

## CHAPTER XII

### PATTERNS OF ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR AND MARRIAGE

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#### I. INTRODUCTION

The period of adolescence is a period of transition to maturity and growth. It opens a new page in the physical and mental development of an individual. In our civilised society, adolescence is a period of stress and strain, but in many other societies it is not so. Whether this transitional period creates stress and strain depends upon the attitudes of the society towards sex and sex relations, handling of adolescence, the taboos and beliefs connected with menstruation

and initiation and lastly the ideals of marriage and married life. Hence, adolescence and marriage are influencing factors in the life cycle of the individual in any society and culture. Here an attempt is made to study the period of adolescence, its patterns of behaviour and marriage in the Dangi society and culture.

## II. TRANSITION TO ADOLESCENCE

When a Dangi boy or girl arrives at the age of puberty he/she crosses the threshold of childhood and enters the stage of adolescence. The Dangis say, "When the thin hair appear to grow on the moustache of the boy he is no longer a child. A menstruating girl is 'bangi', mature and she is no more an innocent young child".

A Dangi boy of this age naturally becomes sex conscious, his eyes brighten up at the sight of a passing girl. He becomes more attentive to his self, enhances his personal beauty by putting on washed clothes, applying oil and doing his hair nicely, trying to keep his body more clear and

clean and tidy and putting flowers in the ear holes.

An adolescent girl feels shy of mixing with and talking to grown up boys freely. She puts on not merely a blouse and skirt but a 'fadki' becomes an important part of her dress. She begins to put on ornaments as an item of daily decorum. She becomes aware of the growth of her breasts and would never be without a blouse.

### III. GROUP MEMBERSHIP

The tendency of forming separate groups of boys and girls continues in the adolescence but it is not so strong now. When the adolescent children meet, they talk and play together occasionally. At the threshold of adolescence, the relations are less emotionally charged. But two or three years later this also changes. The boy who begins to take an active interest in girls is seen less in a gang, spends more time with a close companion finding opportunities of meeting his fancy girl alone and talking to her. Opportunities of meeting

a girl are a few like the village festival, fishing trips or dance nights. A girl can be followed when she is going alone for fetching water or firewood. But the 'love' episodes among the adolescents are very few, for there are rare chances of developing deep and lasting relations for a boy with a girl. Moreover, they are married before they are consciously and actively aware of sex activities, and sex tensions.

Youthful boys are often heard talking about girls, their appearance and their amorous relations with them. The unmarried Bhil youth, my servant of Kirli, told me, "Fair skin, an attractive profile, broad and rounded breasts, cleanliness are the signs of beauty and attracts attention".

#### IV. ~~The~~ ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENSTRUATION

A Dangi girl knows from her observation of daily life that a grown up woman menstruates. So her first occasion of menstruating is not something which is unknown and unusual to her. She, at the same time, knows that she has become mature

and is now 'fit for marriage'. Menstruation is understood as a natural course of life. The girl in menstruation is not looked upon as a dangerous object, she is neither isolated in a hut nor she is a despised untouchable. But she has to observe a few taboos. She is not allowed to cook and touch the cooking vessels, ~~Go~~ going near the devpuja, or articles of worship, participating in the religious ceremonies, etc. are a taboo for her. A woman in menstruation should not go near the Bhagat. Her shadow pollutes him. Sex relations are prohibited during these days. She has to observe <sup>therefor</sup> three days and become pure after taking a bath, cleansing her hair and body on the fourth day. There are no mysterious superstitions attached to menstruation. Once I told Kolgyabhai that in one tribe people believe that if a menstruating woman ploughs the field, the crops are very rich that year. He laughed at this and jokingly said, "Hence I shall also ask my wife to do so".

## V. ROLE TRAINING

The problem of role expectations becomes particularly important at the period of adolescence. An adolescent is a member of his own age group as well as an occasional member of the adult group. In the group of the adult men an adolescent boy can have an easy entry, sits and talks with them and gets his work done. Similarly an adolescent girl is also accepted as an occasional member by the adult women. Thus when the adolescent becomes adult the complete entry to the adult group is smooth and automatic.

