After discussing the various aspects of social life and institutions among the Lambanis in the Dharwad district and India generally, we are in a position to draw some conclusions. It is rather a difficult task to trace the origin or history of any tribes in India. Various theories have been propounded regarding their origin, one of them being that they (the Lambanis) have descended from the gypsies. The gypsies, spread all over the world, are believed to have come from the same origin. No doubt, the Lambanis are wanderers by habit but there is little evidence to show that these ex-criminal tribes belong to the same stock as the gypsies found in the present-day Europe or the other parts of the world. Another theory is that these tribes owe their origin to the aborigines of old who have been displaced from time to time by the invaders of central Asia, and started roaming about from place to place, and thus acquired the nomadic mode of life. The Lambanis were generally a trading community, from Rajasthan, with their cattle and merchandise. And it is also true that the tribe served in the Moghal army as
porters and merchants. But unfortunately they lost this position with the arrival of the British in India. That is how the Lambanis came to be ex-criminal tribes during the British regime. In Karnataka, the Lambanis, particularly in the Dharwad district, have been identified by their dress pattern. Women have kept the tradition of their different style of dress which was being followed in their homeland. The Lambanis are scattered throughout the state as well as the other parts of India.

None of the ex-criminal tribes can claim to belong to any of the recognised castes or classes of India. They never cared to preserve their identity or purity. The problem before the researcher was to study "social life and institutions among the Lambanis." This comprised the questions of morality and social behaviour of the Lambanis. Morality and social behaviour are very much related to social structure and social organisation of the people. The researcher therefore made an attempt to study the social structure and social organisation of the Lambanis from the beginning. The social structure and social organisation of the Lambanis basically differ from those of the Hindus. The Lambanis have carried with them their basic traditions and customs from the country from where they have migrated.
The Ibanis prohibited marriage only between kin of the first and second orders, excluding a brother's daughter; there are also only a few affines whom a man may not marry (his wife's mother, wife's daughter, father's wife, son's wife and step sister). Marriage is allowed with any first cousin, but preferably with a cross-cousin; various forms of levirate are practised, and so is the sororate, especially with the wife's sister, father's sister's daughter, and mother's brother's daughter.

The above practices pose various problems for discussion. Can we account for the tribal variations in the rules of mating? Why do cousin marriages differ in actual order of frequency from the order of preference laid down by informants, and why do nobles, in contrast with commoners, marry agnatic relatives more frequently than others? How are the rules of mating, in general, related both to other aspects of the kinship system and to the social structure as a whole? In particular, can we explain why the Ibanis have such a limited range of restrictions?

The terminology of relationship has been rigorously determined by social conditions, including especially forms of marriage. It is true that relatives to whom different patterns
of behaviour apply are often called by different terms, e.g. paternal and maternal uncles, elder and younger brothers' cross-cousins and parallel cousins. On the other hand, the same term of relationship is sometimes used both for people with whom mating is forbidden and for those who may be married or taken as secondary consorts.

The kinship terminology of the Lambanis is classificatory in nature. The same terms are used to recognise relationships between groups of relatives of the same generation and sex. For instance, "Bapu" is used to denote father. In the Lambani society the rights and duties of the relatives and their mutual behaviour are well defined. This proposition may be understood with reference to certain important features of their kinship behaviour. The reverence shown by a Lambani to his father is revealed in the way he follows his customary ancestor worship.

The marriage of the Lambanis, of the study area, is practised on the traditional lines. The marriage is an essential institution for the sake of fecundity. In fact the unmarried adults are looked down upon and are considered to be of no use to the community. The Lambanis observe caste endogamy and clan exogamy. The important features of the Lambani marriages
are: bride price, elaborate rites and high rate of polygamy and desertion of wife, and tendency to establish matrimonial ties with kin and those who reside in nearby villages. But now-a-days the trend is changing in view of the comparisons with the Hindu community. Instead of the bride price dowry is paid. Marriage rites are cut short and even marriage celebration takes place at centres of pilgrimage. Since the Lambanis want dowry, they are going outside the kin sphere to get brides for their sons. Monogamy is becoming the order of the day. Divorce is on the decrease. Pre-puberty marriages are becoming infrequent in the tribes because of modern education. The Lambanis who are well-to-do celebrate marriages in an elaborate and colourful way spending much money like the other communities in the neighbourhood.

