

247, Kattānī, *Salwat al-anfās*, Fās 1307/1898, ii, 203; Ḥadiwī, *al-Fikr al-sāmi*, Fās 1345/1926-7, iv, no. 787; 'A. Gannūn, *al-Nubūgh al-maghribī*, Beirut 1961, i, 278; Lévi-Provençal, *Chorfa*, 309-10; Ibn Sūda, *Dalil mu'arrikh al-Maghrib al-Akṣā*, i, 209-10, ii, 317; Brockelmann, II, 462, S II, 704; M. Lakhdar, *Vie littéraire*, 185-7 and bibl. cited. (Ed.)

**LAMBADIS**, a name of unknown origin designating in general a group of tribal peoples, ancient nomads, who were active in western and southern India as salt carriers, cattle herders and porters of general merchandise. They were known by different names in different parts of southern India: Lambani, Brinjari, Boipari, Sugali and Sukali, as well as Lambadi.

The origins of the Lambadis are obscure, but appear to be similar to those of groups like the Koravar and Yerukala. All are ancient nomadic tribal groups, who maintained their freedom of movement by securing a place in the economic structure of pre-modern India as carriers, herdsmen and porters in an age when modern modes of transport and adequate roads were non-existent. Apart from their occupation as carriers, members of such groups were often found on the fringes of villages as hunters and distillers of toddy.

Edgar Thurston (see *Bibl.*) indicates that the Lambadis were mainly Hindus, and clung to their tribal rituals and mixed Hindu-animistic religious practices. However, some Lambadis, in the Telugu coastlands and the Mysore highlands, claimed to be Muslims and aspired to the title of *Shaykh*. Their numbers were very small, but nevertheless they represented a very basic level of Hindu-Muslim interaction within the Indian subcontinent. At one end of the spectrum were the orthodox Urdu-speaking Muslims of northern India, at the other end odd tribal groups caught in the transition from tribal identity to something more distinctly Muslim. Some groups of Lambadis fell into this category, as did the Ahir cowherds of the Andhra highlands and the Dudekula and Panjuvetti cotton cleaners of coastal Andhra and Tamil Nadu.

Such groups were generally despised by the main body of Muslims, and possessed few overt signs of being followers of Islam. The Muslim Lambadis spoke a dialect of Telugu strongly interlaced with Tamil and Kanarese words, followed no Muslim marriage rites and practiced circumcision. In dress, daily life-style, names and casual worship, however, they retained many tribal and Hindu rituals. Like the more numerous Dudekula, who were also of Telugu origin, the Lambadis were endogamous and rarely mixed with other Muslim groups, who regarded them with scorn.

The only settled groups of Muslim Lambadis found in southern India were located in the Anantapur district of the old Madras Presidency and in the region of Mysore. There are three recorded groups, all Telugu-speaking, with bards or priests known as Tamburian (or Thamburi), who appear to be the equivalent of the Hindu Lambadi priests or *bhat*. Most of these Lambadi Muslims claimed to have been forcibly converted by the Mysore Muslim prince Tipū Sultān [q.v.] in the late 18th century, who found the nomadic Lambadis ideal espionage agents in his wars against the British in Madras. However, some in Anantapur also claimed descent from carriers who had accompanied Mughal generals in their invasions of southern India.

Until the 19th century, nomadic tribal groups

like the Lambadis had a distinct function in the economic life of India; but with the evolution of modern modes of transport their status and fortunes declined. The Hindu Lambadis (and Karavars and Yerukala) probably suffered more than their Muslim counterparts, as the *jati* system made the changeover to alternative occupations very difficult. Many in fact took to brigandage and petty crime, and were officially classified as problem groups and habitual criminals. The Muslim Lambadis were far fewer in number, and appear to have made the transition to sedentary occupations, though generally they were ones of low social and economic status.

The Dudekulas, a similar Muslim marginal group, were more fortunate in that their traditional occupation—cotton cleaning—facilitated their absorption into the economy of modern India. By the early 20th century, they were merging into the mainstream of Islam in the subcontinent, with overtly Muslim practices and names replacing those of their pre-Islamic past.

By the middle of the 20th century, the Muslim Lambadis appeared to have all but vanished. They were no doubt absorbed into the surrounding body of Muslims, and probably can still be traced amongst the more impoverished and illiterate Muslims in remote areas of Andhra Pradesh in India.

*Bibliography*: The most detailed description of the Lambadi group can be found in E. Thurston's *Ethnographic notes on Southern India*, Madras 1906, and vol. iv of his *Castes and tribes of Southern India*, Madras 1909. Thurston, however, concentrated on Hindu Lambadis, with only an occasional reference to the Muslim ones. The same is true of the District Gazetteers, especially G. A. Grierson, *North Arcot*, Madras n.d., and W. Francis, *Bellary*, Madras 1904; W. Francis, *Anantapur*, Madras 1905, does mention the Tamburian priests. J. Dupuis, *Madras et le Nord du Coromandel*, Paris 1960, puts the Lambadis in their tribal and occupational perspective, whilst L. Dumont, *Une sous-caste de l'Inde du Sud*, Paris 1957, further explains the painful transition from portage to crime for the nomadic tribal peoples in an excellent case study. G. A. Herklots, *Islam in India*, London 1832, makes a brief reference, perhaps the earliest, to Muslim Lambadis. In addition, there are a few isolated references scattered through the records of the British administration of the Madras Presidency.

In official publications and in Thurston's *Castes and tribes of Southern India*, the Dudekulas and Panjuvettis are far more prominent than the Muslim Lambadis, and references to them can be found in the following District Gazetteers: W. Francis, *Anantapur*, Madras 1905; idem, *South Arcot*, Madras 1906; F. R. Hemingway, *Godavari*, Madras 1907; C. F. Brackenbury, *Cuddapah*, Madras 1914; *Guntur* (statistical appendix), Madras 1915; A. F. Cox and H. A. Stuart, *North Arcot*, Madras 1895; W. Francis, *Bellary*, Madras 1904; F. R. Hemingway, *Trichinopoly*, Madras 1907; W. Francis, *Vizagapatam*, Madras 1907. See also references in *Census of India*, 1901, xv, 1911, xii, 1921, xiii. Brief references occur in T. W. Arnold, *The preaching of Islam*, repr. Lahore 1961; I. H. Qureshi, *The Muslim community in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent*, The Hague 1962, and *Murray's handbook of the Madras Presidency*, London 1879. (K. MCPHERSON)

**LAMENTATION** [see NIYĀHA].

**LAMGHĀNĀT**, a district of eastern Af-