The adolescent is a responsible member of the family. He or she can not remain idle and eat without participating in the work of the family. The boy helps the father in his fields, takes care of the cattle, drives the cart and goes on daily labour also. A fifteen-sixteen year old boy is an ~~adolescent~~ earning member of the family. An adolescent girl is entrusted with the household duties which she can do independently. She looks after the younger siblings, fetches water, is entrusted with cooking and helps the mother in cleansing

and grinding the corn. Her qualities of hard work and industry are appreciated and talked of well.

The social demands upon the youth are much greater than those upon the child. The youth is expected to 'earn his salt' in social as well as economic ways, but he is not expected to be fully self-reliant or to make contribution to the welfare of the group. It is a period of social apprenticeship when the social and ~~economic~~ technical skills learned during childhood are tried out under adult guidance.

During this period the boy and the girl prepare themselves for their role as adults. The girl remains more confined to the house, and the boy is more on outing. A youth enjoys more freedom than ~~the~~ he enjoyed as a child.

In the later years of adolescence, i.e. at the age of eighteen to twenty years, the youth becomes mature physically as well as mentally. Now the young man goes to work not as a part-time or a casual apprentice but as a member in an occupational group. Occupational maturity is a criterion for being fit for marriage.

## VI. AGE FOR MARRIAGE

As soon as the parents feel that the boy or the girl has grown up they think, 'Now a suitable partner must be found out and he/she must be married'. But the marriage does not take place as soon as the individual becomes mature. For, it takes time in finding a suitable match. Moreover, because of the weak physique or the sick health of the adolescent, parents think to wait for some time for the marriage. They say, "Why should there be haste, He/she is still 'Barik' (young)". Sometimes the economic conditions delay the marriage. The average age of the marriage for a boy is 18 to 20 years and that for a girl is 15 to 17 years.

## VII. VIRGINITY BEFORE MARRIAGE

One Dangi youth told me that formerly the bride used to bleed at the first intercourse after marriage but now this does not happen always. By saying this he meant that every woman of a marriageable age is not a virgin. He said, 'I know that the wife of the son of Karbhari had relations with another



young man of her village, but her father married her here. The daughter of my neighbour had relations with my friend and both were married." The lovers cannot be adamant in their marriage if the marriage between them is not socially acceptable. But in many cases when the ties between the boy and the girl are casual and do not show deep attachment, the proposal of marriage with some other man is not viewed with opposition. The boy also does not object even if he knows that the girl had relations with some other boy. Today one reason for doubtful virginity at the time of marriage is the increased age of marriage. Sometimes the girl is married as late as eighteen years.

#### VIII. THE CHOICE OF A BRIDE: RESTRICTION OF THE CHOICE

Iku said, "The initiative of the search for the partner in marriage is taken by the parents of the boy and the first proposal to the bride's parents is put by them. There are certain considerations which restrict the choice of the bride, with reference to the tribes. We are endogamous, i.e. a boy or a girl cannot marry outside his/her tribe. That is a Kunbi

boy has to marry a Kunbi girl and cannot marry a Bhil, a Warli or any other girl. If at all such marriage takes place it is not socially approved. Such a pair leaves the village and settles elsewhere. If a Kunbi boy/girl marries a Bhil girl/boy, he/she becomes a Bhil and leaves his/her Kunbi family".

He added, "Within the tribe we are exogamous, i.e. the individual marries outside its 'Kula'. Persons bearing a common surname belong to one paternal family and so are brothers and sisters. Hence such kind of marriage will be incestuous. So the parents, before putting the proposal, first ask the 'kula' of the girl's father".

Along with the clan exogamy, there is a convention though not a rigid custom of local exogamy. That is as far as possible the marriage partner is not sought from one's own village. The reason for this local or territorial exogamy is not that the village may be an endogamous unit. On the contrary families of one's own relatives are very few in one's own village. Then the reason for this is that there are more chances of complaint, and coming into conflict when the two parties are nearer than they are apart.

## IX. PREFERENTIAL MATING

Among the Dangis cross cousin marriage is possible, that is in the choice of the mate the son or the daughter of the mother's brother or father's sister can be preferred. The Jaglya of Galkund said "I bring up my sister's son in my family. When he becomes old, I shall marry my daughter with him." But this kind of preferential mating is not rigid. Sororate, i.e. marrying deceased wife's younger sister and levirate i.e. marrying deceased husband's younger brother, systems exist among them but are not compulsions.