Marriages are usually arranged, not by the young couple, but by the parents and other close relatives. Formerly it was not uncommon for girls to be betrothed during infancy or even before they were born. In choosing a bride people look for the qualities which are likely to ensure a stable marriage; the girl herself should be industrious, modest, chaste, obedient, and amiable and her parents should be of respectable ancestry, good by character, free from any suspicion of practising sorcery.
It is largely because parents wish to find a good wife for their son that they prefer to marry him, if possible, to the daughter of some close relative with whose conduct and reputation they are themselves well acquainted.

The standard of living of the Lambanis can be said to be reflected in the type of food they consume and the clothing they wear. The material culture and living conditions of the Lambanis are also changing, but slowly, because of the improved means of communication and transportation.

The introduction of the tribal (Lambani) council has left much impact on the Lambanis. Some members have been elected to the council in their respective villages. But these members are usually Naik, Davo, Karabhari, they are the holders of the hereditary posts. They have tried to take interest in the regional and national level politics. They take an active part in public affairs at the time of elections to the offices at different levels, from local to national. The isolation of certain sections of population in India like the Lambanis and other tribals acts as a setback to the progress of the country. The various caste and ethnic groups in India live in separate settlements traditionally. As the Lambanis identify themselves
with local people, some variations in their language and lifestyle are noticeable. The basic social (tribal) organisation called "Ghor Panchayat" is very strong and exercises its powers over the lives of the Lambanis. The Lambanis are proud of their ancestors and this has been exhibited in their Gotras named after their ancestors.

The researcher observed that the Lambani festivals are generally those of the Hindus, and are followed as at the local level. Some of the Lambani saints are Sevalal, Meetubhukya and Tulajasathi. Several types of superstitions, witchcraft and sorcery are still found among these people because they believe that these bring good luck, cure illness and protect their property. On account of such beliefs and practices, these people remain backward and need to be educated to change their attitude and ways.

We should note that Lambani is not "caste". It is different from the usual castes, communities, and tribes. Similarly their culture, social life, the Panchayat system, and marriage system and rituals are distinct. The dress of the Lambanis differs from that of the other groups in the Hindu society. The women's dress, in particular, is different from
that of the other castes or communities. The dress of the Lambani men in several cases is similar to the dress of several groups of the Hindu population.

The argument that the tribal customs and traditions are not easily amenable to change is not valid all the time. Changes in the tribal customs and traditions are taking place and sometimes some retrograde and undesirable aspects of the other cultures are being absorbed. For instance, it is becoming fairly common now for the Lambani girls to pay dowry instead of accepting the traditional "mamlo". Giving "mamlo" and taking dowry are equally bad. It is the responsibility of all of us to be united to discourage the undesirable practices and initiate good and sound practices in the interest of the Lambanis.

In the past the Lambanis were nomadic and used to roam about from place to place with their bags and cattle. Their ostensible means of livelihood was by acrobatics, dancing, singing, and sale of salt etc. But the income "crive" from these was not sufficient to meet their day-to-day needs and therefore they were obliged to commit crime. Ordinarily they pass their days in abject poverty but, after the commission of crime, they were found to be living extravagantly. In several places they
have been settled on (permanently assigned) lands as a result of which their income from singing, dancing and sale of salt has been reduced considerably. The financial condition of those who have taken to agriculture has generally improved. Nowadays in the Dinur Tan'a the Lambanis have agricultural land and this has improved their economic condition and financial status.

The tribal council (Panchayat organisation), as is prevalent amongst the other social groups of India, is also found amongst the Lambanis in the country. It may however be borne in mind that the (tribal) councils of the tribes are not only meant to control and regulate the social life of their members but also to organise gangs and provide them with all "facilities" for the commission of crime. Different tribes have different councils and their ethical standards also differ.

In case of disputes, the aggrieved party is entitled to go to the tribal council for adjudication. Generally, there are permanent Panchas (members of the council) but, in extraordinary cases, other members are also invited to act as Panchas. The contending parties or their agents are entitled to plead their cases before the Panchas.
The Panchayats deal with the disputes of any family or between the families of their tribe, be it over the commission of a crime or a civil dispute or any violation of the social or moral laws by groups or individuals or disputes arising over the defence of any member of the tribe or the maintenance of his family in the event of his conviction, settling any marriage agreements etc. Any members defying their directions are fined. Such punishments may, at their discretion, be imposed not only on the offender but also on his next six successive generations. Generally, the members abide by the decisions of the Panchayats. They never go to a court of law.

