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FORMAL & INFORMAL RELATIONS IN THE HINDU JOINT. HOUSEHOLD OF BENGAL[1]

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Even though it lies within the realm of common experience of many of the Bengali population, the Hindu joint household of Bengal provides important and fascinating data to the social anthropologist as a major social institution. This article only reflects in an informal manner on the way the members of the Bengali Hindu joint household behave with one another in their respective kinship roles, and also as a group of persons. It is based on common observations on this type of household structure, and does not say all that may be said on this subject. Rather it suggests future studies on ampler scales. Moreover, it does not attempt to discuss the historical and the legal aspects of the Hindu family on which many volumes exist and more may be added.

The Bengali Hindu joint household usually consists of three generations of persons in the male line with their wives and children, living in the same house, with a common source of income and expenditures, and under the leadership of one member. Daughters are married out of the house to become the members of another. But widowed daughters may sometimes be included in the paternal household together with their children. Married daughters with children may also periodically come for a visit, and for the time being they become members of the household. The daughter is always reminded that she is the daughter of the house even though she has to live elsewhere after marriage.

A household may occasionally consist of four generations, but usually the first generation is deceased before the fourth generation makes its appearance. The head of the house is often the founder of the household. After his demise the joint household may still be run

1. This paper was read at the Anthropology Section of the Thirtyeighth Indian Science Congress at Bangalore, 1951.

jointly by the group of his sons under the leadership of one, by keeping the household accounts and expenditures joint. This is done provided that the expenditures are based mainly on a joint source of income rather than on the individual earnings of the members. Until the father dies ordinarily the sons do not separate, but if the head of a joint household is the eldest of a group of brothers there is no guarantee that the household will always remain together.

The joint household is organized around the head of the house, the *karta*, and the mistress of the house, the *grihini*. Not only do they regulate and keep order in their own household, but it is through them that the members of the community participate socially with the others of the house. They represent the entire household. Social invitations as well as obligations may be presented to the *karta* and the *grihini* and any of the members of the house be expected to accept them. In matters of social breaches and etiquettes of importance to the community, the opinions of the *kartas* and the *grihinis* of the various households of the community may be asked. The leaders of the households are often the leaders of their particular communities in areas of stable population, and together they form the informal judiciaries of social discipline.

If the *karta* of a household is disabled, or at his death, the next senior person usually becomes the *karta* and holds the household together. If there was a younger brother of the deceased *karta* living jointly in the same house he may now be the *karta*, or lacking such a person, the eldest of the sons is expected to take this role. In controversial situations, however, it is not obligatory that other brothers follow the directions of the eldest brother. If the household is based on common property, in the Bengali legal system all the brothers have an equal share of the ancestral property. In a group of brothers, therefore, the younger are not necessarily subordinated economically to the elder, but pay the latter respects due to courtesy and confidence for his seniority in age. If it happens that the eldest brother is lacking in the capacity of leadership whereas a younger brother fulfils this requirement, the latter may be the informal *karta* of the household. The same may be said of the *grihini*. The wife of the *karta* is expected to be the *grihini*. But in case she is incapable of managing all the domestic affairs, or at her death, the next senior female member, such as the sister-in-law directly next to her, or lacking such a member, her eldest daughter-in-law will take the role of domestic leadership. In a group of brothers, the wife of the brother who plays the role of the *karta* may be expected

to be the *grihini*, but here again if the wife of another is more capable than the former, she may execute all the functions of the *grihini* regardless of whether or not her status is formally recognized.[1] When there is lack of agreement and mutual understanding as to who is the actual *karta* of the household, and subsequently the status of the *grihini* is also in question, the unity of the household is disrupted. If the household is not based on common property, or if it has no common source of income, it may disrupt even sooner. Much of the disruption of the joint households in the mobility of city life may be found to have an economic basis if studied in detail. If each member earns his own income and needs to keep a separate account of it, there may not be any gains in living together. On the other hand, it may be a hindrance to those who earn more and are desirous of raising their standard of living. After the experience of some conflicting situations the brothers may decide to separate and form their own establishments. Each may begin his own household either in the same house by partitioning it into different units, or in a separate house, and be the *karta* of his own family unit, which may be or grow into another joint one.

Within the household there are various status groups. Ralations of the members of these groups are formally defined. The two main divisions consist of the generation group and the age group. Members of the three generations have relations of superordination and subordination, each succeeding generation being subordinated to the members of the generations above. And moreover, every person is subordinated to one older than him in age.

Members of the third generation have to treat those of the first generation with the greatest amount of deference. Yet one can be quite personal and familiar with the grandparents, especially with the grandmother. Grandparents joke with the grandchildren, even though they are treated with much respect by the latter. Usually this joking is one-sided, grandparents joke with the children but the latter keep on behaving in a proper manner. Yet if their relationship is an affectionate one, the children may feel free to respond to the joking and to joke with the grandparents.[2]

One treats his parents and members of the parents' generation also with deference, but a less amount of superordination may be

1. A vivid description of the conflicts of the actual and the informal *grihini* of a household exists in Sarat Chandra Chatterji's *Niskriti* (in Bengali).

2. For further discussions on the grandparents grandchildren relationship, *Infra*, pp. 63-65.

expressed in the form of speech used in addressing them, and in the various forms of etiquette. Yet the relationship with parents and members of their generation is of a more serious nature. It may be affectionate and tender, but it has no place for frivolity. Parents and children are not supposed to joke with one another, and any light behavior between such persons is looked upon as of bad taste.

Relationship within one's own generation group is the least restricted one. It permits all kinds of kidding and joking, and respect is demanded only according to seniority in age. However, a little differnce in age does not matter. There is no general definition of how much of difference in age ought to demand respectful behavior on the part of others. Theoretically anyone senior in age ought to be treated with respect, but actually the matter is determined according to the way the children grow up to feel about one another. Persons of the same generation group and the same age group are expected to be companions. Cousins and brothers and sisters are usually given the same status when they are parts of the same group. It is in this group that one may confide about his personal problems, including those that may arise from his antagonism with the older members of the household. Also in this group one may question the values of the *status quo* without any fear of discipline.

The relationship between brothers and sisters and cousins is expected to be an affectionate one. Seniority in age, instead of producing authority often brings about an indulgent attitude toward the younger members of this group. No formalized restraints need to be observed between brothers and sisters. An older brother or an older sister takes a protective attitude toward the younger and feels responsible for the latter. The tenderness of the brother and the brother-sister relationships is highly idealized in the Bengali Hindu culture.

Naturally the persons of the succeeding generations will be younger in age than the members of the preceding generations. This is always true in regard to the immediate procreating family, e.g., the son is always younger than the parents. But in relations not directly biological the members of a subordinate generation are not necessarily younger in age. Thus a step-mother may be of the same age or younger than her step-children. Socially the step-mother has to be treated with the respect due to the mother regardless of her age. In large households the older members of the third generation are often of the same age as the younger members of the second generation. One's elder sister's son may be older than oneself. Here formally the latter is superior to

the former in generation status, and as such is entitled to the respectful behavior toward the uncle, but because of the age difference, they may not be able to maintain this formal status, and tend to act in an equal manner.

It seems then that persons should act in deferential manner to those of the generations above, and to those older in age. Both these factors are supposed to go together, but when they do not, confusion arises as to how one should act toward them in formal matters. There is much tendency to yield to the factor of age in these cases when this participation is informal.

In this system members of the two generation groups that find themselves in the same age group are in a marginal position. In childhood age is much more of a decisive factor in determining the positions of such persons than their generation status. Children of the two groups play together and regard one another as equals, and may call each other by names without even the relationship terms attached.[1] They may also retain this informal equal relationship when they grow up, although the elders of the houshold may frown upon it.

This equality between some members of the second and third generation of the same age group does not extend to other persons of the third generation. Although one feels relatively unrestrained in the presence of older cousins and brothers and sisters, he may act with formal restraint with uncles and aunts who may be of the same age as the latter.

For a clear understanding of the behavior pattern within the household, a list is given below which contains the general terms of relationships of the persons in the household, as well as the terms for addressing them whenever they are different. The Bengali terms presented are those in common use, and those prevalent in the southwestern Bengal area. Some differences in terminology may be found in the other parts of the province, but the actual relationships indicated by the terms are the same. Attempts are not made to acquaint the reader with the literal forms of the terms.

In the father's house a man, a woman, or a child may find the following relationships, and use the following kinship terminology.

Thakurdada	Father's father.
Thakurma	Father's mother.
Jetha	Father's elder brother.

1. *Infra*, p. 61.

Jethaima	Father's elder brother's wife.
Baba	Father.
Ma	Mother.
Kaka (or khura)	Father's younger brother.
Kakima (or khurima)	Father's younger brother's wife.
Pisima	Father's sister (after marriage an occasional member of the house).
Pisamohashoy	Father's sister's hubsband (an occasional guest of the household).

If any of the father's cousins are present they are addressed in the terms for father's true brothers and sisters.

Terminologies used in the father's house for those of one's own generation category may be the following.

Bhai	Brother; male cousin,
Bon	Sister; female cousin.
Dada	Elder brother; elder male cousin.
Didi	Elder sister; elder female cousin.
Bhatribou	Younger brother's wife (elder brother speaking), may be called *bouma* or by name. Relation of avoidance.
Bhaj	Brother's wife (younger brother and sisters speaking). Elder brother's wife was formerly called *bouthakrun*, but nowadays she is called *boudi* (or *boudidi*). Younger brother's wife is called by name. Relation with elder brother's wife is a joking relationship.[1]
Bhaginipati	Sister's husband. Elder sister's husband is called *jamaibabu*, and younger sister's husband is called by name. A joking relationship.[2]

Younger brothers, sisters, and cousins are always addressed by their names, and the relationships are explained to others if necessary. The terms *bhai* and *bon* are not commonly used for addressing persons. The term *bhai*, on the other hand, may be applied generally to all members of one's age group, by and to either male or female persons, as indicating an endearing and informal relationship. In this general manner it may also be used and applied to friends. The term is

1. *Infra*, pp. 66-68.

2. *Infra*, pp. 65-66.

used in the course of conversation and not in exclusion of other terms of relationship or individual names.

The types of cousins may be referred to in the following manner if explanations are needed, but they are addressed as true brothers and sisters as stated above.

Jarhtuto bhai, bon	Brother, sister, as of father's elder brother.
Jarhtuto dada, didi	Elder brother, elder sister, as of father's elder brother.
Apon bhai, bon	Own brother, own sister.
Apon dada, didi	Own elder brother, own elder sister.
Khurhtuto bhai, bon	Brother, sister, as of father's younger brother.
Khurhtuto dada, didi	Elder brother, elder sister, as of father's younger brother.
Pistuto bhai, bon	Brother, sister, as of fathers's sister.

A woman may speak of her husband to others as *swami* (husband) but usually she refers to him by indirect terms. Face-to-face she does not address him by any conventional terms, and may never utter his name in public.[1] In the presence of any senior relatives she does not speak to him, and avoids appearing before him. A husband refers to his wife as *stri* (wife) or *bou* (term in popular usage meaning bride or wife), and calls her by her name. He may address her and speak to her in public if necessary, but usually if husband and wife wish to communicate to each other in the presence of senior relatives, they do so *via* another person.

A woman refers to and addresses other members of her husband's house in the following manner. Most persons are addressed in the way her husband addresses them.

Shashur	Father-in-law, called father. Treated with respect and restraint, and more formality than own father.
Shashurhi	Mother-in-law, called mother. Treated with respect and restraint, and more formality than own mother.
Bhasur	Husband's elder brother. May be referred to as *borho thakur* or as *dada*. Tendency nowadays is for the use of the latter term. A woman does not speak to him and avoids his presence.[2]

1. *Infra*, p. 61.

2. *Infra*, p. 67.

Deor	Husband's younger brother, may be called *thakurpo* or by name, tendency nowadays is to use the latter. A joking relationship.[1]
Ja	Husband's brother's wife. Addressed as *didi* if elder, and by name if younger. Is expected to be treated like a sister. Respected according to seniority, but may be joked with as much as with sisters.
Nonod	Husband's sister, if older than husband is addressed *didi*. If younger than husband may be addressed as *thakurjhi* or by name, tendency nowadays is to use the latter. A joking relationship.[2]
Nondai	Husband's sister's husband, may be called *thakur jamai*[3] or with *babu* suffixed to his name.

Persons outside of the kinship group are addressed with the term *babu* suffixed to their individual names, e.g., Amar*babu*. It is the general respectful way of calling people. To call any members of the kinship group as *babu* is to acknowledge a very distant relationship.

A man similarly addresses his wife's relatives much in the manner his wife addresses them. The following terms of reference are used by him in the wife's household.

