The tribal economy is influenced by the habitat in which they are inhabiting and level of knowledge accumulated about the natural resources and skills for exploiting these resources. The tribal communities in India may be broadly classified into six groups on the basis of economic levels, viz., food gathering, pastoralism, shifting cultivation, settled cultivation, artisans and industrial and mining labour. In India, the tribal societies are characterized by subsistence agriculture, absence of adequate avenues of employment opportunities, inadequate supply of credit and marketing facilities and lack of communication facilities. Besides, they are subjected to different kinds of exploitation by the non-tribal landlords, businessmen and money lenders. Further, they reside in poor houses and in secluded places with low levels of interaction with other communities. All these factors contributed to their backwardness in social and economic spheres when compared to the relatively advanced sections of the State.

Wealth is an important constituent of the community life and plays a deciding role in the formation of the cultural and social structure of any society. The economic structure in tribal communities is specifically different from that of non-tribal or advance groups of people. Tribal social economy depends on various factors. They have a very simple technology which fits well with their ecological surroundings. They are usually considered as an economically
independent group of people having a living pattern of labour, division of labour and specialization gift and ceremonial exchange, trade and barter, credit and value, capital formation, land tenure and good tangible and intangible economic status. All these have their own specialty which identified their economy in the broader setup of Indian economy.

The vast number of tribal people, who live in India are to be found at various levels of economic development. Generally speaking, tribal economy in almost every case has been found to be mixed. The tribal stage does not provide for any specialization of functions and as such a variety of occupations are pursued by a tribe. And when a tribe takes to one specialized occupation, it behaves like a caste. The economic life of any Indian tribe cannot be described as a simple stage either of direct appropriation or of mere accidental collectors. The fact is that a tribe undertakes all kinds of occupations to eke out its subsistence. The present chapter discusses the early economic life of Sugalis and after sedentarization how their traditional economy has transformed from nomadic trading pastoralism to settled peasantry.

In early days there were carriers of merchandise when the local chieftain or rulers of different dynasties like those of the Palegars, and the Mughals, Marathas, Nawabs of Hyderabad and Mysore, the Rajputs, etc. fought among themselves. They had to fall back upon the Sugalis who were transporting merchandise in the form of food grains etc., necessary for the soldiers. Those were periods when communications were difficult for want of good roads. The Sugalis had a good number of pack bullocks. They did not take sides with any of the political powers and were concerned only with the payments they received. Later, when the East India Company and then the British occupied the country, the Sugalis received their munificent patronage.

According to Craufurd (1942)\textsuperscript{2}, the Sugalis have come into the Southern India as transporters of food suppliers for the armies of
Delhi Sultanates, Moghuls, Marathas, Nizam and British in their raids in the South early in the 17th Century. When the army had to face severe difficulties due to bad communications and lack of proper transport, the mercantile Sugali helped the army by quickly supplying rations and other necessities with the help of their hundreds and thousands of pack animals.

The Sugalis or Banjaras are used to attach themselves to the armies of the Maghuls and the British and supply grains to them during the wars. They purchased grains from rural areas and transported them on their bullocks. In a way they were pastoral people who raised big herds of bullocks and maintained them. Even today after shedding their old way of life. Some Sugalis are interested in cattle breeding and cattle rearing at certain places. It is alleged that they had acquired criminal habits when they used to move about place to place in search of their livelihood. When internal communications improved by the introduction of railways and improvement in road transport they lost their position. Though they have suffered economically they have abandoned their hazards and nomadic and migratory life, and settled down in groups permanently to eke out their livelihood. Besides this, some changes have taken place in the sphere of marriage and other social customs due to this development. Now the family life is more compact and stabilized.

Making the field ready for sowing is the male's job whereas sowing, weeding, transplanting and harvesting are mostly done by women labourers. Men usually attend to hard works like poughing, leveling the land etc. If they find more remunerative work they even go to other villages. For weeding, harvesting and transplanting, one needs delicacy and skill which the women are expected to possess and they are most sought after by the ryots for these operations.

Many of the Sugali are engaged in manufacturing of lime which is used for whitewashing the houses. The same industry may also
account at least for a few people engaged in trade and commerce, as they themselves sell the finished product in the neighbouring villages without the help of any middle man.

Now-a-days the Sugali have new opportunities to work for their socio-economic betterment. Most of them have taken to pastoralism, agriculture and various types of labour for their means of livelihood. Although a few Sugalis in Western Rajasthan still carry on their traditional occupation of salt-trade. They are finding it difficult to carry on their occupation because of shortage of grazing land for their cattle\(^3\). After their settlement in the thandas (camps), setup permanent residence with thatched houses. The cattle which they used for good breed of bullocks for their economic avocation in the past have helped them to have good calves for sale and supplement their income. By maintaining many cattle Sugalis started to work as agriculturalists, farm labourers as well as casual labourers in the fields of non-Sugali to earn their livelihood. The Sugali, thus, have learned the agrarian techniques by retaining their pastoral tradition.

At present Sugalis have taken to many kinds of economic pursuits and among them pastoralism and agriculture have become the two primary occupations of the Sugalis not only in the study settlements but also in all the Sugali settlements of the Rayalaseema region. Broadly speaking the Sugalis under study, depend on pastoralism and agriculture. Under study area, the Sugalis of semi-urban thandas are primarily agriculturists and the Sugalis of rural thandas are pastoralists. This dissimilarity has arisen because of the difference in their resources base. The Sugalis of rural thandas have been forced to depend on pastoralism as the primary occupation because of the prevailing ecological constraints such as hilly nature of the surrounding area. The Sugalis of rural thandas who practice pastoralism as their primary occupation also depend on agriculture. Pastoralism is slowly getting transformed in these thandas. In a broader sense, the Sugalis of rural thandas can rightly be called as
'agro-pastoralist' whereas the Sugalis of semi-urban thandas practice agriculture as their primary occupation and also to some extent follow the modern style of life. The settlements which are located in plains have developed an increasing interest towards agriculture and simultaneously they supplement their income with their goat and sheep rearing.