X. QUALITIES OF A GOOD PARTNER -  
BOY AND GIRL

The survey of the families indicates that no grown up boy or a girl remains unmarried. The major physical or intellectual handicaps do lessen the chances of one's marriage. The cow-headed boy in Kalibel was mentally deficient and hence was unmarried. The mother of two blind girls in Isakhandi despaired that the girls have no chances of marriage. Even economic factors also count in choice. An orphan boy without any definite source of maintenance has to wait till some father-in-law offers him to keep as a

'khandhadia'. One old man in Chinchvan had to remain unmarried because he was an orphan and had no relatives to support him, and no land to cultivate

In a candidate for marriage certain qualities are preferred. A boy must have a good physical health, <sup>good</sup>physique, be hard-working, obedient and able to maintain his family. A girl should be obedient, well-versed in household activities and hard-working. A good girl is shy and modest. She spends much less time in toileting. Beauty is not of so much importance in a girl as her qualities of obedience and industry.

#### XI. SEARCH FOR A BRIDE

The father who wants to marry his son talks to his friends and villagers about it. The suggestions of the girls come from them. With three or four of his friends and relatives the father goes to different villages in search of a bride. He goes to the parents of the marriageable girls, narrates his economic position, his 'kula' and his desire to marry his son. The girl's father thinks

over the offer, takes advice from his wife, his friends and the Patel of the village. The girl is also asked to give her opinion. If both the parties agree about this first stage the details of bride price and the amount of 'pen' are discussed and decided. The bride price payable by the boy's parents varies from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 150/-. The amount for 'pen' varies from Rs. 25/- to Rs. 30/- and is to be spent by the bride's father in serving tea (formerly liquor) to the guests on the occasion of 'penbharvi'. Once the bride price is fixed the processes are very smooth. In the initial stage Rs. 5/- are given to the girl's father as a gesture of fixing the match and a day is fixed when the people of the boy's side should come to the girl's village for 'pen bharvi' (to fill the 'pen').

The ceremony of 'pen bharvi' is not marriage but as good as marriage. The boy and the girl thus united live as a husband and wife and build their family\*. As the marriage is a costly affair

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\* In Gamits the occasion of 'pen bharvi' is the day of fixing the date and conditions of marriage. The girl and boy do not stay as husband and wife without marriage.

they may or may not marry in future. Sometimes it happens that marriages of the parents and son are celebrated simultaneously. Thus the ceremony of 'pen' allows a man and a woman to live a marital life. Out of 115 families surveyed only three couples were 'married'.

#### XII. CEREMONY OF 'PEN BHARVI'

The bride groom's party including his relatives and friends starts from its village sufficiently early, so that they can reach the bride's village on the fixed day. Women also join the party. The relatives staying in the villages coming on the way also join the procession. They spend their time in singing and making merriment.

When the groom's party comes to the village of the bride, the father of the bride with his relatives and friends and the 'Panch' of the village receives them. The guests are seated in the verandah and asked to rest. The people of both the parties exchange good wishes and show pleasure on meeting each other.

The religious procedure of (pen) is very short. I attended the 'pen' of a daughter of the Patel of Kasad.

"The girl had put on new clothes, a saree, a blouse, a phadki, red in colour and 'ganthi' a necklace, brought by the bride groom specially for the occasion. She was seated before a figure carved on the floor, from corn. This was thought the 'god' incarnate. She worshipped the god with the redlead powder, rice <sup>ms</sup>grains, corn stalks and red turmeric (kumkum). The corn, water, and the lamp were also worshipped. Then the father of the girl, the father of the boy and other five elderly persons worshipped the gods. Then the boy put some coins in the hands of the girl, as a token of new relation. At the end, bride was asked to offer a few drops of tea to her father and the members of the panch. They in return gave their blessings and said, "We take your tea, now you form an independent house, keep it clean and tidy, and maintain it". The bride was then taken out. She bowed down to all the elderly persons of both the sides and received their blessings of happy married life".

"The end of the ceremony was marked by an exchange of cups of tea between the relatives of both <sup>the</sup> sides. The bride's father and his friends, the groom's father and his four friends stood opposite to each other in front of the door. A leafful of tea was given to each. They exchanged a few drops of tea with one another and declared, "Now the two families have entered into a new relationship and we vouchsafe the sanctity of the 'Pen' of our children". They appealed to various gods to help them and shower their blessings and drank the tea. They swore that they would see that the new couple settles in life and pulls on nicely.\* If there is any trouble in future between this couple these persons are called and consulted to solve the problem. Then tea was offered\* to everybody present there\*.

