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THE WARLIS

THE WARLIS

BY

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Special Officer for the Protection of Aboriginal and Hill Tribes, Thana.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

B. G. KHER,

Ex-Premier, Bombay

1945

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FOREWORD

Of late, public attention has been drawn to the growing importance of the problem of the uplift of aboriginals or *Adivasis* whose population is stated to be not less than twentyfive millions. This interesting little work deals with the customs and beliefs regarding marriage, birth, death and religion of the Warlis, one of the aboriginal tribes scattered all over the Thana District of the Bombay Presidency. Mr. Save, the author of the book, is an Assistant to the Backward Class Officer with the Government of Bombay, and has first hand knowledge of the social, economical and cultural life of these people which he has put to good use in the compilation of this work. I have great pleasure in recommending this book to any one, who desires to know something about these interesting people, who have been neglected so far. Of particular interest is Chapter IX, headed 'property versus poverty'. It shows that 81 per cent out of them cannot balance their budget and even those, who can do so, live in a very miserable manner. The author deserves congratulations for the patient labour, which he has undertaken in bringing out this volume.

13-3-1945. **B. G. Kher**

PREFACE

The Warlis are an aboriginal tribe living in the Thana District in the Province of Bombay. They are also found in other parts of the Province. This study is, however, restricted to the Thana District which is the stronghold of the Warli tribe.

This work was submitted to the University of Bombay in 1935 as a thesis for the degree of M. A., which was awarded to me. I had known the Warlis long before I undertook this study. Moreover, as the Special Officer for the protection of the aboriginal and hill tribes, my contact with the Warlis had been further renewed.

The original thesis covered the social, educational and economic study of the tribe. Since the submission of the thesis, great strides have been made in the ideas of primary education in this country. The subject of Warli education, which is mainly primary in the initial stage, could not have been discussed in its full perspective without touching the new theories of primary and basic education. Furthermore, the Warli education which forms part of the education of the aboriginals in general should be regarded as a separate subject deserving the attention of the educationists. I have therefore dropped the chapters on education from this book.

In the chapter on Property versus Poverty, I have retained the pre-war figures of the economic condition of the Warlis. The increased prosperity of the people during the war time is only superficial and a passing phase. The Warlis will soon revert to their earstwhile condition and the figures given in this book about the income and expenditure of the families will help to present a true picture of the economic condition of the Warlis.

The publication of this work has been delayed very much on account of the many difficulties during the War-time. My heart-felt thanks are due to the Manager of the Aryabhushan Press, Poona, but for whose patience and kindness, this work

would not have seen the light of day. I am grateful to my teacher Dr. G. S. Ghurye, M. A., Ph. D. (Cantab.), University Professor of Sociology, School of Economics and Sociology, University of Bombay for his advice and guidance in the preparation of this work. I am also grateful to Mr. B. G. Kher, ex-Premier and President, Adivasi Seva Mandal, Bombay for writing a foreword to this book.

My thanks are due to Thakkar Bapa, (Mr. A. V. Thakkar) the great friend of the aborigines in this country, and to Mr. P. J. Ghandy, the late Backward Class Officer, Bombay Province, for giving me encouragement in publishing this book. Finally, I am thankful to my many Warli friends, *bhagats* and *dhavleris*, but for whose willing cooperation I would not have been able to write on the Warlis.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to the University of Bombay for the substantial financial help it has granted towards the cost of the publication of this work.

Thana
1st July 1945

K. J. SAVE

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The comparative figures of their population in the Thana district during the last 70 years are as follows :—

1941	...	124,847
1931	...	118,849
1921	...	107,630
1911	...	111,864
1901	...	89,313
1891	...	79,031
1881	...	69,534
1872	...	65,767

It can be seen from both the statements above that as far as the variation of the population is concerned, it has been increasing since 1872, except that there is a marked decrease in the figures of 1901 and 1921. The decrease in the population recorded at the Census of 1901 is due to the ravages of famine and plague during the years 1900 and 1901. The decrease at the Census figures of 1921 is primarily due to the severe epidemic of influenza which swept over the country in the year 1918 and was responsible for an unusual toll of human lives. The figures of 1872 and 1881 are not very reliable inasmuch as the aboriginal tribes were shown partly as Hindus and partly as aborigines. The total population of 207,051, as reported in 1931, is further distributed into males and females in different districts and States as below :—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Thana ...	59,830	59,019	118,849
Jawhar ...	13,939	13,232	27,171
Bombay Suburban District.	2,351	2,215	4,566
Surat	821	764	1,585
Bansda	2,710	2,605	5,315
Dharampur ...	16,094	14,995	31,089
Nasik	6,636	6,049	12,685
All other parts including Khandesh ...	2,837	2,954	5,791
Total ...	105,218	101,833	207,051

These figures clearly show that more than half the population is in the Thana district a stronghold of the tribe; if the

population of Jawhar, which is in the Thana district, is included therein, it forms an overwhelming portion of the same. The total population of the Thana district according to the census of 1941 is 932, 733, of which the aboriginal population is 257,130 and Wārlis number 124,847. Thus the aboriginal element in the Thana population is 27·5%. The Wārlis form 48·5% of the aboriginal population and 13·5% of the total population of the district.

The density of the Wārli population differs considerably in different talukas of the Thana district. It is greatest in the northernmost talukas, viz. Umbergaon and Dahanu and is sparse in the southernmost talukas like Kalyan and Murbad as will be seen from the following table which shows the total population of each taluka, together with the number of Wārlis and their percentage :—

Name of taluka.	Total population.	Wārlis.	Percentage.
Umbergaon ...	92,162	38,117	41·3
Dahanu ...	101,850	30,038	29·5
Palghar ...	118,208	11,302	9·5
Bassein ...	105,593	15,536	14·7
Bhivandi ...	93,619	5,617	5·9
Vada ...	47,252	8,616	18·2
Mokhada ...	35,560	10,532	29·6
Thana ...	72,942	2,688	3·6
Shahapur ...	80,345	2,190	2·6
Kalyan ...	122,142	204	0·1
Murbad ...	63,060	7	
Total	932,733	124,847	13·5

There was an increase of 5,992 in the Wārli population in the Thana district alone during the last decade. The number of males is slightly greater than that of females. The number of females per 1,000 males is 990 in the case of Wārlis, and 973 for Kātkaris in Thana. Other Aborigines in the district are as follows:—

Koli Mahādev	9,376
Thākur	45,949
Kātkari	37,051
Dublā	15,659
Dhodiā	11,660
Koknā	9,245

The Dublās and Dhodiās are mostly found in Dahanu and Umbergaon talukas. The Koknās are seen in Dahanu and Mokhada and the remaining tribes are distributed through the eastern and southern talukas of the district.

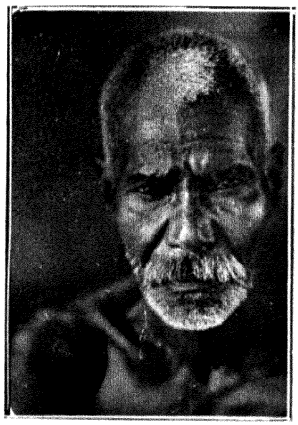
Origin and History :—" The local or early element in the Thana population is unusually strong. The early tribes were almost the only people in the Konkan in the wild North-East, and were in majority elsewhere excepting some of the richer coast tracts. According to 1872 Census the early population of the District included 9 tribes with a total strength of nearly 380,000 souls or 45% of the total population. These were in order of strength Agris, Kolis, Wārlis, Thākurs, Kātkaris, Dublās, Vaitis, Koknās and Dhodiās. Except the Mahadeo Kolis, who are said to have come from the Deccan in the 14th century, these tribes seem to have been settled in the District from pre-historic times[1]." According to Dr. Wilson, "Vārlis, probably originally 'Varālis' or uplanders and in old times of sufficient importance to give the name 'Varālat' to the sixth of the seven Konkans, are returned as numbering 70,015 souls[2]." It is not however known whether Vārlis are so called because they lived in the 'Varālat' the sixth of the seven Konkans, or the northern part of the Konkan was called 'Varālat' because Vārlis originally lived and still live there. *Varāl*, according to Dr. Wilson, means a tilled patch of land. The people who cultivated these patches are therefore Varālis or Vārlis.

On the other hand Mr. Rajwade, the famous Maratha historian and a research scholar of repute, thinks that the Wārlis are mentioned as a non-Aryan tribe by Kātyāyan in his Vārtikās under the name *varud* along with *vyās* and *nishād*. Rajwade[3] derives the word Wārli from the word *varud*

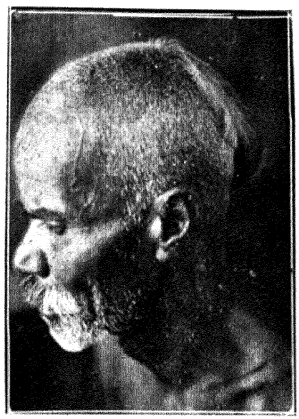
1. Bombay Gazetteer, Thana, Vol. XIII, Part I, p. 60.

2. Dr. Wilson, Aboriginal Tribes II, The names of the seven Konkans are Keral, Tulav, Govarashtra, Konkan (proper), Kerahat, Varalat and Barbar.

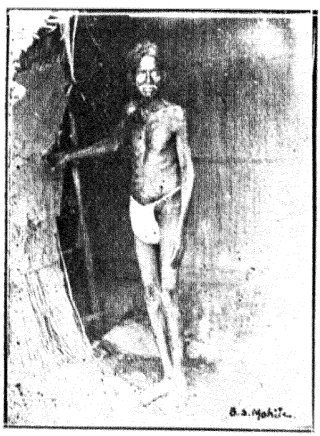
3. V. K. Rajwade, 'Mahikāvatichi Bakhar', 1924, p. 82.



Warli man-front



Warli man-profile



Warli-Old man

All are believed, on good grounds, to be of the same blood. At the same time, the language of the first [group, i. e. Bhils etc.] is akin to Hindi ; on the eastern side of India the language and blood coincide, on the western, the blood is southern, the language northern—the language Marathi, the blood more or less Canarese and Telinga".[1] Scholars have therefore not come to any satisfactory conclusion as to the probable origin of the tribe and the reason why they are so called.

In my tour amongst them, I could not come across anybody from amongst the tribe, who could give me any satisfactory explanation on this point. Among the fanciful and humorous explanations given, I quote two here :—

They are called Wārlis because they used to spread *wāral*—brushwood—in the hilly districts. In some places the word used for brushwood was *wāvar* instead of *wāral*. This much is clear that the tribesmen have a vague idea that their name is intimately associated with the profession they have been following, viz. the spreading of *wāral* for burning the land for agricultural purposes. This strengthens Dr. Wilson's theory of Vāralis as uplanders. They consider themselves *kulambi*—farmers. In the funeral chants the deceased is always addressed as a *kulambi*. Wārlis think that the different castes were created by God. Once upon a time He wanted to distribute certain gifts among men. A certain man got a book and so he became a Brahman. Another got a spade and therefore he was styled a gardener. A third one was given a bamboo and therefore he was called a Dhed as he made baskets out of the bamboo. A fourth one got bellows and became a black-smith. A Wārli got a plough and therefore he became a *kulambi*. Thus he is associated with the spreading of *wāral*—brushwood. The different castes according to the Wārli notion are God-made. Theirs is the easiest way of designating a particular caste from the avocation it follows.

Wārlis themselves think that they are in a humble and humiliating position. They sometimes think that theirs is the lowest tribe, that God created them last and that after

1. Ibid. p. 191.

creating them the trouble of God was over. "*Āmhālā karun devānen peedā vārun tākli, mhanun Vārli.*" Thus there is a pun on the word *vārnen* or *nivārnen* in Marathi. This explanation of course has no value from the historical point of view, but it is given here with a view to show what these people think about themselves. In one of the ritual songs the word *wāruli* occurs. The line is "*gā wāruli bāgalān gā wāruli,*" and means "Oh, in the forest deer, in the forest." Thus *wārul* means a forest and those who dwell in the forest are *wārulis* or *wārlis*. The meaning of the word *wārul* was suggested by the songster himself. The tribesmen do not claim any king of olden times as their own. But they believe that there was a great *rishi* from whom they descended. The *rishi* with his long hair lived in the caves of the hill. "Don't we live like rishis in the jungles allowing our hair to grow?" asked one of them when I was discussing with them their origin.

Appearance and dress :—The general condition of the tribe described by Dr. Wilson about a century ago, i. e. 1842 A. D. remains much the same even today. He describes the Wārlis in "North-West of the District as considerably better off than Katkaris. They were unshaven and slightly clothed, lived in small bamboo and bramble huts, and seem to have been shunned by other castes." [1]

Wārlis have a dark sun-burnt skin. White or brown skin is very rare among them. Such complexion, if found, may mostly be the result of cross-breeding with fair-skinned persons. Even little children are black. Wārlis have a scanty growth of hair on the body especially on the chest. They have no hair on the hands and legs on account of constant work. A Wārli without a tuft of hair on his head is hardly to be found as he believes that there is no beauty without such a tuft.

A Wārli shows no peculiar traits on his face or body. His hair is not woolly like that of the Negroes. The cheek bones are not prominent like those of the Mongolians. The eyes are neither small nor deep. Eyebrows are hairy and lips

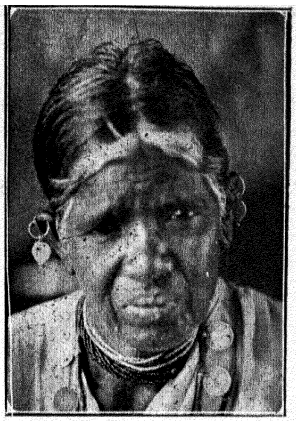
1. Dr. Wilson J. R. A. S., VII 24.

are neither broad nor protruding. The nose is neither prominent nor flat. A Wārli of a robust constitution is rarely to be seen. He is lean and emaciated and lacks vitality, partly because of starvation and partly because of drinks. Though apparently weak, he has wonderful stamina and, if determined, can put up any amount of hard work.

Men do not allow the hair to grow on head, except *shendi* — the tufted hair. But they are very irregular in shaving the head and beard. Those in the forest shave barely once in six months. Generally it may be said that they are fairer and better made than Kātkaris and differ little from Kunbis and Kolis in appearance.

Women do not apply oil to their hair for months together which look very untidy and dirty. Only an occasion like a marriage ceremony or a festive day like Diwali impels them to be better dressed and neatly combed. Wārli women in northern parts put on thick brass rings on arms and legs. This seems to be in imitation of the Dhodia women, who invariably wear such rings in abundance. Women in other parts put on glass bangles, strings of glass beads and sometimes a silver chain round the neck. They also put on brass or silver earings and sometimes a bunch of big hollow silver beads in their hair. Unlike their Dāvar sisters, they prefer to have nothing on their legs or ankles.

Men also usually wear simple round brass ear-rings. Needless to say bathing is out of the question for many days in case of both men and women. Children are shabby and not properly taken care of though the parents love them. Men wear scanty clothes consisting of a loin cloth, a small waistcoat and a turban. Sometimes the latter two are dispensed with. Women are equally scantily dressed. They put on a garment called *lugden* about nine yards in length round their loins which is taken tightly between the two thighs only to cover the private parts but sometimes reaching the knees. A part of this garment is taken over the breasts round the left shoulder and the end brought to the waist from the back. (This is called *padar*.) When the *lugden* is not sufficiently long, a separate piece of cloth is used for the *padar*. One end of this piece is tucked to



Warli woman-front



Warli woman profile.



Middle aged Warli woman

the robe in front near the waist and taken over the breasts and the left shoulder. The other end is brought to the waist from the back and tucked at the waist on the right. Very rarely the *padar* is taken over the head. They put on a bodice of the Maharashtrian type to cover the breasts, but very often they do not care to tie the knots and the bust is exposed.

The Dāvar (a section of the tribe) women in the northern parts wear a great number of brass rings on their arms and legs. These are not only very burdensome, but are also a hindrance to free work. Those in the forest areas untouched by the Hindu civilization neither put on bodices nor have *padar* to cover the breasts. The whole cloth (*lugden*) is wound round the waist only.

Habitations :—Wārlis lead a quiet agricultural life. The tribe as a whole is a settled one and the wandering habits are almost extinct. The sporadic shifts from one place or from one village to another in the case of a few families are primarily due to oppression by the *sawkars*—the land holders—or sudden deaths or epidemics in the family and in the village. Wārlis love and live a forest life. Even the population in the coastal villages is confined to the outskirts of the villages which are closed to cart roads in the rainy season. Their habitations are much scattered. No Wārli village has a group of more than forty huts at one place. The population is distributed in small hamlets of about a dozen huts cut off from each other by furlongs and sometimes by miles. A lonely hut in a far off place is by no means a rare sight. Wārlis prefer to erect a hut on the fields they cultivate irrespective of the fact that they have to live all alone there without neighbours or company. It may be noted that Bhil habitations are also very scattered.

The hut in which a Wārli family lives is hardly worth more than Rs. 15. It consists of a simple earth foundation, a wooden frame, bamboo strips, reed, straw and leaves. A pucca house with tiles, bricks and mortar is a rarity and an indication of unique position among them. A Wārli hut is always square in shape and in most cases facing the east. There is only one door for entrance. As there is no window, free air and light have no place in the Wārli hut. The walls

are built of *boru*, bamboo or *karvi* (reed) sticks and plastered with cow-dung or mud. The huts are roofed either with straw or dried leaves. The hut, unless it is sufficiently big, has no rooms inside it. Wārlis are very reluctant to have any windows in the walls of their huts. The Taluka Officer at Mokhada, a place of predominantly aboriginal population, had selected two hamlets for village uplift according to the Bombay Government scheme. I was told that only the threat and not the persuasion of the Taluka Officer made them cut windows in their bamboo walls and only the frequent visits of the committee members checked them from closing the same.

Ideas of sanitation and cleanliness are quite foreign to them. The yard near the hut is usually dirty. Heaps of rubbish and cowdung lie round about and the floor in the hut itself is often dirtied by fowls. Many a time, a part of the hut serves the purpose of a shed for the cattle, particularly in the rainy season, and this adds to the unclean air the stench of cowdung.

Food :—As pre-eminently agriculturists, their food consists of the produce of the soil they cultivate. Rice of a coarser kind is therefore their chief food. In the hilly districts where there are no rice farms, *nagli* has taken its place. Rice or *nagli* is either boiled, turned into flour for bread, or boiled with water to prepare gruel. Either of these with salt is their daily dish. In rainy season particularly fresh fish, occasionally dried fish and sometimes green vegetables add flavour to their dishes. Milk is not available even for babies, and wheat, ghee and such other luxuries are out of the question. They eat fowls, the flesh of goat, sheep, all kinds of deer, rabbit, wild pig and some birds like pigeons, peacocks etc. The uncivilized forest Wārlis kill and eat monkeys and bats, and a few are reported to be jackal-eaters and are accordingly named *kolkhāde*. Those in the plains and near the coast do not eat monkeys, bats and jackals. The latter eat the white field rats and land crabs which the former hesitate to do. The flesh of a cow, bullock or a buffalo is abhorred equally by all. Among the farm produce, besides rice, are *nagli*, *kodra*, *vari*, *udid*, *tur*, *chavali* and such other pulses. At the approach of the rains, the food is exhausted and

some of them actually live on tender leaves of the wild trees, young sprouts of bamboos and roots and *kandas* or starve for some days.

Wārlis avoid eating certain things in the monsoon. From the first showers of rain to the time of threshing new corn, a few things like coconut, plantain, betel-leaf, betel-nut, turmeric, sugar-cane, beans, cucumber etc. are taboo to them. These are avoided because they must not be partaken of unless offered to God and the deity of corn. The head of the family has to observe this taboo. Young men who are having their training under a *bhagat*, the *bhagats*, the snake-charmers and medicine-men do not eat fish or flesh besides the things mentioned above during the course of their training.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

In the Bombay Gazetteer of 1882, three sub-divisions of Wārlis are mentioned. "They are Murdes, Davars and Nihirs. First and second interdine and intermarry, but not with the third." Enthoven has added one to these, viz. 'pure'. He styles all of them as endogamous divisions not interdining or intermarrying with each other. These divisions may also be classified as geographical or local divisions. "The local group is the smallest unit of cultural specialization. In slight details of custom and daily habits of ceremony and perhaps of dialect, a local group is always to some extent different from every other local group. Civilizational changes are always rooted in local variants".[1] Those in the extreme north are known as the 'Murdes'. They are so called because of their women putting on ornaments named *muradanyā* in the ears. The Murdes are no where found in the Thana district. Next to them come the Dāvars who live in the northern-most part of the Thana district. The Dāvar women are noted for their brass rings on arms and legs, and may often be seen wearing no bodices. Further to the south of the locality of Dāvars live the Nihirs, who seem to have been more influenced by the language and culture of the lower classes of the Marathas viz. the Kunbis. They are so called because they use the word *nihi* instead of the more common Marathi word *nāhi* (no). The Wārlis near the Sahyadri range, i. e. in Mokhada call themselves only Wārlis or *shud*-pure—Wārlis or sometimes Ghāti Wārlis. In fact, all those who do not come within the first three groups go by the general designation of Wārli. It is really difficult to decide which group is socially superior. Each group thinks that socially it is the most superior one and hence it does not like to partake of food with members of other divisions, nor is it prepared to give to or take girls in marriage from other groups. The Nihirs denounce the Dāvars as eaters of white field rats and the latter retort by calling the former

1. Goldenweiser — "Early Civilization" 237.

khube[1] eaters. One division denounces the dialect of the other as inferior and vice-versa. This does not lead to any inference that they are strictly endogamous divisions in the sense of absolute prohibition to interdine or intermarry. A Dāvar by a few years' stay among the Nihirs can pass off as one of the latter and vice-versa. As such mutual assimilation is possible, the groups are not strictly endogamous but only geographical. There is a section amongst them who are known as Pathār Wārlis as they live in plains—*pathār*—being different from those who live near or in the forests. The former are restricted to the coastal strip in the northern part of the Thana district. The Pathār Wārlis are nearer the Dāvars in point of language, customs and religious beliefs. The Dāvar dialect is influenced more than the Pathār dialect by Gujarati. The Pathārs are more advanced; their women folk are not so meagerly dressed as are their Dāvar sisters. The two dialects considerably differ being influenced by different languages. The Nihir dialect is closer to Marathi.

Inter-marriages among the various groups are not strictly prohibited. But the reason why very few intermarriages take place is that a Wārli always likes to get a bride from a locality near his own. Primarily, the outer distinctions in the different groups owe their origin to the regional distribution of the tribe. With the change of habitation, the change of division also takes place. Some of the Wārlis go by the name of Koli or Kolnāk, though Koli is quite a distinct aboriginal tribe. A few of the Wārlis, especially from among the Pathārs and Nihirs, feeling that the designation Wārli was a term of degradation (which it is not), have lately styled themselves as Malhār Kunbis after the fashion of the Malhār Kolis (the latter word, *kunbi* meaning the farmer or cultivator) in order to gain higher social status. They had convened a meeting of the people of a few villages and framed certain rules, particularly regarding the marriage laws and customs and resolved to abide by them. The rules were also printed in a small leaflet. In certain cases, this adopted name was to their disadvantage. I visited a newly opened school at Kasa, a village of pre-

1. *Khubā* is a kind of shelled insect floating in the water in the fields during the rainy season.

Dongarkar, Dohrā, Dowdā, Dodhadiā, Dolyā, Dubhāshe, Dumādā.

Eḍkā.

Farlya, Farād.

Gārḍi, Gavli, Gahalyā, Gaikwād, Gavtyā, Gavāri, Ghātāl, Ghorakane, Ghoshā (a bird), Gorāt, Gowāri (cow-boy), Gohāryā, Gurud (basket maker).

Harapalyā, Hādal, Hāndwa, Hikāryā, Hileem.

Irim.

Janāthe, Jānjar, Jādudā, Jādhav, Junnar.

Kadu, Kānhel, Kankaryā, Karbath, Kākad (a tree), Karavade, Kānhāt, Kāchrā (a kind of grass), Karawale, Kātelā, Kadam, Kadmodā, Kāmdi, (music player), Kavthe, Kenjaryā, Khātā, Kharpadyā, Khevaryā Khānjodyā, Khāḍam, Khirādā, Khirāri, Khutāl, Khutāde, Kolhe, Kongil, Komb (cock), Kol, Kondāri, Kode, Kokerā, Koti, Koknā, Kumbhāryā, Kurhādā (axe), Kuwarā.

Lākhāt, Lāhangyā, Lilkā, Lokhande (iron).

Mād (palm), Mādhā, Māgi, Mahālkari, Malyā, Malkāri, Mānkar, Mashā, Meryā, Medhā, Mhāterā, Mor, Murhā.

Nāik, Nagārya, Nagwāshi, Nadag, Nākrā, Nimlā.

Odhālyā, Ozaryā.

Pāchalkar, Patār, Pāgi, Pātkar, Pārdhi (hunter), Patiwālā, Pānthale, Pawār, Powale.

Rājad, Rāwatyā, Rāhyā, Rādhyā, Rāv, Randhā, Rayāt, Rijad.

Sāmbar, Sānakrā, Sālvi, Shāilkar, Shingadā, Shende, Shinde, Sutār, Sunthadiā.

Tāndulyā (rice), Tāmbdā, Talāthi, Tāndel, Thāpad, Thālekar, Thākaryā, Tokryā, Turyā.

Umbarsādā, Urādyā.

Vādu, Valvi, Vāngad, Varthā, Vānagā, Vāghāt, Vādhan, Vanjāri, Vasāvalā, Vāijal, Vādhiā, Vāgh, Vad, Vājyā, Vajwāde, Varkhandyā and Zop.

Sometimes fanciful explanations are given for their names by the respective surname bearers. Thus *Barafs* think that

their ancestors were servants at a palace (name unknown) whose duty was to get *barafi* or sweets for the King. Hence they were called *barafiwale* or *Baraf*. *Beej* are so called because they were at one time dealing in *beejas* or seeds. *Ghātāls* claim to have come from the Ghats—mountain. *Gavatyās* say that they spread *gavat*—grass—on the sheds of the funeral ceremonies. *Hāndwās* broke the impure *hāndis*—earthen pots—when performing *Gotāi*—the purification ceremony. *Medhā* posted the *Medh* pillar of a house. *Tokaryā* was assigned the duty of bringing *tokar*—bamboo—for the funeral ceremony shed. *Thālekars* were originally drum-beaters. It happened once that when the king (name not known) visited their hamlet, the women received him by beating *thālis*—brass dishes—instead of drums, in the absence of men. They are thus called *Thālekars*, because they beat *thālis*. *Valvi* posted a *Vali*—cross beam of the house. *Tāndels* owned *tānda*, a herd of cattle. *Ādgā* carried the hunt from the forest on a big stick—*ād*. *Hādal* was given mere bones and the flesh partaken by others at a dinner. *Bhurkud* made baskets out of a bamboo. *Gavali* was a milkman, while *Govāri* looked after the cattle, and *Nagāryā* beat drums.

Some clans cannot account for the origin of their names. The tribe has more surnames than personal names. A man is not known so much by his own name as he is by the clan name. *Rāmās* are so many that one has to be distinguished from the other. His name, therefore, must always be accompanied by his clan name, e. g. Rāmā Ādgā, or Rāmā Kharpadyā. etc. All these are the names of separate clans which are different exogamous divisions. They have an equal social status. (Among the Marathas some of the families are presumed to be enjoying a superior status to that of the rest.). Some of the names, e. g. the animal, bird and tree names suggest that the tribe had originally totemistic clans. But the Warlis are not totemistic as the families or clans bearing animal, bird or tree names do not worship or show any special regard for them. There is no taboo on killing or eating birds or animals designated by the clan names, or cutting the tree bearing the clan name. Wārli clans observe no *devaks* as are found among the Marathas. Some of their surnames are common to other aboriginal tribes also.

The names like Gāikawād and Pavār, which are borrowed from the Marathas, are found among the Bhils, Kātkaris, Mahadeo Kolis and Thākurs. (It may be noted that such names are not found among the aboriginal tribes of Gujerat, viz. Chodhrās, Dhodiās and Dublās). The animal name *Vāgh* is found among the Bhils, Kātkaris and Thākurs. The Kātkaris and Thākurs have *Kāmdi*; *Bhoi* is found among the Kātkaris and Chodhrās, and *Rāvat* among the Chodhrās and Dhodiās of Gujarat. *Valvi* is one of the surnames of the Kātkaris and Dhodiās,

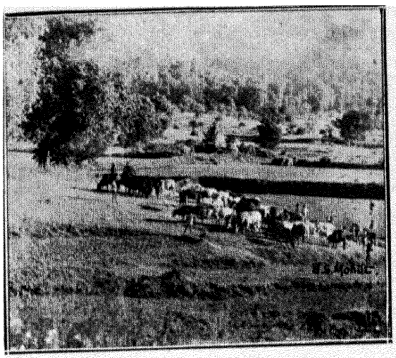
Bhāvar of the Wārlis is similar to *Bhāvre* of the Khandesh Bhils. *Bāmhaniā*, *Kokniā*, *Kola*, *Nāyak*, and *Vanjārā*, all *Kuls* of the Dhodias, are also the *Kuls* of the Wārlis. *Baraf*, *Divā*, *Mora* and *Pātkar* are the names common to both the Wārlis and the Kātkaris.

These similarities in the surnames inter alia bear out the cultural affinities of the different aboriginal tribes in the Presidency.

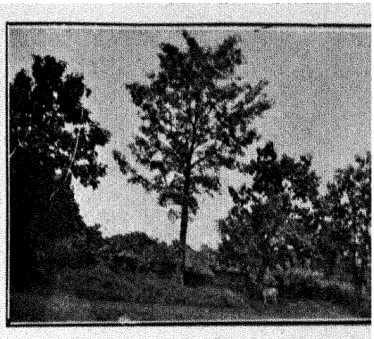
Hamlet:—The extent of Warli population spreads over the hilly parts of the North Konkan and the South Gujarat, the coastal strip of the north of Thana district and the plains and forests lying between the coast, (Arabian sea) and the Sahyadri range. The people live in numerous small groups scattered all over these parts. Each such group lives in huts clustered together in a limited area called a hamlet or a *pādā*.

A hamlet is composed of a small number of huts, usually twelve to fifteen; four or five such hamlets make a Warli village. It may be noted that the Warli hamlets in the coastal villages are situated at their outskirts. Another noteworthy point about a hamlet is that it is not a segregated locality as the *Mahār Wādā* or a *Kātwadi*. A Warli hamlet is not styled *Warli Wādā* and though Warlis prefer to live in a locality separate from that of the higher classes, they admit members of other tribes like Dublās, Dhodiās or Koknas in their midst.

Besides the four endogamous divisions mentioned above, there are other divisions also which are primarily regional or geographic in character. Thus there are the Pathār Warlis who



Grazing Cattle



Warli hamlet



Watch tower for crops

live in the plains near the coastal strip and the Ghati Warlis who live near the ghats of the Sahyadris. These regional divisions, as well as the endogamous divisions, cannot be set in water-tight compartments, but they often overlap each other. It can be said that regionally the tribe is divided into fairly large geographical divisions, which again are sub-divided into numerous villages. The village is further divided into hamlets and the hamlets into various families.

Socially, the tribe can be divided into endogamous divisions; each endogamous division contains various exogamous divisions which are called *varaganes* or *kuls*. These may be designated as the clans. Each clan again is composed of various families. Thus family is the basis of the Warli organization, both as a social and a local unit.

Family :—A Warli family comprises a man and his wife together with their children. Sometimes the family includes the man's brothers also, necessarily so if they are minors and sisters if they are unmarried. The family life of the Warlis usually begins with marriage. A man acquires the status of a family man only when he has a wife. As married life is always synonymous with independent house-hold, one finds that the man's married brothers invariably live separate from him. It is because of this that a man's married sons also do not live with their father. Sometimes, though living in separate huts, they have a common hearth. In their old age, the parents sometimes find that all their married sons have independent establishments. The parents, jointly or separately, then go to live with the family of one of their sons. It may be noted, however, that old parents try to continue to live independently of their sons and seek the protection of the latter only when they are unable to work and earn their living. The sons on their part do not show any marked attachment for their old parents when there is a question of supporting them in their old age, for a disabled person is a great burden to the family and a sort of a curse. If the parents have more than one son, each of them tries to see that the parents do not come to his lot. The infirm parents sometimes go to live with their married daughters if they (the parents) have no sons.

It may thus be seen that generally the filial tie in later life is not very strong among the Warlis. It is because of the tendency to live independently that the Warli families are usually small in regard to the number of members. The family comprises the couple and their children, between whom the filial tie is the strongest. It may not, however, be inferred from what has been said above that the joint family system is totally absent in the Warli society. Occasionally one sees a family headed by a man living under the same roof with his sons and grandchildren, or a family of different brothers. Such instances are not, however, many and the separate family system is the common rule.

The Warli family is also a home. In it lives a group of persons united together by relationship of blood or by marriage. They all live under a common roof, with a common hearth; they adjust themselves to the convenience of each other and very close familiarity exists among the members inter-se.

The father is the 'pater familias' of the family. But he does not disregard the wishes of his wife, who is helpful in conducting the household. No member of the family, besides the father, can hold an independent opinion as is found among the families in the civilized societies. Children or minors have no voice in the family affairs. A married son too has to live under the high command of his father and the young daughter-in-law has to suffer the traditional ill treatment meted out to her by her mother-in-law. The young couple is thus eager to start an independent household.

Children form an important element of the Warli family life. The parents are not at all afraid of the idea of getting a child like the modern educated parents. On the contrary they delight in the birth of a child and like to have many children. Far from being a burden to a man, children are frequently a source of additional income. They prove a helping hand to the family and are taken to be its wealth. "If a guest comes, he enquires after the children and not after your wealth," express the Warlis, when talking about the importance of having children.

The Warli family is patronymic, the wife and all the children taking the husband's and father's name respectively. Sometimes a woman is not known by her name, but as the wife of so and so. Even the word 'wife' is dropped, and the possessive case of the husband's name serves the purpose. Thus a woman may be known and called as Rāmāchi (Rāmā's) or Jethyāchi (Jethyā's), meaning Ramā's wife or Jethyā's wife.

A personal name is many a time sacrificed for that of the family. A man may be so widely known by the name of the family, say, Oḍhālyā, that very few may be aware of his personal name. The tribe observes patrilineal descent. But the tribe has not exclusively adopted the system of patrilocal residence. A man, if he so chooses, may go and live in the village of his father-in-law. In the case of a *gharor*, he has compulsorily to adopt the matrilocal residence. But in such circumstances the *gharor* does not lose his family identity nor does he go by the name of the family of his father-in-law. He constitutes a separate family within a family with himself and his wife. The hearth is common but for all social purposes they are two distinct families.

Even though the tribe pre-eminently follows the patrilocal residence, no segregation of patrilineal kin is aimed at. A married daughter is no more a member of her father's family, but she has a sort of claim over it. So also the mother's brother, though belonging to a different family, has to join hands with the family of his sister for certain ceremonial purposes.

As stated above, the father is the ruler of the family. In any case, he is the oldest member of the family. He wields influence over the family in both capacities viz. as a senior member of the house and a ruler. His seniority in age helps him much in managing the family. Age is a great advantage in such societies, for it is the only source through which experience may be gained. The junior members of the family are thus not consulted in family matters because they are young and inexperienced.

A Warli family does not observe the traditional manners as is seen among the caste Hindus. No member is addressed in terms of verbal respect. The behaviour of the husband and wife towards each other is quite free even in a joint family. A husband can talk with his wife in the presence of his father. It is not necessary for the family to have common meals. Each member may take his food at his convenience and need not wait for others. However the female members dine after the males have taken their meals.

Some of the notions regarding shame or decency, as are found among the caste Hindus, are peculiarly absent among the Warlis. A Warli woman can move in the house without putting on a bodice. It is not rare that the same hall is shared by two couples for sleeping purposes at night; and yet this does not lead to immorality or adulterous connections within the family.

Adoption :—We have seen that the members of a family are grouped together either by marriage or by blood relationship. But a person may be admitted into the family by adoption also. The institution of adoption is not widely prevalent among the Warlis, because it is very rare that a man has no issue. If one wife is barren he can marry another. If he has only daughters, he may choose such bridegrooms as may be willing to stay in his own family. It is only when a man has no child and he is rich enough to possess a well-built hut, cattle and corn, that he likes to have a son adopted to him. The man usually selects a boy from his clan, with the consent of the boy's father or guardian and brings him up as his own. No ceremony or rites are performed. A few relatives and influential men from the village are invited and served with toddy, in order to make it known to the public that the boy has been given in adoption. The father of the boy is not given money, for the boy invariably goes into a better family by adoption. The natural father has no claim over his son after the adoption is publicly declared.

The adopted boy takes the name of the adoptive father and of his family. He is however prohibited from marrying a girl

from his real father's clan, as well as from that of his adoptive father.

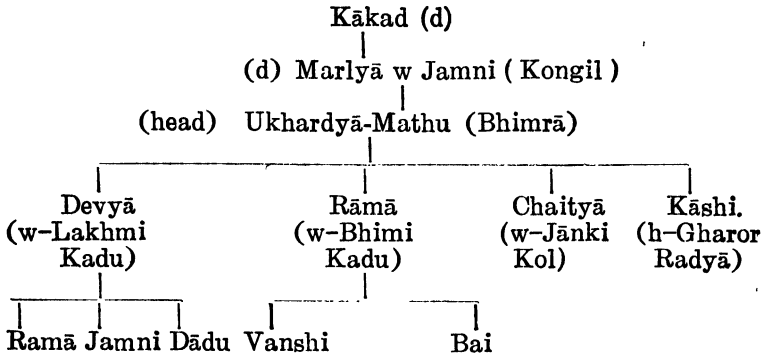
The custom of adoption does not seem to be of Warli origin. It is practised mostly by the coastal Warlis probably due to Hindu influence; it is practically non-existent among the forest Warlis.

The Clan:—A Warli clan is known as a *Kul* or a *Varagane.* It is an exogamous division bearing its own name — *Kul* or a surname. The tribe has numerous such exogamous divisions as mentioned above. It is believed that each clan had an original ancestor and the different families in the clan claim to have descended from that common ancestor. This common descent creates a fictitious blood relationship between the members of the clan. No family, however, knows this ancestor by name. In fact, no man can trace his pedigree to the fourth or fifth generation. The clan organization of the Warlis is a loose system. The same clan may be found in more than one endogamous division. The same clan may also be found in the different geographical divisions. Thus like the Warli hamlets, the Warli clans are scattered throughout the Warli locality. Two families belonging to the same clan may be separated by a distance of fifty miles, and the families have no other obvious connection except the common name. But this common name is enough for a Warli family to recognize each other as *Kutabis* — i. e. of the same *Kutumb* — clan. However, this recognition does not create any feeling of attachment between the two distant families. Inter-communication is prevalent between such families of the clan as are not geographically cut off from each other and are also related to each other as cousins or second cousins.

This is the factor which accounts for the looseness of the clan organization. The Warli clan is not exclusively hereditary; a person is born in the clan, as well as a person is adopted into the family and through it to the clan. The Warli clan has become more a conventional group than functional one. The following few geneologies may be helpful in giving

us an idea of the Warli pedigree, the strength of the family and the marriages outside the exogamous group.

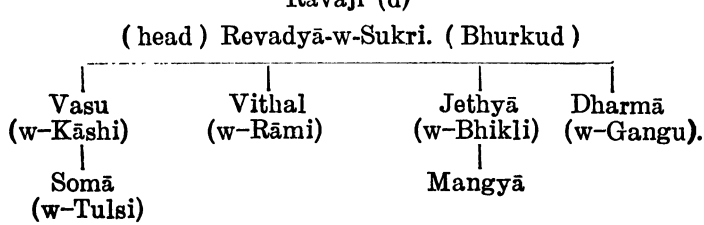
Dombaryā family from Bāble pādā



[d = dead, w = wife, h = husband].

Ukhardyā, the head of the family is above fifty and knows only the name of his grand-father. It may be noted that the women, including his mother, wife and the wives of his three sons, come from different clans i. e. other than Dombaryā; his daughter is married to a boy from the Radyā clan and he lives in his father-in-law's family as a *gharor*. This family lives jointly and has two huts.

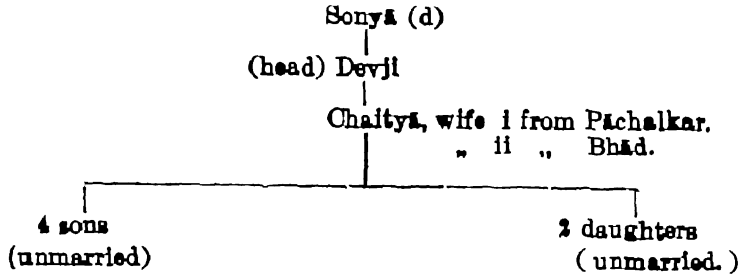
Khātā family from Bāble pādā.



Vasu's wife is from the Dodyā clan. Vithal married three wives successively, first from the Dombaryā, second from the Dodkā and the third from Dodyā. Jethyā's wife is from the Dombaryā. Dharmā's first wife was from Dhodi and the second one from Ozryā. Somā's wife Tulsi is from Kondāri. All the sons have

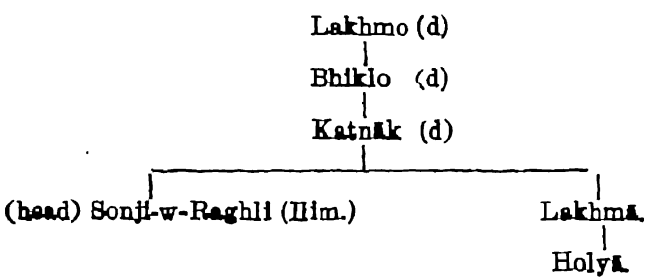
independent households. Revadyā and his wife live with their youngest son Dharmā.

Valvi family from Nāgankas.



Chaityā's first wife from the Pāchalkar clan divorced him and remarried in the Umbarsādā family from Talāi, another village. He got Rs. 35 as *dāvā* from his wife's second husband. He then married a second wife from the Bhād family originally coming from Ādgā who was divorced from her former husband. Chaityā paid Rs. 21 as *dāvā* to her husband.

Rajāt from Uplāt.



Sonji was the first man I came across, who could give the name of his great-grand father. Sonji is an old *bhagat* without an issue. He has taken up his nephew Holyā as his successor as a *bhagat*. Sonji and his brother live separately.

Father's younger brother	Kākās	Kākā
Mother	Ās	Āyā.
Step-mother	Ās	Jiji (among the Southern Wārlis).
Son	Poyarā	Dādu or by name.
Son's son	Poyaryāchā Poyarā	Dādu or by name.
Daughter	Poyari	Bāi or by name.
Son's daughter	Poyaryāchi Poyari	Bāi or by name.
Daughter's daughter	Poyarichi Poyari	Bāi or by name.
Father's mother	Ājis	Āji or Dosi Āy.
Mother's mother	Ājis	Āji or Dosi Āy.
Husband	Navarā, Goho, or Gharwālā	As a child's father.
Wife	Bāylas, or Āu	Age or as the child's mother.
Son's wife	Sunas or Ohvas	By name (in coastal villages) Poyare (in forest villages).
Elder brother's wife	Ohnis	By name, (by man) Ohni or Vansā (by woman)
Younger brother's wife	Ohvas	By name (both by man and woman.)
Father's elder brother's wife	Mati ās	Mate Āyā.
Father's younger brother's wife	Kākis	Kāki.
Wife's father	Sasrā	Māmā.
Husband's father	Sasrā	Bāji or Māmāji.
Wife's mother.	Sāsus	Sāsus.
Husband's mother.	Sāsus	Sāsus, Āyā or Phui.

Daughter's husband	Javhās, Gharor, Ghartanyā or Khandād	Jāvāy; gharor, Khandād; by surname only by the father-in-law.
Sister (elder)	Bahinis	Bāi.
Sister (younger)	Bahinis	By name.
Husband's sister	Ohnis, Vansā, or Nand	Ohni, Vansā, or by name if younger.
Husband's sister's husband	Mehno.	Dādā.
Sister's husband	Mehno	Bhāvo (both by male and female speaker).
Wife's brother	Mehno	Bhāvo
Wife's brother's wife	...	Bāi.
Wife's sister	Sālis	Sāsus (if elder than wife) and Sālis (if younger than wife).
Wife's sister's husband	Sādu	Dādā or by name.
Father's sister	Phui	Phui.
Father's sister's husband	Māmus	Māmu.
Mother's brother	Māmus	Māmu or Māmā.
Mother's brother's wife	Phui	Phui.
Mother's sister	Dhākli	Mati Āy (if elder), Dhākli (if younger).
Mother's sister's husband	Dhākal Bāpu	Dhākal Bāpu.
Husband's elder Brother	Jethus·	Dādā.
Husband's elder brother's wife.	Vansā	Vansā.
Husband's younger brother	Derus	Dādā, or by name if younger than the female speaker.
Husband's younger brother's wife	Vansā	By name.

Son-in-law (distant)	Javāysā	Javāysā.
Brother's child	Bhāschā por	Dādu or by name (both by male and female speakers)
Sister's child	Bhācharu	Dādu or Bāi according to the sex (both by male and female speakers.)

It may be seen from the above terms that relationship is reckoned from both the father's and mother's side. The kinship is based on blood relationship as well as on the relation by marriage. The relationship is extended only to the third degree. Sometimes these third degree relations are not distinctly designated; e. g. the grandson is not known as a grand-son, but literally i. e. son's son or daughter's son. Another noteworthy point regarding the terms of relationship is that in some cases the same term means more than one relation; e. g. *Phui*, *Mehnā* or *Māmus*.

The Warli kinship terminology is almost the same as that of Hindu kinship. It is not so exhaustive as the Hindu kinship, but there is not a relationship-term which can be called as of peculiarly Warli origin. The terms of relationship are similar to Deccani or Gujarati terms with some variations or corruptions. Thus except the terms for wife's sister (*Sālis*), father's sister (*Phui*), mother's brother's wife (*Phui*) and husband's elder brother (*Jethus*) which are like Gujarati terms, almost all the relationship terms are from the Deccani with some corruptions. Some relationships have duplicate terms, both Deccani and Gujarati, the former prevalent among the Southern Warlis, while the latter among the Northern Warlis The terms *Sunas* or *Ohvas* (son's wife), *Navarā* or *Gharwālā* (husband), and *Gharor* or *Khandād* (son-in-law) may be given as the typical illustrations. Ohvas (Gujarati *Vahu*), *Gharwālā* (master of the house) and *Khandād* (son-in-law living in his wife's family) are also adopted from the Gujarati terms. On the other hand, terms like *goho* and *āu* for husband and wife respectively are found in the lower castes of the Hindus only like the Kunbis. The term for mother's sister—*Dhākali*—seems to be purely Warli. No distinct terms are found in the case of some of the relations as in Hindu kinship. Thus the father's elder

brother is not known as uncle but as *Mate Bāpu*, i. e. the elder father, and his wife as the *Mati Ās* the elder mother. The younger brother of the father, however, is termed uncle or *Kākās* and not as the younger father.

Terms of address differ from the terms of relationship in certain cases. A child is either called by its name or as *Dādu* or *Bāi*, according to the sex. No elder relations must be addressed or referred to by their names. Only those relations, who are younger than the speaker, may be called by names. The term of address is associated with the measure of respect accorded to the relation by the speaker. This respect does not depend on the nearness of the kin only, but on the seniority of the relation to the speaker as well.

A husband never calls his wife by name. He may address her as *age*—(oh) or some such word and refer to her not in any definite term of relationship but as so and so's mother, if she has a child, or simply as *gharwāli* the mistress of the house. The wife too cannot address her husband by name and must refer to him as the 'child's father'. A difficulty is experienced by a woman to refer to her husband when she has no child. In that case, she may make an indirect reference or use a word like *gharwālā*. A Warli husband is most reluctant to give out the name of his wife. When asked about the names of their wives, they laughingly said, " how can we tell the name of the wife"? When further pressed, a man asked a person sitting near him to tell his wife's name for himself. Old and young equally follow this practice, there being very few exceptions.

The Warli terms of relationship are classificatory, in that they are arranged in groups and each group goes by one common name. The innermost group of a boy's relations is that of his father, mother, brothers and sisters. The next group consists of the extended family and includes his more distant relations and collaterals. Father's elder brother is called *Mate Bāpu* or *Matā Bā* meaning the elder father, and the mother's elder sister, *Dhākli*, would be called *Mati Āy*—the elder mother. The grand-father is called *Davar Bā*—the old father, and the grand-mother *Dosi Āy*—the old mother. The father's elder brother's wife is called *Mati Āy*, as she is the wife

of the *Mate Bāpu* and the mother's sister's husband is called *Dhākal Bāpu* i. e. father, for being the husband of *Mati Āy* (mother). Some of the distinct relations are grouped into one class for the purposes of address. The elder brother's wife and the husband's sister may be called *Ohni* (from Marathi *vahini*) or *Vansā*. For purposes of relationship the daughter-in-law and the younger brother's wife are both called *Ohvas* (from Gujarati *vahu* — the wife or daughter-in-law). No distinction is observed in the terms of address when the speakers are male or female, except that the male can take the liberty of calling his brother's wife by name which a female speaker cannot.

The mother's and father's kins are not distinguished so far as certain relations are concerned. Thus both the paternal and maternal grand-fathers are *Ājos* and both the grand-mothers *Ājis*. Mother's brother is *Māmus*, as well as the father's sister's husband. Father's sister is *phui*, so also the mother's brother's wife. From the mother's kin the maternal uncle is regarded as the most important relative. In all the festivals and ceremonies performed in his sister's family, he is the chief invitee. His presence is necessary in the wedding ceremony. He first holds his nephew on the shoulder in the bridal procession and in dancing too he must hold him first. At the time of the wedding he must stand near his nephew or niece, the bridegroom or the bride. It is he who crops the first hair of his nephew. Among some of the Warlis, particularly the Southerners, the maternal uncle gives his daughter in marriage to his nephew. The father's sister, however, is not so connected with her brother's family.

Familiarity between the relations:—There is a sort of privileged familiarity between the nephew and his maternal uncle. The latter would always behave kindly towards the former and would not mind if the former does a slight wrong to him. The nephew has a free access to the house of his maternal uncle and he is well treated there during his visits.

A man may have privileged familiarity with his wife's younger sister *Salis*. He can take liberties with her in speech if not in action. Similarly, he may have familiarity with the

wife of his elder brother, for both of them (his brother's wife and he) are nearly of the same age. Perhaps it is this familiarity that makes a woman re-marry her deceased husband's younger brother. On the other hand, a man can take no liberty with his younger brother's wife who would look on him with respect and awe.

There are no relation taboos like the parent-in-law taboos in some of the primitive societies. A son-in-law, however, is not so free with his mother-in-law as he is with his father-in-law. The mother-in-law also, on her part, has no free social intercourse with her son-in-law. Only the father-in-law would call his son-in-law by his surname. The mother-in-law must call him only as *Javāy* or *Gharor* as the case may be. A man calls his mother-in-law as *Sāsus*, but a woman may call her as *Sāsus*, *Āyā* (mother) or *Phui* (aunt). This illustrates the difference between the attitude of a man and a woman towards their mother-in-law. Wife's elder sister too is called Sāsus, i. e. as good as the mother-in-law and the man is not permitted to have familiarity with her.

The local group :—So far we have considered the family as a social unit in its relation to clan and kinship. The family is also a local unit and forms part of the local group or the hamlet. Each hamlet vis-a-vis a village is fairly independent in the management of its own affairs. The relations of the family as a local unit with the local group are certainly more vital than with the clan. The clan is distributed all over, while the local group is compact. But these local groups are never united beyond an area covering a few villages in the neighbourhood. The marriage relations are sought within this area only and social intercourse between the different local areas is almost non-existent. Thus for the purposes of social organisation, the whole tribe is not a single unit ; the laws of one area regarding social behaviour may be slightly different from those of another area.

There may be different families living in the same hamlet, but they live in the spirit of neighbourliness. A family shares in the joy or sorrows of the hamlet and a spirit of mutual help prevails among the different families of the hamlet. A family

cannot, therefore, afford to displease the neighbours in the hamlet, as otherwise it would go very difficult for a dissenter to live in the hamlet. There are instances in which the families leave a particular hamlet because of the unfriendly relations with their neighbours and go to live in the hamlets where they find a more congenial atmosphere.

The affairs of a village, a group of four or five hamlets, are regulated by a council of five tribesmen from the village. It is not necessary that the number must be strictly five. It may be more or less according to the number of influential men in the village capable of acting as the councillors. This council is called *Panchas* who are self-elected persons and approved as such by the villagers. The Panchas are usually the bhagats and old men who by their experience and seniority are taken to be the authorities on tribal matters. The Panchas settle the social disputes in the village. Whenever a complaint is lodged with any one of the Panchas, an intimation is given by him (the Panch) to his co-councillors, to the parties concerned and to the villagers in general that all people should assemble at a stipulated time and place to hear the dispute and give the decision. This gathering is called the *Jāt* though it comprises only the inhabitants of one village and not the whole community. It will be seen from this that the councillors are not the arbitrary judges, but they hear the case in the presence of all and both sides are given a chance to present their case. Sometimes the *Jāt* or meeting is invited on the initiative of the Panchas only, when in their opinion a grave offence has been committed by any member of the tribe within the locality for which he must be brought to book. Petty quarrels are not referred to the Panchas. They are settled by the persons concerned by measuring their strength, might is right being the rule. The tribal court is meant for the social disputes which affect the interests of the tribe. These mainly pertain to marital disruptions, divorces, abductions or adulterous connections. The tribal court gives its judgment after hearing the case which is generally by way of settling the issue through compromise. There are no dissentions between the Panchas, because the prime aim in deciding the case is to arrive at a settlement. The Panchas even consult the villagers

assembled on the question at issue and may give due regard to the sense of the meeting. Ordinarily the persons other than the Panchas assembled there are only to state their view on the matter and not to pass any judgment. It is thus a solution arrived at by consulting all and there is no reason why it should be flouted by anybody. The punishment is usually in the form of fines, a part of which is given to the person wronged by way of compensation and part utilized for serving toddy to the meeting. The tribal court has no legal machinery to execute the punishment inflicted by it on a person. But the decisions of the Panchas are not flouted by the persons concerned, as they (the decisions) are supported by the villagers. Thus there is a strong moral force behind the Panchas' verdict and no man can take the law into his own hands by going against the verdict. Social boycott is the most effective weapon which the village may use against any person who disobeys the court's order. However strong the individual may be, he finds it very difficult for himself to live in the village when all the villagers have decided to non-cooperate with him. He is the most unwelcome guest to the neighbouring villages too, for his notoriety in disregarding the village Panchas has spread in the neighbourhood. He is thus brought to bay and he bows down to the court's word and pays whatever penalty he is ordered to pay.

When persons from two different villages are involved in a social dispute, the Panchas from both the villages come together and try to settle the matter amicably. If the Panchas uphold the man from their respective villages, a decision is difficult to be arrived at. In such cases the matter is referred to the Panchas of two other villages, who may look into it with an unbiassed mind. The judgment of this third party is generally accepted by both. If it is not, the matter ends there only, without any justice being administered in that case. There is no higher court or authority to which an appeal can be made.

The Patel or Jātelā:—There is another institution for administering justice which runs parallel to the tribal court. This institution is invested in the Patel or *Jūtelā* who is

a judge in the tribal matters affecting the social status of an individual vis-a-vis the tribe. He is called *Patel* because he is supposed to be the leading man in a group of three or four villages. He is a *Jātelā*, for he deals with matters relating to the *Jāt* or the caste. The functions of the tribal court are different from those of the *Jātelā*. The former is competent to take up social disputes in general ; the latter can hear the disputes regarding the social status. As such, he is empowered to give justice in those cases in which the issue centres round a person's remaining within the caste or out of it. Such questions arise only when a person partakes of food from a member of a lower caste or non-Hindu or has an illegal connection with such a member. The *Jātelā* does not rest with giving his judgment in a particular case. He has to go a step further and execute the order. When a person is pronounced to have acted against the established practices of the tribe, say in accepting food, he has to be purified before he is admitted again into the *jāt*. For this the *Jātelā* himself has to conduct a purificatory rite. Thus the *Jātelā* is both the judge and the officiater at the ritual.

The post of the *Jātelā* is hereditary, descending from father to son. If the son is a minor and incapable of discharging the duties of a *Jātelā*, the Panchas from the village perform the duties till the boy attains majority. However, the purificatory ceremony is performed by any one of them who is conversant with it, and if none of them is able to do it, the *Jātelā* from a neighbouring group of villages is invited to perform the ceremony. No age limit is prescribed for the boy to attain majority. He is thought to be a major when he is fit to give decisions on the various complaints lodged before him. An adopted son also succeeds his father as a *Jātelā*.

It is believed that originally the different Patels were appointed by a head *Jātelā*, as it was impossible for him to administer justice to the whole tribe single handed. He had a crown of gold and a staff of silver as the symbols of the chief Jātelāship. He toured round the different villages, and asked his subordinates for the account of the decisions given by them and the fines collected. At present, however, there is no head *Jātelā* and the different village *Jātelās* are independent of one another. It is not known how far the institution of the head

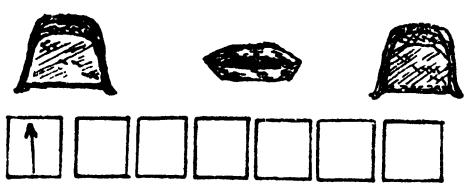
Jātelā and his subordinates was a reality; but if it was, it suggests that the tribal government was well organized in the olden times. The present *Jātelās* said that whenever the position of a *Jātelā* was questioned, he had to bring the crown and the staff from the head *Jātelā* to prove his bona-fides. I came across no *Jātelā*, however, who himself had on any occasion to prove his bonafides in the manner stated above.