Shashur	Father-in-law, called father. Treated with more respect and restraint, and more formality than own father.
Shashurhi	Mother-in-law, called mother. Treated with more respect and restraint, and more formality than own mother.
Shala	Wife's brother ; wife's male cousin, called *dada* if older, and by name if younger. A joking relationship.[4]
Shalaj	Wife's brother's wife, called *boudi* if the wife of a senior *shala*, and by name if the wife of a junior *shala*.
Shali	Wife's sister, called *didi* if older than wife,

1. *Infra*, pp. 67-68.
2. *Infra*, pp. 68-69.
3. *Infra*, p. 67 footnote.
4. *Infra*, p. 66.

	and by name if younger than wife. A joking relationship.[1]
Bhayerabhai	Wife's sister's husband, called *dada* if the husband of senior *shali*, and by name if the husband of a junior *shali*. May also be referred to with the term *babu* suffixed to his name if he is senior. Respected according to seniority but may also be joked with.

A person is expected to address the relatives of his spouse in the manner the latter does to indicate that he or she has become a member of the new household, and that the two married persons stand as one. But this adoption as a household member is hardly ever complete as far as the use of the terminologies indicates. The in-law relatives are addressed in the terms the spouse uses in their direct presence, or in the presence of others of their household. Otherwise they are referred to by the in-law terms listed above.

Members of the subordinating generations are addressed by name. Some of the terms of reference commonly used are the following.

Chele	Son.
Meye	Daughter.
Bhaipo	Brother's son.
Bhaijhi	Brother's daughter.
Bhagne	Sister's son ; also husband's sister's son.
Bhagni	Sister's daughter; also husband's sister's daughter.
Bhasurpo	Husband's elder brother's son.
Bhasur jhi	Husband's elder brother's daughter.
Deorpo	Husband's younger brother's son.
Deorjhi	Husband's younger brother's daughter.
Bonpo	Sister's son (woman speaking).
Bonjhi	Sister's daughter (woman speaking).
Bouma	Daughter-in-law ; also wife of brother's son ; wife of sister's son. She plays an indispensable role in the household, and later becomes the mistress of her own as the *grihini*.
Jamai	Son-in-law; also husband of brother's daughter; husband of sister's daughter. Treated with more formal attention than own son.

1. *Infra*, pp. 65-66.

Nati	Grandson.
Natni	Grand-daughter.
Natbou	Grandson's wife.
Natjamai	Grand-daughter's husband.

The terms for grandchildren and their spouses may also be used in a classificatory manner to brother's and sister's grandchildren and to the spouses of the latter

A person finds the following relationship terms for reference and for address when he comes to his mother's house.

Dadamohashoy	Mother's father.
Didima	Mother's mother.
Mama	Mother's brother ; mother's male cousin.
Mamima	Mother's brother's wife ; mother's male cousin's wife.
Masima	Mother's sister ; mother's female cousin.
Mesomohashoy	Mother's sister's husband ; mother's famale cousin's husband.

Cousins in the mother's house are referred to and called *dada* and *didi* if they are older, and by name if they are younger. The particular relationships are explained as the following.

Mamato bhai ; bon	Brother ; sister ; as of mother's brother.
Mastuto bhai ; bon	Brother ; sister ; as of mothers' sister.

Their spouses are also called *boudi* and *jamaibabu*. If a cousin's husband is not seen very often, he may be addressed with *babu* suffixed to his name.

There may be more than one member within each of the recognized relationship groups. Then each member is referred to numerically. The customary form of numerical reference of relatives is with the terms of *borho*[1], *mejo*[2], *sejo*[3], *nau*[4], *and choto*.[5] If there are less in number, consecutive terms are used, but the last one is always called *choto*. Thus it will be *borho dada*, *mejo dada*, *choto dada*, and not *borho dada*, *mejo dada*, and *sejo dada*. If there are more than five persons in the same terminology group, some extra customary terms will be added between *nau* and *choto*, such as *ranga*,[6] *natun*,[7] *ful*,[8]

1. In English *borho* means big, older. 2. Second. 3. Third. 4. Fourth. 5. Young, small. The terms *mejo*, *sejo*, and *nau* are used to mean second, third and fourth only when referring to an order of succession.

6. Literally means reddish colored, lovely. 7. New. 8. Flower.

etc. If any person in the consecutive series is deceased, there is no readjustment of the terminology. Thus if *mejo dada* dies, the next brother will still be called *sejo dada*. The numbering system is due to the strong sentiment that a senior kin member should not be called by name, even though that name be attached to his relationship term, as Uncle George in English. This feeling of not uttering the name of a senior person is seen in the extreme form in a wife never uttering the name of her husband, as stated previously.[1] Usually the persons residing in the household of either the father or the mother are addressed in the numerical form with the kinship terms attached, e. g., *sejo kaka*, or *mejo mama*. Father's or mother's cousins, or one's own cousins seen only occasionally are not usually included in the numerical order, and may be addressed by name with the relationship term suffixed to it, e.g., *Rom dada*. Usually, therefore, it is felt that not only would it be disrespectful to attach a relative's name to his relationship term, but that it would make a close relative seem distant, as those who are distant are addressed in this manner.

In one's own generation all persons are ranked according to their age in two groups of sex only. The seniority of their father or mother is not taken into account. Thus *kaka's* son may be older than *jetha's* son, and due to seniority in age the former is given the higher status.

Deviations may sometimes be made in substituting other words for the numerical terms presented here and adding these in the same manner to the relationship terms, but still this numerical relationship system is always retained. Some may suffix the words *mohashoy* (meaning *sir*) or *babu* to relationship terms to make them sound more respectful, e.g., *dadamohashoy, jethamohashoy, kakababu, mamababu, dadababu*, etc. These suffixes are used for males only. For females above one's generation group, the word *ma* (meaning mother) is suffixed to the relationship terms to denote respect, e.g , *didima, kakima, masima*, etc. In the Bengali society one may even address strange women as *ma* in order to denote respect to them. Some may attach the term *moni* (literally meaning *jewel*) at the end of a relationship term for either sex, as it is believed to make the form of address sound more affectionate. Thus *kaka, dada*, or *didi* may be addressed *kakamoni, dadamoni*, or *didimoni*. This addition of suffixes is a matter of individual taste, or the taste of the members of the household. It does not mean that an uncle called *kakamoni* is more beloved than one called just *kaka*.

1. *Supra*, p. 57.

Another point to note is that when one person of a relationship group is called in one manner, the tendency is that all persons in that group will be addressed in the same way. Thus the entire group of elder sisters and cousins in a household will be called *borho didimoni, mejo didimoni, choto didimoni,* etc.

The superordinate or the subordinate position of a person may be indicated by the form of speech used while addressing them, or referring to them. Thus in the Bengali third person, singular, two words *se* and *tini* are used, each meaning "he (or she)." *Se* may be used to indicate any person in common, but *tini* refers to a person held especially in respect. In the second person, three pronouns are used. The term in common usage in the second person singular is *tumi*. When a person is held in respect, he is called *apni*. Guests, acquaintances, and strangers of high rank, and the senior members of the household and the kin group are usually addressed in this respectful terminology. In a household often the grandfather is the only person to be called *apni*. Sometimes children may be taught to address their grandmother, parents, and the uncles and aunts also *apni*. But since children do not feel at ease by observing so much formality in the home, they are given training in respectful speech by applying it to the grandfather alone. Senior in-law members are usually addressed as *apni*, as they are new members of the kinship group and are treated with more formality in all respects. When such persons become better acquainted with the others, they may be addressed *tumi* by some of the juniors.

The other term in the second person singular is *tui*. It is much in use in the rural areas, and in the urban society this term may be used by a superior member of the household or kin group to a subordinate member. Persons addressed as *tui* by senior members when children may be addressed *tumi* when they are grown up. Some use the term *tui* to younger persons more than others, and there is no particular rule about it. The only thing to remember is that a junior person may never address a senior person as *tui*, and it will be considered a grave offense if it is ever done.

Children and young people of the same age group may address each other as *tui*. Among young people when *tui* is used reciprocally it indicates a relation of equality of age, friendliness, and a close bond of sympathy. The feeling is that if the persons were not close to each other they would not tolerate being called *tui* by the other. Unless there was a close relationship the term *tui* would be consi-

dered offensive if used by a person other than a senior kinsman. Therefore, outside of the kin group the term is often used by close friends only.

Other ways of showing more respect besides the speech used is to grant more attention in all respects to the senior members than is due to the lesser members. The suggestions of the seniors should be heard and performed in crucial matters, and it is bad taste to talk back to them. Usually, however, the younger members are consulted in matters concerned to them, and their sayings are heard, as otherwise there would be much discontent in the household. If a younger person cannot speak directly to a senior member about a matter in dispute, he would present his case to him through a third person of the household who is in favor with his views but has a status higher than his, or is of the same status but in a particularly good relation with the senior person. Again if the matter does not come to a satisfactory settlement, the younger person concerned may do what he wanted to do without saying much about it, and after some disapproval his action would be slowly absorbed. Usually, unless a strange and novel situation arises, the senior members would hardly pass judgement on the actions of the younger members and make the latter discontent.

On formal occasions, and after a long parting, the younger members touch the feet of the senior members in greeting and obedience. This is called *pronam*. Theoretically any person of the kin group can expect to be greeted in this manner by anyone younger in age. But usually *pronam* is done to persons much senior, as the grandparents, and sometimes to parents and to older uncles and aunts. Except on ceremonial occasions, as on *Vijoya Dasami* when all relatives come together to exchange greetings with due respect to seniority, one does not usually perform *pronam* to the older persons of his own generation group or to the younger persons of the above generation. Relatives by marriage who may be very nearly of the same age, or have their generation and age status in conflict, may greet one another with folded hands in *namaskar*. This is also the main form of greeting for new acquaintances of high status, and to persons outside the kin group in general with whom an impersonal relation may be retained.

It is to be noted that the common terminologies presented for grandparents include the terms *dada* and *didi*. It is indicative of the fact that the same kin terms may be applied to alternating generations.

In the Bengali household a father may affectionately claim to transverse his relationship to his children by calling his son *baba* and his daughter *ma*, as terms of endearment. As the term *bhai* is used to all persons in the same generation group, all in the parents' generation may use the terms *baba* and *ma* respectively to all persons in the son's generation as an affectionate address. And a son may affectionately call his father "his son." Using this sentiment of transposition, grandparents may apply to grandchildren and to all of the latter's generation the terms *bhai*, *bon*, *dada*, and *didi* in an affectionate manner. Grandparents may claim to be in a relation of brothers snd sisters with the grandchildren by alleging to be the children of the same parents, or by pretending to be of the same age group.

In moments of lightheartedness and gaiety, grandparents engage in joking with the grandchildren. They may joke on any subjects. Grandparents may even tease the children by talking to them of marriage, to which the latter react with shyness. The grandfather may call his little granddaughter his bride, or state that she will be his bride if she cannot find anyone more suitable. The idea of this joke is so utterly ridiculous that it never fails to arouse humorous feelings. Or grandparents may tease the grandchildren of their possible future spouses. This is in keeping to their alleged feeling of equality.

Grandparents may support the grandchildren against the strict discipline of their parents in controversial situations. It is not that the grandparents stand against the children being disciplined, but that they desire the children be disciplined in a slower manner, and in ways more likeable to them. This may be due to the fact that the grandparents are not as preoccupied with the development of the grandchildren as their parents are.[1] Due to their partial detachment to the subjects involved, and also due to the wisdom they have earned with their age, they foresee the general behavior pattern and the future development of the grandchildren with less excitement than the parents do. When the grandparents become old and retire from their active life, it was and still is (when they are not so rushed with the trends of the modern days) their pleasure to relate tales to their grandchildren. The tales may be either purely entertaining traditional folk tales, or they may be religious or moral tales unfolding to the children the rich and complicated Hindu mythologies in a simple

1. This has also been observed by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown in "Joking Relationships", *Africa*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, July 1940, p. 202.

manner. Or again they may be tales of personal adventures of the grandparent, and of the old days when things were different.

Regardless of the fact, however, that the grandparents seek entertainment in the company of the grandchildren by telling them stories, or by joking with them, their seniority is never forgotten by the Bengali children, and the fact that they are the parents of their parents is always in the children's mind. It has already been discussed that children are taught to talk to grandparents most respectfully, and to behave toward them in the most deferential manner. Moreover, as the *karta* and the *grihini* of the household, the grandparents can wield more authority over the children than can be done by the parents of the latter, and, therefore, they are held most in awe.[1]

In the list of kinship terminologies presented, a few relationships were marked to be of a joking nature. These will now be described in detail as they present a conspicuous type of formal personal relationship. The relation between a woman and her sister's husband may be noted first. This is an equal and formalized joking relationship and it is maintained regardless of differences in age. It is equal in the sense that all persons who stand in such relationships to one another feel free to joke back and forth without any feelings of restraint. Persons who are younger in age may sometimes feel shy and hesitate to joke with those who are senior to them in age in this relationship. Then the older persons often take the lead and initiate joking with the younger ones, and it goes round and round. The primary quality one looks for in a sister's husband is humour. The form of joking differs according to the age of the persons, and it is found in the best form between a man and the younger sister of his wife. It is a matter of joy to young people when a brother-in-law comes to visit them. He is a new member of the household and not seen too often, and he retains some of this novelty regardless of how long he may be married. A

1. For a discussion of relations between grandparents and grandchildren of a joking nature in other parts of India *cf.* T. B. Naik, "Joking Relationships", *Man in India*, Vol. XXVII, No. 3, pp. 261. For a discussion of this relationship among the North American Indian tribes *cf.* Fred Eggan, *et al*, *Social Anthropology of North American Indian tribes*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1937, pp. 78, 120-123, 257, 297-298 and 325. For grandparents-grandchildren joking relationship in Africa *cf.* A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202. These authors, however, do not specify the aspects of authority and subordination between grandparents and grandchildren of the respective cultures. It may be possible that authority of the grandparents is characteristic of a type of household in which they are the head.

sister's husband is the most indulged person in the Bengali Hindu household, receiving attention from all its members. The parents who do not like to admit the loss of their daughter by marriage will often say to themselves as well as to others that they have gained a new son through their daughter. In order to display their affection to one who is likened to their son, but in reality is the member of another household, and holds the fate of their daughter in his hands, tradition prescribes the son-in-law to be entertained lavishly by his parents-in-law whenever he visits their house.

