

# MAN IN INDIA

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## EAST AND WEST IN BENGAL\*

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### I

#### *Economic Change*

PORTUGUESE, English, Dutch and French merchants entered into trade with Bengal about the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century. Prior to their advent, 'a fairly large volume of trade was in the hands of Hindu, Armenian and Muhammadan merchants who had clients in Turkey, Arabia, Persia and Tibet.' It has been computed that 'the balance of trade was always in favour of Bengal, and during the period 1708-1756 bullion formed nearly three-fourths of the total imports to Bengal.

'The most important articles of export...were cotton and silk piece-goods, raw silk, sugar, salt, jute, saltpetre and opium. Even in Ali Vardi Khan's time (1742-1756), nearly seven million rupees' worth of raw silk was entered in the Customs Office books at Murshidabad exclusive of European investment.

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<sup>1</sup> Majumdar, R. C.; H. C. Raychaudhuri, Kalikinkar Datta; *An Advanced History of India*. London, 1950, pp. 805 ff.

Bengal was the chief centre of the sugar industry even in the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

The point which is of importance is that, although villages in India have been generally considered to form self-sufficient economic units, there is considerable evidence to prove that there was a fairly large volume of export trade in manufactured articles, and even in agricultural products like jute and sugar. It would indeed be an interesting task for economic historians to compute how exported goods stood in comparison with goods produced for internal consumption. Perhaps one way of achieving this would be to compare the approximate cultivable land with the amount of land needed to produce the crops which were processed for export. It is difficult to say whether one can arrive at a dependable ratio in this manner or not. But the fact that trade and manufactures were the source of a large proportion of Bengal's prosperity is also indicated by another source of indirect evidence.

The town of Santipur, situated on the river Ganges in West Bengal, is more than four centuries old. It has always been noted as a centre of Sanskrit learning, and also as a place of trade and textile manufactures. Supur and Ilambazar on the river Ajay, also in West Bengal, were noted at one time before the advent of the East India Company's agents in these quarters as places of flourishing trade. All along the Ganges, the Ajay and the Damodar, one not only comes across old towns or their remnants, but also temples and sculptures which belong to the 10th and 11th century onwards. In some of these centres, like Tribeni in the Hooghly district, there are not only ruins of temples but ancient settlements of the trading Subarnavanik or Gandhavanik Vaishya castes. These towns became deserted for one reason or another. But the chief reason was an abandonment of riverways in favour of railroads for purposes of trade. The point which has to be borne in mind is that villages in Bengal were evidently not as self-sufficient as is usually imagined. Prosperous trading villages also existed along the rivers, manufactures clustered round these trading establishments, temples were built; and all

this naturally exercised a considerable influence on the villages which lay in the neighbourhood.

When European companies established themselves in Bengal, their first concern was to carve out a share of the existing trade. But once firmly entrenched through their influence in the courts of Delhi and Murshidabad in Bengal, they exercised their power in order to oust native competitors from inland trade also. It had indeed been easier for them to oust Arab traders from the overseas carrying trade of India by means of superior organization and improved instruments of war.

Complaints against unfair competition, when privileges granted to the English companies were utilized for furthering private enterprise, increased in volume. The Muslim rulers of Murshidabad became restless ; particularly when Calcutta was more firmly fortified, ostensibly as a protection against French competitors and Maratha marauders. Eventually, a clash became inevitable ; as a result of which, Siraj-ud-dowlah lost his throne in the battle of Plassey in 1757.

Victory was swiftly followed by an unprecedented economic drain upon the country. 'Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim had to pay enormous sums of money to the Company and its servants for gaining the throne of Bengal.' In 1765, the East India Company obtained the right of collecting revenue in Bengal on behalf of the Emperor of Delhi, so that the Nawab of Murshidabad was virtually bypassed and reduced from his former position. The Company paid the Emperor's dues regularly, but the surplus collection 'was invested in purchasing the articles exported from India by the East India Company...It has been estimated that the total drain from Bengal to England during the period 1757 to 1780 amounted to about thirty-eight million pounds sterling...The heavy drain greatly impoverished the province, and crippled its capital wealth to the serious detriment of its trade and industry.'<sup>2</sup> One immediate result of the economic destitution was a series of famines and epidemics which carried away a considerable section of the population in 1770.

The East India Company now turned its attention to the

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

organization of government in the land. Rent had to be collected, much of which was already in arrears. So, finally, the Permanent Settlement was enacted in 1793, whereby a new class of rent farmers came into being, different from the zemindars under Murshid Quli Khan's rule in some significant ways. Their duty was to furnish fixed dues to the Company, while they could collect as much rent from the farmers as they could without any ceiling being fixed for it by law. The maintenance of peace was not entrusted to them as under the earlier situation. That became the sole concern of the East India Company.

Peace was established and trade began to flourish once more. In the meanwhile, products of European industries were introduced into the markets of the country, and trade was also given a new character. Instead of remaining a country of agricultural prosperity and of an abundance of rural manufactures, Bengal was converted into a supplier of raw agricultural produce and a market for the products of British industry.

As peace continued and the new orientation in economic life gained stability, there was a considerable change in the socio-economic situation in the villages. Formerly castes had their allocated function through which goods and services were exchanged in a traditional manner. But with the growth of new trades and professions in the wake of British commercial and political enterprise, a readjustment was inevitable.

A rising middle class, recruited from various castes, flocked to Calcutta, and served to man the lower services which arose out of the demands of trade, industry and government; the upper ranks being naturally preserved for people of European origin. Villages were correspondingly drained of their leadership, and in some instances it had a deleterious effect upon agriculture too. Formerly, landlords were responsible for maintaining irrigation in the Bengal delta<sup>3</sup>; but with their departure from the villages, the whole system suffered considerable dislocation. Artisans, again, who lost their trade,

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<sup>3</sup> Wilcocks, Sir William: *Ancient System of Irrigation in Bengal*. University of Calcutta, 1930. P. 21-22.

flocked to agriculture and swelled the ranks of landless labourers, and thus helped to lower wages ; so that the share-cropper's wages, instead of being 20 : 20 in relation to the owner's share, was now reduced to 18 in proportion to the owner's 22.

### *Cultural Results*

The demands of administration had led to the foundation of the College of Fort William. The Baptist Missionary, William Carey, came to Calcutta in 1794. The Calcutta Madrassa was founded in 1781, the Asiatic Society in 1784, a Sanskrit College in Banaras in 1792, the Hindu College was opened in 1817.

Education in the English language prospered ; while, at the same time, the need of codification of Hindu laws led to a translation of Sanskrit law-books into the English language. The introduction of the printing press in Calcutta at the end of the 18th century was a fact of immense significance. Not only did schools multiply in number, but organizations like the Calcutta School Book Society (1818) were also founded in order to circulate textbooks of various kinds in the vernacular language. The first printing, not only in Bengali, but in the Hindi and Oriya languages as well, was done in Calcutta or its neighbourhood ; while, among the various classes of books which became popular, one notices a fairly large number of dictionaries of several kinds.

Printing made two more things possible. One was the initiation of newspapers ; while the other was a circulation of classical literature, which had so long been limited to hand-written copies, or been confined to a small and exclusive class of literary castes.

In their zeal for conversion, Christian missionaries had been led to an indiscriminate attack on Hindu religion and social practices. There was undoubtedly much in the latter which deserved condemnation ; but there was also much which was of a superior order. The persistent endeavour of missionaries to find fault with Hinduism now set Hindu leaders on the defensive. And as the printing press facilitated dissemination

of knowledge of Sanskrit traditions, two Sanskrit encyclopaedic dictionaries were published in the first half of the 19th century. The first was under the patronage of Raja Radhakanta Dev (1784-1852), and was named the *Sabdakalpadrumah* (pub. 1822-1852), and the other was *Vachaspatya Abhidhana* of Taranath Tarkavachaspati (1812-1885). Two translations of the *Mahabharata* into Bengali prose were also published, while many of the *Puranas* and *Smritis* were similarly made available in Bengali translation.

### *An Attempt at Synthesis*

It was in this atmosphere of economic affiliation of a new middle class to English rule and its commerce and industry, and of cultural antagonism between Christian missionaries and a defeated, though proud aristocracy of Hinduism, that an effort was made to reform Hindu society, as well as to bring about a synthesis between the civilizations of the East and the West. °

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One minor movement, which exercised considerable influence upon educated youth in Bengal was due to the Hindu College founded in 1817. A young Anglo-Indian teacher named Henry L. V. Derozio (1809-1831), who had been inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution, happened to be a teacher in the above school. And a young band of enthusiastic Bengali students was attracted by the new cult of freedom, rationalism and of humanism which was preached by this new teacher. An amusing result of where this enthusiasm led is eviden-

ced by a newspaper report published in 1831<sup>4</sup>, in which we read how a man came to visit his son at school in Calcutta from his village home. Both went to take a bath in the sacred river Ganges, and then visited the temple of Kali in the south of Calcutta. The father prostrated himself before the image in the orthodox fashion, but the son would not, because it was merely an idol. Eventually however the latter yielded, and instead of paying obeisance in the usual manner, he stood upright before the idol and in clear English said, 'Good morning, Madam.'

The antagonism between Christian and Hindu religions had led in the early portion of the 19th century into a position which can be described as one of unadulterated opposition, one of *either* Christianity or Westernism, *or* of Hinduism. In this conflict, Christianity was as it was represented by the Bible and the lives of its missionaries; and Europeanism, as it expressed itself in the lives of the ruling upper class of European origin. On the other hand, Hinduism, as defended by its proud and emotionally injured inheritors, was as represented in the Sanskrit books which were in easier circulation than ever before. Christianity as practised by the warring nations of Europe, or their commercial representatives on the Indian soil, was overlooked by missionaries; while Hinduism, as actually practised in daily life was equally ignored by those who tried to defend the faith from alien attack.

The Brahma Samaj movement has been described both as reformed Hinduism, as well as a synthesis between the faiths of the East and the West, in which the foundation was formed by the pure forms of Upanishadic philosophy. It is interesting that the two great original builders of the Brahma Samaj were both deeply inspired by Islam. Rammohan's proficiency in Arabic scholarship was equalled by that in Sanskrit or English, while Devendranath, in one stage of his spiritual life, had been deeply influenced by the mysticism of the Persian poets. And the version of Hinduism which shaped itself under their hands was a severely monotheistic, anti-idolatrous faith,

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<sup>4</sup> Bandopadhyay, Brajendranath : *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha*, (in Bengali) Calcutta. 1356 B. S., Vol. 2, p. 237.

which could be a match against the Christianity preached by missionaries.

It might be pointed out here that, just as Christian missionaries had concentrated their attack upon Hinduism on the score of idolatry, Islam, during its nearly thousand years of rule in India, had tried with mixed enthusiasm to rescue the infidel into the true faith by laying hands upon temples and sculptures, i.e., Hinduism's sacred idols, with an almost equal measure of revolutionary enthusiasm. This had not worked satisfactorily, for various sects incorporating elements of faith from Hindu and Islamic sources had come into being; and most of them had kept truer to Hinduism than to Islam with its jealous God. Moreover, the economic success of caste had been so profound that Muslims had yielded to its organization in daily life; while the mystic forms of Islam, as it had been shaped under Persian influence, had come closer and closer to the mysticism of the Hindu faith.

It is therefore no wonder that the faith of the Brahmo Samaj became a version of Hinduism, which was no more than one recast in accordance with the monotheistic models of Christianity and Islam. But, as in Hinduism, its god was not the jealous god of the Semitic sects. The Samaj retained an intellectual charity, which developed into eclecticism at the earliest opportunity.

