those who have gathered at this occasion begin to aim five or six severe blows on the girl’s back and breasts.
The beating continues till the girl either falls unconscious, or in certain circumstances till she falls down dead; while this act continues for a period of four rounds at six-hour intervals, it is further considered that if the parents refrain from aiming severe blows on the girl, they are at fault in accordance of their tribal requirements. In the process, various types of meat are prepared, and something known as Sipo is applied on them, which the girl is expected to lick. It is only then that she is accepted as a woman who is suited for marriage. They believe that, since demonic or supernatural powers potent enough to enter the girl’s bloodstream is within her body, that by such a flow of blood these negative powers would leave her. Therefore, what they solely expect out of this beating ritual is that in a natural sense she would be cleansed of all such evils.

Karsten (1962: 177) states that the two German travelers by the names of Reich and Stegelmann have expressed descriptive accounts of circumcision existing among the Rio Ukala Conibos of Peru. When a girl of their tribe reaches the attaining age, a certain drink made of manioc is prepared. It is called Maschato. Providing her with this drink is regarded as a very important factor. While the girl is intoxicated by this drink, once she is totally unconscious, a form of surgery is carried out on her body. The girl is made to lie down on three Balsa planks amidst a gathering, and then a woman, old in age approaches the girl and severes her clitoris, making a cut around her vaginal mouth and also piercing her virgin tissue by using a knife made out of splinters of bamboo old-aged exorcists then apply herbal preparations on the bleeding wounds. Subsequently, an artificial penis made of clay, and similar in size to the actual penis of a man who has given his word to marry this girl is inserted into the girl’s vulva. Once this ceremony is over, she is judged suitable for marriage, and her would-be husband then approaches her. The aforementioned form of circumcision is regarded by them to be of religious as well as of a mystical significance.

In this manner, Rafel Karsten has revealed a host of information of a contradictory nature in association with the customs and socio-cultural features of puberty customs pertaining to South American Indians.

As far as puberty ceremonies of boys are concerned, in many cases the novices are forced to practise a rigid fast. Thus, among the Musquakie Indians, the youth under goes a prolonged fast at puberty, wandering alone until he dreams what his medicine is to be, and, sometimes, what his vocation is. Sometimes the novices are forced to remain in deep water, or to thrust their heads through collars of thorns, or are gashed or sacrificed or beaten with
supple wands or stinging nettles, or are exposed to the bite of venomous ants, or are deprived of sleep, or are bound so tightly as to suffer great pain (Grierson - Hamilton 1918: 443).

In the interior of British Columbia, adolescent rites are a magical training for all occupants. Boys roll stones down mountains and beat them to the bottom to be swift of foot, or throw gambling-sticks to be lucky in gambling. In the plateaus of British Columbia both boys and girls, among these tribes, went out into the mountains at adolescence for a magic training. Puberty ceremonies have a wide distribution up and down the Pacific Coast, and over most of this region they are quite distinct from the guardian spirit practices. But in British Columbia they were merged. The climax of the magic adolescent training for boys was the acquisition of a guardian spirit who by its gifts dictated the lifetime profession of the young man. He became a warrior, a shaman, a hunter, or a gambler according to the supernatural visitant (Benedict 1959:37, 47).

d. Finale

Cross cultural comparison of puberty customs support that one cannot observe any agreement among the attitudes, concepts and beliefs of the people. We are not in a position to arrive at a pre-supposition that all cultures take steps to suppress natural downfall in this age. Therefore, it must be mentioned that one cannot see one kind of attitude institutionally occurrence of first menstruation.