There was never a strong tribal government among the Warlis. It is very rare that the people of more than five villages gather together to discuss an important question. In 1934 some of the Warlis from about fifty coastal villages gathered and framed some rules regarding their marriage customs and rites. It is pretty doubtful how far these rules would be put into execution in the absence of a strong social organization. But it is an indication of the Warlis' attempt to fall into line with the lower class Hindus like the Kunbis in regard to their social customs.

As said above, the *Jātelā* is not only a law-giver but also the conductor of the ritual for the purification of a person. He has, therefore, to know the *gāvalis* the charms and songs to be recited for the *jāt* rite. The *Jātelā* teaches these *gāvalis* to his son, as the latter succeeds his father in the capacity of a *Jātelā*. The *Jātelā* is invariably a bhagat and usually one of the panchas. One *Jātelā* serves a group of three to four villages for the purposes of matters relating to the *jāt*. He is generally assisted by three or four other influential men from the village, in order thet he may not commit discrepancies. His decisions are based on the evidence of the villagers and are influenced by consultations with the influential men. They are almost final and have to be obeyed by all. People from the village are also invited to attend the function in which the *Jātelā* acts as the law-giver. There is, however, a limit to the powers of a *Jātelā* as a law-giver. He has necessarily to follow the existing tribal law; he cannot create a law of his own, neither can he interpret it in a way inconsistent with the tribal notions. The punishment imposed is mostly in the form of a fine. The highest punishment is ex-communication. The fine is utilized in serving toddy to the people. Punishment by fine is taken a sufficient expiation and the accused is entitled to go free.

When a person commits a sin according to the popular notions of the Warlis, he is said to have become impure and is liable to be ex-communicated. Such a person is purified by undergoing the purificatory rite known as *Jāt karne* or *Gotāi*. He is not admitted to his fold, unless he is made pure by the *Jātelā*. Whenever a person kills a cow, knowingly or unknowingly, he is said to have committed a sin. A person is deemed to be impure when he accepts food from a member of any tribe or community which is supposed to be lower than the Warlis. A man returned from jail is also considered to be impure, not because of the stigma on his character, but because of food prepared by people of lower castes served to him. Certain sins or impurities are, however, irremediable. A man accepting food from an untouchable is never allowed to remain a member of the tribe. Similarly a woman found to be in illegal connection with a tribesman lower than the Warlis is denounced and ex-communicated.

People of the village gather in the evening to witness the *Jāt* rite performed near the culprit's house. The *Jātelā* conducts this rite. The culprit is seated in front of the *Jātelā* at a little distance. Seven little squares of the dried *Kasar* grass are arranged by the *Jātelā* at a little distance from each other. The area of each square is big enough for a man to stand. The seven squares are called seven houses. The *Jātelā* draws the figures of a tiger and cow in two of those squares, preferably those in the centre. Two winnowing fans are kept in front of the squares. The *Jātelā* places a *parāt*—a round brass dish—in between the two winnowing fans. He pours little water in it and asks the culprit to wash the toes of the *Jātelā* and four other influential men of the village in the round dish. The *Jātelā* then mixes a little cow-dung in that water. Some hair are cut from the pigtail–*shendi*–of the culprit and put in the round dish.



The culprit is then asked to stand in the first grass square. He places a blade of *darbha* grass on his right shoulder, two rings of the same grass blades round the toes, one in the last finger of the left hand and two in the last two fingers of the right hand. The culprit standing in the square, the *Jātelā* recites the *gavalis*, the charms pertaining to cow, After finishing with the recitation, he gives a few drops of the water from the round dish to the culprit to drink. The squares are then set on fire and the culprit walks through them one by one. The *Jātelā* offers a black chicken and sheds two drops of its blood on the culprit's head. He is then taken to the nearest pool where he bathes. If there is no such pool nearby, he bathes with water taken from a cottage nearby, but not from the culprit's house. All the earthen pots used by the culprit are taken out from his hut and broken by the *Jātelā*.

When this rite is being performed, women in the culprit's family prepare a bread. After taking the bath, the culprit is supposed to have become pure. He distributes the pieces of bread among the gathering and all eat them. The chicken killed by the *Jātelā* is fried and distributed among the invitees. Toddy and dried Bombay ducks are also served to the gathering on behalf of the accused as a token of his expiation. The *Jātelā* gets a rupee from the culprit for conducting the purificatory rite.

The Gāvalis :—The *Jātelā* recites the *gāvalis* in prose. They relate to the story of Mahadeo and the cow :—"Mahadeo and Gangā-Gauri started to roam over the earth. Mahadeo sowed some corn. He reaped the corn in due course and made seven rice-balls after pounding the rice-corn. He made seven cows of the seven rice-balls. They were of seven colours, viz. white, black, red, yellow, grey, white-black (patched) and white-red. These seven cows grazed in seven different plains, viz., *kāsar* (a kind of grass), *bhātol* (corny), *dhudi* (of small shrubs), *rohḍe* (of tall grass), *tātad* (shrubby), *hivāl* (all green) and *govāl* (?).

Mahadeo and Gangā were following the cows. Mahadeo jumped up and fell on the ground in the form of a tiger. The tiger pounced upon one of the cows. The cow, while trying to escape, got entangled in the creepers of the forest and died.

Mahadeo again assumed his own form ; but he committed a sin which Gangā never liked. She threatened to report the matter to other Gods and put Mahadeo to shame. Mahadeo promised her that he would invite the Gods and ask them to purify him. The Gods purified Mahadeo by performing the *jāt* ceremony. Even the God had to undergo this ceremony to render himself pure. So men have to perform it to remove their sins".

The *gāvalis* are recited to emphasize the fact that even the God committed a sin in killing a cow. The cow is held in high reverence by the Warlis and hence the purification recitations are named after the cow–*gāvali*. The *gāvalis* are recited in all the purification rites, even though a culprit is charged for accepting food from a lower caste man. A person becomes pure when he drinks the water with which the feet of wise men are washed and which is mixed with cow-dung. The culprit's walking through the seven squares, set on fire, is also significant. It means that fire has also made him pure. In southern parts of the Warli area, the purificatory rite is called *gotāi*[1]. It is also called *bāt kāḍhaṇe* – removing the impurity.

Inspite of all that is said above, the two social institutions, the tribal court and the *jātelā*, are slowly losing ground year after year. Now-a-days there is a tendency among the Warlis to run to the village Patel (the government officer) to settle their quarrels. Though the Patel acts in his private capacity, his decisions are taken to be *Sarkari* (Government) and as such are obeyed to the letter. Besides they have no fear of receiving a severe form of punishment like ex-communication from the Government Patel. Their contact with the higher class people in the neighbourhood is also responsible for weakening their institutions. They see that all the higher classes take recourse to the law courts to redress their wrongs. They see that there are no such communal institutions existing among them and in imitation of the higher classes, Warlis too are gradually discarding their belief in their own old institutions. The tendency towards the weakening of the institutions may also be due to the loosening of the group ties. A Warli family, if supported by the land-lord on whose estate it works, does not

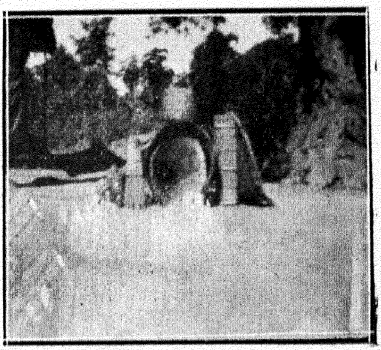
1. From the Sanskrit word *gotra* – *gota* (Marathi). Taking into *gota* is *gotāi*.



Fishing in still water



Fishing in stream



Fishing baskets

The Missionary preachers move from cottage to cottage in Warli villages and try to mix with the children in the beginning. They show and distribute among them pictures. Children are given sweets and gram. By frequently visiting the people, the preachers get acquainted with them. Clothes and sometimes corn are also given to the people by the preachers. They provide them with medicines if they (Warlis etc.) are prepared to make use of them. The people are entertained by different means, such as the magic lantern slides. Thus when a favourable impression is created on the villagers they begin to talk about the people's habits and their false religious notions. They preach that the Warli gods are mere stones and not kind to them, while their God—the Christian God—is very kind and punishes nobody for his sins. He accepts anyone that comes to him and loves him like a father loving his child.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the Warlis discard their religion and embrace Christianity by such preachings. Nay, far from it! The Missionaries come in close contact with the people and ask them to send their children to their schools. As soon as the boys begin to read the letters, they give them the Marathi translations of the Old and New Testaments and try to impress on the young minds the Christian ideas about God. Slowly they gain ground and the people in the neighbourhood begin to take them as friends and helpers.

The field from which the Missionaries get their converts is the old infirm people, the orphans and persons, particularly women, ex-communicated by the tribe. The Missions are too willing to accept the orphans in their fold. The relatives find it difficult to bring up the orphans, because they cannot afford to spend time after them. As a baby is fed only on the mother's milk, a baby without a mother cannot be properly fed. The following account of a Warli convert teacher in one of the Mission schools will give us an idea of the circumstances in which the Missionaries get the orphans and also the attitude of such converts towards their former Warli relations :—

"Philip, a boy of about twenty, passed his Vernacular Final Examination and was appointed a teacher. His real name was Somla and he was handed over to the Mission at the age of

six. His mother was a widow with six children and found it extremely difficult to maintain herself and her children. Philip told me that because of her poverty she threw two of her children into the river and handed over this boy (Somla) to the Mission. Afterwards she re-married and was living with her husband near Sanjan, at which place the boy was working as a teacher. Philip's mother and other relations visited him occasionally and he too paid visits to them. Philip looked quite happy and did not wish to become a Warli again. When taking food at his mother's place, he had to sit at a little distance from others and he was not served in a metal dish, lest it should be polluted. He helped his mother sometimes and his relations with her and his brothers were quite cordial. Inspite of his advice his mother was not at all willing to send her other children to the Mission school. She was afraid they might be converted."

This explains the tribe's attitude towards the Missionaries The mother knew that the Mission had made her son happy; but she was staunch in her religious convictions. It was only the dire necessity that impelled her to hand over her child to the Mission. Thus most of the conversions to Christianity are due to miserably poor conditions. Inspite of the various lures offered by the Missions, the Warlis stick to their own religion. Conversions out of conviction are very rare, perhaps none. When talking with some of the converted families, they told me that the *Sahebs*—Missionaries—were very kind to them and hence they accepted their religion. Afterwards I learnt that the Missionaries had helped those very families in securing plots of land. So the secret of the conversion was in the help rendered to them and a sort of a return for an obligation.

After conversion, the Warli family goes to stay in or near the Christian colony. Some of the members of the family, particularly the younger ones who attend the daily prayers, are given Christian names. These families are helped by the Missionaries even after their conversion by employing them in their colonies. They are better paid by the Missionaries than by the land-lords and are sometimes even fed free. The converts no more belong to the Warlis, in that the Warlis do not dine

with them or accept food prepared by them. No girl is given to or accepted from the converts. The relatives may, however, continue to visit them.

Recently, however, a tendency is discernible among the Warlis not to regard these convert families as outcastes so long as they (the converts) do not partake of food from the hands of the Missionaries. I noticed this at Uplat where the whole Dumāḍā clan with about twenty families was converted. They lived in a small colony near the Mission centre, and most of them possessed woodland plots and were independent of the land-lords. There was no difference between these converts and the ordinary Warlis. The language, the dress, in fact the very life, were the same. Only their religious outlook differed.

" Will not your Gods trouble you if you do not propitiate them ? " I asked some of the converts. " How can they ? We have left them and accepted another God. Old Gods cannot affect us," they replied.

"Do you accept food at the hands of the *Sahebs* ? "

"How can we ? Shall we not be impure if we do so. ? "

"Why ? You have taken the Saheb's religion, you can take food from the Saheb."

"No, no ; You are telling something nonsense ! We shall be no more Warlis then."

"Do your other relations come and take food at your places?'

"Yes, why should they not ? "

"Do you give to and take girls from other Warlis who have not taken the Saheb's religion ? "

"We do."

"If a girl from your family is married in another family, what God will she worship there" ?

"The Warli Gods. The Gods of her husband's family."

"And when you marry a girl from their family ? "

"The girl will worship the Saheb's God – Isu – ! "

This conversation is self-explanatory. It may be seen that the conversion is only regarding the religion. The converts are not prepared to leave their *jāt* and do not accept food prepared by the Sahebs. Even those boys who cook food for the Sahebs take their meals at home. This is the strongest factor which

keeps the converts 'pure' and the social intercourse between the Warlis and the converts is carried on uninterruptedly.

The Missionaries try to prevent the Warlis not only from worshipping their Gods, but also the Hindu Gods. With the efforts of some of the caste Hindus, a temple was built at Zaroli, a village in Umbargaon peta, and a few Warlis began to visit it. Whereupon the Missionaries in the neighbourhood camped just near the temple and began preaching their gospel and dissuading the people from visiting the Hindu temple. The villagers including the Warlis did not like this anti-propaganda of the Missionaries and did not attend their sermons with the result that the Missionaries had to leave that place.

The Missionaries and the land-lords in the neighbourhood are on unfriendly terms with each other as their interests conflict. The Missionaries try to wean the people from the influence of the land-lords and go on spreading their religion. The land-lords complain that the Missionaries instigate their Warli tenants not to cultivate their lands. They allege that the Missionaries feed the people without labour and have thus made them idle. Their relations are so strained that a stranger in the Mission compound is taken as an agent of the land-lords. I had had enough of this experience when visiting the Mission centres. They, particularly the Catholics, were never willing to give out anything to me unless I showed my bona-fides. The workers were always with me when I tried to converse with the converts.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION.

The Warlis do not follow orthodox Hinduism. There is, however, a vague consciousness in them that they belong to the Hindus though enjoying an inferior status. In fact the coast Warlis visit Hindu temples with the new couples after the marriage ceremonies are over. They generally believe in Hindu Gods and deities. The Hindu Gods with whom they are particularly familiar are Ram, Laxman, Hanuman and Śiva. The last one is always known as *Isar* and he is referred to with his consort *Gauri* in their ritual songs. Some of their ritual songs describe Hindu deities and there are allusions in them which seem to be borrowed from Hindu mythology. Warlis are animists in the sense that they worship some of the deities and spirits which are particularly tribal.

A remarkable trait in the character of these people is the very deep and almost universal reverence paid to their spirits and deities. They regard these fierce spirits as evil and unfriendly and make them offerings solely with a view to turning away their ill will. People from the Konkan take their gods to be very severe[1]. The Warli gods also are regarded to be harsh. If not properly propitiated, they do them harm. They are not loving and kind and they constantly cause fear in the minds of their devotees. The Warlis attribute the sickness or other calamities to their gods, thinking that they (gods) have not been properly worshipped. They, therefore, take a vow before them that they would make offerings to them if the person is cured of the particular disease. Warli gods have been associated with their very lives. Their gods not only wield influence over them, but also on their animals. *Dev* is supposed to affect the animals sold. The seller, therefore, demands extra money besides the regular price to perform *dev* in connection with the animal sold, lest the *dev* should trouble the animal and its new master.

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1. *Kokaṇche dev moṭhe kaḍak āhet.*

Belief in ghosts is also a prominent feature of the Warlis' religious outlook. There are different evil spirits which have been attributed specific characteristics. Some persons are believed to become ghosts after death, which assume in their nocturnal wanderings different forms. Ancestor worship is manifested in the performance of death anniversaries, in the belief in rebirth and in naming children after their ancestors.

Nature worship :—The Sun and the Moon are regarded as the 'two eyes of God'. They are identified with Ram and Laxman respectively by some *bhagats*. The Sun is regarded as the only god 'who reveals himself'; " there is not a day when he does not arise." Rain is also considered to be god *pāvashā dev* because he helps grow corn. " Rain is one of the two things which cannot be controlled by human beings, the other being death." It is because of the invaluable contribution of rain to human life that the Warlis hold *pāvas* (rain) to be *paramesar*—supreme god. The Rain-god is omitted from the death list in their ritual songs and considered immortal.

Other natural phenomena such as clouds, wind, lightning, sea, storm etc. are considered divine. The earth (*dhartari*), cow (*gāvatri*) and corn (*kansari*) are goddesses. Woman (*astari*) is added to this trio of female deities, and these four only are said to have *sat*–real power–in the *kali jug*—age of kali. New corn is not brought into the house unless the rituals connected with it are duly performed. It is never disrespected by touching it with the feet. There is not a ritual in which rice is not required.[1] A *kan*, a particle of food is *dhan*—wealth.[2] It is the corn which gives them food, and the very life depends on food. It is for these reasons that the Warlis exhibit the highest reverence for corn as a deity. To them, food is life.[3]

The cow is held in reverence. One who kills a cow knowingly or unknowingly commits a sin of the greatest magnitude. He is thrown out of caste and is admitted back into the caste only when he undergoes a purificatory rite in the presence of influential men and villagers and eats a little cow-dung mixed

1. Cf. Hindu idea, *Sarvārambhas taṇḍuluḥ* !
2. Cf. Similar Hindu idea : Corn is Laxmi.
3. *Antay parān*.

with her urine. This purificatory rite is itself named after the cow *gāvali* by performance of which an impure person is made pure. God *Isar* himself, in their mythology, could not escape this rite of purification, when he was indirectly responsible for the death of a cow.

It is but natural that as a tiller of the soil, a Warli should have high respect for the Earth. It is the source and reservoir of all life, since trees and vegetables come out of it. A medium while invoking any spirit, first looks up to pay his respects to the Sun God and then bows down touching the earth with his hand as a salutation to it.

Worship of Tiger-god:— The Warlis worship *Wāghobā*, *Wāghyā* or *Wāghayā*, the tiger-god. Every village has an image of a tiger-god in the form of a standing stone, usually cylindrical in shape, under a tree. The stone is in the ground. Warlis do not hesitate to kill a tiger if they get an opportunity to kill one. The tiger as an animal is not worshipped. What is worshipped is the tiger-god.

Dr. Wilson's conversation with some of the Warlis about Wāghayā would be of interest:—

"What god do you worship?"

"We worship Wāghiā."

"Has he any form?"

"He is a shapeless stone, smeared with red lead and ghee (clarified butter)."

"How do you worship him?"

"We give him chickens and goats, break coconuts on his head and pour oil on him."

"What does your God give to you?"

"He preserves us from tigers, gives us good crops and keeps disease from us."

"But how can a stone do all this for you?"

"There is something besides the stone at the place where it is fixed."

" What is that thing ? "

" We don't know ; We do as our forefathers showed us.'

" Who inflicts pain upon you ? "

" Wāghiā, when we don't worship him. "

" Does he ever enter your bodies ? "

" Yes, he seizes us by the throat like a cat ; he sticks to our bodies. "

" Do you find pleasure in his visits ? "

" Truly we do. "

" Do you ever scold Wāghiā ? "

" To be sure, we do. We say, you fellow, we have given you a chicken, a goat and yet you strike us. What more do you want ? "[1]

Even after a century, i. e. since 1839, when this conversation took place, the Warlis' conception of *Wāghyā* is not materially changed. Warlis know very well that a mere stone cannot protect them, and that it is something besides the stone which really protects them ; but that something they still do not know. The form in which they worship *Wāghobā* has not undergone any change. It is a legacy left by their forefathers. It is not in the nature of a Warli to ask why and how. It is his sacred duty to step into the shoes of his forefathers.

Wāghyā is the lord of tigers and is chiefly the god of cowherds. He is supposed to protect the cattle grazing in the forest. It is believed that this god assumes the form of a tiger and moves about. When a cow calves in a forest, *Wāghyā* protects her from an attack from wild beasts. The owners of cattle propitiate him as a god of cattle when their cows or bullocks are lost in the jungle with the hope that they will be restored to them by *Wāghyā*. The functions attributed to *Wāghobā* seem to a certain extent to be similar to those of the *Pushan* in the Ṛgveda as a god of cattle. Cattle must be protected from a tiger and the best way to secure this protection is to propitiate

1. " Evangelization of India ", p. 273.

the very lord of tigers, as they are the source of all danger. A tiger is not called by its name, viz. *vāgh*, but is usually referred to as a *khadayā* or a *chobadā* (a buffalo).

Wāghobā is worshipped either on the twelfth day of the second half of the month of *Āświn* or on the fifteenth day (*Purnimā*) of *Chaitra*. The former day is known as *Wāgh-bāras*. A lamp is burnt in front of the image, a coconut is broken and a chicken is offered to him. *Wāgh-bāras* is an auspicious day to Warlis, because it is the day of Wāghyā, and it just precedes *divdi*. The bhagats invoke Wāghyā in their *vāren*-afflatus. It is also one of the spirits invoked in *rawāl*, a training camp for bhagathood. The *rawāl* is brought to a close on the *Wāgh-bāras* day. It is interesting to note that other aboriginal tribes and Hindus of inferior castes in the locality also offer chickens and coconuts to Wāghobā.

Worship of trees :— Trees are not regularly worshipped But certain trees like *bel*, *pipal* and *umbar* are regarded as sacred. The dry wood of these trees is never used as fuel. The *bel* tree is not cut. It is stated in one of the ritual songs of the tribe that the first two creatures in this world had their habitation on the *bel* tree. In Hindu Śāstras, *bel* is associated with God *Śiva*. The *pippal*, which is a holy tree to Hindus, is also held in reverence by Warlis. *Barambhā*, one of the tribal spirits, is supposed to reside on this tree. A twig of the *Umbar* tree is required for the purposes of marriage. It is regarded as a tree of God *Isar*. One of the marriage songs of the *dhavaleri* relates to Umbar. Warlis believe that water is available if the land is dug near an *Umbar* tree. This tree bears fruit without the flower stage. As the flowers of *Umbar* are never seen, Warlis believe that he who sees an *Umbar* flower should rest assured that a good fortune is in store for him. *Tulas* —sweet basil—is also a holy plant to them. But its leaves are offered to none of their gods as the caste Hindus do. It is only in consonance with the spirit of the caste Hindus that Warlis respect *tulas*.

The Tribal Deities:—The principal Warli deities are *Nāran dev*, *Hirvā* and *Himāi*. *Nāran dev* is the common tribal god, who is considered not so harmful as the other gods like *Hirvā* or

Wāghyā. The other aboriginal tribes in the district such as Dhodias, Dublas, and Thakurs also worship *Nāran dev.* A bhagat identified *Nāran dev* with god *Satyanārāyan* of the Hindus. There are other minor gods, but *Nāran dev* is the god par excellence and the god of the whole tribe. Every clan has an image of *Nāran dev* in the form of either a stone or an areca nut besmeared with red lead. This stone image is placed along with similar images of other deities in a big basket half full of rice. The areca nut images are kept separately in small baskets hung on a stick which again is hung on the reed wall of the hut. The baskets are covered and the images are taken out only when required.

The stone image of *Nāran dev* is kept in the house of the family which is supposed to have directly descended from the original ancestor of the clan. The image is taken by other members of the clan, sometimes to distant villages also, whenever they have to worship this god. *Nāran* is ordinarily worshipped in every religious ceremony, but a special ceremony is held to worship him in the month of *māgh* (February) when young men and women spend the night in singing and dancing. Warlis take a vow to propitiate *Nāran* if he cures a person from a severe or chronic disease. At this propitiation, the stone image is placed on rice on a plank (*pāt*). A small earthen pot of any shape filled with water with a coconut on it is also kept near it. A medium invokes the god by taking afflatus in his name. The medium announces the reason why the god is propitiated and ascertains from him whether he is pleased with the offerings of his devotee. The medium assures the devotee that the god has freed him from the vow he had made. A cock is offered to god and a coconut is broken which is distributed as *prasād* (communion) to the guests. Toddy is also served to them and the whole night is spent in merriment by singing and dancing.

The Warlis believe that *Nārandev* is seen at nig human form on a white bullock. Nobody whom I questioned however claimed to have ever seen him. Warli bhagats think that Nāran dev was formerly the god of the Dhodias – an aboriginal tribe in Thana and Surat districts—. He was not at all

pleased with the Dhodia songs. Once it so happened that a Warli, under the influence of liquor, was passing by the way singing a good song in praise of the Sun-god. Nāran dev happened to hear it and liked it so much that he left the house of the Dhodia and went with the Warli singer. Since that day he has associated himself with the Warlis and has been the god of that tribe.

It may be seen from this myth that the Warlis think that their ritual songs are better than those of the Dhodias, so much so that even *Nārandev* liked them. Incidentally they want to establish that theirs is a superior tribe, since *Nārandev* left the Dhodias and joined them. *Nārandev* is still one of the tribal gods of the Dhodias, but his propitiation is conducted by Warli bhagats, probably because the Dhodia tribe has very few bhagats of its own. The Dhodia bhagats also conduct the ritual of *Nāran*. The Dhodias, however, do not believe in the Warli myth that *Nāran* left them (Dhodias).

To the Warlis, the birth of *Nāran dev* is a mystery. Once his mother was in menstruation. After the menses were over she took her clothes to the sea to wash them there. The sea, however, did not like the idea that the clothes worn by a woman during the period of her menstruation should be washed in its water. The sea, therefore, receded from her beyond her reach. She returned disappointed and proceeded towards a river which also behaved like the sea. It dried up all at once. The woman became helpless and returned home without washing her clothes. She buried them in the cow-shed. After some days, a bamboo sprout sprang up on that spot ; and *Nāran dev* came out from the sprout in the form of a babe.

Nāran dev grew up a fine boy. He enquired of his birth and parentage. His mother pathetically narrated the whole story of his birth which greatly enraged him. He resolved to avenge himself on the sea, the river and on the gods who provided the sea and the river with water. He ordered *Meghrāj*, the Lord of clouds, not to rain any more. There was thus a complete drought for twenty four continuous years. (i. e. " twelve and twelve years " to put it into Warli words.) During this long period not only all the people, but even gods were

greatly oppressed by the scarcity of water. They wandered through dense forests in search of water. In order to quench their thirst, they at last sucked *sādadā* fruit by holding them in five fingers. These were the immortal (*amara*) fruit, which made gods immortal. The Warlis believe that because the juice of the fruit was sucked by holding it in five fingers, even to this day the fruit is so shaped, i. e. it has five depressed parts. But the gods could not put a stop to their harassment. At last they approached *Nāran dev* with folded hands and prayed for water. *Nāran dev* was moved with the pitiable condition of gods and ordered *Megh Rāj* to discharge showers of rain.

The salient feature of this myth is that *Nāran dev* is the god of gods to Warlis, since he could punish all gods by stopping the rain. He is a great god because he gives rain.[1] To cultivators, the importance of rain is above everything else. The idea that *Nāran dev* was born of clothes worn by his mother during menstruation and through a bamboo sprout seems very fantastic. No biological explanation can be given for the birth of *Nāran* as narrated in this myth.[2] Warlis have very clear ideas that a woman conceives only when she comes into sexual contact with a man. Their song about birth clearly states that pregnancy is due to man's semen entering a woman's womb. But the maturity of a woman is a condition precedent to this and menstruation is the obvious sign of maturity. Thus birth is associated with menstruation though in a far fetched way. Because *Nāran dev* was born of a bamboo, it is not burnt in the house as fuel by a few bhagats. The pole in the bonfire (*holi*) is a bamboo. The bridegroom while entering the bride's *mandap* is obstructed by holding a bamboo pole in his way. The *kaj*—death anniversary shed—is wholly made of bamboo sticks.

In a ritual song connected with the performance of *Nāran dev*, a list of various Hindu gods is given, who held *darbars*—assemblies, but everywhere *Nāran dev* managed the affairs. This

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1. Cf. Rigvedic idea; Indra is a mighty god because he is a giver of rain.

2. An analogy of this may be seen in the birth of Brahma coming out of the lotus stalk.

again shows that to Warlis *Nāran* is The God. The song is as follows :—

" *Kānu mātechyā dāri bharalā darbāra,*
Pan Nāran deva kara kārabhāra,
Kanasarichyā dāri bharalā darabāra,
Pan Naran dev kara kārabhāra.
Tapesaryāchyā dāri bharalā darabāra." etc.

(the second line of the couplet is uttered alternatively.)

The list also includes gods *Mahadev, Surenarayan* (Sun), *Chānd-Surya* (Moon and Sun), *Indru, Gokul, Noukul* (Nakul), *Shahidev* (Sahdev) and *Bhimvā Balyā* (Bhim), the last three being the three of the *Pāndavas.*

In another ritual song, *Nāran dev* is addressed as the parent. The line is as follows :—

" Nāran dev is the parent,
We, your children, cling to shoulders."[1]

This again proves that Nāran dev is the great God of the Warlis. This is the only solitary instance, where the god is referred to as the parent and human beings as his children. This idea, however, seems to have been borrowed from the Hindus.

Hirvā. *Hirvā*, the family god of the Warlis, is another tribal deity. The image of this deity is a small silver piece, completely besmeared with red lead. It is not possible to see whether there is any human figure embossed on it as the silver piece is completely covered. Warlis, however, say that a small ordinary human figure is embossed on it. This image is kept in a small basket half filled with rice. Every year after the harvest, old rice in this basket is substituted by the new. In the same basket are kept four more nuts also besmeared with red-lead and of the same size as that of the image of *Hirvā*. These are supposed to be his *nāris* (women). There is a second basket which contains three more nuts which are not besmeared with red-lead. These too are *Hirvā's nāris*. The reason why

1. *Nāran dev māyabāpa, Hāmi tuze lekare, khānde zombalo.*

red-lead is not applied to the latter is that they are intended to be pure (*koryā*) in that no offerings of chicken are to be made to them. Thus *Hirvā* has seven *nāris* in all. All these nuts are placed in rice. There are two more nuts, with red-lead applied to them, kept in a small earthen pot of the size of the basket. These are the *Pārdhi* (hunter), and his companion. *Pārdhi* is *Hirvā's* lieutenant.

Sometimes there is a fourth basket in which many more nuts are kept, but apparently they are insignificant. Warlis say that they too are his *naris*. These baskets are covered and hung on a stick, which again is hung to the roof of the hut by the side of the wall. Red lead is applied to the baskets from outside.

Hirvā is always accompanied by his lieutenant *Pārdhi*. Warli bhagats say that *Pārdhi* kills a peacock for his master. *Hirvā's* sister (nameless) drinks the hot blood of the peacock and his poor wife drinks the cold blood afterwards. Associated with the belief that a peacock is killed for *Hirvā*, a custom of tying an image of *Hirvā* in the feathers of a peacock is also prevalent among the Warlis. An image of an ordinary human figure carved on a silver piece is tied as an image of *Hirvā* in a bunch of peacock's feathers (*kusā*). It is not visible being hidden in the feathers. The peacock is not a totem of any clan of the tribe. There is no taboo on killing or eating a peacock, but one who has *Hirvā* tied in the bunch of peacock's feathers does not kill that bird or eat its flesh. *Hirvā* (green) is so called perhaps because the feathers look green.

A special ceremony has to be performed for tying the image of *Hirvā* in the bunch of peacock's feathers. The ritual connected with this ceremony is the same as that of an ordinary propitiation of god. It is known as *kusā bāndhane*–tying the bunch and is performed for fulfilling the vow taken for the removal of sickness or any other calamity. A plantain containing an eight anna piece is put into boiling oil. The bhagat performing this ceremony puts his hand in the boiling oil to take out the plantain from it. The bhagat does this ordeal to

impress the gathering with the mystic power he possesses.[1] It is presumed that the bhagat's hand is not hurt in doing so, since the god has entered his body during the afflatus. If a bhagat can successfully do this, he is held to be one possessing great power. If he shows any signs of injury to his hand while doing this, he is not regarded as an expert bhagat. Taking out the substance from the boiling oil has, however, no direct bearing on the performance of the ritual. The eight-anna piece goes into the bhagat's pocket, and is invariably spent on wine.

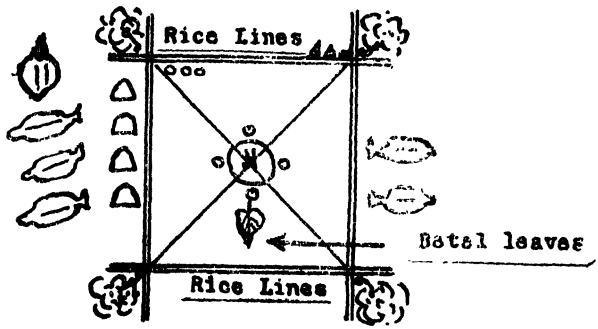
An elaborate ritual is prescribed for the propitiation of *Hirvādev*. The bhagat gets the following material at hand before commencing the propitiation :—

Rice, flour, red-lead, flowers (any), plantains (of a tree which grows only on rain water), betel nuts, betel leaves, co-conut, oil, an earthen lamp pot, round and shallow called *Koḍyā* or *Paṭi*, cloth wicks, two annas (in eight pice), a metal pot of copper or brass–*tāmbyā*–full of water, cock or hen and last but not the least, toddy.

The place in the hut where the ritual in connection with *Hirvā* dev is to be performed is cleansed with cow-dung. A square is drawn with diagonals by the bhagat by means of flour. Semi-circular redlead marks are made on the flour lines of the square. The lines of flour and red-lead are then fully covered with a broad line of rice grains. Each of these rice lines is divided into two by a finger. In the centre is a small heap of rice. Four flowers are placed at the four corners of the square. The bhagat arranges all these things with the right hand, his left hand touching the right elbow all the while. Before placing the things on the figure, the bhagat holds them over the smoke produced by dropping oil on the fuel burning near him. This is called *dhūp deṇe*–giving smoke; the offerings to god are thus purified by *dhūp*–smoke. Five betel leaves with little rice and a pice on them are placed in the square, and five plantains are placed outside the figure, three on the bhagat's left and two on

1. Taking out the substance from boiling oil is called *talan kādhane*.

his right side. A coconut is kept to the left of the drawing.



Four small heaps of rice are made outside the figure to its left. The image of *Hirvā* is placed in the centre on the rice heap. The image is surrounded by the four representations of his *nāris*—wives. Three betel nuts to which no red-lead is applied are placed within the figure and the *Pārdhi* and his companion occupy a place on the rice line which forms one of the sides of the square. The bhagat sits facing the east, with a metal pot full of water in front of him. A wick lamp in an earthen vessel is burning by his side.

Having very scrupulously arranged all things, the bhagat begins to take *vāre* invoking gods. The host waves a lamp to the images of gods and to the bhagat after which the bhagat begins to shake his body in an afflatus. He successively invokes the seven *nāris*-wives of *Hirvā*. They are :—*Khoḍāy- Veḍāy, Harnāy-Koparāy, Chāpāy-Mogray, Phulāy-Zelāy, Sendrāy-Kukvāy, Sesāy—Vesāy* and *Gunāy-Padmāy*. The bhagat utters a few indistinct words addressing the deity he invokes. He invites the deities for the ceremony saying that his devotee is performing the ceremony for which he requires the help of the deity. Generally, the bhagat takes a separate *vāre* for each deity. At the end of each *vāre* he violently shakes his body and puts a few grains of rice in the water pot. If the rice grains sink in the water, spring up together and then disperse, the bhagat thinks that the particular deity has heard his prayer and is pleased to help him. He repeats putting rice in

the water-pot till he sees the phenomenon of the rice springing up together from the water and then breaking up. If he fails for three or four times, he takes the *vāre* de novo and puts the rice again till he is satisfied that his prayer is heard.

When the bhagat invokes *Sendrāy-Kukvāy* he applies red-lead to the host and to other persons assembled there. The women watching the ritual are however excluded from the application of the red-lead. In the *vāres* of other *nāris* he does nothing in particular. Some times the bhagat cuts short the *vāres* for seven *nāris* to three or four. All the *nāris*, as is seen from the list given above, bear duplicate names; their names suggest that they (*nāris*) are totemistic.

Red-lead and *kunkum* are offered to *Sendrāy-Kukvāy*. But *Chāpāy-Mogray* is not offered the respective flowers. Any flowers would do for the purpose. When the invocations to *nāris* are over, the bhagat invokes the *Bāmhan*. Great Brahman priests from the different places of pilgrimage, like Nasik, Kasi (Benares) etc. are invited by the bhagat. He applies flour to his fore-head, chest and arms as a substitute for sandal wood paste to give him an appearance of a Brahmin priest. All these *vāres* are supposed to be pure (*kori*) in that no toddy is used or no chicken offering is made. The *vāres* after this are considered to be impure (*bāti*) in that toddy is sprinkled over the images and drunk by the bhagat and the guests. The sprinkling of toddy on the images is called *dev bātavaṇe*–making gods impure. After enjoying a little rest, during which the bhagat can smoke a *bidi*–country cigarette–he invokes *chitā*–leopard spirit. Chitā must have his prey, since the Warli notion is that he never goes empty.[1] Someone amongst the persons assembled holds the chicken in his hand in front of the bhagat as a prey for the *chitā*. The bhagat bends down on his knees aud palms, smells the things placed on the drawings like a beast and at once plucks the neck of the chicken by his teeth. He hides the head of the chicken in the gunny bag on which he sits and throws aside its body. The bhagat is supposed to be imitating the *chitā* pouncing upon his prey.

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1. *Chitā nāhi jāy ritā.*

Kānu comes next. He is a *Vanjāri*, a carrier, who brings onions, chillies and other things on the bullock's back from the ghats.

Ek-shiryā is supposed to be the 'lord of head'–*shireche dhani*– and seems to be a warrior deity. Another chicken is brought in and only a few feathers from its head are offered to this deity.

The bhagat-deity also has its place in these *vāres*. *Haldi bhagat Baldi bhagat* is invoked and offered a few feathers from chicken's head.

Lastly, *Hirvā* is invoked. Addressing him, the bhagat says. " All gods have come ; it is your turn now. The host, your devotee, has taken all this trouble for you. His relations have come to witness the ceremony in your honour from distant places. Come and accept the offering. Your devotee is fulfilling his vow. The devotee should be given so much corn that the stock will never be exhausted even though he eats as much as he likes."[1]

After *Hirvā*, his lieutenant *Pārdhi* is invoked and a second chicken is offered by cutting its neck and dropping the blood in front of the bhagat. This brings the ritual to an end.

It is difficult to understand the implications of the different spirits invoked in this ritual. The bhagats are unable to enlighten the enquirer on this subject. The spirits like *Chita*, *Bāmhan*, *Kānu*, *Ek-Shiryā* and the *Haldi-Bhagat* ought not to have any place in the ritual of *Hirvā* with whom they are not concerned. Though only three of the *naris* of *Hirvā* are considered to be pure, (*koryā*) in that no red-lead is applied to the nut-images, all the seven *vāres* in their honour are considered pure (*kori*). The *Chitā*, *Kānu* and other spirits are not represented by any images. This ritual serves a common formula in performing the *dev* ceremonies of other deities with necessary alterations like the introduction of the particular deity in the *vāre*.

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1. *Khātā khāvāy nāy na khutatā khuntāy nāy.*

If the bhagat does not see the rice-phenomenon in the water-pot quickly during the invocations, he does not hesitate to abuse or rebuke the respective god, accusing him that the god is not willing to bless his devotee. "The object of worship is viewed as a malevolent being, who may be either frightened or cajoled, according to the convenience of the devotee. The abusive treatment which a Warli god sometimes receives is not peculiar to himself; for even the Hindu Śāstras sanction the resort to *Virodh-bhakti* or the worship of the opposition and present us with many examples of its signal success, both among gods and men[1].

After the termination of the ritual, the bhagat throws away the gunny bag containing the plucked head of the chicken, and the bag is caught by a man standing near by. The bhagat gets two annas for conducting the ritual. The coconut is broken and distributed to all. The images are besmeared freshly with red-lead and kept in their proper places. The chickens are fried and eaten by all along with toddy. The host and the hostess who observe fast eat only after the *dev* is performed.

Hirvā is generally propitiated during or after the harvest season. The Warlis believe that *Hirvā* is more revengeful than other gods. He is quick in bringing illness to the family if not regularly propitiated. The Warlis therefore worship him annually in the ordinary course and on special occasions when somebody in the family is ill.

Hirvā is regarded as the god of wealth. That is the reason why his image is made of silver, a symbol of wealth to the Warli. A bhagat narrated to me a story relating to *Hirvā* and the goddess of corn—*Kansari*. "A controversy was going on between the two as to who was the greater of the two. They started on a journey to see the world. During the journey, *Hirvā* felt very thirsty, but had no means to fetch water from a well nearby. *Kansari* like a wise woman had taken a pot with a long string with her. *Hirvā* admitted the greatness of *Kansari* and begged the pot and string of her to draw water. *Kansari* thus proved greater of the two. It is because of this superiority

1. Dr. Wilson, J. R. A. S. VII, 21.

of the corn that *Hirvā* always seeks protection of the corn. There is no wealth without corn[1]."

About the offerings of chickens to gods, the bhagat expressed an opinion that god did not eat anything offered to him. The gods only see the offerings and men really enjoy them.[2]

Himāy—*Himāy* or *Hemāy* is a female deity and is supposed to be the object of worship for women. No ritual or formula has, however, been prescribed for the worship of *Himāy*. The women too do not exclusively worship her. In the common *dev* ceremony, e. g. during the marriage days, the image of *Himāy* is placed along with the images of other deities. Whenever a *dev* ceremony is performed in a family, the head of the family and his wife observe fast. The fast observed by the woman is supposed to be in honour of *Himāy*.

Himāy is regarded as *Hirvā's* sister by a few, while others consider her to be an independent deity. The image of *Himāy* is a *wāghol* or a *gorochan* fallen from the mouth of a cow. The *gorochana* is a yellow pigment found in small quantities in the bodies of cows and is considered to be a valuable drug. *Himāy* is not associated with any peculiar functions or attributes. It seems the word *Himāy* connotes 'mother' like the Sanskrit word *Ambā*—mother-goddess, an epithet of *Durgā* or *Kāli*. The word '*Himāy*' may have an affinity with the Dravidian word *Ammā*, which means mother. Some of the Warli female names, especially those of the *nāris* of Hirvā end in *āy* like *Himāy*, such as *Gunāy*, *Sendrāy*, *Kukwāy*, *Phulāy* etc. It may be noted that the names of Warli gods ending in *bā*, like *Wāghobā* or *Hirobā*, may be traced to Dravidian origin. *Appā* means father in Kannada[3].

The images of Warli gods are generally of stone or carvings on wooden planks. As opposed to this, sometimes strange things are regarded as godlings. A golden chain is one such thing. It was a family deity of the Dombaryā family. This chain was found about four or five generations ago by a woman

1. *Kanā bagar dhan nāhi.*
2. *Devāchā dekhanā na mānjāchā chākhnā.*
3. Caldwell: "A comparative Grammar of the Dravidian" 492 and 499.

from that family. While reaping a field in a forest village, the woman could not lift the cut portion of the rice plants. Other persons went to the spot and found the golden chain there. The chain was hailed as a deity by that family. When I saw the chain, it was put with rice in a small wooden bottle. It measured about nine to ten inches in length, with two small round rings at its ends. It appeared to be just an ordinary chain and did not glitter like gold. The man who possessed the chain condescended to show it to me with great reluctance. Persons who gathered there boasted that no goldsmith could prepare a chain like that. The chain is annually washed with milk on the first day of Divali. Old rice in the wooden case is taken out and the case is re-filled with new rice. It is believed that troubles and illness visit the family if this practice is not observed.

The Warlis' conception about godhood is vague and very elastic. Any curious thing found in strange circumstances is at once a mystery to them and godly properties are attributed to it. For generations, the Dombaryā family has been worshipping this chain taking it to be a rich heritage of the family. No Warli would look at the chain as a chain; he perceives something besides the chain in it, which probably he does not know and cannot express.

Among other gods worshipped by the Warlis, particularly those who live in the vicinity of the Kunbis, Kolis and Thākurs, are Kālbahiri, Bhavāni, Khandobā, Bhairav, Mahadeo and Pāṇḍhari–a village deity. The silver image of Khandoba shows that he is seated on a horse with a dog near him. Mahadeo sits on a bullock and Bhairav rides a horse. The last two are the forms of God Śiva. The introduction of these deities in the stock of the Southern Warlis is only due to Hindu influence.

The room where the images are kept is a dark and dingy one. Extreme care is taken that no woman in menstruation throws even her shadow on the images of gods. With great efforts, I could secure an access to these images in two houses. A lamp of kerosene oil is not burnt in that room. Instead, a few cumbustible sticks were burnt for light. Kerosene is burnt for the ordinary lamp of daily use. The lamp before the god must be either of ghee or castor oil.

Evil Spirits :—Warlis fear evil spirits as they fear their gods. The spirits are not worshipped, but avoided with a view to turning aside their evil eye. They are harmful and fall within the category of ghosts.

Barambhā : It is a male spirit which is supposed to reside on an old *pippal* tree. He is supposed to be tall, white in complexion and handsome in appearance. He puts on white clothes and even his hair is white. To put it in the Warli tongue, "he appears like a Parsi"—their standard of whiteness. He is said to move only at night.

This spirit is said to like enjoying a young and beautiful woman. Though ordinarily he is not seen during the day, he follows the woman he loves during the day time when she goes out in the forest to work. He enjoys her by night, unseen by any one. He can do so even when her husband is lying by her side. Only the woman concerned feels that a stranger is with her. If the woman finds pleasure in his company, she allows him to visit her till she conceives. An albino is supposed to be an issue of the *Barambhā*. If the woman does not want to be bothered with the nuisance of *Barambhā* she wears a piece of leather round her neck and sprinkles water from a shoemaker's pot on her; this prevents the *Barambha* from touching her or doing her any harm.

A bhagat told me that an unmarried boy becomes a *Barambhā* when he is dead. But this was not corroborated by others, who held that he (*Barambhā*) was a kind of spirit.[1] The idea of the spirit enjoying a woman sounds very curious. The Warlis do not understand that an albino is simply a pathological condition. Birth of such a child in a tribe of predominantly black complexion is to them a mystery. It is, therefore, an issue not from a Warli but from a spirit *Barambhā*. It is also likely that the sexual experience of a woman in dreams may be attributed to the *Barambhā*.

Sanvari : This is a female spirit which lives in a big stone in the forest. As it is difficult to know in which stone

1. Cf. The Hindu belief in Munjâ living on a Pippal tree.

exactly the *Sanvari* resides, Warlis apply red-lead to any stone they come across suspecting that it is big enough for a *Sanvari* to live in. She is supposed to eat corn from a threshing floor. Warlis sprinkle fried-corn all over the threshing floor in the hope that when a *Sanvari* comes, she eats the fried-corn first and has no time left to eat the corn from the heap.

As the *Barambhā* entices away a beautiful woman, so *Sanvari* pines for a young handsome man. She takes him to her residence and enjoys him. If such a man cannot be easily won over, she does not hesitate to kill him. The same device as is used to protect a woman from *Barambhā* is also used to protect a man from *Sanvari.*

Sanvari has her feet reversed, i e. heels to the front in contrast to those of human beings. When there is a constant sickness in the house, a vow is made to *Sanvari* that a *ravāl* will be set in which this spirit is invoked. When a man gets an afflatus of *Sanvari*, he goes to a near field and plucks a few corn-ears. This action is an indication of *Sanvari* eating corn.

Girhā : This is a water spirit, living in the bed of a river. It can become unusually tall like a palm tree. If it has a grudge against anybody, it drowns him in water.

Chedā : A man becomes a *Chedā* after his death, especially when his wishes are not fulfilled in his lifetime or when he is exceptionally greedy. He assumes the form of a snake or a frog and always lives near about the spot where he has buried his money or treasures. If anybody tries to dig the money out *Chedā* is supposed to cause illness to that person immediately.

Some of the snakes are regarded to be " spirit protectors " of the land ; they do not allow anybody, besides the owner, to tresspass on it. Ordinarily, reptiles are killed mercilessly. There are snake charmers among the tribe who can catch snakes alive. The *mantriks* also cure snake-bites both by medicines and by reciting *mantras*—charms.

Hedli : When a woman in advanced pregnancy dies and is buried or burnt without the embryo being taken out of her stomach, she becomes a *hedli.* She is seen swinging a cradle

under a tree even during the day. She is thus always accompanied by her child because she was not separated from it after her death. Her back is open, i. e. the intestines are visible from behind, and if someone sees her intestines he immediately falls ill.

To avoid the troubles of a *hedli* and to free the dead woman from remaining in this state, a human figure made of flour, a cloth cradle, and a comb together with a piece of leather are burnt on the burning ground. After this, it is believed that the *hedli* does not appear again.

The flour figure represents the woman and the cradle the child. The burning of the piece of leather indicates that all impurity is burnt.

Besides these spirits, there are other minor spirits also, mention of which is made in the description of *Ravāl* below.

Witchcraft :—Witchcraft is an institution in itself. A witch or a *bhutāli* is a woman who has acquired special evil powers by which she can do harm to others. All the witches in a village form a secret association and select one of them as their leader. They pick out some young unmarried girls and impart instructions in witch-craft to them. The recruits to the witchcraft can only be maidens, but they can regularly marry thereafter ; and their married life does not come in the way of their practising witchcraft. After finishing with the course of instructions, the recruits have to pay fees to their preceptor—the chief *bhutāli*—; the fees must be in the form of human offerings. For this, they select a victim, preferably a child, against whose mother they bear a grudge, and cause it to fall ill and secretly kill it by their evil powers. Outwardly, the victim meets a natural death.

Strange are the ways in which *bhutāli* imparts *vidyā* (instructions) to a recruit. A bhagat narrated to me two stories in this respect. A certain man was passing along a way with his daughter. He saw a small cucumber which he asked his daughter to pluck and eat. The daughter said she had already eaten it. To the great surprise of the father, he found that it was really eaten, though it was not plucked, only the outer cover

being there. The *bhutāli* made the girl eat the cucumber unseen by others. It was one of the ways, opined the bhagat, in which the *bhutāli* instructed the girl. She was thus made a disciple to whom special training must have been given afterwards. In another story narrated by the bhagat, the *bhutāli* imparted the *vidyā* through bread to a girl disciple of hers.

Bhutālis are supposed to possess extra-ordinary powers by which they can instantly put a person to death. They mutter some evil charms addressing the victim ; and the charms immediately affect the victim, no matter what the distance between the witch and the victim may be. This peculiar power is known as *mooth-māraṇe*. The *bhutāli* can approach her victim (a sick person) in the form of a fly, cat or a hen. She can cover the distance, howsoever long may it be, in no time and without being perceived by anyone. She goes naked in her nocturnal wanderings. Warlis have implicit faith in the powers of witches whom they fear very much. Sickness or any other unhappy incident is ascribed to them.

A bhagat is the greatest foe of a witch. He knows all the evil charms equally well as a witch. A powerful bhagat can undo what a witch has done. He can thus render the *mooth* of a *bhutāli* null and void. He can find out who has caused illness to a particular person and prescribe means to cure it. Sometimes a bhagat picks out a witch from among the various women called for the purpose publicly by invoking a spirit into his body. This is done especially when the whole hamlet is determined to make it clear once for all from what witch they are suffering. During the afflatus, the bhagat puts a *vāti* (a brass bowl) on the ground and points out his finger at a woman whom he suspects to be a witch. If the woman so pointed out is really a witch, the *vāti* automatically moves towards her. This is known as *vāti chālavane*. When once a witch is thus publicly pointed out she is mercilessly beaten by all people. I was told of one such incident in which a woman witch was actually beaten to death. Some of those who had taken an aggressive part in it were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The people of that village represented to me their case in pitiable terms saying that even the *sarkar* sided with witches these days.

A Warli bhagat gave me a fanciful but funny explanation as to how bhutālis were created. God sends many diseases to mankind by which creatures in this world die. He was afraid people would not call him kind and good, if they come to know that it was he who sent miseries to the world. They would curse him and call him bad names. In order to avoid all such blame, God created bhutāli so that people attributed their sickness and miseries to her. It is generally believed by Warli bhagats that *Śukra* was once burnt and some of the lustre of that brilliant planet was carried away by the bhutāli which made her so powerful.

The bhagat being thoroughly conversant with all the *vidyā* of a bhutāli proves more than a match for her. Realising this the bhutāli prayed to God and made a vow to him with a promise to offer him a goat for asking the bhagat not to reveal her secrets and particularly her name to anybody. God granted it. Bhutāli wanted to make herself sure whether God's command was duly obeyed by the bhagat. So she attended the bhagat's place in the form of a hen and satisfied herself that the bhagat did not give out her name. But the bhutāli was not true to her vow. Instead of offering a goat, she offered a lice from the hair of her head; whereupon God got wild with her and cursed her that in her next birth she would hang herself on a tree with legs up and head down and that she would wander only at night. The bhutāli is still experiencing the effects of the curse in the form of a bat which hangs itself in that manner.

Later on, God also desired that a bhutāli should be very easily marked out. So he wanted a bhutāli to have horns on her head. But this idea had to be dropped, since it turned out that the very mother of God was a bhutāli. It would not help us to interpret this story literally and believe that God's mother was a witch. The purport of this little story is that it is difficult to judge what women are bhutālis. A woman who outwardly appears good-natured may be a witch. The whole womankind is thus untrustworthy. Warlis are suspicious about women, since they do not know which of them might turn out to be bhutālis.

It may be noted that similar ideas about witches were common among the Caste Hindus also especially in villages. They are still prevalent, though to a lesser degree, among them. But such ideas are fast disappearing with the spread of education and with the wide-spread use of medicines in fighting diseases. The influence of witchcraft on the Warli mind will wane only when they begin to make use of medicines in combating the diseases and take to education.

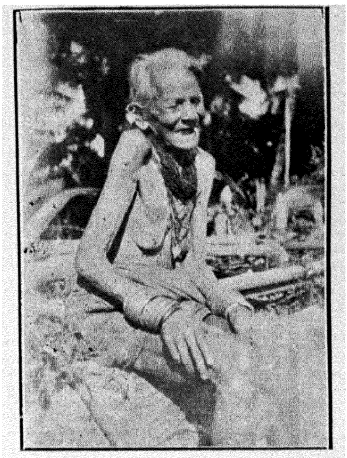
Bhagat: A bhagat is a Persona Grata of the Warlis. He is a medium, a medicine-man, an arbitrator, a diviner, a conductor of rituals and above all an enemy of witches. He is thus all-in-all and a man of pre-eminent social position. As such, he is respected and revered by all. He performs magico-religious duties. There is not a ceremony, a ritual or a social function in which he has no place. He invokes spirits and can bring them into his body. Spirits thus speak through him. He can point out the factors responsible for the suffering of a person and prescribe means to cure them. He can see the past and future of a person in the rice-grains or in a *palas* leaf waved round that person. He coaches pupils in magico-religious training, either privately or in a short course school called *ravāl*. He is consulted by the tribesmen in every important matter. He can put an effective check to the pernicious activities of witches and the evil spirits. He ministers to the religious needs of the Warlis. A bhagat thus yields powerful influence over the tribesmen and is dreaded by all. As compared to an average Warli, he has a fund of knowledge and information.

A brief sketch of an old bhagat's life would bear out some of the facts mentioned above. I met this old man named Bhikāryā Warathā, but popularly known as Dharting Latingā, at Sutrakar, a village in Umbergaon Peta. Bhikāryā lived outside the village in a small modest hut with his old wife. The rest of his family lived in the village proper. He was a man of courage and daring. He said he drove a tiger as one would drive cattle. He was not afraid of a tiger, said he; but he could not shoot him since he had no gun.

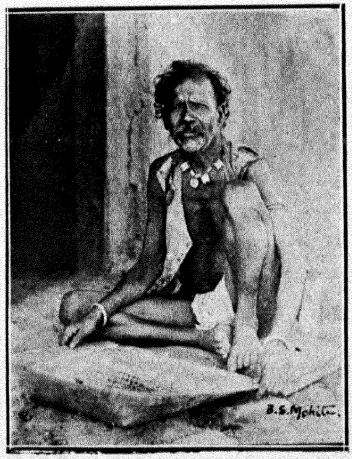
The lands he cultivated were the thorny forest a few years ago where nobody dared stay. But he was the first man who



Navsha Jaduda



Old age.



Bhagat seeing grains.

him to lead a life of a bachelor. But this bhagat thought it best to get married and have children who could help him in his old age. Being the disciple of a *bāwā* he ought to have led a life of an ascetic. His wives were bound to die as a natural sequence and he could do nothing to save them. That was also the reason why his power as a bhagat was waning year by year. Another reason why he was slowly losing his power was that he accepted money which was against the precept of his *guru*. However, he confessed to have no greed for money and accepted only small amounts.

He admitted that he collected about a thousand rupees which he buried in and outside his hut. But he had spent them all for his marriages and those of his sons. He had to spend much after his eldest son who was charged with murder and was confined in jail, where a very big tank was being dug at that time. (This was the Visapur jail).

Dharting's bhagatship was even recognised by the Dharampur State. Once the four best horses of the state were lost all of a sudden; and nobody could trace them. Immediately this bhagat was summoned and asked about the lost horses. He too could not tell anything about their whereabouts all of a sudden. Hence he was confined in a room for three days. He was trying his best to find out the secret pertaining to the horses. But all in vain. At last, a revelation came to him, in which he saw that the horses were returning to the capital. It was indeed a joyful news to the officers, who rewarded him with hundred rupees; but he thought it irreligious to accept such a large amount and accepted only half of it. His learning was much appreciated by the officers, who assured him that none would come in his way when he moved in the State in the capacity of a bhagat.

This bhagat even learnt the *aghori vidyā*—foul charms. He confessed that to accomplish mastery in that *vidyā*, he drank his own urine and sometimes ate his own excreta. The latter he did particularly when he forgot his *vidyā*.

The bhagat also enlightened me with his views on death; some of which are incorporated in the chapter on Death.

Warathā bhagat had curious notions about wearing clothes. All his life, his body was exposed to heat, cold and rain. He never put on clothes except a loin cloth. His head began to ache if he put on a turban. He got fever by wearing a coat and his feet got swollen with the country sandals ! Once he had to go to a town-court along with his *sawkar*. In spite of his protests, the *sawkar* insisted upon his wearing a coat. He immediately began vomi tting furiously. The *sawkar* was then convinced of Warathā's convictions regarding wearing of clothes !