As time progressed, the Brahmo Samaj under Devendranath's leadership was accused by its younger adherents of leaning towards some kind of exclusiveness. Devendranath was not in favour of people of non-Brahminical origin occupying the pulpit. One section therefore broke away to found the Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj, in which caste was completely ignored and women gained a new freedom. Keshabchandra Sen (1838-1884), the leader of this section, subsequently leaned progressively towards the more emotional forms of worship practised under Hinduism. A group subsequently broke away from him in order to found the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, where the form of worship approximated to some extent the practices of the Church of England, while the management of the



church organization was subject to more democratic control than in the other two.

In the church of which Keshabchandra still remained the head, he led some of his close associates to devote themselves to a study of the various religions of the world. One of the missionaries learnt the Arabic and Persian languages and produced an admirable translation of the Koran and of the lives of Muslim saints in Bengali. A second devoted himself to Buddhism, and a third to Christianity. And as a result of these varied spiritual adventures, eclecticism was virtually elevated to the rank of a faith under Keshabchandra. The Brahmo Samaj, as a spiritual successor of Vedantic monism, had always favoured a recognition of its parallel wherever it occurred ; but under Keshab, this was raised almost to the rank of a faith. One may venture to suggest that it was this quality which kept Brahmoism true to its Hindu origin, and rendered it unable to share the character of exclusiveness which is so characteristic of the Muslim and Christian faiths as represented in India.

### *Hindu Reformation*

In the meantime, orthodox Hindu society had not remained completely idle. An increasing acquaintance with earlier traditions, which had so long been the preserve of Brahmin priests and scholars, offered enough wealth of thought in which the educated Hindu could take legitimate pride. He was no longer dismayed by Hinduism's social abuses into an abandonment of his ancestral faith. Nor was he tempted to take refuge in that curious mixture of Eastern and Western faiths which he considered the Brahmo faith to be. Social reform became the cry of the day. Its urgency had been recognized even before the rise of the Brahmo Samaj. But now it became a passion with young Hindus. Kulin polygamy had already disappeared, suttee had been suppressed by law. Education had reached all castes who contributed to the rising urban middle class ; and educated members belonging to the 'lower' castes saw no reason why they should be socially discriminated against merely on account of their birth.

There was also a steady growth of the feeling of nationalism

among the educated classes of Bengal. In spite of the fact that the upper and middle classes had identified themselves with British interests, the rural, and also some of the tribal, inhabitants of India had often risen in revolt against exploitation. Thus in 1799, there was the Chuar rebellion in Bengal, followed by the Santal rising of 1801. The Ho and the Bhumij rose again in 1820-21 and 1832, followed by the Santal in 1855. The Sepoy Mutiny was in 1857. The Indigo Disturbances were in 1860. But all these unorganized, sporadic rebellions had never been given a coherent form, until the middle classes joined the rank and built up a form of nationalism, interestingly enough, after the European political model.

Nationalism became Bengal's new religion by the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The manner in which revolutionary parties, i.e., those devoted to terroristic activity for the overthrow of British rule arose was also of European origin. But these methods were accepted by the proud, revolutionary Hindu without the feeling of injury which accompanied him if he had to overthrow his cherished Hindu idols as a concession to Christian criticism. As a matter of fact, the new cult of patriotism became inextricably mixed with a revived form of Hinduism, symbolized by the worship of Kali and/or a reliance upon the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita*.

As national sentiment thus progressively developed, and as the urgency of political action also increased, the cultural synthesis of the Brahma Samaj was discovered to be inadequate to satisfy the emotional demand of the times. A restatement of Hinduism, unashamed of its own values, had almost become a necessity.

The Ramakrishna movement came to India just at this opportune moment. Ramakrishna (1836-1886) was an inhabitant of a village in Bengal who did not receive the advantage of formal school education. He had derived his knowledge of Hindu faith largely from the oral traditions current in village India. As a sensitive soul, immersed in the adventure of the spirit, he had come to regard religion as a matter of direct realization. Ramakrishna went through the various disciplines of Hinduism; and at the end of each,

became immersed in one common feeling of unity. When the paths offered by Hinduism had been explored, he turned to Christianity and Islam; and was rewarded by an identical experience. यत् मतं तत् पथ—‘there are as many roads (to realization) as opinions (i.e., philosophies)’ became his fundamental creed. *Siva*, the supreme godhead, became identical in his realization with *Jeeva*, the individual soul. *Narayana*, another term for the godhead, was the same as *Nara*, man. And in this manner, Ramakrishna arrived at a realization of the essential identity of all faiths, including the religion of Humanism, all of which he described as separate rivers which eventually lost their identity in the ocean.

This restatement of Hinduism by one who had realized by direct experience rather than by intellect alone, furnished a reborn faith, and also became the starting point of several other Hindu religious movements in Bengal associated with the names of Vijayakrishna Goswami, Sri Aurobindo and others.

### *Modern Tendencies*

The various movements described in brief in the preceding sections have indeed not been replacements of one by the other. The pro-Western, or its antithetical opposite, the pro-Eastern restatements of faith have still persisted in one form or another to the present day. Hinduism has not been shorn of all those elements which impede the progress of life. Caste remains, and so does the subjugation of women. There are other ancient traditions too which, though not directly the outcome of Hindu faith, continue to impede change, and thus become responsible for wasted lives. So the need to break the shackles of the past is as urgent as it was a hundred years ago. Many have gone, but many still remain. Only, reform under contemporary circumstances has become comparatively easy, and evokes less hostility in rural areas in Bengal than it did previously. Rebellious individualism is in demand, as an instrument suitable for breaking the attachment to the past.

On the other hand, the progress of humanitarian movements and of technology have created additional attractions towards the West. But the West has, in the meanwhile, given

proof of new features of weakness of its own. The exaggerated worship of individualism has, in the opinion of men brought up under caste or the joint family, made men more self-centered; except under circumstances like war when that individualism is completely subordinated. All these have raised questions in the minds of some in the East. Is not caste, with its social security guaranteed by reciprocal aid between well-defined social groups, better than the way built upon unbridled pursuit of individual liberty? Why, again, pursue that liberty only in moments of peace, and at other times yield to an unqualified surrender, if it is indeed so precious?

These questions still continue to harass the mind of writers and thinkers of Bengal, as they do in other countries too. And in Bengal's contemporary literature, we find a reflection of many of these ideas, as we also do in the field of social movements. Among some artists and literary men, there is a clearly felt attraction towards the rebellious spirits of the West. Picasso and Gauguin among artists, Eliot, Auden, Spender and James Joyce among poets and writers, or social revolutionaries like Ibsen, Tolstoy or Dostoevsky have been popular; as also political leaders like Lenin, Trotsky or Stalin.

There have been others, again, who have tried to reach down to the traditional sources of India's Brahminical culture, or to the life of the common rural folk, who try to beautify and find a meaning in life by their unaided, spontaneous endeavour, and succeed in creating out of such adventure, simple songs and poems, or unsophisticated drawings and paintings which are of no mean artistic quality.

A new concern about 'people's' art has led to a revival, as much of classical styles in music, like Dhrupad or Kheyal, as to folk styles, like Baul or Bhatiyal. In dancing, there has been a corresponding re-discovery of classical forms like Bharata-Natyam and Kathakali, as of the tribal dances of the Santals, or the simple Holi or Rāsa of rural Hindus.

These adventures in the region of discovery of what is 'Eastern' or what is 'Western', and their constant re-assessment in terms of the needs of human life have covered the field of

Bengal's culture with bewildering variety. The river is made of many streams ; and some of them have not yet lost their identity. Some even rush against one another, and produce dangerous eddies. But in their totality, they perhaps form a unity with a character of its own.

It has also to be remembered that the elements which have been compounded in Bengal into her mixed stream, have been furnished by Europe in part—shall we say, by cultural diffusion ?—and partly by what was available in India after search in her classical sources, or the life of her common people. And every time these elements were set together in a fresh constellation, a newness of character was added to it which gave it a quality of originality.

## II

Anthropologists have tried to depict the results of their investigation in various ways. One of the current methods consists in showing the interaction or interrelation of individuals, or of social units, by means of some form of graphic or cartographic representation. It will be observed that the method followed while presenting the course of culture change in Bengal has been of a different nature. In the rather sketchy and impressionistic picture presented above, the intention of the author has been to unravel the inner moods which have prevailed among the Bengali people from time to time, and show how they have proceeded to reshape the culture under which they lived by incorporating in it desirable elements obtained from other cultures, or by reshaping their own in terms of the ideas and emotions which prevailed at a particular moment. The problems, as presented by life, have been derived from various historical sources. Some have been due to the power relation of conflicting groups ; some due to the failure of existing modes of production caused by increased population, or the competition of improved technological processes, or they have been occasioned by other sources. But under each circumstance, men have been prompted to seek a new adjustment in the established ways of living, as they were handed down to the present generation from the past. In this constant interaction

between tradition and the demands of new life, both have evidently helped to shape or reshape one another.

Not one, but several solutions have been experimented with by separate groups, and even individuals; and when any particular solution has proved satisfactory, or found favour with many, it has become temporarily dominant. Then it has forced other experimental modes of living to adjust themselves to it; or has thrown them into the background, when they either struggled for existence, or perhaps tended to decay and disappear when no adjustment was possible.

The various ways of living have operated at several levels. The present author once suggested that these levels could be distinguished as (1) *Vastu* or material object, (2) *Kriya* or habitual action, (3) *Samhati* or social grouping and (4) *Tattwa* or knowledge. The last again is divisible into two according as the knowledge is *Vicharamulaka*, i.e., based on experience or criticism, or *Viswasamulaka*, or based on faith.<sup>5</sup>

The relevance of the above reference is that, in the conflict of cultures in Bengal, the West has sometimes contributed elements of material content, or of knowledge derived from technological experience. It has introduced schemes of valuation too, just as it has also introduced into the government of the country forms of political organization of alien origin. Those, on their part, who have been faced by the challenge of these cultural innovations, have modified them to suit the genius of established modes, or have tried to build up in their place elements derived from what they have considered to be of ancient Indian origin, transmitted either by oral or written tradition from the past.

It was suggested by the present author that, it is this chain of life experiences which is of ultimate significance in culture. Provisionally, the term 'soul of culture' was employed in this connection. It was stated, 'Beneath the outer framework of

<sup>5</sup> Bose, Nirmal Kumar : *Cultural Anthropology*, Calcutta, 1929. Reprinted in *Cultural Anthropology and Other Essays*, Calcutta, 1953. In his Huxley Memorial Lecture, 1957, at the Royal Anthropological Society, Professor J. B. S. Haldane has employed this scheme for the description of what he regards as cultural behaviour among animals.

culture, there lies a body of beliefs and sentiments which are responsible for the particular manifestation of a culture..... Such a body of ideas and sentiments grows out of life's philosophy, and is consequently conditioned by the needs and aspirations of each particular age.

'In no case does the central core of ideas remain unchanged for any considerable length of time.....It might be said that the mental counterpart of a culture changes according to the experiences of a particular age. Historical developments bring in their train a number of unresolved problems ; and if the cultural heritage of an age does not serve those needs, it is sure to undergo modification by those who inherit it.

'Culture is thus in a perpetually unstable state of equilibrium with the experiences of men.'<sup>6</sup>

It has been on account of this valuation of the experiences of human life as being of primary significance, that the scheme of stringing together the changes in Bengali culture has been made in relation to the variegated workings of the mind of the people of Bengal.

The question which finally emerges may now be brought up for consideration. In this kaleidoscopic variety of experimentation, which is Hindu, which is European ? Which is Eastern and which Western ?