The religious beliefs, superstitions and social customs differ from tribe to tribe. In general, these beliefs are in unison with the criminality of the Lambanis. There is however no doubt that economic condition has a great influence on the social habits. Most of the Lambanis follow Hinduism in its crude form. These people are very conservative in their religious outlook and have faith in a host of gods and goddesses and evil spirits. They believe in a large number of omens and administer countless oaths in their daily life.

They are generally very superstitious and believe in ghosts, spirits, ancestral shadows and also worship trees an
animals. They believe so much in the power exercised by these deities and spirits that they ascribe almost all calamities or losses to their displeasure. It is said that if one violates a taboo, the taboo or the deity governing the taboo is sure to punish the defaulter. Therefore it is customary amongst the Lambanis to propitiate these deities and evil spirits with meat, wine and other offerings before they start on a criminal expedition.

Banjaras are superstitious, easily excited, and are given to quarrelling among themselves. Feelings sometimes run high and result in bloodshed. The oath taken in the name of Siva Bhagya is sacred to the Rathods. A hut is set apart in their camp and devoted to Mitu Bhaklya, an old free-booter. No one may eat, drink or sleep in this hut. In front of it there is a flag-staff with a white cloth attached. The men who intend to go out to commit crime meet in this hut at night, where an image of Sati is produced. A light is lit and if the wick drops down, it is taken as a good omen and they go out on their expedition. No one is allowed to talk while committing a crime even if he is challenged. This accounts for their silence while committing robbery. The Lambanis have a peculiar dialect called "Banjari" which resembles Marwari and contains some Hindustani and Marathi words. They can also talk the language of the state they have settled in, and, usually, Hindustani as well.
Our study of the Lambanis' beliefs and practices has shown that the Lambanis do believe in a supreme deity whom they call Sevabhaya (Sevalal). Though there is no specific worship in his honour, he is far from being a mere abstract conception. He is reverentially invoked in all important rituals, in solemn oath-taking and in the readmitting of an ostracised person into the Lambani society. The Lambani religion differs from animism and can also be seen in their ancestor worship which occupies an important place in their religious beliefs. It keeps the memory of the dead alive and welds the community of the living into one with those who have lived in the past. All the spirits of the deceased members are regarded as forming one family with their living descendants and kinsmen whose welfare is now their special concern. The Lambanis look upon their dead ancestors with filial love and intimacy. Veneration of their ancestors is very deep. Special shrines, appropriate rites and appointed times for rituals commonly characterise their ancestor worship. Apart from the periodical worshipping, the ancestral cult is also closely connected with the Lambani festivals. Thus, in all festivals, public or private, rice-beer libations are made on their behalf. At the end of life, people look forward to being reunited with their loved ones. The performance of ancestor worship clearly suggests that the departed, ancestors, play a definite and
decisive role in the Lambanis' life in general and in their religious beliefs and practices in particular.

Animism, as an explanatory theory of religious behaviour, does not take into account the emotional aspects of religion. For the Lambanis however the religious rituals and ceremonies evoke an emotion that goes beyond a mere response to practical needs. They bind the community together in their beliefs and give them a sense of the sacred. Collective ritual and rejoicing have served to intensify the emotional appeal of religion. Their major festivals and forms of worship can only be partially understood unless they are seen within the context of religious emotion or enthusiasm.

As we have noted in the preceding chapters, the Lambanis have been traders in salt. The word Lambani is said to be derived from the Sanskrit word for salt Lavan. Similarly, the other word for this community is the Banajara which is a variation of the Sanskrit word for trader, Vanik. There are several other different names for this community which lives in the different parts of India and also the other parts of the Indian subcontinent which are now independent nations, Pakistan and Bangladesh.
As in case of several other distinct communities, the status of the Lambanis has varied from region to region. Even in a limited region of western India, the community is classified as scheduled castes in the southern part of Karnataka and as a denotified tribe in the northern part of Karnataka.