In Rayalaseema region, it was noticed that in the last two decades cattle's number is reduced mainly due to fatal diseases and lack of sufficient fodder. At the same time, exploitation of the forest for firewood both for domestic consumption and selling, over grazing are intensified. Cultivation of hill slopes by the local population has caused rapid detraction of the fodder and vegetation has been totally reduced to scattered shrubs. The reduction in tree growth, in forested tracts also led to inadequacy of water resources and grazing ground for cattle in the dry season. All these difficulties have compelled the Sugalis to seek other means of livelihood such as cultivation, goat keeping and other economic pursuits. In other regions, the Sugalis are well settled in rural areas and majority of them are engaged in agriculture and agricultural labour. Some Sugalis possess a few acres of land each. This however, is not sufficient to make their both ends meet, so they have to engage themselves in other subsidiary occupations like agricultural labour and selling firewood etc.

PASTORALISM

The pastoral tradition of India was introduced from beyond the sub-continent of invaders, or by traders. Thus, certain material traits of pastoralism were introduced in India from Central Asia by Aryan invaders around 1500 B.C. Rituals, religious themes and other non-material elements of the Indian pastoral tradition also introduced by the Aryans, who recorded these aspects of life in the Smritis or Vedas. The entry of Aryans into Northern India was followed by other
invaders, nomads such as the Parthians, Scythians and others who also contributed to the pastoral tradition of India. A search for the origin of the Indian pastoral tradition much focuses on India itself and on indigenous populations of the pre-Aryan sub-continent. The animal emblazoned seals of Harappa and Mohanjadaro suggest a concern with cattle and other species which antedates the invasions of nomads. Moreover, cultural-historical reconstruction, based upon both archaeological and ethnological evidence, describes a powerful connection between ancient and modern pastoral practices in India.

Pestoralism in modern India is found in a variety of economic and geographical contexts. In economic terms, pastoralism may be the primary activity of a group and the principal source of its food, clothing and shelter, or the care and exploitation of domesticated animals may play a secondary role in a way of life which is primarily agricultural. In this context, pastoralism may ensure a supplementary source of food, or be a source of cash if animals are breed for sale. Still another context is exemplified by agro-pastoralists, people whose economic activity is somewhat evenly divided, or balanced between cultivation and herding.

**LIVE STOCK:** In agricultural economy, live-stock plays an important role in supplying animal energy for agricultural operations and cart pulling; in providing dairy products and as a form of capital to be increased and sold in times of economic contingencies. Cows are treated with respect by the Sugali, as they supply draught oxen and bullocks for the agricultural purposes. The cows are associated with their chief God, Krishna, the Divine cow-herd.

In the past, the importance of bullocks in the Sugali economy was considerable since they were used as beasts of burden. The raising of live-stock was a secondary concern for them since they were primarily traders and transporters. After sedentarisation the Sugali began to raise cattle mainly for milk and draught bullocks rather than
for sale. They show their liking for cattle by nostalgic references to their tradition of maintaining great herds during their heyday of transport and trade. Even now some of the Sugalis in the interior Rajasthan have still retained their traditional occupation of salt trade; but now they are finding it difficult to maintain large herds of cattle. It is found that the shortage of grazing lands is the main problem faced by them. It is stated that at present the Sugalis of Rayalaseema region are earning money by selling bull-calves. After the birth of bull-calves they take much care. They allot sufficient milk and take them for grazing for about six to ten months. And the Sugalis feel happy if is surplus milk that can be used for curd-making, feeding kinsmen and entertaining guests. The cattle dung is used as manure to the cultivable lands and the same is also sold to other cultivators in the settlements or to the neighbouring caste farmers. In addition to that, cattle dung is used for plastering floors and walls of the houses of Sugali. The urine of cows is used for bathing children and for sprinkling in the houses in order to kill bacteria.

Even today the Sugali attribute the diseases of their cattle either to the wrath of settlement deities or to the influence of the evil-eye or intruding spirits or sorcery and to please the settlement deities or to counteract the special worships – The pastoral Sugali resort to traditional methods of medicines used to cure the diseases of their cattle. Even now only traditional methods are adopted for castrating the cattle. They believe that the castration process done by a doctor may lead to swelling or rupturing of the testis of the castrated cattle.

The Sugali respondents informed that at present the most common pastoral pattern is radial. After sedentarization, the Sugalis characterized by a diurnal movement of animals and people, out from settlements in the morning and back in the evening. In the morning after milking the cattle are led out of the settlements to grazing grounds beyond the settlement and village fields, where they are allowed to graze all day under the constant supervision of herders,
often children, who return with the animals to the village by darkness. The present tendency of the pastoral Sugali of the region is to take up goat-keeping and to become full-fledged agriculturists like their neighbouring caste people, as they have felt that cattle is highly volatile and unstable form of wealth. This instability causes fluctuation in individual's wealth or economic status over the course of his life time and it is difficult to recoup herd losses. Now the pastoral Sugali feels that the pastoralism is a labourious business. Thus, the pastoral Sugali is forced to turn to other activities. Government has been implementing welfare programmes persuading them to take up goat-keeping, sheep-tending.

It was observed in both rural and semi-urban thandas that the sheep was maintained like cattle and goats. But the number of sheep maintained by the Sugali was lesser than cattle and goats. The sheep are valued for meat and milk products rather than wool. Rams are sacrificed in considerable numbers on different religious ceremonies every year. The sheep flocks are driven out from the camp in the morning and they return at mid-day.

It was clearly noticed that there was a great tendency among the pastoral Sugali to become agriculturists. They are making representations to the State Government and district administration seeking permission to cultivate the nearby deforested lands. But the permission has not been given to the Sugali because the desired land is located in the reserved forest. In case the Government comes forward to give some agricultural land to the pastoral Sugali, the pastoral Sugali would soon turn into agriculturists.