Next day morning the groom's party along with the bride left the bride's village for going back to their village. The bride was seated on her brother's shoulders upto the outskirts of the village. The girl prayed for the blessing of the god, bowed down to her parents and other persons and joined her husband".



After coming to the groom's house before entering the house the ends of the dhoti and the saree of the couple are tied into a knot with a four anna coin and rice corn in it. This knot is untied in the house before the goddess 'kanasari' and both swear to live together and participate in the activities of life.

The bride leaving her parental home and joining her husband is a pathetic scene. The parents and relatives of the girl with ~~tear~~ tears in the eyes bid her good-bye. The parents request the 'yevai', "We have entrusted our daughter to you. Now she is your daughter. She is innocent and inexperienced. Please correct her faults and treat her kindly". The parents of the groom assure, ~~that~~, "Do not worry about your daughter. Now she is our daughter". These kind of words and assurances give solace to the bride's parents.

In the first instance the bride is sent for a few days to the in-law's house. After some days the bride's brother comes to take her back to the parental home.

"For a newly married girl", said Bhikhu and his wife, "in the beginning all the members of the in-law's family and surroundings are strange. Moreover, she does not know the temperament of all and hence, is worried as how to deal with and please them. She has to be modest in presence of elders and create an impression of 'a good girl'. In this house only the younger brother-in-law and sister-in-law and her husband are a place of shelter and freedom. Slowly and gradually she becomes accustomed to the new atmosphere and establishes her place in the house".

#### XIII. MARRIAGE CEREMONY

The difference between 'Pen bharvi' and marriage to the Dangi, as he says, is that, "the ties between a husband and a wife united by 'Pen' are 'Kachha', while the couple united by marriage remains united even after death; in the other world". There are certain ~~rituals~~ <sup>rituals</sup> which make the occasion serious, and put forth the ideals of life.

One day before the marriage a mandap is erected in front of the bride's house. On the day

of marriage first the girl takes a bath in the cattle shed, and the yellow vermilion is pasted on her body. Then the boy takes a bath and the yellow vermilion is pasted on his body. Pasting yellow vermilion called 'Pithi' 'Cholvi' is an important item in the Hindu marriage also. It indicates that every thing is correct and the boy and the girl are ready for marriage.

After this a 'barsing' (a preparation of straw to be tied around the skull in such a way that its front portion covers the forehead and eyes of the wearer) is put on by both and are seated on 'bajath' ( a low levelled wooden seat with four legs), the girl being on the left of the boy. Some elderly and experienced person acts as a priest and conducts the ceremony. A common garland of cotton threads is put into their necks. Now they are seated facing each other. The priest asks them to take out their right hands and put the palm of the girl in the palm of the boy. It is covered with a piece of cloth. This is called 'Hastamilap'.

Then, a ceremonial fire is prepared in front of the couple and both take four auspicious rounds 'Mangal Fera', the bride following the groom. Again the yellow vermillion is prepared in a ladle and pasted on the body of the couple. The 'barsing' is untied and hanged on the to<sup>o</sup>most peg in the house.

Next day morning the bride accompanied by her sister-in-law (the groom's sister), ceremonially fills the basket with the cow dung and dirt in the cattle shed and throws it away near the nearest big tree. This is done five times. On the fifth turn, the sister climbs the tree. The groom (her brother) comes there and requests her to get down, gives her some money and carrying her on his shoulders brings back to the house.

During these days all the members of both the sides are given three dinners. The dinners are given by the groom's father, but the food is cooked under the supervision of the bride's father. Three days before the marriage necessary quota of ration and other articles <sup>are</sup> is sent to the bride's house by the groom's father. Giving dinner is a very expensive item.

Another expensive item for the groom's father is clothing. He has to buy new clothes and ornaments for the groom as well as for the bride. Moreover, he has to give in gift one piece of cloth, a saree or a dhoti to all his relatives and those of 'vevai' also. That is the maternal uncle and aunt, father's sister and her husband, cross cousins and parallel cousins, sister and her husband of the groom as well as of the bride, each is given one piece of cloth.