However, there are beliefs of an universal level that have been built-up. When taken on the whole, it is quite clear that almost every tribal society has given prominence to sexual activity. This is made further clear in relation to modes of offerings relating to harvesting connected with the attainment of puberty, sexual maturity or fertility. While it can also be inferred that through the process of keeping the girl who has had her menses for the first time naked, and in conducting certain customs in relation to the sexual organs, attention is focussed on the attraction of sex itself. These societies consider that giving importance to sexual display is of significance. They thus intend the development of sexual discipline through all this. But, while customs followed in the process of achieving it differs from society to society and from tribe to tribe, it is important to notice how such tribal customs have contributed towards the growth of personality arrangement. On the whole, the primary purpose of celebrating the occasion of the initial menstruation in festive style highlights a life based on religious beliefs and special customs in the entire society.
From among customs followed or the attainment of puberty, the custom of seclusion occupies a prominent position. This custom is practiced not only in traditional societies but also in modern societies. During this period of seclusion no male is permitted to see her. These customs have been modeled as a whole in a manner that it fulfills its purpose as an exercise that creates a sense of shyness and protection. It is seen that this is something which needs be carried out through the occurrence of an incident such as the first menstruation itself, and is not something that should be delayed any further. It is through customs instituted on the day of the initial menstruation that the idea that her body has now reached a stage where she could beget children, that she could associate with society keeping this in mind, that she should refrain from engaging in unwanted liaisons with the opposite sex are It is with this motive that customs to the effect of even setting eyes on a male’s face on the first day of menses has been regarded as detrimental in most societies. Such customs could be mostly regarded as a preliminary system of teaching which influences the girl to tread on the right path. It also goes further in training her to indulge in upright procedures of customs even after she passes her youth and moves on to an adult female status. Such customs influence her to lead a virtuous life even after her marriage. In this manner, it could be observed that attaining of age is considered by almost every society as the main foundation towards a righteous life.

Customs followed in relation to the first menstruation have been so prepared that more than in displaying its biological aspect, the purpose has been to gain profit through a sociological and anthropological sense. Among customs followed in this respect are the providing of new clothing, the changing of hair-styles, the tattooing of figures on the body, application of colours on the body, the bestowal of a new name and so on. The new identity that the girl has assumed, and the message to the society is revealed through this process. Through these customs, certain things that are disappearing from time to time among the masses is the process of rehabilitation. Though the definition of rituals consisting of dancing, singing, bathing and torturing may differ from society to society, what is reflected to a large extent by this is the end of the child-personality and the birth of a new stage in life.

What is signified by the Zambian ‘Chisungu’ ceremony is that the matrimonial activities which takes place simultaneously with the occasion of the girl attaining puberty is properly conducted, and that social ethics are safeguarded through the same process. Evans
Pritchard (1965: 78) explains, that the purpose of conducting the singing and dancing during the 'Chisungu' in an uncivilized manner is to create a sexual satisfaction to its highest point. Whatever it is, in order to maintain a society without disorganisation, it is important to protect the society's approved socio-ethical system. Through this medium, not only is the protection of the social order ensured; a society of pleasant individuals too is assured. In this context, through the 'Chisungu' ceremony, which is performed together with the attainment of age of a girl, the Zambian people attempt to carry out this important social necessity.

What can be assumed through the rigorous customs relating to the attainment of puberty among the South American Indians is that the girl is subjected to the socialization process with the motive of habituating the girl to their own society. Due to their simple lifestyle the intensity of the competition and life struggle amongst these members of a tribe is much less compared to modern societies. They feel satisfied in achieving their basic necessities. These people who do not have any struggle with time could devote a long period of time and energy for these sorts of elaborate rituals. The entire living system of the tribal communities take on a very rough tone, so to say. The lives of these people who are constantly subjected to natural calamities and disasters. A girl who has attained puberty is compelled to display her nudity and made to suffer through whipping in a ceremonial sense, and having the body tattooed with a stylus, in order to get accustomed to the rough life that they are used to. Further, what they have imputed on the 'woman' is week and feeble energy status in physical terms. Therefore, it may also be assumed that these tough customs exist among them with the intention of safeguarding her from possible dangers she could encounter, and to instill and develop the courage necessary in such circumstances. According to the beliefs of the American Indians, the experiences gained on achieving puberty are decisive. As such, any and all emotions and thoughts that pass through the girl during such a period would influence her all throughout her life. It is with the motive of testing the strength to bear the changes that occur at the first menstruation that beliefs about various ritualistic things is inculcated during this period. Not only the South American Indians but also the tribes of Papua New Guinea and Central Australia practice the same kind of rigorous rituals during the attainment of puberty. For instance Fitz John Porter Poole (1982) who has recently done a study on male initiation of the Bimin - Kushusmin of the West Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea. Pool (1982: 99 - 154) gives an account of a sensational male puberty ritual called ais am thus:
During the next four days, the boys are continuously reviled, humiliated and terrorised by the men. Forced to punch their heads through a screen of boughs known as the ‘vomit house’, they are daubed with female pigment, forced to eat in rapid succession female foods: frogs’ eggs, tadpoles, black mushrooms, crayfish, punctuated by ginger and sweet potato. They are then scourged with stinging nettles, and made to vomit by drinking pig’s blood and urine. In the next rite, they are made to ingest female parts of slaughtered sows and have their own ‘female parts’ smeared with sows’ blood. In the succeeding stage, the ancestors appear from the underworld, and are witness to further beating and cursing, the bleeding of female parts, and humiliation. The boys now observable attempt to fend away female objects.