**AGRICULTURE**

Weakening of this tribal community resulted in class formation and competition for source resources. This had adverse consequences
on all Sugalis, mainly on those from poorer classes. Their workload has increased and led to the deterioration in all walks of life. Thus the Sugalis were forced to choose agriculture and they started adopting other occupations of neighboring caste societies. Thus the forest policies led Sugali women to take up alternative works such as those of wage labourers.

The agricultural work-cycled among the Sugalis is broadly divided into four inter-connected stages, viz., preparing the land for sowing, sowing seed, weeding and harvesting. In most of the places Sugalis are dependent on dry cultivation. They are at the mercy of nature. If rains come at suitable time, their expectations go high regarding the harvest while if it fails they look forward for hard days to come. The agricultural season starts in the month of May. In April, whenever they find time, the elder members of Sugalis household both men and women, go to the field and remove the stubble or waste of the previous year. Ploughing also starts in the same month. By the end of May they keep the fields ready for sowing and wait anxiously for the rains to come. Cow dung is the only manure applied to the fields. And some are aware of the use of chemical fertilizers. They produce ragi, (millets), jowar, gingelli, chilies and pulses. Watching the crops is important work of the agricultural operations. During the night they leave the fields without any watchman. During the weeding seasons, besides attending to their fields, they participate in the weeding operations in the fields of others in lieu of daily wages. Harvesting is mainly the job of women. During the ploughing season some Lambdas house-holds with bullocks of their own, plough the fields of others on rental basis.

During the last 15-20 years, Sugalis in Rayalaseema region purchased land, both wet and dry located in the respective adjoining villages. They also started irrigating their lands with the help of electric motors and their methods of cultivation are in no way different from those of other agricultural Castes. Through the demonstrating
effect of pioneering Sugali cultivation, the non-cultivating Sugalis have also desired and tried to achieve the status of a cultivator.

Today, the needs and aspirations of the Sugalis in Rayalaseema region have increased within a typically peasant frame of mind. In this respect the peasant Sugalis are far more advanced than those of western Rajasthan who need a fresh orientation and persuasion to take up agriculture. The Sugalis have contacts with the non-tribals of their adjacent territories. Small groups of artisans in the surrounding villages provide them with such items as pots, metal implements and certain ornaments. But the relations between cultivators and craftsmen were basically on an exchange basis and their mutual interdependence operated outside the market economy of neighboring areas.

Majority of the Sugalis are subsistence farmers. They grow monsoon crops during the so called kharif season. Because of the failure of the monsoons, they could not raise the crops every year. Hence they are compelled to resort to other occupations like liquor selling, sale of lime mortar, casual labour, etc. Their chief crops are sorghum, rice, ragi, pulses and other millets. In Sugali folk literature, the millets and pulses figure prominently. A fundamental change has occurred in the agricultural pattern of the Sugalis in the first half of the 20th century. Owing to the scarcity of rainfall, the entire cropping pattern of Rayalaseema region underwent a dramatic change. The people in these areas grew the cash crops like Groundnut and Sunflower. Groundnut crop is extensively cultivated because of the possibility of the speedily moving large quantities of this crop by tractors and lorries to the Groundnut markets. The replacement of food crops by groundnut affects most parts of Rayalaseema region and this reflected in the substantial imports of millets and pulses into the region which once was self-sufficient in these crops.
The Sugalis of Adavibapanapalli thanda in Anantapur district because of the failure of the crops, borrow money from Groundnut merchants and moneylenders dwelling on the periphery of the settlement. Thus had started the vicious circle of repaying borrowed money by delivering the crop to the creditor, one and half times the borrowed money as the next harvest was reaped. Unless that harvest was exceptionally good, the repayments usually resulted in the recurrence of the need to borrow money to meet their expenses. It is not surprising that Sugali men often tried to live a parasitic life on the labour of Sugali women. The anxiety of man to monopolize his skill in plough culture is reflected in the taboo that is observed almost all over India, against the woman's handling the plough. But woman's work load has by no means decreased.

In almost all the traditional peasant societies, cultivation by plough is considered to be the master operation in agriculture. This gives a decisive domination to the man in the whole agricultural complex. A few sections of the Sugali community are intended to introduce the innovations in agriculture. But technological change in agriculture has not radically altered the social arrangement. There are two aspects of technological change. These are mechanization and introduction of high yielding varieties along with ancillary inputs, particularly assured water supply.

Mechanization has reduced the workload of man in preparing the soil. Power operated irrigation has also reduced the workload of Sugali men. But these two together have contributed to the increase in the total workload in agriculture where the time gap between two crops is short, mechanization has made multiple cropping possible. Multiple cropping increased the quantum of work in sowing, transplantation weeding, harvesting, transport and threshing. It can be stated that while the new strategy in agriculture displace the man's workforce to some extent, it increases the work load of the woman. But their culture factors intervene. Owing to their inability to arrange
the inputs required for modernized agriculture the marginal Sugali farmers frequently operate in the same fields as agricultural labourers. It is not socially derogatory for the Sugali woman belonging to small farmer households to work in their own fields. It is derogatory to work in the field of others as paid labourers. Thus a scarcity of labour comes to prevail during the peak period. To meet the shortage, seasonal migration of labour from other regions takes place on a massive scale.

Saving has become an important aspect and earning more has become a status symbol. Consequently in turn to save more, they have taken up growing cash crops such as chilies, tomatoes, sugarcane, etc. The majority of them are engaged in dry farming. Some Sugalis are aware of the Co-operative Banks and Government subsidies for agricultural development women are using DRDA loans for improving their traditional crops also. But one of the main problems of Sugalis is their dependence on traditional moneylenders who lend money for high interest rates. As the Sugalis are often unable to pay the amount with its high interests, the private moneylenders resort to mortgaging their lands. This leads to further exploitation of the Sugali community, as literacy rate is very low among them.

