India is a home of varied ethnic and cultural races. In spite of the assimilation and integration of certain groups, they are still observed in some distinct pockets wherein reside people with peculiar customs and almost a distinct way of life. The pressure of traditional forces, as also the relative geographic isolation of many communities has retained their customs and traditions in an old socio-cultural heritage. Communities with more or less distinct characteristics are met with different parts of the country. Apart from caste Hindus and other communities, the tribal population of India keeps on perpetuating certain cultural traits.¹

The tribal population of the country, as per the 2001 census, is 8.43 crore, constituting 8.2% of the total population. The population of Scheduled Tribes has been on the increase since 1961. The decadal population growth between the Census Year 1981 to 1991 in respect of the tribal population has been higher (31.64%) than that of the entire population (23.51%). Similarly during census years 1991 to 2001 it has been 24.45% against the growth rate of 22.66% for the entire population. More than half the Scheduled Tribe population is concentrated in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Jharkhand and Gujarat. There are over 700 Scheduled Tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India, spread over different States and Union Territories of the country. Many tribes are present in more than one state.
Constrained by a rigorous environment which has fostered physical and social isolation for ages, the tribal communities have developed their own traditional mode of living. The genre de vie of tribes have been marginally modified by exogenous forces and have a symbiotic relationship with the ecological conditions and the resource base of the enclaves of their concentration. It is in these enclaves that the tribes have intended to concentrate ever since the process of peopling started in India. While, the non-tribal communities in the neighbourhood of the pockets of tribal concentration have marched forward in the corridors of time spread over millennia from the early stages of food gathering and subsistence farming to the modern production systems based on advanced technology and the complex of multi-sectoral inter-dependencies, the traditional modes of living of the tribal people have continued to stagnate at a low level of technology in a precarious equilibrium with nature. As the tribal homelands are far from homogeneous in-terms of their natural environment, they display a diversity of a high order in the modes of their living. With the advent of independence, which marked the beginning of the process of economic development of a qualitatively new kind, interaction between tribal and non-tribal groups has increased considerably. The impact of these processes has been highly varied over the regions of the country. The penetration of exogenous forces into the tribal areas has resulted into two main developments. First, these forces have initiated the process of transformation of the tribal societies on a scale unprecedented in history. Secondly, the exposure of the tribes to the non-tribal social institutions has generated among them new urges and aspirations. They now perceive new opportunities which are available to them in the democratic polity of India. The major problems which the tribes face today essentially flow from the inadequacy of the process of structural change in independent India as well as from the distortion inadvertently introduced in the socio-economic life within the tribal areas through some of the tribal welfare and regional development policies. Their old
world is dead; and the new has yet not been born. There is a need to understand the tribal urges and aspirations within the context of the regional milieu and as emanating from the overall framework of the intervention into the resource base of the tribal areas and its social and economic consequences.²

To understand the socio-cultural and political institutions of man in their totality and complexities it is essential to investigate as to how these institutions originated and developed among different human groups. As per the palaeontological and archaeological records the origin of man is from East Africa, is more than three million years old on our planet. The apes of early Pleistocene period are included under the genus Home, because of their abilities to produce and use tools thus distinguishing man from all other creatures in the animal kingdom. These abilities and habits of man, who could acquire, learn and inherit them, gave rise to the original and crudest human societies called savagery at cultural level. The savagery stage occupied the longest period in human history, covering about 99 per cent of the total time span of man on the earth, when man roamed about as food gatherers and nomadic hunters. Naturally the social and political institutions of the nomadic tribes were quite different from those of today. Surprisingly, the hunting and food-gathering modes of subsistence did not vanish altogether from the earth even after the invention of the methods of food production and growth of civilization.

The nomadic tribes provide very interesting examples of cultural continuum of a million years duration. The next stage of human society, labeled as barbarian, characterized by food production developed by man during the Neolithic period (Circa 10,000-7000 B.C) generated the basic factors for the growth and development of a new social order in human societies. The potential force created by the production of surplus food and wealth gave rise to another social order called civilization in about 3500 B.C. in same favourable regions of the world. The processes of development of these three stages of our
social and cultural growth from savagery through barbarism to civilization could be traced and reconstructed with the help of archaeological and ethnographic data.