In the presence of the androgynous cassoiwary ancestress, the boys are sized by their mothers’ brothers who pierce their nasal sputums with cassowoory bone daggers. Poole (1982: 127) writes:

The psychological and physical shock is staggering; and many boys, with blood cascading down their bodies, faint or become quite hysterical.

In fact the above mentioned rituals highlights the identities of these tribes. The opinion of Padmshri and Shashi (1994: 72-73) on tribal customs is significant. They say that the treats to maintenance of the tribe come from the inside too, from rivalries, jealousies, economic and political competition within the tribe. And so we find that the elaborately structured tribal society gives birth to an immemorial pattern of settling these issues before they can destroy the people. Custom decides all, and the tribal leadership lies with those who have the right to decide wherein, in matters under dispute, the true path of custom lies— with those who have the greatest experience, in fact - the tribal elders. We, when we look back from the heights of civilization, find the rigid patterns and formulate for the past a framework which holds back the mind, which impoverishes the intellectual life of a society, and we disapprove. But that is only because we are gifted with hind-sight-where we within such a society, we should see the pattern of rigid tribal custom as the only barrier to the fratricidal anarchy which threatens continually to destroy ‘primitive’ societies, and which must in its time have led to the extermination of many of them. Among the internal stresses, the greatest must be sex- the jealousies within a tribe for possession of its women. This is such an explosive force within the tribal life that it is subject to powerful controls which hold a delicate balance between restraint and license, and circumcision is a universal symbol of this balance.
As such, attempts made by various societies to socialize its members through cultural heritage is confirmed by the beliefs founded in relation to menstrual blood. While certain societies look upon menstrual blood as something that is extremely holy, some other societies look down it as something terribly unclean and dangerous. What one could find within all this is a particular belief imputated by the society and not an inherent value that belongs to one society more than the social attitude of another society. The evaluation of the good and the bad of a cultural phenomena goes again the grain of anthropology. All these customs, attitudes and concepts that have developed towards this biological maturity could be assumed as having laid a binding foundation to built and develop the future personality of the individual and also provide social validity.

6.5 The Psychological Perspective of the Socialization Process of Young Vedda Girls in Comparison to Sinhalese.

a. The Adolescent Mind

During the period of adolescence, people react immensely to various social factors. This is the period of one’s life, which is decisive or various important aspects like self-confidence, leadership, self-control, discipline and independence, discriminating power and courage, and hence is very crucial and intricate. One grows from social attraction to sexual attraction and physical maturity to mental maturity in this period during which the physical development may be in conflict with the process of socialization.

It has been proved by various researches that during the period of adolescence, one is struggling to establish one’s identity and integrity. This is mainly decided by the society and culture in which he or she lives. Researchers have shown that the cognitive and activist bond in ‘simple’ societies hinders the liberty of a person. In modern societies where liberty is based on persons cognitive and activist bond the youth fight for their individual independence. (See Crider and et.al 1983). Since the Veddas also no longer remain as just a ‘simple’ society this conclusion is relevant to them.

However, the adolescent Sinhalese youth are still dependent on their parents. The values and norms by which they live in society have enabled them to be dependents on their parents even between the age group of 20-25. But this kind of a relationship between the elders and the adolescents is rarely seen amongst Veddas. Veddas who are eager to enjoy
individual freedom with the advent of adolescence, start earning money by various means like hunting, chena cultivation and so forth. The female members of Vedda youth decide on their marriage soon after attaining of puberty. During this period they dream of an imaginary future. Especially it is conspicuous among the Sinhalese girls to take firm decisions in the matters of life, job and various personal relationships. But Veddas who enjoy less opportunities of employment and education facilities make their final decisions on matters like love, marriage and sex.

