The inescapable phenomenon of nature as well as life is change. Social change does occur irrespective of the type and location of a human society, for it continues to be an essential law of social life. The study of social change is a historical one as it is a matter of tracing a process over a period of time. Social scientists consider social dynamics an important subject of study, perhaps due to the fact that the modern world has witnessed fast occurring changes in peoples' ways of life. The stress on the study of change over periods, particularly its socio-economic aspects, must take into account of the overlapping time scales and the contiguous regional developments to unveil the specificity of historical transformation. The transformation of a society may be characterised by the incorporation of new traits with or without the rejection of old elements.
The historical study of change in a society aims at an understanding of the functional relationship of different variables of society. The character of the historical development is the result of several factors like alterations in geographical conditions, natural and social catastrophes, accidental discoveries, migration to new environment, increase or decrease in population, innovation, culture contact, introduction of communication facilities, education and implementation of development programmes, which will help in identifying elements of change and continuity that would enable one to raise relevant questions for the understanding of historical processes.

In India, we have vast fields for historical research as yet lying unexplored. The early history of the so-called aboriginal tribes of India is one of those obscure tracts that have hardly yet been rescued from the oblivion of their real origin and their primitive abode, of their successive migrations in ancient times through different parts of India. And yet these are the people whose remote ancestors were once masters of the Indian soil, whose doings and sufferings, whose joys and sorrows once made up the history of the Indian peninsula.

Historians of India generally dismiss from a consideration of these and other aboriginal tribes as unclaimed ignoble hordes but who occupy the background of Indian history. A total absence of historical traditions and antiquities of these tribes is tacitly assumed to exist by writers on Indian history. Historically, almost all the major tribes of India either formed independent large confederacies were closely linked to regional states and multi-ethnic empires and
shared history and culture to a very considerable extent. In fact, the entire course of Indian history shows tribal elements being fused in general society.

The tribes however can be identified by exploring the antecedents and historical processes of transformation of the groups concerned. Such a historical perspective in actuality reinforces the prevalent errors. How can the past characterise the present, which is transformed? Moreover, unless the history is specified, by an extension of the logic, there would be no difference between the people of the past and present.

Without going into polemics, suffice it to note that though history is very significant in the formation of the present, once formed, the present contains sufficient autonomy and mobility of its own, and thus cannot be comprehended only in terms of the past. The little attempt that has been made to study the tribes in transition has neither re-examined the notion of lack of internal dynamics in tribal society, nor freed itself from the Indian sociological over-emphasis on caste. It is stressed that the direction of tribal change is clear and predictable.

The present day formation of tribes into social classes is not an accidental affair, but has evolved through several forces in the past. Therefore an understanding of their present will inevitably lead to the study of their social history. However, reconstruction of the tribal history is a very difficult task, because they have had no written records with them and whatever records are available and
written by 'others' cannot be considered authentic as they were written from different interests and values. Ancient Indian texts have referred to the tribals only casually, and that too largely from the perspective of the Aryan tribes. Similarly, the administrative records of the Moghul period refer to the tribes from the angle of the ruling power. The first detailed reports on the tribes were prepared by the British ethnographers, administrators and missionaries. Strange and bizarre infanticide, exotic social and religious practices and other trivial matters were over emphasized by them at the cost of an insight into their day to day life. Therefore, if what accounts appear to be a string of conjectures and speculations, at least a part of it could be due to the poverty of information on all crucial points of tribal history.

According to the 1981 census about seven per cent of the total population of India constitutes a large number of tribes spread over different parts of the country. There are altogether 427 tribal communities all over India. But the Anthropological Survey of India has estimated the tribal communities which have common names to be 314. According to the figures of 1950, the number of Scheduled Tribes was 212. Looking at the various Census Reports since 1891 we find that the tribal population figures vary from census to census. Each and every tribal community in India has its own economic, political, religious characteristics which seem to be undergoing transformation due to a multitude of factors. The phenomenon of transformation has been accelerated ever since the country attained Independence. Since the time the British entered India, attempts have been made, through
a series of methods, to reconstruct the Indian tribal communities and these bore fruit in the form of changes to a considerable magnitude in the life and activities of the tribal people. Hence it would be of interest to know about a particular tribe with regard to its traditional and transitional aspects of life, which render it possible to assess the nature and extent of change as a result of both induced and voluntary factors.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various studies on the transitional aspects of different tribes have figured in the history of Indian Anthropology. Most of the monographs on Indian tribes written from the beginning of the 20th century were by the British ethnographers, administrators and some Indian anthropologists.