A sister's husband may be of an equal age to one's younger uncles and aunts. But being a new member of the household, he has to be particular in observing the generation status differences, and to act accordingly with proper respect. He has to have patience with young children and show interest in them because it is expected of him, even though he may find it easier to participate with those nearer his own age.

Although relations between girls and their sisters' husband is one of familiarity, it is not necessarily one of closeness or confidence. The situation favours the development of such a relationship but usually it does not arise. Such persons do not see one another very often. Moreover, too close a relationship is not regarded favourable unless the sisters are equally close to one another and they are together a part of this confidential relationship. It is expected to be a relation of frank familiarity, and not of sentimental attachment.

The relationship between a man and his sister's husband is similar to that just described above. The only difference is that it has no possibility for the development of a sexual attraction. They behave with each other in the manner of their relation to others of their age group, except that they make it a point to say things in jest and be humorous more so than with the others. The fact that both the participants are males often tends to make the joking more boisterous than that which takes place between males and females, or females alone. Here again the factor of seniority may regulate the relationship. The wife's older brother will naturally be respected for his age, but he may be joked with if he so desires.[1]

Another free and pleasant relationship is that between a man

1. In the spoken Bengali language the term *shala* (wife's brother), when used in any other context besides designating that particular relationship, is a term of abuse. The fact that this term has a double meaning serves to reinforce the joking relationship. The reason for the abusive context of the term is not clear.

and his elder brother's wife. We have already mentioned that a man behaves with his younger brother's wife with much restraint.[1] Each avoids the other's presence, and only if necessary he will speak to her directly, whereas she responds through an intermediary. Besides, he speaks to her and of her in terms he speaks to his daughter-in-law in that he calls her *bouma*, the term used for a woman by her parents-in-law—or he may call her by her name. It used to be, and it still is in some households, that a woman refers to her husband's elder brother as *borho thakur*. If there were several, she referred to them consecutively as *borho thakur, mejo borho thakur*, etc. Formerly the term *thakur*[2] was a term of respect, rather like the word "sire", and was applied to the father, and to the father-in-law. To call the husband's elder brother *borho thakur*, literally meaning the elder respected one, or the elder father, was to give him the status of the father-in-law. Actually the relation of a woman with her husband's elder brother is one of far greater restraint, as she avoids his presence which is never expected of her relation with either her father or her father-in-law. The substitution of the term *dada* for addressing and referring to the husband's elder brother shows the tendency for less aloofness in this relationship. People raise the question these days as to why there should be so much difference between the behaviour of a woman with her husband's elder brother, and of her behaviour with her husband's younger brother. But calling the former *dada* has not made much difference in changing this aloofness and avoiding relationship in most households.

Quite to the contrary, a husband's younger brother has a joking relationship with his elder brother's wife. He is less restrained in his relation to her than to his own elder sister. Young boys will tease their *boudi* to her wit's end. The joking relationship may develop into a sympathetic relationship, as they live in the same house, and are often of the same age. Not only may they joke with one another and exchange confidences, but she is useful to him in that she may plead a case for him to her mother-in-law (his mother), or to her husband (his

1. *Supra*, p. 57.

2. Terms containing the word *thakur* in the terminologies presented in the preceding pages are *thakurdada* for father's father literally meaning the respected elder brother; *bouthakrun* for elder brother's wife literally means the respected bride; *thakrundidi* in its corrupt form *thandidi* sometimes referring to a grandmother literally means the respected elder sister. In the other terms the word *thakur* means father or father-in-law, as *thakurma* means father's mother, *thakurpo* means father-in-law's son, *thakurjhi* father-in-law's daughter, and *thakurjamai* father-in-law's son-in-law.

elder brother) in times of difficulties. However, if this relationship becomes one of sentimental attachment, it attracts attention, and is censured by the rest of the household. Similar to the relation between a woman and her sister's husband, it is expected to be openly familiar, and not of close personal interest. If there is any affection in this relationship it is expected to take the form of that between brothers and sisters. There may be a change in this relationship, however, in later life when the brothers separate into different households, and the affectionate relationship between a man and his *boudi* may not then last.

A woman is in the same type of relationship with her husband's sisters as she is with her husband's younger brothers. Usually her husband's elder sisters are married away before she comes into the household, and therefore she does not get much of a chance to participate with them except when they come on a visit. As in the other cases of seniority among the joking relatives, a woman looks to her husband's elder sisters with respect, and if there is much difference in age, she may shy from them. If the elder sisters wish, however, they may initiate teasing or joking with the younger brother's wife. It is the young and usually unmarried girls who are found to participate with their elder brother's wife in the most jocular manner. They tease and joke with their *boudi* when the latter is newly married as much as boys do. And they also look up to their *boudi* with respect and affection. The reason for a *boudi* being so popular a member of the household probably is that she is a new member and in order to be looked upon favourably by everybody she goes out of her way to please every one. If a *boudi* is not a cooperating person to the younger members of the house, she will be criticised strongly, and her husband's sisters may take the lead in discrediting her. Usually there is a change in the relations between a girl and her brother's wife after the former is married, and when both persons are in mature life. Regardless of how good their relationship was beforehand, there may come a time when a woman is jealous of or comes in conflict with her brother's wife. In later life as a woman becomes more and more cut off from her father's household, it is with a little envy that she looks upon her brother's wife who becomes the mistress of what was once her father's house in which she had a part. And if a woman is not in as good a position after marriage as she was before her marriage, and expects to get any financial help from her father or brothers, then she may come in conflict with her brother's wife. Usually, how-

ever, although there may develop much antagonism between them, *nonod* and *bhaj* may speak to each other in a humorous and joking manner, even if it may be only for the sake of courtesy.

We may note that the main, joking relationships are those between relatives by marriage of the same generation and the same age group. It has been discussed in the beginning that the same generation and the same age group is itself the group of least restrictions. Within it persons act in a free and jocular manner. In persons who are made members of this group by marriage we see an extension of this relationship in a more intense form. The idea comes to the writer that joking with such in-law relatives may have some bearing on the feeling of loss of an age mate through marriage. Unmarried persons form a clique of their own, and when a member is married, he or she is taken out of this group. This is most apparent in the case of a girl who is taken away from her father's house on marriage. A man remains in his father's house, but still on the arrival of his bride he is thought to become separted from the unmarried younger ones. Marriage gives a higher status to one, being a phase of life indicating social maturity. Actually young people resent losing one of their group through marriage. Before the oncoming marriage they talk of how lonesome they will be in the absence of that particular person, and tease the latter as to how after marriage there will be no time to think of them any more. In order to divert their attention from the separation, they are made to dwell on the joys of having a new member in the household who will be of an especially entertaining relationship to them. This expectancy is built up in the young by the elder members who often take the lead in training the former on how to joke and play pranks on the new in-law. The new person is received with an abundance of gaiety and joviality.[1]

We see then that the joking relationship serves some functions in the household. Sometimes it provides a facade to what would become a violently antagonistic relationship. One can get some ill feeling or

1. For a discussion of joking relationships in other parts of India see Naik, *op. cit.*, and Shamrao Hivale, "The Dewar-Bhauji Relationship," *Man in India*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, pp. 157-167. Among North American Indian tribes see Robert H. Lowie, *The Crow Indians*, New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1935, pp. 22-23 and Eggan *et al*, *op. cit.* pp. 27-28, 31, 75-81, 119-29, 257-58, 296-98, 323-29 and 357-58. In Africa see Radcliffe-Brown, *op. cit.* pp. 159-210.

The question of the origin of joking relationships is not raised above. The *deor-boudi* and the *shali-bhaginipati* relationships may or may not be based on the

aggression out by teasing and joking with the other person when it cannot be done directly, and so the peace of the household is retained. Also it provides a few relations in which persons may act at ease. In a household structure where one's behavior has to be guided into various restrained channels one enjoys the presence of some persons in which they may relax and entertain themselves. Yet just because these relationships are formally expected to be of such a nature, they lose the possibility of a spontaneous development, and become themselves parts of the formal structure. Joking and familiarity with certain persons become formal necessities.

It is already noted that unmarried young people of the household form a clique of their own. Men are prone to seek the company of other men outside of the house, and their ingroupness within the house may not be as intense as among the girls. Marital status is especially important in grouping women together, sometimes even cross-cutting the generation and the age barriers. Many of the sacred and household rituals can be performed only by married women, excluding widows and unmarried girls. Usually married women engage in conversation and joke among themselves excluding those unmarried. They observe differences in rank among themselves by generation and by age, paying proper respect to the senior members; but they are often found to participate in a group. Unmarried girls may be very fond of married sisters or married young aunts and participate with them freely, but when the latter form a circle of their own and interact in a group, the unmarried girls are totally excluded.

Apart from these formal relationships, spontaneous relationships do develop within the household. A strong factor that seems to draw together members of a joint household in friendly groups is antagonism toward other members. Gossiping about the others tends to tie certain members of the household together. Some households have more harmonious relations within them than others. But underlying most of them are some relations of antagonism and hostility which organize the members of the house into friendly and antagonistic groups. The smaller the household, the fewer the number of such groups tends to be.

levirate and the sororate. To go into such controversies will neither lead us to a solution of the problem nor will it explain the actual nature of joking relationships in the Bengali Hindu households, as these theories do not take into account the joking relations within the same sex. For general discussions of theories see, Franz Boas *General Anthropology*, New York, D. C. Heath & Co., 1938, pp. 444-449 and E. D. Chapple and C. S. Coon, *Principles of Anthropology*, New York, Henry Holt and Company, pp. 313-314.

The membership of these groups is usually in flux. Friendship patterns are rarely stable within a joint household. Relations within it take the form of changing and conflicting loyalties. The individual will being generally suppressed for that of the collective family, in moments of tension one takes sides with anyone who sympathises with him or supports him. In times of crises, members of a household who are known to be hostile to one another may become very close in exchanging confidence and sympathy. After the crisis situation is over, they may fall back to their former relation of hostility. Or these crisis situations may eventually bring about a complete change in the relations of two or more persons. The characteristic of the household pattern is that one does not hesitate to change his feelings to another in times of need and confide in him or seek help from him, because after all he is a close relative and not an outsider.

The structure of the household provides the fundamental pattern of interaction with all other members of the community. In the Bengali society the intimate, t e personal world is a world of kin, and in order to be a part of that world even if one is not a member of the kin group, he is made into one. This absorption into the kin group is complete even though the assumed kin may be of a different caste, provided that he is equal in rank in other respects.

In order to indicate nearness to a person one addresses him with a kin term. A friend is called by name if of the same age or younger, but if older, he or she may be called *dada* or *didi*, and their relatives are then addressed in a respective kinship terminology as if they stood in some relationship to the speaker. There are two common terms in the Bengali language which make a sharp distinction between the personal world and the impersonal. These are *apon* and *por*. *Apon* indicates one's own group and it is composed of the near kin members and the assumed kin. *Por* indicates a larger group that includes all those with whom one has no personal relations. It is the world of strangers as well as those who have been estranged from the *apon* group. Toward one who is regarded as *apon* one feels affection. Toward a *por* one feels indifference.

It is usually felt that persons who are biologically related ought to feel the bond of close sentiment. If they do not have an affectionate relationship it is a matter of criticism and complaint. Similarly when a *por* becomes *apon* in the form of a friend the situation is validated by applying kin terms to him and acting toward him as one would toward those in the category of *apon*.