When one has attained age, he or she begins to raise questions about one's own identity. Erick Erickson mention questions such as "Who am I" or "Am I the same person who was in childhood?" "Am I same person who is now, or in puberty?" in relation to American society of youth (Erickson, quoted in Crider and et.al 1983 : 362).

Person who have no establishment identities start wandering in a meaningless search for jobs and status in society. Sometimes they end up as criminals or persons with abnormal behavioural patterns. Their inability to grasp their own identity to drive them to despair which might eventually lead them to drug addiction or committing suicide. Even among Veddas the problem of identity with various social problems of considerable degree. In tribal societies the 'identity crisis' is far more conspicuous than that of modern societies. This crisis which the tribal youth face as a social problem is aggravated with their growth in society and they are seen conflicting of with themselves in handling the question "Who am I?" The Henanigala youth have faced this problem more than the youth of Dambana, since the former group is not successful as the latter in maintaining their identity. The Henanigala youth put the whole responsibility of the questions they face in dealing with the main society on the identity crisis.

Adolescents quite often misunderstand and misjudge the difficulties they face in life. Different individual and social pressures force them to orient themselves to various fields and as a result they have become more self-centered in dealing with crises. Their over concentration on many sudden changes that occur in their lives is just another factor which makes them self-centered. This sort of over concentration on their own physical and social growth generates in them a feeling to think that they become target of others judgments and estimations. This is a feeling that in the long run may frame them to speak to some 'imaginary council' of their attitudes and problems.
It is quite natural for an adolescent girl or boy to be more concerned with his or her own physical beauty, fascinated by perfumes, jewelery and fashions also spend more time before a mirror. They believe firmly that the external world is very much concerned about them. Thus, this is a period in which a person over estimates his own identity and thinks seriously of sexual attraction. Among Vedda youth poverty is a factor that hinders their interest in fashions. The researcher has observed in her field study the fact that they control the desires common to youth and look at life and their youth in a restricted manner. During the field study I was requested to bring these women artificial bangles and necklaces. These young women usually lament their inability to fulfill their desires. They enter into wedlock soon after their puberty but these unfulfilled desires haunt them even after begetting children.

Further, individuals who have attained puberty have a tendency to over-estimate their opinions and personal problems. As Piaget remarks, from the initial period of their having attained age, they begin to debate about certain verbal statements (Piaget, quoted in Crider and et.al 1983 : 356). They may begin to have numerous forms of desires at the time they approach puberty, and some of these may be refreshed. As survey shows that there is a co-relation between the activity of hormones and the maturity of their desires (Crider and et.al 1983 : 356). The adolescents tend to go into the deep corners of their desires, emotions and feelings during this period of life. Their desires mirror their mental instability. These desires soon vanish and are replaced by new desires and feelings of same intensity. Change of desires is more distinct in the direction of fashion, selecting vocations and their struggle to escape from the grip of the elders. Sinhalese youth balance the above situation by concentrating more on various sources of income and fashions. Female Veddas who are more exposed only to trivial vocations like offering house maid services give vent to their mentality through above means. They attempt more to escape the authority of their parents and elders. As a side effect of their freeing themselves from the authority and control of their elders, it is seen that their unapproved love affairs end up in either marriage or pregnancy.

Now, this young woman or man further tries to cover up the bustling feelings of insecurity by getting to know an object that he or she could love. At times the individual would project motive and attempt to convince the self that his motive justified. At other times the individual would blame others for faults committed by none other than his or her own self. By so doing, the adolescent frees the self from personal shortcomings, guilt and
experience of the self and inflicts social rejection of his or her own self as a fault of the others. The individual who uses this projection frequently and quite soon begins to think that the whole world is operating against him or her. In this manner in the same way that he or she believes, the individual attempts to make the other people too believe that it is they who are held responsible for the weaknesses and deficiencies of his or her own self. Moreover youth always protest against the social injustice. This can be clearly seen more among males than females. Even the Vedda youths accuse the leaders and bureaucrats who implement rules over them.