His eldest son, who was dead, had four wives during his lifetime. His second son successively married seven wives, six of whom left him on some pretext or the other. Whenever a wife left his son, he got another for him. His third son had three wives at a time and the last son only one. When asked if any wife left the bhagat himself, he said nobody dared. One wife however actually left him for a year, but repented, begged his pardon and returned to him, fearing that she would be troubled by him.

In connection with the death of Warathā's eldest son, another bhagat from a neighbouring village told me that Warathā was not only a bhagat, but also a *bhutālā* (a male practising witchery) and that he himself killed his son. There was a quarrel between the father and the son, in which the son abused the father and beat him. Warathā warned his son not to beat him, otherwise he (the son) would be no more within five days. And actually it happened as forewarned !

Training for bhagatship :—Every year an established bhagat initiates a few pupils generally not more than three to four. Even a boy of twelve may be taken up as a pupil. The initiation begins with the beginning of the rainy season and lasts for about four months at intervals. The suitable time for it is the night. The pupils have to observe many restrictions as regards food. Vegetables like cucumber and *chavali* which grow in the rainy season are taboo to them. They are forbidden to eat on a plantain leaf. When very important instructions are to be imparted, the pupil is prohibitted to approach his wife for sexual enjoyment during the course of instructions. An

intelligent boy picks up the art even within a short period of two or three months. But it is only elementary. To be a full-fledged bhagat one has to spend years. It is the fortune of a chosen few. Many that strive for a bhagat's position have to give it up half-way as the path that leads to the bhagatship is hard.

The pupils pay the fees of their bhagat-teacher in the form of a cock and toddy on the first day of diwali. A small spot is selected near a fence and smeared with cow-dung mixed with water. A lamp is burnt on the spot sprinkled over with rice. The bhagat mutters some chants, and looks up at intervals avowedly to invoke the sun-god. Cocks brought by the pupils are sacrificed (cut) there and a few drops of the blood shed on the spot. The bhagat and the pupils drink toddy with the fried cocks. The sacrificed cocks are not eaten by women lest they become witches.

The restrictions are very strictly imposed on the pupils at the time of imparting important instructions by the bhagat. This can be illustrated from the story of Sāvalyā Nāik, who was even prepared to kill his son for failing to abide by such rigorous observances.

Sāvalyā Nāik lived a century ago. It is said he used to catch a tiger. He had a gun which he could handle quite dexterously. He had such powerful herbs with him that even a bullet could not hurt him. His corpse could not be burnt by fire unless the herbs were taken out of his body.

Sāvalyā Nāik was giving special instructions in the very valuable *vidya* to his son in a lonely place on the Barad hill. He asked his son to fetch an important article from home. The son who came home after many days was warmly received by his wife. Great was her joy to see her husband back. She clung to him and embraced him and they had sexual intercourse.

The son returned to the hill. The father already knew by insight that his son committed a wrong and was thus not fit to receive *vidya*. He was enraged to see that the son did not even confess his guilt. He aimed his gun at him to shoot him. But the son, through fear, confessed, "Father, I am spoilt" (*Bāpā, mi bagadel āhe*). Nāik thereupon threw down his gun.

Rāval : Pupils for bhagatship are also trained in a short course school called *ravāl*. It can be held only as a consequence of somebody's vow. It is a "Men's house", a secret society like the *Kwod* of the North American primitives, "which no woman or girl could visit".[17] A small booth is raised to hold a *ravāl* outside the precincts of a village in a lonely place in the vicinity of water, preferably a stream or a lake. *Ravāl* begins on the dasara day (tenth of the first half of *Āswin*) or on any other day after it, and is continued till the *Wagh-Baras* i. e. the twelfth day of the second half of *Āswin* on which it is closed.

When a man suffers from constant sickness, or loses his children one after the other or finds himself in continuous difficulties, he takes a *navas* (vow to propitiate a deity in a specified way) to hold a *ravāl*. The person taking this *navas* has to bear the *ravāl* expenses such as raising the booth and supplying the requisite material.

Ravāl is conducted by a senior bhagat who is assisted by two or three junior bhagats. Forty to fifty people take part in the *ravāl* including the new entrants as well as the repeaters and a few spectators. They are required to attend the *ravāl* at night and are free to attend to their avocations during the day. Only one watchman is there in the *ravāl* booth during the day.

A large place round about the *ravāl* is charmed by the chief bhagat. This area is encircled by a boundary line on which some wooden and iron nails are fixed and sand is poured. This boundary is meant as a barrier for witches within which they should not step ; inside the boundary lies the charmed area. The belief in fixing the nails and pouring sand is that a witch cannot cross the boundary line unless she takes out the nails fixed in the ground and counts every particle of the sand, which naturally takes an unusually long time during which she might be watched by the bhagats in the *ravāl*. The relation between the bhagats and the witches is anything but friendly. Both try to outwit each other. The witches therefore are too eager to attend the *ravāl* unseen to watch the proceedings and perhaps to create hindrances in the way of the bhagats. The presence of a witch

17. Webster : "Primitive Secret Societies" p. 7.

near the *ravāl* is not felt by ordinary people, but a powerful bhagat at once smells it and chases her out.

The new entrants have to observe certain restrictions very rigorously. Many things are taboo to them. Since the first showers of the rain in the month of June, they cannot eat fish, cucumber, *chavali*, *chibud* and such vegetables as grow only in the rainy season. They are not allowed to take their meals on a plantain leaf. During the *ravāl* days, woman is taboo to the new entrant. He cannot sleep with his wife; neither can he speak or laugh with her. It is incumbent on him not to take his meals at home, but carry the cooked food to the ravāl shed and there partake of the same, since when taking his meals he has to take especial care that he does not hear even the jingling of a woman's bangles. All these observances by the pupil who attends the *ravāl* are called *pāl* or *pālnuk*.

The recruits have to enter the ravāl booth after taking a bath in a nearby stream. Just near the booth *zendu* plants are planted, and a pole fixed, round which the participants of the ravāl take *vāres*. Red-lead is applied to all things in the ravāl booth. *Tārape* or *pāvrā*[17] musical instrument is blown through-the night. Everyone takes a *vāre* in the name of a particular spirit. The bhagat teaches the new entrants how to get *vāre*. *Vāre* is a state in which a man violently shakes his body and is supposed to have some spirit entered into his body for the time being. In taking the *vāre*, the right leg is moved first and then the whole body. During the *vāre* the man tells what spirit is there in him If the name is not given out by him, the bhagat asks him, "who are you"—*ara kon āhay*—meaning what spirit has entered his body. If the man in the *vāre* still keeps silence, the bhagat strikes him with a whip containing small stones at its end. It is believed that if the *vāre* is genuine, the person whipped is not hurt, but if it is false, he may bleed. Some men also take a *ghor*—an iron ring in which small rings are inserted—to make a jingling sound while taking *vāre*; and yet a few take long sticks. While dancing or moving in the *vāre*, they make loud noise and sometimes make a curious noise,

17. Tārape is made of a long dried gourd connected with a hollow portion made of palm leaves open at the other end.

sounding like *huk* in the middle of the movement which is an indication that the *vāre* is changed i. e. a different spirit has entered the body. If a man attends the *ravāl* after having sexual intercourse with his wife, he does not get a *vāre* and is subsequently whipped by the bhagat. The recruits have a hard time in the *ravāl* in that they are punished by the bhagats every now and then.[18]

Various spirits are invoked in the *vāres* in the ravāl and have their peculiar expressions. If *Āgyā Vetāl* is brought in the *vāre*, the *vārekar*—the man getting that vāre—touches fire. *Bhaishā* (buffalo) goes to a near river and takes bath or wallows on the ground. *Surya* (Sun) moves round about himself. *Girhā* sprinkles water on him. *Bhaṇḍāri* climbs a date-palm, *Dhobi* washes clothes, *Kutan dev* beats himself, *Kis Kalya* chuckles others, *Ūshti* calls dogs, *Hekad* demands tobacco from others, *Waghaya* jumps and makes loud noise, *Chedā* hops, the *Rān bhut* wanders in the forest and *Sanvari* plucks corn-ears from a field. When there is a spirit in his body, the man actually does the respective things appropriate to the spirit as mentioned above. When a man is in a *vare*, he is not addressed by his name but as *deva*-god-. When men are moving in *vāre*, others say, "*devā, dinā yejā*"—Gods, come daily.

In my visit to a ravāl, I saw an old man of sixty sitting silently in the booth along with others. All of a sudden he sprang up and hopped like a frog, making a curious noise and went near the *Zendu* plants. There he began to shake his body and the people assembled asked him who he was. He said *Wāghāyā*. Some juice of the *Zendu* plant leaves was dropped on the fire by another man, which he smelt and began to jump wildly. He asked for water, which was sprinkled on him, and then he began to wallow on the ground. This was the spirit *Bhaishā* in his *vāre*. The change from the tiger-vāre to the bhaishā-vāre was indicated by the request for water. In the meanwhile two others ran away to a near stream in a *vāre*, bathed and returned.

Another interesting incident in which the bhagat tried to teach the new entrants to get *vāre* may be noted. Two new

18. Cf. Webster "Primitive Secret Societies". "For ceremonies of initiation whipping and other ordeals have to be gone through." p. 188.

entrants stood in the midst of the bhagats and other disciples. The *tārpe* was blown and all began to take *vares*. Immediately one of the two new entrants got the *vare* and shook his body; but the other was as firm as a rock. All sorts of devices were used by the bhagat to give him *vare*. Even his legs were actually shaken. The bhagat threw his whip round the man's neck and tried to pull him making curious noises. But to no purpose. The man would not have a *vare*. He was then moved round himself. At last the bhagat took him by hand and went running with him outside the booth. But all these attempts were in vain. I asked another man why the bhagat could not give *vare* to the new man to which he replied that the bhagat had drunk toddy and spoilt everything!

The *ravāl* is closed on the *wāghbāras* day. The participants of the *ravāl* have common dinner on the last day, each man bringing a chicken and a small pot of toddy as his share. The new entrants have to fetch extra toddy which is served to the senior bhagats in lieu of the tuition fees. After this dinner is over, they all go to the host's house. The host waves a lamp to them. The bhagats are asked to find out some things hidden by the host. This is called *chitan* and is the trial of the bhagat's strength. The powerful bhagat finds out that thing during a *vāre*. The host serves them with toddy and food. This closes the *ravāl*.

A disciple receives training for bhagatship in the *ravāl*. If he attends four such *ravāls* successively and is found to be clever enough, he is said to have completed his ravāl (*ravāl thāpane*) ; he is then supposed to have acquired elementary knowledge of bhagathood. To be a full-fledged bhagat, he must undergo special instruction at the feet of a recognised bhagat. A mere training in the *ravāl* is deemed insufficient to confer the high distinction of an expert bhagat on any man.

Auspicious Days :—"Warlis partially observe the two festivals of the *shimgā* and *diwali* which are connected with the vernal and autumnal equinoxes and which though celebrated by Hindus in general, are often supposed to be ante-Brahmanical."[19] Diwali is a felicitous festive day of the Warlis.

19. Dr. Wilson, J. R. A. S. VII, 27.

They enjoy diwali particularly because it falls during the harvest season when the new corn is ready. Warlis observe diwali for full three days which are spent in merriment. They hate to work on diwali days however important and paying that work may be to them. The land-lords who have Warli servants find these three days most trying as no servant turns up to work during diwali.

On the eve of diwali, Warlis visit the nearest village bazaar and purchase their few requirements which include a waist-coat and a turban-cloth for the man, new bodice, *ludgen* and bangles for the woman and new clothes for children. Men get their heads shaved which is perhaps not done during the rainy season. Sweets, tobacco, dried fish and such other things as are required for the use of the family are also purchased.

On the first day of diwali, i. e. on the fourteenth day of the second half of *aswin*, they get up early in the morning and take a bath; women wash their hair too. The horns of the cattle are besmeared with red ochre mixed with water. At about nine in the morning all the members of the family sit together to partake of breads, containing coarse sugar, cucumber and *chavali*[20]. *Chavali* grains are also boiled and salt and pepper powder are mixed with them. This is called *chavale khāne*. They eat *chavale* and cucumber on the diwali day for the first time after the monsoon during which season these are taboo to them.

On the second day, the youngsters—both boys and girls—arrayed in their new clothes dance from house to house in the nearby village. They dance in groups of five to fifteen and get a pice or two from every house. They return in the evening and spend the money collected during the day for purchasing toddy. Third day of diwali is also spent in dances. Work is resumed on the fourth day. Boys married during the year are invited by their fathers-in-law to spend their (the boys') holidays with them.

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* 20. This preparation is called *Godāchi bhākar* sweet bread. Rice flour is mixed with water, crude sugar, *chavale* grains and very small pieces of cucumber. Cakes of this mixture are completely covered by leaves and then steamed on the boiling water. This preparation is also common among the Hindus of that locality with some variations.

Shimgā : The *holi* which is the auspicious day of the caste Hindus is popularly called *shimga* by the Warlis. It is spent in boisterous and rather mischievous merriment. *Shimga* too is spent in dances like diwali, but the *shimga* dances are not artistic. Youngsters dance wildly with curious buffoonery. Some of the dancers cover their faces with ordinary masks available in the local bazaars. A few besmear their faces and bodies with ash and yet a few stick feathers in their hair or head-wear. The dancers do not put on new clothes for the spectators take liberty of throwing water, dust or mud on them. Some of the young dancers wind women's robes round their waists This is done in a very simple manner with one fold lying over the other and not in the manner the women do, i. e. the robe is never taken between the legs. They also put on women's bodices. The part of the robe is worn on the bodice cross-wise both over the shoulders and below the arm-pits. Males thus attired as women hold small sticks in their hands. Sometimes they apply collyrium to their eyes. The head is either bare or a turban cloth is worn in the usual fashion. While dancing, they often shout *Shimgoi Shimgoa*, *Bhalor Bhalor*. Girls do not take part in *Shimga* dances.

The purse permitting, men drink excessively in *Shimga* and do not hesitate to extort money from an occasional passer-by or a cartman. A pile of wood is burnt with a bamboo pole in the middle.

Wāgh-Bāras :—The twelfth day of the dark half of *āsvin* is also an auspicious day to them. (described ante).

Chauth or Sankashti-Chaturthi :—This is the fourth day of the second half of *bhādrapad*, and is a festive day—*sanāchā dis*. This is primarily a day of fasts and *navas*. Manifold are the *navasas* made by women which are fulfilled in a specified manner on this day. Vows of observance of *chauth* are taken either to avoid sickness, constant or occasional, or when a woman does not get children or her children do not survive. Sometimes a *dumb chauth* is observed when the woman does not speak a single word throughout the day. If the vow is to celebrate the *chauth* by standing, the woman concerned is on her feet for the whole day. Simi-

larly, a *chauth* may be sleeping or sitting. The woman observing this day begs at seven places if the vow taken is such and prepares food of the rice so collected. She may also draw water from well and supply it to five houses of different castes. When a child is born after the *navas*, it is named *navasha*, if a son, and *navashi* if a daughter. If the mother had taken a vow to beg, the child is named *bhiklyā* if a son, and *bhikli* if a daughter, after the word *bhik*—begging.

The southern Warlis observe the *māhibij*—second day of the first half of *Māgh*, *ākhātij*-third day of the first half of *Vaishākh*, and *pol*-the fifteenth day of the first half of *Bhādrapad*-as festive days. They are, however, minor festive days. On the first day, some of the Warlis perform the *Nāran Dev*. On *ākhātij* they prepare some sweet things and burn a lamp in honour of gods in general in the room where images of gods are kept. *Pol* is observed as a day of the bullocks by the peasants of Maharashtra. Warlis follow the same principle as other peasants in giving rest to the bullocks on that day. They bedeck them with flowers and take them out in a procession. It may be remembered that the last three days are not observed by Warlis in the northern part of the district.

All the auspicious days of the Warlis, except the *wāghbāras*, are also the auspicious days of the Caste Hindus in that locality. The Warlis have no calendar of their own, but follow the Hindu calendar. Their holidays are the same as those of the Hindus, but the manner of celebrating them is different. It may also be noted that none of the tribal deities are worshipped by them on these festive days.

The most outstanding feature of the Warli religion is that it is based on fear. To Warlis, God is not the father, who loves his children and forgives them for their sins. They worship gods only to avoid their wrath. The important tribal deities are *Nāran Dev*, *Hirva*, *Himāi* and *Wāghobā*. These are propitiated either with a view to preventing the consequences of their ill-will or gaining something from them. The former element is, however, the stronger of the two. Religion is the most sacred institution of these aborigines. It has been handed down in tact from times immemorial. The way in which

the Warlis worship *Wāghobā* today is not different from the way in which they worshipped him hundred years ago, as is seen from Dr. Wilson's conversation with them. It suggests that none can play with religion. Neither has there been any marked change evinced in their religious outlook. The Warlis' attitude towards the different deities is most conservative, in that it is not open to any query or reasoning. They must do what their forefathers did.

As a tiller of the soil, a Warli has the greatest reverence for the earth. He pays equal respect to corn, the product of the soil and to the cow which gives him bullocks to cultivate the soil. Corn is associated with wealth and *Hirvā* is regarded as the god of wealth, because he always seeks protection of the corn. Nay, *Hirvā* is even inferior to the goddess of corn.

The Sun is a god to them, since he 'shows himself' every day. Rain is a god because he grows corn. But *Nāran dev* is their greatest god as he is the giver of rain. Rain, corn and cattle are the three greatest necessities of these people; and Warlis have three deities presiding over them. *Naran* gives rain, *Hirvā* is associated with corn and *Wāghobā* protects cattle. Their life is thus identified with their gods.

Warlis are not nature worshippers. They neither worship animals nor trees. Certain natural phenomena like the Sun and the rain are vitally connected with their life. The cow is held in reverence; so also certain trees. But they are not worshipped. Warlis follow their own religion which fulfills their needs.

Another important trait of the Warli religious mentality is its innate faith in the evil spirits and the witches. The Warli equally believes in the bhagat's unquestionable power in putting down both the ghost and the witch. A bhagat ministers to the religious needs of the Warlis, in that he invokes the deities and ascertains from them that they are satisfied with their devotees. He is thus an agency through which ordinary people can approach the gods. He combines in himself the functions of both the priest and the medium. Next to God, he is the greatest figure and influences the community in a variety of ways.

Though ignorant of the character of the supreme being, the Warlis admit his existence. He is known as God *Paramesar*. Though discriminating the good from the bad, they express no exact idea as to where the good and bad people go after their death. But they have a faint notion that they go to *Bhagwān* or *Paramesar*. This shows that the Warlis manifest a certain amount of knowledge and interest in things outside the earthly sphere. This is mostly due to the contact of the tribe with the Hindus.

Some of the Hindu deities appear in their ritual songs and the influence of Hindu mythology is also visible in them (songs). They have adopted most of the Hindu holidays. Their marriage service conducted by a Brahmin priest is regarded as valid as one conducted by a *dhavaleri*, and the former marriage is for all purposes a legal Warli marriage. They worship no Hindu deity in particular, though they generally believe in them. Along with the age-long religious convictions cherished by them, they evince a vague consciousness in them that they belong to the Hindu fold though enjoying an inferior position. They accept food and water from no other people except Hindus. It is a great satisfaction and a pride to them that the caste Hindus have no objection in touching them and that they are treated better than the untouchables.

Like Warlis, some castes among the Hindus, especially the lower ones, revere the local or non-aryan spirits. Deities like *Wāghobā* are worshipped by almost all lower caste Hindus in their locality. Belief in witches is almost universal among the lower strata of the Hindu society and the bhagats are still engaged by them to check the vicious influences of the witches. Despite their difference, there are still certain features common to both the Hindus and the aborigines including the Warlis.

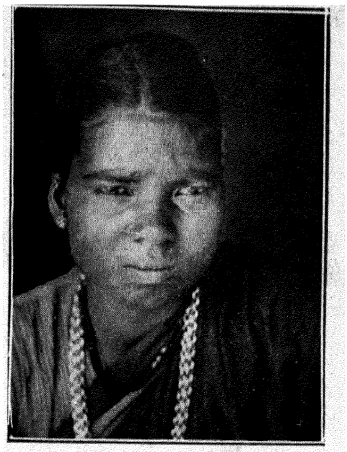
CHAPTER IV

MARRIAGE.

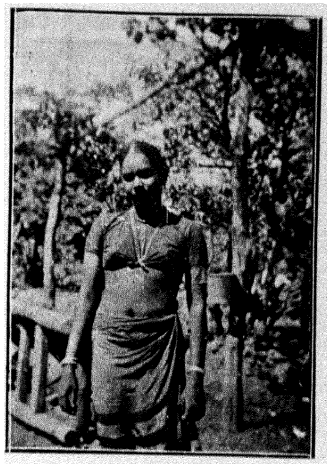
Among the ceremonies which the tribe performs the marriage ceremony is the most important. It is an event in which all persons in the hamlet take an active part. It is a festival and an occasion of great social interest. The Warli marriage lasts for four or five days and many minor rites are scrupulously performed.

Children can be married at any age. However, a girl to be married is usually at least seven or eight years old and a boy is nearly twelve. Sometimes this age limit is considerably extended till a boy is of an age to support himself. Monetary difficulties are also responsible for some of the late marriages among the Warlis.

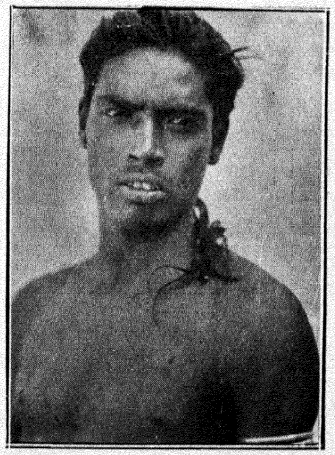
Marriage restrictions and Prohibitions :—Marriage within the clan is prohibited. Every clan is a group of some families and a boy or a girl must marry outside his or her clan. Parallel cousin marriages on the paternal side are out of the question. The cross cousin and parallel cousin marriages on the maternal side are equally disallowed. Thus a boy cannot marry either his father's sister's daughter or his mother's brother's daughter or his mother's sister's daughter. The girl cannot marry either her father's sister's son or her mother's brother's son or her mother's sister's son. As for the cross cousin marriages, the second restriction is sometimes not observed by the Southern Warlis who allow a boy to marry his mother's brother's daughter. Consequently a girl is allowed to marry her father's sister's son. This is due to the Maratha and Kunbi influence, among whom such marriages are not only allowed but also prevalent and sometimes obligatory. The prohibitions are not only restricted to the particular relation, but also to the members of the family of the particular relative belonging to the same generation as that of the particular relative. Thus the boy cannot marry the daughter of his mother's sister, as well as the daughter of his mother's sister's husband's brother.



Warli youth



Modern Warli youth



Warli youth

An influential man called *Kārbhāri* acts as a go-between for the two parties. He brings the fathers of the boy and girl together who hold leaf-cups full of toddy in their hands. The *Kārbhāri* addresses the boy's father as follows :—"The girl is here. She may be blind, lame or a witch. Accept her as your daughter-in-law only if you like her. Do not blame her afterwards. Do you agree to this ?" Then the bride-groom's father drops a little toddy into the cup of the bride's father and vice-versa, and they drink the same. The mothers of the boy and the girl do likewise. The girl is offered new clothes by the *Kārbhāri* on behalf of the boy's side. The girl puts on these and comes to attend the rite called *Oti bharanen.* In *Oti bharani*–filling the fold of cloth–a coconut, arecanuts, rice and eight annas are placed in the hem of the *sadi* of the girl by a woman whose husband is alive. When this is being done, the *dhavaleri*–the marriage priestess–sings and waves a lamp round the girl. The *dhavaleri* is given a rupee for this. After this toddy is served to all the guests, men and women. If the parties have sufficient money and provisions, the marriage takes place soon after the betrothal. If not, it takes place after some years. Ordinarily this engagement is not broken by either side. If at all it is broken on the boy's side, the boy's people have nothing to pay to the girl's side, as all the expenses for the *bol* are borne by the boy's side. If, however, it is broken by the girl's party they have to make good the expenses incurred by the boy's side.

The bride-groom takes no part in this ceremony nor does he accompany the party to the bride's house. Some of the Dāvars (Warlis of the Northern section) however take the boy to the girl's place. After the *bol* the boy is invited by the father-in-law on auspicious days like diwali for dinner. But it is left to the boy to accept this invitation. Sometimes a boy does not like to visit his father-in-law till he gets married. If a boy is good natured and mild, he does not generally refuse his father-in-law's invitation. The girl also is invited at her father-in-law's house on auspicious days. On the diwali day she is given glass bangles and a bodice as presents by her mother-in-law.

Sometimes the betrothal ceremony is not at all performed separately. Instead, the marriage and *bol* take place simul-

taneously. In that case the ceremony of *bol* is not undergone. Only the requisite quantity of toddy is served to the bride's people and the presents are given to the bride.

Marriage Ceremony : The bride-groom's side has to give an intimation about the actual marriage ceremony to the bride's side. A few men start for the bride's place with a bundle of corn rice which is meant to be husked by the bride and the bride-groom together after the marriage ceremony is over. This corn rice is called *ghān* and the procession is called *ghān nene*–taking the *ghān*. At the *ghān* rite the bride-groom's party has also to take the *dej*. The *dej* consists of twelve faris of corn rice (about three maunds) two seers of *wal* (a kind of beans), eight to ten gallons of toddy and twelve to fifteen rupees. The *dej* or bride's price is offered to the girl's father to help him to meet his daughter's marriage expenses. Besides the *dej* the father of the bride also gets a bottle of wine and a bundle of tobacco leaves from the bride-groom's father at the time of the *ghān*. The bride's mother has to be paid Rs. 5/–which is more or less in the form of a loan from the bride-groom's side, but it is left to the mother to repay it or not. The inhabitants of the hamlet demand a rupee and a half from the bride-groom's side for drinks. A rupee is given to the Patel of the village. The paternal and maternal uncles of the bride claim eight annas each. The village watchman also has his share of eight annas. At the bride's place, the guests from both sides drink toddy brought by the bride-groom's party. The *Varhādki* or the *Kārbhāri*–the go-between announces ; "The bride-groom will have his *māndav*-marriage booth–in the evening and you (i. e. the bride's side) will have your *māndav* tomorrow ".

Marriage booth : All persons in the hamlet are invited to the *mandap* ceremony in the evening. The marriage shed is erected in the front yard of the hut. It is a small rectangular shed with nine wooden poles and covered with dried grass. Though the sides of the booth are kept open, a triangular arch made of bamboo sticks is put up to indicate the entrance. Buntings of mango leaves are hung cross-wise in the booth. A bunting is also hung on two poles at a little distance from the booth on the way to it. This is taken as a boundary line for the purposes of the marriage ceremony. In the first hole dug for

fixing the poles, rice, nuts and a pice are thrown. A lamp is waved towards the booth by a woman whose husband is alive and turmeric and *kunkum* are applied to the pole. An *umbar* twig is brought by musicians and the marriage priestess. The husband cuts the twig and the wife catches it, and a song relating to this is sung by the *dhavaleri*, which describes that God cut the twig and the Goddess caught it. The woman who brings the twig applies a little turmeric to it, and the man fixes it in the centre. No rice or nuts are put in the whole in which the twig is fixed. It is touched by the bride-groom while being fixed. The guests are served with drinks and meals if possible.

Dev Ceremony: The same night a ceremony is performed in which the family and tribal deities are invoked and propitiated. For this a little spot is cleansed with cow-dung and simple drawings are drawn on it by means of rice-flour. On a wooden slab are placed rice, coconuts, areca nuts, betel leaves and flowers. The images of different deities such as Nārandev, Hirvā and Hemāi are also placed on the rice grains. The bhagat conducts this ceremony. The bride-groom is seated near him after a bath, his sister standing near him. Four *suvāsinis* sprinkle a little water over the bride-groom from the earthen pots held in their hands with leaves of mango tree. A *pithi*—a composition of rice flour, coconut juice and other fragrant ingredients—is applied to the bride-groom's body. Men and women sit around to watch the ceremony.

The bhagat takes out his clothes and tries to get afflatus of some spirits into his body. He invokes the deities by saying, " Your devotee is marrying : you must come and help him in this ceremony. Come into my body ". While doing this, he constantly shakes his body and all the while mutters some indistinct words in praise of the deities. He invokes different deities and spirits and each invocation is called a *vāre* in honour of the particular deity. Some of the spirits are totemistic inasmuch as particular flowers and substances are offered when the particular spirit is invoked. Thus when *Shendray-kukvay* is invoked, red-lead is sprinkled on the images and *kunkum* is applied to the forehead of the bride-groom. When *Chitā* (panther) is invoked the bride-groom is covered with a spotted cloth to create a sem-

blance of the skin of a panther. The bhagat offers a chicken to *chitā* by strangling it with his teeth. The bhagat crawls on his knees, smells like a beast and plucks the neck of the chicken so as to convey the impression that the *chitā* has devoured his prey. The bhagat has an exclusive claim to the chickens offered in this ceremony. They are not cooked in the house.

This invoking or the *dev* ceremony goes on for a pretty long time, sometimes for the whole of the night. The bhagat gets no remuneration for conducting this ceremony, but he is served with toddy. After the termination of the *dev* ceremony, turmeric is applied to the bride-groom. This is called *halad-chadhane*. Turmeric is then distributed to the parents of the bride-groom, to other members of the family and to the persons assembled. The marriage priestess sings at intervals during the performance of the ceremony accompanied by two of her women assistants. When turmeric is applied to the bride-groom, the priestess puts a small quantity of salt, pieces of turmeric, rice, areca-nut and half anna copper pieces in the hem of the bride-groom's garment and ties them in a knot. These things are claimed by her after the marriage is performed.

Similar rites are observed at the bride's place also the next day. The mother of the bride-groom observes fast for the day on which the *dev* ceremony is to be performed. She neither eats nor drinks anything save water which is directly fetched from an outside lake or well, care being taken that the pot containing the water is not placed on the ground before the mother drinks it. Some women in the coastal villages take tea. The bride's mother too observes a similar fast on the bride's *dev* day. No fast is observed on the marriage day. After the turmeric is applied, the bride-groom is not allowed to go out, particularly outside the bunting limit, lest he may be affected by the evil spirits. He takes bath only after the actual marriage is performed, the idea being that the turmeric once applied should not be washed off till the marriage ceremony is over. All the while he holds a pen-knife or a small dagger with him and on no account is he permitted to part with it. The belief is that an evil spirit dreads a weapon of iron.

Marriage Procession: The bride-groom distributes new clothes to some of his near relations by way of presents before

the procession starts. The cloth-present, with little turmeric applied to it, is first placed on both the shoulders of the recipient by the bride-groom and then placed in his hands. The bride-groom's sister waves a lamp in front of him for which he is required to give her two or four annas.

The bride-groom has a peculiar dress for the marriage. He puts on a short dhoti, a long coat and a turban—a long cloth woven round the head in any convenient way. Marriage coronets with wreaths of *rui* (calatrophis jigantia) or *Zendu* flowers are tied to his forehead. These wreaths are called *mundāvalis* and are five in number. He binds a *pachangi*—a cloth worn in such a way as to cross it around the neck over the chest and to gird the body down to the waist. He applies a *kunkun* mark to his forehead. He covers his body with spotted garment which is tinted with turmeric. The garment has a knot containing rice, *wāl*, (a kind of bean), nut and a pice. Sometimes the bride-groom is without *pachangis* or a coat. He has a silver chain round his waist and bracelets on the wrists put on at the time of the *dev* ceremony in the previous night. If he has no these two ornaments of his own, they are borrowed from a *savkar* for the marriage purpose.

The marriage procession starts for the bride's place in the evening to the accompaniment of music, women walking behind men and singing all the way. The bride-groom is carried on someone's shoulder if the distance is not much; otherwise he goes on foot or in a cart. In either case, he must be on the shoulder of somebody when he crosses the boundary marked by the buntings. The maternal uncle holds him on his shoulder first and afterwards passes him on to someone else.

The procession stops near the bride's house outside the buntings hanging on two poles where they spend the night squatting on the ground. The bride-groom has to keep an all night vigil. If he is found sleeping, it is taken as a serious fault on his part for which he may be fined a rupee by the bride's side. The party is served with breads and boiled *Wals* by the bride-groom's side. toddy is also served if the bride-groom's side can afford to do so. The bhagat and the *dhavaleri* go to the bride's house to perform the *dev* ceremony there. (This ceremony is performe

at the bride-groom's in the previous night). After the *dev* ceremony is over, some young men from the bride's side joint the bridegroom's party, hold the bride-groom on their shoulders in turns and dance. If the bridegroom's side does not agree to this, fearing that the bridegroom would be troubled thereby, they pay a rupee or so to these youngsters from the bride's side with a view to stopping them from dancing.

After sunrise the procession enters the bride's marriage shed. The marriage takes place in the morning. In those parts where the marriages are held in the evening, the marriage procession starts in the afternoon, and the night halt near the bride's boundary buntings is avoided. The *dev* ceremonies are performed at the same night by a different bhagat at each place. Sometimes the performance of the marriage is delayed beyond the stipulated hour on account of quarrels between the two sides. Many people are under the influence of liquor and a few are not even on their senses. The go-between has to see to these things and to arrange for the performance of the marriage at the fixed time.

Warlis generally do not consult a *joshi* or a Brahmin priest for an auspicious moment (*muhurt*) for the marriage. In fact, a Brahmin priest has no place whatsoever in the performance of Warli marriage. The traditional *Mangalāshtakas* — the eight auspicious stanzas — do not occur therein. Warlis have priests of their own and strangely enough they are women. Recently, however, a few coast Wārlis have begun to invite a Brahmin priest for the performance of the marriage. In that case the *dhavaleri* is spared.

The bride is presented with new clothes by the bridegroom's side before the performance of the marriage proper. With these put on, she is brought into the booth for the marriage by her maternal uncle. The bridegroom is seated on a wollen blanket all the while. The bride and the bridegroom then stand on the ground face to face. In some villages, they both stand on wooden planks and yet in a few the bridegroom stands on a plank while the bride stands in a basket. A round brass dish is held by them between themselves from the time they stand in the shed for the wedding. Sometimes this is dispensed with and

the bridegroom holds the bride's right hand in his own. In the latter case, each of them holds a pice in the left hand. The spot on which they stand is cleansed with cow-dung and drawings are drawn thereon by means of flour. Rice is always to be found on this spot. It is customary for the bride to wear a red sari in the usual Warli fashion for the purposes of marriage. She too is bedecked with marriage coronets and flower wreaths. A white cloth (*antarpāt*) is held between the bride and the bride groom by any two men when the *dhavaleri* sings the last marriage song. This cloth is held above the dish held by the bride and the bridegroom. The maternal uncles of both the bride and the bridegroom have to be present at the time of the performance of the marriage. The *dhavaleri* sings with a brass lamp (*nandādeep*) hanging in her hand. Sometimes this lamp is held by some other women also, preferably one of her assistants. She sings marriage songs for over an hour. When she has finished singing she claps with her hands which is taken as a sign that the marriage is celebrated. Immediately the cloth between the two is removed; the bride and the bridegroom exchange places. There is no mutual garlanding by the bride and the bridegroom. The musicians play on a tom-tom and a pipe. The relatives and friends congratulate the couple by embracing them.

The bride and the bridegroom take a little rest sitting on a rough woollen rug on which some rice grains are sprinkled. They then unhusk some rice-corn brought by the bridegroom's side on the first day of the marriage ceremony. This unhusking is called *ghān kāndane.*

This being done, the bride and the bridegroom are made to sit on two small heaps of rice-corn and the bride-groom ties a string of black beads round the neck of the bride. This is called *gānthi bāndhaṇe* and is like the *mangalsūtra* of caste Hindu women. When this is over, some enthusiasts hold the bride and the bridegroom on their shoulders and dance wildly, the musicians playing at their best.

The maternal uncle of the boy gives some presents to his nephew, the bridegroom. This is called *mosālā* or *māmāshelā.* This custom is voluntary and is not found prevalent among the forest Wārlis. The *mosālā* means presents from the mater-

nal uncle, and is derived from the Gujarati word *mosāl* meaning maternal grandfather's house. It consists of a coat, a turban-cloth and a silver ring worth about a rupee. The maternal uncle of the bride generally gives her presents such as a sari, a bodice and some silver ornament.

After the marriage is over, each side arranges for its own dinner in the after-noon. Only the bridegroom and his sister take their meals at the bride's place. In the evening, there is a joint sitting of both sides when drinks are liberally served at the cost of the bridegroom's side. This is the last function in the marriage ceremony. The bride and the bridegroom also are present at this sitting, but they do not sit together. A little turmeric is applied to a small earthen pot containing toddy, and a small hole is made in it by means of a stone or some other suitable implement like a knife. Toddy is then served to the newly wedded couple through this hole. It is afterwards served not through the hole, but through the mouth of the pot to the influential men and guests. The turmeric is applied to the toddy pot because the bride and the bridegroom are married by applying turmeric to them. An advice is then given to the new couple by the medium :—" *Paranvelā ta maranvelā*—Now that you are married, you must be true to each other till death. You must help each other. If one falls, the other must support him or her. If the mango falls, the tamarind should support and vice-versa. (*Āmbā padel ta cheech dharel, na cheech padel ta āmbā dharel*)". Betel leaves are distributed to the village midwife, the musicians, four married women who bathed the bride-groom at the time of the performance of the *dev* ceremony, the bhagat, the patel, the dhavaleri and a few influential men. Thereafter the *varhādaki* (the go-between) announces, " *Pānch gāvchā rājā ālā, vidā khāvun hide* (*hirde*–gums) *padalā, Sitā jikalā, na yo chāllā* ". (The Lord of the five villages came, ate betel leaves, won Sita and went). It is a sort of a warning and a declaration that the bridegroom is the legitimate owner of the bride and that he will take her without opposition.

From this day, the bridegroom is entitled to use the formula of *Rām–Rām* salutation, instead of *johār*. The *varhādki* gets the following formula repeated by the bridegroom:— " Nāyakā, Pātalā Rām–Rām, Sarkār Darbārā Ṛām–Rām, Vāte Ghāte Rāṃ–

Rām—."[1] The bridegroom becomes a full-fledged man after his marriage. Thenceforth, before drinking toddy in a company, he must say *Rām-Rām.*

During the whole marriage affair, the bride's people have not to give a single feast or treat any guests from the bridegroom's side. The bride's side feeds only its own relations and friends. Thus after satisfying the persons concerned, the bridegroom's party returns with the newly wedded couple. The bridegroom plucks the marriage bunting on the way. Before he enters the house with the bride, his mother waves a lamp round him. The members of the party again drink toddy, dance and make merry through out the night. The musicians too help them by playing different tunes. The couple takes a ceremonial bath next day. Four *Suvāsinis* apply turmeric to them, sprinkle water on them with mango leaves and finally bathe them. Then they are made to sit close to each other; the bridegroom holds a mango leaf in his teeth and the bride plucks it with her teeth. The bride does the same in turn and the bride-groom plucks it with the right hand.

After a day's stay at the bridegroom's place, the new couple is invited to stay at the bride's father's house where they spend a couple of days. During the marriage ceremony, the bridegroom cannot sit on a mat or a wooden plank (*pāt*), but he can do so on a gunny bag. Both the mat and the plank are the products of trees having life; but a gunny bag is a lifeless thing from a Warli point of view.

Marriage can be performed at any time and during any season except the rainy season. In addition, the Hindu month of *paush*–December and January–is also avoided for marriage purposes as the caste Hindus do. A day like *amāvāsyā*–the last day of the Hindu month–is also very scrupulously avoided, since the *amāvāsyā* night is supposed to be the darkest and most favourable to ghosts.

Marriage rites are performed by a *dhavaleri*, an elderly woman, who acts as a priestess for the marriage ceremony. She is the moving figure in the whole ceremony. She sings marriage

1. Salutation to Naik and Patel, salutation to Government, salutation to all met on the way !

songs and is paid for the job. *Dhavaleri* is always a woman of position and is duly respected. She is accompanied by two other women who only repeat what she sings. It is only the *dhavaleri* who knows all songs.

It is sincerely believed by Warlis that the recital of the ritual songs by a *dhavaleri* is a divine gift. It is not a thing which anybody and everybody can do. It is also believed that *dhavaleris* are born and not made. However, an intelligent woman, if she picks up the ritual songs, can become a *dhavaleri*. I was told by one *dhavaleri* that these songs were revealed to her in dreams in her childhood; and at times she experienced some strange fits, when marriage ceremonies were being celebrated. This little incident explains how the dhavaleris in particular and Warlis in general believe in the divine favour bestowed upon the dhavaleris.

Toddy is most liberally used during the marriage celebrations from the beginning to the end. Quarrels, if at all they arise, are connected with toddy. Some persons who are not served with toddy, or some privileged persons such as the relations who are not given their special share of toddy fight for it. In the marriage shed and in the cottage, one can see the big pots of toddy placed together. The sour smell of stale toddy pervades the atmosphere. Men and women are under the influence of this liquor. Occasionally a few persons almost lose their senses owing to heavy drinking. They move here and there prattling, crying, singing and bawling whatever they like. They wallow on the ground, run, dance, jump and do many other things by which the gathering is amused.

Sweets are not necessary for a Warli marriage. Even food is not enjoyed by the gathering. The whole marriage ceremony is worth nothing to them if toddy is not served. If Warlis cannot do without a bhagat or a dhavaleri, they cannot also do without toddy. Much of the sincerity and the seriousness of the whole function are lost owing to petty quarrels due to drink.

As regards the marriage expenses, they come to about a hundred and fifty rupees for the bridegroom's side.[1] Much of it is wasted on liquor. Presents of clothes and silver ornaments

1. These are according to the pre-war rates.

to the bride and others cost about Rs. 20-, while liquor costs not less than Rs. 40/-. The *dej*—bride's price-is Rs. 12 to 13 in cash and Rs. 6 to 7 in corn. Musicians are paid Rs. 3/-and if they belong to a different tribe, Rs. 10/-. Expenses for food come to about Rs. 20/-. Other incidental expenses including the fees of the *dhavaleri* amount to about Rs. 20/-. In addition to this, a sum of nearly Rs. 20/- is spent for the *bol* ; the chief source of expenditure in *bol* is also toddy. The expenses for the bride's side are considerably less. The *dej* received from the bridegroom is utilised to meet a part of the marriage expenditure. Besides the bride-price, the bride's father also gets corn and toddy from the bridegroom's side. He has to give no presents. He has not to spend more than Rs. 40/-at the most from his pocket. A debt is incurred to meet the marriage expenses for which the bridegroom, and if he is young, his father has to pledge his services for a term of years, which term develops into life-long and some times a hereditary servitude. Some men remain unmarried even up to a late age for want of money. Some girls remain unmarried to a late age because of the obstinacy of their parents in demanding more bride's price.

Though boys and girls are generally married above sixteen and fourteen respectively, the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1930 has not been able to check the few child marriages that are taking place in the tribe. The coastal Warlis fear the newly passed Act which they call *Sarkārchā Kāyadā*—Government law. The forest Warlis hardly know anything about it. A Story told me by an old man of a coastal village about his grandson's marriage and how he escaped from the clutches of this Act sheds an interesting light on the workings of such Acts. The bridegroom was about eighteen but the bride was hardly eleven. The marriage ceremony was going on and the actual marriage was to be performed within a couple of hours. Just then, the village watchman came there to enquire on behalf of the village patel if the marriage was performed. They all got frightened with the idea that the patel would stop the marriage. In order to avoid this the old man bribed the watchman by offering him two bottles of toddy and persuaded him to tell the patel that the marriage was already over. The matter was, however, not reported by the patel to the higher authorities.



Engrossed in dancing.



Putting on bangles



Date palm with toddy pots.

As stated above such child marriages are not frequent. The boy to be married must be sufficiently old to work in lieu of money borrowed for his marriage. The girl too must be old enough to help her husband in his work.

The marriage rites described so far are applicable to all the sections of the Warlis in general and to the Warlis in the northern parts in particular. The Warlis in the southern parts show a few variations in regard to minor rites.

In 1934, representatives of about fifty Warli villages gathered in a conference at Wakipādā, a hamlet in the Dahanu Taluka, and passed resolutions relating to the interests of the tribe in general, and framed rules and regulations about marriage ceremonies in particular. These were mostly the coastal and central villages, and the delegates to this conference decided to style themselves *Malhāri Kunbis* instead of Warlis.

The following are some of the important marriage rules laid down by that conference. These rules clearly prove that the Warlis are by now sufficiently Hinduised to think of approximating their customs to those of other Hindus like the Kunbis.

1. It is desirable to consult a Brahmin priest when fixing the betrothal of a boy and a girl. Particular care ought to be taken to see if they are a good match by ascertaining if their 'stars' are favourable.

2. Full liberty should be given to both boys and girls in the choice of mates. If both like each other, none should come in their way.

3. At the first time of fixing the betrothal not more than a rupee and a quarter should be expended over drinks.

4. For the second *bol* the *ḍāvvālās* of the bridegroom should be given Rs. 2 in lieu of drinks and those of the bride Rs. 4. No corn-rice should be given to the bride's side at the time of *bol*. It is advisable that the second *bol* and the marriage should take place at the same time.

5. The bride should be given a green sari worth a rupee and a piece of cloth for bodice worth four to six annas as presents for *bol*[1].

6. *Dej*—the bride's price should be Rs. 7 to 8 in cash.

7. *Dej* in the form of corn should be seven *faris* worth Rs. 3-8-0, and *ghān* four payalis worth annas 4.

8. *Dej* should be given on the day previous to the beginning of the marriage ceremony. On the same day shopping for marriage requirements should be done jointly by both parties. Twelve annas may be spent for this purpose on drinks. Persons who take the *dej* to the bride should be given eight annas by the bridegroom. The bride's side should also be given eight annas in addition to *dej*. The persons taking the *dej* of money and corn may demand four annas from the bride.

9. As a marriage present the bride should be given a sari of Rs. 2-8-0.

10. The bride's mother should be given a sari of Rs. 2 or the amount should be given in cash.

11. The bride's brother should be given eight annas in lieu of a turban.

12. The bride's sister may be given four annas for a bodice.

13. No presents should be claimed by the bride's paternal uncle, maternal uncle, or paternal aunt.

14. The bridegroom's side should take a pair of coconuts along with the *dej*.

15. No *wāl* or *turi* should be taken along with *dej*.

16. On the day when *dej* is taken, both the *gāvvālās* should be given Rs. 6, for the marriage sittings so that the marriage performance may not be delayed and all persons may join the sittings for drinks after the marriage is celebrated.

17. Expenses for clothing should not exceed Rs. 10/- to Rs. 15/-. The manager should be given a dhoti worth eight annas. The marriage coronets for the bride and bridegroom

1. In the orthodox practice of the Warlis no colour is fixed. A green sari is preferred for the *bol*, perhaps because a red one is given for the wedding.

should be purchased by each side. People accompanying for shopping should be given a rupee for drinks.

18. Women accompanying the bride for putting on bangles should be given only four annas.

19. Both the sides should erect their marriage sheds on the same day.

20. At the perfomance of *dev* ceremony, the villagers should not claim meals by way of right. It is left to the wish of the bridegroom's side to serve them with meals or not.

21. Expenses for the *dev* ceremony should be borne by each side separately.

22. At the *māndav* ceremony the four married women should be given four annas.

23. The gāvvālās should be served with toddy costing Rs. 2/- at the *māndav* ceremony.

24. Women drawing a square at the time of the *dev* ceremony on the wall by means of wet flour should be similarly given drinks worth Rs. 2/-.

25. The *dev* ceremony should be performed near the rectangular drawing on the wall.

26. The *umbar* twig should be brought in the morning and fixed in the centre. The coronets should be tied to the bridegroom.

27. The relations or gāvvālās may give such presents to the bridegroom as they like when he sits in the shed with marriage coronets tied to his forehead. The people should be served with meals and toddy worth Rs. 2/-. After distributing the presents to relations by the bridegroom, the procession should start for the bride's place.

28. At the time of entering the marriage booth of the bride the bridegroom should not be obstructed by holding a bamboo pole in his way as was done formerly.

29. Girls from the bride's side used to block the way of the bridegroom by standing in a row and placing their hands on each other's shoulders, thus preventing the bridegroom from entering the shed unless he offered them four annas or so. All this has been stopped now.

30. Two coronets are tied each to the bride and the bridegroom; when entering the bride's booth, one of their coronets should be exchanged. They should then be made to stand before each other for the performance of the marriage.

31. It is better to invite a Brahmin priest to celebrate the marriage. But those who so wish may engage a *dhavaleri* for this purpose. In either case, they should not be paid more than a rupee and quarter.

32. After the performance of the actual marriage, the bridegroom should fill in the lap of the bride and place ten annas therein along with other things.[1] Four married women waving lamps to them should be given two annas.

33. At the time of filling the lap, the bride's people should neither hide the bride nor claim anything for the same from the bride-groom.

34. After the *Oti bharanen* is over, the bridegroom and the bride should be taken to unhusk the corn. The bridegroom should then tie a string of black beads round the neck of the bride. He should also put silver bracelets on the wrists of the bride.

35. After this is done, the bridegroom should be served with meals along with others assembled. After the meals are over all should sit together for final drinks.

36. Separate claims of the Patel, Naik (leader of the clan) etc. for drinks have been discontinued. It is not necessary that the influential men should be given a hen and a bundle of tobacco leaves. The bride's relations should not delay the work by demanding separate shares of toddy.

37. The bridegroom was put to great harassment by excessive dancing. This has been now stopped. Only one man from each side should come forward and dance with the bridegroom on his shoulder. Even for this he must undertake full responsibility for any harm done to the bridegroom in dancing.

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1. *Oti bharanen*—filling the lap or the fold of the sari of a girl or woman with fruit and grain.

38. After the sitting is over, betel leaves should be distributed and the bridegroom's party should return with the new couple.

39. When coming out of the marriage booth, the couple should not be obstructed by holding a bamboo pole in their way. The bride's side should not claim anything for plucking the boundary bunting.

40. On the second day of their return home, the newly wedded couple should be ceremonially bathed. The residents of the hamlet should be given drinks worth Rs. 2/- and the couple should return to the bride's place accompanied by two other couples. They should stay as the guests of the bride's father for a night and return next day. With this finish all the marriage rites.

41. The musicians should be given Rs. 2-8-0.

Those who do not abide by these rules are to be fined Rs. 51/- It is doubtful how far it is feasible to enforce this punishment in the absence of an effective social organization.

The marriage rules of the *Nihirs*, a sub-division of the Warlis, differ from those of other Warlis in certain respects. The bride's price among the Nihirs is Rs. 21/-. They do not pay any *dej* in the form of corn-rice.

As regards article 5 pertaining to the presents of cloths to the bride, the *Nihirs* have to give three saris to the bride as follows:—

1. Green, worth Re. 1-8-0
2. White, worth Re. 1-0-0
3. Red, worth Rs. 3-0-0

(The last one is to be worn at the time of the marriage proper.)

Similarly, the bride has to be given three bodices.

For the marriage booth the *gāvvālās* have to be given eight annas. Two *suvāsinis* are required to pound turmeric and to prepare flour to stamp some figures with the fists on the walls. Rice flour is mixed with water in a dish. The left side of the right palm and the right side of the left palm are dipped into the watery flour and fists are stamped on the wall in a row of

twos. *Dev* is performed at night on the *māndav* day. The maternal uncle of the bridegroom or the bride does not give any presents to them, as is done among other Warlis.

On the day of the *māndav* a small pole of unbarked teak is brought by a man from the family and posted in the *māndav*. Thereafter, the *umbar* twig is ceremonially brought by a couple and fixed near this pole.

The custom of blocking the way of the bridegroom by the girls from the bride's side as described in article 29 above is not prevalent among the Nihirs.

At the time of marriage proper, the boy stands on a plank and the girl in a basket. Even after exchanging their places, the bridegroom must be on the plank and the bride in the basket. A piece of cloth (*antarpāt*) is held between the two.

As described in article 32 above, the bridegroom has to fill the lap of the bride after the marriage is performed. For this the bridegroom has to carry the bride from the marriage spot to the house by lifting her only by his left hand. If he fails to do so, or if the bride falls on the ground, he is fined a rupee by the bride's side. People from the bride's side dance before him and try to obstruct him, so as to make him nervous and drop the bride down. If the boy is weak, his parents give a rupee in advance to save the boy from the botheration of carrying the bride.

The marriage among the Nihirs takes place in the evening. The bridegroom thus has a night's rest at the bride's and washes his face in the morning. This is called *tond dhune* and special toddy is claimed by the bride's people for this.

The marriage rules of the Warlis from the Jawhar State and Mokhada Peta show still more variations. Some customs bear different names. Thus to the Jawhar Warlis *bol* is known as *pend*. The villagers have to be given five rupees in cash by the bridegroom's father, which money is utilized for drinks. In this part morning marriages are very rare. The maternal uncle of the bridegroom draws the square on the wall—*Chauk bharanen*—instead of the married women in other parts. For this he gets a rupee. A regular dinner is given to the villagers at the time of the erection of the booth which is called *māndav-*

jevan. The bride's side bears its own expenses for this dinner on the *mandav* day. Among the eastern Warlis, the marriage ceremony begins with *halad*. Turmeric is applied to the bridegroom by married women whose husbands are alive, They sprinkle water on him by means of mango leaves after which the bridegroom bathes himself. A portion of the turmeric is taken to the bride, to be applied to her. This is called *ushti-halad* (left-over turmeric). A sari, a marriage coronet and sweet oil are also taken to the bride along with *halad*.

The *dev* ceremony is performed the same night. The marriage shed is erected on the next day morning and *umbar* is brought in the evening. Presents of clothes are given to the relatives on the same evening. Presents to the bridegroom are also accepted on the same day. The custom of *dudi dharanen* as described in article 29 above is also prevalent among the eastern Warlis. Four girls from the bride's side hold two water pots on their heads and stand close to each other blocking the way of the bridegroom in front of the marriage booth. They clear the way when a two-anna coin is dropped in one of the pots.

The same girls hold a pestle at the entrance of the booth and prevent the bridegroom from entering the marriage booth. Again, they have to be given two annas to get the way cleared.

After the priestess finishes her marriage songs, the *antar-pāt* is removed and the bride and the bridegroom move round the spot they stand on five times and then exchange their places.

As referred to above in article 32, the cloth of the bride is filled by the bride-groom with nine annas, a piece of dried copra, gur, rice, arecanuts and a few pieces of turmeric. Unlike other Warlis who hide the bride, the easterners hide the bridegroom after the corn is unhusked. While unhusking the corn the bride says to the bridegroom, "*Tu jā dāru piyā*—you go to drink wine," to which the bridegroom replies, "*tu jā bāngadyā bharāyā* you go to put on bangles". The bridegroom then puts on five green glass bangles in each of the bride's hands. The bride offers a small cup of wine to the bridegroom which he drinks.

The respective maternal uncles hold the bridegroom on shoulder and the bride on waist and dance. Others then come forward to do the same. While the dancing goes on, the relations wave a pice round the bridegroom and the bride and give it to the musicians. When the bride and bridegroom proceed to their home, the inhabitants of the hamlets on the way obstruct the procession. They clear the way when a cocanut is given to them.

Polygyny:—Polygyny is allowed and practised by the tribe to a certain extent but no case of polyandry is heard. In fact the very idea of the latter is abhorred. Though polygyny is allowed, there are few cases of man having more than one wife. An instance of a man having four or five wives living at the same time is exceptional. The reason why there are few polygynous marriages is that a Warli cannot afford to marry many times on account of monetary difficulties. He has to pay the bride's price and incur other incidental expenses. Marriage without money is thus not feasible. Even those who can afford to marry many wives from the monetary point of view refrain from doing so beyond a second or a third wife.

The idea in marrying a second or a third wife is not merely the satisfaction of desire, but extracting work from them. A wife to a Warli is not a burden as is the case among the middle and higher classes, but an economic asset. She is a helping hand to her husband. In polygynous marriages the economic and related factors are far more potent, in that the services rendered by the wives give a position to the man. Polygyny thus becomes a badge of distinction.

Another important consideration for a second marriage is the absence of children, i. e., when the first wife is barren. It is a social degradation to a Warli to be without a child. "Polygyny is not a sign of feminine inferiority or a degradation felt by the woman concerned."[1] Sometimes the wife is eager to shift part of her household duties on other's shoulders. As a senior wife she works less than the junior.

Sometimes the polygynous marriages take place under silly excuses. I was told of a man who married a second wife be-

1. "R. Lowie, Primitive Society." p. 42.

cause the first one was black, and married a third because the second was lean and weak. Some of the bhagats have got more than one wife at a time.

Gharor :—There is a custom among the Warlis in which a man is permitted to marry a girl by offering his services to her father. In certain cases under the *gharor* system, Warlis permit a man and woman to enjoy marital life before actual marriage provided the bridegroom adopts a matri-local residence, i. e., he settles with his wife's parents.

A young man goes and stays with one who has a marriageable daughter. He offers his services to him. This service period is regarded as probation or trial. If the girl and her relatives like him, the marriage takes place in due course. This is a sort of a trial marriage, in which a bride is obtained by offering service. The girl is given full latitude and choice in this system of marriage, the last word resting with her. If the boy serves the girl's parents for full five years, he acquires a right over the girl and can take her away despite the wishes of her parents provided the girl is willing. If the girl is not willing the matter is reported to the panchas by the *gharor*. The panchas ask the girl's father to pay some remuneration to the *gharor* for his services.

The son-in-law is called *gharor*, *gharatnyā* or *khandādiā* because he lives in the house of his wife as opposed to the common practice of a girl living in the house of her husband. A *gharor* is generally a poor man or an orphan who is not in a position to meet his marriage expenses. Parents in well-to-do circumstances or those having an only daughter desire her to live under their roof even after her marriage. They are, therefore, in search of a quiet and a poor boy who would be prepared to stay in their house as their son-in-law. Generally a needy boy avails himself of such an opportunity, since he has to incur no expenses for his marriage. The girl's father bears the expenses of both the sides. He has to satisfy the bridegroom's relatives, if any, by giving them presents.