The severity of the drought in Anantapur district is leaving many a scar on Sugali life. Life in the thandas as well as in villages has been engulfed by a bundle of problems revolving around lack of work and food. The two basic problems have a snowballing effect on all aspects of life. Migration of wage seekers including small and marginal farmers, facing continuous crop failure, struggle to earn meal a day, distress sale of cattle due to shortage of fodder, scarcity of drinking water and ill health in the absence of nutritious food mark the drought in the district. Many of the Sugalis in Kadiri and Nallamada areas of Anantapur district migrate to Hyderabad and Bangalore every year.
At present there is a substantial rise in the standard of living of the Sugali as a result of the pursuit of agricultural operations. This has raised the incomes of the Sugali and consequently standard of living of the well-to-do caste peasants is being imitated. This is a remarkable change in the economic history of the Sugali from the mercantile nomadic transporters and petty-traders, pastorals to peasantry. It was observed that the needs and aspirations of the Sugali according to the present study, have increased. Their need for fertile land, good cattle, better irrigational facilities and assured crops is a phenomenon that can be called as peasantizing process among the Sugalis and now they are getting thoroughly sedentarised. In this respect the peasant Sugalis under study are far more advanced as compared to the nomadic Banjara of the Western Rajasthan who requires a fresh orientation and persuasion to take up agriculture.

This economic change has its impact on the traditional political organization of the Sugali. With the economic emancipation of the Sugali into independent, individual family enterprise, the role of their Headman, called ‘Naik’ and his council of elders (Panch) has undergone some change. When they were nomadic transporters, they had to give to their traditional occupation and were dependent on forest work and hunting. Their communal solidarity was, so strong. When their ‘Naik’ was all powerful politically and directed even economic activities of the settlement. He (Naik) ordered when to set-out on journey, banditry, hunting and fishing etc., but today the hold of the Naik and his council of elders over the community have slackened.

**MODERN METHODS IN AGRICULTURE:** The agricultural and rural development essentially depend upon a system of related functions. The utility of agricultural innovations depends very much upon the large-scale addition of these innovations by the fillers of the soil. Owing to the failure of the monsoons for the last five years the Sugalis are supposed to utilize the water resources with the help of modern
agricultural technology in the farming. Although the farmers are becoming more and more aware of modern agricultural technology, the degree of adoption of the innovations varies from farmer to farmer. It is significantly less in the case of the Sugalis. The peasants take their decision based on their knowledge and attitude which again is connected with socio-economic status and value orientation.

Keeping these facts in view, the researcher made an attempt to find out agro-economic characteristics of Sugalis and their adoption of modern agricultural technology. The concept of value orientation is very essential for knowing the psychological characteristics of the Sugalis. The value orientation (fatalism – Scientism) is a dimension of values in the Man-Nature Orientation. Here the concept of fatalism has been defined of values that human situation and acts are predetermined by some super natural power and can never or little is influence by individual violation or by act of anyone else. On the other hand scientism has been defined as a belief that situations are the result of natural and or social forces, which can be understood and changed by human volition or by human action. And the value orientation of Sugalis was studied on fatalism-scientism dimension developed by Chattopadhyay (1963).

The perception of Sugalis about their value orientation was studied. It is observed that majority of the respondents have very low values of orientation. It reflects that most of the Sugalis solely depend on their fates and they are not scientific in their outlook and approach. Rather it may be said that majority of the Sugalis believe, “every man’s life has already been settled and determined by his fate” or “a basic tragedy is that man proposes but god disposes.”

The selected respondents in both rural and semi-urban thandas were asked to mention important duties, which are important in their economic and overall development. They were further asked to rank
their duties according to the degree of importance they attached to each one of them.

It was found that the Sugalis of Rayalaseema region perceived 'provision' of educational facility/primary school as the most important duty the Government must perform for social, economic and overall development of Sugalis. Other duties perceived as important are: "to provide medical facility/health center, provision of loans with subsidy for house construction; to provide better road transport facility and to provide electricity facility. So it might be stated that education, health, house and road communication are most important to the Sugalis for their overall development.

Now-a-days, in all study settlements, the Sugalis who belong to the age group of 35-40 years, are adopting the modern agricultural techniques, under the guidance of the agricultural officers at Mandal level. Because of the scarcity of water for agriculture, they are using the sprinklers and drip irrigation system in their farming. The Naik of the settlement (thanda) buys the tractor and hire it to other Sugalis.

Other implements like iron ploughshare dragged by the tractor, sowing the seeds through the pipes of the tiller, machines, which are used to separate the groundnut from the plants, are used by the Sugalis.

Land and forest are the twin major sources of living of the Sugalis and they have become so close a part of their life that it became a philosophy and prime mover of their civilization. Large scale tree felling and deforestation apart from all its attendant effects such as the imbalance in the eco-system, denudation, dissatisfaction of the lands and so on, had led to serve strain on the Sugali life. The loss of the forest resources and decrease in the average rainfall and all its subsequent results in their economy and agriculture, the role of the Sugalis further difficult as their families as a whole are subjected to the serve and adverse effect of drought. The ill effects of the
deforestation resulted in destroying the vital resources of soil and water. As a result the Sugali women has to spend twice her energy for domestic labour as she has to spend nearly six to nine hours in household work, fetching water, collection of fire wood, collection of limestone and manufacturing of the lime in the kilns, etc.

Hence, the traditional life of Sugalis has changed entirely in a different socio-economic set up which differ from other tribals as well as non-tribals for they lived totally in the exclusive settlement called Thandas and experience entirely a different life.

**AGRICULTURAL LABOUR**

Agricultural labour is another important occupation in which Lambdas are engaged in. Labour is required for weeding, harvesting, sowing and transplanting. Majority of the people taking part in agricultural labour are women though now and then men also participate, if they have no other work.