AI, THE SMALL-POX GODDESS OF ASSAM

MAHESHWAR NEOG

In a state of society, in which the knowledge of rules of health and hygiene is not the common possession of the people, there is ample ground for regarding diseases as the creation of offended gods and demons, and for believing that diseases can be got rid of by the worship of those unseen powers or by repeating charms. William Crooke thus summarises the beliefs among Assam's hill tribes about the origin of diseases: "Khasis in Assam attribute sickness and other calamities to malignant demons, and seek to discover the person in whom the demon is embodied; Lushais believe that sickness is due to some Huai or demon, and all tales about Huais begin or end: 'There was much sickness in our village'; Nagas ascribe mysterious illness to the breach of some *genna* or taboo; Mikirs say that sickness if long continued and severe, is due to witchcraft; Lhota Nagas think that it is due to an evil spirit or to the wandering of the patient's soul, and the medicine-man extracts bits of earth, wood, or hair which the evil spirit has put into the body". (*Religion & Folk-lore of Northern India*, 1926, p. 115). Among the Garos sickness is attributed to deities and the priest questions the afflicted person as to who of the deities is responsible in his case (A. Playfair, *The Garos*, 1909, p. 80 ff). Such animistic usages are rife among the uneducated common mass of the valley also. Epilepsy, delirium of fever, madness and all other violent types of disease and death are ascribed to supernatural agencies. These invisible beings are known by the names of *bhut, pret, pisach, khetar, camon*, etc. There is a huge *mantra* literature in the Assamese language; and some of these are applied by the village medicine-man, called *bej*, (Skt. *vaidya*,) or *oja*, (Skt. *upadhyaya*,) to the treatment of diseases (Dr. B. K. Barua, "Sorcery and its practices in Assam", *Journ. of University of Gauhati*, vol. I, p. 45ff). Some very crude types of medicine are also administered by the *bej* more with the purpose of driving out the demon than as a therapeutic. The *mantras* are repeated by the medicine-man as he strikes the sick with a bunch of *bihlangani* (Skt. *visalanghanika*, a kind of fern), or over a pot of water which he stirs with a *karati*, a knife, (Skt. *karapatrika*), or a *kaci*, a sickle, and which is later poured on the head of, or taken a little of, by the sick man. The first of these two processes is called

jara-phuka (fanning and blowing air with the mouth) and the second is *pani-kata* (lit. cutting water).

Small-pox creates horror not only on account of its fatality and sharp infectiousness, but also because of the permanent results of blindness, loss of beauty and deformity in some limb. Numerous are the names and modes of worship of deified small-pox in India. In South India there are many tutelary village deities (*grama-devata*), the majority of whom are females, called *ammans* or mothers. Every village is supposed to be surrounded by evil spirits, always ready to inflict the villagers with small-pox, cholera and fever, or bring about cattle diseases and failure of crops, or to strike the village's women with barrenness. So the villagers worship their guardian deities in order to avert those calamities. "There is no idea of praise or thanksgiving, no expression of gratitude or love, no desire for any spiritual or moral blessings. The one object is to get rid of cholera, small-pox, cattle disease or draught, or to avert some of the minor evils of life. The worship, therefore, in most of the villages, takes place occasionally". (Rev. Henry Whitehead, *The Village Gods of South India*, second ed., 1921, p. 46). Mr. Stuart in his Report on the Census of Madras, 1891, says that the Hindus of the province give only nominal allegiance to the great deities, Visnu and Siva, Laksmi or Parvati, Ganesa, Subramaniam, etc; "but the ordinary villager thinks that these august deities concern themselves but little with his affairs, and his real worship is paid to Mariamman, the dread goddess of small-pox, and cholera, and to the special goddess of his village." There is nothing of the festal character in the worship of these deities. People even do not care for them so long as there is no disease. When, however, diseases are rife, the deities have to be propitiated with much ceremony and the slaughter of buffaloes and other animals. Even human sacrifices were once offered to the deities (Whitehead, *op. cit.*, pp. 86f). Mariamma or Mari, the mother of death and destruction, is generally considered to exercise the functions of inflicting and warding off small-pox. She is worshipped as such almost in every village in the Tamil country, in Tanjore, in Trichinopoly and in Cuddalore, as also in other places (*op. cit.*, pp. 31f). Gangamma, the water goddess of Masulipatam in the Telugu country, is also the protectress against small-pox; but at a village twenty miles off from there the water goddess is Sitalamma (*op. cit.*, p. 23). In a shrine in the Bangalore City, Sukhajamma, a minor deity, is the goddess of measles and small-pox (*op. cit.* p. 29).

In the South Arcot is a shrine dedicated to Kanniamma, who is said to be another form of Mariamma and to preside over that disease (*op. cit.*, p. 32). Sunkalamma as well as Sukhajamma is the goddess of the malady in the Canarese country (*op. cit.*, pp. 74, 79). There is many a story about the origin of Mariamman and her worship; and three of these have been reproduced by Whitehead (*op. cit.* pp.115-117).

Mothers of children in the Punjab worship a goddess Bibrbian with the fourfold objects: their children will be free from smallpox, will cry less, will maintain good health, and will have a bright future. The goddess is worshipped in "merely a block of stone partially sunk into a high platform built of mud under the shade of a Barota tree, known in Bengal as the Barh." Men and women of the Muslim minstrel caste, called Mirashi, act as the deity's priests and wardens. Women take their children to the holy spot on sunday mornings of the bright halves of the months of Asadha and Sravana and make offerings of cowries or pice, flowers and food at the altar (Manmatha Nath Chatterjee, "On Bibrbian, a goddess universally worshipped in the Punjab by native women with children", *J. A. S. B.*, 1896, vol.LXV, pt.III, no. I, pp. 33-34).

In many parts of northern India the small-pox goddess is *Sitala*, 'the cool'. *Sitala* is an euphemistic name, meant to hide peoples' fear for the disease and to psychologically allay the sufferings due to it. Some wish to connect the name with the word *Takman* found in the *Atharva Veda* and to consider the Vedic *Apdevi* as *Sitala's* prototype. She is, on the other hand, supposed to have been derived from the Buddhist deity, Hariti. Like *Sitala*, Hariti also commands irruptions. In Buddhist Tantric texts, Hariti occupies an important position and in Buddhist temples of Nepal her images are frequently found side by side with the supreme Lord. Offerings to Hariti consist of fish, blood of animals, and meat along with other articles (Dr. S. B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp. 300-301). A later Purana, the *Skanda Purana* speaks of *Sitala's* great powers and sets forth a *stava* (prayer) to be recited in praise of the goddess. The deity is conceived of as a figure, riding all naked on an ass, with a broomstick and a pitcher in her two hands, and with a winnowing fan on her head:

namami sitalam devim rasavastham digambarim
marjanikalasopetam surpalamkrtamastakam

The goddess is to be worshipped for protection against small-pox and for the general welfare of children. Those who venerate her are

never stricken with poverty, disease or evil influence of planets (*Skanda Purana*, Cal., Avantya Khanda, Avtniksetramahatmya, ch. 12). A Tantra work, the *Picchilatantra*, also deals with the goddess. There is an ancient temple dedicated to the goddess near the Dasasvamedha Ghat at Banaras. *Sita'a* has thus come to have a definite place in Hinduism and in the Tantric literature. In Bengal, many Muslims worship *Sitala* and *Raksakali* when diseases prevail (*Census of India*. 1901, vol. I, pt. I, p. 375) ; and in central India a particular class of Muslims worship the Hindu goddess of small-pox (Russell, *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India*, 1916, vol. II, p.44). Ehrenfels seems to suggest that all Indian earth-goddesses are indigenous and pre-Hindu entities. "A hint, pointing in this direction, is given by the significant fact that *Sitala Devi*, the Aryanised form of the goddess of small-pox, controlling also other contagious diseases, was found to be organically coherent with different and primitive grades of mother-right in India." He further suggests that the goddess of small-pox "really is a pre-Aryan deity, Aryanized only in name, and thus able to have resisted not only the first wave of a foreign religion, i.e. the Vedic cult, but even a second one, namely Islam." (Baron Omar Rolf Ehrenfels, *Mother-right in India*, 1941, p.115).

In Bengal, *Sitala* priests are generally Doms but their image of the goddess is not in accordance with Shastric descriptions. It is devoid of hands and feet, besmeared with vermilion and its face is marked like pustules with broken pieces of conch-shell and metals, (D.C. Sen, *Bangabhasa O Sahittva*, 5th ed., 1334 B. S. P. 187). In the Burdwan disrict, the goddess is represented as a four-armed figure, seated on a lion like Durga, and "her image is sometimes a piece of wood or stone studded with spots or nails of gold, silver, or brass, in imitation of the pustules or she is a white, nude figure, or merely a pot". In Bombay, *Sitala Mata* controls the epidemic of small-pox and is annually worshipped for protection against the disease in a clay image varying just a little from the *Skanda purana* description, or in a stone or a piece of screw-pine plant. In Madhya Pradesh, she is worshipped in roughly hewn stones, looking like a honey-comb and placed under a *Neem* tree. In the Maratha districts of the province, an image of the godling is bathed in water mixed with *Neem* leaves ; and the water is then sprinkled over the afflicted person. The goddess is venerated in many other parts of India (Crooke, *op-cit.*, pp.118-123).

In the Jaintia hills in Assam, the disease is reverenced as a goddess

and the Syntengs consider it a great honour to be smitten by small-pox; They call the pock-marks, 'the kiss of the goddess' ; and deeper the marks greater is considered to be the honour. Women wash their hair in the water used by a diseased person and also bring their children to his house so that they may contact small-pox and obtain 'the kiss of the goddess.' The house of the sick is considered sacred for the time being ; and visitors have to wash their feet with clean water, kept in a trough at the front door, before they enter the house. In the Khasi hills, small-pox is in charge of a god, *U Siem niang thylliew*. "He is not appeased in any way, the people calling on two other spirits *Thynrei* and *Sapa*, to whom a fowl or a goat is offered" (P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis*, Lond., second ed., 1914). The Angami Nagas used to kill human beings to avert the plague of small-pox (E. A. Gait, "*Human Sacrifices in Ancient Assam*", *J. A. S. B.*, 1898, P. 60). *Lizaba*, the Ao Naga' god of rain and storms, who commands sickness and disease, sometimes appeared, before British annexation of the place, of course, once or twice each year in certain Ao villages. If he brought a bamboo bottle with peas, beans or corn, small-pox would come. As soon as this became known, there would be feasts in the village in the deity's honour (Dr. William Carlson Smith, *The Ao Naga Tribe of Assam*, Lond., 1925, pp. 78f).

In the Brahmaputra valley the small-pox goddess is generally known as Ai, 'the mother'. The disease itself is reverentially called Ai or Aisakal, 'the mothers', and its attack is described *Ai olowa* or *Aisakal olowa*, 'the appearance of the mother or mothers ! This euphemistic attempt at avoiding the name of the disease, ie *vasanta*, is significant and exhibits the horror with which an attack of small-pox is held. There is a good number of songs in praise of the goddess ; these are known as *Ai nam*, 'songs of the mother.' In such songs seven types of the disease are made out and described as the seven Ai sisters :

ujai ahile aire sato bhani
satali parevat juri

'The seven Ai sisters have come up over the seven mountains.'

Only three forms of the disease are known and mentioned in the songs and are spoken of, viz, *barai* or *tutiai* (*vasanta*, *masurika* or small-pox), *maju ai* or *nuti ai* (measles), and *saru ai* or *panicamari ai* (water-pox or chicken-pox). Seven is in fact a magic number. "According to one account, *Sitala* is one of seven sisters, who control pustule diseases;

and Tiparas in Bengal worship seven godlings, six married and one a virgin, who preside over witchcraft. One list gives the names of the sisters : *Masani*, who deals with wasting diseases and is connected with the *Smasana* or cremation-ground, whence she derives the name; *Basanti*. the spring godling, when small-pox is rife ; *Polamde, Lamkariya, Mahamai and Agwani*. Another list gives *Agwani* whose name is supposed to be derived from *ag*, 'fire', who causes fever ; *Chamariya*, connected with the Chamar or currier caste,who brings the malady in its worst form, *Phulmati*; 'flower-like', who causes a mild type, *Basanti* and *Lamkariya*. In the Deccan, seven godlings control various diseases *Pochamma*, small-pox; *Mariamma*, cholera ; *Mutiyalamma*, typhoid fever ; *Duggalamma*, cough ; while *Bangaramma* presides over cold ; *Mahishamma*, buffaloes ; and *Ilamma* is the general protectrix" (Crooke, *op. cit.*, p. 122). At Cuddalore is the shrine of Minachiamman with the figures of seven virgins, *saptakannigais*. In Mysore they believe in seven *Mari* deities *op. cit.*, pp. 25-29). The animist tribe, Rautia, of Bengal, worships seven sisters (*devis*), who scatter cholera, small-pox, and cattle plague abroad. and their brother Bhairo. The seven deities are called Burhia Mai, Kankarin Mai or Sitala, Kali Mai, Kulesvarl Mai, Baghesvari Mai, Maresvari, and Dulhari Mai. A rude shrine (*devi-garhi*) is raised to them. "He-goats, flowers, fruits, and *bel* leaves are offered to the seven sisters in front of the *devi-garhi*. Women and children are present at the worship. A Sakadwipi Brahman presides, but does not slay the victims" (Gait, *Census of India*. 1901, vol. I, pt.I, app. to Ch. VIII, p. 417). Even in the medieval Indian works of medicine : "Seven forms of this disease are described, which survive in the seven smallpox sisters, including *Sitala*, whose worship is very common in Northern India" (J. Jolly, *E. R. E.*, vol.4, p.755).