But socially, culturally, economically and from the religious point of view, the Lambanis may be said to be very akin to the Hindus or most Indians living in the vast country. As tribals, they have attracted the attention of scholars and surveyors and books and reports have been written on them as on the other tribes in the various parts of the country. But since as the history shows, the Lambanis have gone about as traders and suppliers of provisions and fodder to the Moghal and British armies for several centuries, it is not easy to classify them straight as pucca tribals, like the tribals who have been dwelling in various forests for centuries past. The Lambanis have had contact with civilisation and have dealt with the Moghal rulers, army commanders and other men in leading position. In course of time, in pursuit of their activities and in the company of the buyers of their services, the Moghals and the British, they have migrated to the southern and western parts of India. When both the Moghals and the British left the
Nizam of Hyderabad to the care of his own state, the Lambanis or Banjaras were there to be dealt with. So the modern Andhra Pradesh has a sizeable population of the Banjaras. Some of these have moved away to the more suitable regions of neighbouring Maharashtra. In Maharashtra they have gone about as Vanjaras or Vanjaris and in this state also their population is sizeable and here they are generally treated as a de-notified tribe.

Since the Lambanis have an ancient history, like many other sections in India and since they have been in contact with several leading sections of people, it seems natural that their life and living are similar in several ways to the life and living of the vast population of the country. They resemble the Hindus in several ways. The Tanda near Munaragi which has been investigated fairly closely reveals several features which lend support to the view that the socio-economic and religious life of the Lambanis is noticeably similar to the main life of the Hindus or most Indians. Many of these Lambanis seem to belong to the economically lower stratum and as such their life looks simple and elementary in many ways. Like the rural women in India, the women of the Lambanis have to spend much time in fetching water from the sources nearby and obtaining firewood for cooking from the nearby woods. They have to work hard at home,
In the kitchen in feeding the family and bringing up children. In the Tanfla under study, we have seen that the women spend much time in weaving cloth for the family and giving instruction to the daughters of the family in doing the household work and also weaving. In this way, the women are very hard-working. Generally they are more hard-working than their men. Precisely for these reasons, the women in the Lambani society have a greater initiative and access to the vital projects of the family. Their men are found to value their services and role and regard them as important partners in life at home and also outside. The importance and equality of the women in the Lambani society seem to be taken for granted. In addition to the domestic work and responsibilities, the women assist their men-folk with the work on the farm. Well, this seems to be the general picture of the dutiful and hard-working women in the several lower rungs of the Hindu society.

The question of teaching children and bringing them up for taking up the various careers has been facing the Lambani parents. As the tables in some of our chapters show, the parents in this community want their sons to take up new careers like those of teachers, advocates, doctors and so on. The importance attached to the political career seems to be not very significant. Also,
the daughters seem to be married away soon after their early training in the various tasks and skills. This stage seems to be rather early for the girls to be prepared for the new careers. Further the parents are taking care to send their children to school and this is taken as necessary for their careers and also as a supervised expenditure of time while the children are away from the family for seven or eight hours. In a few cases, the parents do not think much of the school because they feel that their children are a burden, to be taken care of, whether they are at home or at the school. This picture also resembles the picture of the children in the economically lower classes of several million families in India. By and large, the Lambani parents, like the millions of the non-Lambani population, do not seem to make much fuss about the discipline of their children. By and large, the Lambani children seem to be well behaved and where there are occasional difficulties, the children are brought round through proper harsh talk and even physical punishment. In a few cases where the children become a problem, they are turned out of the house for various durations of time. This feature also seems to be practised in common with the millions of economically low-class families in India. Like in millions of rural homes in India, in the Lambani households too, the old people have not become a problem. The old people are generally
respected and tolerated and they seem to have a good understanding with the younger generation.

In the matters of religion, the Lamtanis have several features which are common between them and the rest of the Indians, specially the Hindus. Ancestor worship is performed regularly. This is specially seen in the ceremony to remember the departed father. Here the eldest son of the family takes the lead and the ceremony is observed in his house. The other brothers contribute their share to meet the expenditure. This can be said to be a very sound practice because the eldest brother alone is not required to shoulder the whole burden. The burden is shared and in this way the participation of all the brothers is ensured. Another practice which is even more remarkable is the head of the family acting as the priest of the family. This of course has several advantages. The priest is always available at hand and this priest also takes care of the other tasks and organisational details of the various ceremonies. In a way, this practice is different from the general practice of the rest of the Indians, Hindus as well as Muslims or Christians. In the latter communities, the priest is an outsider and he often belongs to a priestly class. In most categories of the Hindus, priesthood is inherited, and when we call in a priest, he is usually a born
priest, born in the priestly family. This is sought to be continued even in the big temples and pilgrim centres where the priests, the worshippers or assistant worshippers of the deities etc. are inherited positions although there are efforts on the part of the government to regulate these posts and even occasionally throw them open to the individuals of the non-priestly classes.