E.T. Dalton compiled materials about the geographical setting, physical traits, and economic, social and religious life of the Lepchas and Limpus of Sikkim and Darjeeling. W. Crookes describes the culture of the tribes like the Bhutias, the Gujjars, the Tharus and the Khasas. This brings out their reciprocal interactions with ecology, economy and social life. Roy, S.C. took a humanitarian interest in the Mundas of Chotanagapur. He studied their language and also published a monograph on Mundas and their country. Muzumdar, D.N. carried field work on HO's and presented a comprehensive study and brought out the characteristics of tribal Hindu continuum. Surjit Sinha studied the Bhumji-Hindu interactions and the pattern of tribal
caste interactions of Mehalis or Midnapur and of the Bauris. Srivastava, S.K. conducted field-work on the Tarus of Nainital, who claim themselves to be of Kshatriya origin. He had developed the concept of Kshatriyazation to account for the change in some tribal society.

Haimendorf attempted a study of the tribal problems of Hyderabad. He studied the primitive economy of the Chenchus and related it with their seasonal nomadism (1941). He also studied the Reddis of Bison Hills (1945) and presented a full-length account of the culture of Raj Gonds' (1948) and made another study on the Pradhans, who are the bards of Raj Gonds (1950-51).

Ghurye, G.S. examined the status of the tribals in the total Indian social structure. He dealt with the problem of interaction in the light of the latest political and constitutional provisions. Das, T.C. did research on four villages of Purums in Manipur hills and published an excellent monograph on Purums and presented an integrated and complete picture conveying their physical, linguistic, demographic and ethnographic dimensions.

Kalia, S.L., made a conceptual study and attempted to test the concept of Sanskritization and proposed the idea of tribalisation which explains the fact that the non-tribals living in the predominantly tribal areas are tribalizing themselves by accepting non-vegetarian food, alcoholic drinks and above all accepting the several religious functions of the tribals. Elwin's study on the Savaras deals with the religious aspects of a primitive tribe which
leads him to develop the concept of spiritism. The myths and legends which were rightly observed by him as 'tribal puranas' brought a turning point in the history of tribal studies. Saraswati, B.N. pleads for an anthro-historical study of Ladakh in the broader frame of Indian culture and her religion. Satyapal, studied the nomadic Gudulia Lohars of Rajasthan, who have their mobile house-cum-workshops in bullock-carts. He discussed the population, historical background, social structure, kinship terms, domestic unions, panchayat material, culture, economics life-cycle and the new horizons of the Godulia Lohar.

B.S. Guha's attempt on racial history of India figure prominently. The Census operations of the Government of India also intensified the schemes of Tribal studies during the 1961 census which are still continuing, and under their social studies section have brought out monographs on tribal culture in different parts of India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON SUGALI

Field-work was undertaken after careful examination of the previous literature pertaining to the Sugali tribe. This has given a fairly distinct picture of the Sugalis and their historical past covering more than a century. The picture that emerges is from the details obtained from the earliest ethno-historical descriptions of Craufurd (1772), Elliot (1869), Dalton (1872), Briggs (1877), Cumberlege, (1882), Ibbetson (1883), Robertson (1892), Thurston (1909, 1975), Siraz-Ul-Hassan (1920), Nanzudaiah and Iyer.
A few studies with regional bias have recently been made on the Sugalis. One such study made by the All India Banjara Seva-Sangh presents the population distribution of the Sugalis in different states of India and their socio-economic conditions in considerable detail. A graphic account given by Malhotra and Bose is available on the socio-economic life of the Sugalis in Western Rajasthan, it is treated as a scientific work. A monograph in Hindi by Vyas, N.N. (1967) which portrays the historical, social and economic life of the Sugalis of Rajasthan along with similar aspects of their counterparts in Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Gujarat is regarded as a comprehensive treatise on the regional ethnographic studies on Sugalis. And Census Organisation also published a village survey monograph (1965), which gives a brief description of the community life of the tribe in a village of Chittoor District Andhra Pradesh.