Piaget is of the opinion that the faculty of intelligence best activates during the period of adolescence (Piaget, quoted in Sarafino and Armstrong 1980: 470). Therefore the youth have the capacity to face crucial problems through a proper blend of concepts and attitudes. Oswald Schwarz (1953: 36) has stated that the child during this period of life begin to search ‘self’ and what is beyond self. As a result they become aware of the fact that the world is not only centred round his self but also he himself is a part of it and to be perfect in this world they feel the need of a life partner. They learn that they are in the need of the others and others are in need of them. This understanding leads them to reach free decision regarding the pattern of their social relations.

Researchers opine that young age is not always full of pressures and conflicts. Margaret Mead says that inhabitants of the communities in South Sea Islands live a life which is least affected by emotional stresses during this transitional period (Mead, quoted in Hugo & Hershey 1974: 491). Although the Veddas consider adolescence as a natural process in comparison to Sinhalese, yet they do not consider it as a complete natural process devoid of mental stresses as Mead looks at it.

b. Role of the Social Institutions

Since it takes a considerable time to cope with the physical and mental changes that occur in the first stages of adolescence, it is necessary to socialize the adolescents systematically. Duties and roles that have to be performed in this direction by various social institutions like family, school, peer groups, religious councils, and media are many. Social institutions are factors that mould and shape not only complex societies but also traditional societies and hence they are of great importance in this process. It is important to consider
the services rendered by these social institutions in socializing Vedda women since they are a new community which has entered into the modern social stream.

In a considered estimation of the institution of family, researchers have shown that it is the responsibility of the family to help them build relationship among members of the family in a congenial atmosphere. It has been proved that those who have had healthy relations with their parents have coped better with the identity crisis. Psychologically these youngsters whose parents do not take a keen interest in their socialization tend to be mentally weak and suffer from weak super ego.

During the period of adolescence parental guidance is extremely important for the youngsters. But this is a service which is quite often rejected and refused by the children. As Anna Freud mentions, such opposition means that the child maintains a sense of rejection in identifying his or her parents. This condition arises as a result of the change of the concepts of the super-ego and the ego (Anna Freud, quoted in Blos 1962: 176). Therefore, the parents have to be quite tactful in dealing with such situations. Psychologists assert that they should learn to interfere in the businesses of their children and guide them in a very gentle manner. There can be a slight discrepancy between experiences of the parents in their youth and the youthful experiences of their children. This discrepancy might result in a wider generation gap between them.

Struggle for freedom which begins in childhood reaches its extreme, during adolescence. Mostly they struggle against the authority of their elders for they are not properly understood and kindly treated by them. More often than not, for the very reason that the child who has reached puberty has got accustomed to think that the parents are people who possess the authority to play the dominating role, also consider that their advice and instruction as a form of dictatorial force on him or her. But adolescents need more help than control over them. They misjudge the help offered by the parents as efforts to restrict their freedom. Adolescents aggravate the situation by entering into arguments and showing their reactions physically over trivial things. They desire the freedom to choose their friends and leave home at night.

Above circumstances are often seen amongst the Sinhalese urban community who are more exposed to broader social relationships. Male members of the Vedda community enjoy more freedom than that of the female members and begin to group, gamble and
consume intoxicating drinks in their early youth. Sinhalese youth avoid the above conditions to a certain extent for they have to concentrate on employment and education. But they too are susceptible for the above circumstances since they enjoy more time and space in modern societies. Sinhalese parents have constantly bicker over the action of their children. In Vedda community where the members have no greater goals and ambitions in life, the elders adopt a more lenient attitude towards such actions of their children. Some of the Vedda males discard their traditional dresses and wear trousers and shirts and cut their hair with the advent of youth. But when they gain maturity with the passage of time, they again begin to accept the traditional ways and wear their clothes ethnic to them, and use their weaponry and grow hair. All these changes are compassionately watched by Vedda elders and do not lead to conflicts.