Among the Warlis, a marriage in ordinary circumstances is a marriage by purchase inasmuch as a bride price has necessarily to be given to the bride's father. *Gharor* marriage is by

service. "It is not a regular form of marriage, but a substitute for marriage by purchase, when the suitor is too poor to pay the ordinary bride—price".[1]

A *gharor* occupies a subordinate position in the family of his father-in-law. Sometimes he receives the same unkind treatment as a daughter-in-law receives in her husband's house. He leaves his father-in-law's place if he finds it uncomfortable to continue there. His position becomes awkward especially, when his spouse does not like him. I learnt of an instance of a *gharor* who stayed with a girl for a year or so ; but the girl did not treat him well. She even did not serve him with good food. The *gharor* thus got tired and left that place to live in his former village. Later on he was invited as a *gharor* by another man.

A *gharor* inherits the property of his father-in-law, if the latter has no sons and stands on an equal footing with his sons. Gharor marriages are not, however, many, and they are mostly to be found among the Northern Warlis, the Dāvars and Pathārs.

The rights and duties of gharors have attracted the attention of the meeting held to frame the marriage rules. It was laid down that a *gharor* must serve his father-in-law for seven years. If he elopes with the girl after a year or two he may be fined Rs. 25/-and may be thrown out of caste. If a *gharor* thinks that either the girl or other members of the family are at fault, he should lodge a complaint to that effect before the village panchas who are empowered to give a final decision.

In the case of parents having an only daughter, the *gharor*, is bound to live with them till their death and perform their funeral ceremonies. The girl's parents have to give him an undertaking that they would treat him well and that he would be entitled to inherit their property provided he does not forsake them in their life time.

A man and a woman are allowed to live marital life without undergoing a regular marriage ceremony if the man pays a lump sum of Rs. 40 or so to the girl's father or guardian. No marriage rites are performed ; only a few persons are invited

1. Westermarck, ' Short History of Marriage '. p. 158.

and served with drinks. Such a wife is called *Udhadi* or *Kordi* meaning a wife brought by paying a lump sum and performing no rites. The regular marriage ceremony of such a couple is performed at convenience later on even after children are born to them. In any case the ceremony must be gone through before the children of this couple are married. And there are instances when a son enjoys the marriage ceremony of his parents! In case the whole ceremony is not possible, simply turmeric is applied to the parents, coronets are tied on to their foreheads and they are supposed to have undergone the necessary ceremony, nominal though it may be, at the time of the marriage ceremony of their son or daughter. The children are free to marry if their unmarried father dies before their marriage. If, however, the mother dies unmarried, the father has to marry a *rui* tree—gigantea swallow-wort—prior to the marriage ceremony of his son or daughter. An *udhadi* wife can remarry under the *pāt* form after the death of her husband. Though not married under a regular ceremonial she is regarded to have acted as the wife of a man and thus treated as a widow after her husband's death.

This seems to be rather a crude form of marriage which is purely a 'marriage by purchase'. Recourse is taken to this form only when the bridegroom is unable to go in for a complete marriage ceremony by incurring the necessary expenditure. Some of the polygynous marriages take place under this form. A widow re-marriage is quite distinct from the *udhadi* form of marriage as under the latter the bride must be a virgin.

A Warli from Vada-Thana Central-where the major population is that of the Kunbis, told me that the panchas never allowed anybody to get *udhadi* wife. The very idea was not tolerated. The *wdhadi* form is mostly prevalent among the Davar and Pathar Warlis and is absent among those Warlis who have been living in the neighbourhood of more civilized tribes like Kunbis and Kolis.

Divorce: Divorce is allowed to either party of the marriage. Most of the divorces are due to adulterous connections on the part of the wife and the criminality among the Warlis, if any, is largely due to the suspected infidelity of the wife. Cases of a man himself divorcing his wife are not many. He is a loser

thereby, since he has to incur expenses for his second marriage. Primarily, the husband has a right over his wife, who is thought to be his property which he is not prepared to forego without proper compensation. When a wife leaves her husband either because she does not like him or loves another man, the husband demands marriage expenses called *dāvā* from his wife's paramour by way of a right. But a man does not allow his wife to leave him so smoothly and stay with another man. The husband and the new suitor of the woman become the greatest enemies and the husband fights for his right unto the last. The enmity between the two at times goes to such an extremity as to risk their lives. When the quarrel takes a graver turn, the influential men of the village intervene and arrange for a divorce.

Divorce is granted by an assembly of a few influential men of the village. It is ascertained from the husband and wife that they are not willing to continue living together and are prepared for the divorce. The wife's lover is asked to pay the marriage expenses to her husband before divorce is granted. The husband's claim does not stand if he asks his wife to leave him of his own accord without any fault of hers. However, the aggressive part, in most cases, is played by the woman.

In granting a divorce a small stick is held by one of the influential men assembled. Water is poured on the stick and it is broken in the middle by the influential man who addresses the husband and wife: "This stick is now broken and your relation is herewith broken." Because a stick (*kādi*) is broken, divorce is called *kādi-mod*. Out of the money given by the woman's paramour to her husband toddy is fetched and served to the assembly. The husband and the paramour of his divorced wife exchange drinks. They are advised by the influential men to be on friendly terms thereafter. The *kārbhāri*—the leader of the panchas—says: "*Vāte bhetlā, ghāte bhetlā, rānāt bhetlā, shetāt bhetlā, tumhi ātā bhāvāsārkhe. Kutā māri nako, bhāndan tantā nako, shivi gāli nako, ājpāsūn tantā mitlā.*" "Henceforward you are like brothers whenever you meet, either on the way, on hill, in forest or field. No more quarrels, no abuses, no beatings; from today your quarrel ends. Be you friends."

The father has a right over the children born of his wife when the latter is divorced. A woman who divorces her husband

is looked upon by others as a woman of light character and loose morals. Divorces are not frequent. In many cases, permanent and life-long attachment and devotion exist between man and wife.

Some women of rather easy virtues marry three or four husbands successively in their life time. I have heard of a woman named Rasu, who first married a man from the family of Murhā. She had a daughter from this husband; she left her husband when the daughter was about two years. She then married a man named Radhyā from whom also she got a daughter and left him when the daughter was about three. Finally she married a third man from a distant village.

A divorced wife cannot marry by a regular form. She can do so only under the *pāt* form described below. A bachelor marrying a divorced wife has first to marry a *rui* tree and then have a *pāt* with her.

The circumstances in which the divorce generally takes place and the point to which an enmity between the husband and his wife's paramour can go can be seen from the following instance:—

Rāmaji, son of Lāhanu, married Zurli, daughter of Vasu. They lived as husband and wife for about five years but had no issue. Rāmaji suspected that his wife was leading an adulterous life. When he was out at night with his bullocks, two paramours used to visit her. He hid himself one night near the cottage and caught one of them; Rāmaji gave him a sound beating and tied him to a tree. He did not fail to beat his wife too. The matter was reported to *jāt*. Rāmaji was disgusted with his wife and wanted to sever his connection with her. He was much persuaded by the older men not to leave his wife, as she was young and would behave herself. But the young man remained adamant. Being deserted by her husband, Zurli went to live with one of her paramours in another village, who was prepared to pay Rāmaji his marriage expenses. But Rāmaji demanded that he should come and personally hand over the money to him.[1] "Otherwise," threatened Rāmaji, "I will kill her and cut her to pieces when she comes to my village." Both

1. This money is called *dāvā* and to demand it is *dāvā ghene*.

Rāmaji and his wife were quite young. The girl was robust in health and darkish in appearance. However, she had tolerably good features. It was learnt later on that the matter was amicably settled and Rāmaji accepted his *dāvā*.

The conference of Warlis referred to above laid down that a man who enticed away another's wife should be fined Rs. 125/-, because he completely ruined the husband. Nobody should give shelter to such an eloped couple. He who contravened this rule by harbouring such man would be fined Rs. 25/-.

Widow Marriage—When a man dies, his widow is expected to remarry her husband's brother, even though his (brother's) wife is living. This is more common in the case of a younger brother remarrying the widow of the elder brother. The consent of the widow is necessary for such a marriage. When there are two or more brothers, the choice to marry any one of them is left to the widow. The Warli conception of a 'levirate' marriage is that the woman who has been a member of a family for a number of years should not be thrown out of it because her husband is dead. At the same time, opportunities must be given to her to lead a normal married life. A widow has her own interests in the family, especially children, which she cannot take with her to the new home after remarriage. She is thus tempted to continue to stay in the same home by remarrying her deceased husband's brother. The widow may remain in the family even without marrying her husband's brother. She remarries her brother-in-law by the *pāt* or *molur* rite.

Pat Marriage—The *pāt* marriage is performed at night in the front yard of the widow-bride's house. No rites are performed. The bhagat, dhavaleri and few other elderly men attend it. The bridegroom applies little turmeric to the widow-bride and vice-versa. The bridegroom ties a string of black beads round the bride's neck. The widow bride is given some presents of clothes and a sum of Rs. 8 to 10 as a dowery. The guests are served with toddy. This finishes the whole affair. Thus the whole ceremony is brought to an end within a couple of hours.

The Davars, a section of the Warlis in the north, do not require a bhagat for a *pāt* marriage. Only a dhavaleri has to

sing some marriage songs for which a rupee has to be offered to her. No *antarpāt* is used. Musical instruments are not necessary. The *pāt* takes place near the stone mortar in the house, while among the Pathar Warlis it takes place in the front yard.

The conference of the Warlis of some villages resolved that the widow should be given only Rs. 2-8-0 as *dej*, a sari worth Re. 1-4-0 and a bodice worth eight annas. The villagers should be given only Rs. 2/- for toddy. The idea in laying down this rule is to minimize the expenditure of *pāt* marriage, so as to make it possible even for a poor widower to avail himself of this form of marriage.

A widower marrying a virgin has to undergo all the ceremonies of a regular marriage. A bachelor marrying a widow has first to marry a *rui* or a *sumadi* tree and cut them. Warlis cannot offer any explanation for this. They are following in the footsteps of their forefathers. It may be noted that "the tree-bride is intended to form a spirit companion to the widow's first husband who might, if not so satisfied, devote an unwelcome amount of attention to the remarried couple."[1] This seems to be different from the marriage with a tree bride at the third time by the caste Hindus who regard the third marriage as inauspicious. By cutting the tree bride, the Hindu widower is supposed to marry a fourth bride.

Sometimes the widows do not turn out to be good housewives and leave their husbands on silly excuses. The Warli conference strongly denounced such an attitude on the part of widows and laid down that nobody should give them shelter and protection.

Some of the marriage customs of the Warlis seem to have been influenced by those of the Hindus. The customs like holding a cloth between the bride and the bridegroom, erecting a marriage booth, applying turmeric to the bride and the bridegroom and waving of lamps to the bridegroom are observed by the caste Hindus also. The dhavaleri's songs at the time of the marriage relate that different Hindu deities are invited for the marriage ceremony; the bridegroom rides a horse in the marriage procession and a Brahmin priest recites mantras with

1. Enthoven, 'Tribes and Castes of Bombay Presidency,' Vol. I., p. xlv

the help of sacred books for which he requires some *ghatikas*. But none of these are witnessed in the Warli marriage.

The presence of a priestess and her conducting the marriage service, the bridegroom holding a knife in his hand, the bride-price and the use of red lead seem to be aboriginal. As among Warlis, the cross cousin marriages are prohibited among the Katkaris of the Konkan and Chodhras, Dublas and Bhils of Gujarat. The *dej*, the *umbar* tree and the rubbing of turmeric to the bride and the bridegroom are almost universal among the aboriginal tribes of the Province. In all the tribes a bachelor marrying a widow, first marries a *rui* tree and cuts it. Marriage service is conducted by the bridegroom's sister among the Chodhras of the Surat district and by two caste women among the Dhodias of Surat and Thana. That the bridegroom must not part with a weapon during the marriage days is a rule common to all the tribes. Divorce is allowed by all the tribes and effected by breaking a straw in two parts. The institution of the bridegroom serving the bride's father is found among the Koknas of the Surat Agency and also among the Chodras, Dhodias and Dublas, all neighbours of the Warlis. The 'levirate' form of marriage wherein a widow is permitted to remarry the younger relative of her husband is practised by the Dhodias and Dublas. The widow's consent is necessary among these tribes also as among the Warlis.

There are many indications that the marriage by capture is the basis of the marriage rites of the Warlis. The marriage procession waits near the boundary throughout the night and is allowed to enter the bride's marriage booth in the morning. It may mean that a struggle was going on for an entrance at night over this barricade of the marriage procession. The girls from the bride's side prevent the bridegroon from entering the marriage booth by holding a bamboo pole in his way. They also obstruct him by standing in a row with water pots on their heads. All this suggests that the bridegroom was opposed even by women. After the marriage the bridegroom has actually to carry the bride by lifting her by his left hand, the right hand thus preserved for fighting. The bride is nominally concealed by her people at present. It might have been actually so in

olden times. When returning with the bride after the marriage, the bridegroom plucks the mango leaf bunting in the way thus indicating that he clears his way. In the final sitting the bhagat declares that the lord of the five villages came, conquered Sita and took her way. This is said about the bridegroom who returns with the bride without an opposition. All these rites lead us to surmise that at one time the marriage with Warlis was pre-eminently a "marriage by capture" in which a man had to win his bride. It may be noted that a 'capture' or *rākshasa* form of marriage was one of the eight recognized forms of Hindu marriages. This *rākshasa* form might have been borrowed from the aborigines.

CHAPTER V

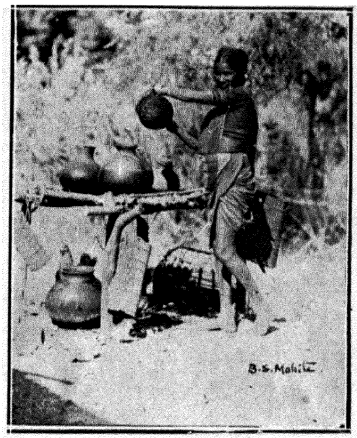
THE POSITION OF WOMAN.

Puberty—The Warli women regard themselves to be impure during the period of menstruation and confinement. A woman is considered as untouchable during the period of menstruation for five days. An adult or a middle aged woman observes the menses period for two days only. During the menstruation, the costal Warli women take a bath either daily or on an alternate day. During this period, a woman is forbidden to enter the kitchen or do any household work. She can, however, work in the field or do outdoor work. On no account is she allowed to touch the clothes, food and water which are meant to be used by others. The forest Warlis on the other hand regard such a woman to be touchable. She can bring water for the household purposes, but she cannot enter the kitchen and must not cook.

The woman takes a purificatory bath and washes her hair on the fifth day, and resumes work in the kitchen on the sixth day. Adult and middle aged women bathe on the third day.

No ceremony is observed at the time of the first menstruation like the caste Hindus. It is not obligatory on the Warli parents to marry their daughter before she is mature. The Warli conception of female puberty is epitomised in the saying, "without a flower there can be no fruit"—*Phulā bagar phal nāhi*—and puberty is a flower which precedes the fruit, viz., the child.[1] It is believed that the sins of a woman are coming out of her person in the form of the menses[2]. It is because of this that even the clothes worn by her during the menstruation are regarded as sinful (*pāpi*) and unclean. She has to remain secluded and cannot take part in cooking and other household duties. Particular care is taken that no woman in her menses even casts her shadow on the images of the gods. Though a woman in menses is regarded impure, the Warlis think it to

1. cf. The Hindu idea of a woman in menstruation as *Pushpawati*.
2. cf. Smritikars' idea.



Water stand



At the drinking water pool



Grinding

In due course the woman became pregnant. At the time of her delivery she asked her husband to get a midwife for her. He did not know for what purpose the midwife was required. The wife exclaimed, "men are really foolish; they do not know that our shames are covered with our clothes.[1] " The man then quietly went out in search of a midwife. When the midwife was coming, a cow stopped her in the way and requested her to attend to her (cow's) delivery ; the request was, however, turned down by the midwife. The cow cursed her in disgust :— "My calf will be able to stand immediately after its birth. But the child of a woman, whom you are going to attend to, will not stand even though you nurse it for a year." And even to this day we see that it is so, say the warlis.

This story covers a long period of the life of a woman from puberty to delivery. The last part of the story is the warli explanation of the manifest difference between a beast-infant and a human-infant.

A Warli wife is very anxious to become a mother. If she shows no signs of pregnancy within a reasonable period after her marriage and attainment of puberty, she does not hesitate to take medicines so that she may bear a child. A married woman without issue defeats the purpose of nature. Barrenness is not only a degradation for a woman, but also a sufficient reason for her husband to take a second wife. The medicine is either in the form of a mixture to be administered internally or some herb paste to be applied to the stomach. Sometimes the woman ties a piece of the herb or a charmed thread to her arm so that she might conceive. A woman may also make a vow to a deity which is fulfilled after her desire is satisfied i. e. when she gets an issue.

A woman when enceinte has particularly to avoid the evil-eye of the spirits. She takes care not to visit places which are popularly known to be infested with evil spirits, lest the spirits may affect the embryo. She must neither eat nor cut anything during the eclipse. It is also believed that if a pregnant woman sees a serpent, it becomes blind until she delivers.

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1. Āmchā lājā padrāt bāndhel.

Birth ceremonies:—Warlis celebrate all the important occasions in life with ceremonials and rituals. A birth in a family is surely an occasion for joy, and the ceremonials connected with it are scrupulously performed. A midwife, an old woman from the same tribe, is called for the delivery. She does all that is required for the delivery and is helped by other women in the house. The umbilical cord of the babe is immediately cut by the midwife, two inches above the navel, by means of a sharp *boru* chip. No metal weapon must be brought near the child in the first moments of its life. Both the mother and the babe are washed with hot water. The midwife buries the cord and the placenta just outside the hut near the reed-wall in a small pit. This pit is dug by the midwife. A pice and rice are also buried along with the cord and the placenta. A small stone is placed on the spot and red-lead is applied to it. In no case the placenta and the cord are touched by anyone except the midwife and they are never thrown away. The placenta and the cord are considered to be the impure things coming out of the woman's womb. They must be suppressed down in the earth, lest they may compete with the child in growing and may shorten its life. Among the Malhāri Warlis, the husband of the confined woman digs the pit to bury the cord and the placenta; the midwife does it only in his absence.

The uncut portion of the cord when it drops down from the navel is wrapped in a piece of cloth and tied to the neck of the babe by the midwife. The cord is tied to the babe's neck with a view to avoiding the evil eye of the witches and spirits. The mother throws this cord in a watery place on the twelfth day. On the third or fourth day, a man experienced in the process burns the babe on the stomach nearly two inches above the navel with a red-hot iron instrument. This instrument, simple in construction, is arrow-shaped and made of umbrella ribs. The babe's stomach is hot-ironed with a view to preventing stomach diseases from which the babies usually suffer.

The confined woman is regarded as impure for the first six days. Only the midwife touches and bathes her and the baby. The mother observes certain restrictions in food; she takes only light food and avoids eating vegetables. She also takes chicken soup. The confined woman takes complete rest for a few days.

Either on the fifth or the sixth day, a little ceremony called *Sat* or *Sati*[1] is observed. This is also known as *Pānchavi pujane* inasmuch as the rite is observed on the fifth day. The midwife roughly draws a human figure with rice in a winnowing basket. She also draws another small figure by the side of the first. These figures are supposed to be the images of the *Sati* and the child. *Sat* is supposed to be the controlling deity of the child; hence her propitiation. The deity, it is believed, writes the fate of the child on its forehead. A suitable spot on the wall is cleansed with cow-dung and spotted with red-lead marks. The winnowing basket is placed on the ground below the spot on the wall. The mother puts red-lead in the parting of her hair and puts on five flowers in the hair. She is seated on a *pāt*—wooden plank—in front of the midwife. The mother fills her own lap (cloth) with a seer of rice, an areca nut, a copra piece and an anna coin and gives them to the midwife. She also fills a small earthen pot with *nāgli* corn and gives it to the midwife. The midwife also gets four seers of rice-corn and eight annas, if a son is born, as her fees for attending the confined woman; but only four annas, if a daughter. The midwife ties a cloth cradle for the baby. The female relations and the women from the neighbourhood attend this function and each puts a pice in the lap of the mother. Toddy is served to them. No songs are sung on this occasion. This function is not attended by men. The midwife ceases attending the confined woman from the next day after this.

No further rites are observed on the twelfth day like the *bārse* of the caste Hindus. However, on the twelfth day, the mother visits the nearest lake or stream with a water pot and applies red-lead to any stone nearby, and sprinkles some rice-corn near it[2]. She brings water from the lake or stream, and bathes herself and the baby after making it warm. From this day onwards, she begins to do light household work. These rites are called *Bārvā pujane* observances on the twelfth day.

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1. The *Satwāi* of the caste Hindus.

2. Compare the practice among some of the caste Hindus whereby such a woman visits the nearest well at the end of the month and draws some water from it after some rite.

The delivery is not viewed a serious occasion in the life of woman. It is a thing in the natural course of life and events and is not in the least feared. No fuss is made about it and at times the pregnant woman has a safe delivery without anyone's aid. I was told of an instance by an eye-witness of a pregnant woman who came to sell a bundle of firewood in a coastal village and had a safe delivery by the side of a cottage on the way. She cleaned the babe herself and wound it in a cloth and went to her village, a distance of about five miles from there.

As against this fearless attitude towards the delivery of a woman, some of the coastal Warlis, in imitation of the caste Hindus, have begun to take it as quite a serious occasion for a woman. She may die if the labour is not safe, say they.[1]

The child is not named on the sixth day when the *Sut* rite is observed. The child is called *Dādu* if a boy, and *Bai* if a girl, till it is named. The parents have to wait for the naming of their child till a *Dev* ceremony is performed in the neighbourhood. The father or any other male relative of the child waves rice round the child and takes it to the Bhagat who takes an afflatus in the Dev ceremony. The Bhagat takes the rice in his hand and declares the name of the child. Sometimes the name is that of one of the ancestors, preferably the paternal grandfather's in the case of a boy and that of the paternal grandmother for a girl. The belief in naming the child after the ancestors is that when any other name is not approved of by the ancestors the child weeps bitterly. The child ceases to cry when it is named after an ancestor. Another reason why a child is named after an ancestor is that the Warlis believe that the ancestors are reborn in the same family especially if a child bears some marks on the body. If the child is born as a result of the mother's taking a *navas* for it, it is named *Navasā* or *Navasi* if a boy or girl respectively. If the mother had taken medicine (*Vansi*) for the child it is named *Vanshā* or *Vanshi*.

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1 *Jinali ta bāl : nāhi ta kāl.*

The Bhagat generally selects a name from the following stock for boys :—

" Ānyā, Bhikāryā, Bhikhlyā, Bahru (deaf), Bālyā, Bārku, Bāriklyā (lean), Bhādyā, Bhivā, Chaityā (born in the month of Chaitra), Chandru (moon), Devyā-Dewoo-Devji-Devāji (God), Dharmā, Diwāl, Dhākat (younger), Dāmā, Dhāvji, Dhavlu (white), Dundyā (fat), Gangyā, Harji, Havsā (joyful), Jethyā (born in *Jeshta*,) Javlyā (twin), Jānyā, Jivā, Kākdyā (tree), Kātyā (thorny), Kharjā (suffering from scabies), Kālyā (black), Kamlyā, Lāhanu (younger), Lakhmā, Lādkyā (dear), Lakhu, Lāsyā, Mangyā (born on Tuesday), Maryā-Marlyā (weakling), Mahādyā (Mahadeo), Mānji, Māhyā, Mugāji(dumb) Mahlā, Makhmalyā, Navshā, Posalyā, Poshā (born in Poush), Pātalyā (thin), Rāmā-Rāmji, Rāghu, Rāju, Rāvji, Radkyā (weeping), Radhu, Rupji (silver), Radyā, Rāhyā, Revdyā. Rishā, Ravyā (born on Sunday), Sāvji, Soma (born on Monday), Sukryā (born on Friday), Sowāryā, Shidwā, Sukad (having bones only), Sonji (of gold), Surmāji, Shinwār (born on Saturday), Tulji, Ukhardyā, Udharyā, Vasu, Vithal, Vihlu, Vanshā, Vālyā, Viklyā, and Zephryā (with wild hair).

The names of women are:—

Āni, Āngi, Bani, Bārki (small-young), Bhimi, Bhikhli, Budhi (born on Wednesday), Chaitu (born in Chaitra), Dewoo (goddess), Dhākli (younger), Gangu, Harku (joyful), Jethi (born in Jeshta), Jamni (Jamunā or Yamunā), Jānu, Jivi, Kāshi, Kākdu (tree), Kālgi (dark), Lakhmi (Laxmi), Lādku (dear), Lakshi, Lukhi, Mangu (born on Tuesday), Mathu, Markat-Mari (weakling), Manki, Navshi (born after Navas), Pātu, Pāteri Posali, Poshi (born in Poush), Rāmi, Raju-Rāji, Rādhi, Rasu, Rupāi (of silver), Rasmāi, Somi (born on Monday), Sukari (born on Friday), Shinwāri (born on Saturday) Soni-Sonai (of gold), Sowāri, Thuru, Tulshi (the basil-plant), Vanshi (born after medicines), Zipri (with wild hair) and Zurli.

Some of these are nick names inasmuch as they refer to certain peculiarities, physical or otherwise, of the person,

like Ziparyā, Dhākli, Radkyā etc., or the day and month names. Some are corrrupt Hindu names e. g. Lakhmi, Gangya etc. Again a few are incidental names like Vanshā and Navshi. No person is named after the tribal gods. In this respect, Warlis hold quite different views from those of the Hindus, who particularly name their children after their deities, and also name the boy only after his grandfather. Warli gods are not kind and hence their names are not associated with persons.

The Warlis go to the goldsmith in the nearest village for ear-piercing of their children, both male and female, at any convenient time. The maternal uncle of the boy crops the hair of his nephew for the first time when the boy is about six months old. The hair is collected in a new piece of white cloth and thrown in flowing water by the maternal uncle. Neither this relation nor any other has to perform any rite in particular for a female child. The hair of a boy is supposed to be impure as it comes from the womb of the mother. It must therefore be cropped. A girl's hair is not, however, cropped since she is never allowed to cut it in her life.

The Warlis love their children and the mothers treat them kindly. But at the same time, they occasionally become extremely harsh and beat their little ones severely. The babies often go without clothes. Mothers do not care to keep them clean and decent. It is true, the Warli mother does not find time to look after her baby for she has to work. It is not a rare sight in the warli hamlet for one to see a baby crying in the cloth cradle or on the floor. When the children are able to crawl or walk, they are often seen playing in the dust. It is a pitiful sight to see a warli boy, hardly a year old, being shaved on the head with a razor by a village barber. They seem to have no idea of the pain their young ones have to bear in undergoing the ordeal of tonsure.

The child is a welcome addition to the family. The Warlis do not consider children as a burden to them. On the contrary they like to have many children. A man without an issue is unfortunate. A child can do certain amount of work like

looking after the cattle. It thus helps the family to a certain extent. Besides, the parents have not to spend after their children in regard to education as amongst the higher castes.

The Position of Woman :—The stage of the civilization of a society is often gauged by the status accorded to woman in that society. In the Warli society, the position of woman varies from that of a personal chattel, a little better than a slave or a beast of burden to that of an undisputed mistress of a family. " The treatment of woman is one thing, her legal status is another, her opportunities for public activities is still another, while the character and extent of her labours belong again to a distinct category. The harem beauty is not compelled to perform the drudgery of a menial, yet her position is not consistent with our ideals of human dignity. The Toda women though well treated, rank as inferior and are excluded from ritualistic observance that occupy the foremost place in Toda culture.... On the other hand, the Andaman Island woman is virtually on a plane of equality with her husband, though a somewhat larger share of work may fall upon her shoulders."[1]

A Warli woman generally enjoys an inferior status to that of a man. The birth of daughter is not so merrily celebrated as that of a son. In fact, a midwife gets a smaller payment for attending to the confined woman when a daughter is born. As a tribe of pre-eminently patrilocal residence, the woman has to live in the husband's house after her marriage. A girl is therefore considered to be a thing to be owned and claimed by others. This creates a difference in the parents' mental attitude towards their sons and daughters. The girls are destined to leave the roof of their parents after marriage, and are not expected to help the family of the parents in the manner in which boys are expected to do. Those parents who have only daughters and no sons think themselves very unfortunate, for they would go unsupported in their old age. As opposed to such indifferent attitude towards the girls, the parents love their daughter more than the son since the feeling of her separation is always looming large on them.

1. R. Lowie, " Primitive Society ", 186–187.

The woman's position as a chattel or a piece of property can be determined by the fact that she is owned by her father before her marriage and by the husband after the marriage. It is for this reason that the father of a girl is not prepared to hand her over without the bride-price. He is permanently deprived of the services of his daughter by getting her married. He must therefore be properly compensated in the form of a bride-price to make good the loss. Though a girl's marriage is performed with equal merriment as a boy's, it is an occasion for her parents to feel sorry as it permanently separates her from them.

With marriage, the woman enters into a new phase of life. The marriage is not so much a sacrament with the Warlis. It is a contract inasmuch as there is an agreement in the form of a betrothal and a consideration in the form of the bride-price. This view of marriage cannot but affect the status of a woman, who serves the purpose of an article for which the contract is entered into. As a logical corollary of this, the paramour of a married woman has to pay the marriage expenses of her husband at the time of securing the divorce through the tribunal; the underlying idea being the making good of the loss incurred by the transfer of property from one hand to another. That the elaborate marriage rituals and ceremony are sometimes dispensed with and a woman is taken as a wife simply by offering the bride-price to her father or legal guardian and by entertaining a few guests and relations with a promise that a regular ceremony will be performed later on at a convenient time, and also that a widow is expected to remarry her husband's brother, strengthen the conclusion drawn above that the marriage is not so much a sacrament as a contract in which a woman is supposed to be an article transferred from one owner to the other in exchange for money or other (service) consideration.

Marriage is most common in the Warli society. It is unnatural and condemnable for a man to remain unmarried. Prostitution as such is conspicuously non-existent among them. Sexual connections are not permitted outside marriage. Hence, marriage is the only way to satisfy sex impulses. Sex activity is one of the objectives of marriage. This may be noticeable in the marriage rites. " The red colour which is so frequently used in

marriage rites is regarded as a means of ensuring defloration.[1] The red-lead and *kunkum* are almost associated with every right in the marriage. It would be of interest to note that the bride has to put on a red sari for the marriage. There are no inns among these people. So a woman is required to prepare food. It is because of these considerations that a man must get a wife. Doubtless woman has to face the traditional illtreatment from her mother-in-law in the beginning, yet it cannot be denied that she enjoys some status as a man's mate in his married life. It is by marriage that a woman profits so far as her status is concerned. It is only as a house-wife that she fares well. She works in the home as well as in the field. Home is not only the woman's place but her kingdom. The entire management of the home rests with the house-wife. She controls her children and even her husband and if she is clever and shrewd, keeps perfect harmony in the family.

It is not merely for the satisfaction of the sex instinct that a man has a wife. He has an ulterior motive in marriage which makes him treat his wife as his partner in life. He must have a woman who bears him children and nurses and looks after them; for a man without off-spring is an unfortunate being. A woman too is not less anxious to have children. Barenness is considered a degradation more so on the part of a woman. Besides it is an adequate reason for the husband to repudiate the wife. After children are born the conjugal relationship becomes more stable. Children unite parents and bring social position for their mother. A woman wins the confidence of her husband after she becomes a mother, as both of them have then to rear up a family.

A married woman also enjoys a distinctly higher status than a widow and re-married or a divorced woman. It is only the *suvāsini*, that is a wife by the first marriage with her husband alive, that has a privilege of taking part in certain marriage rites. Only a *suvāsini* can wave a lamp to the bridal pair.

A Warli woman is independent in the sense that she can leave her first husband, if she does not like him, and live with another man of her choice. A divorce is granted in such cases.

1. Westermarck—"Short History of Marriage", p. 192.

But a woman who seeks the divorce is regarded as one of light morals. A boy and a girl are allowed to lead a marital life in certain cases before the final settlement is reached; the prospective bridegroom stays with the father-in-law and the marriage takes place if the girl likes him. Even after the marriage he stays in the family of the girl. This does not however emancipate the woman from the thraldom of man. Being in the same family, she is subordinate to her father instead of being subordinate to the husband. No doubt, the woman profits by continued residence under her parents' roof, but that does not make her completely independent.

Polygyny is not taken to be a sign of feminine inferiority. A husband takes a second wife not because of the satisfaction of lust only but to win that badge of distinction which polygyny brings him. The economic and the like factors are far more potent. Service rendered by the wives makes a position for him. Besides, there is a universal longing for children underlying polygyny. There is no reason why a Warli woman should feel humiliated if her husband gets another wife.

The Warlis confer the highest distinction on a woman in hailing her as the officiator at their marriage service. It is the *dhavaleri*, a woman who acts as a priestess at the marriage ceremony. She is highly respected by men and women alike. But this unique honour bestowed upon the *dhavaleri* does not help to elevate the position of the woman in general. A *dhavaleri* is respected because the Warlis feel almost a divine hand in her power of reciting the marriage songs.

Far from being a burden to a man, the wife is frequently an asset. She is a willing partner in her husband's work wherever it may be. She is an earning hand, a profitable proposition, and helps her husband in maintaining and rearing a family. And yet, she is subordinate to man. The reason for this subordination may be attributed to the division of labour between the sexes. Heavier and more important work is done by man, and lighter and less valuable is done by woman. She never plies a cart or ploughs the field. Her husband does that. The woman does not sow seeds in fields; for it requires a man's skill. She can plant and reap corn. But even then man arranges the heap

and woman helps him by giving the sheaves. Man fells a tree and cuts wood. The woman ties the wood in a bundle. Man climbs the roof of the hut and woman assists by giving him straw and leaves for thatching the roof. This unequal burden of labour also determines certain work as man's and the rest as woman's. "A man feels ridiculous if he does work which should be done by women[1]." A Warli does not wash clothes especially those of a woman, even though that woman belongs to a higher caste and he happens to be her servant. He never carries load on his head ; that is a woman's way. He uses shoulders.

" In religion, a woman is scarcely anywhere on a level of equality with man[2]." The entire cycle of magico-religious ceremonies is taboo to her. Woman is debarred from whatever is mystic. She is on no account allowed to enter the precincts of the *Ravāl*, a training school for bhagats. During the course of training, a pupil has not only to avoid approaching his wife on any account, but to take care that he does not even hear the jingling of the bangles of a woman when he is taking his food. He must observeco mplete countinence during the days of training. If he indulges in sexual enjoyment during those days, he not only wastes all that he has learnt, but casts slur on his preceptor and incurs the wrath of God. Woman is thus the cause of his spiritual destruction.

A woman cannot conduct the propitiation ceremony of gods. She can, however, attend the ceremony and watch the function. Chickens offered to gods are not shared by women, neither are they cooked by them. When a bhagat is practising divination, no woman must approach him. No woman must touch or handle the images of gods.

The witch institution has also influenced the position of a Warli woman. A woman is a potential witch. The Warlis fear the witches and exhibit the most hostile attitude towards them. This makes them hate women who are supposed to be evil-doers as witches. It is difficult for the Warlis to know outwardly whether a particular woman is a witch. They con-

1 Driber " At Home with the Savage," p. 64

2 Goldenweiser, "Early Civilization," p. 262.

demn and look upon the woman-kind with suspicion. The woman is considered as capable of committing treachery and sorcery and therefore dangerous. A Warli's attitude towards women in this respect may be aptly represented by the slogan, "witchery, thy name is woman."

The tribe's ideas about chastity and morality are not very rigorous. Pre-marital sex relations are not seriously considered; at the most the young man and woman are asked to get married. If the girl develops pregnancy as a result of such relations, the seducer is forced to marry her under threat of a heavy fine. But a woman partaking food with a person of a lower tribe, such as Mahar, Dhorkoli, Kātkari etc. or found in illegal connection with any such man is outcast. According to the Warli notion, such an immoral woman lowers the prestige of the community and does not deserve to be its member. The laws of morality are thus applied more strictly to women than to men.

A woman is also regarded inferior to man, because she is confined during her delivery, when she is regarded as impure and also because she cannot work. Monthly seclusion of a woman is also a cause of her inferiority. Generally menstruation is associated with impurity. It is the fear of pollution which accounts for much of the debarment of women from activities invested with an atmosphere of sanctity. During the menses, no woman is allowed to enter the threshing floor when paddy is being threshed. Even the shadow of such a woman pollutes the images of God and the offerings.

Being herself considered a property, woman is incapable of holding property. In the absence of sons, the property of a man is inherited by the brothers or the nephews, or by his son-in-law, if the latter is a *gharor*, i. e. living in the family of his father-in-law.

As opposed to the otherwise fair treatment meted out to a woman, she is sometimes severely beaten and illtreated by her husband out of mere caprice. It is the monopoly of the husband and none else can interfere with it. When the parents-in-law have a grudge against their daughter-in—law, they instigate

their son to inflict punishment on her as only the son has a claim over her.

To sum up: the position of a Warli woman is generally inferior to that of a man. She is, however, treated well. Her opportunities for public activities, particularly in matters religious and ceremonial, are restricted. She does not enjoy the same status as the man, in that she is denied some privileges like holding property and the laws of morality are stricter in her case. It is as a house-wife that she fares well and is an undisputed mistress of the family. On the one hand her fate is wretched as a witch, while on the other she is hailed as the priestess of marriage.

CHAPTER VI

DEATH

The Warlis burn their dead. But if a person dies of a contagious disease, he is buried as the warlis think they incur the wrath of the spirit which caused that edipemic. It spreads like the flames of fire if the deceased is burnt. Even in such cases, the buried body is dug out after a fortnight or so and burnt. Otherwise it is considered that in the next birth the person may be born defective. Before burying a corpse, the leaves of *shindi* tree are first spread in the grave. The corpse is wound in the mat of *shindi* leaves and tied with creepers so that it becomes convenient to unearth it and burn it. No doubt it is extremely nauseating to unearth a decayed body. But the persons who are entrusted with this work are under the heavy influence of liquor. If the body is completely destroyed, only bones are formally burnt. Malhar Kunbis, a section of Warlis, do not burn the body once buried. To them, once-buried is always buried.

When a woman dies in advanced pregnancy, her stomach is first dissected by means of a knife and the babe is taken out of the womb. The incision is done on the burial ground, by an elderly person who is experienced in the performance of the same. He drinks wine before starting on with his work. The stomach is filled with boiled rice and nominally stitched with string by means of an iron needle. The woman then is either burnt or buried. In the latter case, the corpse is taken out after a fortnight or so and burnt. Under no circumstances, is the babe burnt. The woman and the babe are buried at different places because the Warlis believe that two souls should not be buried together. The babe is taken out of the womb as it is regarded as an independent body and must be given a separate burial. If the babe is not taken out of the womb, the dead woman, it is supposed, becomes a *hedli* an evil spirit.

The dead body is taken out from the house and washed by the women of the family with hot water in the front yard of the house. No cold water is afterwards mixed in the hot water, the

idea being that the water once made pure by heating should not be again made impure by adding cold water to it. A turban is wound round the head of the dead, if he is an adult male and some copper or nickel coins are tied to the hem of it. Copper coins are also placed in the hands and in the mouth. The face and hands of the corpse are marked with red lead, turmeric and black soot of the pots. The face is covered.

If a woman dies in the life time of her husband, her face is not covered. New clothes and ornaments are placed on the proper parts of the body. A line of red lead is drawn in the parting of her hair, *kunkum* is applied to the forehead and flowers are strewn in her hair. She must be carried to the burning ground with all this paraphernalia, since she died as a *suvāsini*.

The corpse is carried by four men on a bier, the chief mourner walking in front with a pot of fire in his hand. The corpse is carried with its head in the rear. When the corpse is being carried, rice-corn and *nāgli* are sprinkled on the way. The idea underlying it is that the spirit of the dead coming home at night is detained till day break while eating the grains; and the spirit dares not visit the house after day break. If a very old man dies, and there is no reason to mourn for his death, his corpse is carried to the accompaniment of music. Women from the family and neighbourhood accompanying the funeral procession stop half way, and take bath near a watery place and return. The spot from which women return is called a place of rest—*visāvā*.

When the procession reaches the burning ground, a small pit is dug in which a pyre is constructed and the corpse is placed on it with its head to the north, thus facing southwards. The chief mourner, who is the nearest male relative of the dead, moves round the funeral pyre with the pot of fire in his hand four times, and the pyre is set on fire by him and any other relative at the two ends with a burning torch. If there are no relatives to perform these funeral rites, the villagers do the same. The earthen pot containing fire is then filled with water by the chief mourner, who makes a hole in it and pouring water in an unbroken line, walks round the pile five times and dashes

the pot on the ground breaking it to pieces. The forest Warlis sprinkle rice corn on the pyre. If any vows taken by the dead man remain unfulfilled by him during his life time, any two men near the pyre loudly say, "Oh, God, please forgive him for vows he could not fulfill."

Warlis burn the dead in the day time, with the Sun as a witness. When the corpse is completely burnt, water is poured over the fire to make the dead cool or at peace, since death is associated with hot power.[1] Money placed on the corpse is searched and is subsequently utilised in purchasing toddy. All go to a nearby pool and take a bath.

Wet rice grains are pounded and boiled at home by women who remain behind. Eight small balls are prepared of it and taken by any man to the place where the men bathe. Boiled *chavalis*—a kind of bean—and *alu* roots (an esculent vegetable) are also taken along with the rice balls. Rice balls, chavalis and alu roots are equally distributed on two plantain leaves out of which one is placed there and the other is taken to the burning ground. This is done by a bhagat who later on acts as a chief singer in the death anniversary. A peculiar thing in connection with the placing of these leaves is that the bhagat has not to look at them, but to turn his face away from them. The belief is that the man offering the flour balls and the spirit coming to accept them should not see each other, lest the spirit should be disturbed. The offering of the rice balls to the dead is nearly the same as offering of *pindās* by the caste Hindus.

Four *dātuns* — chewing tree—sticks to cleanse teeth — are chewed one by each of the four mourners, the four nearest male relatives of the dead, and put on the ground to make a square. A little cowdung is placed in the square, some rice-corn is spread on it and water is sprinkled over it. After this they return home. The reason why rice-corn and cowdung are used for this purpose is that the Warlis show great reverence to *kansari* — corn and *gāvatri*-cow. Teeth cleansing sticks are a symbol of purification. No sensible Warli eats or drinks

1. Abbott: "The Keys of power" p. 7. Kātkari pours milk over the grave for the same purpose. The Malhāri Wārlis make an offering of rice, milk, and cow urine on the third day on the burning ground.

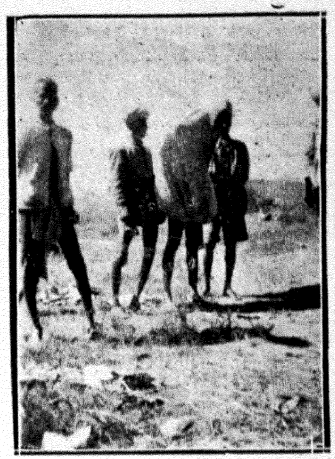
anything for the first time in the day unless he has cleansed his teeth by *dātun* and washed his mouth. It is not at all necessary that he must do it early in the morning. *Dātun* is thus a purificatory sign and therefore it predominantly figures in forming a square. Offerings of *chavali* and *alu* are sacred. The former is taboo to Warlis during the rainy season. They eat it ceremonially on the first day of Diwali. *Rān-alu* (wild roots) is found in abundance and forms their common vegetable.

After returning home, all of them sit in the front yard. The bhagat holds a brass dish with some rice in it. The chief mourner stands in front of him. The medium asks him " *Yechā bhār devalā kāi* ? " Is he (the dead) free from all the troubles of life" ? He continues asking this question with reference to the different parts of the body, from head to foot, viz. "*Māthyāchā bhār devalā kāi* ? *Hātāchā bhār devalā kāi* ? " etc. The meaning is that the dead is burnt and is absolutely free from all the burdens of the body. The bhagat further asks " has the spirit joined the past relatives ? Has the spirit met God" ? To all these, the latter says "yes." The chief mourner makes a sort of a cup out of a wet rice-flour and pours toddy in it. The cup is then placed inside the house with the belief that if at all the spirit visits the house at night, it may drink the toddy and eat the flour. Toddy is then served to those assembled, men and women. Even a poor man has to spend about two rupees for drinks. The members of the family observe mourning for two days. On the third day they take a purificatory bath at a near pool, women bathing at home. The Malhari Warlis make an offering of boiled rice, milk and cow's urine to the dead on the burning ground on the third day.

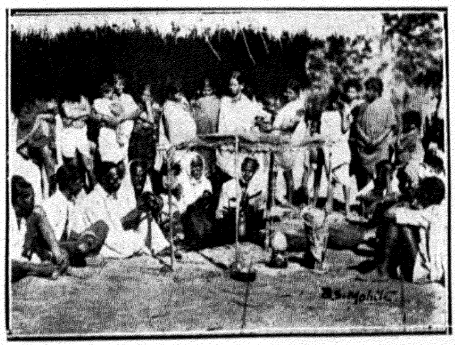
No ceremony is performed on the tenth or eleventh day as do the caste Hindus. The anniversary is observed for the first time during the year preferably in the month of *Mārgashirsha* (December) on any convenient day. The anniversary is not necessarily observed on the completion of the year and it is not repeated. The ceremonies relating to the anniversary begin in the evening and last for the whole of the night and the day after. Male and female relations and inhabitants of the hamlet are invited and served with food and drinks. The cere-



Tiger God.



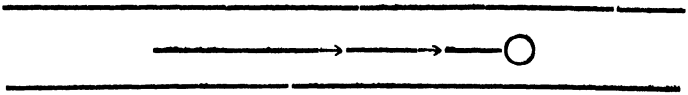
Spirit entering the man with cover.



Death ceremony shed

mony, I attended, had an assembly of not less than a hundred people, including women and children.

A small booth with six bamboo sticks is erected outside the hut in the front yard. The roof of the booth is thatched with thorny bamboo sticks and grass. The ground in the booth is cleansed with cow-dung and flowers and red lead are sprinkled on it. A winnowing fan with a little rice and a coconut in it is kept on the roof of the booth. Two lines of rice are drawn in the *mandap*. In the space between the two lines, a human figure is drawn by means of red lead as an image of the dead.



A nickel coin is placed on the figure and four pice on the rice lines. The figure is then wholly covered with a strip of cloth.



Two more lines are drawn with grain husk outside the *mandap*. A heap of grain husk is made between them. An earthen pot (*lotā*) filled with fresh water is placed on this heap.



One more husk heap is made at a little distance from the lines, on which heap is placed another earthen pot of the same size. Red lead marks are applied to both the pots. A coconut

is placed on the latter pot. The conductor of the ritual–the chief singer–arranges all these things. A string is tied from the roof of the booth to the mouth of the second pot; to this string are tied twelve betel leaves. Small rice cakes, cooked beans (*chawali*), and vegetables are brought in a little basket as an offering to the *pitar* — spirit —. A portion of this offering is placed in a *dron* — a cup made of leaves and fixed in the mouth of the first earthen pot to which no string is tied. Another *dron* is similarly filled and is taken up to the top of the *mandap* and brought down to the ground five times by the chief mourner and then placed in the winnowing fan on the roof of the booth. These offerings are made at midnight. If the deceased is a woman, whether died as a *suvāsini* or a widow, a glass bangle and *kunkum* are offered among other things.

The conductor of this ceremony is called *Kūmadi*. He sings death songs throughout the night to the accompaniment of musical instruments with assistants. The *Kūmadi* himself beats a very handy drum called *ānvad* with his fingers. His assistants play on cymbals. At the end of each song, the singer shouts the name of the deceased which serves as a signal for the women to begin crying loudly. This general weeping lasts for three to four minutes and is almost mechanical. Sometimes this weeping is musical too. Below is a sample of such a musical weeping of a sister for her dead brother :—

" *Mānze lādke bhāvā yere yere,*
Mānzi pāṭh kon rākhil re bhāvā,
Manze gore gore dādā
Mānze bhāvā yenā yenā.
Mānzā bandhu kot gelā re devā,
Ekhlā koṭ gelā re devā,
Mānze mayāle dādā.
Tulā kot nāngu re bhāvā. "

" My dear brother, come come,
Who will protect me now ?
Oh, my fair brother,
My brother, come come,
Where has my brother gone. Oh, God ?
Where has he gone alone, Oh, God ?
Oh, my loving brother,
Where shall I see you ? "

The singers are served with drinks at intervals.

In the morning, a lamp is lit and all the relations of the dead are called forth to touch the string hanging from the roof of the booth. The chief mourner touches the string first and all others stand behind him in a line touching the person in front. The chief mourner then waves a lamp to the booth. This is called *divalyā* — waving of lamp—.

The *Kāmadi* resumes singing. A medium sits in the booth opposite the singers with the earthen pots in front of him and tries to get the spirit of the dead into him. He violently shakes his body and the songsters sing loudly. All the persons eagerly watch the coming of the spirit, — *pitar yene.* — He goes during the afflatus to a place formerly visited or habited by the dead. He finds out something from an unknown spot which was presumed to be placed there by the dead ; by this act of his the people believe that the spirit has already entered his body. He acquaints the people with some incident which occurred in the life time of the dead. Some of the secrets of the dead are also revealed by him. He catches some of the deceased's relations and takes them to a place familiar to the dead. They all cling to him and weep. This goes on for a short time and the medium again sits in the booth. The relations of the dead embrace and hug him one by one, weeping bitterly all the while and sincerely believing that they are meeting the deceased only in a different form. This quietens down after a time.

In the afternoon the pots are taken to a nearby stream or pool and broken there. All take a final purificatory bath. This terminates the anniversary ceremony which is never repeated thereafter.

The anniversary ceremony is called *Kāj* by Warlis in the eastern part of the district. In some places the medium invoking the spirit of the dead during the afflatus, makes a small scratch in the hind portion of his head above the neck with a sword or a knife, and drops a little blood in the earthen pot. This process which is called *doki kāpne* head-cutting is entrusted to a member of a particular clan in the locality. I met one such man at Jawhār, named Sānakrā, who told me that

he had on several occasions to 'cut his head. He did not at all suffer on account of such cuttings, as he said, he experienced a divine touch in it and took pride in doing so. The idea in offering a few drops of blood is that no offering is deemed perfect unless it is culminated by giving the human blood " the elixir of life. "

It may be noted that the offerings of the blood of a cock or a goat which are very common amongst the Warlis are conspicuously absent in the death ceremonies. Human blood is regarded as the greatest offering and sacrifice. It suggests that the tribe perhaps practised human sacrifice in ancient times, the relic of which is still seen in the offering of a few drops of human blood.[1]

In respect of the anniversary ceremony of a dead person, who was only buried and not burnt, a figure is made of rice flour at the end of the ceremony and burnt near a pool or a stream where a final purificatory bath is taken. The idea is that the dead must be ultimately burnt, if not the corpse, at least a figure of rice as its image. When burning the figure some *mantras* are chanted by a medium, some of which are given below :--

" *Alā kālā samadirā mera kelā ālā,*
Tevar thevalyā koryā kanasaryā,
Talha lāvali tulshichi vanā,
Tulshichi gāvatri jivā pindā mokaji,
Mokalā mārag gokaji, goti goti sadāchi,"
"*Kalā kuchirā agni jal, agni bal,*
He girbhās, he petāsu, utim hoijo,
Jambhucha phāsa tāku, jambhucha phāsa dhālajo,
Devāche kāse lāgajo, dharmāche vāte jayjo."
"*Sanksheer ghodā, pāpi hirā, Sāndjal rājmal,*

1. It has been reported in the Bombay Gazetteer, Thana, that the high priest of the tribe hooked a couple of Warlis at the time of the annual fair at Nagar and swung them. (The Bombay Gazatteer, Vol. XIII, Part I, p. 188). This practice is heard no more at present. One of the death songs also shows that a preceptor could be satisfied by nothing less than the human offering for imparting the *vidyā* — the secret instructions to the disciple, (Please vide chapter on Ritual Songs).

Uth Nāranā, iskadevar basanā zālā,
Sankāsan sankāmukh chandarbālācha ālankār
Pahale sankāchi māze guruchi gurudhajo,"
"Lavoochā ghodā pālakhi shelā,
Asūdevā shivartā gosavyāla bhākar keli,
Andaru chandru dev, lampil jāchan yela
Atmehār ṇujmadola thakurbhāyā varkhi nirkhi
Varāpti māze guruchi gurudhajo."

It is difficult to put down a literal interpretation of these charms. Probably a few catch words are culled together. The soul is asked to seek a free path. "Oh ancestor, be you free. Seek protection of God and pursue the path of religion."

Some of the Warlis, in imitation of the caste Hindus, offer part of the meals with little wine, if possible, to a crow in the name of the dead person on the *Sarvapitri Amāvāsyā* day. This is called *Sapalok* by them.

A single ceremony can be performed for more than one person dead during the year. In such ceremony, the expenses are shared by all concerned. But a larger portion has to be borne by one at whose place the ceremony takes place and the *pitar* he worships is regarded the principal one. A poor man who finds it monetarily difficult to perform the funeral ceremony avails himself of an opportunity of doing the same by sharing expenses with somebody else in the village. The funeral ceremony is most devoutly performed by the relations of the deceased. Without such performance the spirit of the deceased does not become free from bondage and the family incurs its wrath in the form of diseases, epidemics or other calamities. The ceremonies are performed within a year from the date of the death and on no account are postponed to the next year. A member of the family wherein a death has taken place cannot marry unless the death anniversary is performed.

The ceremonies described above amply show that ancestor worship is prevalent among the tribe. There is an earnest desire on the part of a Warli to liberate the spirit of his dead relative. A child is named after an ancestor.

It is difficult to gather the tribe's ideas of eschatology. An extract from the conversation entered into by Dr. Wilson and the

Rev. Mitchell on one side and some Warlis round about Umargaum in Haveli Parguna (a Portuguese Dependency) on the other would be of interest in this connection.

"Whether you bury or burn your dead ?"
"We burn them. "
"What interval occurs between the death and the burning ?"
"We allow no interval when the death occurs during the day. When it occurs during the night, we keep the body outside till the break of day."
"Why are you so hasty in the disposal of the dead ?"
"Why should we keep a corpse beside us ?"
"Where does the soul go after death ?"
"How can we answer that question ?"
"When a man dies in sin, whither does he go ?"
"How can we answer that question ?"
"Does he go to a good place or a bad place ?"
"We cannot tell."
"Does he go to heaven or to hell ?"
"He goes to hell."
"What kind of a place is hell ?"
"It is a bad place; there is suffering in it."
"Who are in hell ?"
"We don't know what kind of a town it is."
"Where do good people go after death ?"
"They go to Bhagwān."
"Where is Bhagwān ?"
"We don't know where he is and where he is not."[1]

The tribe's ideas of eschatology do not seem to have advanced to any degree since Dr. Wilson's time, i. e. 1840 A. D. They have only a hazy notion that good people go to Bhagwān after death and bad to hell. "The notions entertained of the future state are faint to a degree which we seldom see exemplified among the Hindus. Though nearly entirely ignorant of the character of the supreme being, they admit his existence "[2]

1. "Evangelization of India" 1849 A. D., pp. 273-274.
2. " Evangelization of India," 1849 A. D., p. 276.

Their funeral rites reveal that dead men are supposed to meet their ancestors and to join with God. The spirit of a dead man is not finally emancipated until the funeral ceremonies are performed during which it comes into the body of the medium. Rarely does one come across a man who has ever tried to think over this. To an average Warli, the dead is gone for ever (*melā to gelā*). A bhagat, however, has his ideas about death. He observes : — " God is great. He sends the dead persons again to this world. Otherwise how can there be new births ? "

Another old bhagat, speaking about death, expressed : — " No one can escape death. It is uncontrollable. The important thing in the body is *Jiva* or *Wārā* (wind). This wind passes away from the body and the man dies. The wind which is the life of the man goes to God *parmesar*. It lives there for some years and again comes in the form of a human being. It is not necessarily re-born in the same family. Some dead persons become ghosts, but they cannot remain in this form for a long time. "

The concept of *jiva* — life force — expressed above is similar to that entertained by the Kātkaris.[1] The bhagats are the spokesmen of the tribe. The privilege of independent thinking is almost denied to average Warli. In important matters, the ideas of the tribe are, therefore, influenced by the bhaghats.

Some of the death psalms reveal ideas which are quite high and philosophic. Following are the few ideas culled from the different psalms :—

" The soul has no death ; only the body dies. (*Jivālā maran nāhi, kāy konute*). This body (chest) is the home of life (soul). As a fruit is plucked from the tree, so is life plucked from the body. This soul gives up its outer form like a snake giving up its outer skin. Death is inevitable. God giveth and He taketh. (*Paramesar detā na toch netā*). A man should neither fear nor hate death. This circle of life and death is eternally going on. Body is like a lac-dye melting away by fire. It is like a full-moon setting all of a sudden and like a plantain stalk breaking in the middle. An earthen pot can last

1. Abbott : " Keys of Power, " pp. 2-3.

at least for a few days, but none can predict how long the body can live. "

Some of the death songs seem to have been influenced by Hindu mythology. There is a song, giving a Warli version of the death of Pandu. In one song the nature gods like Sun, Moon, Clouds, Rain, and Lightning, etc., are described as exempted from the death list, as they have to keep the cycle of the worldly existence ever moving.

None of the tribal deities, like Nārandev, Hirvā, or Wāghayā has been associated with death. They can only trouble them (people), but they cannot kill them. After the death, a man does not go to Wāghayā, as he lives in the jungle. He goes to Bhagwan or Paramesar. This vague belief in the supreme being seems to have been borrowed from the Hindus.

CHAPTER VII.

RITUAL SONGS AND MYTHOLOGY.