#### XIV. OTHER WAYS OF MARRIAGE

Besides the regular marriages in which the boy and the girl accept the parent's choice and decision there are marriages decided upon by the boy and the girl themselves. Even in regular marriage the girl's desire and opinion about the boy are asked. If the girl does not approve the father's choice the father does not insist on it. He says "I cannot force her to accept against her wishes". In <sup>one</sup> a case, one girl in Chitiya said to her father, "I shall not marry this boy. In his dress of a 'payjama' and a 'kafani' he does not look

like a Dangi". The girl is at liberty also to name the boy with whom she is in love and wants to marry. The adamant and determined girl is married to her choice even if there is little doubt in the father's mind.

Sometimes the marriage by elop<sup>m</sup>ent also takes place. Generally it happens if the boy and the girl are of different tribes. Elopment is a disgrace to the girl's father than to that of the boy. For it means that the father has no control over the daughter. So he goes to the boy's father and threatens him to complain to the panch. If the boy's father is in know of the things he sends a word to his son. If they come back, they are allowed to marry if they remain adamant. Such inter-tribe marriages can be revoked by undergoing some rituals.

Love marriages do not change the position of the bride price. It is to be paid by the boy in any case. At the most because of the intervention of the girl some concession may be given.

XV. KHANDHADIASHIP

A poor boy who cannot pay the bride price can serve as a 'Khandhadia' and save the bride price. A khandhadia is a 'Ghar Jamai', i.e. a son-in-law who stays in the father-in-law's place-house. As a khandhadia the boy stays as one of the member of the girl's family, works in the father-in-law's fields and gets a living from him. The tenure of khandhadiaship is five years. During this period he is not allowed to keep close contact and sleep with the girl. At the end of the five years period of experiment if the boy is proved a suitable partner for the girl the father marries him with his daughter. He gives them all the articles necessary to start a house and helps them to establish their own independent house.

Though the period of tenure is of five years it is not always so in practice. For the fact that they are prospective husband and wife and the factor of vicinity create soft feeling for each other in the boy as well as in the girl. They may steal many occasions to meet privately. Sometimes

such affairs lead to pregnancy, hence they are married before the scheduled period is over.

The relation between the khandhadia and his in-laws are very cordial. He is not treated as a servant or humiliated for his position. He is treated as a son, an active and earning member of the family.

#### XVI. PRE-MARITAL AND EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONS

Pre-marital and extra-marital sex relations are tabooed and socially disapproved.

Pregnancy of a girl before her marriage is a topic of public censure. The parents ask the girl to name the person she has connection with, and privately make an arrangement of her marriage with him. If the case is not settled privately the father of the girl brings the man before the panch. The panch settles the case and levies a fine of rupees twelve payable to the panch and also the bride price to be paid to the girl's father by the person involved.



If one of the spouse suspects the other of having extra-marital relations, it creates conflicts and quarrels between them. But they cannot file a complaint before the panch unless they have a concrete evidence. For example, if a husband suspects his wife, he cannot charge the man having relation with his wife, publicly without any evidence. If the husband steals some alimony of his wife or her lover when they are together and produced before the panch, it is a sufficient evidence. The guilty man is fined rupees twelve.

#### XVII. DIVORCE

Divorce is granted on several reasons. The causes which lead to divorce are the frequent quarrels between the husband and wife, the husband being inattentive to wife, or having relations with other woman, the wife having relations with other man, and hence not attending to her husband, ill-treatment from the in-laws, husband's inability to maintain the family etc. Generally a Dangi is not willing to give a direct divorce to his wife on the grounds like that she is diseased or she is barren.

For in that case no other man would marry her and he does not get the return of the bride money.

The unwilling wife runs away to her parental home. If she does not return within a few days, the husband is worried, goes to the wife's parent's house to persuade her and brings her back. If the wife has severe grievances and not inclined to go back, her parents do not enforce her to go. They say, "What can we do? She does not want to come". But the husband is more worried about the bride price rather than the bride. For without money he cannot get another wife. The parents do not pay the bride price back, but the girl is married to another man, and this new husband pays the amount to the aggrieved husband. I witnessed one such case in May 1959 in Jakhana. 'A young girl of 18 years was married to a man of another village. But within a few days after marriage she ran away from her husband's house and came to stay with her lover in Jakhana. She was determined not to go back. So the day on which I was there, the aggrieved husband with some fifty persons from his village came to the Patel's house of Jakhana. The Patel who was

in know of the matter collected the members of the panch and the lover of the girl also. The spokesman of the other village said, "If the girl is unwilling to come we cannot take her back by force. But then the aggrieved husband should get back the amount of bride price and the expenses incurred in marriage". The Patel of Jakhana said, "the boy - her lover - is very poor and cannot pay such a big amount". "But what can we do ?" Said the spokesmen, "We have spent money for this girl. Either the girl should come or pay the amount". Ultimately both the parties came to a compromise and the quarrel was settled.