India is one of the few countries in the world where survival and continuity of culture is of unique nature. There is a remarkable co-existence between human groups of all levels from its primordial stage of savagery to the level of high civilization. While there are so many instances of survivals of prehistoric traditions in material culture and subsistence pattern, we can naturally expect similar situation in respect of social and political institutions. The social and political institutions among the Sugalis which are need based, developed around the nuclear concept of communal economic transactions. In this situation, the bond between the kindred groups is the strongest factor of social cohesion. The 'Thanda' (territory of settlement), enjoyed by a particular lineage group occupying several villages, satisfies the needs of a situation where subsistence pattern formed their livelihood.

Societies are always dynamic and no society is ever totally static. This change is taking place both in structure and functioning. The amount and scope of change are stupendous, unprecedented. The study of social change needs no more justification than the study of society itself. Social change in India is that of the relation between tradition and modernity. Tradition and modernity are frequently mutually reinforcing, rather than systems in conflict. The evidence to that effect continues to accumulate.

Social change in modern times has become the symbol of continued movement towards modernization. It is a process which indicates the adoption of the modern way of life and values and refers to an attempt on the part of the people, particularly those who are custom-bound to adapt themselves to the present time, conditions, needs, styles and ways in general. It indicates a change in people's
food habits, dressing pattern, speaking styles, tastes, choice, preferences, ideas, values and recreational activities.

Srinivas, M.N. (1966), made the first systematic attempt to define the process of social change in the Indian context. According to him, sankritization is the process by which a downtrodden Hindu caste or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently twice born. His term 'westernization' subsumes changes occurring at different, levels: technology, institutions, ideology and values.3

TRIBE

The word tribe has been used by European historians to refer to such distinctive groups of people as the Gauls or the Anglo-Saxons in Europe and such autonomous political groups as Lichchavis, Malla, Yaudheya and Khasa in Ancient India, or such wide descent groups or tribes of Israel or the Arab tribes in West Asia.

The Oxford Dictionary tries to define 'tribe' as "a group of people in a primitive barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having common ancestors".

The Webster's international dictionary, among its several definitions describes a tribe as "an endogamous social group held to be descended from a common ancestor and composed of numerous families, exogamous clans, bands or villages that occupies a specific geographic territory possesses cultural, religious and linguistic homogeneity and is commonly united politically under one head or chief".

In the Dictionary of Anthropology by Charles Winick (1956), defines the tribe as 'a social group, usually with a definite area, dialect, homogeneity and unified social organization, may include
several subgroups such as sibs or villages. A tribe ordinarily has a leader and may have a common ancestor, as well as a patron deity. The families or small communities making up the tribe are linked through economic, social, religious, family or blood ties.

In the open society, Karl Popper (1945) speaks of the closed society, which, for him can be magical, or tribal or collectivist, as justly compared to an organism. He thinks that the organic or biological theory of the state can be applied to it, and that the herd or the tribe is at least a semi-organic society the members of which are held together by semi-biological ties, kinship, living together, sharing common efforts, common dangers, common joys and common distress.

Under the constitution of India, certain tribes have been specified as the scheduled tribes. As per the article 366 (25) the main criteria adopted for specifying communities as the Scheduled Tribes include, traditional occupation of a definite geographical area, Distinctive culture, includes whole spectrum of tribal way of life, language, customs, traditions, religious beliefs, arts and crafts, etc., Primitive traits depicting occupational pattern, economy, etc., and, Lack of educational and techno-economic development. The tribal peasant had no need of an economic calculus which adopts a sectoral or compartmentalizing approach to profits and losses or to production and consumption. The tribal is not yet used to the sectoral approach which is the distinguishing characteristic of the advanced communities. For example, he cannot distinguish between a loan for consumption or for production purposes. Despite many economic changes the same situation in the socio-religious sphere is continuing. But one factor that brought substantial change is the impact of the social models of the mainstream in the society. The Indian caste system is so powerful and all pervading that few tribes can entirely escape from its consequences. While dealing with the civilized people, the tribal also came under the influence of caste system.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

After careful examination of the previous literature field work was undertaken and, 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), Briggs (1819), Elliot (1869), Danton (1872), Cumberlej (1882), Ibbetson (1883) and Robertson (1892) etc.,

Nanjundayya, Iyer, K.A.K (1928) gave a clear picture of the social stratification of the Banjaras from the Mysore/Karnataka region and mention four important groups. The Banjara customs in the Mysore area are given clearly. The religion of Banjaras as well as the origin, early history of social organization, admission of outsiders, dress patterns, the status of women, and even few changes in their religion are well described by the authors.