The ceremonies of the Warlis always abound with elaborate rituals which are scrupulously performed by the people. Ceremonies regarding marriage, birth and death are full of such rituals; so is the propitiation of the different tribal deities. The rituals can be broadly divided into two categories; those in which the songs form a prominent feature and others which are devoid of them. The rituals connected with the ceremony of marriage, funeral rites and agriculture fall in the first category. Propitiation of the tribal deities like Hirvā or Wāghayā and rites in connection with birth ceremonies are those in which songs are not sung. It may be noted that on an occasion like the marriage ceremony, or the celebration of Nāran Dev, women sing a few songs of a general nature which also have an indirect bearing on the respective rite, and may be considered to be a part of the ritual. These songs are however the soul of the ceremonies. The duty of reciting the ritual songs at the time of marriage is entrusted to a *dhavaleri*. The songs relating to the death anniversary are chanted by a *kāmdi* a singer who is well versed in this profession. These ritual songs sometimes involve mythological stories relating to the respective performances in a direct or indirect way. Along with the fanciful narration, the composers occasionally dwell on certain generalizations which by the way exemplify the tribal ideas and beliefs. The short songs usually mention the names of the Warli gods and it is very rare that one comes across a song which is exclusively in praise of one deity alone.

One outstanding feature of the ritual songs is that one feels the vague but persistent influence of Hindu thought and mythology on them. The tribe's contact with Hindu society for generations past is responsible for such an influence. It is therefore likely that one might be misled from such scattered references to interpret their songs as reflecting their life, for the life depicted in the songs is not necessarily the life lived. The songs rather depict their aspirations. With this caution their songs would

help us to a certain extent to understand their culture. It may be noted in passing that as all the important occasions in the life of a Warli are connected with ceremonials and rituals, the songs are mainly ritualistic with the result that the tribe has a very meagre stock of the songs of general nature.

(i) The marriage songs :—The marriage songs are very simple in construction containing four to five words in a line which is split up into two. No poetic skill is visible in the composition and they are chanted in one tune which is often monotonous. Words are either shortened or lengthened at convenience to keep up the rhythm. The *dhavaleri* sings and two other women assist her either by repeating the same line or by making a long 'O' sound.

An attempt is made to give the songs in substance, if long and verbatim if comparatively short, care being taken not to mar the spirit of the song in either case. A few remarks by way of comment are also added at the end of each song wherever such remarks are deemed necessary.

The ritual songs of the *dhavaleri* in connection with marriage have a greater value and respect attached to them than those sung by women in general. Tho *dhavaleri's* songs touch almost all the different stages of marriage from betrothal to marriage proper and then to pregnancy and delivery, the natural sequence of marriage according to Warli notions.

The Song of Betrothal :— "*Nāran Barambhā* and the goddess *Himāi* started on a mission to select a bride. Himai was well dressed. She had put on silken garments and golden ornaments on her hands and in her hair. She had applied lines of *kunkum* to her forehead and collyrium to her eyes. They went to the country of *Parabhās* (a higher caste among the Hindus) in search of a bride. There they saw many *Parbhu* girls. Nārandev was pleased to see one girl in particular, and expressed his willingness to select her as a bride. But Himai did not approve of his selection saying that the girl did not possess good eyesight and that her lips were disproportionate.

"They then proceeded to the country of Brahmans. Nārandev was pleased to see the Brahman girls and was about to select

one. But Himai again opposed him on the grounds that the girl was lame and her hands were too slender.

"They went on further to the country of the peasants (Kunbis) where they saw the simple peasant girls. Naran again liked the girls and the goddess too this time approved of his choice. So they went to the peasant's house and called him out. "What brings you here"? Asked the peasant. The pair told him that they had come for the betrothal of his daughter. The peasant invited his relations and the God fetched *mahura* wine which they all drank and settled the betrothal.

"The pair returned to their palace and commenced the marriage preparations. They invited God *Ganoba* as the musician for the marriage. They also invited *Garjāi* (Girijā) to act as the priestess. They invited *Vajrāi* and other goddesses to take part in the ceremony as *suvāsinis*.

"The goddesses attended the marriage, bedecked with new dresses and ornaments. Their saris were silken and the bodices were bordered with silver thread. They put on golden rings in the fingers of their feet and golden necklaces round the necks. They applied *kunkum* lines to the forehead and put red-lead in the parting of the hair."

The simple reason why Nārandev liked Brahman and Prabhu girls was that they were fair. But they would be of no use to a Warli, especially in the hard life he leads. The woman Himāi refused such fair and tender but useless girls and purposely selected a peasant girl, stout and sturdy and in every way helpful to her husband. The song also very cleverly hints that to man beauty is the only consideration in selecting a bride but a woman considers other factors as well.

The Brahmanic influence is visible in this song inasmuch as two of the Hindu deities viz., Ganesh and Girija are referred to. It would be of interest to note that these two are the son and consort of Siva who is known to Warlis as Isar. Nārandev is a tribal god but never styled as Naran Barambha elsewhere. Perhaps *Barambhā* may be the corrupt of the Hindu *Brahmā*. Himāi is the tribal goddess and Vajrāi is a local goddess in the Thana district in whose honour a big fair is held annually at Vajreshwari.

As at other Hindu marriages, Warlis require music, the priest and the *Suvāsinis* for their marriages. It would be interesting to note the description of the women's dress in the song. It is the picture of the ideal dress of a high caste Hindu woman in olden times and not of a Warli woman. The *kunkum* of the goddesses is not a round mark but lines—*chiri*. It may be noted here that Warli women apply, if at all, a round mark of *kunkum* and not a long line.[1] The practice of filling in the parting of hair with red-lead is followed by Warli women on ceremonial occasions like the marriage. No mention is made about the bridegroom; the song is sung in honour of every bridegroom.

The song of Umbar :—(at the time of cutting a twig of *Umbar* tree.)

"*Telubāi*[2] was dead
On that (spot) was born an *Umbar*
Umbar came out of the earth
Umbar came out of its mouth (seed)
Umbar got two (tender) leaves
Umbar began to grow
It rained on it
With the breeze of the wind it grew
It got four leaves
It got eight leaves
One branch went to the east
and another to the west
One spread in the northern direction
From there came God *Isar*
Also came *Gangā Gauri*
Ganga Gauri began to speak
This *Umbar* is very fine
This Umbar for the god's marriage
(They) brought pure threads
Wound round the eastern twig
Isar dev cut it
Ganga Gauri caught it."

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1 The bride has to apply a line of *Kunkum*.

2 A sort of insect in a lake.

The *dhavaleri* sings this song when the *Umbar* twig is being cut. The *Umbar* is sacred to the Warlis because it is required for the marriage ceremony. The song recites the evolution of the growth of this tree. God *Isar* and *Ganga Gauri* who was referred to as *Garjāi* in the previous song are mentioned in this song also. But here is a combination of *Gangā* (who might have been misconstrued by the Warlis as also a wife of Siva) and *Gauri*. In the Warli marriage, the husband cuts the twig of the tree and the wife catches it.

The song of Ornaments :—

" The god (bridegroom) bathed there
What bridegroom went from this side ?
From this side went Rāmāji, the bridegroom.
He was looking from a distance
Why did you come, boy ?
So they asked him.
I have come for ornaments
To wear them for five days and return
I am borrowing them to be returned
To be returned after five days.
Put on the ornaments, put on the ornaments
The ornaments were put on
Put on the ornaments for his fingers
Put on the ornaments for his knees
For his hands and waist
For his chest, head and face
Put on the ornaments for all parts of the body.
Made of flesh and blood
Of drawbacks and defects, "

The *dhavaleri* sings this song when the bridegroom takes bath and sits for the *dev* ceremony. It may be remembered that for the marriage ceremony the bridegroom generally puts on a silver ring in his finger and a silver chain round his waist. Usually he has to borrow them from other tribesman or from some caste Hindus. The first half of the song refers to this borrowing and the latter describes the various parts of the body on which the ornaments are ideally to be put on.

The Coronet Song :—

" Ask, O brother ask ;
You be ever asking.
I shall give you, O brother a dhoti for the waist
I don't want the dhoti, it will be torn away.
I shall give you, brother, the waist chain
That too I don't accept ; it will be broken
Shall I give you the bracelets for the wrists ?
These bracelets will soon be broken
Will you like to have a coat for your body ?
The coat too will be torn off
How about the bracelets for your arms ?
Would they not be broken ?
" And the ear-rings (*kudi*) ?
Would they not meet with the same fate as the bracelets ?
Then surely you would be pleased to have the turban
Oh, those too would not be lasting
I shall then give you the stores of grain
But the stores of grain will be exhausted
Then should I give you hard cash ?
But that would be expended
If so, the sheds full of cows would serve your purpose
The cows in the shed will die
I will give you a golden bride. "

This song is an imaginary conversation between the bridegroom and his elder brother. The latter wants to satisfy the bridegroom by offering him some presents. But all the presents suggested by him are refused by the bridegroom on one ground or the other. Incidentally this song gives us an idea of how far the Warli conception in regard to male clothes and ornaments can go. As for the clothes, the dhoti, the coat and the turban for the head exhaust their stock. Among the ornaments are the silver chain (*todā*) for the waist, bracelets (*wāle*) for the wrists, bracelets (*kadi*) for the arms and the ear-rings (*kudi*). But neither the clothes nor the ornaments are good presents in that they are not lasting and that Warlis can do without them. Failing all these, the Warli mind would be naturally turned to

food. But that can be exhausted and money can be spent. Cow is held valuable above all them, but she too dies. The last proposal is the offer of a bride which at once satisfies the bride-groom. This song explains in unambiguous terms their attitude towards life. Nothing makes life so perfect as the bride — the wife — the gift of gifts.

The Marriage Song :—

"God *Nāran Barambhā* was called for the marriage ceremony and was asked to make all arrangements regarding the ceremony. He invited God *Ganobā* as the musician for the marriage and Goddess *Garjāi* as the *dhavaleri*. Nārandev also invited *Chāndobā* — the moon-god — and the goddesses including *Kālkā*, *Bhārjāi*, *Gangāgauri*, *Mahālakhmi*, *Hāthin* — the elephant goddess, and *Tivrāi*.[1] Nāran asked God *Hirobā* (Hirvā) to get Brahmans for the marriage. He went to many places in search of Brahmans and at last saw one from whom he got the sacred books. The last requirement for the marriage was a horse. God *Hirvā* went to a forest for it but could not get one there. He saw a horse in the milky lake. He caught it, washed it with milk and harnessed it with silken garment.

"The bridegroom (*Vara-rājā*) too began to put on the nuptial dress. He had shoes on his feet, a dhoti round his waist, a coat on his body and a cloth turban on the head. He took a golden whip in his hand, bowed to the Sun and the Moon and placed his foot in the stirrup. He thus rode the horse and started for the bride's place. They all arrived at the golden shed. The Brahman took out the books and began to read them. The Brahman completed one *ghadi* (one *ghatikā* 24 minutes). He went on reading four and eight *ghadis*. But sixteen *ghadis* are required for the marriage. The Brahman spoke the word 'ready' and God *Ganobā* immediately played upon the musical instrument".

We can gather from this song that the bridegroom with a special dress goes to the bride's place on horse back. A Brahman and his books are required for the performance of the marriage. A mention is also made of *ghatikās* and the word 'ready' (*sāvadh*) in the last part of the song.

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1 A tree growing in the vicinity of sea water.

But the Warli marriage in reality satisfies none of these requirements. There is no horse in the bridal procession. The Brahman has no place and the *mangalāshtakas* the eight auspicious stanzas are not chanted. They neither insist on any *muhurt* or an auspicious moment nor use the *ghatikas*. The composers of the song are thus clearly influenced by the customs of the caste Hindus. It is not the picture of their marriage, but one of the caste Hindus. It is natural that they have not glorified the poor style of their marriage festival, but adopted an ideal like one narrated in this song.

In the Thana District Gazetteer, the version of this song is given as follows :—

" Go and call someone of the gods,
Go and call *Kansari* mother
Kansari mother, seated on a riding horse,
Be pleased to come to the wedding door,
The wedding day has begun
The wedding hour is at hand.
Go and call *Dhartari* mother.
Be pleased to come to the wedding door
The wedding day has begun.
Go and call the child of *Kansari*
Be pleased to sit on your purple steed
Be pleased to come to the wedding door
The wedding day has begun
The day for holding the wedding.
Go and call the God Brahma
Go and call the God Brahma
Oh Brahman God on a riding horse,
Be pleased to come to the wedding door,
The Brahman has sat on his purple steed,
He holds his bundle of holy books.
He grasps in his hand the brazen pot,
The Brahman has entered the wedding hall
He has tied his horse at the Chamber door,
He has opened his bundle of holy books,
The Brahman reads from his store of books
The *malya* fish, the skin of the shrimp

The black beads and the white cup,
The Brahman calls 'be ready'
The Brahman calls 'blessed day." [1]

The Song of Pregnancy and Delivery :—

" The gods assembled to dig wells. They invited *Tikam dev* (pickaxe), but there was no trace of water in the well. *Surang dev*[2] was then invited but to no purpose. There was one god *Tapesar* (of penance). He was then called for. *Tapesar* sat in the well and practised penance for twelve years. He got sweat on his head. A drop of sweat gradually descended from his head to the chest, waist, knee, toe and finally to the nail from where it dropped into the well. Immediately all the wells and lakes were filled with water.

"In the lake was born the lotus plant. The *Bhogesār*, the lord of enjoyment, who was lying on the cot of gold in his palace saw the *Poynār* — the lotus plant in the lake. He came to the spot running, but the *poyani* hid herself in the lake. The god got angry and returned to his palace. The lotus plant was, however, in the lake. *Bhogesar* again rushed to her. He embraced her and enjoyed her. The lady plant was pregnant since the semen went into her stomach.[3] Her pregnancy developed and when she completed nine months, she asked her husband to get a midwife for her. He went to a midwife who brought with her a bamboo bottle and *boru* chips. She bowed to Sun and Moon, took oil in her palm and massaged the woman's abdomen A babe was then born."

The *dhavaleri* sings this song after the celebration of the marriage. It relates to pregnancy and delivery, the natural consequence of marriage according to the Warli notions. The idea is poetically expressed. The lotus plant *poyani* was enjoyed by *Bhogesar* the lord of enjoyment. To bring in *poyani* in the song, an account is given about its birth in the first part of the song, which tells how gods created water. *Tikam* and *Surang*, the instruments for digging and blasting respectively, are deified.

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1. Bombay, Gazetteer, Thana, Vol. XIII, Part I, p. 186.
2. *Surung* is a Marathi word for the blasting operation with which rocks are blasted.
3. *Yecha poti ras gela.*

Tapesar performed penance and water was created out of the drop of his sweat. Here again a natural phenomenon is expressed in a figurative language. Penance or *tapas* is always associated with heat-power. Thus the rain comes only after the hot season.

The song also gives a very clear idea of the conception of a woman. The lady plant was enjoyed by *Bhogesar* whose semen entered her abdomen and she conceived. The midwife comes with a bamboo bottle with oil and *boru* chips. It may be remembered that the *boru* chip is an implement used by the midwife to cut the naval cord of the babe.

Besides the songs of the *dhavaleri* other women also sing at the marriage ceremony. The songs are sung by two women, line by line and others repeat the lines in chorus. These songs are comparatively short compositions, but their lines are long and the ending sound of each line is considerably extended by the singers.

The song reproduced below is supposed to be sung by a young woman who is blaming her fate for getting a hot-tempered husband and all her new relations unfriendly to her. She says, "Cursed be my fate that I got a mother-in-law who is nothing but harsh and exacting. I am unfortunate to have a father-in-law who is a debtor. My elder brother-in-law is a vagabond and the younger one is fashionable and lastly my husband is hot-tempered".

Another song of this kind in which a young woman asks her young female friend what sort of a husband she would like to have. The other is pining for a good match. One asks, "Oh Sitabai, tell me whatever you want, please tell me." The other replies, "There is no good match. I want a husband who wears a cap, a husband who wears a shirt, one who puts on a dhoti and one who has shoes on his feet."

The young woman's ideal of a perfect man is not one dressed like a Warli, but one who is just like a high caste Hindu from top to toe. The last two songs seem to be of a comparatively recent origin. The tune in which they are sung is different from the popular Warli tunes. It is more in consonance with that of the popular fishermen songs. The mention of

the word Sitabai in the second song also suggests a recent origin as this name is not found among the Warlis.

There is a third song in which it is described that two girl friends are working in the fields and that one complains that she cannot work, to which other promises that she would give her some presents if she works. "Oh friend, I cannot construct these bunds in the field." "Don't worry. I will take you to the grove of *jodvis*—the toe rings, and give you some of them." "No, but I cannot work." "I will take you to the grove of *cholis* bodices, and give you a silken bodice of silken colour. I will take you to the grove of *sadis* and give you a silken *sadi* of silken colour."

Another set of songs can be classified as agricultural. In fact there is more of gardening described in them, though gardening is not the Warlis' occupation. Here is a song which describes a water-wheel and a garden plot. "The bullock is yoked to the water-wheel which makes a 'kun kun' sound, and the water goes to the garden. Let the water of the wheel come to the garden of betel vines; let the betel leaves be taken to the marriage ceremony of God. Let the water of the wheel come to the grove of coconut trees; let the coconuts be used in the marriage ceremony of God. Let the water come to the plot of turmeric; let the turmeric be utilized for the marriage ceremony of God."

It may be remembered that the Warlis are not horticulturists. But the three things, betel leaves, coconut and turmeric are essential for the marriage ceremony. The turmeric is very liberally applied to the bride and the bridegroom; while the other two viz., coconuts and betel leaves are required for almost all the rituals performed by them.

Here is another song of a similar nature :—

"What is planted in this garden?
There are coconut trees in this garden
This is the garden of God *Isar*.
What is planted in this garden?
There is the betel vine plantation in this garden
The betel leaves are useful for the *dev* ceremony.
What is planted in this garden?

There are areca-nut trees here
The nuts are required for the *dev* ceremony."

Another song of this type is as follows :—

"Near the roots of the *Umbar* tree
Wells are dug up.
Of these wells, water is black and blue
The weary bird drinks that water,
After drinking it, it becomes refreshed
It flies and sits on the coconut tree
Coconut branch, why was it cut" ?

Umbar is a sacred tree to the Warlis. They believe that sweet water is available at its root if ground is dug close by.

The song given below is about a bride who asks her maternal uncle to pay for the ornaments she wants for the marriage ceremony :—

"Have a pair of toe-rings for me
Oh maternal uncle pay for them.
You will get me a pair of bodices
Pay for them, Oh maternal uncle.
You will have a spangle[1] for me
Māmā, pay for it."

This song shows that the maternal uncle has to give some presents to his niece—the bride at the time of her marriage.

There is a song which describes a fair :—

"We went to the fair, the home of gods,
The cart-loads of saris were brought there
Carts full of finger-rings came there.
There came carts full of bodices,
There were cart-loads of black bead necklaces,
And carts of marriage coronets, turmeric,
Bracelets and cotton blankets."

They regard a fair as the abode of gods. All the things mentioned in the song are either the different ornaments or clothes. Poor as they are, their ornaments are very few. Practically the same names are repeated in another song with a different background.

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1. *Tilak-chāndolā.*

"What is the noise being heard from the hill?
They are filling the boxes with finger-rings for me.
What noise is coming from the hill?
Boxes are being filled with saris for me.
They are filling the boxes with bodices
Black-bead necklaces and *dāl* (split pulse) for me."

A similar idea is again expressed in another song with a different setting :—

"Isar dev is keeping a watch on this way
Let our bags of turmeric come this way.
Let our bags of nuts come this way.
So also our bags of saris, black-bead necklaces
And marriage coronets come this way."

The following is a song in which a girl is said to have gone in person to search a bridegroom for herself.

"Mother, I went to the town of Chichani[1]
Father, I had been to Chichani town
I wandered all throughout Chichani
But a partner for life was not available."

Sometimes a Warli girl is given a latitude in selecting a husband for herself, especially when she is the only daughter of her parents.

The dialect of the *Dāvar* Warlis is influenced by Gujarati. Sometimes the whole song is composed in Gujarati. It is likely that such songs might have been borrowed from the Dublas and the Dhodias, the Gujarati speaking neighbouring tribes. Here is one Gujarati song :—

"My own brother is marrying
Let us go to see my brother
The marriage ceremony of my brother is being performed
Let us go to see the marriage booth
They are performing the rite in honour of *Hiroji*
Let us go to see my brother."

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1. A coastal village in Dahanu Taluka.

Another Gujarati composition has apparently no relevancy to the marriage ceremony :—

"Oh brother-in-law, the goats are grazing by the side of a well.
Oh sister's husband, the girl is joking with me.
The boy is cutting jokes, Oh sister's husband.
Even this old man and the old woman are joking."

It may be seen from the above songs that the Warlis' power of imagination is too limited. Practically the same things are repeated over and again that one gets tired of hearing them. Monotony is increased by the fact that there are very few changes in the tune. But one occasionally sees a flight of poetic imagination in the songs. I venture to suggest that the song reproduced below is poetic. It runs as follows :—

"On the skirts of the hill, the flowers are blossomed.
On the skirts of the town, are flowers blossomed.
Out of the blossoming of the flowers, comes the moon-shine.
In this moon-shine *Kānudev* is playing.
In this moon-shine is *Nārandev* walking."

The moon rises over the hill or at the outskirt of the village It is quite natural for a Warli poet to imagine that the moon is a flower blossoming and the shining pleasant light spreads out of this blossoming. The composer has scrupulously avoided naming the word 'moon' in this song; the word for moon-shine is *chāndanā*.

Another couplet is equally poetic :—A mother-in-law says, "My son-in-law is the moon of the full-moon day." To this another replies, "My daughter-in-law is the basil (*tulas*) in the front yard." These similes are truly poetic.

(ii) Songs at the Performance of Nāran Dev Ceremony:— The ritual songs at the time of the performance of Nāran Dev ceremony are not many. The conductor himself, usually a bhagat, sings a few songs unaccompanied by any musical instruments. Young men and women spend the night in dancing and singing. It is not necessary that the songs of the young folk should be relevant to the occasion, *i. e.* bearing on the prowess of the deity worshipped.



Clap dance



A pose in dancing.



Circle dance.

The following is one of the songs which describes the assemblies held by various gods, Nāran Dev managing everything:—

"An assembly is held at the palace of mother *Kānu.*
But Nāran Dev is managing everything.
In the front yard of *Kansāri* is held an assembly.
But Nāran Dev is doing everything.
An assembly is held at the palace of *Tupesar.*
An assembly is held at the palace of *Mahādev.*
But Nāran Dev is the manager there.
Darbārs (assemblies) were held at
The palaces of *Surya Nārāyan*, the *Moon-Sun.*
Indru Dev, *Gokul* and *Noukul* (Nakul)
Shahidev (Sahadev) and *Bhiwā-Balyā* (Bhim)
But Nāran Dev managed them." (1)
"Oh, Nāran Dev, you went to beg,
But mother Earth was sitting,
Mother Corn was dressing.
Nāran Dev, you went to beg,
But Chandarkalā was standing near the pillar;
Nāran Dev is the bridegroom,
Haldāi[1] the married woman[2],
Lakhmāpat (Laxmi) the bride,
And the families of Gods were the guests" (2)
"Nāran Dev is the parent, we, your children, cling to shoulders,
Lakhmāpat, the mother, we your children, cling to waist,
Girjāi, the mother, we children cling to your waist.
Mother Kansāri, we children cling to your breasts." (3)

The following is one more song in honour of the tribal gods:-

"Whose assemby is this ?
A lamp of butter is burning
This assembly of gold.
Whose assembly is this ?
This is the assembly of God Hirobā,
It is the assembly of Himāi,

1. Deity Turmeric.
2. Suvāsini.

Chedobā's assembly is this,
This is the assembly of God Nāran." (4)
" I bow to thee Oh God,
Kolum is the great rice-corn, cut when tall,
Corn is the mother and cow." (5)
" You go by the higher road,
I take the lower road;
You go by the eastern road,
I take the western road." (6)
" The son of a farmer, clever indeed,
folded thirty-two betel leaves." (7)
" In the milky lake was born a rice plant,
That plant is without root or stalk;" (8)
" The *chimbli* bird lives in the bamboo thorns
And eats the same thorn,
It has neither hand nor feet, nose nor eye." (9)
" *Kansāri* wore a sādi and accompanied the earth,
Oh Nāran Dev, your woman Gangā went naked,
On the way she wore a sādi,
And the Earth accompanied." (10)
" Oh God, mother the protection,
father feeds with milk,
Father feeds with milk,
how can the child grow ? " (11)
" Mother is a copper pipe
From there was born a silver babe
And it grew a golden child,
God, first was born the child
But its mother was born afterwards. " (12)
" (You) plucked the sandal flower,
gathered a fruit for me.
The child's flower is in the braided hair." (13)
" Wings grow, why is Gangā flowing ?
But the *Pūravat* (God of the mountain) is bathing.
In the abode of Isar *Kānth*[1] and string are played
But God *Pūravat* is dancing all over.

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1. A kind of small drum shaped like an hour-glass (Indian *damaru*) beaten by a knot of string.

Isar's daughter became a mother
But the cradles are tied to the wooden post." (14)
" Seven hundred women went for water
All women filled (pots), the lake dried up" (15)
" Did you see the woman of the world?
She came down to the Earth,
No relations, no family, God, I have no brothers.
Parents deported me." (16)
" God Peacock, do not spoil the water
The lake is (nearly) dried;
God Peacock, why are you standing in the way?
But the hunter has encircled the hill." (17)
" High as the sky and broad as the earth
The earth was the step,
God drank the (water of the) sea." (18)
" In twelve years the tree blossoms, what is its name?" (19)
" The woman of the sky descended to the nether world,
But keep a watch on the water." (20)
" *Kānhā* went to play and lost the ball
Went to see *Salad*,[1] *Salad* was not there."
" Is it too far brother? Come let us go,
But the braided hair loosened on the way,
where shall I tie it?
She took meals at her brother's and followed him
There is too much of mud, brother, where shall I sit?"
Chandar Surya (Sun) started and came at noon,
Chandar Surya is not pure, but *Nāran Dev* is pure."
" In the last fortnight the water exhausted,
But how can we graze (the cattle)?
And how can we allow them to starve?"
" At last planted a tree, where the roots?
But wild fruit were seen at Trimbak."
" Oh, in the jungles deer, in the jungles,
We cannot get down, take the deer back."
" The sea is black and Nāran is white
But their meeting place was a wave."

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1. A basket in which images of gods are kept.

" Sang twelve meditations (songs), but never heard,
We went to the father-in-law, not heard."
" Take the pot for water, I would not go alone,
It is raining on the skirts of the hill."
" Saw a deer grazing in the forest
On the head was a golden horn."
" Pearl fell in the well, Oh, *Dasmāi*,[1]
"My younger brother-in-law, please find out my pearl."
The barren woman wanders alone in the forest
The barren woman is not clever
But a woman with children is clever."

These songs do not possess any continuity as regards a theme. They seem to be the collections of different couplets. The meaning too in many places is quite obscure. Some couplets are more or less of the nature of puzzles, the solution of which is expected from the listener. "What is the tree which blossoms once in twelve years" ? asks the singer. The answer to this is tiger ; since it is believed a tigress bears once in twelve years. References to the object of worship, Nāran Dev, are also very few. The dance of *Isar* who is also referred to as *Pārvat*, the god of mountain in the fourteenth song may be a faint reference to the famous *Tāndava* dance of Siva.

Young men and women sing general songs after the Dev ceremony in honour of Nāran is performed. These songs are usually short pieces. Generally men sing first and women repeat the line.

Who let the water run to the field of rice-corn ?
Great is the God Hirvā ; he let the water.
Who let the water to the betel vine grove ?
Great is the goddess Himāi ; she did it.
Who watered the grove of garlic ?
That Chedobā is a great God ; he did it.
Who brought water to the grove of kumkum ?
Great is the God Nāran ; He did it ." (1)

1. A female name.

"The daughter of the black cobra
Forgot her silver rings
The daughter of the black cobra
Forgot her sari
She forgot her bodice
She forgot her bangles
And forgot her necklace." (2)

"In the grove of reeds came a hog
And passed through breaking the reeds.
In the grove of reeds came a deer
And broke the reeds.
A sambhar entered the grove
And broke the reeds." (3)

"On the raised spot is the bamboo stalk
How is it moving ?
Really, friend Vālyā, your wife
How she moves being sleepy :
Gibhlyā, your wife
How she swings being sleepy" : (4)

Sometimes the songs are of a proverbial nature like one given below :—

"The great are worthless
The poor are really good
Raise a hut in the yard." (5)

The following song is about a herb, an effective medicine for the conception of a woman :—

"On the mountain of high peaks
Who has cleared my way ?
By whom was the way cleared ?
By the son of the bhagat
The bhagat's son cleared
To take out the herbs
To give to my sister-in-law
To give them to her
(so that) she may bear children." (6)

In the following song the husband asks his wife to attend the marriage ceremony. The wife, however, refuses :—

" On the way is a bush of *āthroni*[1]
Come, let us attend the wedding ceremony.
On the way is a bush of *karvandi*[1]
Come let us go to the marriage ceremony.
My bodice is torn
I would not come for the wedding.
My sari is torn
I shall not attend the wedding." (7)

(iii) **Funeral songs** :—The funeral ceremony begins with a general song of salutations by the *kāmḍi*, the chief singer with his two assistants.

" Salutations to Sun and Moon
To the Lord of Clouds
To all the creatures in the world
To the god of toddy and the god of *mādi*
To the Lord of Thunder and the Lord of Lightning
Bow down to the God of Strength
Bow down to Lankā Rām
And to the Lord of Happiness
Our salutations go on
They move towards the Banyan tree
Towards the monkeys in the forest
The salutations move on to the seas
And to the lands near the sea
We bow down to the waves of the sea
And to the *bhingār* fish in it
The salutations went towards the Earth
Bow down to the Lord of Time
And to the Lord of Sinking (*Budnāk*)
Salutations to the Megh Rāj
To four continents of the world
To five mountains and five Pāṇḍavas
To God *Harmān* (Hanuman)

1, A kind of thorny bush.

The Salutations move towards the white city
Bow down to Mahadeo
And Gangā-Gauri, mother Girja
To mother Earth and mother Corn
To lady herb (*Vansi*) and to the village Bhagat
I bow to this assembly
I am an ignorant child
Oh, my Raghu Kulambyā (the name of the deceased)".

This song is by way of an apology of the singers. They bow down to various gods asking their favour lest the singers may commit some mistakes. There is no consistency in the order in which the names of various gods are pronounced. Probably the names are announced as the *Kāmdi* remembers them. It may be noteworthy to see that the tribal Gods are omitted from the list of salutations. At the end of the song, the *Kāmdi* also mentions the name of the deceased whose anniversary is performed.

Death of Pandu :—"Goddess Earth began to cry. All the great gods came running to know why Earth was weeping. 'What are your sorrows and miseries' "? ; asked the gods ; "From misery we shall take you to happiness." The Earth replied. "This world has been a great burden to me. Let some creatures from this Earth go and let some remain here. I cannot bear this huge burden." It is for this reason that a lac and a quarter of creatures pass away by night, but the same number is born every night.

" White papers, pen and ink were brought. The gods began to prepare a list of those who were to be made mortal. The Sun and the Moon came there and pleaded that they should be excluded from the death list; " We are not afraid of death, " said they. "If I am dead who will make the day over the four worlds" ? asked the Sun ; " And who will make light at night ?' retorted the Moon. "I will shine for a fortnight every month." The two were, therefore, dropped from the list since they were useful.

"*Sukesar*—Lord of Happiness—pleaded that no one will give happiness to the world in his absence. He must not be made

mortal. The Wind pleaded, " Who will blow over the world"? *Dhagesar* the Lord of Clouds was included in the death list, but who would then create clouds in the sky ? *Gājesar* the Lord of Thundering and *Vijesar* the Lord of Lightning also do valuable work. The Rain-god was on the death list; but who will then rain in the world ? All the creatures including the cattle and small insects and ants will die for lack of water. Therefore, he was made immortal. *Thāpesar*, the Lord of building, *Lipesar* the Lord of plastering, *Khachesar* the Lord of pits, the twelve seas and thirty crores and nine lacs of gods were all useful and therefore, saved from death.

" But *Pandu dev* was of no use and he must die. His nails grew as large as a span, the hair on his body grew like grass, his stomach as big as a hill, his ears as broad as a winnowing fan and the hair on his head as wild as a rope. *Pandu* got nervous with the idea of death and he began to flee away to avoid death. He hid himself under the ground, but he was unearthed. He hid in the forest and in the sky, but to no purpose. God *Isar* was his brother-in-law and *Gangā-Gauri* was his sister. *Pandu* went to them as their guest and was given a warm reception. But he wept and said, " I am under the shadow of death. Please look after my children after my death."

" *Pandu* then went beyond the seven seas of sweet water and seven of saline water and hid there.

"His seven children wandered in search of him through the fields, the threshing floor, the forest and the market places; but could not trace their father. At last they went towards the sea. There was an ascetic under a banyan tree, who gave them plums to eat. After eating the plums they planted the seeds; the seeds grew into fine trees. They blossomed seven times, but only at the eighth time the blossoming produced fruit. All the plums fell on the ground when quite raw; only one ripened. All the six brothers walked over this plum on the ground, but only the youngest one picked it up. They did not know what fruit it was, but the youngest alone knew that it was a plum. They decided to take it to their father whose whereabouts were told to them by the ascetic. They prepared gruel and bread for their father. Pandu partook of the food, but his death was in

that plum. No sooner did he smell the plum than he felt nervous and succumbed to it; the children began to weep. The body was washed ashore. Isar and Gauri did not know that Pandu was dead till they saw his corpse on the sea-shore. Isar performed the cremation."

The mythological influence on this song is clearly perceptible. The death of Pandu was one of the mysterious deaths in Hindu mythology. Hence Pandu's death might have been chosen for composition. Various gods, almost nature gods, as one finds in the RigVeda like the Sun, Moon, Rain, Clouds, Seas etc. are excluded from the death list as they are very useful. Again there is a reference to the plum and death centered in it. It reminds one of the mythological story of Takshaka and King Parikshita, the king who met his death through the plum. One idea which is constantly running throughout this song is that death is inevitable to us mortals. Pandu tried all means to avoid it. He even hid himself beyond the fourteen seas, but the all-powerful death over-powered him. The story brings out a strong moral to the Warlis on an occasion like the funeral ceremony that one cannot escape the icy hands of death.

Reconstruction of the Earth :—"Once the Earth sank down Men, animals, birds and trees all disappeared. Not a sound was heard anywhere and dreadful calm prevailed everywhere. The gods assembled and pondered over the problem of reconstructing the Earth. The most essential thing required for reconstructing the Earth was earth (*māti*). Only the gadfly possessed earth-balls. Nārandev caught hold of her and asked her to give earth-balls. "Let me off!" bawled the gadfly; "I will supply you with whatever earth you want[1]."

"After having secured earth, Nāran went to the stone-world to get stones. He caught the robe of the Lady-stone. She at once agreed to give him as many stones as he wanted. He then let her off.

"There was one *Bhivadā Tākār* (stone maker) who possessed the pillars of the Earth. *Chavdā* carpenter had the cross-beams and *Dhanji* black-smith had iron nails. All these were invited, but the gods were confronted with one big question, "Who will now

1. The gadfly builds her nest with small earth-balls.

shape the Earth"? All the gods were requested to shoulder this responsibility. The Sun, the Moon, the Lord of Thundering, the Lord of Lightning, the Rain-god, the Wind-god and thirty crores and nine lacs of gods were there, but none could come forward to build the Earth. At last Nāran Dev ran for *Gondyā Kumbhār* (pot-maker) in the hope that he would come forward to rebuild the Earth. The pot-maker followed Nāran with a golden sieve. He divided earth into separate categories. Thus, the rough, red, stony, sticky, and milky earth were separated. He mixed the earth with filtered water. For sixteen days the earth was under water and it became perfectly ripened (smooth). The earth was then thoroughly kneaded. *Gondyā Kumbhār* sat near a golden wheel with a staff in his left hand. Bowing to the Sun and Moon, he set the wheel in motion and placed a little earth on the centre of the wheel. The shape of the Earth was as small as a sesam seed in the beginning. It, however, began to grow bigger and bigger. Gradually, it assumed the shapes as big as a broken piece of rice, *tur*, *wāl*, plum, mango, palm, dish, room, front-yard and a hamlet. It subsequently got bigger to cover two and four hamlets, a village and hundreds of villages. Finally it spread over the four worlds. The building of the Earth was thus completed.

"All the gods were, however, at a loss to know how the earth could be lifted. They tried to lift the earth but none could do it. At last came *Balayā Bhīm* who lifted the Earth. But the sky could not be lifted up. The sky was so close to the earth that even the water pot on the head of *Garjāi* touched it. Once it so happened that while unhusking corn, Garjāi's pestle pierced into the sky and it immediately went up.

"But the Earth was shapeless. Four pillars were posted and cross-beams were placed on them. They were properly nailed. The Earth was then plastered. However, there was none to look at the Earth. There remained some mud from the earth mixed with water in the beginning. This was thrown in the sky and the stars were made of that sprinkled mud. Thunder, clouds and lightning accompanied by the stormy wind brought rain. The rain by its showers pressed the Earth below."

Inconsistencies are not few in this song. When once the Earth sank down, how was it possible for the various persons

like Gondyā Kumbhār and the carpenter etc. to exist? But a Warli composer is not evidently discouraged with such inconsistencies. He has an aim in view and he is not mindful of the details. The Hindu mythology contains the story of the deluge in which the Earth was drowned. The most immediate solution for the Warli mind for reconstructing the Earth was a pot-maker, for he had essentially to deal with earth. The earth was procured from a gadfly as she was building a nest out of small earth-balls and is still doing so. The reconstruction of the Earth was done on the lines of pot making and the beginning was the smallest imaginable. Thus it began from a sesam seed shape and assumed different larger shapes familiar to Warlis and at last the Earth spread over the four worlds. The influence of Hindu mythology is again visible in that the Earth could be lifted only by Bhīm, the idol of strength. The explanation supplied for the phenomenon of the sky going up is fanciful. The creation of stars by sprinkling of the mud in the sky is also highly imaginative. The song has no direct relevancy to death. But the Warli poet has to suggest that even the Earth once died.

Sowing of seeds on the earth :—When once the construction of the Earth was complete, and it was showered by the rain, the next thing for the gods to do was to create life on the Earth. God Isar and Gangā-Gauri were entrusted with the work of sowing seeds on the Earth for this purpose. The song given below describes how the seeds were secured and subsequently sown :—

"The Earth was bare. Gods thought of having some plantations on it. But the seeds were nowhere available. *Nūran Barambhā* was asked to obtain seeds from somewhere. He went to the ant-world and caught hold of an ant, He would not leave her off unless she consented to give him seeds. The ant stored different kinds of seeds in the ant-hill. The gods got baskets full of seeds from her ; but the seeds were not sufficient for the purpose. The gods next approached the squirrel, another store-house of seeds. They secured from her particularly the fruit-seeds and proceeded to the parrot who too had a good stock of seeds. But all these seeds were insufficient. There was one

king named *Lakhpati* who possessed lacs of seeds. Only his offer sufficed for the purpose.

"But who was to undertake the task of sowing all these seeds? Nāran Dev approached Isar Dev with a request to undertake the work. "Shall I come alone or shall both of us come"? enquired Isar. "Both of you shall better come," replied Nāran Dev. Isar and his consort then separated the various kinds of seeds from each other, stored them in bags of cloth and started for their work. "What road shall you take"? asked Gauri. "I will go along the road of bullocks" replied Isar: "and what way shall you go"? asked the god. "I will take the route of cows" replied Gauri. "How will you sow the seeds"? asked Gauri. "I will sow the seeds of palm and date-palm very sparingly", replied he. "We may take twelve years to sow all the seeds and we may forget each other after such a long lapse of time", doubted Gauri. Isar Dev had his wedding kerchief with him, which he gave to his wife and said, "I take the high road; and you take the low. If you go ahead dear, wait for me." "And if you go ahead, my lord, wait for me too", said Gauri.

"Thus the couple took the handful of seeds and sowed them on the earth. They called for the rains simultaneously, so that the seeds might immediately grow. The god traversed a hilly track and the goddess covered the coastal one. Isar constructed hills and built forts; while Gauri made creeks and rivers and built wells. They went in the northern direction, the god going ahead; he was waiting for his consort. He saw a woman coming towards him but could not recognise her, since he could not see her during the past twelve years. "May I know who you are"? asked Gauri. "I am Isar Dev and who are you"? "My name is Ganga Gauri." "You are telling lies, woman," said Isar Dev. Gauri took out the wedding kerchief, seeing which Isar Dev at once recognised her as his wife. Both began to weep for they were thirsty and hungry. Isar Dev planted a plam and Gauri planted a date-palm. They grew into fine trees. "There may be water at the root of these trees" suggested Gauri. Isar dug small wells at the roots of the trees. The well near

the palm contained clean water, while the water in the well near the other tree was turbid.

"Drink the water by bending your knees on the ground" said Isar. "Are you mad to make such a suggestion? Will not my hips be exposed if I do like that? All the gods will laugh at me," replied Gauri.[1] She then drank water by folding her two hands and making a hollow of them. Both of them got intoxicated by drinking the water of the wells. Gauri got so much intoxicated that she began attacking the god. After a while she became sober and said, "Even the gods are not free from the clutches of water under these trees. What of men? Any passer-by may die if he drinks this water. Let us fill up these wells with earth." They then cursed the two trees. "You will get the juice from under-ground and people will be intoxicated to drink your juice. Palm being the male tree, its juice may be taken out throughout the year. But the date palm being a female tree, no juice can be taken out for fifteen days of the month. Date palm is a female and must get rest." So the woman gets rest for some days in a month."

This song too is not free from the usual inconsistencies. As said above the composers do not worry themselves to reconcile even the obvious discrepancies. This song can be called a purely Warli song in that it is not influenced by Hindu mythology. Perhaps the only point not favourable for this inference is the introduction of God Isar and his consort who sowed the seeds. But it may be noted that this God very often appears in Warli ritual songs and he is associated with the sowing operations with no specific view.

It is interesting to note the store houses of the seeds. The ant, the squirrel and parrot practically live on the grain seeds and fruit. When their seeds were not deemed sufficient, the Warli imagination invented the *Lakhpati* who had lacs of seeds; thus. there is a pun on the Marathi word *lakh*.

The more arduous task was taken up by the god-man-in that he took the hilly course and the comparatively lighter one fell to the lot of Gauri the woman since she travelled along the coast. It indicates the division of labour between the sexes.

1. Perhaps the Warli woman's dress is hinted at here.

The tribe's fondness for toddy, the date-palm juice, is again noticeable in this song. They are not unaware of the evil effects of the juice of the two trees which affected even the gods. The curse too is significant. As a female the date palm must have rest every month. The connection between this curse and the woman's menstruation is again an inevitable conclusion for the Warli mind.

Origin of Humanity :—

"All the world was drowned
There remained a *Bel* tree
On that were Mang's children
Lord, what is seen there ?
Went near the *Bel* tree
Whose children are you ?
We are *Māng-Mār* (Mahār)[1]
Of one mother, of one father
Why did you stay here ?
Get down ; to god's palace
We shall go to the hall of *Indra*
Oh, friend, the children did not get down
"From that side came Nāran Dev
(He) took a gun on the shoulder
Went near the *Bel* tree
Children still climbed
Shall shoot you down with the gun
Shall cut you with sword
Still the children did not consent
Nāran Dev climbed
He pulled the children down
Children came to God's palace
Great Gods asked them
Gods, we were kept there to grow
How will you grow ?
Friends, let us puzzle them
Nāran Dev caught the male child
Isar Dev took the female
You children, who are you to each other ?

1. Two castes from the depressed classes.

This is my own brother
This is my own sister
Children were moved round seven times
They gave them drinks and made them forget
How are you related to each other ?
We are not related
They were brought together for life
Isar Dev became the manager
Gangā-Gauri the *Savāshin*
Bhārjāi Devi the bridegroom's sister
Ganobā Dev acted as the musician
Nārap Dev was in charge of toddy
Preparations for wedding were made
Marriage shed was erected
Turmeric was applied to these gods (two children)
Coronets were tied to them
Māng-Mārs' wedding was performed
Five days passed away
Turmeric was washed on the fifth day
Theirs was a couple for life
Māng girl was pregnant
Nine months passed away
Her time of death arrived
Child is the cause of your death
Who was born of a Māng ?
Of Māng was born *Walmik Rishi*
Who was born of the Rishi ?
Kāmāti was born of the Rishi
A Bhāṭela[1] was born of a Kāmāṭi
A Wāni was born of a Bhātelā
Wāni gave birth to a Brahman
Brahman gave birth to a Parbhu
Parbhu gave birth to a Vāḍol[2]
Vāḍol gave birth to a Kumbhār (pot-maker)
Black-smith was born of a pot-maker
Māchhī[3] was born of a black-smith

1. Bhātelās, also known as Anāvils, live in the Surat Dist.
2. Possessing *wādis* or orchards, a gardener caste.
3. A sailor caste.

"Dhodi[1] was born of a Machhi
Thus the world grew on
An elephant was born on this earth
Touching the rein a horse was born
Holding a peak was born a cock
Holding an ear a goat was born
Cow was born by holding a horn
Bharvād (shepherd) was born by touching a sickle
Great Gods bathed (in the sea)
Nobody is there to kill (fish)
There are many to eat
In the sea was made the fisher-man."

The Māngs and Mahārs are regarded as untouchables even by Warlis. It is therefore strange that according to Warli conception humanity originated from the couple of the lowest caste. The children were brother and sister. In order to bring them together as husband and wife, gods deceived them and made them say that they were not related to each other. This suggests that the marriage of a brother and sister is incestual to Warlis. (There are very few instances of such unions in Hindu mythology, e. g. the union of Yama and Yami). It does not seem very probable that Warlis have borrowed this idea from Hindu mythology. The order in which the names of the different castes are narrated does not show any consistency in regard to their social status. It is likely that the reciters change the order and also add any castes they like. It is significant to note that the first creature born of the couple was *Wālmik Rishi.* Wālmik is the celebrated author of Rāmāyana, but this name is inserted here probably because the Warlis though in very faint terms claim their origin from a Rishi. The creation of some of the animals is associated with merely holding the outstanding mark of the respective animal, e. g., the ear of the goat or the horn of the cow.

Of human sacrifice : "There was a certain young man who went abroad to learn the *vidyā* — instructions. He approached the preceptor and requested him to impart instructions to him. " What fees are you prepared to give me in return for the

1. An aboriginal tribe.

vidyā " asked the preceptor. " A *pāyali*–four seers–of rice-corn, " replied the disciple. " I do not accept a *pāyali* of rice-corn. I am not prepared to impart the instruction on such low fees. "

" There was one preceptor named *Khapesar*–Lord of toiling. The young man approached him with an offer of rice-corn full of a winnowing fan as the fees. But the preceptor did not agree to teach him *vidyā*.

" Thereafter, the disciple went to *Khāmbesar*–the lord of pillars–and requested him to teach him vidyā for a bunch of coconuts. He too was not prepared to teach on his terms.

" He further went to *Ubadesar*–one who was lying on his stomach for the vidyā and offered to pay him a crowing cock as his fees. His terms were, however, not acceptable to this preceptor as well.

" The next preceptor he approached was *Māndesar*–the lord of knees–and promised to give him a goat if he imparted the learning to him. He did not accept this offer and asked the young man to go to some other preceptor.

" At last the disciple came to *Gānesar*–the lord of singing–and bowed to him most respectfully. He disclosed his intention in approaching him. When asked about the fees, the disciple promised to give him an offering of his wife in return for the vidyā. The preceptor consented to this and taught him the vidyā during the night. The disciple left for his residence to fetch his wife as an offering to his preceptor. He told his wife that she was to be sacrificed to the preceptor in lieu of the vidyā he learnt from him. His wife scolded him very much. "Cursed be your vidyā which separates us for ever," said she. They then decided to sacrifice their maid servant. The maid servant was beautifully bedecked with various ornaments. She had silver rings in the fingers of her feet, bracelets on her wrists, necklaces round her neck and rings in her ears. She wound a sari round her waist and wore a bodice. Collyrium was applied to her eyes and kunkum to her forehead. Kunkum was also filled in the parting of her hair and

flowers were strewn in her hair. With this paraphernalia, the maid servant looked as beautiful as her mistress. The disciple took her away on the understanding that they were to go to the market place. She looked so nice that the preceptor took her to be a woman belonging to some higher caste. But the young man assured him that she was his wife.

" The maid servant was made to stand before the preceptor. A lamp of five wicks was lighted. Red-lead was sprinkled on all sides and a coconut was broken. The maid servant was beheaded with a stroke of the sword and the body fell on the ground. The disciple began to weep loudly saying to himself " cursed be my vidyā ".

"The preceptor's people brought pot-ful of wine and partook of the maid-servant's flesh. They said, "this is very nice, very tasty". All of them got intoxicated. Afterwards the disciple went home. "

This song clearly deals with human sacrifice. No preceptor was ready to impart *vidyā* to the disciple unless the latter was prepared to pay substantial fees. The highest offering that could be made was the disciple's wife. But the wife was too shrewd to be sacrificed in that manner. She even scolded her husband. They thought it best to sacrifice their maid-servant. It may be noted that the sacrificial offering was bedecked with rich ornaments and beautiful dress. Even today the sacrificial beasts like goats are garlanded.

The practice of human sacrifice is entirely non-existent among the tribe. The only relic, if it can be so called, is visible in the performance of the funeral ceremony, that a few drops of human blood are offered to the ancestor by a bhagat in some parts of the Warli area. It may be inferred from this song that a practice of human sacrifice was in existence in ancient times among this tribe. The song even goes a step further and states that the flesh of the offering was partaken of by all the people, who had assembled to witness the sacrifice. It may also be noted in passing that even now it is believed by the Warlis that the witch-disciples have to offer a human being to their preceptors in return for the charms they learn from them.

Birth and Death :

"Human body is not obtainable,
Old *Barambhā* was called
Mother *Sati* was called
Jammu God came
On golden cot sits *Jammu*
Mother *Sati* and *Jammu* sat
Old *Barambhā* dips the pen
Mother *Sati* writes the letters
Bodies are of wax, indeed bodies of wax
(Life) was pushed in the creek of hell
In the stomach of human being (is) the creek of hell
The embryo comes in the creek of hell
In the creek of hell does the embryo grow
It completes nine months
From the creek of hell the babe fell
It fell on the ground, fell on the ground
Sati wrote broken letters
The life (person) given to me is taken back,
No envy or enmity for this death
(Man) alone comes, alone goes
Ways for coming are narrow
Ways for going are broad
God gave such curses
Such were the conditions of human life
Mourning at one's house, mourning everywhere
Trees weep, insects and ants weep
Brother, don't do like this
In whose house corpse, mourning for him only."

It is only in this song that mention of Yama—the god of death (*Jammu*) is made. This is clearly due to the influence of Hindu ideas. Warlis perform a little ceremony on the sixth day of the birth of a child and worship *Sati*. The song mentions that *Sati* writes some letters probably about the life of the child. This is again the Hindu belief borrowed by Warlis. A curious connection is established between the life during pregnancy and life after death. The pre-natal life is in hell, (the idea being that human excretion is in the abdomen)

hence after death man goes to hell. Thus he comes from hell and goes to hell. Man dies because *Sati* writes broken letters.

The song contains some generalizations like the following :—

"Bodies are of wax, indeed bodies of wax.
(have) no envy or enmity for death.
(A man) comes alone (and) goes alone.
The incoming ways are narrow,
The outgoing ways are broad.
Mourning at one's house (means) mourning everywhere
No, it should be, mourning for those only,
who have a corpse in their house."

These generalizations are not without a forceful meaning.

Death the Inevitable : The all-pervading nature of death is expressed in a little song of eighteen lines. The song does not contain the usual story, but its lines are generalizations.

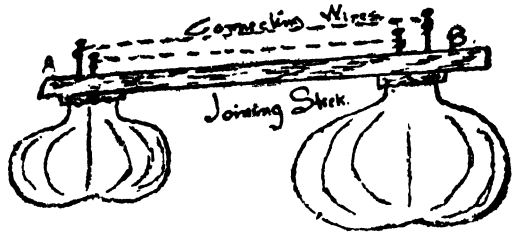
"While talking and walking a man may die,
The loaded cart may become topsy-turvy
One's own brother may be killed by cruel words ;
While talking and walking may a woman die,
The woman is pregnant
A time may come for her death ;
A man climbs a tree,
His hands and feet slip off ;
Lac-dye meltsa way (by fire)
The cumin stick dries up
The little creeper is plucked
The small vegetable shrub withers
So does the body wither.
The full-moon sets (all of a sudden)
A plantain stalk breaks in the middle
An unbaked earthen pot breaks
An earthen pot can last for a few days
(But) there is no knowing when the body may die."

These lines are pregnant with meaning. The illustrations which are very aptly selected from the agrarian life of the Warlis go home. The ideas are expressed poetically, especially when the full-moon setting and pot-breaking are referred to.

(iv) **The Ritual connected with Agriculture**: *The story of corn*: The corn is respected and valued by the Warlis as agriculturists. Corn is deified and the presiding deity of corn is called *Kānsari Mātā*. During the harvest, the story of corn is narrated on a threshing floor at night. Any man who is well-versed in the narration tells the story to the people gathered round him. Women are also allowed to come to the threshing floor and listen to the story. Before commencing the narration, the man on whose threshing floor the story is to be narrated, waves a lamp to the narrator and applies red-lead to his forehead. A coconut is also placed near him. When the narration is finished, the coconut is broken and distributed to the gathering.

The story-teller plays on an instrument called *ghāngali*. It is a crude musical instrument made of two dried gourds and two wires wound to the two sticks in their mouths. The construction is quite simple.

The narrator places the instrument horizontally on his thighs. He moves both the wires with his finger at one end (at A), so as to make a regular sound by means of the vibrations. He plays as well as narrates the story in prose, but



with pauses and in a musical tone, so as to give a semblance of a song to the narration. The narration runs as follows:—"Oh, mother corn, I bow to thee at dead of night. This man of black head seeks your protection. Where was the corn deity born and where was she brought up? She is the creation of God and moves in the eight worlds (*khanda*)."

"Gods assembled to devise means to reconstruct the Earth. They got stones from the stone workers (*pāthrat lok*) and built the Earth. Gods also made the mountains, which subsequently

became the *Rishis*.[1] Gods planted twelve herbs and made the Earth very firm. A lamp was lighted for this dark world. This was the Sun and the Moon was made as his companion. All creatures big and small, were then made. One creature lives on another[2]. A man of black head was then created. Brahmans were made to write books. The winds were asked to blow over the world. There was, however, no food for these creatures. Nāran Dev prepared a plot of land for sowing eighteen seeds. He meditated upon the mother corn and went deep into the darkness in search of her. He arrived at the city of *dhānol* (full of corn), but mother corn refused to accompany him to the assembly of gods. In order to propitiate Corn, Nāran Dev brought cow-dung, burnt it and applied the ash to his body.[3] He thus assumed an appearance of an ascetic and took some ash with him. He persuaded her and took her with him to the divine assembly. Gods requested her to be pleased with them and give them food as a means of livelihood. At last she, the mistress of eighteen corns, consented to create corn. Thenceforward gods got abundant crops. But they soon got tired of the Corn and said, "We do not wish to have this black beauty (*Nāgli*) in our kingdom. Find out a husband for her and drive her out.[4]" The corn-diety was insulted and immediately left god's abode."

"The gods soon began to feel the corn deity's absence. They began to starve as the stock of food got exhausted. Cows gave no milk and wells dried up. Gods thought to themselves that they were in a far more prosperous condition so long as the 'black beauty' (Corn) was with them. They requested

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1. Mountains became Rishis, because they are like each other in appearance from a Warli point of view. Rishis have long hair on head, mountains have trees. Mountains are motionless; so also the Rishis when practising penance.

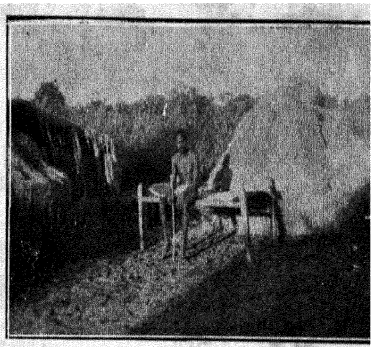
2. *Jivālā jiva dharte na jīva mārate.* Cf: Sanskrit "*Jīwo Jīwasya Jīwanam.*"

3. The deity was propitiated by this means for a good crop. The field is burnt with brush-wood and cow-dung, the ash being considered a manure giving good crop.

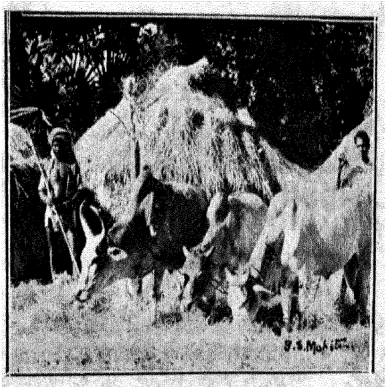
4. *Kāli nā nāra, āpalyā rājāmadhe nako phāra.* The Nagli corn is blackish in appearance. It is always a good crop, even on ordinary soil and without much rain.



Reaping paddy.



Threshing floor.