Men with skills in agricultural operations like ploughing, driving the seed-plough and leveling the land engage themselves as permanent workers with the landlords on yearly basis. The wage given to this type of work purely depends on the skill of the person. This kind of activity is very common in Rayalaseema region. Generally the contract is for one year starting from one Ugadi festival to another Ugadi festival. In addition to the agricultural operations the labourer has to do many other odd jobs in the house of the landlord; he has to look after the cattle and feed them, has to keep the house clean, fetch fuel for cooking, and draw water for the use in the household and so on. Sometimes the master fives him three sets of dress in a year consisting of a dhoti and an upper cloth in each set, if it is stipulated in the agreement.
Sugali men are instructed with the work of harvesting. The animal power has been harnessed in cultivation. It is taboo for the women to handle the plough or even to touch it. It is observed that the taboo on ploughing reaches far more constraints over land. In the absence of male member in the family, a male from outside was approached for ploughing. This is because it is too arduous and physically exhausting for women. While ploughing has become man's monopoly, women's work has by no means reduced. Transplanting, weeding, winnowing and husking are exclusively done by women.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

Very few Sugalis are at present engaged in trade and commerce which is their traditional occupation. In Rayalaseema region, some of the Sugalis are engaged in manufacture and sale of lime used for whitewashing the houses. A superior quality of lime used along with chewing pan is made in small quantities and Sugalis women carry head load of the same in baskets and sell in the neighbouring village in exchange of grains. It was observed that a few Sugalis under study area especially in semi-urban thandas were competing with other communities in business and were having pan, beedi and cigarette shop. A few were also engaged in fruit and vegetable selling. The sales are however carried on by women only. This is a new development in their economic avocation; in fact none of the shop is older than 10 years. Here the main concern is ethnicity and economic exchange among the Sugalis. It describes the Sugalis economic niche, showing also why it is more appropriate to refer to economic exchange than to “work”, which in an industrial capitalist system is closely associated with wage labour. A recurrent theme in the literature is that the Sugalis' traditional livelihood has gone, and that they will disappear with development. This underestimates their continuing ability to
adapt to changes in the larger economy. It assumes that the Sugalis have been isolated and cannot survive unless they remain so.

The Sugalis or Banjaras as they often prefer to be described by outsiders, are directly dependent on a sedentary or host community within which they circulate, supplying goods, services and occasional labour. A considerable number of the Sugalis in Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh are still nomadic, at least for part of the year, living in caravans or trailers towed by lorries or vans. Even those who move into houses are not necessarily permanently sedentary. That, the Sugalis shift from ox-drawn wagons to motorized transport, is an example of their economic adaptation. Modern technology has actually enhanced their nomadism. Unlike migrant workers who move from place to place for 'settled' and wage-labour jobs, the Sugalis operate largely independently of wage-labour. The greatest opportunities for Sugalis lie in those occupations which others are less able or less willing to undertake.

The Sugali family is both self-employed and actually or potentially mobile with tractors and minimum overheads. With these advantages, the Sugalis can cater for occasional needs where those are gaps in demand and supply and market forces are uneven; and where any large scale or permanent, specialized business would be uneconomic or insecure. The character of Sugali occupations can be summarized as 'the occasional supply of goods, services and labour to a host economy where demand is irregular in time and place.'

The descriptive details and history of a particular occupation become less important than the consideration of aspects common to all. A list of the occupations of Sugalis is indicative. It would include:

1) The hawking of manufactured goods – either small items like cosmetic goods and household articles etc., or agricultural products like ragi, jowar, wheat, pulses and other edible fruits, etc. 2) Seasonal farm work on daily wages like flower picking,
weeding, harvesting, etc. 3) The hawking of local made liquor like 'dharu', traditional medicine made of locally available plants, fortune telling and sharpening of knife, selling of the lime-mortar, etc.

The number and variety of occupations reveal the Sugalis' remarkable adaptation to changes in the larger economy. But now-a-days the Sugalis, like the dominant sedimentary population, have become concentrated in urban industrialized areas.

Throughout these changes the Sugalis have retained the preference for self-employment which has always been a crucial defining boundary between them and the non-Sugalis. Economic exchanges with non-Sugalis are, as far as possible, on the Sugalis' own terms. Wage labour by contrast would entail working to the orders of a non-Sugali and would put restrictions on the location, times and type of work. The Sugalis regard welfare as merely a modern equivalent to begging and so not degrading. The Sugalis even avoid wage-labour economic relationships amongst themselves. A Sugali may work with, but not for, another Sugali. Economic cooperation occurs in work partnership; two men might enter a temporary partnership to do some tarmacking jobs together. This often occurs between affines.

Ideally, the Sugalis have a multiplicity of occupations both overtime and at anytime. Given this absence of specialization, the Sugalis wide ranging skills are appropriate and necessary. The vast majority of Sugalis can neither read nor write. Few have ever attended school. This lack is normally seen only in negative terms.

The Sugalis' skills include knowing the local economy and the local people; manual dexterity, mechanical ingenuity.
SAVINGS

Sugalis in the traditional set up never thought of savings, because of their irregular and low income. They are well known for their habits of extravagance in matters of food and drink. In the present set up savings have become a status issue. In the traditional set up Sugali women's earnings were spent totally for household purposes as men used their earnings lavishly on drinking and food. This leads towards their children's starvation as well as poverty. Consequently dependence of Sugali on money lenders increased for agricultural purposes such as for buying seeds, sowing, etc. Money lenders charged exorbitant rate of interests and this economic exploitation also resulted sometimes in the mortgaging of agricultural land. Quite often Sugali peasants being mostly illiterates, cannot recognize the amount that is written in the records thus heightening their exploitation. Some of the Sugalis even migrated to towns in order to escape from the harassment of money lenders.

FORESTRY

The Sugali under study area, earn their livelihood not only from rendering casual and agriculture labour but also on fire-wood and liquor selling and some of the older Sugali go to the fields of agricultural Sugali as well as to the caste farmers of neighbourin villages for watching the crops. There are very few families who are depending on fire-wood selling either as main or secondary occupation. And those who rely mainly on wage labour, go to the forest when they are not employed, and fetch head-loads of firewood for sale around surrounding villages. Most of the firewood sellers sell their bullock-cart loads of firewood in distant markets, where there is a heavy demand. A large number of Sugalis took to firewood selling as it is a remunerative source of income in the region. Some of the Sugalis also collect fruits, edible roots and leaves which are used as
vegetable for both their own use and for sale. It is stated that generally older people and children carry this type of business as it is relatively easier to them. They collect wild berries, mangoes, marking nuts honey, wax, gum etc., and sell them in the neighbouring villages.