Prakash Rao, R. made an attempt to study some aspects of the cultural life of the Nomadic Banjaras. This work gives some discription of the life cycles of Banjaras, their nomadic past and present. Pratap, studied the life of the Banjaras and the impact of the urban environment on the life cycles and ceremonies. He again made an effort to study the festivals of the Banjaras and noticed the impact of Hindu Festivals in the traditional life of the Banjaras.
Charyulu, N.C., made an attempt to study the tribals of Andhra Pradesh region in general and Lambadis in particular, which also gives some of the life aspects of the Sugalis in brief. Balaji gives a brief note on the history of Banjaras and their presence in the region of Andhra Pradesh. Joseph made an effort to study the traditional festivals of the Banjaras in the region and measured the change in the celebrations. Mohan Rao, K. studied some of the socio-economic life styles and customs and traditions of the Sugalis.

Reddy, K.B., has studied the transitional aspects of the life of the Sugali tribe and noted that the Sugalis have not lost their original ethnic identity despite the phenomenal changes they welcomed in and they todate demonstrate their identity by retaining many of their socio-cultural traits. Halbar, B.G., an economic anthropologist has studied the changing economy and society of Lamani and found that it is an economy of relatively recently settled nomadic tribal community which is in the process of becoming peasant, and is no more a nomadic tribe. Shanta Mohan, N. made an attempt to study the status of Banjara women in India under the women studies series.

Thus, after careful examination of all the literature pertaining to the Sugali tribe, it is evident that most of the work is centred on the recent history of the Sugalis but none of these works pays full attention to their early society. Therefore, in the present study an attempt is made to have an indepth understanding of the history of socio-economic change in the tribe in a backward district like Anantapur in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The topic chosen for the present study examines specifically the historical processes of change in the Sugali tribe in Anantapur district which is one of the largest tribes residing in Andhra Pradesh. Sporadic distribution of the Sugali tribe is to be seen all over the country. They are known by different names in different parts of India as the Laman, Labhan, Lambadi and Sugali in Maharashtra, and south India, and as Banjara in Northern India. They inhabit not merely forest villages but also the Plains. Their past shows that they were nomadic mercantile traders and traded with Marwaris, Armenians, Beluchis and Bhils. They not only supplied food grains to the armies of Afghans (Delhi Sultanates) and Moghuls, during their war in South India but also served other South Indian rulers including the British and French. After breakdown of their traditional occupation (carriers of goods on bullock and bullock-carts), they have become semi-nomadic, gradually settling down with the assistance given by the state and central Governments by preserving their original traits.

At present in Andhra Pradesh, especially in Anantapur district the Sugali tribe follow varied occupations such as pastoralism, agriculture, agricultural labour and firewood selling. In spite of wide differences in the past community life between Sugali and other agricultural Hindu communities, now share many common features. The present study discusses to what extent tradition
governs the diversification and progress in the social and cultural life of Sugalis. It also studies the historical processes of change in Sugalis and in which direction these dynamics are taking them. These are some of the pertinent questions that have been raised and answered in the course of the present study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is to analyse the historical process of socio-economic transformation among the Sugalis. It also examines their present social, economic, political and religious aspects of life and the extent of changes that occurred in them. The following are the main objectives.

1. to study the historical and geographical background of the Sugalis,

2. to examine the changes in the traditional social structure and organisation of the Sugalis,

3. to study the process of transformation of the Sugali economy from the traditional nomadism, pastoralism to agriculture and other emerging positions,

4. to study the level of control exerted by the traditional political organisation on the Sugalis day-to-day life, and their participation in the democratic political set-up.
5. to study the impact of the Hindu religion on the religion of the Sugalis and to what extent it still retains its traditional folk elements, and

6. to study the impact of the Government welfare programmes on the life of the Sugali and to trace the processes and direction of change.

METHOD OF STUDY:

The primary aim of the present study is to understand the historical process of socio-economic change in the Sugali tribe. To achieve this objective, the researcher has depended on both the primary and secondary sources. Documentary evidences pertaining to the early culture of the Sugali tribe together with the primary data obtained from the Sugali field-settlements give a historical evidence of change in this tribe. In order to identify the tradition and transition of the Sugalis in Anantapur District, a careful study has been carried out in all settlements of the Sugalis in the District and it has been found that people in some of the settlements are still seminomadic and the rest show a tendency to become agrarian. From these two diversified economic groups the researcher has purposively selected two settlements (Narasampalli and Padapalli) representing each group for an intensive study. The settlements which are selected for an indepth study are representatives of all the Sugali settlements in Anantapur District not only in their socio-economic position but also in the degree to which they have
been influenced by the programmes and policies of the Government.

The present study has been a general description of the Sugali tribe mainly based on participant observation method. Since the Sugalis still lead a semi-nomadic and semi-agrarian life, the more sophisticated methods of study were found to be unsuitable. Important aspects of the Sugali social structure and process cannot be known completely through a questionnaire or survey research method, but this process will be understood only by close observation and careful scrutiny. Hence in the present study a combination of observation and interview methods have been used with a heavy slant on the former.