Competition, jealousy, authority of elders over the young have warned even the relationships between the members of the same family. The situation is likely to aggravate more if the elder sisters and brothers are in the last phase of adolescence and the younger sisters and brothers are in the early phase of it. Those elder sisters and brothers by now have forgotten the dreams and wishes of their youth and want their children to abide by their parent values and standards. As a result elder sisters and brothers take a dim view of the fashions, clothes and friends of their younger sisters and brothers and have constant bickerings with them. This is a situation so common between Sinhalese and Veddas. A usual change brought against those who adhere modern values leaving behind the traditional ones is that they disgrace the whole race. But in Vedda community these changes do not develop into quarrelsome situations as in the case of Sinhalese.

These troubles and difficulties the youngsters face in their search for freedom have greatly affected their personality development. If the elder sisters and brothers and the newly adolescents do not reach a compromise acceptable to both the parties in the matters of the latters future and marriage they might look up to some third party for assistance. Romantic love among Vedda female adolescents leads them to unknown worlds of fantasy and they end up in pre-marital pregnancy.

Thus, it is clear that the responsibilities of parents and other members of the family towards the adolescent members can no way be treated negligible. One of the main responsibilities of the parents is that they should identify and judge correctly the
psychological problems of their children and help them face such situations. Ignorance of such things by elders may lead the youngsters to more serious troubles.

Adolescents often tend to group with their peers in school and society and gain knowledge and experience from them. Many advantages could be desired by belonging to a peer-group with similar ideas. If one were to be a well-fitted adult, as Hurlock (1949: 177) says, an adolescent should be a member of such a group.

The advantages that the child could gain by associating peer-groups at the time of puberty can never be got from any other experience in life. In fact the degree of stress in traditional society is less than that of the modern society. Therefore the role of peer groups in modern societies is more dominant and significant than it is in the traditional society. On the other hand the broadness of modern society causes discrepancies among children of the same age in intelligence and experience. This enables them to learn from their friends and build their personality. This way the peer-groups render a greater service in modern societies than in traditional ones.

But during the adolescence the role of peer-groups in personal socialization is not at all a small matter. In the process of the attempts made during the period of puberty by the individual to gain entry into the adult world, the adolescent is constantly pressurized into revealing to the self many matters which he or she is unable to extract from the parents or elders, and therefore has to draw emotional through peer-groups. It also helps in correcting one's faults or mistakes within the self and thus affords an opportunity of understanding the shortcomings and defects prevalent within the self, thereby paving for a successful socialization.

Apart from the role played by the family and the peer group, the role played by the school, religious institutions and mass media on the socialization of the child who has reached puberty is extensive. But these institutions do not play that important role or the socialization of youth's in the traditional societies. Most of the Vedda girls still leave their schools and get married just after the attainment of puberty. Moreover it is the children and the teachers who are the agents of the school. It is after having obtained a fresh identity that the girl who has attained age comes to school and expects more attachment with her female teachers. But can the Dambana school which has only two female teachers provide such attention to these girls?
Thus the role of the teacher in the school, as mentioned, is very important. A child disobedient to her parents may treat her teacher with a sense of fear or a degree of devotion. Fear of punishments, embarrassment or devotion caused thereof bring a female child to the correct path of life. In a family where there is no one to look upto in times of difficulty, a teacher usually is chosen for the purpose. Hence, although a greater service may be provided for adolescents in the traditional societies by the institution of school, the institutional and social negligences have hindered these services to a great extent.

Religion and media influences on traditional societies are inconsiderable. Invocation of devils is the main religion of Veddas and the exorcist is their chief priest. They are not organized in a proper order as found in other religious organizations. They neither preach nor bear any intellectual deep philosophy. Their effort is just an attempt to assist their members in overcoming problems that rise in day-to-day life.

Such religion plays on centralised role in the process of socialization, what is generally expected of a religion is to direct the adolescents through the pits and falls of social evils. A religion directed towards such an enterprise is difficult to be found in traditional societies.

Mass media is another factor to which the members of traditional societies have the least access. The exposure of adolescents to mass media like cinema, television, radio and advertisements is minimum in traditional societies. Low literacy level prevents the sale of papers and magazines in their villages. Television and cinema do not reach them due to lack of electricity. Of all media usages, listening to radio is the only thing which is found at a satisfactory level.