When some body in an Assamese household is attacked with small pox, his diet and movements are restricted. He has to put on white and clean clothes, lest the goddess *Ai*, who herself is described as white, and who has taken possession of the sick man, be offended. When the deity is offended (which is termed *ghati laga* or *air ghati laga*) the attack is believed to turn virulent. At the early stage the sick man is given fine cooked rice with a curry of *magur* (a kind of sheat fish, *Clarius assamensis* and dry *kharica* (a condiment prepared by drying and powdering tender bamboo shoots). This meal is called *pakani*, 'a suppurative,' as it helps the pustules to suppurate. It is feared that if the diseased juice does not come out in proper time, the patient may be sure enough to die. In one song, (*mowa mach*) *amblyphar yndon mola*)

is mentioned as *pakani* and *kharca* as *sukani*, 'a healer', as it is believed to help the pustules to dry and heal up. But more generally *sukani* consists of cooked rice with duck's egg or, in western Assam, fried *maraliya suk* (the chick-weed, *Stellaria media*) and cocoanut oil. No medicine whatsoever is to be used ; but a little cocoanut oil may be applied to the irruptions from time to time or the man may be fanned with an ordinary fan in order to keep his body cool.

In case any member of a family is smitten with small-pox, women of the neighbourhood are invited, and they gather together in the house of the afflicted generally in the afternoon and sing *Ai nam* in praise of *Ai*. The gathering is called *Ai sabah*, assembly (*sabha*) for worshipping *Ai* and the function is called *Ai mata*, invoking or entreating *Ai*. *Ai-nama* are characterised by a deep, almost tragic, sense of concern for the afflicted and a great horror for the disease, which however is enshrouded in an euphemistic language. *Ai* in some of these songs are identified with the many forms of the Indian Mother Goddess and is called *Ai matr*, Sitala, Devi, Bhagavati, Mahamaya, Parvati, Durga, Kamakhya, Candi, Kali, Rudrani, Narayani, and so on. She is sometimes addressed as Phulesvari, 'the goddess of flowers', seeing that she bestows pock-marks euphemistically compared to flowers. The diseased human body and the disease are described in a symbolic language.

ujai ahile air sate bhani
nawat gutiphular tora,
gutikai aniche muthikai bilalche
acinkai manicharpara'

'The seven *Ai* sisters are coming from the west and are taking with them in their boats bunches of *guti* (Skt. *gutika*, small-pox) flowers. They are taking these flowers in small units and are broadcasting them in handfuls among un-knowing humanity.'

paca sarirat ay phul bachiche
epahi dupahi kari"

'*Ai* is weaving flowers, one by one, into the rotten body.

bidhatai srajile mawe sanamale
aye pagat tali yay
ughala ahatak aye ruye ga'le
air man dha:ami nai

'The Creator has created (the human child) and its mother has given birth to it ; *Ai* now tempers (its metal) well. The uprooted

peepul tree (meaning the diseased human child) *Ai* has planted firmly again. There are none so virtuous (kind) as she.'

The peepul tree is particularly associated with the goddess in the songs. The elderly women, who constitute the main and unavoidable part of the gathering, in a plaintive tone, thus apologise to the deity for the afflicted persons having offended her :

najani somalo ai re phulebari
nicini cingilo kali
ibarar dosake khemiba bhavani
mato caranate dhari

'Indiscreetly have we entered thy garden of flowers and unknowingly have we culled the buds. Mayest thou, O Bhavani, grant us forgiveness for this time. We do fall at thy feet and thus do we entreat you.'

The note of desperation is vibrant in such lines as :

nayaiba nayaiba matr amaka cariya he
tumi taru ami lata thakibo beriya he

'O mother, do not you go, do not you go, do not you leave us; thou art a tree and we as creepers shall ever entwine you. As the goddess is considered as all white, only white flowers are to be used in the ceremonies in her honour, *campa*, *nagesvara*, etc. In an *Ai-sabah* the fore part of a plantain leaf is placed on the floor of a room, which is properly washed. On the leaf are placed in seven different divisions some cleanly milled *arai rice* (uncooked rice), white flowers, one in each division, *mah* (pulse), powdered rice, pieces of sugarcane, *jara tenga* (a kind of citron fruit), and such other articles of food. An earthen lamp with mustard oil is lighted and placed facing the plantain leaf. An earthen pitcher with a bunch of nine mango leaves put inside it and with a white cloth wrapped round it is also placed near it. It is marked with vermilion just at the middle. This pot is known as *ghai ghat*, 'the main holy pot', although no second pot is used in the course of the ceremony, and represents the goddess for the time being. When the women finish saying their prayer in songs and reciting a benediction in prose, the plantain leaf with the nine divisions of offerings and the oil lamp are carried on a sieve by some persons to a tank. The leaf and the offerings are thrown into the water, while the lamp is placed on the side of the tank. The person should then leave the place, taking care that he does not turn his eyes back upon the tank.

In another form of worship, known as *Sitala mata*, 'calling or invoking Sitala; the same ceremonies are gone through, only that the plantain leaf should be placed on a towel covering a small and well-finished plank and that every division of offerings on the leaf should have a vermilion mark on it.

In both the above cases, there may be an additional ceremony, namely *Sitala padha*, ' reading of Sitala' which comprises of reciting the following sanskrit *stava* to the deity from the *Skanda Purana*:

vande'ham sitalam devim vishphotakabhaypaham
yamasadya nivateta vishphotakabhayam mahat
sitale sitale ceti yo bruyaddahapiditah
visphotakabhavo dahah ksipram tasya vinasyati etc.

This invocation is also sometimes recited by a person standing knee-deep in water. This practice of course is in accordance with what is ordained in the same *Purana*:

yastvamudakamadhye tu dhytva sampujayennarah
vispotahkaoyom ghoram grhe tasya na jayate

The ceremonies as described above are mostly confined to western Assam. In that region sometimes *Ai-sabah* is held in the open courtyard. In eastern Assam *Ai-sabah* alone, and not any other ceremony, is observed and that also in much simpler fashion, which seem moreover to have been more influenced by Vaisnavism, and less connected with the *Skanda Purana*. The *naivedyas* or offerings to the goddess, consisting of rice-flour in the main, *mah-prasad* (one or two varieties of pulses after placing under water for some time and a little quantity of uncooked rice of a fine variety) , etc. , are placed on a *sarai* (a raised tray) with beautifully designed pieces of plantain leaf placed below and above the offerings. The usual oil lamp is lighted in its proper place. The things offered to the goddess are then distributed among the assembled women and a little is given to the diseased person on a *sarai*, a privilege enjoyed only by the gods, priests and religious heads, kings, nobles and congregations. *Payasa* or *Paramanna* (fine *jaha* rice cooked in milk and sugar) is also a prominent element of the sacred offering, which is generally distributed among young girls, unmarried and not attaining puberty (*akumari chowali*). The uncooked offerings may be taken home by the women of the assembly; but these things are never to be cooked. Betel-leaves and areca-nuts always play an important part in such ceremonies.

Ai is by the way connected with goddess Kamakhya of Nilacala hill near Gauhati and the other forms of Siva's *sakti*. There is moreover a particular place in the north Lakhimpur sub-division, Phulbari-nagar on the bank of the river Pichala, which is mentioned as especially sacred to Ai.

bar ai paciche saru ai ahiche
phulbari deoghararpara

variantly,

bar aipaciœhe saru ai ahiche
phulbari nagararpara

'On being sent by *Bar Ai* (elder Ai), *Saru Ai* (younger Ai) is coming from the Phulbari *deoghar* (temple) or Phulbari town.'

pichalare ghate aye snane kare
lahar culitari meli

'Ai is bathing at the *ghat* of the (river) Pichala with the beautiful tresses of her hair spread over.'

Dr. J. P. Wade, who visited Assam in the early years of the nineteenth century, takes note of the Phulbari temple on the Pichala: "Phoolbaree, Deorgong, and Kosowahgong, are the principal towns on its (Pisoola's) banks. Phoolbarree is famous for a temple of masonry, dedicated to Mai, or Kamaka, Deorgong is inhabited chiefly by those who attend the temples at Phoolbarree and Kosowahgong. (Montgomery Martin, *The History, Antiquities, Topography, and Statistics of Eastern India*, Vol. III, Lond., 1838, p. 646).

When Sankaradeva, a Kayastha by caste (1449-1568 A.C.), propounded his monotheistic cult of Bhakti (*ekasarana namadharma*), its adherents were interdicted from worshipping any god other than Narayana (*Krsna*). A Brahmana disciple of Sankaradeva was taken ill with small-pox and his father, Vyaskalai, also a disciple of the saint, arranged for the worship of *Sitla*, although the patient himself was not a party to it. The sick man died. The whole matter was reported to the preceptor, who was so gravely displeased with Vyaskalai that the latter was at once excommunicated (M. *Neog, Sri-sri-Sankaradeva*, pp. 74-75). Another disciple of Sankara, Madhai of Jainti, died of the same disease and no supplication was sent to any god for his cure (U.C. Lekharu ed. *Katha-Gurucarit*, Vol. I, p. 120). Propagation of Vaisnavism has been greatly responsible for the eradication of this Primitive form of worship in Assamese villages. But in many places it has managed to survive the onslaught of Vaisnavism. The very word *nam* applied to

the songs of Ai is Vaisnavite in character. Ai *sabah* is also called *gopini -sabah*, and the women who attend it are *gopinis*. Such terminology is reminiscent of Vaisnavite scriptures containing the stories of Krisna and the *gopis* (milkmaids) of Gokula.

gokular gopini anaiche apuni
patiche harimandali

'The Gopis of Gokula are coming on summons and are making a circle (to sing the name) of Hari.'

In some songs Ai is associated with *Ratnavali* or *Bhakti-Ratnavali* a scripture of the Assamese Vaisnavas. In one verse her votaries are called *Bhakats* (*bhakta*), a term commonly applied to the devotees of Krisna. In another she is described as playing on a golden flute, the usual attribute of Krisna, while in still another verse she is said to have a *tokari* (a stringed instrument carried by wandering minstrels) and a *vina*(a lute) in her two hands. It is also sometimes seen that *ai-sabah* is held in a *nam-ghar* the village chapel of the Vaisnavites, or a *gosai-ghar*, the private chapel of a Vaisnavite householder.

The worship of Ai has suffered the worst with the spread of general education and modern sanitary ideas. But there are even today people who refuse to be vaccinated, lest the goddess be offended.

Postscript: As soon as signs of disease appear in a person, the mother or any other female relative takes a preparation of betel-leaf and areca-nut, places it on the fore part of plantain leaf at the place of daily worship or in a corner of the house and undertakes the resolve to worship Ai in a formal *Ai-sabah*.

In eastern Assam some Ganaks (Daivajanas or astrologers) have taken to profess themselves to be able to administer to the pleasure of *Sitala*. They have to be given a black household pigeon and such other things for the worship of the goddess. They utter some *mantras*, probably the *Sitala-stava* referred to above, over a quantity of water, which has then to be sprinkled over the diseased person.

A poet Jayarama by name, who is definitely posterior to Sankaradeva's time possibly by about two centuries if not more, wrote a book of songs on *Sitala*. He quotes the *Kalika Purana* as his authority, though perhaps he thereby means the *Skanda Purana*. The mental picture of the deity sketched by him is the same as is described in the latter work. He says that he has only rendered some *slokas* into *Payara* (verses of fourteen syllables) . He creates a confused mythology about the origin of the goddess. He writes in some places that *Sitala*

evolved herself in eight forms out of Mofanasa's navel, in one place that Mahesvara was her father and in another that *Sitala*, *Manasa* and *Sarasvati* belong to the same category of divinity. In two of the lyrics the deity is said to have *vrsabaha* (the bull, Siva's bull in particular) as her mount and is termed the mother of the universe. It is also stated that she resides in the *nabhi-Kamala*, one of the six circles or nerve-centres, and presides over the seventy-two nerves of the human body. *Sitala* again is imagined as visiting people's houses in the form of air: this seems strangely enough a scientific view of the matter. Like the Vaishnava lyrics, which are widely popular in Assam and to which the poet seems to refer in one place, these songs are put to some classical Indian tunes (*karana-kedar, malava, kau,*) as is mentioned at the top of each.

Besides our personal observations, we have collected our information on the subjects of worship of the small-pox goddess in western Assam chiefly through Srijuta Sasiprabha Devi (elder sister of the late lamented Gopinath Bardoloi, Chief Minister, Assam) , Srijuta Lilavati Devi Bardoloi and Srijuta Ratanibala Devi of Gauhati.

TRIBAL INHERITANCE

SYED KHAJA MAHBOOB HUSAIN

The disparity with respect to the progress of different segments of India's national life is most pronounced in the case of aboriginals. Separated from the rest of the population by language and custom they have lagged far behind in material and intellectual progress. Hyderabad forms an important block of the ethnological zones of the Republic of India where population ranges from primitive food gatherers persisting in the economic atmosphere of the stone-age, who gleaned from the forest what nature provided and led a hand-to-mouth existence with the little thought of the 'morrow—India's most primitive and most ancient culture to the modern city-dweller fully participating in the cosmopolitan civilisation of the 20th century.