Was the Hinduism of the Brahma Samaj truly Hindu, or that of the orthodox Raja Radhakanta Dev, or the actual life of the Hindus as it was lived from day to day by people in the villages and towns of India ? When it comes to European civilization, what were its dominant and real elements ? Was it the spirit of liberty as exemplified in the French Revolution, which was a source of inspiration to Raja Rammohan Roy and to Derozio alike ? Or, was it Europe's gospel of rationalism and of humanism, and the Christian way of life to which a noble band of missionaries bore witness ? What about the greed or cruelty of commercial enterprise, exercised under the shelter of superior military technique and organization ? Was that also European civilization, or merely its debasement as presented on the historical stage of India ?

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<sup>6</sup> Bose, *Ibid.*, chapter II.

Probably, the anthropologist would prefer to describe the observable totality of life in India as the reality. He would perhaps relegate the ideals and intentions of a superior order as things of the mind which also mattered ; but reserve them for a subordinate category, because their effects were far less patent than the value attached to them in men's minds. Perhaps this has been one reason why anthropologists in the past were led, on the whole, to adopt the comparatively simple method of describing a culture after rendering it into many separate categories, with little or no trace of interrelationship. Others, however, noticed the interrelationship, and proceeded to represent it by graphical or cartographic methods.

If one is permitted to use a simile, this is like using aerial photographs to depict the land-forms of a country. Such a photograph is obviously true ; it cannot be otherwise. But among land-forms some may be superficial, and some of deep-seated origin. It is only when the underlying geological structure is also studied that a meaning becomes available for the photographic representation which a geographer has been able to secure from an airplane.

Social and cultural life in Bengal may be photographically represented. But when one works at that life, tries to change it, one realizes at once that certain forms of organization or interrelationship are of a superficial nature, while others have a more deep-seated origin, which gives rise to increasing resistance to change. When one tries to pull up a tree from the ground, one realizes with what strength it is held in the soil.

The submission is therefore made that it is the changing relationship between the experiences of life and the perpetually remodelled framework of culture, which together should constitute the totality, which should be the purpose of an anthropologist to investigate.

Then arises a question, namely, is there any moment of time when the various components of culture are in logical conformity with one another ? It is usually held that a primitive people, who have lived long in isolation, succeed in establishing some kind of logical conformity, a formal equilibrium between its different components. That assumption may or may not



be true. But, in any case, in the history of modern Bengal, we find, on the contrary, ideas, organizations, the technological equipment of living, all in logical unconformity with one another. It is not suggested that this unconformism is Bengal's characteristic. The suggestion is rather made that, when one particular mood or idea or a material situation becomes dominant, the rest of culture is strained or altered to be in conformity with it. And before a balance has been achieved, a new situation may arise, rendering a fresh endeavour necessary. Instead of one dominant note, again, there may be more than one competing for survival. And, in this respect, Bengal's civilization has been subject to many stresses and many changes, which have given no rest to those who have been in observation.

But which shall we call Bengal's civilization? If one compared the life of the Bengali people today with that of their fore-runners of a hundred years ago, the contrast would be striking indeed. Even those who are orthodox Hindus, have changed widely according to eighteenth century standards. Is it spatial or temporal continuity alone or jointly which permit us to designate the contemporary civilization of Bengal as one phase of that which existed two centuries ago?

If one is permitted to offer a suggestion, it is not the continuity, nor even the fact that the two phases bear the same name, that binds the two phases together. On close examination, we observe how the orthodox leaders of Bengal went back to Sanskrit sources for inspiration. We also observed how, after the contemporary interest in common people's lives, Bengal's artists tried to rediscover things of value in their villages and towns. In each case, certain common elements were discovered. Thus, for instance, there has been a recognition of the pluralistic view of truth as promoted by Vedanta; something which allows the Bengali thinker of today to incorporate science and humanism from the West, and yet allows him to feel a continuity with his ancient heritage.

In this formidable adventure at cultural reorganization, Bengali culture has always been in process of *becoming*, instead of merely *being*. By contrast with Western items of culture,

items of Bengal's culture gained added distinctness. Perhaps, by contrast with Bengal's current life, the life lived by Christian missionaries in India, and of her merchant-princes or rulers, was also changed; for they too had to live up to a model which was 'truly European or Christian' rather than a mere continuation of the kind of life which was lived in Europe.

This tendency to *become* something is the characteristic of any civilization. No civilization perhaps satisfies all the needs of a free and full growth of human life in a perfect manner. And when there is a continuity between the *aspirations* which shape the actuality of cultural life, we are perhaps entitled to regard the two as belonging to one civilization.

The submission is thus made that civilization is a matter of the mind, although it does not exist without its material or organizational shell. And the form of this ideational substructure—which together with the material or organizational components forms that for which one may reserve the term 'Culture'—springs and alters according to the demands, and from the experiences of life.

Professor Robert Redfield said in course of his address, that he had almost been making a voyage in a gaseous region. Unfortunately, the present writer has to confess that his voyage has led him to a rarefied region where breathing has almost become difficult.

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# FURTHER STUDIES IN SINGHBHUM NEOLITHIC TYPOLOGY

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and

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(Received on 11th June, 1958)

THE discovery of a rich celt site in Chakradharpur in the Sanjai valley in Singhbhum, south Bihar, was first reported<sup>1</sup> in 1941 and an account of the same was published by the first author in *Man in India* Vol. 30, No. 1 (1950). On a further reconnaissance in 1954, some more artefacts, dug up during recent cultivation, were recovered from the site and its neighbourhood and a report of the same was published in *Man in India*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (1955). The same site was revisited in 1956 yielding further data including pottery. The area is now being more intensely cultivated, with the result that though artefacts crop up here and there, many specimens are either damaged or have been lost. The latest additions bring up the total number of stone implements from the site to about 350 specimens. There is no doubt that it was a factory site.

As observed in earlier field-works, gulley erosion of the edge of artefact-bearing land-surface towards the river is still proceeding vigorously. A few specimens were recovered from the denuded slopes just below the edge of the ancient land surface.

As reported previously (1950), the artefacts were mainly collected from the surface or the subsurface covered with a deposit of dark humic clayey soil interspersed with pieces of shale and phyllite, rolled quartzite and a mixture of pebbles and gravels. The relative dating of the site is difficult in view of the absence of stratified deposits. Typologically however,

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<sup>1</sup> Proc. Ind. Sc. Congress, 1941.

the site is interesting, having yielded a variety of celt types and techniques, chisels, hammerstones, pounders, ringstones, discs, polishing stones etc., besides potsherds and a few microliths. Celts however constitute the predominating tool family and include characteristic neolithic types and techniques found elsewhere in eastern and southern India. It is interesting to observe that the Singhbhum specimens resemble certain celt types found in Hoabinhian, Bacsonian and Somrong Sen neolithic complexes of Indo-China. Evidence of agriculture and animal domestication is however still lacking. No trace of iron or copper objects has been found in the site. The celts are generally made of epidiorite which occurs in adjacent places. A detailed typology of the celts has already been published<sup>2</sup>. A review of the same in the light of further data obtained and a typological correlation with the Indo-Chinese neolithic complexes is attempted in this paper.

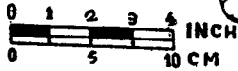
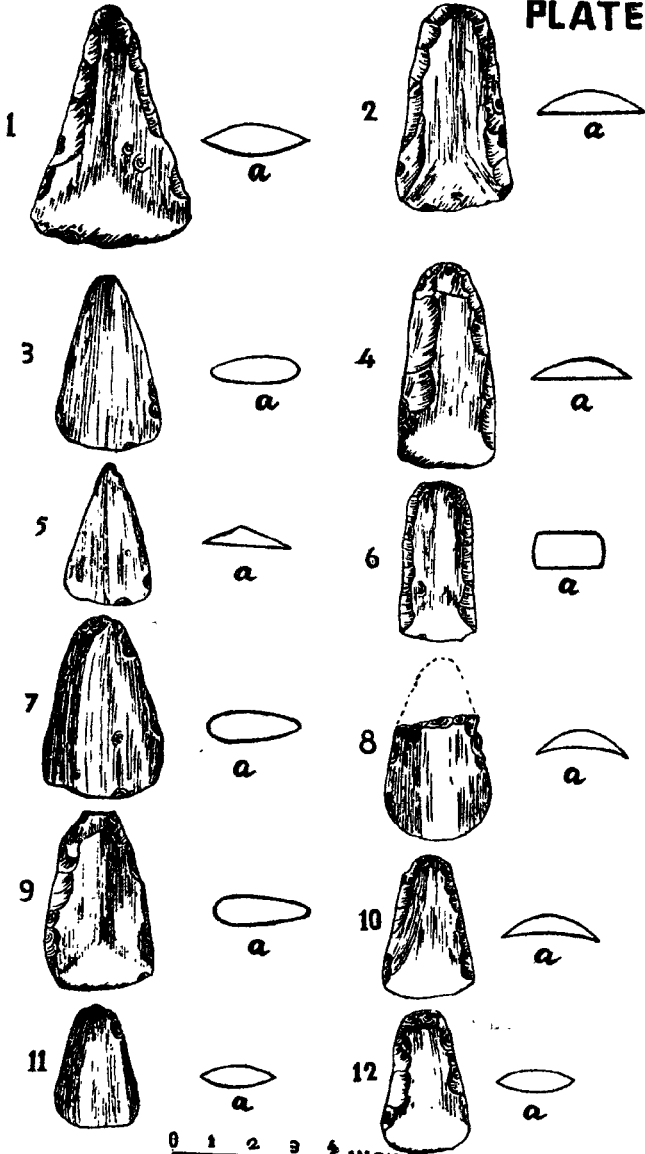
A detailed study of the celts shows that three main techniques were involved in their manufacture. These are (i) chipping and pecking, (ii) grinding and (iii) polishing. Specimens range from completely chipped to completely polished ones. At times all the three techniques are observed on particular specimens. A few specimens show the ground surface superimposed by polished surface revealing that the surface must have been prepared by grinding before the final polish was rendered. It may be noted that the polishing technique is a characteristic neolithic criterion. That the smoothing technique was known in earlier period also is shown by the presence of polish on the earliest types. The difference between the earlier and the later types is marked by the area covered by polishing. The earlier types have only their cutting edges polished. The area covered by polish generally increases as the comparatively evolved types appear. Bevelling technique is employed in the preparation of the cutting edge in the more evolved types.

When we review our total collection of celts, we find that the characteristic external *forms* of the celt in Singhbhum are trapezoidal, oval or ovoid, triangular or subtriangular and

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<sup>2</sup> *Man in India*, vols. 30 (1950) and 35 (1954), pts. I & IV respectively.

PLATE I



ractangular. Of these, the trapezoidal (Figs. 2, 4, 10, 12, 16) is the most common form, having a great range in size varying from big, thick and heavy specimens to slender and smaller types. Next in frequency, come the triangular and subtriangular forms of celt (Figs. 1, 3, 5) having a similar range in size as the trapezoidal. The oval or ovoid forms (Figs. 11, 19, 20) account for a very small number. They are mostly crude and made by chipping with very little polishing around the cutting edge. The rectangular celts (Fig. 6) are also very rare, having a small size and are either polished or ground. The cutting edge of this form is usually straight.