A few studies with regional bias have recently carried on the Sugalis. One such study made by Prakash Rao, R (1953) is an attempt to study some aspects of the cultural life of the nomadic Banjaras. It describes the life cycles of Banjaras and their nomadic past and present. The study of All India Banjara Seva-Sangh (1968) presents the population distribution, customs of the Sugalis in different states of India and their socio-economic conditions in considerable detail.

Jadav, P.R. (1968) described the Banjaras as a community subjected to enormous suppression and exploitation at the hands of the rich and ruling class. Further, this historically exploited group is now being denied access to the advantages of modern culture. Their culture as variegated as their many colored dresses speaks of their highly refined way of life, the author has thoroughly discussed the socio-economic development of the Banjaras who led a wandering life, much like the Jews and the Gypsies in the West. The author also tried
to throw light on the affinity between the Banjaras, on the one hand and gypsies on the other. Relationship can be restored if when proper conditions are created. This book also describes women and their present status briefly, their crafts and how Banjara women are on the front of Indian fashion, breaking new ground with their exquisitely embroidered ghagras, bridal veils and red blue and black duppattas.

Pratap's (1970) study of Banjara festivals in Andhra Pradesh is not only a valuable contribution to the ethnography of an important and populous tribe, but it also illuminates various facets of the development and modification of rational phenomena. It also gives a picture of regional variations in their performance, thus enriching the meagre anthropological literature of Andhra Pradesh in general and Banjaras in particular. He attributes Proto Austroloid characteristics to this community. Social structure of this tribe is also marked by the bewildering regional and ethnic diversity and also describes some similarities among the tribes of Andhra Pradesh.

Russel, R.V. & Hiralal's monumental work is the result of the arrangement made by the government of India on the suggestion of the most famous Anthropologist of his time, the late Sir Herbert Risley, for preparation of an ethnological account dealing with the inhabitants of each of the provinces of India.

The whole book is divided into two parts: part one deals with the Caste system and there is a detailed study on the glossary of the minor castes and part two included volumes 2, 3 & 4 with Caste and Tribes of Madhya Pradesh. Banjaras as goods carriers are seen in part two, where authors have given a clear picture of customs of these tribes. Russel & Hiralal also describe the physical, cultural and social characters of the Sugalis in the Central and Western India.

Krishna Reddy, B. & Ramachandra Reddy, M, (1984) in their article on Banjaras made an attempt to give an ethnographic account of the Banjaras, one of the latest tribes of Andhra Pradesh.
Singh, K.S. (1985)\textsuperscript{19} views that roots of change lay in state formation, transfer of technology and culture contact. Peasants and tribes interacted over a wide spectrum. He states that colonialism profoundly disturbed the tribal society and explains that with decolonization, tribal society changed rapidly.

Shyamala Devi Rathod's (1985)\textsuperscript{20} note on the Lambada tribe is important for a particular reason. This is one among the few tribes which have a system of admitting outsiders into the tribe, a characteristic which has generated of late a good deal of interest among the anthropologists. Her first hand information of an actual admission in which she participated is of considerable interest in this context. She also describes the land relationship of tribals.

Halbar, B.G. (1986)\textsuperscript{21} has analysed how the process of economic differentiation as well as integration have merged into the wider regional economy. He did not touch upon the aspects of the culture of the Sugalis.

Edger Thurston, (1987)\textsuperscript{22} describes Lambadi as synonymous with Banjari, Vanchari Sugali or Sukali. He further describes women driving the cattle and says that they are most robust women ever seen in India, undertakes a great deal of labour. He further describes Lambadi women's ornaments their economy and society clearly. He gives important information that Rolla in Anantapur District has a small community of priests to the Lambadis who call themselves as Muslims but cannot inter marry with others of the faith. He further describes their religion and form of worship.