Though liquor making and drinking is prohibited in Rayalaseema region, but most of the Sugali believed to have an illicit liquor making distillery for personal consumption as well as for sale to outsiders secretly. It is observed that it is also not prospering because they themselves heavily addicted and consume bulk of the liquor distilled. With the rise in the price of jiggery, the most important ingredient for making liquor, the price of liquor has also gone up and prohibition bring in decline in the number of customers. The Sugalis engaged in the illicit distillation of liquor therefore find themselves in a tight corner.

**CRIMINAL PROPENSITIES**

In order to control criminal activities, Sugalis were brought under the ambit of the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Till 1977, Sugalis were treated as a nomadic tribe in all parts of the Andhra Pradesh except in Telangana. Sugalis in the past were notorious for their criminal activities. They used to move about from one area to another area in organized gangs supplying grains to the armies and they were placed at the far end of the army where discipline was very loose. It is said that it provided them an opportunity to look and commit robberies and blackmail isolated way farers. It is on record that the Sugalis enjoyed certain immunity by the orders of the Muslim rulers from being troubled for crimes of certain nature. To carry the grains Sugalis maintained herds of bullocks.

At present the incidence of crime among the Sugalis seems to have decreased because of the measures taken by the government and
various social organizations. The police department also is taking some steps to wean them from the criminal activities.

**PATTERN OF CONSUMPTION**

**FOOD:** The subsistence nature of the economy can be inferred from the high proportion of expenditure on food, a common feature of all subsistence economies. The staple diet of Sugali consists of the ragi, jowar, and rice. These three are equally consumed by them with jowar and ragi they prepare an item of food which is locally called 'sangati'. The staple food of Sugali now is the same as that of the other local communities: rice and jowar almost balance, supplemented occasionally by other cereals, and certain other accompaniments like pulses and vegetables. Some old informants of Sugali say that during their nomadic transportation they rarely find time to prepare food because of their continuous travel from one place to another place. Before setting up a journey, the Sugali women prepare bread (cake) with the flour of jowar or bajra, which can be preserved and eaten upto three months.

The Sugali are also fond of non-vegetarian food. They eat all kinds of meat except that of the cow and buffalo (beef). Consumption of both these flesh is considered taboo among them. Further, as a practice, they do not cook non-vegetarian food in their kitchens. They cook meat on hearths outside their houses, and they enter their homes only after eating and cleaning the utensils used for the same. Consumption of non-vegetarian food is more frequent than those of the surrounding caste villagers. If their means permit they would like to take non-vegetarian food everyday. And some of the Sugalis also are fond of eating pork.

There is no difference in the food habits of the Sugali in the region. Generally no family consumes milk even when the milk
products such as butter milk, curd and ghee. Very few Sugalis especially educated, are in the habit of taking tea or coffee. Each family will have a brass plate which is called Kancherothali generally the daughter-in-law of the family possess this plate given by her parents at the time of marriage. None in house except the owner can take food in Kancherothali.

Changes are also seen in food habits. The reasons for this can be attributed to their earlier dependence on forest food. With the introduction of forest policies, the increasing scarcity of forest products and also introduction of settled living, considerable changes have taken place on the practice of agricultural operations. The food diet, of late consists of ragi, jowar, rice, dal and vegetables and also non-vegetarian food like meat of sheep, goat, chicken and pork.

**CLOTHING:** The Sugali tribe is considered one of the most interesting and colourful tribes in India. After their sedentarisation consequent upon economic mobility and increased cultural contact, they have discarded their traditional dress pattern to a greater extent, which is considered to be one of the distinctive traits of Sugalis. It is observed that the both men’s and women’s wear changed to such a greater extent that it is indistinguishable from hat of neighbouring peasant castes. The Sugali men wear a shirt as an upper garment and a dhoti as a lower garment, while the women wear a saree and a blouse. They say that traditional dress is not only a costly affair but also heavier and is not possible to clean them as modern sarees. Men started to wear terlin, and terricotton dress and this change is noticed only in the case of younger generation. And it also appears that only older people are stinking to traditional dress.

**DRINKING HABIT:** Craving for drink may be traced back to the dawn of human society. The use of alcoholic drink has extended to over virtually all parts of the earth. In primitive societies generally alcoholic beverages have been used variously as a common drink in ceremonial
festivals and to indulge in merry-making. In most of the Sugali legends and in contemporary rituals and celebration toddy and liquor find a unique place.

It is a well known fact that drinking serves not one or two or three functions, but a broad spectrum of functions. The Sugali drinking behaviour appears to serve social, ceremonial, economic, nutritional, medicinal, religious, psychological and integrative functions. The Sugalis drink for social integration and as a token of social solidarity and unity. They drink in friendship and in enmity. Success is to be ensured or celebrated with a drink. Birth, death, ritual, festival and harvest are occasions for drinking. They drink for divorce or reunion, play and dance. The sacred attitudes towards drinking may be established from other striking evidences too. For example, the trees from which drinks are prepared are treated as sacred and hence it is consumed even today also.