Sometimes a man runs away with somebody's wife. The paramour is chased and may be beaten when caught. But if the woman is unwilling to come back the quarrel is settled if the new husband pays the bride price.

In such cases of divorce children, if any, remain with the first husband. But if the woman has a child on the breast or the child is too small it is kept with her. But the father warns the mother and the new husband that the child must be looked after well.

## XVIII. REMARRIAGE

A widow is allowed to remarry. If there are children and if the father of the deceased husband is willing to bring them up, the woman alone goes to the new house. If not, she takes them with her to the new house. The second husband is generally ready to father the step-children. This custom sometimes creates a peculiar situation, that in the same house there are three categories of children, children of the husband of his first wife, children of the wife of her first husband and children of the new union.

Even if there are grown up sons, a widow remarries.

A widower's problem of remarriage is more acute. He cannot remarry so easily if he has not sufficient money to pay the bride price for the second time. In remarriage also the ceremony of 'pen bharvi' is performed again. A man marrying a widow pays some amount to the woman's former husband's younger brother who had a right to marry her. The widow leaving the husband's house leaves also the ornaments purchased for her by her husband.

Though getting divorce and remarrying are easy, public opinion is not in favour of such unstable life. A woman often running away, and changing husbands is criticised as 'hindya', always moving. But the cases of marrying more than once are not a few. The survey of 115 families show the following results :

Married, times	Male	Female
1. Once	67	75
2. Twice	35	36
3. Thrice	12	3
4. Four times	1	1
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	115	115
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50 % of the second marriages were because of running away of the wife within the first year of marriage. In five cases the woman had never gone to the husband's house for the second time after marriage. It is not so that a woman after getting children will be stable. A mother of three four children also may take a second husband. Bhangubhai

of Kirli who was fifty years old told me that because he was not keeping well from a very long time his wife ran away before a month. A married daughter of Karbhari Iku did not go to her husband's house. I asked her why she did not go. She said, "I do not like him. My in-laws do not treat me nicely". I said, "Among us, the Hindus, a married woman does not leave her husband on such flimsy grounds". She said, "Why should I be ill-treated? I shall marry another man". Iku said, "When my daughter does not want to go it is useless to send her against her desire. If I send she will come back after a few days". The marriage customs are such, which do not emphasise the fidelity in marriage, being faithful to one's spouse under whatever circumstances. Marriage to them is a social necessity, not a religious pact.

#### XIX. POLYGYNOUS MARRIAGE.

The Dangis are monogamous not by rule. One can marry more than one wife, but hardly I have seen two or three cases of having more than one wife. A poor Dangi cannot afford the expenses of having a second wife.

The idea of marrying a second wife is not merely the satisfaction of the impulse, but a wife is an economic asset to the family. 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. Sometimes the wife is eager to shift a part of her household duties on other's shoulders. As a senior wife she works less than the junior.

The Patel of Kakadvahir had two wives. He told me how he had to marry the second wife. "The former husband of this woman did not treat her well. So she left him and came to my house. I am a man of wealth and status. How can I drive her out from my house? So I have two wives".

The two wives did not quarrel and by mutual adjustment divided the duties between them. I told them a story of how a man with two wives was put in a very pitiable condition and was harassed by both. They simply smiled and said, "It does not happen here. We live as sisters".

XX. SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL  
IMPORTANCE OF MARRIAGE

The celebration of marriage is an invigorating and colourful event in the dry, hard and mechanical life of the Dangis. It is of great psychological significance in the life of the individual as well as in the social and cultural life of the people.

Socially marriage makes a change in the status of the individual. A married man and woman assume new responsibilities and are socially recognised to build their own family. The social and economic obligations, the production and consumption of the utilitarian resources are carried on within its limits. Everybody gets married, so an unmarried person is like an outcaste. His is a very pitiable condition. "There is no life without a family and there is no family without marriage. If one is unmarried he has no son to continue his family line. There is nobody to pay oblations to him after his death".