Treading paddy stalks.

prepared the evening meals. She chewed the betel leaves with nut and catechu along with her husband. She spat the juice on the ground and the substance went into the stomach.[1] She was pregnant. At the third month she suffered from morning sickness and could not bear the heat of the Sun. Thinking that his wife was not keeping good health, the farmer ran to a medicine-man for advice. The medicine man told him that his wife was pregnant and that he should bring a midwife (*suin*) when she completed nine months. The poor farmer brought needles instead.[2]

"At the time of her delivery, the two sisters *Dharanāvati* and *Vansāpati*[3] came to attend her. The woman was undergoing unbearable pains. She prayed to god, "As you have filled, you now take it out.[4]" *Vansāpati* sat near the woman's head and *Dharanāvati* at her feet. The latter said, "if she is pure and chaste, she must come out safe of this danger."[5] Thus she invoked God and the woman had a safe delivery. Immediately *Vansāpati* flew off saying that she could not remain there in that impure atmosphere."[6]

"On the fifth day the *Sati* deity was worshipped. She writes something on the forehead of the babe that night. The rats and cats should not be beaten that night, since *Sati* comes in any form. An image of *Sati* was drawn with *Vari* corn. The midwife threw some rice grains in the hollow of the tree. The rice became honey-bees; hence the bee-hive has an appearance of a bread. The tube of oil became the serpent; and the hair-comb thrown in air became a bird. Out of the dirty clothes thrown on the slope of the hill was born a lizard. The menstrual fluid was thrown on the teak tree; therefore the tender leaves of the tree are reddish. It was also thrown on the fruit of *Karavandi*; that is how its fruit are red."

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1. Catechu is forbidden to a Warli woman in the menses. The chewing of betel leaves on the sixth day suggests that the taboo is over and she is allowed to indulge in sexual intercourse.
2. Pun on the Marathi word *sui*.
3. *Dharānāvati* the midwife deity and *Vansāpati* the herb deity.
4. *Jasā bharalā tasā ubharun de.*
5. *Asel sādichā, nādichā, ekā purusāchā, ta hilā dagā deu neko.*
6. *Vansi*—the herb must not be polluted by anything impure.

(3) "The child grew up a fine boy. The wife told her husband, "It is no use simply giving birth to a child; we must marry him.[1]" The farmer, therefore, went in search of a bride for his son. Nobody offered him a girl, for he was a black farmer. Disappointed he returned and asked his wife to find out a bride herself. The wife went to Dāmshet Wāni's wife and reminded her of their mutual promise on the bank of the river and requested her to give her daughter in marriage to her son. The merchant (wāni) did not like the idea of giving his daughter in marriage to a poor farmer. But his wife was quite serious about it, for she was bound by a promise. Thus the betrothal was fixed. But the poor farmer felt sorry to learn this fearing that he would cut a very sorry figure in comparison with the rich merchant. He was thus in a fix as to how to prepare adequately for the wedding ceremony. The rat knew this and she dug an underground passage connecting the farmer's house and the store-house of the merchant. She filled the house of the farmer with grain from the merchant's store-house. The farmer was astonished to see such a large but unexpected store of grain in his house. "What more you want"? asked the rat next night. "Wealth", replied the farmer. The farmer was also provided with wealth from the merchant's place by the rat. Dāmshet Wāni found that some unknown agency had robbed him of corn and money."

"The marriage ceremony was duly performed. The farmer thanked the deity corn very much for helping him to keep up his prestige. The mother corn told him in a dream to prepare a plot for plantation. The farmer burnt brushwood in a plot, secured seeds from ants and waited for the rains. After the showers of rain, the farmer asked his son to plough the field. While ploughing, the plough of the farmer's son was obstructed by a root of a tree in the field. He tried his best to uproot it, but could not do it. Being fatigued, he sat down to take rest. He thought to himself, "I am working so hard; I might die one day. I have not enjoyed life. I have not enjoyed my wife." He got disgusted with the work and went home on the pretext that he got fever. His father knew this and beat him with the

1. *"Bāl jinalyāchā phal nāhi; ujavanyāchā phal āhe.*

handle of an axe. His father scolded him for leaving the work unfinished. His mother too did not spare him and threw a laddle at him. This was enough for the son to leave his parents immediately."

"His mother interrupted him saying that he had sucked her milk in his childhood and demanded twelve pots of milk. This the son gave. The father came forward to demand twelve bags of corn, for he fed him so long. This too the son paid and started on. His mother came in his way in the form of a bear. "I will not go back even if you kill me," said the son with determination, and the mother cleared his way. After a little distance his father blocked his way in the form of a tiger. But the son never turned back and stood there quite firm. The tiger retired and the son went on. His wife, who was collecting cow-dung in the fields, stood before him with a request that they both should go to her father. The farmer's son agreed to this and both of them went to Dāmshet Wāni. They were given a warm reception by the merchant who promised to help his son-in-law with a capital to start some business."

"The young couple carried on a trade. The husband sold things at a profit, but the wife incurred loss. Her father accused her of neglect. She took it as an insult and left her father's place in protest along with her husband. She followed her husband saying that the wife must always be with her husband.[1] They proceeded only to find themselves in more miserable condition. They starved without food and water. They had no strength to walk; they crawled on the ground and were almost on the point of death. Some unseen hands placed food before them, the very smell of which gave them a new life. But this was a rejuvenation for them. The son of the farmer was turned into the *Kansaryā Bāl* (child of corn) and the son's wife became the *Dhānāi Nār* (the lady corn). Thenceforward they separated from each other."

(4) "This Kansaryā boy was in his fields entertaining himself by playing on different musical instruments[2]. Dhānāi

1. *Jethe dhani tethe rāni.*

2. Warlis usually spend the time between planting and harvest by playing on musical instruments as an entertainment.

Nār put on a gorgeous dress and went to see the Kansaryā youth. She had two horns on her head and appeared like a Charan woman.[1] Thinking that a thief was there in his field to remove the crop, he rushed at her. "These crops are my gift," said the woman. But he could not believe her. She then revealed to him her identity. Both were then happily united. Thus the farmer was rejoined by corn."

This narrative is an indication of Warlis' devotion for corn. It is believed that telling or listening to this story gives them good crops for the narration is in the honour of the corn-deity. The story gives a detailed account of the Corn, how it was the heritage of the gods in the beginning and the circumstances in which corn was handed over to the black farmer. The composers perhaps wanted to emphasize the fact that this disrespect or neglect of the corn meant miseries to oneself. This is amply proved in the case of gods who had to starve because the corn deity refused to favour them. The sub-story of the farmer's son also bears out the same moral. He had to suffer hardships because he failed to respect the corn in refusing to work on his father's field. It is again the corn that rejuvenated both him and his wife and they were transformed into the 'corn-child' and the 'lady-corn.' In bringing about the happy union of the two the story again impresses that a Warli is after all associated with corn and can never part with it.

This narrative is not composed in the regular verse form. Yet it is as it were sung by the narrator. This narrative thus forms a link between the ritual songs and the mythological stories which are in the prose form. As compared to the ritual songs, the Warli mythology contains very few stories. Some of the songs are often times narrated in prose by a story-teller or a bhagat.

(v) **Mythology**:—The Warli mythology and folk-lore are woven mainly round the tribal deities. The birth, power and functions of the different deities and spirits are associated with folk-lore. But other customs and minor rites too are not free from the folk-lore attached to them. Some references of this

1. Chāran and Vanjari women are famous for their gorgeous dress.

kind have been made in their proper places in the previous chapters. Some of the mythological stories too have been given as explanatory of the prevailing ideas of the tribe in certain matters, especially religious. It is proposed to give here a few stories which have not been referred to so far, and are more or less of an independent nature.

One outstanding feature of the Warli mythology, as well as of the ritual songs, is that there is a remarkable influence of Hindu mythology on them. The tribe seems to be acquainted with some of the Hindu gods. Some of the incidents from Hindu mythology are reproduced in a crude form in their songs as is seen in the song relating to the death of Pandu. The source from which Warlis learn the Hindu mythological stories is the Caste Hindus with whom they come in contact. An intelligent Warli picks up the theme of the story and reproduces it in a form and manner suitable to him. He takes care to add local tinge to it and gives the story an atmosphere of Warli ideology. This is the reason why one sees sometimes the perverted versions of the mythological stories. A Warli story-teller invariably gets a patient hearing. The listeners have implicit faith in the stories and they never ask the narrator why or how a particular thing happened.

Below is a typical illustration of the influence of Hindu mythology on that of the Warlis as is seen from the version of Rāmāyan, the most popular epic of the Hindus.

"There was one Janakā-Sitā who was to be won in marriage. Kings from different countries came there but none could win Sitā. Last to come there were Rām and Laxman. Even Rām could not win Sitā, but Laxman could do it successfully. Now Sitā was Laxman's. How could the younger brother marry when the elder was a bachelor ?. With great persuasion of Laxman, Rām consented to marry her."

" Rām and Sitā lived together; they had a son. A quarrel arose between Laxman and Sitā and the former asked Rām to abandon her. Rām did accordingly. Sitā became helpless and wandered on the Earth with her son. In her wanderings she came near the seven seas. Two ascetics named *Sakobā* and *Itobā*

were residing on the sea shore. They were very glad to see a woman coming towards them with a child in her arms, each thinking for himself that she would be his. Sitā, on approaching them, narrated her story and told them how helpless she was. Both of them accepted her as a daughter and promised to protect her and her child."

" One day, when going out to fetch water, Sitā asked *Sakobū* to look after her child sleeping in the cradle. *Sakobū* fell asleep while rocking the cradle. When he awoke, he found to his great surprise that the baby was not in the cradle. Both of them were frightened out of their wits to see this unusual thing. Sitā would be very sorry to know that her child was lost, thought they. Sakobā dived deep into the sea with a view to finding the child if it was there. But the lost child was not in the sea. Instead of bringing the baby from the bottom of the sea, he brought mud with him. They made a baby of the mud and kept it in the cradle."

" When Sitā returned with a pot of water, she had already the baby with her. When asked why they kept a baby of mud in the cradle, they narrated the whole incident. Both the babies were, however, brought up and named as *Kushan* and *Ankushan*, the first being the name of the real child."

" Many years passed; a battle was fought between Rām and Rāvan. Sitā had not forgotten Rām. When she heard about the war, she ran to the battlefield along with her two sons, who had grown fine youths by that time. Rām had a very small army while his opponent Rāvan was all powerful. Ram and Laxman were both wounded and bleeding. Sitā came on the battlefield and with the help of her two sons won the battle. She introduced her sons to her husband and Rām was glad to meet them. That was the happy union of the family. "

This version begins with the *swayamwara* of Sitā, but she was won by Laxman. The reason why Rām married her instead of Laxman is the product of the Warli imagination. Sita was protected by a Rishi, Valmiki; but according to this version she was protected by two ascetics, purely the creatures of Warli fantasy. An account of twin sons of Sitā given here considerably differs from that of the original version.

The Importance of Rain :—"Two kings were once quarrelling with each other about the superiority of one over the other. A shepherd passed by them and enquired after the quarrel. Knowing the reason why they quarrelled, the shepherd said "None of you is great. *Megh* is the greatest. Just imagine the consequences if *Megh* does not rain. The cotton plant will not grow and you will get no clothes. If it does not rain, there would be no crops and you would starve. So rain is the important thing and the giver of rain is the greatest of all."

After hearing the sermon of the shepherd, the kings gave up the quarrel.

The Brahman and the Kunbi :—" Once a Brahman came to know that God was to descend from heaven at a particular time and place. He went to the place at the stipulated time and waited for the God to descend. The Kunbi who was returning from his fields asked the Brahman why he was waiting there. "To see God," replied the Brahman. Being anxious to have a look at the God, the Kunbi too waited there. But the God did not come down in time. The Brahman was eager to go home. His mind was full of things other than God. Having waited there for a sufficiently long time, the Brahman retired from that place. The Kunbi was, however, looking up towards the sky with his mind fully occupied by the idea of God. After a while God appeared there in the human form. Not knowing that he was the God, the Kunbi tied him to a tree with a rope. In the meanwhile the Brahman returned after taking his meals. To his great surprise he saw the strange phenomenon of the God being tied. It was only from the Brahman that the Kunbi knew that the person whom he tied was none else than the God himself. He was very sorry for what he had done and apologized for it. He immediately untied him. The God at once flew away to the sky taking the Kunbi with him but leaving the Brahman behind."

Inequality in the World :—" A minister of a certain king was pondering over the problem of inequality in the world. He suggested to the king that inequality should be removed from his kingdom and that all people should be made equal. The King tried to explain to him that the existing system of inequa-

lity was the right one. The minister, however, insisted upon the king changing the system. Thus all people were made equal in wealth, status etc."

"After some days, the minister intended to build a new house. He asked some labourers to take the work in hand. "What wages shall you give us?" asked the labourers. "The usual wages," replied the minister. "The usual wages"; exclaimed the labourers. "Why should we work at all"? We are enough rich; we are all equal."

"This went home. The minister himself found out that his way of thinking was on the wrong lines and that in introducing equality among all he committed a blunder of the greatest magnitude. The previous orders were immediately cancelled and inequality restored."

"The world cannot go on without inequality. There must be people to serve and people to demand service."

Yama's messengers locked:—"Once there lived a very kind Kunbi. He had a pair of bullocks whom he treated very kindly. The bullocks too loved their master very much. One day they knew that the messengers of Yama (the god of death) were to come the next day to take away their master's life.[1] They were extremely sorry at the idea of their master's death, for they could have never received such kind treatment from any other master. Fortunately they got the power of speech and told everything to their master. They suggested to him a way of escape."

"Get a plank of wood," said the bullocks to their master. "Carve a figure of goddess on it. Invite all the people in the village for the festival of this goddess. The messengers of Yama also will come tomorrow and will sit in the court yard unseen by any one waiting for the opportunity of taking your life. Install the image in a wooden box. Invite all the people assembled to have a *darshan* of the goddess and bow to her. When all the people have bowed to the goddess, look at the front yard and say, "Why do you sit there? why don't you come and

1. "Yama's messenger" is a Hindu idea.

have the *darshan* of the goddess as others did?" The Yama's messengers would think, 'this fellow sees us; let us approach the goddess.' When you think they have come near the box and peeped inside, at once shut the box and lock it from outside."

"The master followed the instructions of the bullocks to the letter. Yama's messengers were thus locked in the box and the man's life saved."

Yama was at a loss to know why his messengers did not return and suspected that some mischief was played on them. He wanted to find out where they were interned. He hit upon an ingenious plan. "Liquor reveals everything," thought he. He created liquor. Liquor shops were started everywhere and people began taking liquor immoderately."

"The farmer who had locked the messengers was once quarrelling with another man in a liquor shop. In order to put down the man opposite, he proudly said, "I would not spare you. I have even locked Yama's messengers." This secret was revealed to other messengers of Yama who were moving there in the human form. They made friendship with the farmer and treated him with more liquor, so much so that he lost his senses. The other messengers while accompanying him home expressed a desire to see Yama's messengers in the box. This farmer being under the influence of liquor opened the box. The interned messengers at once flew away and the poor fellow lost his life."

The chastity of a woman:—"A king had a heavy crown of gold which could be lifted by nobody except a chaste woman. One day the king asked his minister, "Is there a woman so chaste in my kingdom as to raise this crown and take it to the top of my palace"? "Yes," replied the minister, "there is one woman who could answer to this description." The minister had in mind his wife to perform this ordeal. The king warned him "if the woman does not raise the crown to the top, your head will be off. If she raises the crown, half the kingdom of mine will be yours." The minister accepted the king's challenge, for he was quite confident of his wife's chastity. He unfolded the plans to his old mother and told her that he was straightway going to ask his wife about the whole affair. The old mother,

however, wanted her son to ascertain from his wife if she was really chaste. She therefore asked her son to test his wife in a different manner. According to his mother's instructions, the minister placed a proposal before his wife, " My dear, the king has a crown which can be raised by a woman who has had connections with five men. If the crown is raised, the woman will get half the kingdom." The wife at once gave out " only one man is less. I had four connections. Could you not wait till I have the fifth ?"

" The secret was out. The mother thought her son's life was in danger, for the crown would never be raised by his wife. She herself was chaste. She went ahead to lift the crown and did it so easily as she would pick a flower. It was taken near the top of the palace when she felt it heavy. She confessed to God, ' there might have been a moment when I thought of another man besides my husband. But it was only a thought. I have not erred in action." Again it became light and the minister's mother took it to the top."

These stories do not seem to be originating from Warlis. But they have been presented in a changed garb by the story-teller.

CHAPTER VIII

DIALECT.

Nineteenth century scholars who wrote on the Warlis exclusively or in connection with other tribes classed the Warli language as Marathi. Latham, in his "Ethnology of India" published in the year 1858 A. D. observes :—"The Warlis have Marathi names and speak Marathi language.[1]" The Bombay Gazetteer (Thana) dated 1882 goes a step further and states :— "The speech of the Warlis differs little from that of the Kunbis. They always speak Marathi, except those in the extreme north who speak Gujarati.[2]" Neither of the above statements is correct. The Warlis neither speak pure Marathi nor exclusively Gujarati. The more correct view is voiced by Dr. Grierson who has in his 'Linguistic Survey of India' (1907) included the Warli in the Marathi dialects of the Konkani group. Dr. Grierson writes, "The Warlis of Thana are also Bhils and their language must originally have been of the same kind as other Bhil dialects and Khandeshi. In the course of time it has however been so largely influenced by Marathi that it must now be classed as a dialect of that language, except in the extreme north where it is stated to be a form of Gujarati.[3]"

Writing about the 'Konkan Standard' of Marathi, Dr. Grierson observes : "Marathi is the principal language of all the coast districts of the Bombay Presidency, from Daman in the north to Rajapur in the south. The northern part of this territory from Daman to Umbargaon is divided between Marathi and Gujarati and the influence of the latter language is also felt farther south, the vocabulary to some extent being Gujarati. This element is not, however strong.[4]" Dr. Grierson has styled the speech of the Warlis and the Kathodis as 'broken dialects'. In further discussing these broken dialects he refers to Warli thus : "Another dialect of a similar kind (i. e. broken) is Warli. The

1. "Ethnology of India", p. 347.
2. Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. XIII, Part I, p. 183.
3. "Linguistic Survey of India", Vol. VII, p. 141.
4. Ibid, p. 61.

Warlis, as also the Katkaris, are said to be more like the Bhils than the Kolis. Their dialect is still more influenced by Marathi than Katkari."[1]

Dr. Grierson has thus grouped the Warli and Katkari with the Konkani dialects of Marathi. It may be noted, however, that the similar dialects of other aboriginal tribes like the Nāikdi, Kokani (of the Kokna tribe), Chodhri etc. have been included by him in the group of the Bhil languages admitting that "the Nāikdi dialect of Surat is still more influenced by Marathi than was the case of the Nāikdas of Reva Kantha and Panch Mahals.[2]

Mr. Kulkarni, in his Marathi book (1933), 'Marāthi Bhāshā, Udgam Āni Vikās,' says "the Warli dialect has been influenced by Gujarati ....Perhaps these people came down to the Konkan from Gujarat."[3] (translation).

It may be seen from the references quoted above, that the early scholars held that the Warli language was Marathi. Later on it was held that it was a dialect influenced by Marathi and the latest opinion is that it has been influenced by Gujarati. I am inclined to think that the Warli dialect is not only influenced both by Gujarati and Marathi, (including the Konkani) but it has also some peculiarities of its own.

Latham has grouped the Bhils, the Warlis, the Kols of Gujarat and other allied tribes, on the western side of Gondwana, as having a language akin to Hindi, as opposed to the group of the Sours, the Khonds, and the Kols of Bengal on the eastern side. "All are believed, on good grounds, to be of the same blood."[4] As quoted above, Dr. Grierson also has associated the Warlis with Bhils and has stated that their language must originally have been of the same kind. He further thinks that the aboriginal tribes in Central and Western India have descended from a common stock, the Munda family, and that they had originally the Munda form of speech. Dr. Grierson has worked out his hypothesis in the volume on the Munda

1. "Linguistic Survey of India," p. 130.
2. Ibid, vol. IX, Part III, p. 93.
3. "Marāthi Bhāshā, Udgam Āni Vikās," p. 246.
4. "Ethnology of India," p. 191.

and Dravidian languages and is as follows :—"The Munda-family has been known under various names. Hodgson claimed the languages in question under the head of Tamilian. Ho, Santali, Bhumij, Kurukh and Mundari are according to him 'dialects of the great Kol language." The word Kol or Kolh is a title applied by Hindus to the Hos, Mundari and Oroas and sometimes also to other tribes of the Munda stock.....It is probably connected with caste names such as Koli; but we do not know anything really certain about the original meaning of the word. Kola occurs as the name of a warrior caste in the Harivansa. The word Kola in Sanskrit also means pig and some authorities hold that this word is used by the Aryans as a term of abuse in order to denote the aboriginal tribes."[1]

The Kols have thus been supposed to belong to the Munda stock and it is a term which was used generally in denoting the aboriginal tribes. The following continuous passage refers to the identity of the Mundas with Nishadas and that of the latter with the Bhils :—

" In Sanskrit the common name for the Munda aborigines seems to be Nishād. Nishādas are identified with the Bhils They are found to the south-east of Madhya-desa and in the Vindhya Range. The Nishādas lived in the deserts and in the hills to the south-east of the stronghold of the Aryans i. e., in districts where we now find Munda tribes of their descendants."[2]

" The principal home of the Munda languages at the present day is the Chhota-Nagpur Plateau. Speakers are further found in the adjoining districts of Madras and the Central Provinces and in the Mahadeo Hills. It is also probable that the tribes who speak various broken dialects in Western India such as Koli and so forth had originally a Munda form of speech."[3]

At present, however, the Warli dialect, though showing some affinity to that of the Bhils in Khandesh, shows no traces of having connection with the Munda form of speech. It may be, however, taken for granted that as an aboriginal tribe or as a

1. "Linguistic Survey of India," Vol. IV, p. 7.
2. "Linguistic Survey of India," Vol. IV, p. 8.
3. Ibid, p. 9.

member of some such stock as the Munda or the Kol, the Warlis had a dialect of their own in the pre-Aryan times, but later on it underwent a complete change. This statement can be supported by Bishop Caldwell's opinion on the subject. "As the pre-Aryan tribes, who were probably more numerous, were not annihilated but only reduced to a dependent position, and eventually in most instances, incorporated in the Aryan community, it would seem almost necessarily to follow that they would modify whilst they adopted the language of their conquerors and that this modification would consist partly in the addition of new words and partly also in the introduction of the new spirit and tendency."[1]

There are some words in the Warli dialect which seem nearer to Sanskrit than to Marathi. These words were perhaps introduced from the language of the conquerors in a modified form.

At present, the Warli dialect is spoken in two different parts with some variations. In the northern part the dialect, which may be called *Davar* after the name of the Warli section there, is influenced by Gujarati and in the southern parts it is influenced more by Marathi. The dialect of the southern Warlis comes nearer to that of the Kolis or Kunbis. In the northern part of the Thana District i. e. the Umbergaon Peta and some Villages in Dahanu Taluka, the Warlis can follow and speak Gujarati also. In Umbergaon Peta Warlis live with Dublas and Dhodias whose language is Gujarati. Besides the commercial language of Umbergaon is also Gujarati. Even Warli children follow and speak Gujarati. In some of the Primary Schools in Umbergaon Peta Warli boys learn Gujarati along with other Gujarati speaking children. I saw one Warli boy in the Sanjan Mission School, where the medium of instruction is Gujarati, holding first rank in the class. When I started conversing with him in the Warli dialect, he could not but use Gujarati words every now and then. I have heard Warli women from Umbergaon Peta singing Gujarati songs. Thus Warlis in the northern part of the district are quite familiar with Gujarati, though among themselves they speak their own dialect. On the

1. "Linguistic Survey of India," p. 278.

other hand, to the Warlis in the south, Gujarati is quite foreign. The Warli dialect is simple, spoken slowly with distinct pronunciations and is rather musical in intonation. The last attribute is particularly true of the dialects of the Davars and the Pathars. It can be easily followed by anyone having on an average a fair knowledge of Marathi. Some of the words found in their songs are not in use in their dialect.

Before giving the peculiarities of the Warli dialect or dealing with its tentative grammar, a few common English words and simple sentences are given with the Warli equivalents and renderings, in the hope that they may acquaint the reader with the vocabulary of the dialect.

English	*Warli*	*English*	*Warli*
I	*mi, may*	of me	*mānzā*
We	*hāmi*	of us	*hāmchā*
Thou	*tu*	of thee	*tuzā*
You	*tumi, tumhi*	your	*tumchā*
He	*to*	His	*techā*
She	*ti*	Her	*techā*
They	*te*	Their	*tenchā*
Hand	*hāt*	Foot	*pāy*
Nose	*Nāk*	Eye	*dolā*
Mouth	*tond*	Tooth	*dāt*
Head	*dokān, māthān*	Lip	*hont*
Chest	*sānthi*	Neck	*galā*
Gold	*sonān*	Silver	*rupān*
Iron	*loh, lokhād*	Copper	*tāmbān*
Man	*Mānus, goho*	Woman	*Bāil, āū*
Child	*Poyarān*	Son	*Poyarā*
Servant	*chākar, hūli*	Cultivator	*kulambi*
God	*Dev, Paramesar*	Devil	*bhūt*
Sun	*surayā*	Moon	*chānd*
Star	*chāndani*	Sky	*āb*
Fire	*āg*	Water	*pāni*
House	*ghar*	Tree	*zād*
Cow	*gāy, gāvali, gāvatari*	Bull	*bāil*
Horse	*ghodā, punawā* (*in songs*)	Dog	*kutarā, sunā* (*dāvar*)

English	*Warli*	*English*	*Warli*
Cat	*mānjar*	Cock	*kombadā*
Camel	*ūt*	Bird	*pākhru*
Go	*jā*	Eat	*khā*
Sit	*bas*	Come	*ye*
Beat	*mār, kut*	Stand up	*ūth*
Die	*mar*	Give	*de, op*
Run	*pal*	See	*nāng*
Up	*var, varata*	down	*khālala*
Near	*rānga*	Far	*dūr*
Before	*pahala, moḥara*	Behind	*māgata*
Who	*kon*	What	*kāy*
Why	*kyā*	When	*kay*
And	*na*	But	*pan*
If	*ja, jo (Bhilli jo)*	Alas	*are, ara, arā*
Yes	*ho, ha, hān*	No	*nāhi, nihi*
Of father	*bāpāschā, bāschā*	To father	*bāpāslā, bāslā,*
From father	*bāpā pāyshi,*		*bāpāsday*
	bā pāyshi	By father	*bāpān*
A good man	*bara or bes mānus*	A bad boy	*bhundā or wyāt*
Better	*bahu barā or bes*		*poyarā*
High	*uchā*	Best	*ghanā bes*
Highest	*asgyāhun uchā*	Higher	*tehun uchā*
Thou art	*tū āhas*	I am	*mī (may) āhe*
We are	*hāmi hāv*		*(āhay)*
They are	*te āhat*	He is	*to āhe (āhay)*
Thou wert	*tu hotā*	You are	*tumi āhā*
We were	*hāmi hote*	I was	*mi hotā, hotu*
	(Davar) hāmi hotu		*(southern)*
	(southern)	He was	*to hotā*
They were	*te hote*	You were	*tumi hote*
We beat	*hāmi māru*	I beat	*mi māra*
You beat	*tumi mārā*	Thou beatest	*tu māras*
They beat	*te mārat*	He beats	*to māra*
I beat (past)	*mihin māralā*	We beat (past)	*hāmi māralā*
Thou beatest	*tuhun māralā*	You beat	*tumi māralā*
He beat	*tyāhan or tenhā*	They beat	*tyānhān māralā*
	māralā	I was beating	*mi mārat hotā*
I am beating	*mi mārat āhe*	I may beat	*mi māra*

English	*Warli*
I had beaten	*mi mārel*
I shall beat	*mi māran*
He will beat	*to māral*
You will beat	*tumi mārāl.*
I go	*mi jāy.*
He goes	*to jāy.*
You go	*tumi jā*
I went	*mi gyāv* (Davar) *me gelu* (southern)
Thou wentest.	*tu gyāv* (Davar), *tu gela* (Southern).
You went.	*tumi gyāv* (D), *tumi gelā* (S).
He went.	*to gyāv* (D), *to gelā* (S)
They went.	*te gyāv* (D), *te gele* (S)
What is your name ?	*Tuzā nāv kāy ?*
How old is his horse ?	*Tyācho ghodo kalok* (*kodāk*) *mato āhay ?*
How far is that village from here ?	*Te gāv athachen kodāk dūr āhay ?*
How many sons are there in your father's house ?	*Tuze bāsche gharāmā kalek poyare āhāt ?*
I have walked a long way today.	*May āj bahu dūr chālalā* (*chālin*).
The son of my uncle is married to his (that person's) sister.	*Maze kakāschā poyarā techā bahinisshi paranel āhe.*
In the house is the saddle of the white horse.	*Gharāmā dhavle ghodechā khogir āhay.*
Put the saddle upon his back.	*Teche pāthivar khogir ghāl.*
I have beaten his son very much.	*May techyā poyaryālā bahu mārel āhe.*
He is grazing cattle on the top of the hill.	*Dogarichyā māthyāvar to dhorān chārat āhe.*
He is sitting on a horse under that tree.	*Te zādākhālata to ghodevar basel āhe.*
His brother is taller than his sister.	*Techā bhās techā bahiniskartā uchā āhe.*

English	*Warli*
The price of that is rupees two and a half.	*Techi kimmat don rupaye na āt āna āhe.*
My father lives in that small house.	*Māza bās tyā lāhanyā gharāmā raha.*
Give this rupee to him.	*Tyālā (tyāday) yo rupayā de (op).*
Take those rupees from him.	*Tyā pānyashi te rupaye ghe.*
Beat him well and bind him with ropes.	*Tyāla bes kūt na dorākhāl bāndh.*
Draw water from the well.	*Bāvitshi pāni kādh.*
Walk before me.	*Māze mohara chāl.*
Whose boy comes behind you ?	*Tuze māgtum konhācha poyarā yey ?*
From whom did you buy that ?	*Konhāpāyshi te vikat ghetlā.*
From a shopkeeper of the village.	*Gāvatche dukānvālyāpāyshi.*
Father and mother went to Dev ceremony.	*Āyā na bāpā devāmā gyāv.*
But God started and came home.	*Pan dev nighin to gharā yāv.*
He eats himself and gives to me also.	*Pote hu khāy na mānday hu dey.*

"Besides, the common tendency of the wilder tribes to clip their words, e. g, *kot jās* standing for *kothe jātos*, they use several non-marathi words such as *nāngane* to see[1]. The specimen received from Thana by Dr. Grierson corroborates this statement. "An instance of the so-called shortening of the words is *vichara* he asked, for which the fuller Marathi form is *vichārle*[2]. This tendency to shorten can further be illustrated ; e. g. *karas* doing for *kartos*, *khāyā* to eat for *khāyālā*, *Jān* having gone for *Jāun*, *Jān* will go for *Jāin*, *bāslā* to father for *bāpāla*, *kode* how much for *kevadhe* etc. Though this tendency to shorten is visible in the inflection of nouns and verbs, it is used more in the case of verbs.

'A' is used as in the dialects of the North Konkan in many cases where standard Marathi has 'E'[3]. Thus *tatha* there for

1. "Bombay Gazetteer" Vol. XIII; Part, I, p. 183.
2. "Linguistic Survey of India", Vol. VII, p. 141,
3. Ibid.

tethe, atha here for *ethe. padala* it fell for *padalen* and *sāngan* shall say for *sāngen.*

Sometimes the 'n' sound is dropped and sometimes it is added. The peculiarity of dropping the 'n' sound is also found in the Khandeshi dialect,—

Bhit - wall - for bhint
Chich - tamarind - for *chinch*
Ut - camel - unt
Pākh - wing - *pankh*

The addition of 'n' sound which is also one of the characteristics of all the dialects of Konkan is found in the following words.—

Ninghun	- having started	-	*nighun.*
Ungavane	- rise	-	*ugavane*
Mānzā	- mine	-	*māzā*
Manga	- after	-	*mag*
Anjun	- yet	-	*ajun*

Some of the Marathi words ending in 'ā' appear as ending in 'o' in the Warli, and the plurals of such words as end in 'e' in Marathi end in 'a' in Warli. Thus *āmbā* mango. *āmbo*; *ghodā* horse *ghodo*; *paisā* pice *paiso.* This is a trait of the Konkani dialect also where words like *ghodo, bhoplo, choutharo* etc., are common. The plurals are *āmbe* (Warli) *āmba*; *ghode* (W) *ghoda*; *paise* (W) *paisa* etc. Such words are mostly found in the dialect of the northern Warlis.

Some of the words ending in 'en' sound appear as ending in 'ān' sound in the Warli. Thus.—

Kelen	- plantain	- *kelān*
Sonen	- gold	- *Sonān*
Rupen	- silver	- *Rupān*
Kombden	- chicken	- *kombadān*
Tāmbden	- red	- *tāmbadān*

Sometimes the nominative singular of masculine noun ends in *u* after the old Marathi fashion. Thus :— *Nāranu, hātu* (bazaar), *chākaru* (servant). It may be noted that the nominative singular termination is 'u' in Dnyāneswari e. g. *yeru, dandu* etc. In Dnyāneswari there are many Konkani

words, some of which are also found in Warli dialect either in the same form or with very slight variation, thus:—*pālav* (*padar*) as a synonym of female puberty, *bhāte* (corn for maintenance), *mera* (boundary), *sāta* (bazaar), *sunen* (dog). *Sāta* is *hāt* in Warli, 's' changed to 'h' as in Khandeshi ; and *suenn* is *sunā*, both being nearer to the Sanskrit word *swan*.

In Konkani most of the relationship terms end in 'sh'. This is equally true of the Warli, except that such terms end in 's' instead of 'sh'. This is because the Warli dialect has more of dental 's' and less of palatal 's' (i. e. 'sh'). The Konkani and Warli relationship terms are as follows:—

Konkani	Warli
Āish (mother)	*Ās*
Bāpush (father)	*Bāpus*, or *bās*
Bhāush (brother)	*Bhās*.
Behnish (sister)	*Bahinis*.

Also *nandash*, *jaush* etc. (Konkani) and *mehnis*, *sālis* etc. (Warli).

The case terminations: The nominative singular is 'u', 'o' or 'ā'. The plural is 'a'. e.g. *deva* (gods).

The accusative is 'la' and not 'lā' as in Marathi. Thus *māla* to me, *tula* to you. *Rāmāla* etc. The plural is 'nā' or 'la' thus *ghodyānā* or *godyālān*. The instrumental is 'ān' and not 'ne' as in Marathi. Thus *rāmān*, *mānsān*' etc. The plural terminations are 'ni' or 'hi'. Sometimes the instrumental termination is accompanied irregularly by an aspirate. Thus *tyāhān* or *tenhā* by him, *mihin* by me, etc. Instrumental in the sense of 'by' or 'with' is expressed by the termination *khāl*. Thus *kurhādi khāl* by an axe, *kyā khāl* with what. The dative suffix is *la* like the accusative. Besides, in the Davar, another dative suffix is *day*. Thus *mānsā-la* or *mānsā-day* to man. The *plural* terminations are like those of the accusative and also *day*. The ablative sense is conveyed by using a suffix like *shi* or *pāyshi*. Thus *bāvitshi* from the well, *tyāpāyshi* from him. In Ahirani the ablative term is *pān* e. g. *tyānpān* which is very near to Warli *tyāpāy*. The genitive is *chā* or *zā* like the Marathi, but the Gujarati *nā* which is found in Khandeshi or Kātkari is not prevalent. Only in the extreme north, this *nā* is rarely used, e. g, *tyāne*-his,

instead of *tyāche*. The locative is both *āt* and *mā* in the sense of 'in'. The first is Marathi while the second is Gujarati and only used by the Davars. Thus — *gharāt* or *gharāmā* — in the house.[1] *Ma* and *mā* are common in the Khandeshi and *ma* in the Panchali, a dialect of Buldhana (C. P.). The Panchali is *wāwar ma* in the field. Another locative termination, which is found only in the Warli songs, is *mazār*, thus *dunyā mazār* in the world. *Mazār* is also a locative termination in the Khandeshi, e. g. *khet-mazār* in the field.

Like Konkani, *ni* is added to the verb form to indicate the past tense. In Warli *ni* is used as a feminine termination and *no* as the masculine. Both the suffixes are common among the Davars only. Thus—*kat jāyani*—where had you been? *khalevar jāyani*–had been to the threshing floor; *kalik tādi opani*–how much toddy did you give ?[2] Sometimes only 'n' is added to the verb inflection to indicate the past tense.[3] Thus—*nighin*—started—(Marathi) *nighālā*. Among the Davars, the past-tense of *jā*—to go, and *ye*—to come, is *gyāv* and *yāv* respectively and not the Marathi *gelā* and *ālā*.[4].

The present participles are formed simply by adding 's' to the word, e. g. *jās*—going, *karas*—doing, *bolas*—speaking etc.[5] Imperative singular is formed by adding *jo* to the verb inflection and plural by *jā*. Thus *dhavjo*—wash, *karjo*—do, and *dhavjā*, *karjā* etc.

Ya may be changed to *ja* as follows :—

Yama	— god of death	— *jam.*
Yuga	— age	— *jug.*
Yugma	— pair	— *jugmā.*
Bhāryā	— wife	— *bhārjāy.*

Sh may be changed to *kh* as in—

Sheshnāg	— shesha serpent	— *shekhanāg.*
Purusha	— Oh, man,	— *purkhā.*
Visha	— poison	— *vikh.*

1. cf. Kātkari—*gharāt* or *gharāmā*—in the house.
2. cf. Ahirani, *Karani* (did), *Opani* (gave), *Khādani* (ate), also cf. Kātkari, *Rahnā* (he lived), *Adchan pādni* (difficulty arose).
3. cf. Naikdi (Surat), *Lāgin* (he began), *Hoijin* (he became).
4. cf. *gyā* (he went) in Khandeshi and Kātkari.
5. cf. Kātkari, *kuthas*—thou beatest, *rahas* thou livest.

Like Khandeshi, sometimes hard 't' is used for soft 't Thus—*māṭi* for *māti*, *hujaṭyā* for *hujjat*.

There is a separation of conjunct consonants as in Konkani of lower Marathi.

Shukrawār	— Friday	— *Sukurwār*.
Prajā	— people	— *parjā*.
Lagna	— marriage	— *lagin*.
Parameshwara	— God	— *paramesar*.
Dharitri	— Earth	— *dhartari*.
Prān	— soul-life	— *parān*.

Words not in use in Deccan and found in the South Konkan dialect are also seen in Warli; e. g. *nimbar* (sun-shine), *bāil* (wife or woman), *gho* (man or husband)—in Warli *goho* in the same sense, *devar* (to place), *dis* (day) etc.

Some of the words peculiar to the North Konkan are found in Warli:—

Asage (whole), *bije* (other), *bāpus* (father,-South Konkan also), *āis* (mother-Warli *ās*), and *mere* (near).

On the other hand some Warli words can be found in Varhadi dialects:—

Avandā—this year (South Konkan also), *vaje-vaje*—slowly (in use among the Southern Warlis).

Warlis very rarely use the cerebral 'l' and 'ṇ'. The dental 'l' and 'n' are very common, e. g. *pāni* (water), *kansari* (corn), *tala* (lake) and *kamal* (lotus).

The Warli word *dhavaleri* has also an interesting derivation. "One Rupāi alias Mahadambā, who was the disciple of Chakradhar Swāmi and a cousin of Nāgadevāchārya, flourished as a contemporary of Dnyānadeva, i. e. about 1290 A. D. Her *dhavale*—women's songs—are famous."[1] The priestess sings *dhavale*, hence her designation—*dhavaleri*.

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1. Kulkarni, "Marathi Bhāshā, Udgam āni Vikās." pp. 181-182. (translation).

Some of the Warli words are nearer to Sanskrit than to Marathi :—

Warli		Sanskrit
Jugmā	Pair	*Yugma.*
Bhārjāy	Wife	*Bhāryā.*
Dhartari	Earth	*Dharitri.*
Mahyā	Earth	*Mahi.*
Mānjā	Man	*Manuja*
Nāgoli	Betel leaf	*Nāgavalli.*
Sūr	Toddy-Wine	*Surā.*
Dhunane	Shaking	*Dhū.*
Hinvā	Cold	*Hima.*
Sunā	Dog	*Śwan.*
Turat	Quick	*Twarit.*
Bahu	Much	*Bahu.*
Gāvatāri	Cow	*Gāyatri.*
Jarā	Fever	*Jwara.*
Lohi	Iron	*Loha*
Kanwarā	Son	*Kumāra*

Most of these words occur in their songs.

Some of the words peculiar to Warli are given below. A few of them have also been noticed in other tribal dialects :—

Ḍhaḍkān (garment—belonging to *dhaḍa*—body), *nāng* (see), *wālukh* (cucumber), *hu* (also), *kay* (when—in Konkani), *lāho* (quick), *davar* (old man), *wādghā* (old man), *eksā* (one that—*are to*—Marathi), *vahār* (call), *hāri* (with, together)—*her* (see into-cf. Chodhri, *heri*—to see), *nikrā* (really), *zaj*, *zāsak* and *mas* (very much), *punavā* (horse), *poynār* (lotus plant—in songs), *āu* (wife, woman—also in Kunbi), *poshā* (son, boy-cf. *posā* in Kokani of Navsari, also Dhodia-*pohā*), *vepār* (cooking), *bāharā*, (broomstick), *rānga* (near), *yera* (cf. *yeru* in Dnyāneshwari). *nisud* (green).

The Gujarati element in Warli is chiefly in the vo cabulary This is particularly true of the Davar dialect. The locative suffix *mā* is from the Gujarati; so also the genitive *nā* in the extreme north. Some of the relationship terms are adopted from Gujarati in toto or with some variations. As for the Gujarati

influence on the Warli vocabulary, compare–*bijā* (another, *bijun*), *pote* (himself), *marel* (dead), *jarā* (a little), *māntuk* (vow—G. *māntā*–goddess), *tiḍka* (sun–G. *taḍku*), *op* (give–G. *āp*, also *op* in Kunbi), *hāṭ* (bazar), *bāv* (well–G. *bāvadi*, also in Konkani *bāv*), *kuwā* (well), *juṭhā* (false), *ghaṇā* (much) *parṇe* (married).

It may be due to the influence of Gujarati that some of the Warli nouns end in 'o', e. g. *āmbo*, *paiso* etc. This is however regularly the case in Konkani also. The formation of past tenses like *gyāv*—went are also nearer to Gujarati. (*Gayo–gyo gyā* (Ahirani) and *gyāv*.

The language of the specimen given by Dr. Grierson is a mixed form of speech. "In most respects it agrees with the current language of Thana. Other characteristics it shares with the Marathi of Poona and lastly there is an admixture of Gujarati...the mixed nature of the dialect will be seen from the beginning of the parable of the prodigal son which follows :—"[1]

"*Ekā mānsālā don poyare hote. Tyātshi lāhanā bāslā vichāra, bā, istelāchā bhāg jo mālā yel to de. Manghā bāni estelāchā bhāg sarakhā vātun dilhā. Manghū thodke disānin lāhanā poyarā asagha lāmb binje gāvānt ghen gelā. Manghā tatha jaun asagha istel udhalum tākala. Manghā tenhā asagha kharchun tākalyāvar tatha mothā dukāl paḍalā. Taishi tyālā hāl padala. Tyākhāl to tathache ekā asāmijaval jāun rahalā. Te asāmin tyālā dukara chārāyā tyāchyā shetānt davadalā. Tain dukara tarphala khāt ti pote khāun pot bharāva asa tyāla vātala. Pan tyālā koni kānhin dila nāhin. Tain tyāchi sud jarā valalin bolalā. Māze bāsche gharā kodhek majurānā khāyā milat āhe na mi bhukechā phār ābhadalat āhe. Mi athashi māze bākade jāin na tyālā sāngan, bā mi devāche ultān na tuze pudhān pāp kelā āhe. Āthāshi tuzā poyarā mi āhe asā tu samajshi nako. Tuzā mi chākaruch jasā āhe.*"

The dialect of the specimen is neither purely Davar nor that of the southern Warlis. It is not only a mixture of Marathi and Gujarati, but also a mixture of both the dialects prevalent in the Warli locality with affinities to the southern dialect. The same parable is given in the Davar dialect below :—

1. "Linguistic Survey of India," Vol. VII, p. 141.

" *Ekā mānsāday don poyare āsi. Temhāchā lāhano bāpāsala vichāra, bāpā istelāchā bhāg jo māla yel to op. Mangā bāpān istelāchā bhāg sarkhā vātu opi. Mangā thoḍek disān lāhano poyaro asgha dur bije gāvāmā ghen gyāv. Mangā tathā jān asgha istel udhalun tāki. Mangā tyāhān asgha kharchun tāklyāvar tatha mato dukāl padi. Tasa tyāla hāl padi. Tyākhāl to tathache ekā asāmipāy jān rahalā. Te asāmin tyāla dukara chārayā tyāchyā setāmā davadi. Tay dukara tarphala khāt ti pote khān pot bhārāva asa tyāla zālā. Pan tyāday konhā kāhi opi nāhi. Tay tyāchi sud jarā valali na bolalā. Mānze bāpsāche gharā kalek majurāṅnā khāyā milat āhe na mi bhukechā ghanā ābhadalat āhe. Mi athashi mānze bāpāche vāta jān na tyālā sāngan bāpā mi devāche ultān na tuze mohara pāp kari āhe. Āthāshi tuzā mi poyarā āhay asa tu sumjuch nako. Tuzā mi chākaruch jasā āhay.*"

The difference between the two specimens is clearly visible in the use of the past tense. In the former the past tense is more of the Marathi type, while in the latter it is of the older form. The suffixes like *day* (dative) and *mā* (locative), are peculiar to the dialect of the Davar section of the tribe. The Gujarati influence can be marked in the use of words like *temhāchā* for *tyātshi*-out of the two, *lāhano poyaro*-younger son for *lāhanā poyarā. asāmipāy*[1]-with a man for *asāmijaval, ghanā* much for *phār* and *kalek*-many for *kodhek.*

The dialect of the Southern Warlis is nearer to that of the Kunbis spoken in that locality. Besides the subtle difference in toning or in shortening or lengthening of words, the southern dialect shows the following main differences as compared to the northern one :—

The first person past tense in the southern dialect is invariably after the Kunbi fashion, e. g. *baslūn*—I or we sat. *gelūn*—went, *ālūn*—came etc. All the letters in a word are spoken quite distinctly with equal force on all. Thus, *vāchatho, karatho* and not like *vāchto, karto* as in Marathi, where the middle letters *cha* and *ra* are pronounced hurriedly. ' t ' is often changed to ' th ' as is seen in the above words, and the original ' th ' is sometimes changed to hard ' th '. Thus, *eṭha*-here, *teṭha*-there. The older forms of the past tense, as found in the Davar dialect, are peculiarly absent in the southern one.

1. Cf. Gujarati *pāse*, Warli *pāy*, Khandeshi *pān* and Marathi *pāshi.*

The following short story of the jackal and the elephant narrated by Warli children in infant class of one of the schools in the southern locality may be taken as a specimen of their dialect :—

"*Ekā rānāt ek hothā hāthi na ek hothā kolhā. Kolhā hotā labād. To hāthilā kāy sānga, chal jāv āpun ūs khāyā. Jātā jātā telā lāgalā gāl* (mud). *Kolhā gelā tad tad udūn. Pan hāthi gelā rutūn. Na tentach melā.*"

Warlis have a peculiar knack of describing an incident or narrating a story with proper gestures and acting. They enter into minute details and in order to express themselves realistically, they try to reproduce a story or some dialogues in it in the original language e. g. Gujarati or pure Marathi as the case may be. When one narrates, people round him listen to him most attentively and sometimes repeat the last word of the speaker. To illustrate:—The speaker—" *Tatha ek ghodo ubho rahela.*" (There was one horse standing). The listener–"*Rahela*". Occasionally, the listener nods his head saying, yes, yes, which is known as *hakār* (saying yes–*ha*). Even the Warli boys in the schools use this *hakār*. I remember an incident of this kind during my visit to a Warli school a few years ago, when one boy told the story and another stood before him simply to say *hā hā* (yes yes) after every sentence.

The Warli language is slowly undergoing a change due to the contact and influence of their neighbours and caste Hindus. Some of the words, such as *punavā* (horse), *poyanār* (lotus plant), *purkhā* (man), *kanyā* (daughter) etc., found in their ritual songs, are no more in use in the spoken language. Even their ritual songs show a tendency of change for they are handed down from one generation to another orally. People being illiterate, the language was never a written one. As we come from the north to the south, the language becomes more and more Marathi and in the south it becomes almost undistinguishable from the dialect of the Kunbis. The influence of Gujarati on the Dāvar dialect is unmistakable and the use of the archaic forms is more prevalent in it. Though the peculiar traits of the Dāvar dialect are not visible in the speech of the southern Warlis, they have been noticed in their (southerners') ritual songs. The form like *kara* – he does – which has been preserved in their songs,

is *karatho* in their speech. Such forms e. g. *kara* – does, *bola* – speaks, etc. are common in the Dāvar dialect. We may infer from this that the Dāvar dialect is the older of the two. In fact the very connotation of the word *Dāvar* may suggest this. *Dāvar* means old (man). The section of the Warlis which is older, is called *Dāvar* and their dialect too is accordingly old.[1]

From this linguistic study, I am inclined to agree with Mr. Kulkarni in saying that these people might have come down to Konkan from Gujarat. There are still a few Warlis living in South Gujarat and in the Dharampur and Bansda States of the Surat Agency. Warlis in Thana invariably point to a village in the north as their former home. It may be that the Warlis in olden times were called the *Varli jāt* – a tribe from the north.

If the words *Dhor* and *Dāvar* can be interpreted as conveying a sense of 'old', there is no reason why the same interpretation cannot be put on the word *Dhodia*. Warlis and Dhodias perhaps formed one tribe in olden times, the older section of the two being the Dhodias (Dhoria-Dhor). Warlis believe that their tribal god, Naran Dev, was first with Dhodias, who left them and joined Warlis. This supports that Dhodias were only an older section of one tribe. It may be noted that Dāvar women still wear the brass rings after their Dhodia sisters' fashion.

As Northerners, it is likely that in ancient times the Warli home might have been located somewhere between the ranges of the Vindhyas and the Satpuras where Nishadas lived and with whom Warlis are identified by some through the Bhils.

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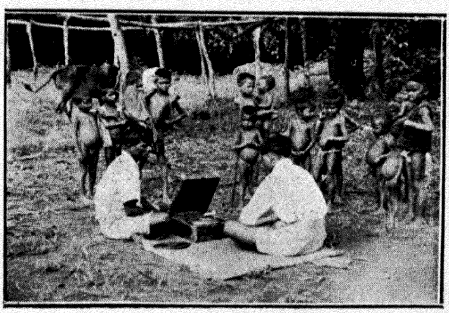
1 cf. Dhor Kolis - Older Kolis - as against the Son Kolis – younger Kolis. Dhor – *dodda* (Kanarese) big in the sense of old... Bombay Gazetteer Vol. XIII, Part I, p. 67



Rain-umbrella



Group of children



Children enjoying gramophone records

CHAPTER IX

PROPERTY VERSUS POVERTY

(i) *Agriculture*:—The Warlis are more or less a settled tribe living on agriculture. There is not a family which is directly or indirectly un-connected with some sort of agricultural farming. They are out and out cultivators and take pride in calling themselves so. A Warli is, however, not a skilled agriculturist. He is following the same good old practice of farming like his forefathers. He is quite ignorant of the new and improved methods of agriculture. He is neither industrious nor prudent like his Dhodia or Kokna brother. A Dhodia is regarded as a better cultivator inasmuch as he can produce more crop from the field than a Warli. So also the Kokna, who is reputed to be eating his bread while ploughing the field. A Warli loathes steady work. From time immemorial they had to work very little and the result of this is that laziness has been the trait of the tribe. He does not take pains during the summer either to level his field or to construct proper bunds for the same. Many a Warli does not possess his own bullocks. The quality of the seeds is not fine. The fields are not properly ploughed. All these factors combined bring a meagre crop to him. The pitiable thing is that a Warli does not realise this. He is satisfied with whatever little he gets which has made him most unambitious and checked his very progress.

If he has displayed any interest and skill in any art it is only in farming, though he is not to be considered an expert cultivator. Being a tiller of the soil, he holds both the soil and crops in high reverence; all the functions relating to agriculture like reaping, threshing and sowing are accompanied by rituals. Respect for corn has been almost his religion so much so that he attributes the good or bad results in his crops to his gods irrespective of the consideration of rain and other natural factors. Year after year he performs the *dev* with a blind faith and hopes that he will give him plenty but never realises that much depends on his own skill in husbandry.

These false religious notions of his are responsible, in no small measure, for making him but a poor farmer. Even in this one and sole profession, the tribe has not come out much successful. All that is said above applies generally to the tribe as a whole with few exceptions who are genuine farmers. Warlis will improve as agriculturists only when they know the new and proper methods of tilling and discard their implicit faith in gods as givers of good crops.

Agriculture is neither a business nor a concern for profit to them. The one idea, pure and simple, in cultivating lands is to get a living for the year. One can hardly find a Warli, who can afford to sell corn produced by him. On the contrary he has to buy the same sometime during the year. The low prices[1] of rice do not, therefore, directly affect the interests of these people. But indirectly, they are hit by them, inasmuch as they have to pay a greater quantity of corn by way of interest for the loans.

(ii) *Corn – a medium of exchange*:—Money is not the only medium of exchange in the Warli society. Ricecorn equally takes its place in many cases, especially in purchasing dry fish, salt and such other things. Proportionately, they pay more in doing this, but they fail to realize it owing to their ignorance. Besides, they have to pay in kind because they have no cash. Interest on loans, hire for bullocks for farming purposes during the rainy season, wages for service and labour, casual or permanent are all paid in kind.

(iii) *Agricultural Seasons*:—Warlis who live in or near the coastal villages do not much care to cultivate lands on leases, as odd labour is available throughout the year at reasonable wages. In the forest area, labour is very scanty. Warlis cultivate lands of their masters on leases. Some of them have been fortunate in securing the 'wood-land' and other plots from Government on certain conditions. Very few of them own their own carts and bullocks. Invariably every family has its own plough. In fact they measure the land under cultivation in terms of a plough. A Warli farmer cannot tell how many acres or gunthas

1. The prices of paddy and other articles in this chapter refer to the year 1935.

of land he cultivates. He says " I cultivate land of one plough or two ploughs " i. e. land which can be tilled by one plough with one pair of bullocks.

The agricultural season begins with the advent of the rains. For sowing and planting of rice-corn the soil of the field has to be tilled by means of a plough to which bullocks or buffaloes are yoked. At the approach of the first showers in June, Warlis visit the nearest villages with a view to secure a pair of bullocks for the monsoon from Hindu or other land-owners who have extra pair or pairs of bullocks. The land-lords find it difficult to maintain extra bullocks in the rainy season as they have to exact little work from them. Besides, it is very inconvenient to keep extra cattle during the monsoon as the sheds for the cattle are small and the same cannot be accommodated therein. The land-owners are, therefore, willing to dispose them of for the rainy season on contract. The bullocks are returned in October after the rains are over.

The following terms are usually embodied in such contracts :—

1. The Warli taking the bullocks for his use will take proper care of the animals and see that they are well fed. They must be sufficiently strong when returned so as to satisfy the owner.

2. He will pay 8 faris or 2 maunds of rice-corn as hire for using the bullocks.

3. He will give some sundry things as cucumbers, beans etc. to the owner at diwali.

If he is found to have taken proper care of the bullocks, the owner gives them every year to him for agricultural purposes. Warlis are generally reluctant to have buffaloes on hire as they require more grass and fodder than the bullocks. Besides they are very slow at work.

On the hilly and rocky soil, especially on the slopes of the small hillocks, the bullock-plough is little used. Men do the tillage with small iron tools, like *kudali* or *tikam* (pick axes).

During the summer the stock of their corn is almost exhausted, so much so that many of the families have hardly any

corn to sow. They therefore run to the land owner or savkar for seeds in the nick of time. It is not always that they get good seeds for sowing and consequently the yield is much less and qualitatively inferior to normal one.

The practice that has been followed is that the borrower is to repay double the quantity he takes for sowing. It is only left to the imagination of the reader what sort of a farmer the Warli is who does not even possess his own seeds to sow and for which he has to depend on others. It is needless to say that agriculture is not a paying concern to such farmers.

The Warlis use coarse, rough and big seeds. The crops are ready in early October. They cannot afford to use fine seeds like *kolum*, because those crops get ready late and require a greater quantity of water. The farms of the Warlis are shallow and store a little quantity of water. As such they are not helpful for sustaining the finer quality of rice plants. They have to depend solely on rain water, no arrangements being made to get water from lakes and streams. In bad years they are the persons who are hit most. The rough quality of rice does not fetch them as high a rate as the fine one does.

The harvest which falls in the months of October and November is another busy time for the Warlis as farmers. This is the season when there is a great demand for labour. All the adult members of the family go to reap fields in these days. The wages on an average are three annas per diem per person in coastal villages. In the interior, it is two annas or four seers of corn. Both men and women take part in reaping, but men do the heavier work. Thus piling the bundles into big heaps is entrusted to men, while women carry the bundles to the heaps on their heads.

No time is lost in threshing the corn after it is reaped. The preceding year's stock is almost exhausted during the monsoon and the need for corn is very urgent. New corn is not cooked in the house unless the corn-ceremonies are performed at the time of threshing the corn in the field. Besides corn reaping, Warlis are also busy in the months of October and November with cutting hay. In villages both near the coast and in the interior where grass is grown on *varkas* lands, Warlis and other

tribes like the Dublas and the Dhodias have hardly any time to spare at this juncture. During the rainy season, particularly during the period between the plantation and harvest, they have to while away their time uselessly and are hard pressed for want of food. This is an opportune time for the land-lords and the grass merchants to advance money to these people to secure their cheap services for hay-cutting. Five hundred small bundles weighing approximately a pound each make a *ganji* or a heap. Wages for making a *ganji* are a rupee. When money is given in advance a *ganji* is made for twelve annas only, no interest being charged. Thus by giving money beforehand, the land-lords make a profit of four annas per rupee. Two men cut as much grass as is required to make a *ganji* in a day. However, they prefer to do this work during their spare time, i. e., in the mornings. From 11 O'clock in the morning till sun-set, they do regular reaping in the fields on daily wages.

