

GANDIA

The Gandia lives in the southernmost part of Orissa, concentrated in Podia, Motu, and Malkangiri blocks. Typical palisade bamboo fencing all around is a distinguishing feature of Gandia settlements. Very close to their settlements one notices stone pillars and wooden posts erected in memory of their dead ancestors. The number of houses in a village varies from ten to thirty. Each house, its courtyard and adjoining kitchen garden are nicely fenced by bamboo splits. They have mud houses beautifully thatched by a type of jungle grass. Houses are rectangular giving shelters to their pigs and fowls. Herds of cattle are put or tethered in front courtyard. They giving shelters to their pigs and fowls. Herds of cattle are put or tethered in front courtyard. They worship mother-earth as village deity. They offer sacrifices of eggs, pigeons, fowls, goats, and pigs, cows and buffaloes to their deities and spirits. Their kins, *kutumb*, and affines, *wiwalwand*, are clearly distinguished. Marriage is termed as *pendul*. Marriages by service, intrusion, and exchange are also practised. The custom of bride price is prevalent. Marriage negotiation starts at an early age. They observe rites de passage; secondary burial ritual is observed most elaborately. The traditional village council is headed by *pedda*, the village headman, and *perma*, the priest. The posts of *pedda* and *perma* are hereditary.