Siraj-Ul-Hasan (1990)\textsuperscript{23} clearly describes the Banjaras, starting with their different nomenclatures, their physique, Rajput caste of countenance, etc. He also describes in detail the appearance of men and women in their traditional dress. He further gives details of their names and their derivations, origin, internal structure, marriage, widow marriage, inheritance, religion, disposal of the dead,
occupations as well as the distribution of the Banjaras under Nizams dominion in 1911.

Naik, K.K., (1991)\textsuperscript{24} made an attempt to study socio-economic changes among the Sugali tribe in historical perspective. Further he tried to focus on their migratory movements and different theories, legends which are popular among them about their origin and migration from North India to other parts of India.

Khandoba, P.K. (1991)\textsuperscript{25} writes about the cultural traditions of Lambani in the state of Karnataka. But he could not mention the cultural traditions which are common to the whole of the Sugali community which is spread throughout the country.

Deogaonkar, S.G., & Sailaja Deogaonkar (1992)\textsuperscript{26} have described Banjara tribe as a nomadic tribe which presents colorful culture with an altogether different level of acculturation. They also analyse conditions of Banjaras, how they got settled and given up nomadism. The authors further described how the Banjaras were leading settled life and how they developed politically and economically and even socially. The Banjaras of Maharashtra were given the status of general category based on the population level as well as on their economic conditions. They also gave a clear picture of Banjaras, their changing culture and the story of development and of assimilation with exotic culture.

They further described the Banjaras of Vibharbha as a type by themselves and who boasted of having provided two able chief ministers for a progressive state like Maharashtra. They analysed and showed a strong Hindu culture with the signs of assimilating Sikh and Muslim worship within their fold. They further highlighted that characteristics, which are very strong and historically inherited, have been thoroughly mixed with the local Maharastrian style of life. But this study neglected the status of Sugali women.
Singh, K.S. (1994) describes the Sugalis, the Lambadi and the Sugalollu as synonymous, who use the suffix nayak while the women use the suffix Bai to their personal names. Further, Banjari language as Indo-Aryan language, women's ornaments, dress patterns, marriage, economy, education as clans etc., are described briefly.

K.Aialaiah's (1997) article provides us with the information on religion where the author says that the Sugali Gods are divided into malevolent spirits and they also worship Hindu gods and goddesses. This article also contains the three types of implications of festivals.

Contribution to the ethnography of an important and populous tribe, but it also illuminates various facets of the development and modification of rational phenomena. It also gives a picture of regional variations in their performance, thus enriching their meagre anthropological literature of Andhra Pradesh in general and Banjaras in particular.

Rupla Naik, Y (1998) describes occupation, trades practices, dress and ornaments, marriage procedures, social customs, habits and beliefs, their special dialect, Gor Boli, Panchayat system, feasts and festivals, songs and sayings of Banjaras in Karnataka.

Sannarama (1999) speaks of the various dimensions of Lambani culture. It focusses on the cultural aspects of Lambanis especially in Karnataka. He however neglected the area of political organization.

Cheenya Naik (2000) has highlighted the rich traditions of the Sugalis and the developmental programmes launched by the Government for the development of their society. But the customary law is not discussed thoroughly.

Naik, D.B. (2000) discusses the historical background of the Lambani society and focused his attention on the Lambani folk
literature. He neglected the cultural aspects of the Lambani and their social and political institutions.

Shyamala, K, (2006) studied the culture and customary laws among the Sugali in Anantapur district. She tried to present the changes caused by the external and internal factors for taking place in the present status of their customary laws.

Bhangya, B., (2010) tried to trace the historical transition and the political economy of the Lambada community of Hyderabad State under the Nizams during Colonial rule. The study spans nearly two centuries - from the early eighteenth to about the middle of the twentieth century. He presented that once this community, originally caravan traders, confronted the colonial state power which had adversely transformed their lifestyles.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The present study is to analyse the position of the Sugali community in terms of their present status, as it represents a different level of acculturation with a colourful culture. Earlier the Sugalis led a nomadic life, but of late, they have been developing socially, economically and even politically. Thus it is interesting to study their changing culture, their development as well as their assimilation with exotic culture by continuing their tradition. For studying the culture of a Society, analysis of Women's position in terms of their status and role becomes very important as an instrument of introducing social change. It also necessitates understanding their historical process of development.