The grass industry is developed only in those places which are accessible by roads from the Railway stations. Many Warli families migrate to distant places in this season to cut grass as they accept money in advance for this purpose.

These two months are really a boom period of the year for this tribe. A prudent man can easily earn as much in this period as he can during the rest of the year. But it is too much to expect foresight on the part of Warlis. Besides, this is just the time when Malaria is rampant in this area and many a person is confined to his house.

After the harvest is over, the slack season begins. Except those in the coastal villages, they do not get casual labour. From December to June, they have nothing much to do except in the summer when they have to prepare themselves by burning brushwood in those fields where seeds are to be sown. For burning ground for this purpose, they chiefly use the dried cow-dung, brushwood and dried leaves of trees. The whole of their winter and spring are spent practically in collecting cowdung and other materials. As these people have not sufficient cattle, they have to wander every day for collecting cow-dung. Women and children are particularly busy in this work. Men either spend their time in levelling the fields (if they are wise

enough to realize its value) or in collecting brushwood, thorny plants etc. from the jungles.

(iv) **Other Occupations**: As said before, the main occupation of the tribe is agriculture and agricultural labour. In the forest areas, the people do not get enough casual labour for the year. This is not so in the coastal areas where many persons are engaged either in casual or permanent labour. Out of eighty-five families examined, only one family was found to be maintaining itself on occupation other than agriculture. This family was out and out living on domestic service.

The following table shows the side-occupations in which the Warli families are employed :—

TABLE I

Side occupations	*Eastern locality*	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
Agriculture[1]	1	...	...	1
Service	3	2	9	14
Pensioners	2	...	...	2
Plying carts	...	12	5	17
Carpenters	...	1	...	1
No side occupation	32	8	10	50
	38	23	24	85

Out of the 85 families examined, only 34 or 40 per cent. were following other occupations besides agriculture. But the majority had to fall back upon agriculture alone and were idle in the off-season for want of work. Such families were 50 or 59 per cent. of the total number.

It will be seen from the table above that the Mokhada Warlis—the easternmost locality – have entirely to depend on agriculture for their living. Out of 38 families from this locality only 6 had secondary occupations and 2 of them were pensioners. I doubt if the number of pensioners is more than 3 or 4 in the whole Peta, as very few men were and are employed in the Government service. One of the pensioners was a teacher and the

1. Except this family, the main occupation of all the other families was agriculture.

other a Forest Guard. Most of the families are without any employment throughout the year, and the agricultural income is hardly sufficient for their maintenance.

The Mokhada Warlis were the poorest I met. Mokhada Peta is a hilly tract and plains and fields are very rare. The chief crops of the lands are the *Nagli* and *Vari* grown on the slopes of the little hillocks. Very little rice is grown. Lands are anything but fertile, and though the average rain-fall is about 80 to 90 inches, there is a scarcity of water even for drinking during the dry days. The soil is rocky and the wells are very deep. Tanks are conspicuously absent.

Another reason why the Mokhada Warlis are unable to find other occupations is that they are very much cut off from road communications. There are villages to which we can have no access by cart roads. Thus they are prevented from having carts for plying the same for hire. The whole of the Peta is very backward, and the aboriginals therein can hardly have a hand-to-mouth living during all the months of the year.

From the Central part, 12 out of 23 families were employed in plying hire carts either carrying timber or charcoal. I am afraid this state of affairs is not true generally in the case of Warlis living in the central parts. The 23 families were taken from two villages which were close to the Dahanu Jawhar road with a heavy traffic.

It is natural that many families in the villages on the road side have bullock carts and are busy carrying loads to the Railway stations or the creek ports for about six months in a year. The Warlis in the central areas are only slightly better off in this respect than their eastern brethren; and they experience practically the same difficulties as the Mokhada Warlis in finding other occupations.

The above statement is fairly true in the case of the Warlis near the coast. They find sufficient casual labour throughout the year in the coastal villages and many of them are long time servants of the land-lords and sawkars.

Besides agriculture, cart plying is the recognized profession of the Warlis. Some Warlis are employed as domestic and

agricultural servants. Many are employed in the forest coupe works for some months of the year. Very few indeed are in the literary and executive services. So far as my knowledge goes only about a dozen young men are employed as teachers in the Primary Schools in Mokhada Peta.

(v) **Cattle**:—Cattle are regarded as the wealth of the agriculturist. But these poor people are devoid of cattle just as they are of money. Cattle and particularly the bullocks are necessary for farming in India. Cattle, like their masters, are semi-starved and anything but strong. The bullocks and cows are of the most ordinary breed. On account of this semi-starvation, bullocks are not sufficiently strong to carry heavy loads and cows hardly give half a seer of milk. In fact cows are not used for milking purposes. Not only do these people not drink milk, but they do not care to feed their babies with cow's milk, the mother's milk being considered more than enough for babies. To make one's living by selling milk is almost an absurdity in the forest area, because nobody wants to buy milk. So far as the income from and other advantages of milk are concerned the cow can be said to be the least paying animal. She is thought useful for breeding bulls which are helpful to them for ploughing. The following table will give a rough idea as to how many families possess cattle :—

TABLE II

	Eastern area	*Central area*	*Coastal area*	*Total*
No. of families having cattle	15	14	13	42
No. of families having no cattle	23	9	11	43
	38	23	24	85

It will be seen from this table that only 42 out of 85, or nearly 50 per cent. of families have cattle. The rest go without them. This is a very sorry tale so far as farmers are concerned especially when they live in forests where there is ample pasture for the cattle. The Mokhada Warlis are again backward in this respect also. The reason why very few of them

have got cattle is that they can make no use of the bullocks during the dry season, first because there is no work for plying carts and secondly many villages are inaccessible by roads. In their present stage, even if they think of purchasing bullocks, it is certainly not advisable as they have to borrow money for this ; and once they go to sawkar they are doomed for ever.

Among the cattle, bullocks and cows are found most. Warlis hate keeping buffaloes as feeding them means a question of great expense. During the monsoon the cattle are exclusively fed on green fodder. In summer the cattle become very weak as they have almost nothing to eat at home and in some villages they have to be driven two or three miles away twice a day for water.

Children are asked to graze cattle. The energy and time of a child are wasted even for the sake of grazing one cow. They are not considerate enough in giving a fairly large number of cattle in charge of one boy thus saving the labour of many others. Thus, for example, seven families could co-operate in this respect and entrust the work to boys in turns for a week. Children could be conveniently spared for schooling by such an arrangement.

(vi) **Land**:—Though they are cultivators, very few indeed have lands of their own. A majority of them are tenants of the land-lords and sawkars. The rents are far from being moderate. Ordinarily, half the yield of the field is paid to the land owner as a lease rent. In many cases it is more than half. Supposing a farmer produces 20 maunds of paddy every year, ten maunds out of this must necessarily go to the sawkar. The tenant has to bear all the expenses for cultivation, the Government assessment being paid by the land owner. About 6 maunds are left to the farmer for his consumption. As lease holders they have very little chance of improving their condition.

That very few families hold land of their own can be seen from the following statement :—

TABLE III

	Eastern	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
Families owning land	2	11	4	17
Families not owning land	36	12	20	68
	38	23	24	85

Out of the 85 families examined from three different localities, only 17 were found to possess their own land. I should say that even this figure is much above the normal inasmuch as the number of families owning lands from the Central part is much larger, the two villages from which the families were studied, being quite close to the road and avowedly in much better condition than the rest from the central locality.

Even with figures quoted above, the percentage of land-owning families is only 20. On an average, however, not even 10 per cent. have such lands. The land owners from among them have not big estates. The lands are only small plots. Among the seventeen cases of land owners the highest assessment paid by one was Rs. 7/- only.

In most of the villages in Warli localities, the village patels are Warlis; as such they enjoy the Government inam lands and a small annual pay of about Rs. 10 to Rs. 20.

Big Warli land-lords are rarely to be seen. I came to know of only two such land-lords. It would be quite interesting to see the conditions of these as distinct from those of others.

Nawshā Jivan Jādudā is the patel of Dhanoli and pays an annual assessment of nearly Rs. 150. He is an old man of about 60 and is reported to be a great drunkard. A good deal of his property is mortgaged to the Sawkar. His land is mostly leased out to other tenants for cultivation. Inspite of his possessing such a big estate, the women from his house work on casual wages at the neighbouring Sawkars. One can hardly see a better type of culture than what is seen in ordinary Warli families in his house and he can hardly be distinguished as a landlord from other Warlis.

Another man was Surmāji Dowadā from Kainad. He was reported to be rich and it is said that once he had carried two small bags of rupees (silver coins only) to the Taluka place in order to purchase land. After his death his sons have, however, lately sold off his land, for which they were paying Rs. 60/- by way of assessment, to pay off the debts, and have now land paying an assessment of Rs. 12|-only. The sons have two well built houses worth three to four thousand rupees. (Both these families are not included in the 85 families examined in details).

(vii) **Wood-land Plots**:—Most of those who are fortunate to have lands of their own only possess the wood-land or *gur charan* plots given to them by Government on certain conditions and free of occupancy price, the chief conditions being that the plots must be brought under cultivation and the plot-holder has to prevent and report wasteful lopping of trees in the vicinity of his plot. The tribe would be very much benefitted if more such plots could be made available for them. But for one reason or other, this has not been done. One of the greatest difficulties for them is that wood-land plots are now-a-days not available.

The reasons why few persons only have plots are roughly as under:—

(1) Government have no spare lands at present, or very few if at all they have, to lease out as plots to the accredited members of the forest tribes.

(2) Even when such plots are available, these people are ignorant of their existence or of the procedure to secure them.

(3) Even when they know that the plots are available, the subordinate Revenue officers like talatis do not pay any heed to them in helping them to acquire the same.

(4) Plots in the *Varkas* lands cannot be easily converted into rice fields. As such they pay very little. In some cases the plots are forfeited to Government, the conditions being not fulfilled within the prescribed time.

(5) Landlords or their agents create difficulties in the way of these people in getting plots as they (Warlis) would cease to cultivate their (landlords') lands.

(6) Last, but not the least, there is neither a desire nor ambition in them to improve their lot by having lands of their own.

(viii) **Family—An economic unit**:—So far as income and expenditure are concerned, family is regarded as an economic unit in this chapter. The head of the family is regarded an important person because usually he is advanced in age at any rate the oldest male member. When carrying on inquiries regarding the budgets of the families, the youngsters appeared

to have no idea about their earnings or expenses; only the elders were in a position to supply the information. Because of the omnipotence of the family, property is associated with the family rather than with the individual.

The universality of marriage is responsible for the growth of family life in Warli society. This is the reason why a family with a single member is hardly to be seen in this society. Two members—a husband and wife—are the minimum strength of the family. It can be seen from the table given below that the Warli families are small as regards the number of members.

TABLE IV (a)

Classification of families by the number of persons in each.

No. of persons in family	*No. of Families*				*Total No. of persons*
	Eastern	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*	
2	5	...	2	7	14
3	1	1	1	3	9
4	11	2	...	13	52
5	8	4	4	16	80
6	6	...	3	9	54
7	...	10	6	16	112
8	2	4	2	8	64
9	2	...	1	3	27
10	2	1	1	4	40
11	1	...	1	2	22
13	...	...	1	1	13
15	...	1	...	1	15
16	...	...	1	1	16
19	...	...	1	1	19
Total families	38	23	24	85	537

TABLE IV (b)

No. of persons in each family	*No. of families*	*Percentage*
From 1 to 7	64	75·3
„ 8 to 10	15	17·6
„ 11 and over	6	7·1
Total	85	100·0

The average strength of the Warli family is 6·3. Only 7 per cent of the families have 11 or more persons in them. Out of the 6 big families, 5 were from the central and coastal localities. These five were also the joint families. Another thing which obviously strikes us is that the majority of the families contain 2 to 7 members each. (Not a single family out of the 85 consisted of one member). This small unit is invariably composed of the couple and their children. This smallness of the family is mainly due to the tendency of these people to live under the roof of the father during the latter's life time and to separate after his death. Brothers hardly live together. All the members of the family are earning inasmuch as every body, including the children, are working. Every item of expenditure is considered in relation to the family and not the individual members. Thus the whole family including children enjoys toddy on holidays. And all the members of the family buy new clothes at Diwali.

(ix) **Property versus Poverty** :– Property plays an important part in the discussion of the economic conditions of any people. But in case of Warlis poverty is the main consideration. We have to see not how much they have, but how much they do not have. They are born, bred and buried in poverty. The birth of a child is surely an occasion of rejoicing in the family. But the birth ceremonies are performed by borrowing money to serve liquor to the invitees. So with the birth of the child the seed of its economic downfall is sown. Children go naked without clothes and proper nourishment. They begin the marital life with a burden of heavy debts on their shoulders. It is a pity that they do not even get bare food throughout the year. They die almost penniless and the death ceremonies too are celebrated with borrowed money. Poverty is, therefore, the very breath of the life of these people; nay, they are the very incarnation of poverty.

One is painfully struck to see the wretched condition these people live in. As said already very few have lands of their own. This is the state as regards immovable property. And what about the movables? Cattle they have very few; furniture none: Their huts are made of straw and reeds and are hardly worth Rs. 10. They are useless for dwelling in the rainy season

unless properly roofed before the rains. The whole hut can be pulled down and removed to a distant place in a few hours. The housewife rests satisfied with earthen vessels only. Clothes are no better than rags and ornaments are out of the question. Their earnings are very meagre and comparatively their expenses are also low—almost compulsory. Figures will perhaps paint a more realistic picture of their poverty than words.

The table given below deals with actual figures of 85 families examined from three different localities. 38 families in the eastern part are from 4 villages in the Mokhada Peta. The remaining families from the two localities are again from four villages, two central and two coastal. Outwardly, what would strike a reader is that few families have been studied. But it is submitted that they are representative of the divisions. Besides, the family budgets reveal very little variations in income and particularly in expenditure. The latter is almost stereotyped and pertains to the minimum and most essential requirements of the members of the family. It was thus thought advisable not to increase the bulk of the data :-

TABLE V (a)

Annual gross income by classes.[1]

Class of per family income per year			*Natural Divisions*			
		Rs.	*Eastern*	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total.*
Class	I	0— 25	...	...	1	1
„	II	26— 50	8	...	3	11
„	III	51— 75	6	3	3	12
„	IV	76—100	12	3	5	20
„	V	101—150	6	7	2	15
„	VI	151—200	4	7	2	13
„	VII	201—300	1	2	5	8
„	VIII	301—400	...	1	1	2
„	IX	401—500	...	...	1	1
„	X	501 and over	1	...	1	2
Total families			38	23	24	85

1. These are the incomes in the pre-war years.

Greatest difficulty was experienced in collecting information about these family budgets. Backward as they are, they are most reluctant to give out anything to one who is an utter stranger. The villagers were approached through the local Revenue or Forest Officers who were conversant with their conditions. The tribesmen themselves were ignorant about their own finances and it was really a difficult task to squeeze out any correct information from them. But they were taken into confidence through local influential men and being invited in groups were helpful to each other in giving particulars.

Gross income in the above table means an income from all possible sources. The items of income were divided into agriculture, (own lands or leases), labour (agricultural or otherwise) cart hire, bullock hire, service wages, sale of fowls, goats etc. The largest source of income was from agriculture. The family is considered a unit irrespective of the number of members in it. The income is gross and is not arrived at after excluding business or any other necessary expenses. The rents or taxes are shown on the expenditure side.

The families are classified into 10 divisions, the last being one in which the annual income is upto Rs. 25, and the highest shows the income of Rs. 500 and over. There was only one family whose income fell in the I class i. e. Rs. 0—25. This family came from a hamlet about three miles from the coast and included only two male members. The actual income as told by them was Rs. 21 only. This was the only instance of its kind and can be held negligible because perhaps the income was very much understated. It. is not physically possible for two persons to live on Rs. 21 for a year.

Two families were reported as having an income of Rs. 500 and over. The family in column 2 hailed from a small village near Mokhada and that in column 4 from a coastal village. Families that can be placed in class X are really very rare and the percentage from such isolated instances would not be reliable. The total annual income of the Mokhada family was Rs. 877. Such a large income in a Warli family is, however, due to an unusual factor. One of the members of the family is a first year trained primary teacher drawing Rs. 31 per month or Rs. 372 per year. The income of this family from agricultu-

ral sources was Rs. 450 per annum, and the teacher's pay added to this raised the total to a higher figure which is almost a phenomenon in this tribe. This can be pointed out as an outstanding example wherein the family had improved its economic status by means of education. This family was not only free from debts, but had also a saving of Rs. 400. It owned lands of its own and engaged two permanent servants to cope with the agricultural work. The family had nine members, namely, two men, three women and four children. The teacher was the eldest son of his father who had married two wives,—an indication of a man of property and position. This family possessed fifteen cattle and three ploughs. One very interesting thing about this family was that none of its members drank or smoked. This is above all the reason why it was free from debts and had a saving.

As a contrast to this, another rich family with an income of Rs. 600 was found to be in debts. The head of the family told me with pride that he could not pass a day without toddy in the season. This was primarily an agricultural family, only one adult man being employed as a Railway coolie on Rs. 15 per month. There were 16 members in this family with 12 adults including 5 men and 7 women. He was the biggest cultivator in that village, and had a plot of land for which he paid Rs. 7 by way of assessment. He was also the District Local Board voter.

TABLE V (b)—Percentages.

(*These are the percentages of the distribution by classes in Table V (a).*)

Class of per family income			*Natural Divisions*			
		Rs.	*Eastern*	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
Class	I	0—25	...	...	4·2	1·17
„	II	26—50	21·0	...	12·5	12·95
„	III	51—75	15·9	13·3	12·5	14·11
„	IV	76—100	31·7	13·3	20·8	23·52
„	V	101—150	15·9	30·2	8·3	17·65
„	VI	151—200	10·5	30·2	8·3	15·30
„	VII	201—300	2·6	2·7	20·8	9·41
„	VIII	301—400				
„	IX	401—500	2·4	4·3	12·6	5·89
„	X	501 and over				
		Total	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0

It may be seen from these figures that 23·5 per cent.—the highest—of the families are found to be in class IV, viz., Rs. 76–100. About 32 per cent. are classified below and above class IV respectively, that is in the groups of Rs. 26–75 and Rs. 101–200. The percentage in class I may be neglected for the reasons mentioned above. Families whose income exceeds Rs. 300 per annum are really few, only 6 per cent of the total. More than 50 per cent of the families have an annual income of less than Rs. 100.

Another important fact revealed by these figures is that in the eastern part there are more 'poor' families and that in the other two parts there are more 'rich' families. In other words, in eastern parts many families have an income of less than Rs. 100 each; their number being over 68 p. c. In the central part this percentage is only about 26, while that of the families deriving income of over Rs. 100 is about 73, and in the coastal area the latter percentage is 50. No doubt the inhabitants in the coastal and central parts are richer than their brethren in the interior, but these percentages do not show the exact state of affairs. Nearly half the families from the two villages of the central part were found plying carts. This is not true in the case of other villages in the same parts. Similarly one-third of the families from the two coastal villages were found to be maintaining themselves on the monthly wages of an adult mans which varied from Rs. 10 to 15, a decent figure so far as the Warlis are concerned. The percentages arrived at in the last column of the table V (b) may be taken as fairly true in that more than half the families have an earning capacity below Rs. 100.

The income-figures are far from satisfactory. It is difficult to imagine how these poor people manage to pass the 365 days of the year with such a low income. As is pointed out later, many families are in debts and many actually starve, partially may it be, at least for a few months of the year.

The yearly income in case of many families is so low that it is not sufficient to meet even their minimum requirements for the year. As a result of this many families show deficit budgets

The following table will show the deficit or surplus budgets of the 85 families examined for this purpose:—

TABLE VI (a)

Families with deficit or surplus budgets.

	Eastern	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
No. of families with deficit budgets	34	18	17	69
No. of families with balanced and surplus budgets. ...	4	5	7	16
Total families examined	38	23	24	85

TABLE VI (b)

Percentages of the above

	Eastern	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
Deficit	89·5	78·2	70·8	81·18
Saving or balanced ...	10·5	21·8	29·2	18·82

This shows that proportionately a very high percentage, viz., 81, of families has less income than expenditure; the latter includes the following items:—

(1) Taxes—by way of assessment or rent for leases.
(2) Cultivation expenses—either in the form of labour or bullock hire.
(3) Food.
(4) Clothing.
(5) Ceremonies and other compulsory expenses.
(6) Voluntary expenses like drinks and sundries.

Except the last item, all the first five are the essential items of their expenditure and may be taken as the minimum wants. It is pointed out later on, that the voluntary expenses are comparatively low. It means, therefore, that all the income does not go to meet even the barest needs of the people. Table VI (b) above proves once more that the eastern Warlis are more poverty-striken than the western. The percentages of the 'deficit' families among them comes to 90, and the same in the case of the remaining is 78 and 70 respectively.

Even those families which show a surplus of income over expenditure are not free from the clutches of poverty so far as

indebtedness is concerned. Thus out of 85 such families 8 were in debts inspite of the fact that their income exceeded the expenditure. This perhaps shows that the surpluses were not genuine. Including these 8 families in the 'poor' families, the percentages of those who get sufficient food for the year will be still lower, only 9 out of 100 families can be classed as 'happy in the sense that they are able to get food twice a day and can manage to meet their barest needs. These results bear out the fact that their income which is mainly from the agricultural source does not support them throughout the year and unless some side occupations are found for them to increase their income, they would continue to lead a semi-starved life.

Per Capita Income:—In the last two tables we have seen the income of the family and its financial position as regards the deficit or the surplus budgets. The per capita income per year for this tribe may be seen from the table below:—

TABLE VII (a)

Annual Gross Income by Classes

Class of per Capita Income			*Natural Divisions*			
			Eastern	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
			The number of families			
Class	I	Rs. 0–10	9	1	6	16
„	II	11–25	19	18	10	47
„	III	26–50	7	4	6	17
„	IV	51–100	3	0	2	5
	Total families		38	23	24	85

TABLE VII (b)

Percentages of the distribution by classes in table VII (a)

			Eastern	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
Class	I	Rs. 0–10	24·0	4·3	25:0	18·32
„	II	11–25	50·0	78·3	41·6	55.30
„	III	26–50	18·3	17·4	25·0	20·00
„	IV	51–100	7·3	0	8·4	5·88

N. B.—Income means gross per capita income of the family. Business expenses are not deducted from this income. Per capita means total income divided by the number of persons in the family without distinction of age and sex.

The distribution of classes here differs from that in the tables V (a) and V (b). Per capita income is so low that it is found necessary to restrict the number of classes and the amount to represent a correct state of affairs. Only in the case of five families per capita income varies from Rs. 51 to 100, and 16 families show the individual income below Rs. 10 per year. In table VII (b), 55·3 p. c. of the families are shown against class II. i. e. more than half the population of the tribe has a per capita income varying from Rs. 11 to 25 yer year.

The Central Banking Inquiry Committee has estimated the average income of an Indian agriculturist in British India at about Rs. 42 per year[1]: This is considered as a very unsatisfactory figure. But very few Warlis can boast to have this much income per head. The average income of a Warli as worked out from the families studied is only Rs. 16-13-8.

TABLE VIII (a)

Expenditure per Capita per year.

Class of per capita expenditure.	*Eastern*	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
I Rs. 0-10	...	...	...	...
II Rs. 26-50	11	13	14	38
III Rs. 10-25	24	10	8	42
IV Rs. 51-100	3	...	2	5
Total families examined.	38	23	24	85

TABLE VIII (b)

Percentages.

	Eastern	Central	Coastal	Total
Class I	...	...	...	...
Class II	29.0	56.5	58.3	44.7
Class III	63.1	43.5	33.2	49.42
Class IV	7,9	...	8.4	5.88

N. B.—Expenditure means gross per capita expenditure of the family including taxes and rents.

1. The Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee's Report Part I, 1931, p. 39.—Rs. 59 per head according to Sir M. Visvesvarayya, "Planned Economy for India" 1934, p. 32.

It would be worthwhile to compare this table with table VII showing the annual gross income by classes. The comparison proves beyond doubt the conclusion arrived at before, that in the case of the majority of the families, the expenditure greatly exceeds the income. There are no less than 16 families in class I of the table VII (a)-Income-, but in the table VIII (a), there is not a single family in this class. The reason is that per capita expenditure cannot possibly go below Rs. 10. It is interesting to note that the number of families in class II in table VII is slightly more than the number in the same class in table VIII. The figures given again widely differ in class III, which shows that many families spend actually more than what they earn.

It may be asked how is this possible? The answer is "by incurring debts"? It may also be made clear that the necessary expenditure is accounted in the family budgets and it is not unlikely that the actual expenditure amounted to less than what was represented, either because the family did not buy the required clothes for the year or ate less food for a few days of the year when the stock was exhausted. Many families spend more than what they get.

It is not that they are prodigal or foolish to spend more but that they are compelled to do so only to meet the most essential needs. The fact that more than three-fourths of the families have to spend in excess of their income amply proves how poverty has run amock in this tribe.

TABLE IX

Percentage distribution of expenditure by heads.

Main head	*Detailed head.*	*Eastern*	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*
Compulsory.	1. Food	64.8	67.2	66.8	66.4
	2. Clothing... ...	11.4	11.5	12.9	12.1
	3. Taxes	11.7	12.1	16.0	13.1
	4. Cultivation ...	10.7	4.5	...	5.0
	5. Ceremonies and other ...	1.3	1.7	1.0	1.2
Total compulsory	...	99.3	97.0	96.7	97.8
Voluntary, Toddy, tobacco etc....		0.7	3.0	3.3	2.2
Total number of families examined.		38	23	24	85

The items of expenditure are divided into two heads, compulsory and voluntary. The first four items may be accepted by all as compulsory expenses. The reason why ceremonies are included in the compulsory head is that they form part of the very life of these people. Every year the family has to perform certain rituals in honour of the deities. The ceremonies include these recurring rituals and not the occasional ceremonies like marriage or birth.

Voluntary expenses include money spent on liquor, tobacco and on such other miscellaneous items. It may be observed from the above list that the items of voluntary expenditure like education, doctor's fees, travel, furniture, recreations etc. are conspicuously absent in the case of Warlis. Drinks are the only luxury and recreation of theirs. Many people even do without lighting at night!

The major part of expenditure is spent on food to keep themselves alive. Next to that comes the item of taxes. As many of them have no lands of their own, they have to pay considerably by way of rents to the land owners. As few again have bullocks they have to hire the same for cultivation and pay rent for them. Cultivation expenses also include money spent on labour. Next is the item of clothing. It may be remembered that only necessary clothes have been taken into account in estimating the expenditure under this head. A Warli generally goes in for new clothes in diwali. He has no spare clothes. The percentage against the items on ceremonies is comparatively low because the major ceremonies are not included in it inasmuch as they are not annual. The voluntary expenses for liquor are also low. No one was able to tell exactly how much toddy or wine he drank every year. "We drink toddy whenever we have money," was the stock reply. The expenses under this head are bound to be under-estimated.

Food includes mainly rice and other corns like nagli. It is never expensive as it is very simple. Salt and sometimes dry fish—Bombay ducks—and pulses make their dish. Even partaking the simplest possible food, the expenditure on account of this item is proportionately more as compared to other items. This shows to what extent they have narrowed down their expenses on items other than food.

In column 4, no expenses are shown against cultivation in the case of coastal families. This is due to the fact that there was a small amount reported under this item, and it was consequently included in taxes. Besides the families examined for this purpose had their own bullocks. Co-operative farming is also in existence to a certain extent in so far as cultivators pool their resources by mutual exchange of labour and help in the form of bullock service.

The following table gives the average distribution of expenditure on the various groups according to income-classes :—

TABLE X

Income class Rs.	*No. of families*	*Average No. of persons per family*	*Percentage expenditure on* Food	Clothing	Taxes & cultivation	Miscellaneous.
I 50 & below	12	4·57	72·38	13·64	11·10	2·88
II 51 100	33	5·00	69·95	12·55	15·55	1·95
III 101 200	28	7·17	66·16	11·10	18·25	3·89
IV 201 300	5	6·40	66·66	16·78	10·84	5·72
V 301—400	4	10·25	64·42	10·07	22·28	3·23
VI above 400	3	14·33	53·62	10·64	30·78	4·96
All incomes	85	6·81	66·44	12·14	18·04	3·38

The expenditure of the family is shown in the four main groups, (1) Food, (2) Clothing, (3) Taxes and cultivation and (4) Miscellaneous. Food includes cereals, pulses, spices, fish etc.; Taxes include the assessment or the rent of the land, and costs of cultivation include the labour and bullock hire etc. Under the heading miscellaneous are included the expenses for rituals, tobacco, toddy etc.

The table brings out certain things very clearly. First it will be observed that nearly two-thirds of the total expenditure is on food only ; the next two highest groups being taxes and clothing. The miscellaneous expenditure is comparatively very low. This is due to the fact that every family has first to defray the expenditure on the necessary items like taxes, food and

clothing. Little remains to be spent on luxuries or such other items, like lighting without which they can do.

In the case of the poorest families, (Rs. 50 and below) the percentage expenditure on food is the greatest, and that in the case of the richest, (above Rs. 400) it is the lowest. The comparative food percentages show that as the income becomes greater, the percentage expenditure on food becomes less, except in the case of the IV class, viz. Rs. 201–300, where it is slightly higher.

Another important thing borne out by the table is that as the income becomes greater, the percentage expenditure on the taxes and cultivation also becomes greater. This means that the bulk of the income is from agricultural source and that more has to be spent to produce more yield, which means more income. Here again the IV income-class is an exception.

A third thing revealed by the table is that with the increase in the income, there is a corresponding increase in the average strength of the family. Here too the IV income-class does not support this statement.

It may be noted that the circumstances of the families in the IV class are so peculiar that this class, somehow or other, does not fit in this table. First, the families hold Government plots, the assessment for which is very low as compared to that of ordinary land. Their income is increased by other sources, such as plying of carts. This accounts for the low expenditure on taxes and cultivation. Consequently these families can afford to spend more on food even though the average number of persons constituting them is comparatively small. The percentage expenditure on the miscellaneous item is the greatest for this class. This too is not inconsistent with the facts stated above.

An important conclusion that can be drawn from the study of these figures is that the people can improve their economic position if they minimize the expenditure on taxes and cultivation, i. e. if they possess their own lands. Secondly, their agricultural income must be supplemented by income from other sources if they are to spend more on items like clothing along with food.

XI. SOME FAMILY BUDGETS

(1) *Budget of a Mokhada Family.*

Members :—Male 1, Female 1 Total 2.

Income		Rs.
Rice corn	50 maunds	100-0
Nagli	25 „	50-0
Vari	5 „	20-0
Tur	½ „	2-0
Casual labour 40 days at annas 2 each		10-0
Fowls		4-0
Total		186-0

Expenditure		Rs.
I. *Lease Rent.*		
Rice corn	28 mannds	56-0
Nagli	7½ „	15-0
Cash		4-0
		75-0
II. *Cultivation.*		
Bullock hire, 9 maunds		18-0
Labour		11-0
		29-0
III. *Food.*		
Rice corn 23 maunds at 2 seers per day per person		46-0
Salt		2-4
Bhaji (fish)		1-8
Dal		3-0
Spices		3-0
Extra		3-0
Total Food (rounding up)		59-0
IV. *Clothing.*		
For man : 2 waist coats		1-0
2 dhoties		1-0
2 lungotas		0-4
1 blanket		2-0
Total		4-4
For woman : 2 saris		4-0
4 bodices		1-0
Bangles		0-4
Hair oil		0-4
Total		5-8
Total clothing Rs. 9-12-0		
Rounding up to, 10- 0-0		

Income	Rs.	*Expenditure*	Rs.
		V. Annual rituals	1-0
		Total compulsory expenses	174-0
		VI. Voluntary expenses	
		Tea	12-0
		Wine	4-0
		Tobacco	4-0
		Total voluntary	20-0
		Grand Total	194-0

The income of this family is less than its expenditure. The purely agricultural income is Rs. 172, and the agricultural expenses are Rs. 104, thus leaving a profit of Rs. 68 only. The rent is Rs. 75 or 45 percent of the agricultural income. Out of Rs. 59 spent for food, Rs. 43 are for rice only. For 12 months they spent only Rs. 13 by way of extra items other than rice. The articles of clothing are the minimum requirements. The members of this family used to drink tea. It may be mentioned however, that very few families drink tea. This family has debts of Rs. 100.

(2) A Nikna Family (from the central part.)

Members: Male 2, Female 1, Children 4, total 7.

Income	Rs.	*Expenditure*	Rs.
1 From the plot	21-0	I (i) assessment	1-4-0
2 From lease lands	70-0	(ii) lease rent	5-0-0
	91-0	II Cultivation	0-0-0
3 Cart hire	72-0	III Food	105-0-0
4 Hay cutting	4-0	IV Clothing ...	16-0-0
5 Fowls	3-0	V Ceremonies ...	2-0-0
Total	170-0	Total compulsory	129-4-0

Income	*Rs.*	*Expenditure*	*Rs.*
		VI. Voluntary expenses.	
		tobacco	6-0
		drinks	7-0
		Total	13-0
		Grand Total	142-4-0

The family shows a saving. This is mainly due to the income on account of the plying of carts for about 6 months of the year. Secondly there are no cultivation charges, as the family possesses bullocks and no hired labour is required. It will be seen that purely agricultural income does not suffice for the food charges of the year. The family is, however, in debts.

(3) A Family from Jambu Pada, a village near the coast. Members: Male 3, Female 3, Children 4, Total 10.

	Income	Rs.		*Expenditure*	Rs.
I	Agricultural produce from lease lands ...	90-0	I	Lease rent	47-8
			II	Food	160-0
II	Service (as Railway coolie at Rs. 15 per month,	180-0	III	Clothing	34-0
			IV	Dev ceremonies	2-0
				Total compulsory	243-8
III	Casual labour	35-0			
IV	Hay cutting	8-0		All voluntary expenses	12-0
V	Other income	4-0			
	Total income	317-0		Grand Total	255-8

The family is practically maintained on the earning of one member which comes to Rs. 180. This earning is also responsible in showing a surplus of income over expenditure. The family has improved its economic condition because one member of it is engaged in service. One male member is serving a sawkar in lieu of debts incurred for his marriage.

APPENDIX

Minimum subsistence annual budget of a family of husband, wife and 2 children.

Item	*Expenditure*	
Paddy—1 khandi 14 maunds (at 2 seers per adult per day, and 1 seer per child per day)	Rs. 68-0	
Dry fish	2-4	
Salt (1 anna per week) ...	3-4	
Pulses (1 anna per week) ...	3-4	
Spices (chillies etc.) ... ... (1 anna per week)	3-4	
Onions (1 maund)	0-12	
Coconut oil	0-4	
Extra (sweet oil, sugar etc.) ...	3-0	
		84-0
Clothing : Man—2 waist coats ...	1-0	
2 pieces of loin cloth	0-4	
2 dhotis for turban and covering	1-0	
1 blanket ...	2-0	
Woman—2 sadis ...	4-0	
4 bodices ...	1-0	
Male child—2 waist coats	0-12	
Female child— piece of cloth	0-8	10-8
Tobacco (½ anna per week)	1-10	
Miscellaneous (bangles, pots, kerosene oil etc.)	6-0	7-10
Total		102-2-0

CHAPTER X

THE DRINK PROBLEM, INDEBTEDNESS AND FORCED LABOUR.

Drink problem :—This question is not so much social as it is economic, inasmuch as it has been a very great obstacle in the way of the material betterment of these people. It has not only brought down these people to a low moral tone, but has considerably made them poor. Craving for liquor has encouraged them to contract debts which have ultimately kept them in perpetual bondage. Use of liquor has reacted on the physical, social and economic progress of the Warlis.

A Warli is immoderately fond of toddy and wine. He cannot afford to drink as much wine as toddy, as the former is far more costly than the latter. In those parts, therefore, where toddy is available, Warlis make a maximum use of the same. In the hilly parts, like Mokhada, where there are no date-palms, they have to satisfy their thirst of drink by using wine. Purse permitting they do so. But it is very costly to use wine in ceremonies, wherein a large quantity of the same is required. Methylated spirit mixed with water and sugar acts as a substitute for wine. This is injurious to health no doubt, but it is quite cheap and serves their purpose. They call the spirit *wāipet* and few bottles of the same are conveniently used in a marriage ceremony or some such occasion.

In the northern and western parts of the district, date-palms and palm trees are found in abundance. Warlis in these localities are habitual toddy drinkers. They make little use of wine, except in the rainy season when toddy is not available. A Warli begins and ends his life with toddy. Toddy is essentially required for both the birth and death ceremonies. In fact there is not a ceremony, function or festival in which toddy is not used. It is the one and the only enjoyment of these people. Well earned money is ill spent on toddy. To a Warli there is no substitute for toddy. He cares neither for food nor work when he is under its influence. He is ill fed and half fed because of toddy. He has become lazy and indolent because of toddy.

Because of this white juice he quarrels with his relations and neighbours and beats his poor wife and innocent children. Toddy is bad for him not only because it deprives him of money but also because it kills his energy and vitality. It has reduced him to degradation and ruin. He neglets his work by spending time in drinking toddy. "Catch fish and drink toddy, for the rains are far away" say the Warlis.[1]

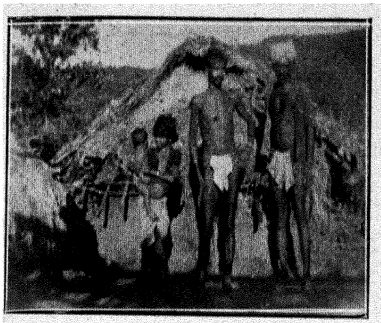
All the toddy shopkeepers in the forest area earn their living by selling toddy to Warlis and other forest tribes. To what degree the people are addicted to this drink can be illustrated by one instance. Jharoli is a village with a population of about 1500 souls and there are 1200 date-palms tapped for toddy.

Taking advantage of their passion for toddy drinking, land-lords even go to the extent of encouraging them to borrow money for drinking purpose. They naturally prefer their tenants to be always involved in heavy debts from which they cannot be redeemed in their (tenants') life time.

The land-lords are shrewd enough to take utmost advantage of the Warlis' fondness for toddy by exacting labour from them by offering a gallon or two of toddy worth only four annas in exchange for the labour which would have ordinarily cost them a rupee. But these ignorant people are not capable of realising this.

Table IX about the percentage distribution of expenditure per capita in chapter IX shows that expenses for liquor amount to only 2·2 percent. of the total expenditure. This surely does not appear to be a big figure and a casual observer would be tempted to ignore it. But as stated above, the reason for this low figure is that people do not frankly admit how much they spend over drinks. Toddy or wine is an important feature of their ceremonies. As such, it involves a proportionately high percentage of expenses for the same. As none or very little sweets are prepared for the ceremonies, the participants enjoy only drinks. It is true that as compared to other items, the drink item appears to have consumed less expenditure. But they do not spend more on drinks because they do not have more to spend for the same.

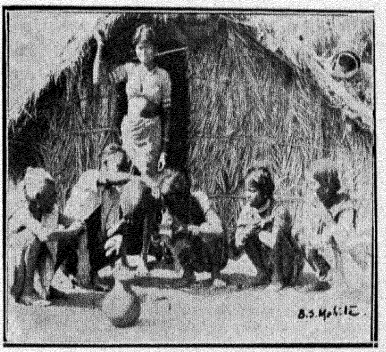
1. "Mār māsali ns pe sur, pāni-āhe ghanā dur,"



Warli family and hut



Warli family



Enjoying toddy

A Warli never likes to drink fresh and sweet toddy. He prefers the nasty, foul-smelling stale stuff. It must intoxicate him. Such rotten stuff is injurious to health. When a Warli drinks he drinks by bottles. He is never satisfied with a small quantity. He does not hesitate to walk a distance of five miles to fetch toddy if the rates there are slightly lower than the local ones. Besides, illicit distillation of wine from *mahura* flowers, rice, gur, toddy etc. is not uncommon. This is also partly responsible for bringing down their expenses for liquor. As they are forest dwellers, illicit distillation is not much detected by the Excise Department. Whatever few crimes are brought to light are detected not by the skill of the Excise officers, but on information given by the members of the very tribe through hatred and malice. Drunkenness is almost universal in the case of this tribe. I have hardly come across half a dozen teetotallers from among them. Drunkenness, therefore, is the chief cause in keeping these people in a backward state and preventing them from progressing in any field.

How can the drink evil be stopped? "By total prohibition" will be the ready answer. But this is very difficult to be translated into reality. The people themselves will not vote for total prohibition; because it is the only refreshing stimulant in their dull monotonous life.

Besides, wine or toddy must be offered to their deities. Inspite of the above consideration, it must be confessed that prohibition is the only solution to many of the social and economic ills of these people. How to achieve it is the question of questions. To have a lasting effect, prohibition must come from within. For this, toddy must be substituted by some other drink. Tea is a bad substitute, because it is not half as charming as toddy and doubly expensive. Mere sermons on prohibition will fall only on deaf ears.

A Missionary working among the Bhils of Panch Mahals for a number of years talking about the amilioration of the conditions of the aboriginal tribes expressed as his firm belief that no real improvement would be achieved unless prohibition became a reality. He said this was by no means an impossible task. There were bands of young Bhils who had taken vows

not to take liquor. This success, however, is the sheer result of the long and untiring work of the voluntary reformers among the people. Expecting cent per cent result on this line in any tribe will only be a dream.

As a via media, if the tribe becomes a bit moderate in their drink habit, something tangible would be deemed to have been achieved. For this, as a first step, the wine shops in the purely forest areas — however few they may be — should be closed. The exaggerated fear that illicit distillation will be increased as a result of this should not much come in the way of such a step. If special efforts are made through the schools to preach the advantages of prohibition to chridren, at least a part of the new generation is likely to be free from this vice. Lantern slides depicting the horrors of drink may also have some effect in this direction. Toddy will hold the field, till a proper substitute takes its place. The people too in their turn will not give up toddy drinking. The advisability of drinking fresh toddy for reasons of health should be impressed on their minds. Side by side, propaganda for temperance must be carried on. For true reform, it is certain that the tribe must be saved from the grip of drinks.

Indebtedness :—Indebtedness among the tribe is strikingly abnormal. To have a debt is perhaps as common as to have a wife and children. A majority of debtors are so poor that all their property if sold would not be sufficient to pay off the debts.

TABLE XI (*a*)

Families in Debts

No. of families	Eastern	Central	Costal	Total
In debt of both money and corn	24	12	9	45
In debt of money only ...	1	8	12	21
In debt of corn only ...	3	1	1	5
No debts	10	2	2	14
Total ...	38	23	24	85

TABLE XI (*b*)

Percentage

No. of families	Eastern	Central	Coastal	Total
In debt either of money or corn	73·7	91·3	91·6	83·53
No debts	26·3	8·1	8·4	16·47

These tables show how large the percentage of indebtedness is. Out of 85 families examined only 14 were free from debts. The remaining 71 were either in money or grain debts. That 85 per cent of the families are indebted proves universality of indebtedness in this tribe. One more remarkable thing to be noticed is that most of the families have both kinds of debts — money and grain. This shows that debts were incurred not for some extravagant purposes but to satisfy hunger. This gives us an idea as to how the tribe is struggling for mere existence. The individual columns show that the Eastern Warlis, who were hitherto depicted as the poorest, are better off in respect of debts. They have the largest percentage of 'no debt' families. The reason for this is that there are few Savkars in this part, it being backward. So the sources for incurring debts are fewer. Besides this is a part where toddy is not available and consequently people spend less on drinks. Savkars also hesitate to advance money to them, they being very poor. It is in this part that the people starve more.

Per Family Money Debts

Eastern	Central	Coastal	Total average
Rs. 44	Rs. 65	Rs. 40	Rs. 49

Per Family Corn Debt

Eastern	Central	Coastal	Total average
9	9	6	8

Among the families from all the three parts, who are in debts, the debt per family is Rs. 49. This figure is the largest in the case of families from the central part and nearly the same in eastern and coastal villages. The families from central part, it seems, have incurred more debts, because their earning capacity is more and also because they spend more. Rs. 49 appears to be a small amount to a casual observer, but this is too much for these poor people. As shown elsewhere, there

are families who have not been able to get an income of Rs. 49 per year. Added to this the cost of the corn debt, viz., 8 maunds which comes roughly to be Rs. 16 according to the pre-war rates, the total for debts goes to Rs. 65. These are certainly heavy debts for these people to pay off. Money debt per capita is Rs. 6·6.

Duration of Debts

Period	*Eastern*	*Central*	*Coastal*	*Total*	*Percentage*
1 year	6	6	5	17	25·7
2 years	3	3	4	10	36·3
3 years	3	...	3	6	
4 years	3	1	4	8	
5 to 10 years	7	8	4	19	28·7
10 and over	3	2	1	6	9·3
	25	20	21	66	100·0

This table relates only to the money debts. The corn debts are of a year's standing only and are paid during the next harvest. At any rate the Sawkars do not allow the corn debts to be in arrears. There were six families who were in debts for 10 or more than 10 years. The largest duration of debts was 20 years. Many families were in debts for less than five years, but they often incurred new debts to pay off the old ones. The Sawkars are shrewd enough to get old accounts changed. They also borrow from the new money-lenders to pay off the old debts. Thus when they incur debts it goes very difficult for them to get free from the same.

Purposes of debts.—Debts are contracted for various purposes ; A few of them are given below :—

Purpose	*No of families in debts.*
Marriage ...	36
Purchase of cattle ...	5
Building huts ...	2
Cultivation ...	1
Clothes ...	2
Death ceremony ...	1
Litigation ...	1
Miscellaneous ...	18
Total ...	66

Marriage tops the list. Most of the families perform the marriage ceremony by incurring debts. Besides the debt incurred for marriage is comparatively much more than that incurred for any other purpose. It is invariably a hundred rupees or more. All purposes which did not fall in either of the first seven were included in the last item 'miscellaneous'. Also when a debt was incurred for more than one purpose, it was included in the 'miscellaneous'. Thus 54 per cent, or more than half the debts were contracted for marriage; and 46 per cent. or slightly less than half for all other purposes. This makes it clear how far marriage alone is responsible for keeping these people in debts and consequently in a degraded position. Knowing fully well that marriage leads them to servitude, they do not hesitate to borrow money for the same. Their attitude towards the institution of marriage explains the position. Marriage is a necessity both physical and social to a Warli. An unmarried man does not get so much respect and so high a status as a married man does. Marriage is so very universal that an unmarried man is looked down upon by the society at large. This is the reason why a Warli must get married at all costs, not minding what amount of debts he has to draw for the same. This would show how the social and economic life of the tribe is so closely related and how sometimes the social considerations outweigh the economic.

Other Causes for Indebtedness.—Besides heavy expenses in marriage and other ceremonies, several other reasons like ignorance, laziness, lack of enterprise and foresight etc. are also indirectly responsible for their indebtedness. Their drunkenness too is no mean a factor in making them debtors. Due to the prevalence of malaria, they have to spend many a day in poor health and without doing any work. No work means no money and consequently no food. To satisfy their hunger they have to borrow money or corn from the Sawkar.

Superstition also compels a Warli to borrow money sometimes even when he is not in need of it. I know an instance in which a man contracted debts for his son's marriage even though he had money with him thinking that if he did not do the same, the tribesmen would take him to be rich and the witches would do him harm!

Money is borrowed at a very high rate of interest which is never lower than 25 per cent. The poor man finds it difficult even to pay the interest, one fourth of the principal and the latter remains unpaid for many years.

A Warli's ignorance, particularly of accounts is also responsible for his poverty and indebtedness. He gives his thumb impression wherever and whenever the money-lender wants. He does not know where he stands in respect of his debts.

Rates of Interest.—Rates charged to these people by the money-lenders for debts are very high. The main reason for these high rates of interest is not that the debtors belong to the aboriginal tribes but that they have very little property to be pledged by way of security. Advantage is also taken of their isolation and ignorance of accounts. But why should a Warli pay exorbitant rates of interest? Is he not to be blamed for this? No. Many a time, he cannot but run into debts, particularly in the years of scarcity and famine. Even in normal years, he cannot do without borrowing for any extra item or occasion.

The minimum rate of interest is four annas per rupee or 25 per cent per annum. If it is paid in kind two *pāilis* of paddy are charged per rupee per annum. Paddy is to be repaid in the proportion of two to three. For a maund of corn borrowed, the borrower has to pay a maund and a half at the end of the year. Thus the rate in kind for the corn is 50 per cent. i. e., double that of the rate on money debts. The rate for the borrowed seeds is 100 per cent. i. e., double the quantity is to be paid after a year.

At the time of advancing money to a debtor, the creditor deducts the interest for a year plus discount at the rate of half anna per rupee. Thus for rupees 100 borrowed, the debtor actually gets Rs. 71-4-0 (Rs. 100 minus Rs. 25 interest and Rs. 3-2-0 as discount). Sometimes the discount is calculated at the rate of one anna per rupee. There are a few money-lenders who enter double the amount in the *khātā* of what is actually advanced.

These are the rates for the purpose of accounts. Only the Sawkars know how much they squeeze from their debtors. It is not unlikely that a money-lender demands money from a Warli whose grand-father had borrowed money from his (Sawkar's) grandfather.

What great harassment these people are put to at the hands of the money-lenders can be shown by citing a few instances :-

(*a*) A man borrowed Rs. 200. For four years he paid an instalment of Rs. 10 every month. He had still to pay Rs. 100 to the Sawkar.

(*b*) Another man borrowed Rs. 100 for his marriage, on condition that he would serve the Sawkar and the latter would credit six rupees to his account every year. This man put in twenty years' service and says that he has about Rs. 15/- still to pay to the Sawkar.

(*c*) A third man borrowed Rs. 200 which were entered into the account as Rs. 300 by the sawkar. He had paid Rs. 16/- per month for three years. He has yet to pay Rs. 100.

(*d*) A fourth man drew Rs. 200. He paid Rs. 15/- per month for three years and yet he owes his sawkar Rs. 50/-.

Forced Labour

Forced labour is a system in which labour is exacted without remuneration or for a paltry monetary consideration. This system exists in the aboriginal localities. It is known by different names in different parts but connotes the same thing, a form of serfdom.

Veth or Bigār. *Veth* is a common expression in vogue in Gujarat, and the continuance of *veth* is sanctified by a long usage. *Veth* is prevalent in the north of Thana district, particularly in Umbargaon peta and some parts of the Dahanu taluka, where the Gujarati influence is predominant In the eastern and central parts of the district, *veth* is known as *bigār*. The labourers are called *Vethees*, *Vethiās* or *Bigūris*. The class of people who are bound to give their labour by a long established custom comprises of the aboriginal tribes, such as Warlis, Dublas, Dhodias, etc. Those privileged to exact

their labour are the big land-lords, money-lenders and subordinate Government servants in few cases. Persons cultivating the lands of their masters on lease and those living on the masters' lands are bound to offer their free services to their masters for some days in a year. Thus they are required to help their masters in the planting and harvesting seasons and also for any other casual work. If the master is kind, he may give them paltry wages for these days. No food is given. The subordinate Government servants, particularly the Patels of the villages, exact such work from the labourers. Other servants like Talatis, Forest Guards, Policemen etc. also use the services of the Vethees or bigāris for work, Government or private, by paying them little money or nothing at all. The Patel of the village serves the purpose of an agent to procure the services of bigāris.

The landlord also asks his tenants to give him the services of their carts if the latter are cartmen. This service, manual or otherwise, he exacts as his right and privilege and the labourer too quietly bows down to such a practice. If he resists, the land-lord or his agent does not hesitate to beat him.

Agricultural Serfs :—There is another system of forced or indentured labour which is known as *hāli* system in Gujarat and north of Thana district. The *hāli* system is not commonly prevalent throughout the Thana district as it is in other districts of Gujarat. However, many Warlis, Dhodias and Dublas in the northern part have been reduced to the position of serfs by Parsi, Brahmin and Bania land-lords. Some of them are no better than serfs of the forest contractors from whom they have accepted loans.

What is a Hāli ? :—A *hāli* is a labourer who contracts debts from the land-lords for his marriage and binds himself to serve the master for a number of years. The land-lord who exacts service from the *hāli* is known as a *dhaṇāmā* — a master cultivator. The relationship between the two is not merely that of a master and his servant, but that of a born slave and the owner. The nomenclature connotes that the *hāli* is an article of property of the owner.

When contracting debts, only thing a Warli can pledge to his sawkar by way of security is his labour for a number of years. But the debt has a tendency of swelling. He has to serve his master until the debt is repaid, which is sometimes not paid during his lifetime, after which his children inherit the father's debt. They have again to serve as *hālis* and the vicious system goes down from generation to generation.

The *dhaniāmā* besides advancing the loan looks to the maintenance of *hāli*. The annual cash wages of the *hāli* vary from Rs. 20 to 30, and to this is added a daily ration of 4 seers of rice-corn for food. This is just sufficient for two meals for himself and his wife. He also gets a small quantity of tobacco for smoking everyday. The *hāli* gets a waistcoat and a turban worth about a rupee each at *diwāli* and the beginning of the monsoon. Besides he is given occasional tips, known as *pini*, of an anna or so to drink toddy and small presents of money on *diwāli*, *holi* and other holidays.

A *hāli's* wife also has to serve for about two hours in the morning everyday at the *dhaniāmā's* place, for bringing water, washing clothes and doing other household work. She is given some food and 8 to 12 annas per month for this part time work. She is free to do any work she likes during the day.

For his marriage a *hāli* receives a loan varying from Rs.100 to 200. Ordinarily a loan of Rs. 100 can be repaid within a period of five to six years at the rate of Rs. 20 per annum. But besides the marriage expenses, a *hāli* occasionally takes necessary advance to meet the expenses incurred for guests, wife's delivery, death in the family etc. The cash wage is never paid in cash, but is credited in the *khātā* towards the repayment of the loan. His family grows and with it his wants. The loan together with interest diminishes but slowly and the *hāli* continues to sweat on his master's field year after year.

Hālis are thus the permanent hereditary servants of the land-lords. They are not in a position to leave the service and seek any other occupation. It is not a common phenomenon in these days for a *hāli* to be transferred to some other landlord by his master in lieu of money, but when a *hāli* leaves

his master and takes up service at another's, the former asks the latter to pay off his money which he had advanced to the *hāli* and the latter also does the same by making an agreement with the *hāli* for his services for a number of years. A *hāli* is still regarded as an article of property. *Hālis* are free men de jure but serfs de facto.

These conditions are, however, gradually disappearing. With the touch of civilization, *hālis* have begun to realise their position of servitude. The firm belief that they are born to serve as *hālis* is also losing ground. The *hālis* do not serve their masters efficiently. They have a tendency to shirk work, absent themselves often and sometimes run away too. The masters are also getting dissatified with the *hāli* labour. There are a few cases in which *hālis* even dictate terms to their needy masters. I know cases of *hālis* who have become free of their masters within a period of five to six years. They had sane habits and their wives were particularly industrious and hard-working to get money to get the family going for the time when their husbands repaid their marriage debts by steady and regular work. Honest and hard-working *hālis* are better treated by their masters. But such *hālis* are rare. The *hāli* labour is so very notoriously inefficient that it has almost become a phrase of contempt in the locality. When somebody does any work half-heartedly, he is said to have done a *veth* and not work.

Conditions of forced labour are not mitigated on account of the application of the Bombay Tenancy Act to Thana district. The exaction of forced labour from a tenant penalises the land-lord, but on account of their poverty and subjected position, the tenants dare not complain against the land-lords.

CHAPTER XI

GENERAL

The Warlis hardly know of anything outside their own world. They are quite ignorant of the great events that are happening in this country and are even unaware of what is going on at a distance of fifty miles from their locality. Some of the settlements of the Warlis come down to within fifty miles of Bombay. But there is hardly one in a thousand who has ever seen Bombay. Their means of travelling is foot and there are many in the interior who have neither seen a train nor travelled in it. Their vision is too narrow. The southernmost city known to them is Goa and the northernmost is Surat. To the east they know no place beyond Nasik. It will be too much to expect of these people, living in abject ignorance, to know anything of the Government of India. They are, however, aware of the fact that the *Sarkar* is ruling over all and that 'he' is very mighty. But they have no idea that *Sarkar* or Government is a machinery or on organization. They take it to be some powerful individual. They are very much impressed by the various mechanical inventions, especially the aero-planes. They know that there is one leader named Gandhi and that he is great. "But *Angrej* is still greater. What can Gandhi alone do against so big a *Sarkar* which is all powerful? He who fights against the *Sarkar* will simply perish": Views like these are particularly due to the last civil disobedience movement watched by the coastal Warlis standing at a distance.

An average Warli always evinces a vague fear of the *Sarkar*. He is also afraid of the officers of the *Sarkar*. A stranger in their locality is suspected to be a Government servant, especially if he is in western dress. I remember an incident of women hiding themselves in their huts when I was moving in one of the hamlets of Uplat. A Warli does not disclose even his name to a stranger. When one meets a Warli on the way and asks his name, the Warli replies, "why do you want to know the name of the 'jungli' man"? It is because of this fear and general ignorance that they are most reluctant to supply anyone with information regarding their customs and beliefs. With great

persuasion and through the influence of the local land-lords or their estate-managers, they were prepared to tell me something about their life. But the moment I took out the pen and paper, they got terrified and exclaimed, " you are deceiving us. You will take down all that we tell you and show it to the Sarkar. Sarkar will then arrest us. What can we tell to Sarkar then ? We shall be caught in the writing." Besides when they are narrating anything, one cannot interrupt them by asking questions. The queries are taken as an indication of unusual interest and the interest is associated with some inner purpose, viz. taking the information to the Sarkar as mentioned above. This curious attitude of the people mixed with fear, indifference and ignorance makes investigation among them a difficult task.

The secluded life in the jungles restricts the mental outlook of these people. Besides the Sun and the Moon, the only planet they know is Venus, which they name as *Suk* ' the star which shines before the day-break.' It is believed that the Earth will be there as long as the Sun and Moon are shining in the sky and as long as there is water in the sea.