Although the Lambanis have been fairly dynamic or enterprising people, involved as they have been in supplying grains and fodder etc. to the Moghal and other armies, their present position seems to be one of the lower middle class or even lower than this. Apart from the social classification to which they conform, their economic position seems to be generally unsatisfactory. This is particularly so in Karnataka and may be said to be confirmed by the study of the Dindur Tanda. Overall, they may be said to belong to the lower-class farming category. Some of them own their land and the cattle etc. But there are also the others who are landless. In the search for India's socio-political and economic modernisation, they have occupied a backward place. Their various assets or forms of wealth and income seem to be limited and in this way, they start life with initial hurdles and disadvantages. To be classified, as they are
in western and southern India, as a "notified" tribe or as scheduled castes, indicates that they are backward. This also implies a kind of psychological and social handicap vis-à-vis the advanced castes and classes in India. In a way, to the extent they are clubbed along with the other tribes or SCs, chances of their getting adequate or priority attention in the matters of socio-economic development are slim. Since, by and large, they live in their own isolated settlements or Tamias, it is not easy to focus organised economic efforts on them. They tend to remain scattered and deprived. By classifying them differently in the different regions of the country as SCs or "notified" tribe, their political history has made it difficult for them to come together and organise themselves as a powerful bloc. Like several other communities, they are scattered in various states with various dominant languages, and this makes their all India or even regional consolidation difficult. As in case of some communities, the linguistic reorganisation of 1956 has not brought them together in any particular territory or region. Because of this they have been deprived of the natural advantage of political and administrative power. It is not always that a Lambani population will be represented in a state legislature or the national parliament by a Lambani leader. We often find that the Lambani populations have been represented by the non-Lambani
leaders. This may be said to have generally slowed down the progress of the community.

Educationally, as we have seen, the progress has been slow too. This is because the parents are not very enthusiastic about educating their sons more and more and the case is worse with regard to the education of girls. Like the several million low-class rural parents, the Lambani parents find it difficult to send their sons and daughters to school. Some of them do send their sons to school. But not many want to continue their education beyond the end of the secondary stage. The Lambanis find their sons more useful at home and in the field; the daughters are not educated so readily. As we have seen, they are prepared for their domestic roles and are married off rather early. This seems to be true of many million low-class rural folks in India. However this tradition and trend are not very helpful for the modernisation of the Lambani community. The government has been rightly wanting tribal people like the Lambanis to come forward and take the benefit of education. Mid-day meals and the occasional schemes like paying money to the parents for sending their children to school and improving attendance are aimed at improving the educational standards and attainments of the backward people like the Lambanis. In these circumstances, the Lambanis
must be positive and enthusiastic and come forward to make use of the advantages and benefits extended to them. Otherwise their economic development and socio-political modernisation can slow down.

For the researchers and writers, it is necessary that they come forward in increasing numbers to undertake explorations and enquiries into the lives and activities of the backward groups like the Lambanis. The value of the present study has been sought to be enhanced by the first-hand observation of the Lambani Tanda, Dindur. Similar Tandas and settlements need to be studied in the other parts of the state (Karnataka) and the other parts of the country. Some writers, foreign as well as Indian, have already made fascinating studies of the Lambanis and the other tribes in the various parts of the country. Some of these studies have become old and less relevant in course of the numerous developments and changes which surround the life and living of the Lambani group. More studies need to be undertaken to highlight the conditions and problems of the Lambanis and suggest solutions, drawing in the process the attention of the policy makers and administrators and indeed the society at large. The Lambanis should be enabled to acquire more training and skills and outlook which are necessary to improve their share in the employment market. Some thought
will have to be given to their settlements or housing patterns. The present pattern no doubt preserves their way of life and traditions etc. But it also keeps them fixed to their present low economic status. It seems to keep them away and out of the mainstream of the active, energetic sections of the Indian population. If we are very keen on maintaining their (Lambanis') uniqueness, then the fear is that they may remain fixed to their traditional low-level economic status. They may not improve much socially and politically too. On the other hand, if it is assumed that they have to join the mainstream of the other sections of the well-off and energetic Indians, they have to plan to build rapidly their socio-cultural group, political parties and representation and improve their overall strength and bargaining capacity. It is necessary for the experts and students of various disciplines to come forward with their investigation and analysis.