The medial cross-sections of the celt reveal six main forms. These are : (i) biconvex or ellipsoidal (Figs. 3a, 7a, 9a, 13a), (ii) broad oval (Figs. 15a, 16a, 17a, 19a), (iii) flat lenticular (Figs. 1a, 11a, 12a), (iv) triangular, (Fig. 5a), (v) plano-convex (Figs. 2a, 4a, 8a, 10a, 20a) and (vi) rectangular (Figs. 14a, 18a, 6a). The first three forms of cross-section are quite common in Singhbhum. The triangular, plano-convex and rectangular cross-sections occur rarely. Generally speaking, celts having trapezoidal, oval/ovoid and triangular/sub-triangular forms show biconvex or ellipsoidal, oval, lenticular, triangular or sub-triangular cross-sections. The rectangular form of celts generally shows a rectangular cross-section. Certain trapezoidal forms whose sides are roughly squared also show a rectangular medial section (Figs. 14a, 18a).

Certain evolved specimens show bevelling technique employed on the cutting edge. In some specimens the cutting edge generally on the dorsal surface is bevelled and forms an acute angle with the ventral surface. In others, bevelling is done on the cutting edge on both the dorsal and ventral surfaces. The angle at the cutting edge varies according to the thickness of the tool.

On the basis of technique, form and cross-section, the Singhbhum types fall broadly into two groups as follows :—

- A. Chipped and pecked ; smoothed or polished round the cutting edge only. Chipping on both the surfaces and on the margins. Forms : Trapezoidal, oval/ovoid, triangular/sub-triangular. Medial cross-sections :

PLATE II



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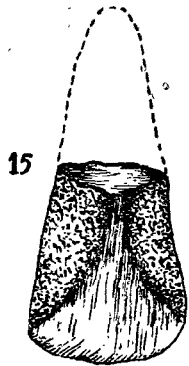
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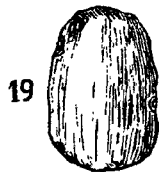
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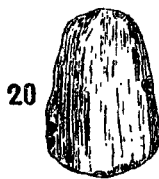
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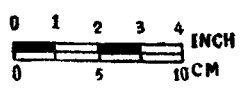
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biconvex or elliptical, oval, lenticular, plano-convex and triangular.

- B. Smoothed or highly polished over the larger part of the tool surface. Forms : trapezoidal, triangular and rectangular. Medial cross-section is rectangular.

Group A may further be subdivided into : (i) forms having biconvex, elliptical, oval or lenticular cross-sections, (ii) forms having plano-convex and triangular cross-sections.

Group B may further be subdivided into (i) Trapezoidal, (ii) Triangular and (iii) Rectangular forms.

Worman<sup>a</sup> has recognised two main techniques of celt-making in India : Technique 1 involves chipping and smoothing with an intermediate pecking step. The two surfaces are coarsely chipped and laterally merge. Smoothing is usually round the cutting edge only. The resulting transverse sections of such tools are ovoid, lenticular, trapezoidal or triangular. Technique 2 involves careful chipping and polishing. Polishing covers more than half the surface. The sides as well as the upper and lower surfaces are chipped so that the celt is flat-faced and with perpendicular sides. The transverse section of tools made by this technique is rectangular. In some cases such tools having rectangular sections are made by chipping technique only.

A classification of celts and axes based on technique, form and cross-section into three groups, each group comprising 4 basic types has been proposed by Worman. Group I comprises four celt types (types 1 to 4) made by technique 1 : oval, elongated, triangular and rectangular forms. According to Worman, the celts of this group are the oldest. Group II comprises four celt types (types 5—8) made by both the techniques and show forms ranging from trapezoidal, triangular to rectangular with circular, oval or rectangular cross-sections. The shouldered adze falls in this group. These types are intermediate in date.

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<sup>a</sup>E. C. Worman, Jr., 'The Neolithic problem in the prehistory of India', *Jour Wash. Acad. of Sc.* Vol. 39, No. 6, 1949.

Group III comprises four celt types (types 9—12) made by technique 2 having rectangular transverse sections and trapezoidal, triangular and rectangular forms. These types according to Worman are latest in date.

Worman's celt types 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 10 have been recognized in our Singhbhum collection. His type 1, an oval type, is absent in our specimens. But a broad oval or ovate type occurs in this region (Fig. 19). Worman's types 2 and 3, elongated trapezoidal and triangular forms, widely distributed in east, central and south India, are very common in Singhbhum (Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 12). His type 4 (with high trapezoidal section) is not represented in our collection. Type 5 distinguished by its large size (20—25 cm) and thick transverse section is either absent or rare in Singhbhum. A somewhat large (about 20 cm long) and heavy type approaching Worman's type 5, ground all over and smoothed round the cutting edge and having a broad oval cross-section has been found here (Fig. 13). This type however is rare. Celt type 6 of Worman, tiny in size and trapezoidal in form is represented in Singhbhum but is rare. It is almost completely smoothed and has a rectangular cross-section (Fig. 14). A trapezoidal form with roughly rectangular cross-section somewhat resembling Worman's type 9 in form and cross-section occurs in Singhbhum (Fig. 18). This type is polished over a larger part of the surface. Type 7, a tiny triangular form, is also rare in Singhbhum (Fig. 5). Type 8, the shouldered adze, is not represented in our collection so far but it is reported from nearby regions of Dhalbhum, Manbhum and Mayurbhanj as well as from Midnapur in West Bengal. The distribution of this type is confined almost wholly to eastern India including Assam and extends further to south-east Asia. As mentioned earlier, Worman's type 9, a trapezoidal form with roughly rectangular section, occurs in Singhbhum (Fig. 18) but against very large size alluded to it by Worman, it is somewhat smaller though heavy. Type 10, rectangular both in form and transverse section, also occurs in Singhbhum (Fig. 6) but not commonly. Its sides are squared and parallel and show either careful chipping or grinding technique. Worman's last two types 11 and 12 are not represented in our area at all. Thus

only two types (types 9 and 10) of Worman's latest and most evolved group are represented in Singhbhum.

Thus excepting types 1,4,8,11 and 12, the rest of Worman's celt types viz., 2,3, 5,6,7,9 and 10 occur in Singhbhum. In our scheme of classification, Worman's types 2,3 and 5 would fall in Group A while the types 6,7,9 and 10 would fall in Group B.

In Indo-China, in Hoabinh and Bacson in Tonkin province and at Somrong Sen in Cambodge, neolithic celts and other artefacts occur in clear stratigraphical contexts. Typologically, the Singhbhum data compare well with the Indo-Chinese finds. In form, technique and cross-section, and in many specimens even in the rock-material, a considerable number of the Indian and Indo-Chinese celt types are so strikingly similar that a cultural relationship may be envisaged. Briefly the stratigraphic sequence in excavated sites in Indo-China is as follows (after Worman) :—

	Late Bacsonian.....Somrong Sen		
	(Ind. Celt types	(Ind. celt types	
	2,6,8,9)	4,6,8,9,11)...	L. Neolithic
Late Hoabinhian	Mid-Bacsonian		
	(Ind. Celt types 1,2,3,6)	.....	M. Neolithic
Mid-Hoabinhian	Early Bacsonian	.....	E. Neolithic
(Ind. celt types 1,2)	(Ind. Celt type 1)		
Early Hoabinhian	.....	.....	Mesolithic.

It may be mentioned that Indian celt types 5, 7, 10 and 12 are not precisely reported from Indo-China. We have stated that Worman's types 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 occur in Singhbhum (Chakradharpur). If we compare the respective Singhbhum types with the corresponding types in Indo-China occurring in a stratigraphic sequence, we observe that the types 2, 3 and 6 occur in the Mid-Bacsonian phase and the type 9 occurs in late Bacsonian and Somrong Sen phases. If the above correlation (see Table) is correct, and if the Early, Middle and Late Bacsonian-Somrong Sen phases be equated as Early, Middle and Late "Neolithic", then typologically the Singhbhum finds would be dated from within the Middle to Late "Neolithic" times. In the Late Bacsonian, as in Singhbhum, ringstones and hand-made pottery in some quantity are found; in Somrong Sen,

besides celt types 4, 6, 8, 9 and 11, hand-made pottery, ringstones, chisels, pounders, polishing stones, hammerstones etc., are found. In Singhbhum (at Chakradharpur), besides the more primitive and simple types of celts (e.g. types 2 and 3), axes with more regular shape and polished almost all over, rectangular celts with squared sides (having rectangular cross-sections), short axes, chisels, screw-driver types, ringstones, pounders, polishing stones etc., and a considerable quantity of plain hand-made pottery are found. It may be mentioned here that a similar assemblage is also found in Manbhum.<sup>4</sup> The Singhbhum artefactual data may thus be typologically correlatable with the Late Neolithic Somrong Sen and Late Bacsonian Culture phases of Indo-China.

While discussing the various types and techniques, Worman made no mention of the bevelling technique employed in the preparation of the cutting edges of certain axe and adze types, as found, for example, in Singhbhum, Manbhum and Mayurbhanj. It is of interest to note that with the emergence of the more evolved types of celts, bevelling of the cutting edge becomes more prominent. In Singhbhum, certain celt types are characterized by highly bevelled and polished cutting edges.

Worman's grouping of types 1 to 4 (Group I) as typologically the *earliest*, types 5 to 8 (Group II) as *intermediate* and types 9 to 12 (Group III) as the *latest* in date calls for some revision. For example, his type 4 which occurs in rectangular adze form should better fit in with either Group II or III, as typologically it is somewhat evolved. This type, it may be pointed out, occurs in the latest neolithic phase, Somrong Sen, in Indo-China. Again, Worman's type 8 (placed in Group II), the shouldered adze, which is a late and evolved type should go with his Group III (latest). This would also fit in with its probable correlation with the Late Neolithic of Indo-China where it occurs in Somrong Sen and Late Bacsonian phases. It is interesting to note that this type is restricted to eastern India having so far been reported from Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa,

Thus regrouped as above, Worman's classification and probable correlation with Indo-China would stand as follows :—

Group III (Late) ... ..	Types 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.	L. Bacsonian and Somrong Sen
Group II (Intermediate) Types 5, 6, 7	...	M. Bacsonian
Group I (Early) ...	Types 1, 2, 3	... E. Bacsonian

Thus, as some Indian celt types have been recognized in distinct stratigraphical contexts in Indo-China, a probable correlative dating of the Indian finds can be envisaged. Thus, types 1, 2 and 3 would be dated as Early Neolithic, type 6 as intermediate or Middle Neolithic and types 4, 8, 9 and 11 as Late Neolithic. This dating however would be tentative, till it is substantiated by further reports on excavated sites from Indo-China. The so-called neolithic sites of India have not yielded definite evidence of agriculture and domestication of animals, although polishing technique and pottery have been found. Thus when data relating to the two primary traits are lacking, we cannot yet say, on the basis of artefacts only, that true neolithic status is attained by the sites in question.

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\* G. S. Ray, 'Implements of Neolithic type from Bongara-Bhangat in Manbhum'. *Man in India*, Vol. 34, 1956.

# VARIANT DEFINITIONS AS A SOURCE OF ORAL MYTH

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*(Received on 17th March, 1958)*

**R**ECENTLY I had the novel experience of hearing both an oral myth and the process whereby it came into being. Usually we hear the myth and then speculate on the causes thereof, perhaps falling back on the theories of our predecessors who themselves were rarely in contact with the process of myth-making. The coincidence whereby I happened to grasp both the myth and the factors producing it, deserve space\* in this journal, simply because the field worker rarely observes both the result and its causes. The analysis of the fortuitous occurrence of all the factors necessary to comprehend what happened suggests that the same process may have produced other myths. Let us see.