Their counting system may also be cited as an illustration of their general ignorance. They count by *Visā* or twenty. An ordinary Warli can count upto twelve and twentyfour is expressed as twelve and twelve. The Marathi words for hundred and thousand are within their knowledge, but even hundred is five *Visā* to them. Very few Warlis can tell the number of pice in a rupee or their age.

They have words for only two directions in their vocabulary. The east is called *ugwat* because the sun rises there, and the west is called *māvlat* as the sun sets there. North and south are indicated by means of the town names ; thus *Davnehār* towards Daman means northwards.

Any unusual illness is viewed as the effect of the evil eye of the spirits or of the witches. Epidemics are supposed to be the consequences of the wrath of gods and spirits. Since the diseases are not attributed to natural causes, the treatment too is not medicinal. For minor illness, however, they take traditional medicines. If it is a headche or a mild fever, they pay no heed to it, except to lie down for the whole day. If the fever is high

or the headache is severe, they approach a medicine man, invariably a bhagat, for madicine. The cure for headache is tying a small piece of herb in the ring of the ear. For fever the bhagat gives a herb to be tied to the arm. For cuts and abrasions, the juice of some shrubs or a powder of dried leaves is applied. The medicine is always some herb, so much so that the Warli word for medicine is the same as that for the herb, viz. *Vanshi*. For stomach diseases the treatment is rather monstrous. Burning is resorted to as the patent remedy for any abdominal disease. There is hardly a Warli who does not bear brandings on his belly. In fact every child is burnt on the stomach, within a week of its birth, with a view to preventing the stomach diseases.

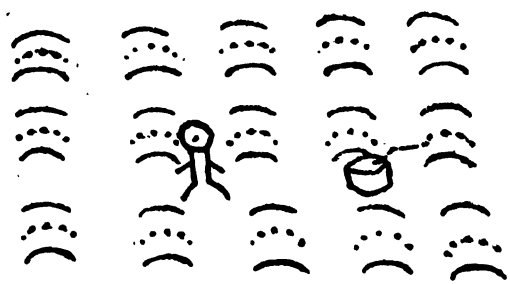
The cure of sickness is very closely connected with divination. Whenever a person falls ill, a few rice grains are waved round his body and taken to the diviner—the bhagat – with a view to ascertaining the reasons of the illness. By looking at the rice grains, the diviner gives his opinion whether the person suffers from natural causes *āngachā* or from outside causes *bāherchā*. The 'outside' cause, as said above, is the evil eye of the witch or the spirit. The method of judging the causes of the disease is called *dāne pāhane* to see the grains. People approach the diviner before giving any treatment to the ailing person, because it is feared that if he is suffering from an 'outside' cause, the medicine intended for the cure of the malady if given to him will have a counter effect on him. After seeing the grains, the diviner prescribes the remedy to cure the disease. If he is himself the medicine-man, he may give some herbs or may advise the person approaching him to get medicine from some other source. It is not necessary for the medicine-man to see the patient. He diagnoses the disease through the rice grains. If the patient suffers from an 'outside' cause, the bhagat diviner prescribes an *utār* (described below) and prepares it himself.

The ways of 'looking into grains' are several. Some diviners do it by spreading the grains in a winnowing basket, some on the leaf of a tree and a yet few in water; while some bhagats do it by means of a grinding stone. In the last method the bhagat keeps a few rice-grains which were moved round the sick person on the grinding stone. He thinks to himself that the person is suffering from a certain cause, either internal or

external. If whatever he thinks to be the cause is true, the grinding stone becomes heavy and cannot be easily lifted. If the reason, which he took for granted, is different from that from which the man suffers, the grinding stone is light as usual. The diviner thus decides on the heaviness felt while lifting the stone.

While looking into the grains in the winnowing basket, the bhagat first spreads the grains in the basket. He takes rice in both the fists and feels if they are hot or cold. If he feels them hot, he decides that the person suffers from a hot disease like fever. If cold, he suffers because of an 'outside' cause. He then arranges small heaps of the same rice in the basket in the name of different spirits whom he invokes and invites to help him in clearing the issue before him. The bhagat takes some grains in his hand and slowly drops them in the basket, thinking at the same time that the person suffers from a particular cause like the evil eye of a witch. If he sees that the grains fall in the basket in some regularity, say in twos or threes, he takes it that his calculation is right. If they fall irregularly, he tries the other way, thinking that the person is suffering from the evil eye of some spirit. He repeats the process and watches the falling of the grains till he sees that they fall in regularity. If he never sees it, he concludes that the person suffers from a bodily disease, even though he felt the rice cold ir the beginning. A diviner sometimes throws rice in a water-pot and comes to a decision by watching them coming up from the bottom of the pot in certain regularity.

When a person is affected by evil eye of the spirits or



witches, the bhagat prepares an *utār* in front of the sick person. The bhagat draws small semi-circular figures with rice flour,

redlead and black powder (*abir*), one below the other on a plantain leaf. The whole leaf is filled with such curved lines. In the centre a human effigy is made of wet flour, standing on two small sticks pierced in the flour. Red-lead is sprinkled on this effigy ; and a lamp-cup made of flour with oil and wick is burnt by its side. A flower is stuck to this lamp. The bhagat mutters some charms and moves his hand around the person making a sound by his thumb and the finger of the right hand near the sick person's face. This is done three, five or seven times. The bhagat then makes a sound like '*chhut*'[1] by his mouth and asks somebody to take the *utār* and place it on the public highway. This is called *korā* or pure *utār* and is done to remove the evil from the afflicted person. An *utār* for which a chicken is slaughtered is called *bātā* or impure *utār*, which is done in the case of serious illness.

The most common disease among the Warlis is malaria. Children suffer from skin diseases like scabies and most of them have enlarged spleens. Many of them are not vaccinated for small-pox prevention. Venereal diseases are conspicuously non-existent among them. It is not the diseases but the people's ways of combating them that are responsible for much of their suffering. There is waste of vitality and waste of money in taking wrong treatment for the sickness.

Music.—The otherwise dull and unenterprising life of these people has become more monotonous by the absence of sports and healthy types of recreation. The only two forms of amusement are the music and the dances. Music playing is the art restricted to few and the dances are reserved for the youngsters, both male aud female. Adults take no part in dancing thinking it to be meant exclusively for the youngsters. Warlis do not enjoy music and dances as a pastime. Musical instruments are played on ceremonial occasions like marriage and dancing is restricted to auspicious days like Divali and Holi.

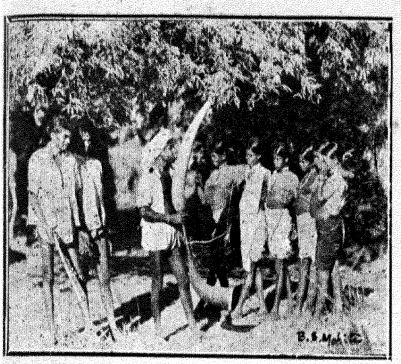
The Warlis act as their own musicians. But in the southern parts, the musicians of the Warlis are the Mahars. The Warli musicians are in great demand at the marriage festivals of the

1 *Chhut* (go, get away) probably addressing the spirit.

lower class Hindus in the northern and western parts of the Thana district. The musicians are given ten to twelve rupees for three days besides the daily marriage feasts. The Warli musicians' band consists of three or five players. It is called *tur* or *dholi*. The Warli band plays three musical instruments; the *dhol* (a drum leathered on both sides), the *timki* (a small drum leathered on only one side) and the *pipori* (a flutelike wind-pipe). When the band consists of five players, there are two *dhols* and two *piporis*. The *piporiwala* or the piper is the most skilled artist among the band; he is responsible for the tune and his task is arduous in that he has to blow the pipe all the while. The *dholyā* hangs the *dhol* by a strap round his neck and beats it with two sticks, one thick and the other thin. The Warli *dhol* is not different from the well known Indian tom-tom made by hollowing out the trunk of a tree. The leather on one side is fastened tight and makes a sharp sound; while that on the other side is a bit loose and produces a dull sound when beaten by a thick stick. The *timki* is very tightly leathered and beaten by two thin sticks to produce a sharp sound. Usually every hamlet has a music band of its own and sometimes more if there are enthusiasts in the hamlet to pick up the art of playing music. Old men also take part in the music band. The musical instruments are manufactured by the village craftsmen.

The most popular musical instrument of the Warlis is the *tārpe* or *pāvrā* which is an essential accompaniment to the dances. The size of the *tārpe* may vary from one foot to six feet. It is thus a long instrument prepared by the Warli craftsmen. It consists of three main parts, the topmost part which is a long dried gourd made hollow with a hole made near the top and a hollow bamboo stick inserted in it through which it is blown. If the *tārpe* is small, it is blown from the hollow at the top of the gourd. The lower part is a curved hollow made of thin palm leaves stuck together. The two parts are joined by two short hollow bamboo sticks with holes to produce variations in the tunes. This forms the middle portion of the *tārpe*.

The other less important musical instruments are the *dāk* or *āvad*, a small drum (like Marathi *damru*) leathered on both sides and beaten with the fingers, and *zānz* (cymbals). These two



Posing for a dance



Dancing



Warli musicians

instruments are played only during the funeral ceremony. *Ghāngal*, a sort of crude *satār*, to which reference has been made in the chapter on ritual songs, is played only at the corn ritual. In the southern parts some Warlis play on the *thālā* (brass dish-tune) and the *derā*[1] is played by women in the north. The last two instruments, viz., the *thālā* and *derā*, are, however, not common among the Warlis. *Thālā* is more popular among the Kokanas and the *derā* with Dhodia and Dubla women in the northern parts of the Thana district. A *pāvi* (flute) made of a hollow bamboo stick with holes is played by the younger boys just to amuse themselves.

Dances :—Warlis dance during the Divali and Holi festivals and also at the ceremony of the propitiation of Naran Dev. There are no individual dances among them. The dances at the propitiation of Naran Dev are the simplest of the kind. The youngsters dance in groups to the accompaniment of songs. Young women and girls also take part in these dances.Sometimes their part in the dances is active in that they dance along with the males forming a separate group of their own in the circle. Their part is passive when they do not mix in the dancing group but sit aside and merely repeat the lines of the songs recited first by the male group. A lamp is kept burning in the middle and a circle is formed round it. The dancers dance in this circle. The two head-dancers sing a line of a song which is repeated in chorus by the rest. The same line is again sung by the head-singers and again repeated by the chorus. The whole line is sung or repeated and it is never split into two. Thus the dancing and singing go together and the lines are repeated on and on. A line from a song is given below by way of an illustration :—

The head singers :—*kālyā nāgāchi poyari ra.*
(black cobra's daughter oh)

Chrous :— *kālyā nāgāchi poyari ra.*

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1. *Dera* is an earthen pot filled with water and its mouth tightly covered by a thin leather. A thin stick is attached to the centre of the leather. The instrument is placed on the ground and the musician holding the stick between her fingers, alternately draws her hands towards herself allowing the end of the stick to slip through the hold. The movement of the fingers on the stick produces a vibrating musical sound.

These dances are not accompanied by any musical instrument and are very simple. The dancers move in a circle, bending down at each step and clapping with both hands. Some of those who are rather active move their hips on sides while dancing. The younger boys stamp their feet on the ground with force. But the dances are slow, gentle and monotonous. They bear a resemblance to the simple *garba* dances of the Gujaratis. The party rests a little when one song is finished. This is continued for a considerable time during the night. It may be noted that these are the only dances accompanied by songs.

The Shimgā Dances:—The dancers are only males. They are accompanied by the music band consisting of the *dhol*, *tinki* and the pipe. No dexterity is displayed in the Shimga dances. Though attempts are made to keep a uniformity in the rhythm of the steps, the dances are more of a boisterous kind. The musicians stand in the centre and a circle is formed round them. The party moves in circle facing towards the musicians, holding one another's hands and dance with jerks and jumps. Their movements become slow or rapid according to the low or high pitch of the tune of the pipe. A change in the tune is a signal for the dancers to move in the opposite direction and make a loud sound *bhalor bhalor*. A fortnight before the Shimgā is spent in practising these dances; the youngsters gather at night at a central place, light a small bon-fire and dance near it.

The Diwali Dances:—The most popular dances of the Warlis are the Diwali dances which are exclusively accompanied by the *tārpe* music. These dances are systematic and show many varieties. A month before the Diwali, young men and women gather at a convenient place and spend the earlier parts of the nights in learning these dances with the accompaniment of the *tārpe*. Diwali dances are mixed dances with two separate groups of men and women, Some times males and females form only one group. The man with the *tārpe* stands in the middle and the party makes a circle, complete or half round him, either in one row or two different rows of males and females. Generally the males dance with speed, in jerks and small jumps. The first man in the line holds a stick in his hand. An iron ring is inserted at the top of the stick, with two or three thin iron chips

in it, to make a jingling sound when its lower end is dashed on the ground. They form a row by holding each other's hand and move in a circle.

The dance begins with the blowing of the *tārpe*, the dancers facing the tarpewala throughout the performance. In the simple dance the pose is that of the left leg forward and the right backward, with a distance of about a foot between the two. The dancers always move sideways facing the *tārpe*, the position of the feet being the same. This is markedly observed in the case of female dancers who are slow in action and closely joined with one another by placing the hands on the shoulders of women on their sides. The tune of the *tārpe* is called *chālā* and the action of the dancers depends on the *chālā* played. The *chālā* differs for different dances. The party enjoys a short rest at the end of each dance.

The dancers exhibit a good deal of variety in these dances, some of which are in imitation of the actions of the birds. The beginning of the dances is always a slow process. The males and females form two separate semi-circular rows. They form a sort of a chain as described above, i. e. males holding each other's hands and females resting their hands on the shoulders of their neighbours. The two chains move towards the right, at the same time the dancers slowly moving their body a bit forward and then backward. Their movements resemble a ship rocking on the gentle sea. Both the rows move sideways to the left or to the right. Sometimes one row moves to the right and the other to the left.

In the dance which is termed *rānodi* (wild) the players form a wide circle by keeping a hand's distance in between themselves. The movements are quick. After every three steps, they take a little jump and dash both the feet on the ground. In the ' clap dance ' two persons form a pair. They make movements only on the spot, once facing each other and at another time turning away from each other. When the tune on the *tārpe* is raised, both hands are used for clapping. There is further variation in the clap dance. The dancers stand close to each other with arms in arms. They move sideways and clap with both hands with arms in arms.

In the 'peacock' dance the dancers stand in a circle slightly bending down and keeping both the hands on the knees. With this position they move their hips this way and that way, at the same time making slow movements of the feet. This is done in imitation of the peacock's gestures.

In *usalyā* or jumping dance, two circles of the dancers are formed, one within the other. Persons in both the circles move only three paces sideways lifting the legs very quickly and dashing both the feet on the ground with force. In another dance of the same kind rows are formed on the two sides of the man in the centre. The two rows while dancing come nearer the centre and go away from it to their former positions. While doing this they slowly move round.

In the 'salute' dance they hold each other's hands. When dancing both hands are taken up and brought down, thus the whole group saluting the *tārpewala*.

In the 'sweeping' dance, the feet are not lifted from the ground, but dragged sideways, thus sweeping the ground. In the 'duck' dance the legs and the upper body are moved in imitation of a duck. In another variety, a greater distance is kept between two dancers. Each one holds the hand of the person next to him and runs. When the tune of the *tarpe* is raised each one turns behind and claps. In another 'bird' dance (*lāvrā*) the dancers stand one behind the other. Instead of moving forward, they move two paces sideways. When the front man moves to right the man immediately behind him moves to the left, the whole group moving round that way.

The only dance in which the *tarpewala* stands outside the circle is *ogalīā*—'passing under.' The two groups of male and female dancers form a circle. A male and a female hold each other's hand and take it up to form an arch. Then two persons, one from each group, come in a pair holding each other's hands and pass through the arch, the first pair keeping on forming an arch till all pass under it.

In the coastal villages, Warli dancers give a house-to-house performance at the Caste Hindus' and other classes.' Every group is given a pice or two for its performance at each place.

General Traits:—Warlis are immoderately fond of smoking. Every adult Warli carries the smoking material in his pocket and whenever he gets rest he invariably smokes a *bidi*—the country cigarette. He makes his own *bidi* with a dried leaf or two of the *āptā* tree with tobacco. He has his own contrivance for lighting the *bidi*. He strikes a steel chip on a piece of flint and its sparks fall on the *sāvari* (silk cotton tree) cotton inserted in a tiny bamboo tube with a lid. The cotton is thus lighted with the spark and it serves the Warli's purpose. After lighting the *bidi*, he covers the tube again. Even women smoke as immoderately as men. But they do not carry the smoking material on their persons. Tobacco is not a luxury to these people. It is a necessity and a remedy to drive away their fatigue. Besides toddy, tobacco is the only intoxicant for them. It has been so very popular that a master has to give a pice to his Warli servant after the day's work in the evening to buy tobacco. The first thing offered to a guest is tobacco with which he prepares a *bidi*. Generally the youngsters do not smoke in the presence of the elders.

A Warli is frank, thriftless, timid, fond of drinks and loathes steady work. At the same time he is simple, faithful and honest. The Warlis have no criminal tendencies in them. Whatever few crimes are committed by them are mostly due to quarrels over women or due to drunkenness. They reveal no thieving propensities. Those engaged as house servants are trustworthy and money entrusted to them is not misappropriated. As against the general confidence in the Warli servants, one land-lord told me that they often robbed him and others of fruits and other garden produce. This may be taken to be true, but may not be attributed to thieving tendencies among them, and may be treated as an exceptional experience.

I met a Warli of about thirty at Khodala, a village in the north-easternmost part of the district, who, I was told, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment on a charge of dacoity. He was as mild in appearance as others and nobody would have dreamt that he was once a dacoit. When asked what impelled him to commit a decoity, he said that he was starving and was associated with some of the Koli bad characters. He was leading quite a peaceful life after returning from jail. This instance

may serve as an illustration to show that even culprits are not criminals.

A Warli is faithful. He cares for his word and tries to keep it. He has a sense of moral obligation and acts to it. He is never forgetful of the charities done to him and repays them to the best of his abilities. If his master is kind, he will be faithful to him and sincerely work for him throughout his life. But if the master is nothing but exacting, the Warli servant always bears a grudge against him. Warlis are ever grateful to their helpers. I know a woman whose daughter was treated and saved during her (the daughter's) delivery by an American lady doctor. The poor woman had no money to pay the doctor's fees. After a few days she went to the doctor with a present of a few eggs, spending five annas on railway fare and walking a distance of no less than six miles.

Warlis are truthful. Falsehood, the disease of civilization, has not affected them to any large extent. The savkars and money-lenders take full advantage of their truthfulness. Cases when Warlis have committed murders of their wives for adultery and surrendered themselves to the police with all frankness are not rare.

A Warli is simple and frank. He does not know how to observe manners like the higher classes. A funny story is reported in a Wārli locality about a Warli's explaining certain term of relationship to the magistrate. It is not known whether it has any foundation, but it is a very fine illustration of the Warlis' frankness. The pleader was trying to explain the term *odhyā* to the magistrate in regard to a case in which Warlis were involved. The magistrate could not follow what the pleader was driving at; the Warli in the court too, found that the *vakil* was making a mess: so he sprang up to his feet and addressed the magistrate, "*Nāhi ra nāhi māmledārā ! tasā nāhi. Mi sānga nāng,*" (No, no, oh, mamlatdār: It is not like that; I will tell you; just see) and he proceeded, "supposing you are my brother. You have a wife and you get a son from her. Then you die: and I marry your wife. Then your son becomes my *odhyā*. Did you understand"? It goes without saying that the magistrate understood it thoroughly with this direct explanation of the Warli amidst the laughter of the whole court.

As against these excellent virtues as stated above, a Warli is idle and most unambitious. He does not care to work if he has sufficient food to eat. It is only the pinch of hunger that impels him to work.

Warlis are a timid tribe. They conspicuously lack dash and courage. A Warli is not so much afraid of a tiger as he is of a savkar or a civilized man. This is due to his ignorance and secluded life in the jungles. A savkar or his estate-manager can beat a Warli without any protest from the victim. He suffers and keeps mum like a lamb. It is not in his nature to revolt. Had Warlis this revolting spirit in them they would have bettered their condition long ago. Because of this timid nature, Warlis have been reduced to utter subjection.

The Neighbouring Tribes:—Warlis come in close contact with other aboriginal tribes who are their immediate neighbours. Though it is difficult to measure in exact degrees to what extent the Warlis have been culturally influenced by the social environment, it can be said that there are a few culture traits common among all of them. Their religious outlook, dialect, songs and even their appearance and dress to a certain extent have been influenced by their neighbours. To a casual observer a Warli in the north would appear quite distinct from a Warli in the south-east. The one has only a loin-cloth with nothing on his head; and the other may put a short dhoti with a red turban-cloth after the fashion of his Koli brother. The Dāvar woman puts on solid rings of brass from ankle upto the knee and also on the arm from the elbow to the wrist; while a woman on the eastern part prefers to have only glass bangles on the wrist and nothing on the ankle. Reference regarding some common rites and customs have been given in the proper places in the previous chapters. A short description of each of the neighbouring tribes would not be out of place here.

The Warlis live with Dhodias, Dublas and Koknas as their neighbours in the north and with Kolis, Thākurs and Kātkaris in the east and south. The former group seems to have been influenced by the Gujarati culture and language to a certain extent. In regard to social and economic status, the Warlis stand lowest in the first group.

Dhodias:—They are better cultivators than any of the aboriginal tribes in the locality and most of them are engaged either in plying carts or cutting wood in the dry season. During the time their husbands are away, the women folk manage the house and work in the fields for brushwood etc. The Dhodia is thrifty, industrious and hard working. He is shrewd enough to pay more to his savkar by way of rent and not to pledge his services to him throughout the year. There are exogamous divisions called *kuls* among the Dhodias. Marriage with maternal uncle's daughter, mother's sister's daughter and father's sister's daughter is not allowed. As among the Warlis, the father of a girl receives bride-price and the institution of *khandādiā-gharor* is prevalent among them. A widow may marry the younger brother or a younger relative of her husband. The Dhodias worship *Bharam Dev* and observe *Wāgh Bāras* as an important holiday besides Diwali and Holi. They bury or burn their dead and a devotee called *Bhuwā* (like the Warli bhagat) shakes his body at the funeral rite. They believe in witch-craft, but have few bhagats among them as compared to Warlis. " They have cleared many of the jungles of Surat district and Navsari district of Baroda State and made the land fit for cultivation. They are educationally in advance of other aboriginal tribes of Gujarat and the Deccan. If adequate encouragement be givan to this community it will come into line with the Hindu intermediate classes."[1]

Dublas:—The Dublas live in the vicinity of villages more especially on the coast line. They are not so much forest dwellers like the Warlis or Koknas. Most of them are field labourers and hereditary servants. The very nomenclature suggests that Dublā is meek and he is really so. A section of the Dublas has been contra-distinguished from the rest of the tribe as *Watal* or impure, for the *Watals* have taken service with the Parsis and eat food prepared by them. Generally Dublas are idlers and their women do not like to work hard. Marriage restrictions among the Dublas are the same as those of the Dhodias. Marriage service is conducted by a caste-man or a priest of a lower caste. The practices of *dej* and *khandādiā* exist.

1. Report of the Depressed Classes and Aboriginal Tribes Committee, p. 7.

A widow may remarry the younger brother or a younger relative of her husband. The rite regarding the re-marriage is conducted by a re-married widow. There are bhagats among the Dublas also. In Māgh or Chaitra they observe a ceremony for the manes which is conducted by a devotee called *Jāngio.*

Koknas :—Koknas resemble Warlis in appearance. They are also better cultivators than Warlis. Some of them have lands of their own and produce paddy. A Koknā is reputed to be hard-working, so much so, that he eats his bread while ploughing his field. In schooling, particularly in Jawhar State, the Koknā children are better than other aboriginal children. The parents are willing to send their children to school. Koknā children are smart in appearance and clean in habits. In Jawhar State I saw a few Koknā girls in schools. Most of the Koknā girls have a figure of sweet basil (*tulsi*) tattooed on their foreheads. Some of the young women are not without good looks and fair skin. Koknas worship *Brahm* and *Wūgh Dev* and the system of Khandādio is prevalent among them. In both physical and intellectual spheres, Koknas seem to be on a higher level than the other aboriginal tribes and they are likely to reap the best advantage of education and other facilities if they are made available to them.

Kolis :—Among the second group, the Kolis are better off socially, economically and lately educationally also. The idea of organizing themselves into a social unit has dawned upon them, particularly upon the educated ones. The idea gets impetus because a Koli prince is ruling in Jawhar State. Kolis are widely distributed both in Gujarat and the Deccan and come second only to Bhils as regards population. There are three divisions of Kolis in the Thana district; the Mahadeo or Rāj Kolis, the Malhār Kolis, and the Dhor Kolis, besides Son Kolis who are culturally a distinct group. Formerly the Kolis were notorious criminals and outlaws and the cirminal tendency is not extinct among them even to this day. Dhor Kolis as distinct from other Kolis are regarded as untouchables by all the aboriginal tribes because they are associated with carrion eating. They live apart from other tribes in villages or hamlets.

Thākurs :—Thākurs are divided into two endogamous divisions, *Ma* and *Ka*. The former think themselves as Marathe or

mothe (great) Thākurs, as opposed to the *Ka* Thākurs who are regarded as lower or *Kanishta*. The divisions may also be due to the fact that the *Ma* Thākurs use many words which begin with *Ma*, and the latter use the words beginning with *Ka*. The *Ka* Thākurs are socially inferior to the *Ma* Thākurs. Their men and women are meagrely dressed and do not take *padar* over the breasts. The Thākurs are industrious, honest and faithful. They are deceived most by the money lenders. Their dialect has musical toning. The Ka Thākurs are very backward and poor.

Kātkaris :—Kātkaris form only the bottom step of the social ladder of the aboriginal tribes. They lead and love a forest life. In the Thana district, the tribe, particularly the *Dhor* section of it, is unsettled and still nomadic. They are wont to leave their habitations on the slightest pretext. Most of them are engaged as wood-cutters or charcoal-makers. Charcoal-making is the privileged profession of the Kātkaris. Kātkaris earn more in coal-making; but a Kātkari drinks more if he earns more. In some parts, particularly in the north of the Thana district, the Kātkaris who are popularly known as Kāthodis and sometimes as Nāiks are regarded as untouchables. Next to Koli and Bhil, Kātkari is criminal in his pursuits. He is idle, less sober, extremely poor and least hopeful.

The relation of Warlis with all these tribes is friendly though they think themselves socially superior to some of them They partake of food with Dhodias, Dublas, Koknas and Kolis They do not dine with Thākurs and Kātkaris and never with Dhor Kolis. Dhodias do not eat food prepared by a Warli. Even in the Mission schools, this distinction is observed by the convert children: so the Dhodia boys act as cooks there. A Dubla does not take his meals with a Warli in the latter's house, but he can do so anywhere else. The Kolis are not prepared to accept food from Warlis. Thus Dhodias and Kolis consider themselves socially superior to Warlis and Dublas and Koknas consider themselves on a par with them. Thākurs and Kātkaris are inferior to them. The question of inter-marriage between the Warlis and any one of the other tribes is out of the question. If a Warli woman is found to be in illegal connection with a man from any other tribe mentioned above she is proclaimed as

an outcaste. On the other hand, a man may have sexual intercourse with a woman from any tribe, but he cannot marry her according to the Warli marriage law. A man is, however discouraged from keeping illegal connections with another tribeswoman. No distinction is observed by Warlis when enjoying drinks with members of other tribes.

CHAPTER XII

IN CONCLUSION

The uplift of the Warlis :—It will be seen from what has been said so far that the tribe is in a very backward stage socially, educationally and economically. Only patient and honest work for a number of years by Government and other selfless workers will bring the tribe up from poverty and degradation. To my mind there are two greatest hindrances in the way of their progress. These are their ignorance and poverty. All other factors are allied to these two prime causes. Again, they are inter-dependent. The people are ignorant, because they are poor and vice versa. Ignorance can be combated by the spread of the right type of education on right lines. Poverty will be removed by solving their land problem and making their agriculture pay them at least sufficient food for the year. The educational problem of the Warlis is not discussed in this book as it forms part of the rural-cum-aboriginal educational subject. The solution of poverty lies in getting more lands for them and improving their position as tenants so as to make them self-dependent, in finding subsidiary occupations for them during the off season, in saving them from the clutches of the money-lenders and making them temperate in drink habits.

An ardent reformer will unhesitatingly say that all improvement must be educational and that primary education is the basis of everything. This indeed cannot be disputed. But in the case of the aborigines like the Warlis, prior to education, the problem of bread must be solved. The natural instinct of hunger must first be satisfied, In the case of people who hardly get bread twice a day literacy is a tall talk. A hungry man refuses to digest anything but food. Time and again it has been pointed out in these pages that poverty is the very life of these people. To enable them to get their food is therefore the supreme need.

There are some other considerations also which when put into practice, would go to ameliorate the conditions of the Warlis. Thus prohibition, medical help, social contact and propaganda may be mentioned as ways in which a reformer can

work among these people. They need not, however, be dealt here extensively. The tribe's difficulties in the way of getting pure and sufficient water both for themselves and their cattle must be solved. The tribe as a whole lacks a healthy type of recreation. Their social institutions need to be overhauled and organized on new lines. The influence of bhagats must wane. People must be educated to cut down their marriage expenses. They must have an ideal example to follow from among them.

Admitting all that has been said above, a casual observer or an unsympathetic friend of these people might ask "can the Warlis improve"? It is indeed the confirmed opinion of those persons from higher classes who move among the Warlis that they are incapable of improving their lot. For generations past they have shown no signs of progress. They themselves have hardly realized the pitiable condition in which they live and have rarely shown a desire to improve their lot.

There is no doubt a grain of truth in such opinions. But such a view is too pessimistic. Doubtless improvement in Warlis is an uphill task. It is true that whatever efforts were so far made to better their conditions, socially and educationally, have met with the least success. Consciousness to develop themselves has not yet dawned upon them. Warlis are unambitious and unenterprising. Their wants are few and they are extremely contented with whatever little they have. Their general condition is much the same today as that described by Dr. Wilson nearly a century ago. Dr. Wilson who came in contact with some of them in 1842 A. D., said :—"The Warlis are more slender in their form than the common agriculturists in the Maratha country, and they are somewhat darker in their complexion. They seldom cut either the hair of their heads or beards and on ordinary occasions are but slightly clothed. Their huts are sometimes quadrangular and sometimes circular and on the whole are very convenient, being formed by bamboos and bramble, twisted into a framework of wood and so thickly covered by the dried grass as to be impervious both to heat and rain.....The grains which they raise are principally *nāgli*, *tur*, *udid*, *wāl*, and to a small extent *bhāt*. They are immoderately addicted to the use of tobacco and almost every man

amongst them carries the materials for striking a light for smoking whenever he may please."[1]

Thus a Warli of today is more or less the same as a Warli of hundred years ago, he having progressed very little if at all. The tribe as a whole shows no social solidarity. The various local groups are independent of themselves, and the tribal spirit as one unit is absent. The observed differences between the different endogamous divisions are sometimes so marked that a member of one group is not willing to accept food from a member of the other.

All this goes in support of the hypothesis that Warlis are incapable of improvement. Those who advance such hypothesis, however, fail to visualise the silver lining behind a dark cloud. True, Warlis have not materially much progressed within a century but the present-day Warlis cannot be culturally identical with the Warlis of hundred years ago. Whatever their own desires may be, the march of civilization brings them into contact with others, and their age-long conservatism has to give way to the progressive spirit of the time. Thus the Warli culture—"that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society "[2]—has not remained stagnant. We have tried to see the traits of the Warli culture, expressive of " that complex whole " in the previous chapters on social organization, religion, marriage, birth, death and ritual songs. The people's life is co-extensive with their culture and with the change in their life, their culture also changes.

The Warli culture is primarily simple, at times primitive and complicated too like the culture of the Hindus. Like a primitive, the Warli makes fire with the help of flint and iron, can use a bow and arrow and hunt, constructs fishing dams and weirs, makes basket traps and can catch fish; he primarily worships his own tribal gods, dreads evil spirits, believes in black magic and in its power in doing harm to others, does not recognize disease as a physical evil, but takes it as the result of an evil eye and attaches significance to any physiological pro-

1. Dr. Wilson: J. R. A. S,, Vol. VII, p. 22.
2. E. B. Tylor: Primitive Culture, p. 1.

cess, be it birth, menstruation, disease or death, far beyond the biological considerations which are involved in it. Like his so-called civilized brother, the Warli builds a hut and lives in it with his wife and children, rears a family, ploughs his field, eats cooked food, uses clothes, has ideas about modesty and shame; he has a marriage institution, observes certain restrictions regarding the choice of his mate, treats his wife well, has a tribal council whose decisions on matters social he has to obey to a certain extent, has his own law of morality and cremates his dead. He celebrates some Hindu festivals, generally believes in Hindu gods though not worshipping them, often refers to them in his ritual songs, has borrowed some of his customs from the Hindus, worships *Sati*, the presiding deity of a child and offers *pindas* to the dead. As a tiller of the soil, he shows highest regard for the Earth, holds cow and corn in reverence and takes pride in calling himself a peasant. Lastly he has his own folk-lore, folk-songs and folk-dances, assigns reasons for some of his customs and thinks in his own way.

But the Warli culture must not be viewed as a secluded one. It must be considered in relation to the general cultural environment. An account of the warlis' customs and beliefs regarding marriage, birth, death and religion reveals that they share some of the culture traits in common along with the lower caste Hindus, as well as with the neighbouring tribes. These culture parallels are due to diffusion from a common stock. The development of culture is both an independent evolutionary process as well through the borrowings due to chance contact. In the case of the Warli culture, the latter part of the above statement is truer. The tribe's contact with the Caste Hindus has produced an unmistakable influence on their ways of thinking. The borrowings and adoption of some of the Hindu beliefs and customs have considerably affected their culture. The influence of Hindu culture is clearly visible in their ritual songs, so much so that highly philosophic ideas about certain phenomena like death are expressed in them. All this goes to prove that the Warlis cannot be culturally secluded from the surrounding castes and tribes.

Looking at the present culture of the Warlis, we can say that it is slowly undergoing a change. The Warlis are gradually

adopting, consciously or unconsciously, Hindu customs and rituals. They evince a belief, faint though it be, in the existence of a supreme being. There is a vague consciousness in them that they belong to Hindu society. Even keeping their old religious ideas in tact, they have begun to believe in the Hindu gods and deities. The marriage ceremony, which was performed exclusively by their own priestess, is being replaced by a ceremony which is performed by a Brahmin priest of the village. The latter form of marriage is as valid as the former one; nay, it is regarded even more sanctified and acclaimed as one after the Hindu fashion. There is a growing tendency among a few of them to name their children after Hindus. These are sure indications of their old beliefs giving way to the new ideas. The Warlis are thus moving with the changing and changed times.

The Warlis do not suffer, in fact never suffered, the social disability of the untouchable classes. Their touch is not a pollution to the Caste Hindus, even to Brahmins. Warlis were never shunned by the higher classes and were not forbidden from visiting the Hindu temples. Most of the domestic servants in the locality are Warlis. The Warli women act as maid servants and do household menial work freely moving in the houses of Caste Hindus. Warlis can also mix with others in the village functions, if they so desire.

Day by day, the Warlis are becoming an essential constituent of the village community. Their votes are sought by a candidate contesting the Village Panchayat and Local Board elections. The warlis themselves are standing as candidates for the reserved seats in the Village Panchayats and Local Boards. His contribution to the village life as a labourer is no small. It is true that the Warli labourer is not as efficient as he ought to be. Nevertheless his services are in demand. In those localities where the major population consists of Warlis, the land-lord has to depend on them in bringing his land under cultivation. The Warli's habits are almost settled and he has developed a sort of attachment and tie for the place he lives in and which he is not ordinarily prepared to leave unless compelled to do so owing to unfavourable circumstances. He has almost given up his hunting activities along with his nomadic habits

and has taken his stand as an agricultural labourer. It is impossible for him to revert to his old wandering pursuits from a settled life. He has to put up a hard struggle to make his position certain as an avowed agriculturist.

His conservatism does not come in the way of his adapting himself to the changed environment. In some quarters a growing desire for education and social organization is discernible in him. The Conference of the Warlis of a few villages, referred to in chapter IV (p. 95) is an important indication of the people's desire to organize themselves and attempt to come into line with the lower castes of Hindus like Kunbi. It is encouraging to see a few Warli children in schools. Some Warli youths have passed the Marathi School Leaving Examination. Some have passed examinations in Training College also. A few are acting as teachers. These facts amply show that they are not incapable of development. Many a Warli boy is quite smart and intelligent. I have come across boys who have stood first in their classes sometimes competing with boys of higher castes also. These examples, solitary may they be, are valuable to the reformer who is out to work among them.

It has been already said in the chapter on Warli religion that Warlis are gradually adopting Hinduism ; (p. 81). I may go a step further and suggest that even at this stage Warlis can assimilate with the Hindu society, forming a backbone of its lower strata. Warlis' cultural affinities with the Hindus may make an assimilation feasible. It is not merely that the Warlis follow some of the customs of the lower caste Hindus, but the latter too in their turn believe like Warlis in witches and evil spirits and sometimes propitiate the gods of Warlis like Wāghobā.

Some of the Warli notions regarding purification are almost identical with those of the Hindus. They not only hold the cow in the highest reverence as do the Hindus, but a culprit undergoing a purificatory ceremony has to eat a little cow-dung mixed with her urine. He has to put on the rings of *darbha* grass in his toes and fingers. (see *jāt* ceremony pp. 38-39). The trees sacred to Hindus are also sacred to them. (p. 50) In almost all the Warli rituals, rice, betel leaves and betel nuts

are a prominent feature as with the Hindus. Their terms of relationship are very similar to those of the Hindus. (pp. 27–30) The language they speak is a dialect of Marathi. These, along with the Hindu religious ideas and cultural affinities with the Hindus, are sufficiently strong reasons for a dispassionate observer of these people not to classify them as purely animists. They further suggest that the Warlis' assimilation with the Hindus, rather than with any other religion, will be more in the natural course. This may be corroborated from the fact that inspite of the strenuous efforts of the Missionaries and their sympathetic and helpful behaviour towards these people, very few indeed are prepared for conversion. After all, Warlis and Hindus stand on a common ground.

But if left to themselves, Warlis would hardly be expected to make a substantial headway in progress. It has been pointed out that their material condition is nothing but deplorable. Their whole life is a continuous process of struggle to get two meals for the day. But this fortune even has been denied to some of them. They are more and more falling easy prey to the sawkars, with the result that their indebtedness is daily increasing and their position at times reduced to that of a serf. Social uplift without the material advancement of the people would be a dream. It will be a sheer folly to expect such to developments within a few years. It may take generations yet achieve this objective. If proper remedies are found out to meet their difficulties and equal opportunities are given to them, they would not lag behind.

From this point of view, the tribe needs the help and protection both of the State and the general public in more than one way. The apathy of the general public must be converted into the constructive channels of sympathy towards them. Help and not neglect should be the guiding point of view of the higher classes in looking at them. The officials coming in the contact of these people must be actuated with a sense of service and sympathy. " It has been recognized by the distinguished anthropologists like Flower, Tylor and Driberg that a sound knowledge of the customs, beliefs and manners of the backward people would be very useful for the officers in administering the areas

under their charge to the good of the natives."[1] "A good psychologist who has social reform at the heart will not commence by direct and determined onslaught on everything which is primitive in conception and execution; on the contrary he will gradually eliminate the elements of barbarity and injustice, while sound principles of primitive law will form a key-stone of social and legal structure."[2] "The policy of the reformers, [whether they are Government servants, voluntary institutions or private individuals] should be evolutionary and not revolutionary."[3] An administrator, a social or religious reformer, or an educationist, who wishes to ameliorate the condition of this or other aboriginal tribes will find his task easier on account of a knowledge of the mentality and view point of the aborigines.

The Warli today stands on a low level expecting his culturally advanced brother to stretch forth a helping hand to lift him up. He has been neglected by the so called educated and the civilized in the past. He has been ruthlessly exploited by the vested interests. Should he ever continue to be neglected and exploited?

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1. Dr. G. S. Ghurye, Presidential address at the Indian Science Congress (Anthropology section) Calcutta, 1935,
2. Hambly: Origins of Education among Primitive People, 396.
3. Ibid. p. 398.

APPENDIX—A

SONGS

Song of Marriage :

1

Hotā Nāran Barambhā
Nāran Baramela bolāvun ānalān
Kāy mānzi kāmān padalin
Kāmān lagnāchin padalin
Gelā Ganobāche māhalālān
Ganobā dev turaye zāla
Gelā garajāyche māhalālān
Garajāy devi dhavaleri jhāli
Nāran Baramyān bolāvanān kelān
Kalakā devilā bolāvanān kelān
Bhārajāy devilā bolāvanā kelān
Gangā Gavarilā bolāvanā kelān
Mahālakhmilā bolāvanā kelān
Hāthin devilā bolāvanā kelān
Tivarāy devilā bolāvanā kelān
Devani tumānlān bolāvanin kelin
Kāy kāmā hāmachin padalin
Māla padalin lagnāchin kāmān
Yevān tumhin sonyāche māndavā
Tatha devani ubhyā rahajā
Bolāvanān kelān Hirobā devānla
Hirobā dhānvatuch āla
Kāy kāmān hāmachin padalin
Māla padalin bāmhanāchin kāmān
Hiravā gelā Dāhanūchyā sāharānla
Tatha bāmhan nāhin O mila
Gelā sevate O sāharānlā
Sevate sāhari bāmhana āhay
Kāy kāmān hāmachin padalin
Padalin chopadyāchin kāmān
Bāhamnāchā nokar dhānvatuch yeya
Tyāhān chopada ānala

Padalin punvyāchin kāmān
Ninghun gelā dhudiche mānsla
Tatha punavā nāy mīla
Ninghun gelā dudhālin talelā
Tatha punavā chara
Tehān punavā ānalā
Punavā dudhāna dhavalā
Tākalyā resami gādyā
Punavā sajāyā lāgalā
Varrājā sajāyā lāgalā
Pāyin bharala joda
Kamaren nesala jote ra
Sānthi bharalā āngarakhā
Hāthin ghetlā sonyāchā chābuka
Chandar Surayā joāra lāgalā
Tākala ujavā pāya
Udun basalā punave ghodevar
Māralā sonyāchā chābuka
Punavā dapatāyā lāgalā
Punavā chāla lohiche mārgālā
Ālā Punavā sonyāche zāpyālā
Bāmhan ālā sonyāche māndavālā
Bāmhanān chopadyā kādhalyā
Bāmhan pothyā vānchāyā lāgalā
Lagnān eka ghadyāvar āhe
Bāmhan vānchatūch jāya
Lagnān āli don ghadyāvar
Bāmhan juthyā o bola
Chār ghadyā juthyā bola
Dāhān ghadyā lagnāchyā juthyā
Solā ghadyā lagnāchyā āhāt
Kāli gāthi pāndhari vāti
Bāmhan bola sāvadhi bola
Ganobā devān turān thokali.

(Chap. VII p. 145)

Song of Marriage : (2)

Jā bolāv konyā devā
Jā bolāv Kanasari Mātā
Kanasari Mātā baskāi ghodā
Tumhi yāve mandapa dārā

Lagnāchyā zālyā velā
Lagin ghatakā chadhāyā zālyā
Jā bolāv Dharatari Mātā
Tumhi yāve mandapa dārā
Laganāchyā zālyā velā
Jā bolāv Kanasari bāl
Tumhi basāve jāmbe ghodā
Tumhi yāve mandapa dārā
Laganāchyā zālyā velā
Jā bolāv Baramha devā
Jā bolāv Baramha devā
Baramha devā baskāi ghodā
Tumhi yāve mandapa dārā
Bāmhan basalā jāmbe ghodā
Tyāne ghetalū pothyāchā bhārā
Tyāne ghetalā kalasa tāmbyā
Bāmhan ālā māndavā khāli
Ghodā bāndhalā mōndavā khāli
Bāmhan basalā mandapa dārā
Tyāne ughadalā pothyāchā bhārā
Bāmhan vāchi pothyāchā bhārā
Malya māsā kolambi kosā
Kāli gānthi pāṇḍhari vāṭi
Bāmhan bola sāvadhāna
Bāmhan bola opanaya.

(Chap. VII. p. 146)

The Song of Water Wheel :

Bail kūn kūn rātālū
Pāni gela charnīla (burden)
Charnīcha pāni ga yenvde
Tumi nāgoli banāla
Nāgoliche nāgole yenvde
Tumi devāche laganāla
Charnīcha pāni ga yenvde
Tumi nārole banāla
Nāraliche nārel ge yenvde
Tumi devāche laganāla
Charnīcha pāniga yenvde
Tumi haladi banāla,

haladichi halad ge yenvde
Tumi devāche lagnāla.

(Chap. VII, p. 149)

The Fair :

Devānche ghardār ten, gelān vo jatre (burden)
Sādiche gādale te, bharun go āle
Jodvāche gādale te, bharun go āle
Cholyāche gādale te, bharun go āle
Gānthyāche gādale te, bharun go āle
Bāshingāche gadale te, bharun go āle.

(Chap. VII, p. 150)

Gujarati (Marriage) Song :

Bhāy sarakho bhāy paranāy, bhāyne jovā jāyere
Hirojini rita karye, bhāyne jovā jāyere
Bhāy sarakho bhāy puranāy, māndavāne jovā jāyere.

(Chap. VII, p. 151)

Moon-Light :

Dongarācyhā kelanīla, kunvar kānda phūlaya
Nagarāchyā kelanīla, kunvar kānda phūlaya
Ten ge phulānche, Chāndanā ge padaya
Ten ge chāndanātu, kānu deva khelaya
Ten ge chāndanātu, Nāran dev chālaya.

(Chap. VII, p. 152)

Son-in-law :

Mānzā ge jānvāy, punavechā chāndu
Mānzi ge sunas, dārichi tulas.

(Chap. VII, p. 152)

Nāran Dev :

Tu Nārandev māganelā gelā
Pan Dharatari ghāla baskāra
Kanasari kara sinagāra
Tu Nārandev māganelā gelā
Pan Chandarkalā khāmbāsi ubhi
Nārandev varājā, haldāy savāsuni
Na Lakhmāy ta navari zāli
Na Devagota varādi
Nārandev māyabāpa
Āmhi tuze lenkare khānde zombalo

Lakhmāpata māya
Āmhl lenkare ānkade zombalo
Girijāy māya
Āmi lenkare ānkade zombalo
Kansari māte
Āmi lenkare thāren zombalo.

(Chap. VII, p. 153-(2)(3))

Assembly of Gods :

I subhā konhāchi ra
Divā lāvlā lonyāchā ra
Subhā basli sonyāchi ra
I subhā konhāchi ra
Hirobā devāchi ra
Mānze Himāyu devichi ra
Bāi Chedobā devāchi ra
Mānzyā Barambhu devāchi ra
Bai Nāranu devāchi ra

(Chap. VII, p. 153)

Cobra's Daughter :

Kālyā Nāgāchi poyari ra (burden)
Jodavi visareli ga
Sānga sādi na visareli ga
Sānga choli na visareli ga
Sāli chude na visareli ga
Sānga hārā na visareli ga
Botavān na visareli ga.

(Chap. VII, p. 157-(2))

Sleepy Wife :

Ulsanevar velu
Velu na kasā dūla ra
Nikarā Vālyā tuzi bāyku ra
Nijechi kasi dūla ra
Gibhalyā tuzi bāyku ra
Nijechi kasi dūla ra.

(Chap. VII, p. 157-(4))

Herb for Children :

Sāle musali dongarālā ga, mānzi vāta konhā chokhaleli ga
Vāta konhā chokhaleli ga, Bhagtācyhā poyaryān ga
Bhagtāchyā poyaryān ga, vansayā kādhāyā ga

Vansayā kādhāyā ga, mānzyā sālela deyāla ga
Sālelā deyālā ga, porānān hoyālā ga.

(Chap. VII, p. 157–(6))

Marriage Ceremony:

Vātevarali ātharoni ga, chal jānva lagināla ga
Vātevarali karandi ga, chal sāle lagināla ga.
Choli mānzi phāteli ga, nāy mi yeny lagināla ga.
Sādi mānzi phāteli ga, nāy mi yeny lagināla ga.

(Chap. VII, p. 158–(7)

Salutations:

Chāndā ra Suryā namu lāgalyā,
Dhagesar devā namu lāgalyā,
Jugā jātilā namu lāgalyā,
Tādesar devā Mādesar devā
Gajesar devā Vijesar devā,
Balayā devā namu lāgala;
Lankā Rāmālā namu lāgala,
Sukesar devā namu lāgala,
Irā namīna chālu lāgali,
Yera vadālā chālu lagāli,
Vani vāndarālā chālu lāgali,
Samadari namina geli ninghun,
Bārā maroli geli ninghun,
Samadira lāṭā namu lāgala,
Bhingār māshālā namu lāgala,
Namin geli mahyā dunyāla,
Kālesar devā namu lāgala,
Budanāk devā namu lāgala,
Megharājālā namu lāgala,
Chāre khandālā johāra zāla,
Pāncha nagāla namu lāgala,
Pāncha Pandavālā namu lāgala,
Haramāna devā namu lāgala,
Ninghun gela dhavale purāla,
Mahādevālā namu lāgala,
Gangā gawari Girajāmālā,
Dharalare bāy go dhartari bāi
Kansare bāy ge namu lāgala,
Vansi bāy ge namu lāgala,

Gānvache bhagatūlā nanu lāgala,
Bharale sobhela nanu lāgala,
Mi āhe dādu ajāna bāla,
Athā mānzyā Rāghu Kulambyā,

(Chap. VII, p. 158)

Birth and Death:

Mānajāchi kayā nāya dādu mila,
Barambhā doshāla bolānā kelā,
Satyā Māvalilā bolānā kelā,
Jamnu deva rājā ālā ninghun,
Sone palangāvar Jammu dev basa,
Sati Māvalī aksharā likhaja,
Barambhi Doshi liklanyā budavat
Sati Māvalī aksharā likhaja,
Menāchyā kayā ra menāchyā kayā,
Dhakalun dilābā narkā khādita,
Mānajāche poti narkāchi khādi,
Narakā khādit yo jivadā yeya,
Narakā khādita jivadā vādhaya,
Nav mahanah zāla nav mahanah zāla,
Narkā khādishi jivadā padalā,
Dharati padalā dharati padalā,
Sati aksharā tokadi lihali,
Dilā jivadā māla māgata neya,
Yerā maranāchā hevā nāhi dāvā.
Ekhalyāchā jānā bā ekhalyāchā yenā,
Yetyā todyā sānkadyā vātā,
Jātya todyā paghala vātā,
Ashi devān varadānā dili,
Ashā mānajālā sayā thevalyā,
Ekāchā gharā radā, sagalinchā radā,
Zādpān rada, kidi mugli rada,
Asā dādā bā nako ra karu,
Jāche gharā madhā tyāchech radā.

(Chap. VII, p. 171)

Death the Inevitable:

Bolata chalata gohāchā marana,
Bharela gādi jāy ulathūna,
Pāthichā bhava jubina mārāvā,

Bolatā chālatā bhārajāyachā marana.
Bhārajāy dādu ra mahana rahela,
Eka vela yechi maranāchi yela,
Goha dādu ra zādāvar chadhalā,
Hāta pānha yācha jāya nisatāna,
Lākhi chikayā jāya tārvāna,
Jiryāchi kāḍi geli sukān,
Velichā vānsā nelā khuduna,
Bhājichā mādā gelā komuna,
Tashi ra kayā geli komuna,
Punavechā chāndu gelā māvaluna,
Kelichā khāmba dādu gelā dhaluna,
Kāchā ghadā gela futuna,
Kāchyā ghadyāchī kānhi tari dīsa,
Kayā chā dādu nāhi kānhi dīsa.

(Chap. VII, p. 172)

APPENDIX—B

GLOSSARY

Amāvāsayā—Last day of the Hindu month.

Ārti—A lamp the waving of which is a frequent feature of ritual.

Barambhā—A male evil spirit.

Bāravā Pujaṇe—Rites on the twelfth day of the birth of a child.

Bāshing—Marriage coronet.

Bhagat—A priest-medium.

Bhālavaṇe—To close (a *ravāl*).

Bhūt—Ghost.

Bhutāli—Witch.

Bigār—Forced labour; (also *veth*)

Bol—Betrothal.

Chālā—Tune of the music.

Chauk—Square drawn in the marriage ritual.

Chavale khāṇe—Eating chavale (a kind of bean) for the first time after the monsoon on the Diwali day.

Cheḍā—An evil spirit.

Chitan—Finding out a thing secretly kept by others.

Dāṇe pāhaṇe—To judge the cause of the disease by looking at the rice waved round the sick person.

Dātūn—Chewing tree—stick to cleanse teeth.

Dāvā—Compensation to the husband of a woman paid by her paramour at the time of divorce.

Dāvar—A section of the Warlis.

Dej—Bride price.

Dev—God, ceremony in propitiation of

Dev bātavaṇe—Sprinkling toddy over the images of gods.

Dhartari—Earth.

Dhavaleri—Marriage priestess.

Dhup deṇe—Holding the articles to be offered to god on smoke.

Dīs—Funeral rites; also *kāj*.

Divalyā—Lamp lighted in the funeral ceremony in honour of the manes.

Dongari schools—Special schools for the aboriginal tribes children.

Dūḍ—Keeping two water pots on the head one over the other.

Gānthi—String of black beads.

Gāvalis—Chants in the purificatory rite.

Ghān—A marriage rite in which rice-corn is taken from the bridegroom to the bride.

Gharor—Husband living in the family of his wife's father; also called *Gharatanyā* or *Khandādhā*.

Ghor—An iron ring for making jingling sound in a *Ravāl*.

Girā—An evil spirit.

Goṭāi—The purificatory rite.

Halad—Turmeric, rite of.

Hāli—A domestic servant.

Hāṭā—A whip used in Ravāl.

Hedli—A female evil spirit.

Himāi—The tribal goddess.

Hirvā—The tribal god.

Jānosā—Bridal procession.

Jāt—Caste or tribe; rite of purification.

Jātelā—Caste-patel, a judge.

Jīva—Life-force.

Kādimoḍ—Divorce

Kākan—A wristlet worn by the bridal pair.

Kāmadi-A singer of the funeral chants.
Kanasari—Corn, deity of.
Kārbhāri—A go-between in the marriage; also *Varhādki*.
Karavali—Bridegroom's sister.

Khale—Corn threshing floor.
Kode—An earthen wick lamp, (Mar. *paṇti*)
Kore—Pure.
Kul—(i) Clan, (ii) Tenant.
Kuli—Surname, clan name.
Kunbi—Peasant.
Kunbi Malhāri—A section of the Warlis.
Kusā—Bunch of peacock's feathers in which the image of Hirva is tied.

Mandap—Marriage booth, also *Māndav*.
Mosālā—Presents given to the bride or bridegroom by her or his maternal uncle; also *Māmā-shelā*.
Muṇḍāval—Flower wreath tied to the bride or bride-groom.
Murde—A section of Warlis.
Muṭh—An evil power possessed by a witch, by which she is supposed to kill a person.

Nāran—The chief tribal god.
Nāris—*Hirvā's* women.
Navas—Vow made to god.
Nihirs—A section of Warlis.

Oṭi bharaṇe—Filling the lap or the fold of a sari of a woman or girl with fruit or grain.

Padar—(i) A cloth taken over the breast and shoulder.
(ii) A synonym for female puberty; also *pālav*.
Pāl—Restrictions imposed on a bhagat pupil, also *pālnuk*.
Panchas—Five tribal councillors.
Pāchavi pujaṇe—Rites on the fifth day of the child-birth.
Pāradhi—Hunter, Lieutenant of *Hirvā*.

Parāt—Round brass dish.
Pāṭ—Widow-remarriage,
Pathār—Warlis living near the coast and in plains.
Pinḍa—Balls of rice offered to the *pitars*.
Pitars—Manes.
Pithi—A composition of rice flour, coconut juice and other fragrant ingrediants.
Punav—The day of full moon, also *Purnimā*,
Ravāl—A training camp for *Bhagats*.

Salad—A basket in which images of gods are kept.
Sanavari—A female spirit.
Saplok—Offering of meals to the manes on the last day of *Bhādrapad*,
Sat—Real power.
Sat or Sati—Presiding deity over a child; observances on the sixth day of child birth.
Suvāsini—Woman married for the first time and with her husband alive; also *Savāshin*.

Talan kādhaṇe—Taking out a substance from boiling oil.
Tāmbyā-A handy metal water-pot.
Tārpe—A musical instrument accompanying the Diwali dances.
Tokar dharaṇe—Blocking the way of the bridegroom by holding a bamboo pole.
Toran—Bunting of mango leaves.
Tūr—Warli music band.

Udhaḍi—Woman taken as a wife without undergoing the regular marriage ceremony.

Umbar—A sacred tree, glamerous fig tree.

Ushṭi halad—Left-over turmeric taken from the bridegroom to the bride.

Utār—The removal of evil.

Vansi—Herb.

Varagaṇe—Clan, also *kul.*

Vāre—Afflatus.

Vāṭi chālavaṇe—Pointing out witch publicly.

Veṭh—Forced labour.

Vidyā—Secret learning.

Visāvā—Spot from which women accompanying the funeral procession return.

Viṭāl—Menstrual fluid.

Wāghayā—Tiger-god; also *Wāghobā.*

Pronunciation of the vernacular words:—

Short 'a' is pronounced as 'u' in 'but', and the long 'ā' like 'a' in 'father'. The short 'i' like 'i' in 'fit' and the long 'ī' as the sound of the double 'e' in 'feet'. Short 'u' is like 'u' in 'put' and the long 'ū' as the sound of the double 'o' in 'foot'. The vowel 'e' has the sound of 'a' in 'met and 'o' has the sound of 'o' in hole.

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