In the whole population of about one and half crores in the Hyderabad State, the tribal people like Gonds, Pardhans, Thotis, Kolams, Koyas, Naikpods, Hill Reddies, Chenchus, Bhils, Banjaras, Mathuras and Andhs, number about 6,29,392. According to the census of 1941, there were 142,026 Gonds including Naikpods, 1,583 Pardhans, 746 Kolams (but this figure is not correct as there are about 5,000 Kolams and Thotis, the latter not enumerated separately) 31,094 Koyas, 18,034 Hill Reddies, 3,684 Chenchus, 18,021 Bhils, Lambadis including Mathuras are 4,04,640 and Andhs 19,330.

The customs and traditions of the tribals who live in far remote areas are primitive and ancient, and those who reside in the plains with other advanced people have adopted the civilised customs to a certain extent. Andhs and Bhils have adopted highclass Hindu customs, owing to their close contact with the Hindus. Generally, tribal inheritance rules are not dissimilar to those of the Hindus to a certain extent, but in several cases there is a clear departure from the usual procedure, and while dealing with such variations, special explanations have been provided as an aid to the layman.

In every tribe described above, the male section enjoys more privileged position than the feminine line in the inheritance procedure. The aboriginals, as other people, have got two kinds of properties, i.e., movable and immovable. Movable property consists of

clothes, ornaments, cattle, implements and household goods, and immovable property as lands, huts, etc. The Chenchus, who are on the oldest strata of the pre-Vedic culture & who still live on the same economy of stone-age man and depend upon collection of wild roots and edible fruits and small game hunting with their bows and arrows and nets have a special regard for property, of collecting and hunting grounds which they have for the village (*pente*) and the hunting and collecting grounds are supposed to be the village community property. Similarly, the other aboriginals like Naikpods, Kolams and some Hill-Reddies, who live in the most interior forest villages, having no lands or insufficient lands, have to depend upon wild roots and fruit collection and small game hunting with their arrows and bows, have also their hunting and collecting grounds for their villages. These grounds are distributed among their families. No member of another family or another village is authorised to collect and hunt anything from that ground. But if he happens to pass through that portion of the land, he may eat anything from that area, but of course he is forbidden from carrying anything from there. The promulgation in the later years of the 'Forest Act' by the Forest Department, has seriously interfered with age-old freedom of these tribes and they have subsequently lost their grip over their previous possessions.

There are no hard and fast rules regarding inheritance among the aboriginals, but by long practice and precedence they are able to stick to the fundamental principles. One has the right to paternal as well as maternal property but man's predominance as a right over such property is undisputed. What a woman can rightfully claim as hers is the property that she gets at the time of her marriage from her parents as a dowry or gift. After her demise, such a property goes to her children first ; if no children, the husband is entitled to it, whereas among the Chenchus, it is distributed among daughters primarily and in case of no daughters, it goes to the sons, and finally to the husband if there are no children to them. On the other hand, if a woman possesses no children nor husband, the property goes to the nearest relation and if there happens to be no such relations, it automatically goes to the community. The procedure of inheritance among Gonds, Pardhans, and Thotis is the same. Similarly Koyas, Naikpods and Hill-Reddies have their own similar procedure in the inheritance methods.

Girls do not get any property as a right from their parents excepting dowries and gifts, but in case of '*Ghar Jamai*' i. e., '*Illitam*' among

Koyas, Hill-Reddies and Naikpods or *'Lamsane'* among Gonds, Pardhans, Thotis and Kolams, a girl gets equal share.

When a share has to be distributed among the children, male children get equal shares among all the tribes excepting the Chenchus where the eldest son gets the lion's share, while among the Koyas and Hill-Reddies, the eldest son gets the *'Jesta'* or biggest share. Among Lambadis, it is worth while to note the peculiar sense of reasonableness, the youngest of the group gets the double share, perhaps on the principle that the weakest element deserves greater protection. From the same point of view but with a bias to themselves, brothers hold themselves responsible to bear the expenses of their sisters' marriages, because the latter do not get share whatsoever. In Lambadas, while distributing the share, the relative expenses necessary for the marriages of the unmarried boys and girls are separated and kept aloof and only the balance is distributed among the authentic members. In every tribe, even the parents and the widowed wife are liable to get the benefit of the equal share of the property as a son, but the wife has the right to such a share as long as she remains single and unmarried, otherwise, she forfeits her claim. But among Gonds, Pardhans, Thotis and Lambadis where there is a choice for a widowed woman to marry the younger brother of her dead husband, she has the right to retain her share of property. If the deceased does not leave behind any children or *Illitam* (Ghar Jamai) or *Lamsane* (serving for a wife) or parents or a wife, then the property goes to his brother's sons or to his nearest relations. But in the Koyas, Hill-Reddies, and Lambadas particularly it has been noticed that the property of the deceased is distributed among his sisters' sons in the absence of his own off-springs, or to parents or a wife or brother's children or *Illitam* or *Lamsane*. Among the Mathuras, the share alloted to wife and parents is at least twenty five per cent less than that apportioned to the sons. It is necessary to make a mention here of the fact that among Lambadis, the consent of a widow for the distribution of her deceased husband's property is respected and the property is first offered to the children of the elder brother and, only if he has no children, the next brother gets the benefit.

As a matter of general procedure, in case of a deceased who possesses no relations, the property goes to the community, who sells such property for the purpose of observing the ceremonial rituals for the departed soul, whereas in the Gonds, such property goes to Pardhans and Kotoras, who are the ministrel, bards, musicians and

priests and perform religious ceremonies. In the Lambadis and Mathuras, the property is divided between people of the deceased of that village (*Thanda*) and such a sub-division is responsible for the usual *ritual*, ceremonies etc. In Gonds there is a little variation in their procedure, a portion of the property of the deceased is first given to the Pradhans and Kotoras for performing the rituals, and the remaining property is then distributed among the rightful heirs. There are rare cases among the Gonds where such properties were distributed equally among boys and girls. From a critical study of the inheritance procedure, adopted by the tribals, it will be evident that they have, to a very great extent not strictly and uniformally adhered to any proper principles of standard type, but in several cases there seems to be a fair sprinkling of the Hindu usages.

TRIBAL WELFARE

B. S. SHARMA

Before we proceed to discuss plans for the welfare of the people who go by the name of Tribes, let us be clear as to what the term tribe actually conveys. Who are the people that really constitute the so-called tribes? The word tribe, though it has become a popular stigma now-a-days as judged by general opinion of the public, actually means a hoard of people bound together by definite relations, social, moral, aesthetic, intellectual and of all other kinds that are possible. In other words a tribe is a strictly homogeneous unit of members who constitute it. They place the interests of their group always above their individual interests. They have also councils consisting of freely selected or elected members of the group, and can bring matters of dispute or individual grievances before the council. But they are strictly disciplined, in so far as they gladly submit to the verdict given by the council.

The members of a tribe follow the customs and traditions that prevail therein and which are supposed to be handed down ffom generation to generation unchanged. The why and wherefore of these beliefs and practices is seldom questioned by any member of the tribe. They believe blindly in the execution (systematic) of rituals attendant upon ceremonies and tribal festivals, and would consider it a matter of grave dishonour, rather of misfortune, if even a slight digression from normal practice comes about ever in the observance of a certain ritual. In that case all members of the tribe, generally both the sexes, shall have to undergo penances and ordeals, *i e.* self-imposed sufferings, which alone would help to cleanse their bodies and minds of the sin.

Every tribe has its own customs and beliefs in all walks of life, *i. e.* at the time of birth, adolescence, marriage and death. No two tribes have absolutely identical customs and rituals that follow. Minor details must differ and the differences can be traced easily, if one closely examines and studies with patience the folk-lore of the people concerned. Study of folk-lore and of popular beliefs makes very interesting revelations sometimes. Conflicting views regarding the origin of a custom are often found among the members of a tribe itself. The reason for this lies in the fact that the tribal

people are so simple and unaffected by the air of modern cities and education, that they never care to inquire themselves about the origin of institutions that they have been following for ages (times immemorial); nor have they ever questioned the usefulness or otherwise of their customs and institutions. They know only one thing and that they take care to carry out with precision and that is the practical observance of customs and beliefs. They won't care to go a step farther.

Now this ignorance of the causes of things and beliefs which affect the tribal people directly and refusal to exercise reasoning may be dubbed as signs of primitiveness or old fashionedness or a low stage of culture, as these expressions have been employed on a number of occasions by scholars and observers alike. The fact is that the tribal people have been living in partial isolation, quite aloof from the geographical limits of city population, and generally they do not like to mix with city population or with any people outside their tribe. The reason is that very often the tribal people are united to the extent that they look upon every body outside their tribe as a potential enemy. This attitude explains their aloof-ness, only it may differ in the intensity of feeling in different tribes.

The immediate consequence of the attitude that tends to keep them aloof to such a great extent is that they reside in water-tight compartments in all their actions and activities. Exchange of views and all that forms the back-bone of culture of a people is not at all possible, when thorough suspicion and distrust of an outsider is the motto and the guiding motive. That is the principal reason why the tribals all the world over have remained static in contrast to the city dwellers and those who have been modernized by education and culture that emanate from educational exchange. Forces that are static always lead to decay and that's the obvious cause of the dying out or the decay of tribal cultures in so many areas of the world, *e. g.* among the Tasmanian, Veddah (Ceylon) *etc.*

In our country there lives a vast population of tribal people, exact numbers are not known, though the census taken in the year 1941 places the figure at 25 millions. If we take this figure to be true, even then the numbers are not small. Ultimately it becomes a problem of human lives and cannot be ignored any longer out of sheer prejudice for their characteristic culture and mode of life (low standards), or for any other reasons. We are capable of handling this human problem as nicely and efficiently, as we do tackle other national problems. This

in itself should form a vital clause of our country's reconstruction programme. For, if we succeed in bringing this vast mass of humanity in line with the rest of our countrymen, or at least if we are able to convince them of our sincere intentions towards them (which it is possible to do by action only), then we shall be able to solve many other problems of national importance, much more easily, *e. g.* food problem.

TRIBAL WELFARE

After having discussed the 'tribe', we go on to discuss the welfare of the tribes. Welfare means anything which leads to the well-being of a people. Naturally, education comes first in any welfare programme and more especially when discussing the plans for the welfare of backward people like the tribals, who are more or less uneducated from the literary stand-point. Then comes sanitation and hygiene which are no better found among them, for generally they live under the most unhygienic conditions, and inhabit in an environment which is swampy or malarial, or due to other reasons, unfit for human habitation. Finally we have to consider the introduction of social and cultural reforms, wherever necessary in their society. The social reforms that shall have to be introduced, will vary in character with each tribe, and shall have to be determined by the mores and customs that obtain in individual tribal societies.

Now the question that remains to be settled once for all is one round which an age-old controversy has arisen in the name of the welfare of this down-trodden mass of humanity. Not a few anthropologists and social workers have advocated a policy of complete isolation for the aboriginals on a number of occasions and have defended their point ardently. Their contention is that if the tribal belts are rendered freely accessible to non-tribals and cityfolk, the former will go under completely. This argument obviously is based upon the assumption that the tribal people possess a culture, which is so weak that it will not be able to resist the onslaught of city culture. In other words, exploitation of the tribals by the non-tribals is feared very much by the protagonists of the 'Isolationist' policy. On the other hand there are those who not only condemn 'Isolationist' attitude as positively harmful, but go to the other extreme of the scale, by preaching a thorough mixture of the tribal and non-tribal, who have been living in forced separation according to them. The latter approach, if closely examined, is nothing but the method of direct 'Intervention'—which may in some

respects prove even more harmful than the former one of 'Isolation'. For, direct intervention implies a violent conflict of cultures and traditions and ideas, which are in direct opposition to each other, and an upsurge leading to disastrous upheaval on both sides, more so on the side of the aboriginals (for they have a weaker culture), thus defeating ultimately the very purpose for which the trials and tribulations had to be gone through.

Thus, isolation is finally disposed of as a welfare measure, for the tribals have had enough of it. And it is the result of this policy of isolation or total neglect for their well-being that we find them where they are. They have yet to begin life, so to say, speaking from a realistic stand-point. Had we abandoned this isolationist outlook some time back, somewhere in the middle of this long experiment, which has proved absolutely futile for our real purpose, and instead had taken to painstaking devotion to the cause of their welfare or uplift, by now we should have prepared the ground work of this immense project. Instead, we have been losing our heads in vain over the wordy conflict and have stuck fast to theoretical creeds, just out of blind prejudice or madness. Even now, there are people in our midst who pretend to think about the welfare of the aboriginals in terms of segregation. Surprising as it is, they refuse to call a blade, a blade. Who can deny that rot will set in, if people are separated by artificial barriers and thus are not allowed to sit together and exchange ideas? Can ideas or ideals and ideologies survive long in isolation in the fast moving world of to-day? Why should you deny the privileges and amenities (social and political) that many millions of our country-men enjoy, to the twently-five million aboriginals of the land?