The myth is as follows :

Many years ago a sahib, an Englishman lived somewhere around here in a big bungalow. He was an influential man, and had power. He loved our India and before his demise, he said, 'Don't take me back to England; bury me in yonder meadow.' So, they put him in the ground and erected this cement grave cap. He still stayed in this place, refusing to leave. But in time people began to forget him. So one day he came upon one of our pandas, who went into ecstasy. The spirit of the Englishman began to speak through the functionary, and to say, 'Why are you people forgetting me?' But nobody could understand what the the spirit was saying, because his language was, naturally, English. Here was a panda, an illiterate medium whose mother tongue is Hindi, speaking English! Along came a clerk from the post-office and translated to the people; that is how they knew what was being said. 'Why do you people

forget me ? Unless you mend your ways I will trouble you,' the spirit shouted. The people said, 'Oh Sahib, what shall we offer at your grave ?' The Englishman's ghost said through the medium, 'Bring me what I like to eat, in other words, eggs.' So somebody ran for eggs. 'Bring me also a loaf of bread.' Another went after leavened bread. 'Bring me a fork, a knife and a spoon.' Others went to an Anglo-Indian's house to borrow the utensils. So the people offered these things and the ghost was satisfied. He did not trouble the people thereafter. When the medium came out of his ecstasy, he did not know of his having spoken English. This shows that a medium is no hoax, and that the dead do speak to us through such a person.

The process whereby this myth was produced operated between two different definitions of the spirit and of the religious rites at this sacred platform. Neither definition of the situation clashed with or contacted the other definition, but each existed in different brains, and resulted in variant interpretations of the same factors and rituals. The only way to reconcile the opposite definitions of what transpired was to assume supernaturalism, and the myth is the effort of the extremities to which their definitions had forced them. This will become plain and understandable by matter-of-fact statement of our field work experience.

## I

### *The First Definition of the Situation*

Early in the afternoon we found a Kurmi (cultivator) and a Kachhi (vegetable-grower) working in the field, breaking lumps of dirt, and we managed to develop a free and easy, enjoyable conversation with them. I worked the talk around to the two white objects (platforms about six by six by three feet, covered with whitewash) standing some hundred yards away. The Kurmi said that the northern-most was the grave of Angrez Baba (an Englishman's ghost). The other platform, he said, was the grave of a Gwal (actually Gwala, but in this dialect the

final a is dropped), or shepherd to cattle and buffaloes giving milk. We strolled over to the supposed graves.

Question. Who was this person buried here ?

Answer. He was an Englishman.

Q. What were his name and station ?

A. We don't know all that, but he must have been a great man because the English ruled our country then, and all Englishmen were great.

Q. Do you people worship an Englishman's ghost ?

A. Yes, of course. He is powerful, and might harm us.

Q. When do you worship him ?

A. Once a year at the Diwali festival.

Q. In what manner ?

A. We offer coco-nut and eggs.

Q. Coco-nut is customary ; but why the eggs ?

A. Because Englishmen eat eggs, and his spirit wants eggs.

Q. What else ?

A. *Dabal roti* (leavened bread). You know that there are still a few bakeries left where you can buy the kind of bread that Englishmen eat. Also, we offer a fork, because English people don't eat with their hands, and the spirit needs a fork.

Q. What about meat ? Englishmen eat meat, don't they ?

A. No, we can't offer that because we are vegetarians, at least our caste is.

Q. Is there a panda ( a word used to indicate an ecstatic who contact the dead by becoming a medium through which the ghost may speak ) ?

A. Yes. M —, a Barou (fisherman). He gets *bhau* (ecstasy) on Diwali Day.

Q. Do you mean to tell me that the ghost of the Englishman comes on him ?

A. Yes ; why not ? When the panda is seized, he speaks English.

Q. Is this M — able to read or write ?

A. No. He has memorized some verses from our scriptures, simply by hearing them ; but literate you cannot call him.



Q. What is his work ?

A. He is a shepherd who takes a herd of cows out to graze daily.

Q. Who comes here to see ecstasy ?

A. About 60 to 70 shepherds. Also, a large number of children from the surrounding neighborhood come to see, and sometimes other adults of any caste may come.

Q. How long does this seizure, this ecstasy last ?

A. About an hour.

Q. What does the Englishman's ghost say through the panda's mouth ?

A. The ghost says, 'Give me eggs, *dabal roti* and a fork, and such like, and I shall be satisfied, without troubling you. I will let you alone in peace.' That is all that the ghost says.

Q: Kurmi, are you a native of this place ? Are you a member of this brauderie (caste community in the 'know' of this place) ?

A: No ; I came from Jhansi (several hundreds of miles north of Jabalpur), about two years back, and am just a field hand. The people connected to this grave and who worship here are Ahirs (shepherds) and Barous (fishermen), and not Kurmis like me. Nevertheless, whatever I have heard with my ears and seen with my own eyes, that I have told you.

At this juncture, I turned to my partner and said in English (which neither the Kurmi nor Kachhi understood), 'This is a simple myth and it exists in its own right. As a matter of fact, it is a useful addition to our collection and we will record it. But, just as an aside. What do you suppose, is the source of this myth ? This Kurmi is foreigner to these parts. His co-labourer, the Kachhi, is from Rewa state, so neither are natives, and both are rather ignorant of the traditions of the indigenous population, unless very unusual men. Do you think, then, that the Kurmi is inventing this tale and 'giving us the go around ?'

We talked of this possibility, but both were convinced of the absolute sincerity and naivete of the Kurmi.

Q : Who told you that this is an Englishman's grave ?

A : Some respected members of the caste panchayat (chief governing committee) told me ; they ought to know.

Then I said to my partner. 'Notice one trait of the Kurmi. He sometimes does not hear us accurately, and he gives absurd replies without perplexity. Then we have to repeat our question so that he understands it rightly. He has the habit of not trying to find out precisely what is told to him. He does bother to verify what he hears ; whatever he thinks he hears, whatever his ears tell him, that he accepts the first time, and ruminates on it. This absence of curiosity as to just what the other person intends to convey, this contentment with whatever his faculties report to his mind, must allow frequent mis-definitions of objects and situations to arise. This want of accuracy creates lacunae, or gaps in meanings. But this trait is not characteristic only of this Kurmi ; it is a common trait with which we have to reckon in myth formation, in all parts of the world.'

When two or more differing definitions of the same phenomenon exist in the minds of several individuals or groups, variant interpretations based on those definitions arise. I mean to say, A with his definition cannot comprehend what B with his differing definition is doing ; therefore, A thinks B is performing the extraordinary or miraculous because he cannot account for B's actions in terms of A's definitions. B, moreover, is innocent of what is transpiring in the definitive activity of A, and proceeds unconscious of the interpretation to which he is giving rise. Thus, the supernatural explanation rushes into the gap created between the two differing definitions of the same phenomenon and their resulting variations in interpretation. The myth represents the attempt to express coherently the mystification, and in terms fitting into whatever categories normal life seem to supply for such wonderment.

## II

### *The Second Definition of the Situation*

At this juncture, by an extraordinary coincidence, M—the ecstatic functionary, was seen to be walking along the road

about two hundred yards away. He could not have heard our conversation, or scarcely have recognized his friends, the Kurmi and the Kachhi. By relaying shouts we were able to hail him, when he came over to us. I had seen him somewhere in this locale, and he had seen me coming and going; both of us had made up our minds to appreciate each other. This M— is a middle-aged, good-natured fellow with a moustache and lacking several teeth, besides being short in stature. His speech is halting, complicating the inevitable obscurity in pronunciation due to the absence of front teeth. His nervous responses contain hesitations and blocks, which may be significant for his ecstatic behavior when acting as a medium. He was an authority on the sacred place, having been born in the local community, and serving as its religious functionary.

Q.. Whose grave is this ?

A. It is not a grave ; it is a *chabutra* ( a kind of platform providing the foundation of many local shrines).

Q. But Kurmi says it is a grave.

A. That is wrong ; I ought to know, having lived here all my life.

Q. Well, then, who is the god here ?

A. This is X godling's place ( Note : We prefer to protect our informants with complete anonymity. The name, however, is of a popular local divinity).

Q. But Kurmi says this is an Englishman's ghost.

A. No, this is X godling's place. This rough stone is his idol.

He protects us and our cattle. We assemble here once a year, on Diwali. ( If the Kurmi had been born and raised locally, he would have known that local shepherds assemble on Diwali Day at the shrines of X godling. That is, an illiterate Jabalporite would think, 'Given an annual shepherd festival on Diwali Day, and there you must have X godling rather than an Englishman's ghost.' But this thought and the resulting doubt of his own definition, do not seem to have crossed the Kurmi's mind). Our ritual takes about an hour and a half. We offer coco-nuts, eggs, *dabal roti*, wine and whatever we like.

Q. What do you mean by *dabal roti* ?

A. Why, what we people prepare in our own houses, such as *atwae* (a kind of fried bread, cut in thick pieces, and unleavened ; because a slice of leavened bread is also thick, the Englishmen's bread was also called *dabal roti* ; but the two breads are utterly different, agreeing only in name. Thus, when the Kurmi heard that *dabal roti* was offered, he automatically thought of a slice of European bread, connecting it with the supposed Englishman mistakenly thought buried here).

Q. Does X godling speak through you ?

A. Yes, of course. I get *bhau* (ecstasy) on Diwali Day, only once a year.

But others become mediums for X godling any time they like. If you want to talk to X, I can arrange with these other mediums.

Q. How is it that they get *bhau* anytime ?

A. People are always losing things. Especially shepherds lose their animals and need divine help to find them. That is why this godling and this shrine are popular with the graziers.

Q. Why offer wine ?

A. Because our ancestors did. After offering a small portion to X, we drink the rest of it here. The same with eggs. Our ancestors offered chicken eggs, so we do ; I don't know why.

Q. Kurmi says you offer forks, knives and spoons.

A. Well, you can offer anything you like (a deft avoidance of denying what the Kurmi had said, with the Kurmi standing there and listening).

Q. Do you pandas charge money for speaking what X wants to be said ?

A. No, never ; none of us charge a single pie for that. We don't know, as a matter of fact, whether we have spoken anything or not, being unconscious. We only ask beforehand for the things required for *bhau*, such as *pan* leaves, betel nuts, flowers, *ghi*, and so forth. But if X godling tells through us where to find the cow, the shepherd first goes

there and fetches the animal ; then he may come and give us a present.

Q. What language do you speak here when under ecstasy ?

A. How would I know ? Did I not tell you that I am then unconscious ?

Q. Do you know any English ?

A. None. Look here, my mud house is over there in plain sight. How would I know English ?

### III

#### *Analysis*

I begin by repeating a working assumption : We do not arrive at an understanding of the process whereby this myth came into being, unless we grant the honesty and sincerity of both informants. The moment we say that either of them is lying, the door is slammed shut against the possibility of our ever understanding what happened here. As a matter of fact, these people lie very seldom, in comparison to so-called 'advanced' persons.

Two definitions of the factors and situation have been given by two different informants, the first, a stranger, and the second, a native of this place. The first is a Kurmi, an outsider, and a layman ; the second is a Barou, an insider, in fact the religious leader himself.

The two definitions differ in the following important points :

1. AS TO THE SACRED LOCATION

Kurmi. It is a grave.

Barou. It is a shrine.

2. AS TO THE SUPERNATURAL BEING

Kurmi. An Englishman's ghost.

Barou. A popular, local divinity or lesser god.

3. AS TO THE ECSTATIC WORDS

Kurmi. The English language is spoken by the ghost.

Bystanders : Our panda speaks Hindi when in ecstasy.

## 4. AS TO THE PURPOSE OF THE OFFERING

Kurmi. Eggs to please the Englishman.

Barou. Eggs due to traditions of the forefathers (Note. Lower castes do offer eggs to their gods and goddesses in Jabalpur).