During their nomadic days, they must have been distilling liquor or purchasing it for consumption. After they settled down, they had to purchase liquor and toddy from licensed shops as domestic distillation and tapping were banned. Consuming country-liquor or government liquor with less alcoholic content has proved very costly affair to the Sugali. However, at both rural and semi-urban thandas, a few men consume liquor regularly and the rest consume occasionally, especially on the days of socio-religious occasions. It is noticed that the Sugali women folk consume liquor along with their men folk during occasions like birth tonsure, marriage, death and on festivals. Now-a-days there is a greater tendency among the Sugalis of study area to give up the habit of liquor drinking. Among Sugalis under study area, the number of women consuming alcohol has greatly come down. Thus, it is an important aspect of change in the Sugali way of life.
HEALTH AND EDUCATION: In general, Sugali settlements can be described as very neat and clean. The front yards of houses are swept daily and water mixed with cow dung is sprinkled at least once in two days. It is observed that majority of the Sugali thandas in the study area are only a conglomeration of a few huts and more pucca houses outside the main village. So, normally they do not have any problem of congestion. No particular disease can be attributed to Sugali exclusively. The expenditure on health and medicare among the Sugali is very little. The expenditure on health they incur on ailments mostly goes to the village quacks and professional and non professional shamans. They also mostly depend on roots and herbs which are available in the adjoining forests for curing their diseases. When all their efforts fail to get healed, then they go to government hospitals. However, the Sugali have not completely stopped depending on herbs and roots and traditional magico-religious practices for curing the diseases.

Sometime after settling down, the Sugali have developed a liking in sending their children to schools. After Independence, the children of the Sugali have been entitled to free education and scholarship. Even then the Sugali have to incur some miscellaneous expenditure on items like clothing, travelling and pocket money to pursue higher education in institutions which are situated at the taluq headquarters in four districts of Rayalaseema region.

Bhukya Saame Naik who is 49-year old man of Diguvallapalli thanda in Chittoor district stated that education is one of the important factors responsible for the changes in the Sugali community. Many Sugalis are seen in the professional courses like engineering, medicine, etc. Sugalis are sending their children to convent schools also. Present day aspirations of Sugalis are changing and they want to take up dignified jobs. Sugalis below the poverty line are sending their children to the Government Residential Schools. However one can see that the majority of the Sugalis drop out from
the schools. This is due to the lack of interest, domestic requirements, inaccessibility to schools, inability to meet the travel expenses and lack of schools in the nearby places.

However, education totally changed the dressing pattern of Sugali women. Now-a-days they are wearing chudidars, sarees, etc., when compared to the other tribals the Sugalis has a better educational status and sex wise literacy levels. Though changes are seen in every aspect of Sugali community still they observe their own customs as well as their traditions and they distinguish them from the other tribals and non-tribals.

A significant feature of the expenditure pattern of the Sugali is that on social and religious occasions, the expenditure far exceeds the expenditure incurred on household comforts and luxuries and is indicative of the importance assigned to kinship and ritual obligations. Rites of passage (birth, tonsure, betrothal, marriage and death) have to be observed in the socially approved way, even if it means borrowing money. Pilgrimages have to be made to the shrines of the family deities and of the patron-saints, necessitating expenses. The community and domestic sacrifices and offerings to the family and local deities are a common feature. Since the Sugali have added to the traditional pantheon the gods and godlings of the neighbouring casts, part of their meager income is also spent on these rituals and ceremonies; and, this trend is on the increase, with the pursuit of agriculture.

RELATIONS WITH NON-SUGALIS

To understand economic relations between various Sugali socio-economic groups the best course is to make a comparison between the Sugalis and non-Sugalis. Here the researcher made an attempt to compare the Kammas, Reddys, Kurubas who are the traditional land
owners of the Gonipenta village with that of the Sugalis of the adjoining thanda. All the other castes, other than the above mentioned castes are obliged to give free labour to the landlords.

In the Sugali society, the relationship between the landlords and other castes is not quite rigid. The Sugali land owner does not accept free labour nor does he expect potter, carpenter, barber, goldsmith, toddy tapper, etc., to serve his interests first and their own thereafter.

The Naiks and the Kharbaris generally pay for all goods and services provided by both the non-Sugalis and the Sugalis. The artisans are paid by the Naiks and Kharbaris. They do not give free labour. This is because the Sugalis are conscious of their rights and if a Naik becomes over demanding he will be forced to give up his Naikship and dragged to the panchayat.

The tribal artisans are expected to work free for the non-Sugalis landlords, and the situation is the same as that of the non-Sugalis.

In the other words, the non-Sugali landlords extracts free labour from Sugali, but Naik and Kharbaris hire labour from non-Sugalis, as the Sugalis are considered lower than non-Sugalis in the Hindu caste hierarchy.

In the case of Dhadi, Dhapadiya and Bhat who are the low and out caste people, work free in the Naik and Khabari households. A Dhadi messenger, for example would work for four days and carries message from one thanda to another to organize marriage ceremonies, death rituals and other gatherings. Yet he is paid a meagre amount of Rs.5 for his efforts for the entire period. Meals in all thandas are free for him. The jangads are at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, but it should be noted that economic oppression is not the reason for this position. It is possible for the jangads to move up in the caste hierarchy through a system of adoption. The jangads are given the
gotra of the family into which they are adopted after seven or eight generations.

Various factors - social, economic, technological and demographic have inclined the Sugalis of study area to adopt neo locality as the most ideal and the multi locality as the actual type of residence. Growth of population, agriculture economy, and economic status is the decisive factors in the adoption of multi-locality. Those families of wither thanda which depend on pastoralism or wage labour or firewood selling as the mainstay of their economy have opted for neolocal pattern of residence, other families with good landed property and huge number of cattle, the management of which require much manpower, practice patrilocal type of residence.

Nuclear families are predominant at rural thandas than at semi-urban thandas mainly due to the difference in their primary occupation. A young man belonging to rural thanda immediately after marriage can very easily set up his independent household unlike at semi-agrarian thanda where setting up an independent family involves division of land, house and other assets of the family. On the other hand, extended families occur more frequently among cultivators where the task of cultivation and the pursuit of secondary occupations, especially pastoralism require a large force.

Furthermore, changing economic structure has influenced not only family but also its organization. The organization of a peasant family at either thanda is entirely different from that of a family among the pastoralists. The daily income of that a nuclear family derives from some pursuits as cattle rearing, liquor selling, firewood selling, casual labour, etc., is just enough for a day and this type of economic system does not require any complicated organization of family.