It is thus seen that not only are they free from the evil effects caused by the blind imitation of media but also are kept away from the pleasure of enjoying a refined form of art.
6.6 Conclusion

Stanley Hall is of the opinion that the most crucial time of ones life is the period of adolescence. Since the child is deficient in maturity to lead forward human evolution and also the elderly individual is more supreme in maturity, the person suited ideally for this is the adolescent. As such, if society were to think of the progress of their own human beings, society should utilise the potentialities and abilities of the adolescents to their advantage.

The ‘storm’ and ‘stresses’ operating within the mind of the adolescent not only cause frustration to him or her, it could even go as far as creating reactionary influences in the mind within. Though a type of strong human relationships and inter-relationships could be expected during this period of time, the individual also searches simultaneously for a way to spend the time in solitude. The most cherished desire of adolescent female is to dream of a better world. If a society does not adopt a healthy attitude towards the youth it might result not only in a useless generation of people but also may thwart the advancement of the human race (Perera 1993 : 104).

Psychological analysis of the adolescence of female shows that attitudes and desires of youth are common to modern and traditional societies. Cultural and social experience are the only difference. It is the culture that mainly decide the rites and rituals of socialization.

There are both similarities and differences among Veddas and the Sinhalese in the socialization of adolescents. But there are conspicuous differences in the roles played by social institutions. Sinhalese, specially urban youth who are more properly exposed to education and economic facilities undergo a better process of gradual socialization through family, peer groups, schools and mass media. Vedda youth subjected to a lesser influences of religion and social institutions are not helped much by them in the process of socialization. This incomplete assistance on the part of social institution have resulted in diverse circumstances.

Shock of puberty among Vedda females develop into love, marriage, sexual relations and premarital pregnancies, which are of course burning problems in the present day Vedda society. The minimal help offened by social institution is the major factor responsible for such circumstances. This can be averted to a certain degree by the protection and guidance of mother and members of family. But they too are prevented by lack of education and experience in performing such a task.
On the other hand, as in most of the tribal societies, Veddas do not practice very harsh and rigorous customs relating to the attainment of puberty. For example the societies of Bushmens, Zambians and Arapesh in Africa and Red Indians like Mecusis, Piaros and Canibo in South America, accept their children as adults only if they are able to pass these harsh and rigorous examinations. The mental integrity and the self confidence that these harsh examinations impart to them serve as better examples to show the degree of harshness in their society and also to what extent these customs have further contributed to perpetuating principles in their societies. However, although the harsh and rigorous customs and traditions of this nature are not suitable to Vedda who do not lead such traditional lives neither have they entered the modern life stream in order to experience better facilities in such a modern society. This transitional status has made the Vedda society a complex one and the adverse effects of it will be reflected through the problems of youth and their behavioral patterns. Further most of the tribal societies have their own ways of amusements. Sometimes, these entertainments have been built around their customs and traditions. For example the ‘Chisungu’ festival that follow the attainment of puberty of girls of the tribe Bantu in Zambia brings them joy, pleasure and excitement. Most traditions and customs of tribes in Africa too reflects this. However, there is no evidence to show that festivals of this nature which brought joy and excitement to Veddas have taken place even in the past. What Seligmann has mentioned about the entertainments of Veddas are the different games of small children using small bows and arrows, poems recited for entertainment and also that they express a story through miming or dancing when the Veddas are in the hight of their pleasure. Seligmann (1969 : 321) describes it in the following way:

The only other art practiced by the Veddas is that of pantomime from which they undoubtedly derive real pleasure. Within the limits of their daily experience they are good actors, and will most faithfully portray their own method of doing things.

However, in the present times this practice of entertainment has vanished from them and instead it is confined to a way of entertaining tourists. Although hunting was selected by the Vedda youth both for their entertainment and livelihood, this too cannot be practiced independently today. This dearth of ways of entertainment for Vedda youth has contributed to their frustration and also compelled them to go for sexual pleasure alone.

However, it is mandatory for both a modern society as well as a traditional one to make these youth a useful and sociable group. Sinhala youth as well as Vedda youth are
subject to this stress which is created by the mass society. However, Sinhala youth are ahead of their Vedda counterparts in facing this stress. Thus, this shows the necessity that the family and the other major social institutions should reform their role which had been practiced hitherto. If the social institutions perform a significant role in addressing the dilemma of youth some satisfactory solutions can be reached.