Kurmi. *Dabal roti* or a loaf of leavened bread because Englishmen eat such.

Barou. *Dabal roti*, Indian cookery, made by dropping chunks of unleavened dough into boiling fat.

Kurmi. Other foods and utensils pleasing to Englishmen.

Barou. Wine, coco-nuts, sweets, *pan* leaves, betels, flowers, clarified butter.....'Whatever you like; this god accepts anything respectable.'

## 5. AS TO WHAT IS MEDIATED THROUGH THE ECSTATIC

Kurmi. Give me what I as an Englishman require, and I will let you alone.

Barou. The god gives advice on getting out of trouble and for finding stray buffaloes.

Thus, each informant saw the same sacred structure or or *chabutra*, but defined it as the residence of a different supernatural person. Each informant saw much the same objects offered, but each of them interpreted those objects differently according to the preceding definition of the divinity supposed to be resident.

Each was present during the ecstasy, the Kurmi as an onlooker; the ecstatic as a medium. (Here I maintain from much other evidence too extensive to recount now, that some ecstasies are certainly in a state of unconsciousness during their seizure, so that by premise the two men would be in much the same position of not knowing what was said; that is, the Kurmi would not know it because much of what comes out of the mouths of ecstasies is not normal language, and the ecstatic himself would not know it because he would be unconscious. Rather, the Kurmi would be left to interpret what he heard in terms of the primary definition of the divinity or spirit of the Englishman; and the ecstatic would interpret

what was reported to him afterwards to have come out of his mouth by persons to whom he spoke.)

Further, it should be remembered that in Jabalpur the pattern requires the ecstatic to speak softly to the client. Client and ecstatic with the latter's assistance, 'go into a huddle,' forming a little circle, and talk in low tones. Therefore, the Kurmi might be seeing the seance but could not hear it. He would interpret what was being said, not knowing the words; or some other persons in the same misapprehension as himself would report to the Kurmi. The upshot would be that the Kurmi became established in his interpretation, and he would not (also according to custom) bother to check his opinion with anybody else, nor would he confer with the ecstatic.

The ecstatic, in turn, would not come to know the erroneous mental content of the Kurmi's brain, and so would not correct him. Even if he were to know it, he would not bother to correct the Kurmi, because discussion is not normal to local religion. The Kurmi would conclude, "The ecstatic is saying something; since the spirit is that of an Englishman, he must be speaking English, and saying thus and so about the eggs and the *dabal roti* people say is offered here. This is practically the same to the Kurmi as that the spirit was actually saying so and so.

Now as to the objects offered, it is necessary to realize that the ecstatic is also the priest, the very one who performs the rituals while yet conscious. That is, M— first conducts the rituals and thereafter goes into ecstasy. The Kurmi and the ecstatic (yet in his right mind) would see much the same objects, manipulated in the same ritual. I say 'much the same objects' because local laymen (including the Kurmi) prefer to sit idle and to talk, leaving particulars of the ritual to the functionary. The efficacy of the ritual is not enhanced by their giving close attention to it; the ritual 'works' due to its intrinsic power. The purpose of those objects, the reason for their having been chosen and offered, would rest on an interpretation based on the primary definition of the divinity. The Kurmi, being an outsider, would not participate in the ritual; he would carelessly observe it. It simply does not occur to a

local layman to ask, why do you do this? What is the *mutlab* (meaning) of the ritual? Especially if he be a stranger. Thus, the Kurmi is left with his own erroneous interpretation. As for the fork, knife and spoon supposed to have been offered, the Kurmi's occasional glances at the utensils of the functionary would be superficial enough to permit his seeing in the iron *chinta* (forceps) and brass spoons, those English utensils he had already conceived as necessary. But if this is not the source of these imaginary objects, then I do not know the source, and contend that any water-tight explanation of a myth which leaves out unknown factors also fails to comprehend the nature of the process of myth-making.

To proceed, the two men look at the same performance through different definitions and interpretations. Both view the performance with appreciation and faith; both are believers. This means that to the Kurmi, performance is defined and interpreted, but it is not comprehensible. He has no normal ideological structure into which he can fit the mental activity taking place in his mind. Yet, the experience is there, real, actual, unmistakable. This creates the emotion of awe. The Kurmi is in the realm of the marvellous, the miraculous. He does not reason himself to the position, 'This must be miraculous.' Rather, he is himself transported; he is with the Ineffable. The Englishman becomes a godling. The ritual is the correct answer to the godling's requirements. The messages from the Unseen are the supernatural evidences of the Englishman's spirit. The Kurmi's interpretation works itself out consistently, so that every act of the functionary, and every object in the ritual falls into a system agreeing with what is known of Englishmen in normal life. It is a system whose premises are not questioned, and whose logic is not even conceived. It is a system constituting the germ of a new theology, embedded in the emerging myth.

As for the ecstatic, he sees the Kurmi there, in the grip of the marvellous. The demeanor of the Kurmi re-enforces the ecstatic's own conviction of his mediumship. Thus, a circular reaction proceeds between the two, so that each re-enforces the other's faith and definition. The Kurmi helps to define the



ecstatic to himself as one capable of conversation with X godling (no matter that in the Kurmi's mind the Englishman and not X godling is the spirit). The ecstatic is re-enforced in his divine activity, nay, established in it. Indeed, his seance becomes a compulsion from the Kurmi,

But the Kurmi is not the only believer present. There are many, each with his own interpretation and definition, perhaps equally at variance, but all caught up in the incomprehensible. So the ecstatic feels the Kurmi's wonderment only for a moment, then that of another individual, then that of another. The conviction that he is indeed a privileged participator in the Divine becomes absolutely irresistible. He accordingly slides easily into seance.

The conclusion of the matter is that the Marvellous emerges from this extraordinary situation in which many minds look at the same procedure and objects with different definitions and interpretations, and none of them is aware of their differences.

The normal way for the Kurmi to express his wonder, is to tell of it in story form. He is not accustomed to abstraction, not habituated to statements of fact. The myth puts his experience into a connected story, the plain man's device for achieving coherence. A myth is a story of religious import, especially an account of the activities of supernatural beings.

This particular myth emerged in the process of confronting two different definitions of objects and situation, a situation in which the participators were not aware that they differed from each other, and in which each therefore unwittingly re-enforced the definitions and interpretations of the other party. These re-enforced interpretations were not able to account for the actions of the other persons. Now, when we cannot account for what the other person does because of our misunderstanding of what he thinks he himself is doing, we sometimes react by using our fists, at other times by using our sharp tongues, and at other times by snubbing him ; which course we take depends upon the nature of the misunderstood situation. The nature of the situation described

above was such as to develop a fourth alternative, namely, recourse to supernaturalism and myth-making. The myth of the Englishman's ghost emerged, to be told by the Kurmi and spread among all who heard him speak, and to be handed down the generations from father to son.

In closing, I claim only that this is how this particular myth came into existence.

# DERMATOGLYPHICS OF THE NAYADIS AND THE PANIYANS OF MADRAS

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## *Introduction*

THE dermatoglyphic data on the Nayadis and the Paniyans of South India were entrusted to the present writer by Dr. S. S. Sarkar in January, 1958. The Nayadi palm prints (males 23, females 29) were collected by Dr. A. Aiyappan during the year 1930-35 when he carried out his study of the social and physical Anthropology of the Nayadis of Malabar (Aiyappan, 1937) in the Palghat taluk.

The Paniyan palm prints from 18 males were also collected by Dr. Aiyappan in the neighbourhood of Manantody, Wynaad taluk, Malabar district, during the year 1937 in the course of his investigation of the Wynaad tribes.

As the finger prints were not taken individually and, therefore, not rolled impressions, their identifications could not always be correctly made and have been excluded from the study.

## *Main Line Formulae*

The frequency of the different main line formulæ in the two hands of two groups are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1

*Percentile occurrence of different main line formulae*

Serial No.	Palm formula	PANIAYN			NAYADIS					
		Male			Male			Female		
		Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total
1	7·5·5·2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3·45	1·72
2	7·5·5·3	22·22	—	11·11	8·70	—	3·35	—	8·45	1·72

Serial No.	Palm formula	PANIYAN			NAYADIS					
		Male			Male			Female		
		Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total
3	7·5·5	—	—	—	8·70	8·70	8·70	27·59	3·45	15·52
4	7·5·5	—	—	—	—	8·70	4·85	—	3·45	1·72
5	7·0·5·4	5·55	—	2·78	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	7·x·5·3	5·55	—	2·78	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	7·7·5·3	5·55	—	2·78	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	7·7·5·4	—	—	—	4·35	4·35	4·35	—	—	—
9	7·9·5·4	—	5·56	2·78	—	—	—	—	3·45	1·73
10	7·9·5·5	—	—	—	4·43	—	2·17	—	3·45	1·73
11	9·7·5·2	—	—	—	4·34	—	2·17	—	—	—
12	9·7·5·3	5·55	5·55	5·55	8·70	—	4·35	13·79	3·45	8·62
13	9·7·5·4	—	—	—	—	4·35	2·17	10·34	3·45	6·89
14	9·7·5·5	—	—	—	4·34	8·70	6·53	—	17·24	8·62
15	9·9·5·3	5·56	—	2·78	4·34	—	2·17	—	—	—
16	9·9·5·4	5·56	5·55	5·55	4·34	—	2·17	—	—	—
17	9·9·5·5	—	5·56	2·78	4·35	—	2·17	—	3·45	1·73
18	9·0·5·3	—	—	—	4·35	—	2·17	—	—	—
19	9·x·3·5	—	—	—	4·35	—	2·17	—	—	—
20	9·x·6·4	—	—	—	—	—	—	10·34	—	5·17
21	9·x·5·5	—	—	—	—	4·34	2·17	—	3·45	1·73
22	9·0·5·5	5·56	—	2·78	—	—	—	—	—	—
23	9·x·7·5	—	—	—	8·70	—	4·35	—	—	—
24	11·9·7·2	—	—	—	4·35	—	2·17	—	—	—
25	11·9·7·3	—	—	—	—	—	—	3·45	—	1·73
26	11·9·7·4	5·56	5·56	5·56	—	4·34	2·17	6·90	3·44	5·17
27	11·9·7·5	16·67	66·67	41·67	4·35	56·52	30·45	18·79	34·48	24·13
28	11·x·7·3	5·56	—	2·78	—	—	—	—	—	—
29	11·x·7·4	5·56	—	2·78	8·70	—	4·35	6·90	—	3·45
30	11·x·7·5	—	—	—	—	—	—	6·90	3·44	5·17
31	11·0·5·5	—	5·55	2·77	—	—	—	—	—	—
32	11·0·7·5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6·90	3·45
33	11·7·7·4	—	—	—	4·35	—	2·17	—	—	—
34	11·7·7·5	5·56	—	2·77	4·35	—	2·17	—	—	—

The frequency of some of the important main line formulae is given in Table 2.

TABLE 2

*Percentile frequency of some of the important main line formulae*

	11'9'7—	11'x'7—	9'9'5—	9'7'5—	7'5'5—
Paniyan (Male)	47'72	5'56	11'11	5'56	11'11
Nayadi ..	84'78	4'34	6'50	15'22	17'39
Nayadi (Female)	31'03	8'62	1'73	24'14	20'69

The male Paniyans and both the sexes of the Nayadis show 11. 9. 7. as the predominant main line formula. The Paniyans possess it in 47.72% while the Nayadis show it in 34.78% in males and in 31.03% in females. The next frequency is seen in the formula 7.5.5-, which occurs in 11.11% in the Paniyan and in 17.39% in Nayadi males. Nayadi females show this formula in the third order of frequency (20.69%)-the second in order comes the formula 9.7.5-, in 24.14%. It occurs in 15.22% in Nayadi males and in 5.56% in Paniyans. The formula 9. 9. 5-, occurs in 11.11% in Paniyan, in 6.50% in Nayadi males and in 1.73% in Nayadi females. The formula 11.x.7- occurs in 5.56% in Paniyan males, in 4.34% in Nayadi males and in 8.62% in Nayadi females.