It must have been clear by now, that a policy of direct 'intervention' also does not suit the purpose of the welfare of the tribes. For, in a way it amounts to invasion of their standards and their liberties, a thing which no-body would relish, being as it is in direct conflict with human nature. So we shall have to devise a *via media*. A policy of moderation should be our aim. That is to say, without injuring the feeling of the tribal folk, we have to bring about this revolution in their lives and in the society at large, of which they are important members. This brings us face to face with the problem of investigation of the crux of tribal life. We shall be required to focus our energies and attention on the mainspring in the lives of the men and women of a tribe. The guiding force of their life

and destinies shall have to be carefully surveyed. For, it goes without saying that on the whole the tribals are a very practical and colourful people. Their life is never dull; they draw inspiration in life from some concrete aspect (even if it is an inanimate symbol), and pass their life happily to the tune of their ideal. They do not believe in a thing like imagination or thought, and it is so far no fault on their part, for they have not been educated to do so. The opportunities to exercise their brains (thinking power) along the right lines have never been extended to them, and for this, we, the city-dwellers are to blame.

The education of the aboriginal will have to be conducted along different lines from what we in the ordinary sense of the word take education to be. No doubt, a knowledge of the three R's will have to be imparted, for it is indispensable in the modern world; but, beside that we shall have to straight-away give them brain-exercises. What I mean by brain-exercises, is nothing, but that we shall have to explain intelligently to the aboriginal the positive and negative aspects of the peculiar customs and practices, that he follows in his social life. Also, their backwardness, which ensues from out-moded cultural patterns that they have been clinging to, in an almost orthodox spirit, shall have to be brought home to them. Why should they keep on cultivating land with an ordinary hoe or why should they keep resorting to *jhum* cultivation, which is disastrous to the land (Mother-Earth) itself, in that it is rendered fallow gradually, when their neighbours have advanced so much in the methods of cultivation, that even the iron plough is being replaced by the mechanised farming (tractor), the former to be listed as an implement of the past ?

In all these matters of vital importance, the cooperation of the aboriginal by the social worker and vice versa is absolutely essential. Reforms cannot be thrust upon the aboriginal, even though it is he, who will ultimately be benefitted by them. For instance, take the methods of agriculture. The primitive techniques of cultivation that he employs are so dear to him, that these have been ingrained in his nature. Even though the tribal man knows that the yield of crops by such methods is not sufficient, still he will normally refuse to think of improving upon age-old techniques. He would say, that the crops that he gets through his own methods of cultivation, when supplemented by hunt, and wild fruits and berries, are sufficient to keep him going. Why should he then bother about giving

up the type of cultivation that he and the members of his tribe have been following till now? So that, generally, he who aims at the welfare of the aboriginals from the core of his heart, will fail repeatedly in argumentation with them. But the missionary zeal should be there and unlimited patience is required to bring the aboriginal round, in his own interest. In the case of cultivation, actual demonstration with a plough should be given and the yield of grain compared with the yield which the native has thus far been getting.

The tribal man has been dubbed as lazy on many an occasion by social workers. This, I think, is far from true. He may be unwilling to accept new ideas and to introduce new techniques in his daily routine, but this is chiefly due to suspicion which is his principal guide. Just out of distrust for an outsider and for everything that is associated with an outsider, he refuses to have straight dealings with him. And as far as I can see, the feeling always lies hidden inside the heart of the aboriginal that the so called educated city-dwellers are out to exploit him, and that's why he wants to avoid contact with them as far as possible. I have myself been able to confirm this feeling in the tribals (Rajputs and Koltas) of Jaunsar Bawar in Dehra-Dun district, when I visited them in the year 1949. To some extent, these fears of the aboriginal have not been without justification, in some places. For instance, the Christian missionaries who undertook the improvement of the lot of aboriginals in India (notably in N. Eastern parts), converted a majority of tribals to Christianity and were thus swayed from their ideals. Why was it so done, and still the same policy is being pursued, even though on a diminished scale, in some places? Why did the tribals of these areas, where Christian missionaries worked for their uplift, embrace Christianity? Did they give up their own religious beliefs and practices in favour of a new religion, willingly? No, certainly not. The answer lies in the fact that the innocence and child-like simplicity, which the tribal folk are reputed to be having in abundance, was exploited to the full by the world-wise missionaries.

I have dealt with the exploitation complex of the tribals at some length mainly for one reason, and that is to impress upon the social worker or on whosoever is interested especially in tribal welfare, the fact, that motives should be left behind (given the good-bye), once the noble venture has been embarked upon. To promote the well being of a people is not every body's concern, and there are really few among us who will wean themselves away from the pleasures

and opportunities, that the city life affords, and instead volunteer to face the hazards obtaining in tribal territories. And it is these few who will form the nucleus of tribal welfare, for they will have cast aside all personal considerations. They will be able to convince the aboriginal much better, and in a more desirable way of the futility of some wasteful practices which he indulges in. At the same time, the social worker should be careful enough not to interfere with the colour and pageantry of dance and drama which form the backbone of tribal culture. The motto, which is worth constantly keeping in view by a social worker should be 'Interference, Due and No More.'

NOTICES OF BOOKS

Stone Age & Pleistocene Chronology in Gujarat—*Deccan College Monograph Series No. 6. Published in 1950, from the Deccan College Post-g aduate and Research Institute, Poona, and a monograph by Frederich E. Zeumer. (pp. 46 besides references, plates and drawings.)*

The Institute was started in 1941, and with a financial grant from the University and from the authorities of the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, research work is being carried on. A prehistoric expedition to Guajrat was organised in 1946-47. Dr. R. E. M. Wheeler, the then Director General of Archaeology in India suggested that Dr. F. E. Zeuner be invited to make a study of Gujarat Prehistoric Culture with a view to dating them. Dr. F. E. Zeuner very kindly accepted the invitation and an excellent monograph nicely got up with plates, drawings and sketches, is the result.

Previously, studies were carried out by Drs. D. Terra and Peterson on behalf of the Yale and Cambridge Universities but this is the first of its kind sponsored in India.

This monograph is divided geographically, according to the river systems studied. The Sabarmati river system provides the most complete sequence and is therefore taken as a standard, the arrangement is from north to south as it demonstrates clearly the climatic change with the geographical latitude. The normal method of work applied in stratigraphical geology was applied to find out which of the deposits are older than others and to arrive at a minimum age for each of them.

After examining and discussing the various types of soil in the Sabarmati river area the author concludes: 'the system of climatic events revealed by the deposits here discussed, appears to be sufficiently complex to represent a very considerable period of time. Whilst the microlithic phases are certainly quite late i. e., either early historic or near the end of the prehistoric period, the palaeolithic deposits, separated from them by a great thickness of strata and at least two periods of land surfaces, suggest extreme remoteness. It is certain that the Palaeolithic industry dates from well within the Pleistocene. The determination of its actual age, however, depends

on the possibilities of correlating the climatic succession of Sabarmati with that of other areas, notably of Kashmir and Northern Punjab". (pp. 24-25).

The other rivers and river systems taken up for research investigation are the Mahi river, the lower Narbada system and the upper Godavari system. The author after making a comparative study, says, "The Sabarmati sections reveal repeated oscillation of the climate between drier and wetter conditions. The earliest evidence of wetter conditions is that of the laterite phase which suggests a rainfall higher than the present. It is the only period which could legitimately be called a pluvial, although it too must have had a dry season. The evidence so far accumulated is not sufficient to say whether the period preceded the formation of the paleolithic gravel immediately or with a long interval. The first view is slightly more probable. After the initial period, the climate oscillated around present-day conditions".

The monograph ends with the assurance that it will be followed by others describing and discussing the evidence from other areas visited, and the results of investigations of samples in the laboratory.

We cannot but mention that the author has shown the right way to approach all such problems and others relating to them. Those interested in Ancient Indian Geography and Archaeology will find the topics very interesting and profitable. To a geologist this will be of great value.

EARLY HISTORY OF INDIA. (Second and Revised Edition) by Nagendra Nath Ghosh, M. A., Lecturer in Ancient Indian History, Allahabad University, Published by the Indian Press Ltd., Allahabad. Pages 429. Price Rs. 12/-.

Professor Nagendra Nath Ghosh, the reputed author of the *Early History of Kausambi* has brought out a new and revised edition of his book *Early History of India*. As a result of new researches and fresh discoveries the book required a new orientation.

Several new features have been added so as to make it up-to-date and comprehensive. We are glad to note that great emphasis has been laid on its cultural aspects. Maps to make it more helpful to students and general readers have been provided with. Important topics which are still matters of controversy amongst scholars, and on which no definite conclusions have been arrived at, have been inserted in the form of appendices.

At the outset, the author has pointed out that after the development and consolidation of Hindu polity and culture by the Indo-Aryans in the country up to the time of the Mahammedan invasion and conquest, whatever races came to India and settled in the country were absorbed in the people and became completely Hinduised in customs, manners and religion. In fact, it has helped a great deal in moulding what we may term as Modern India.

Antiquities of the prehistoric Indus-Valley civilisation discovered about 1926, in the prehistoric graves of Nal in the Kalat State of Baluchistan which contain a bunch of copper implements, leads, beautiful groups of painted pottery and vessels, testify to a culture somewhat different from those discovered in Mohenjodaro in Sindh and show a greater affinity with the painted fabrics of Persia and Mesopotamia.

The most notable recent discoveries are numerous seals bearing inscription of pictographic characters. These seals have not yet been deciphered by scholars. Dr. Pran Nath of Banaras (Hindu) University in a meeting addressed in Allahabad demonstrated on the canvas decipherment of some of the Indus symbols with his very clever and interesting syllabury, proving its Sanskrit origin. But this view is yet to be accepted by other scholars. The author of the book is of the opinion that undoubtedly on the satisfactory reading of the script depends the solution of the knoty problem how far the Indus valley civilisation as revealed by these excavations is Indian or foreign.

The author points out: "The Rig Vedic Aryans realised sooner than their western compatriots, the Greeks, the noble truth that God exists and that He is the Father and Creater of all creations". The author also discusses the question of the complete change in the social and religious life of the Aryans in the later Vedic period.

After reviewing the history of Northern India from the 6th century B. C. to the 4th century B. C., the author gives a short and interesting account of polity, society, and the economic conditions then prevailing. Trade, both inland and foreign, was in fairly brisk condition. Principal items of export were, *silk*, *muslins* and finer sorts of cloths, cutlery, armour, broaches, embroideries, perfumes, rugs, ivory works, jewellery of gold and silver. Bharukachha, modern city of Broach near Kathiawar, was a famous port. The author also deals with markets, market conditions, mediums of exchange, system of barter. The *kanhapan* was the established coin of ancient India, struck both in

copper and silver with marks both on the obverse and reverse sides.

During the Mauryan period, India was in her gala days of glory. The system of administration followed at the time is still a matter of admiration. In dealing with the topic the author takes into special consideration Kautilya's *Arthasastra* 59 (Shamrastries. Ed).

Taxilla and Panchala were great centres of higher education. Another important event to be noted is the high degree of perfection in stone work.

In this period India may very well be termed as the ambassador of the world sending missionaries to spread her culture all over the globe. Asoka, undoubtedly one of the greatest rulers of all ages, sought to build up a new world based on peace, universal brotherhood and cultural amity.

The author then proceeds on to discuss the rules of Sunga, Kanva and Satabahana. Pushyamitra Sunga who was the head of the Brahminic revolution destroyed the Maurya rule inaugurated by Asoka.

In this connection the author puts stress to the facts that Buddhism was in excellent condition in the Deccan and was tolerated by the Brahminic Satavahaya.

In the third century A. D., India lacked political unity. The author discusses in detail the effects of such political disunion and opines that the fourth century ushered in a new epoch. India was once again free from confusion and disunion and improvement was noticed in art and industry, architetcture and literature. This was possible, because according to the author, almost all the emperors of this period were highly cultured and were great patrons of learning. This was the Golden Age and can very well be compared with the Age of Pericles in Greece and the Elizabethan age in England. Here the author remarks that Buddhism was in the declining stage, though Nalanda Vihara was built at this period when Sakraditya styled as Kumara Gupta I ruled, (5th century A D). The decline, says the author, was inevitable for three reasons (i), lack of royal patronage (ii), corruption entering the Buddhist *sanghas* (iii) absorption of the Buddhist pantheon in the field of Brahminism.

The renewal of the Vedic sacrifice at this period required study of astronomy and mathematics for its due performance and auspicious moments and the proper construction of *Vedis* (platforms for

sacrifice). The great astronomer Aryabhaṭta was born in c. 476 A. D. In this Golden Age, poets like Kalidas, Harisen, Vatsabhatti wrote their famous works. Asariga the famous Buddhist scholar also made contributions to the Buddhist literature. Amarsingha wrote his famous lexicon *Amarkosha*, and such a lexicon has yet to be written.

In the domain of fine arts, highest peaks of excellence were reached. The sculpture of the Gupta Age shows remarkable beauty of execution and high degree of perfection. Some of the finest caves of Ajanta C. G. No. XVI, were constructed in this period.