In this study the researcher selected a starting point for further analysis after a scrutiny of all the existing literature. The literature about the Sugali tribe belonging to 19th and 20th centuries provide a basis not only for understanding the initial phase and subsequent phenomena of social and cultural change among the Sugali, but also for knowing their present status. This literature throws light not only on the tradition but also on the transition that has occurred in the traditional social and cultural setting subsequently.

The conventional way of trading and transportation of the nomadic Sugali faced a setback when the British administrators of India introduced mechanised transportation in 1850's, which brought change in the socio-economic structure of Sugalis. From this point of time the Sugali tribe lost its traditional source of living and searched for alternative sources of occupation which ultimately led to
diversified avocations viz., agriculture, agricultural labour, crop watching, firewood selling etc., Herscovits (1943)\textsuperscript{43} says that one may take up some period in the history of a given culture, usually antecedent to the particular period of contact that is being investigated and analyse the historical process of change from that period onwards.

In this study the post-independent period is also taken into consideration because the Sugali community after India became a Republic received considerable attention. This historical landmark is a convenient span of time in more than one way. Another important reason for taking the birth of the Republic of India as a landmark for analysing the socio-cultural changes among the Sugalis is the effect that the Republic of India has had on the national life. After the attainment of Independence, India became a Republic in 1950 and as a consequence Community Development Projects were launched, the Panchayat Raj system and elections were initiated and provision for special reservation rights for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes were made under the Constitution of India. The idea of Parliamentary Democracy emphasising equal rights and opportunities irrespective of caste, colour, creed, community and sex has its own effect on the social system.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The survey of human societies, myths and beliefs on the basis of observation and study of past records is nothing but an
extension of the discipline of history. Making use of historical generalisation for the sake of bringing out structural, functional, socio-economic epistemological and anthropological configurations etc., is known as the process of conceptualisation of history. Conceptualising history as a process of life belongs to the systems of economy, culture and sociology. The conceptualisation in the case of Sugali requires a thorough understanding of the historical process of socio-economic change. Hence a number of culture oriented concepts are employed to study total process of change in the socio-economic life of Sugalis. The proposed concepts are sanskritisation, westernisation, Modernisation, Great and Little Traditions.

The above concepts have been criticised on the ground of their inadequacy to explain the totality of change in every culture because they identify change with the spread of norms and values in regional and national spheres. Despite the lacunae in some of the concepts, each one is useful, to some extent, in analysing the socio-cultural change among the Sugalis. But no single concept is all comprehensive and can be put to use in the analysis of socio-cultural change without the help of other concepts with regards to the Sugalis.

In this study the Ecological and Historical approach serves as an adequate basis to comprehend the traditional and transitional aspects of the Sugali way of life. The historical approach focusses on
the sequence of development of single trait, institution, society or culture with the passage of time. This strategy seeks to understand that cultural trait or intact society, in terms of origins, growth and development, events and processes flowing along a temporal continuum, which constitutes the unique career area of that society or bit of pattern behaviour. The ecological approach emphasises, on the other hand, the ties of inter-dependence within and between populations and in the relations between population and their environment. The historical and ecological approach facilitates the understanding of how different sections of the Sugali society have come to the present stage. This approach in a nutshell, provides an understanding of the causes of the processes of change in the Sugali tribe. It traces out the relations of interdependence within and between the Sugali population and their environments across the dimension of time.

SCHEME OF STUDY

The entire thesis is divided into eight chapters. The First Chapter is an introductory one and deals with the aim and scope of the present study. The origin and historical background of the Sugali tribe along with the necessary background of the area of study is explained in the Second Chapter.

The early society of the Sugali tribe and the influence of various factors that brought change in the traditional life of Sugalis is discussed in the Third Chapter. In the Fourth Chapter, the early economic history of sugali tribe and the change that occurred in the economic life of the tribe has been explained and discussed.
Politics and religion are two inseparable things that play a vital role in the socio-economic life of human society. In the Fifth and Sixth Chapters, these two aspects of early Sugali society are carefully studied and compared with the present situation to assess the extent of transition in the Sugali society and economy.

The Seventh chapter discusses the various welfare measure launched by the Government and their influence in bringing the traditional Sugali society and economy towards modernisation. The Eight chapter presents Summary and Conclusions of the study.

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