On the other hand, a peasant family has to organize itself properly according to the time schedule to get better yields from agricultural and other occupations like cattle rearing and fire wood
selling. Each member of the family has to be entrusted with a specific duty to be completed within a prescribed time, which will be conducive for the productive work of the family.

**RIGHTS OF PASSAGE AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

The Sugali subsistence economy is not a self-sufficient one and possibly never was so even in the days of their nomadism. The Sugalis take part in market exchange and many elements of reciprocity and redistribution still present in their economy. They have four modes of distributing heir produces vis., reciprocity, and redistribution in regard to political and ritual purposes, informal market exchange in market places. Their exchange and distribution is a mixture of both traditional forms and modern market exchange.

There are two types of reciprocity systems prevalent among the Sugali – one is balance reciprocity and another is generalized reciprocity. The former is direct exchange in which goods and services of commensurate value are exchanged within a recognized time limit. Gifts are common among the Sugalis. Gifts received must be returned by a gift of comparable or greater value, within the reasonable time. If the obligations of giving and receiving gifts are not adhered to, the social relations on which the gift is based may suffer and may ultimately be terminated.

When a child is born, its maternal grandparents and paternal aunts present with a new dress and ornaments. Its mother is presented with specified articles to prepare special dishes. Lapses in gift-giving indicate strains in their relationships. The birth of a male child is announced by drum-beat and is a happy occasion. The father of the child gives refreshments to his kith and kin which are called Volangmetero. On the full moon-day of Phalgun, the father entertains the community with a feast. It is also an occasion for thanks-giving.
to the family deity. The new born child is only admitted into this community after this ritual. The Sugalis are patrilineal, and hence the birth of a male child is given due importance, while the birth of a female child is not given such importance. The custom of the first delivery of the Sugali woman has to take place in husband's place.

The ceremony of adoption of a male child is attended by the kith and kin. The adopting parents should arrange feast to all of them who attend the function. After the feast, the guests present new clothes or money to the parents. On the occasion of a child's tonsure ceremony, the Rathod, Chauhan and Pamhar clans of Sugali arrange a feast consisting of a sweet dish in honour of the domestic deity and also in honour of God Balaji.

Every marriage among the Sugali creates an alliance of affinal relations. These relations have economic implications expressed in gifts and counter-gifts by the parties to the alliance. Some of the gifts are ritually and jurally critical for the establishment of the conjugal bond. After marriage, when the girl sets out for her husband's home, she is presented with money by each family of the settlement. Her parents and close relatives present her ornaments and new dress. If she does not carry the traditional gifts from her natal home, the newly-wed 'Navaleri' (bride) is looked down in her husband's home. Now-a-days, rich Sugalis adopting the custom of neighboring village peasant castes and have started taking dowry from the parents of the girl. In a way, the payment of dowry is a drag on the poor economy of the Sugali; but they are resorting to this economic sacrifice to going a higher socio-economic status on par with the agricultural castes.

The cremation or burial ceremonies, is attended by the relatives and neighbours of the deceased in the settlement. On the occasion of the third-day mortuary rites, after the visit to the cremation ground, a feast consisting of a sweet dish called 'Madhi' is shared by the participants at noon; under a tree outside the settlement. The feast on
the thirteenth day mortuary-rite is an expensive affair; a non-vegetarian meal is provided to all the guests. Even today the Sugali express a feeling that it is not possible to reduce the cost of such feasts as these are part of their tradition. Occasions of marriage and death are charged with emotion and the Sugali adhere to the expected norms of property, irrespective of whether they can afford the cost or not. Such observances are socially obligatory and are regulated public opinion. The economic effects of gifts are reciprocal within the community, as they roughly balance over a reasonable period of time.

The economic organization of the Sugali clearly points out that the attitude of the Sugali is almost inclined towards the 'peasantisation.' Economically, the peasantries are land-based subsistence agriculturists with some surplus to sell. When they are not self-sufficient, they may obtain from outside services, important articles such as iron implements, earthenware bullock carts.

Basing on these observations one can say that changes are seen in the Sugali community in all walks of life. The acculturation of Sugalis is different when compared to other tribal communities. The factors responsible for these changes in the community can be said to have started with the arrival of Britishers in India when the whole traditional set up undergone change. With the introduction of modern means of transport such as Railways, roadways, etc., the traditional economy is disrupted. Others reasons an also be seen. To avoid the objectification by local people the Sugalis started changing their thoughts which are totally different when compared to the earlier Sugalis. These changes have enabled the Sugalis to come to the forefront. The Sugalis of Andhra Pradesh, it would seem, have been benefited most when compared to other tribal communities. The Sugali have pastoral economy though all the settlements practice agriculture either as primary or secondary occupation. After breakdown of their traditional economy, sometime the Sugali got interested in buying of cattle, especially cows as they viewed it as
wealth. But in recent times this trend has changed and they have started making investments by buying cultivable lands for earning cash. Thus, the peasant Sugali have become a part of economy structure of wider society by participating in the national economy. Furthermore, the Sugali have developed strong concern for individual ownership of land. There is considerable differentiation in land holding among the Sugali. They are aware of different categories of land-owners, landless labourers, poor cultivators, subsistence cultivators, and big land-owners. The latter category of land owners is almost absolutely dependent upon the labour of fellow Sugali or non-Sugali for their livelihood. Though the some traditional factors are still continuing on the whole, this community has experienced great changes in all aspects of their economic and social life. These changes are prominently seen in the Semi-urban thandas and much less in the rural thandas.

REFERENCES

5. Nobel and Dutt, Ibid. pp.325-335
6. Malhotra and Bose, Ibid., pp. 74-76
10. Otterbin, Comparative Cultural Analyses (An Introduction to Anthropology), New York, 1972, p. 28
11. The celebration of this feast is called by Sugali as Khond. After the birth of a male child the parents have to arrange a formal feast to the people of the settlement. It is stated that this custom has been practicing even from the days of their nomadism.