Marriage provides an evidence of the rich corporate and co-operative social life of the people. At least one member from each family attends the marriage in the village. Elderly and experienced persons give advice and suggestions as to how to celebrate the occasion.

A young man has to work hard to save money for the bride price, but his burden becomes somewhat less because of some social conventions. If he is very poor, he may observe only <sup>the</sup> ritual of 'pen bharvi' <sup>does not</sup> so, spend much after clothing and feasting. Secondly, the persons who join the groom's party make their own arrangement for food on the way to the bride's village. Moreover, the near relatives help the groom by contributing four annas to eight annas to the amount of bride price. Such customs help in reducing the economic burden and worry of the individual.

Marriage is an event of economic importance also. It is an occasion of give and take, traditional exchanges and gifts. Bride price is the largest sum that a Dangi at once gets or gives. A Dangi father is justified in asking for the bride

price in return of his daughter. For, in marrying a daughter the father loses a hardworking member, an asset of the family, while the bride groom gets double advantage in return of his money. One, getting a bride means an addition to the labour assets and secondly, he gets a social recognition to enjoy marital and social life. "So the bride price, as the Bhils of Gujarat believe, is not <sup>for</sup> rearing up the girl but for losing a valuable asset that the father is given some money"(1).

The bride price, it may be thought, may be a price one has to pay in competition of getting a girl. This can be so possibly when there is dearth of women in the society. But in <sup>the</sup> Dangas it may or may not be so. The ratio of the population of males and females of particular age groups is as follows :

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1. Naik, T. B. : The Bhil - A Study. New Delhi, Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh, 1958. p.146.

The sample survey of 326 families reveal following facts :

I.	Families	Persons	Males	Females
	326	1659	872	787
	Infants (less than 1 year)		37	36
	Non adults (1 to 20)		438	414
	Adults		397	337
	Unmarried		455	357
	Married		391	381
	Widowed or divorced		26	49
II	Families	Persons	Males	Females
		4715	2534	2181
	(a) Age group 5 - 14	1273	709	564
	Married		13	30
	Unmarried		696	534
	(b) Age group 15 - 24	858	414	444
	Married		210	384
	Unmarried		197	48
	(c) Age group 25 - 34	717	396	321
	Married		352	312
	Unmarried		23	1
	Total Married		1320	1014
	Total Unmarried		1144	1045

286

The first survey shows that the man woman ratio is 100 : 86.15, while the second survey shows as 100 : 86.86. There is not much difference between the figures of the two surveys. It is to be seen later on what influence this fact of disproportionate number of males and females has on the life and personality of the Dangi man and woman.

#### XXI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The growing of <sup>the</sup> moustaches in the boy and the start of <sup>the</sup> menstruation in the girl are the signs of passing to the stage of adolescence <sup>as</sup> recognised in the Dangi society. The onset of puberty is not looked upon something as mysterious. The process of transition to adolescence and changing the social groups and roles is smooth. The child knows that it is mature and shall be married within a few years.

Within their tribe, the Bangis are exogamous. Cross cousins marriage is possible but not rigidly followed. The Dangis distinguish between 'pen bharvi' and 'marriage'. Most of the pairs are united by 'pen bharvi'. Very few pairs enter into a union through marriage. This affects

a great deal on their attitudes towards marriage bonds. Taking a divorce and marrying twice or thrice is not uncommon. A Dangi boy has to pay bride price and incur some other expenditure in 'pen'. ~~For~~ A poor boy who cannot meet these expenses can go as a 'khandhadia'.

Pre-marital and extra-marital relations are not socially accepted. Divorce is granted on several reasons and remarriage is allowed. Monogamous marriage is not a rule but hardly a person has more than one wife.

The ideal of Dangi marriage is domestic and not romantic. To a woman the husband is one who feeds her and looks after her children. When a dissatisfied wife runs away the husband loses not only a sexual object but also an economic asset and the bride price. These attitudes and situation in marriage <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ responsible for strained relations between a Dangi husband and wife. The mistrust created ~~because~~ of the discontinuity in the attitudes of the mother, the possibility that a woman can become a witch, the age at the time of marriage, and the

emphasis on the economic aspect in the marriage are the factors which precipitate the situation between the husband and wife, and embitter the relation between the sexes. The embittered relations in turn perpetuate the situation and the relations become worse. A husband feels hatred for the wife and the wife experiences the feeling of insecurity.