The colonial ethnographers, administrators, and anthro-historians have studied this tribe. But all these studies have their own limitations. The Colonial ethnographers studied this tribe from the administrative point of view. Hence it is felt essential to analyse
further and study the ethnicity of the tribe and the changes that are taking place in their present socio-economic and cultural status especially in the drought prone districts of Rayalaseema region. Keeping this in view it is proposed to study “Social History of a Nomadic Tribe – The Case of Sugalis in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh.”

OBJECTIVES

The present study basically aims at analyzing the cultural change that is taking place among the Sugalis in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The specific objectives of the study are:

> to generate a demographic profile and to document oral, legendary traditions in relation to the origin, spread and movement of the tribe;
> to document the various historical and administrative citations in relation to the socio-cultural practices; and to document migratory movements both past and present to reconstruct their social history.
> to examine the social institutions and to document the changes that are taking place in the process of development of the tribe;
> to record their political participation through government initiations and in turn its impact on their own sub-culture; and
> to examine how far the government’s policies and programmes for economic change have paved the way for the socio-cultural change.
METHODOLOGY

The primary aim of the present study is to understand the 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 settlements give a historical evidence of change in this tribe. In order to indentify the tradition and transition of the Sugali tribe in Rayalaseema region, a careful study has been carried out in all settlements of the Sugalis in the region and it has been found that the Sugalis in some settlements located in interior areas still practise pastoralism and agriculture as their main occupation and the Sugalis in the rest of the settlements located in semi-urban areas practise agriculture and other government and private sector services. From these two diversified economic groups the researcher has selected eight settlements from four districts of Rayalaseema region, i.e. in each district two settlements representing each group, for an intensive study.

In Anantapur district, Gonipenta thanda, located in remote Penukonda Mandal, and Adavibapanapalli thanda, situated in semi-urban area of Mudigubba Mandal, were selected.

In Chittoor district, Diguvallapalli thanda, located in rural area of K.V. Palli Mandal, and in semi-urban area, Sugalimitta thanda of Punganur Mandal, were chosen.

In Kadapa district, Bakkannagaripalli thanda, under rural area of Vempalli Mandal, and under semi-urban area, Vanarasapaalli thanda of T. Sundupalli Mandal, were selected.

In Kurnool district, Lakshmaiah Kunta thanda, a pastoral and semi-agrarian settlement located in Gadivemula Mandal, and
Cheruvu thanda, located in semi-urban area of Tuggali Mandal, were chosen as sample settlements for the present study.

The above settlements selected for an indepth study are representative settlements of all the Sugali settlements in Rayalaseema region 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 State and Central Governments.

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 has been used.

In this study the literature about the Sugali tribe belonging to 19th and 20th centuries provides 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 mechanized transportation in 1850s, which brought change in the socio-economic structure of the Sugalis. At that point of time the Sugali tribe lost its traditional source of living and started searching for alternative sources of occupation which ultimately led to diversified avocations, viz., agriculture, agricultural labour, crop watching, firewood settling, etc.
The post-Independent period is also taken into consideration because the Sugali community after India became a Republic received considerable attention. Another important reason for taking the birth of the Republic of India as a landmark for analyzing 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 Panchayath 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 emphasizing equal rights and opportunities irrespective of caste, colour, creed, community and sex has its own effect on the social system.

SCHEME OF THE STUDY

The entire thesis is divided into eight chapters. The First Chapter is an introductory one and deals with the aims and objectives of the 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.

In the Third Chapter, the early society of the Sugali tribe and the influence of various factors that brought change in the traditional life of the Sugalis are discussed. The Fourth Chapter deals with the early economic history of Sugali tribe and the change that occurred in the economic life of the tribe.

Politics and religion are two inseparable things that play a vital role in the socio-economic life of human beings. 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 measures launched by the Government and their influence in bringing change in the Sugali society and economy towards modernization. The Eighth Chapter presents the summary and conclusions of the study.

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