### Endings

TABLE 3

*Percentile frequency of the endings of four main lines (D, C, B and A)*

#### *Endings of Line D*

Endings.	PANIYAN			NAYADI					
	Male			Male			Female		
	Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total
7	38'89	5'56	22'22	26'09	21'74	23'91	27'59	92'69	24'14
9	22'22	16'67	19'44	47'83	17'39	32'61	34'48	31'03	32'76
11	38'89	77'77	58'34	28'08	60'87	43'48	37'93	48'28	43'10

*Endings of Line C*

Endings.	PANIYAN			NAYADI					
	Male			Male			Female		
	Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total	Lt.	Rt.	Total
5"	22'22	—	11'11	17'39	17'39	17'39	27'58	13'78	20'68
7	16'67	5'56	11'11	30'43	17'39	23'91	24'14	24'14	24'14
9	33'33	88'88	61'12	26'09	60'87	43'49	24'14	48'28	36'21
x	11'11	5'56	8'33	21'74	4'35	13'04	24'14	6'90	15'52
0	16'67	—	8'33	4'35	—	2'17	—	6'90	3'45

*Endings of Line B*

5'	44'44	11'11	27'78	20'69	6'90	13'79	13'04	4'35	8'70
5"	16'67	16'67	16'67	41'38	44'83	43'10	52'17	34'78	43'48
7	38'39	72'22	55'55	37'93	44'28	43'10	34'78	60'87	47'82

*Endings of Line A*

2	—	—	—	8'70	—	4'35	—	3'45	1'72
3	30'00	5'56	27'78	30'44	—	15'22	17'24	6'90	12'07
4	22'22	16'67	19'44	30'43	21'75	26'09	62'07	13'79	37'93
5	27'78	77'77	52'78	30'43	78'25	54'34	20'69	75'86	84'28

Line D among the Paniyans ends in 11 in the highest percentage of 58·34% while in 7 in 22·22% and in 9 in 19·44%. In both the sexes of the Nayadis, Line D ends in 11 in the highest percentage—43·48% in males and 43·10% in females. The endings in 9 and 7 are almost equal in the two sexes; 32·61% and 23·91% in the males respectively and 32·76% and 24·14% in females respectively.

Line C among the Paniyans ends in 9 in 61·11% and in 7 and 5" in the equal percentage of 11·11. Both the absent (0) and the abortive (X) types occur in 8·33%. Among the Nayadi males, Line C ends in the highest percentage of 43·48% in 9; in 5" and 7 in 17·39% and 23·91% respectively. The absent and the abortive types occur in 2·17% and in 13·04% respectively. Among the Nayadi females the highest percentage (36·21%) of ending is in 9, followed by 24·14% in 7 and 20·69% in 5". It is absent in 3·45% and abortive in 15·52%

among the Nayadi females. Among the Paniyans, Line B ends in 7 in 55.55% in 5' in 27.78% and in 5'' in 16.67% while the respective percentages for the Nayadi males are 43.10, 13.79 and 43.10, and the same for females—47.82, 43.48 and 8.70.

Line A ends in 5' in 52.78%, in 4 in 19.44% and in 3 in 27.78% among the Paniyans while the Nayadi males show the above endings in 54.34%, 26.07% and 15.22% respectively. It also ends in 2 in 4.35% among the Nayadis a character, not found among the Paniyan males. The Nayadi females show the endings in 5' in 48.28%, in 4 in 37.93%, in 3 in 12.07% and in 2 in 1.72%.

### *Hypothenar Patterns*

TABLE 4

*Percentile occurrence of Hypothenar patterns*

Patterns	Paniyan male	Nayadi male	Nayadi female
O	30 (83.34)	30 (65.22)	25 (87.93)
V/L <sup>u</sup>	1 ( 2.78)	2 ( 4.35)	—
L <sup>r</sup>	3 ( 8.32)	2 ( 4.35)	—
L <sup>r</sup> /A <sup>c</sup>	1 ( 2.78)	—	—
W/S	1 ( 1.78)	—	—
L <sup>u</sup>	—	7 (15.22)	4 ( 6.90)
A <sup>u</sup>	—	1 ( 2.17)	1 ( 1.72)
A <sup>c</sup>	—	1 ( 2.17)	1 ( 3.45)
A <sup>u</sup> /A <sup>c</sup>	—	1 ( 2.17)	—
L <sup>u</sup> /A <sup>c</sup>	—	2 ( 4.35)	—

The percentage of three main patterns extracted from Table 4 is given below.

Whorls	2.78	—	—
Loops	8.33	19.57	6.90
Arches	2.78	10.86	5.18
True patterns	13.79	30.43	12.08
Vestiges	2.78	4.35	—

Open field (O) is found in 83.34% the Paniyan, in 65.22% among the Nayadi males and in 87.93% among the Nayadi

females. The hypothelar patterns are met with more in the Nayadi males than the females and the Paniyan males. Whorls occur in 2.78% in the Paniyans—a character which is not found in either sexes of the Nayadis. Loops occur more in Nayadi males (19.57%) than females (6.90%) and Paniyan males (8.33%). The same is also true of the arches; Nayadi males (10.86%), Nayadi females (5.18%) and Paniyans (2.78%).

True hypothelar patterns occur more in Nayadi males than the other two samples.

Vestiges are found in 2.78% in Paniyans and in 4.35% in Nayadi males. It is absent in Nayadi females.

### *Thenar and 1st Interdigital patterns*

TABLE 5

*Percentile occurrence of Thenar | I Interdigital patterns*

Patterns	Paniyan male	Nayadi male	Nayadi female
O	25 (69.43)	36 (78.26)	46 (79.31)
V	2 ( 5.56)	—	1 ( 1.72)
V/L <sup>u</sup>	5 (13.89)	—	—
L <sup>r</sup> /L <sup>r</sup>	2 ( 5.56)	—	2 ( 3.45)
V/L <sup>r</sup>	2 ( 5.56)	—	—
L <sup>r</sup>	—	4 ( 8.70)	5 ( 8.62)
A <sup>r</sup>	—	6 (13.04)	4 ( 6.90)

The percentage of three main patterns extracted from Table 5 is as follows :

Loops	5.56	8.70	12.07
Arches	—	13.04	6.90
Vestiges	5.56	—	1.72
Vestiges and Loops combined	19.45	—	—

Open field is present in 69.43% in Paniyans and in 78.26% and 79.31% in Nayadi males and females respectively.



Loops are present in 5.56% in Paniyan males and in 8.70% and 12.07% in the Nayadi males and females respectively. True arches are absent in the Paniyan. They occur in a higher frequency in Nayadi males (13.04%) than females (6.90%).

Vestiges occur in 5.56% in Paniyans. They are absent in Nayadi males but occur in 1.72% in females. The Paniyans are also characterized by the presence of 19.45% of vestiges and loops combined.

The ratio between the hypothenar and thenar works upto 2.48 in the Paniyan, to 1.49 in Nayadi males and to 0.63% in Nayadi females.

### The Interdigitals

TABLE 6

*Percentile occurrence of three Interdigital areas (I, III and IV).*

Combinations	Paniyan male	Nayadi male	Nayadi female
0-0-I,	13 (36.11)	15 (32.61)	22 (37.93)
0-L-0	7 (19.44)	15 (32.61)	17 (29.32)
0-0-0	3 ( 8.33)	7 (15.22)	12 (20.69)
0-L-L,	6 (16.67)	8 (17.39)	6 (10.34)
L-L-L	4 (11.11)	1 ( 2.17)	—
L-L-L	1 ( 2.78)	—	1 ( 1.72)
L-L-0	2 ( 5.56)	—	—

The main combination of the three interdigital areas (II, III and IV) is 0-0-L, which occurs almost in equal percentage in the two groups. It occurs in 36.11% in the Pan yan and in 32.61% and in 37.93% in the Nayadi males and females respectively.

The combination 0-L-0 occurs second in order in 19.44% in the Paniyan and in 32.61% and 29.32% in the Nayadi males and females respectively.

The combination L-0-L is absent in Nayadi males while L-L-L is absent in Nayadi females. L-L-O is seen in the Paniyan only.

*Axial Triradii*

TABLE 7

*Percentile frequency of Axial Triradii.*

Patterns	Paniyan male	Nayadi male	Nayadi female
<i>t</i>	28 (77.77)	26 (56.52)	30 (51.72)
<i>t'</i>	6 (16.67)	8 (17.39)	23 (39.66)
<i>tt''</i>	2 ( 5.56)	8 (17.39)	2 ( 3.45)
<i>tt''</i>	—	1 ( 2.17)	—
<i>t''</i>	—	2 ( 4.35)	3 ( 5.17)
<i>tt't''</i>	—	1 ( 2.17)	—

The main axial triradius is *t* in the two groups. It occurs in 77.77% in the Paniyan, in 56.52% in Nayadi males and in 51.72% in Nayadi females. The second highest in order is *t'*, which occurs in 16.67% in Paniyans and in 17.39% and 39.66% in the Nayadi males and females respectively. Nayadi males are also characterized by the presence of *tt''*, *t''* and *tt't''*, which are absent among the Paniyans.

*Summary*

The Paniyan finger prints have already been described by Sarkar (1954), who on the basis of their having more whorls than loops (W : L - 60 : 40) and other anthropometric characters has grouped the Paniyans under the Veddids or the Australoid racial stock.

Both the Nayadis (male and female) and the Paniyans are characterized by the presence of 11.9.7—in the highest percentage. It is found in 47.72% among the Paniyan and in 34.78% and in 31.03% in the two sexes of the Nayadis. Osmani Hill (1941) also found 11.9.7—in 2 out of 6 palms in his post-mortem study of the Veddids.

Line D shows similar endings in 7, 9 and 11 in both the tribes. There is a slight variation in the ending of line A. It ends in 3, 4 and 5 in the Paniyan while in 2, 3, 4 and 5 in

the two sexes of the Nayadis. Line C has been found to be absent in both ; Paniyans ( 8·33% ), Nayadi males (2·17%) and Nayadi females (3·45%).

The abortive type is seen more among the Nayadi males (13·04%) and females (15·52%) than the Paniyan males (1·33%).

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# SOCIAL GROUPINGS AMONG THE KHASIS OF ASSAM

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## *Introduction*

THE Khasis, who inhabit the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills district of Assam, are matrilineal. Like the Garos, they, are matrilocal in residence. Exclusive ownership over family property is claimed by the Khasi women and the youngest daughter (*Ka-Khadduh*) who lives permanently in the house of her mother, is the custodian of the family property and the holder of religion (*Ka bat ka-niam*)<sup>1</sup>.

This paper deals with the social groupings, namely, the clan, sub-clan and family, of the Khasis. The materials were collected in 1954 from Mawphlang, Cherapunji and Mamluh and Mawsmal villages farther south of the Chera State.

## *Discussion*

In the language of the Khasi, the prefix *Ka* is usually used before the name of a woman or any object belonging to a woman (or considered feminine). The use of *Ka* as a prefix before the name of each social group is suggested to have bearing on Khasi matriliney. *Kur* is not a very expressive and exact term for a clan. *Kakur*, which is supposed to have sprung from the woman (*long jaid na ka kynthet*)<sup>2</sup> is more exact. Similarly, *Ka-K'poh* and *Ka-iing* denote the sub-clan and family respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> Gurdon, P. R. T., *The Khasis*, London, 1914 p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., page 82.