The rule of Vakatakas in the gangetic valley at this period was duly noticed. Thorough painstaking research, a further light has been thrown on these rulers and their importance has been appreciated. In the author's opinion some of the magnificient caves of Ajanta-Vihara, Caves XVI and Caves XVII, were built during the rule of the Vakatakas and under their patronage.

The author points the sixth century A. D. as another period of disintegration till the rise of Harsabardhan.

The most outstanding feature was the rise of the warlike race of Rajputs and the foundation of numerous Rajput states. Tracing the origin of the race, the author remarks, "many foreign races like the Sakas, the Pahlavas, and the Huns settled in the country and merged in the older population, having adopted the manners, customs and religion of their Hindu neighbours. Those Hinduised foreigners formed a new race". The author then gives a graphic account of the chief dynasties, Gurjara-Parihara kings and the Gahrwar dynasty or the Rathor dynasty, the Chandellas of Bundelkhand, the Chedi of Kalachuri dynasty, the Paramars of Malwa, the Chauhan Rajputs of Ajmer and Delhi.

The most regrettable feature at this period is that inspite of chivalrous spirit the Rajputs were disunited owing to the mutual jealousies among the chieftains and these were so great that they could not combine against their common foes though they separately offered stiff resistance to their common enemy.

The Rajput kings were great patrons of art and literature. The great Paramara ruler, Raja Bhoja was a reputed author of many books on different subjects, such as, medicine, astronomy, grammar, lexicography, art and architecture, religion and politics. He was no doubt a genius and could be termed as one of the great king-writers of which there were really very few in those times.

No early history of India is complete without a proper survey of Dakshinapatha or the Deccan.

Southern India or the Dravida could correspond roughly to the modern Madras Presidency and comprise that part of the peninsula lying to the south of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers. In the early period of its history, Southern India was divided into three kingdoms, the Pandyas in the extreme south, the Cheras along the Malavar coast, and the Cholas to the north of the Pandyas. These three states were outside the dominion of Asoka. As a result, the Dravadians developed their culture and language in their own line without being influenced by the Indo-Aryans of the north.

Before taking up the history of the Deccan proper, the author takes up the history of the Pallavas.

During the time of Nara-Sinha I, the Mabamalla Yuan Chwang visited Kanchi (Kanjiverum).

The period of Pallava rule is marked by considerable literary activities. The Pallava rulers were great patrons of letters. Sanskrit was the language for all official epigraphs.

The caves, temples, buildings and architectural remains of the Pallavas are important specimens of Hindu art. There are four types or styles as they may be termed (1) *the Mahendra style* (c. 600-625 A. D.) (2) *The Mamalla style* (c. 625-674 A. D.) (3) *The Rajasinha style* (8th C.A.D.)—the structural temples at Kanchi and the shore temple of Mahavalipuram and the famous Kailas temple at Kandi are remarkable specimens of this style (4) *The aparajita style* (900 A. D.)—the cylindrical *lingams* and *abucus* about the capital are conspicuous and are its special features. Readers desirous of a detailed account of this, may find it profitable to refer to pages 366-368 of the book under review.

The three states of the Tamil country, i. e. the region south of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers extending to the Cape of Comorin, were the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas. Their early history is pretty obscure, references are however found in Katyana's writings.

A very authentic and interesting account of the administration of the Cholas is given in the concluding portion of the book.

In the concluding chapter the author points out that "when ultimately the Aryan immigration into South India did take place, many elements of Dravidian civilisation found entry into Aryan civilisation *which*

ultimately developed into 'Indian civilisation.".....'The *Bhakti* movement which has in its genesis the worship of the Gods Siva and Vishnu is a pre-Aryan and peculiarly Southern cult which gradually found its way to the North. It had its beginning in the South, long before the Sanskrit culture penetrated in that region".

The author gives copious references wherever necessary in the footnotes. An upto-date and a comprehensive picture of Indian history and generally accepted results of modern researches are embodied herein. A thorough index adds to the value of the book. The author does not hesitate to point out the reasons why he differs from the opinions of other scholars.

It is really very difficult to write a short up-to-date and comprehensive book on *Early History of India* but the author's attempt is successful.

To the student of the early history of India, the book will be found interesting and useful.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF HINDUISM:—A Philosophical Study, by Satischandra Chatterjee M.A.,Ph.D., Lecturer in Philosophy, Calcutta University, Published by the author (to be had of Das Gupta & Co., Ltd., 54/3, College Street, Calcutta), Pages xiii + 178, Index & Bibliography, Price Rs. 3/8/-.

To an occidental mind, Hinduism is a riddle, a mystery, a paradox. The present tendency of the Hindus towards their own religion is also sceptical. The style of the book is simple, clear and charming, and suited to young students and general readers, keen on knowing the reality behind this religion.

"It is quite natural" says the author, "that a religion of which the source is so complex and multiple, should itself be complex and manifold in character. It does not represent a single type of religious experience nor does it recommend the same path for all to attain the goal of religion. On the other hand it comprises the entire body of religious experiences of different sages and saints at different times". The author adds, "attempt has been made to throw some light on the problem of the Hindu society to suit modern condition".

To general readers, the "*Laws of Karma*" is an enigma. Chapter VI of the book, devoted to explain this problem is an interesting study. *Varnasram-dharma* is easily misunderstood. To understand this the ideas of bondage and liberation, peculiar to Indian philosophy and religion are to be studied and grasped in this connection. Chapter

VI & VII deal with these questions. In Chapter X, the author refutes the charge of other worldiness and pacifism against Hinduism and deals with the *path of action* (Karmayoga) recommended and encouraged by Hindu religion. The author deals in one of the concluding chapters (Chapter X), with *the path of devotion* (Bhakti-Yoga). The author points out "Bhakti" as Yoga or a spiritual path is naturally easier than any other path for it rests on man's natural emotion of love as that is turned towards God...Bhakti-Yoga as a spritual path is constituted by man's pure love of God, his service to and sacrifice for God, reciprocal love of man, and the blessed communion between man and God".

To a scholar who is willing to devote his mind to a comprehensive study of Hinduism from historical standpoint (a complete history of Hindu religion and philosophy), this hand-book will no doubt, be a helpful guide.

L. K. R.

Early Man in the World: By Kenneth Macgowan, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1950, Price $ 5.00.

This is a hand-book on the first settlers of the Americas. America did not evolve any man itself. We know of the settlers from Europe after the discovery of this land by Columbas. But long before that, America was known to the Asians some 14,000 years ago. And the people from north Asia crossed the Berring Strait and made headway to America through Alaska. This stream of migration followed the West Coast of America until it reached the southern most part of South America.

The question of Mongoloid, Australoid and Negroid traits in the skulls of the American aboriginals have been fully discussed. A short idea of the origins of early men of the old world is also given. Cultural account and the story of the domestication of plants by these primitive men form special features of this treatise.

Man in the Primitive World: By Prof. E.A. Hoebal. McGraw-Hill International Corporation, New York, pp. 543.

The book is an introduction to general anthropology and is meant for the students and lay readers who desire an orientation in the anthropological science. It is sufficiently descriptive and factual materials have been so selected as to give substance to the work without

stiffling the reader with technicalities. A fine balance between over-feeding and underfeeding of facts has been maintained throughout.

The author has started with the origin of the Earth and in so doing has discussed the famous Chamberlin-Moulton planetsimal hypothesis. Then comes a short description of the origin of life and its evolution. He says that though the law of evolution is not satisfactorily established, the fact of progressive evolution in forms of life from the simplest to the most complex varieties is convincingly revealed in the story of the rocks. Through comparative anatomy and the vestigial remains, he traces the evidences for the evolutionary origin of man and shows that man "is, indeed, a walking museum of antiquities".

The author is strongly of opinion that man is not directly descended from the apes and monkeys. The real fact is that man's pre-human ancestors were apelike, and the apes and monkeys are our near or remote cousins. This is because apes, monkeys and men are descended from common primates and apes and monkeys, not being able to advance in the line of evolution, retain closely some of the traits of their primate ancestors. So it is quite justifiable to say that these primates were apelike. According to the author, the true position is this: one branch of the common primate ancestors evolved to monkeys, someother went in the direction of anthropoid apes from which species, it is known man and apes descended in different lines. Dryopithecus is the genetic source of all humanity and the author supports F. Weidenreich on the point that man envolved differently and simultaneously in many parts of the old world.

It is interesting to go through the history of dawn man--those Java-Pekin-Neanderthal species-who were just emerging from apedom and were more man than apes in their cranial capacity. These people in time vanished from the earth, to be replaced by the Cro-Magnon *homo-sapiens*. But a curious reader is likely to be disheartened not finding an account of the origin of his modren ancestors.

On the cultural side there is elaborate details of the Paleolithic age and the dawn of Civilisation.

Races of mankind have been primarily divided into three: the Caucasoid, the Mongoloid, and the Negroid. But these racial traits are non-adaptive which is to say that they are not specialised responses to differential features of environment. The physical environment of the Caucasians and the Mongolians are not much unlike, still they have different pigmentation, while Negroes' heavy pigmentation has not been

prov'd to be in response to tropical life. The author is of opinion that cranial capacity has nothing to do with mental activity among men. As an example, the case of the Eskimos can be taken who have the largest brain with little mental power. Again, no known functional advantage can be attributed to long-headedness over round-headedness i.e. to high or low cephalic Index. Thus it is clear, that the much resented idea of race-superiority is a myth.

In the chapter on food-getting, the several stages of economic activities of early man is given. These are, fruit gathering and collecting, hunting, gardening, pastoralism, and agriculture. It is the Neolithic Age that saw the domestication of plants and animals, bringing about world's first great revolution in the ways of life.

Then come successive sections on housing, handicrafts, clothing ornaments, art, marriage and kinship status and social role, property, social control, religion, society and culture including a chapter on evolution. These cover all the imaginable aspects of human life. drawn from all the known tribal varieties of mankind.

A. R. C.

Religions of India: By Sten Konow & Poul Tuxen, G. E. C. Gad, Publisher, Coperhage, 1949.

This book of 215 pages gives in a short compass the history of religions and religious movements originating in India from the ages of the Indus civilization down to the tenets of Gandhism.

The main characteristics of the various Indian religions, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, as also of the later reformatory movements, the *Bhakti* sects, Sikhism, the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Ramkrishna Mission are clearly brought out.

The authors have approached their subject with a broadness of view, and have succeeded in appreciating the unity which underlies the apparent diversity of the various cults and sects, a very rare achievement, even amongst Indian savants, not to speak of foreigners born and brought up under different systems of society and religion.

Speaking of Vivekananda's preachings the authors say, 'There is no essential difference between the religions. In all of them one may obtain what is the highest *Yoga*, the connection, the communion between god and man, between the higher and the lower "I".

The value of the book lies in the clear analysis which separates the non-essentials and comes to grips with fundamentals of the Indian

religions. On page 181 of the book, the authors after describing the cults and worship of numerous gods by the Hindus, say "the picture is extremely variegated but it is nevertheless not quite right to stamp the Indians as poly theists. The conception of Oneness we already found in the Vedic *Rita* the *Brahman* of the Upanishads the so-called henotheism, and in the conception of the *Ishtadevata*, the individual's separate deity. But *devata* is not quite the same thing as *deva*, god, but rather being a god, a special apparition of the divine. The Hindu conception of God is rather a common denominator in which polytheism as well as monotheism may be included.

If we leave out of account the many varieties and stick to the great principal sects, it is still the striving after oneness which strikes us".

Coming from the pen of Europeans, the book is a remarkable one and testifies to the industry, research, and love of truth of the authors.

Unlike most Europeans the authors recognize that the Indus civilization was native to India, and was much superior to that of old Aryan invaders of India, and much older. According to them "it formed part of a culture extending over a great part of the whole ancient world from China in the East perhaps to Egypt in the West."

We commend the book to all who desire a knowledge of the religions of India.

S. K. R. C.

MAN AND HIS WORKS :—*The Science of Cultural Anthropology.* By Prof. M. J. Herskovits: Pp. i—xviii; + 1—678 and Index i—xxxvii. Published by Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1949, Price $ 6. 75 net.

This voluminous book covers the entire range of cultural anthropology. Being designed, as the author says in the Introduction, for the students in institutions of higher learning who follow courses in anthropology, the book is expected to serve the needs of teachers and students of cultural anthropology. In fact, the book is so exhaustive in its treatment that it can veritably be called a complete reference book on cultural anthropology.

The book is divided into eight parts. Part I "Introductory" deals with anthropology in general as the Science of Man. Parts II-VII deal successively with the Nature of Culture; the Materials of Culture; the Structure of Culture; the Aspects of Culture; Cultural-

Dynamics; and Cultural Variation. In these six parts the entire range of primitive human culture, its variation and adaptation has been exhaustively dealt with. Part VIII gives a summary of the foregoing parts which is very useful to students in their study.

Full bibliography and Index have also been provided which enormously add to the value of the book for reference purposes. The book is thus a very valuable addition to the growing literature on cultural anthropology.

P. K. M.

NOTICE.

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