The primal father and the mother of the members of every clan are respectively known as *U-Parad (U-Thawlang)* and *Ka-Meyrad (Ka-Lawbei)*.

There is a large number of clans among the Khasis and some of the clan names are those of animals and trees. *Shrieh* is monkey, *tham*, a crab, and *dingdoh*, a tree; yet they do not constitute totemic clan organization. The clan names are not even the names of the ancestress. The clans are not ancestral but rather were territorial in nature when the clansmen (*shi-Kur*) used to live in a place having a common land (*ri-kur*) and a clan ossuary (*mawbah*) where the bones of the dead clansmen were deposited.

Unlike the clans, the sub-clans (*ka-k'poh*) are ancestral. As for example, in case of the *Siem* clan of the Chera state, it is found that *Ka-Khiem* was the primal ancestress. Her daughter *Ka-Pet* had three daughters, namely, *Ka-Sngi*, *Ka-Lngen*, and *Ka-Kreh* each of whom is regarded as the *K'a-K' poh* (meaning womb) of their respective descendants who are *shi-K'poh* (the members of the same womb). And their names are the names of the three sub-clans of the *siem* clan.

The names of the sub-clans of some of the clans as collected from the elderly Khasi women are given below.

CLAN	SUB-CLAN
1. Siem	— sngi ; lngen ; kreh
2. Khongsit	— yin ; phai ; har ; jiram
3. Kharshiing	— iew ; mah ; saynglar ; iynean
4. Lyngdoh	— kaban ; summhir ; kamal
5. Nongrum	— tungan ; tungwi ; syngna ; buhai
6. Khongrymaï	— thania ; thani ; barhai ; lisi
7. Jaidkhar	— hazi ; haza ; tuli ; tula
8. Simpilian	— eli ; mayar ; josi ; emi

Family (*ka-iing*) among the Khasis is the socio-economic and religious unit. Due to matrilineal residence, the structure of the Khasi families assumes a different form. The constituent members are the grandmother, her daughters and their children. But the permanent residents are the youngest daughter (*ka-khadduh*), her husband and daughters. It takes an

extended form more often when the children of the deceased sisters of *Ka-khadduh* reside there. This extension is on the mother's side and is affiliated through the extension of mother-child relationship.

Additional members like widower brothers or widowed sisters make the Khasi family a composite one.

In a Khasi family father, mother and her brother are very important. Father who is regard as *Mynder* (stranger) or *Ushong kha* (begetter), has also the position of *Kynrad* (master) of the house (set-up by him). He is the executive head and the mother is the *dejure* owner of the household.

Modern conditions and spread of Christianity have greatly affected the Khasi society and changed the Khasi ways of life but have failed to alter the traditional mode of inheritance even among the Christian Khasis. Another important fact which is apparent in the Khasi families, is the change of the status of the mother's brother (*Uknii*) in his sister's house. His influence has greatly been diminished due to clash with *Ka-Khadduh* (heiress). He has almost lost his control over his sister's family. This has made the women exert their status to a danger point. Consequently, some amount of maladjustment in the relationship system, moral depravity and disintegration loom large in the family horizon.

Family is the core of Khasi social organization and the closeness of familial kin with the members of the sub-clan is due more to the fact that sub-clan owes its development to the family. A *Shi-K'poh* (member of sub-clan) is a secondary relative and can easily be approached for any help.

The functions of the above mentioned social groupings are as follows :

Clan (*Ka-Kur*)—It regulates marriage. It being a larger non-residential kin group contact between its members is infrequent. The amount of social participation needed on certain level to intensify the relationship among its members falls far short of. But nevertheless, there existed among the members

of a clan some ceremonial attachment developed out of the custom of depositing the bones of the clansmen in clan ossuary and renewing the relationship between the clansmen on the ceremonial occasion of *thepmawbah* when the bones were finally transferred from *mawshieng* (ossuary of a sub-clan) to *mawbah* (ossuary of a clan).

Social bond among the clansmen is due to the performance of common religious ceremonies (*phur*), worship of common deities and spirits of household (*Ksuidnia*), water (*puri*) and hills (*Ksuidlum*) and observance of mourning for three days for the death of clansmen with the cessation of outdoor work specially with implements.

Economic bond among them is due further to the possession of common land (*ri-kur*), which is divided into separate holdings held by families.

Sub-clan (*Ka-k'pon*)—Unlike the clan, sub-clan has nothing to do with the regulation of marriage. Its main functions are socio-religious. Mutual interest in the welfare of the members of sub-clan evinced in the observance of *aibam*\* in honour of the dead grandmother, profound sentiment grown out of the former practice of depositing the bones of the dead persons of the same sub-clan in *mawshieng* and the responsibility of bearing the expenses for *thepmawbah* bind the members together.

The observance of mourning on the death of a person of the same sub-clan for three days and the consequent

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\*Offering of food to the spirits of the dead ancestors.

cessation of transaction of money (*kheinsbai*) during the period, compulsory social participation in marriage, household worship, and funeral ritual, and the pride for the privilege in succession to *siem-ship* (chieftainship) hold together the inner structure of the society in fulfilling its function.

Family (*Ka-iing*)—The functions of family centre round the :

1. performance of basic religious rites,
2. management and inheritance of family property,
3. maintenance of social relations with the kin of *ka-k'poh* and *ka-kur*,
4. protection of familial kin.

From the above discussions it may be inferred that the social groupings of the Khasis function in different dimensions and make the individuals aware of their duties, and obligations towards each other. In the process of socialization and enculturation of the individual they learn that the individuals, the different social groups and the community at large are inseparable.

Even from infancy a boy is infused with the idea that family comes first in regard, sub-clan second, and clan third. The kin of the family are primary relatives, and those of the sub-clan and the clan are secondary and tertiary respectively. One bow and three arrows given by a father to his son in his naming ceremony (*jerkhun*) symbolise their relationships with the three social groups. With the first arrow man has to fight for *shi-iing* (members of the same family) and *shi-k'poh* (members of the same sub-clan), with the second for his *shi-kur* and with the third for the state.



## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

### MID-DIGITAL HAIR AND HEAD HAIR WHORL AMONG THE JUANGS OF ORISSA

Mid-digital hair was observed in 100 adult male Juangs and its distribution in the middle digit of the different fingers is given in the table below. Only 30 out of 100 individuals bore hair on their middle segments and the left hand showed more of it than the right hand. All fingers were examined under a hand lens.

Digit Combination	Left hand	Right hand	Both hands	%
III	3	2	5	2.5
IV	10	8	18	9.0
III-IV	10	10	20	10.0
III-IV-V	6	4	10	5.0
IV-V	1	1	2	1.0
	30	25	55	27.5
Absent	70	75	145	72.5

Hair whorls on the occiput of the head were examined in 116 adult males and the following types were found to occur :

	No.	%
Clockwise (+)	90	77.59
Anti-clockwise (-)	24	20.69
Clockwise, anti-clockwise (+ -)	2	1.72
	116	

6th March, 1958.  
Tribal Research Bureau,  
Orissa.

Ajit Kishore Ray

### BLOOD GROUPS OF THE RABHAS

The Rabhas constitute one of the important Plains Tribes of Assam. They are scattered throughout the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Garo Hills ; the main concentra-

tion being in southern Goalpara. Their total numerical strength is 88, 748 individuals (1951 Census).

In course of an anthropological investigation carried out among the Rabhas of south Goalpara during the winter months of 1955, blood samples of 100 individuals of each sex from each of three groups, Patis, Rangdanis, and Maitoris, were studied.

Blood was obtained by pricking the finger tips with the help of a pricking needle. Washed red blood corpuscles were tested in all the cases. Agglutination tests were done in the 'open slide method' with the test sera obtained from the Haffkine Institute, Bombay. During the process of reaction slides were kept in moist petri-dish chambers. A few individuals of known blood groups provided the necessary control of the sera.

The blood groups and their gene frequencies are given in the following table :

TABLE

	No.	O	A	B	AB	p	q	r	D/σ
Males									
1. Pati	100	25	39	27	9	'281	'202	'515	'06
2. Rangdani	100	24	24	39	13	'206	'307	'486	'01
3. Maitori	100	27	40	24	9	'287	'183	'528	'06

Chi<sup>2</sup> between 1 & 2 = 3'24 ; p between '30 and '50

" " 1 & 3 = 0'12 ; " " '98 " '99

" " 2 & 3 = 4'20 ; " " '20 " '30

Females

4. Pati	100	28	33	24	15	'283	'222	'493	'06
5. Rangdani	100	19	31	31	19	'290	'290	'420	'0
6. Maitori	100	30	28	34	8	'201	'240	'557	'02

Chi<sup>2</sup> between 4 & 5 = 1'32 ; p between '70 and '80

" " 4 & 6 = 5'35 ; " " '10 " '20

" " 5 & 6 = 3'60 ; " " '30 " '50

It will be obvious from the above figures that all the three Rabha groups are similar to one another in respect of the blood

group frequencies. As such the three Rabha groups may be lumped together for comparative purposes.

14 March, 1958.

Bhuban M. Das

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Gauhati.

## LETTERS

To

The Editor,  
Man in India.

Dear Sir,

With reference to Dr. S. S. Sarkar and Papia Bhattacharjee's article "The Tribal Population in West Bengal" (*Man in India*, Vol. 38, No. 1) the following may please be noted.

(1) At present the number of Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal is 41 and not 7. The list was published in *Gazette of India* of 29. 10. '56 and *Calcutta Gazette* of 26. 12. '56.

(2) The comment that migration of the Mru to West Bengal is the solitary instance of westward migration of tribes is not correct. Quite a good number of Garo have in recent years migrated to West Bengal. The Mech of North Bengal also claim to have come from Dimapur area of Assam. Migration of a number Hajong and Chakma from East Bengal has also been reported. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the Chakma mostly come from the Tipperah hill tract.

(3) It is very strange that the authors have been able to infer existence of a "very old veddid pocket" from a single photograph of a "Mro" woman and from the incidental mention of non-mongoloid character of the "Mro" in Mill's report.

(4) Many of the so-called anomalies in the Census Report of 1951 about sex ratio may perhaps be explained by the fact of seasonal migration of tribal labourers in the districts concerned. At least this is a possibility which should be looked into.

(5) The comment regarding the desirability of including the Lepcha and the Bhutia in the list of the Scheduled Tribes is wide off the mark. When a tribe adopts Christianity, they tend to leave their old culture behind. But when a people like the Lepcha and the Bhutia or Santal, accepts elements of Hinduism or Buddhism, quite often the general pattern of their culture remains unaltered. Then the old and the new tend to exist side by side. It is difficult under such circumstances to classify dynamic culture groups of this kind categorically. Perhaps it is wiser to still consider them as 'tribes' rather than as a Hindu 'caste' unless they have substantially left behind their ancestral culture. In any case, marginal cultures and peoples always offer a difficult problem.

18th March, '58.  
Calcutta.

Yours faithfully,  
B. K. Roy Burman

With reference to the points raised by Mr. B. K. Roy Burman regarding our paper, "The Tribal Population in West Bengal" (*Man in India*, 38, 1, 1958) we append herewith the following :

- (1) Our paper refers to the Census of 1951 alone.
- (2) The Garos or the Mech have not covered any long distance in their migration and perhaps the two kinds of movements are not strictly comparable with one another.
- (3) What 'appeared' to us is no more than a possibility. There are other published data besides those of Mills.
- (4) This still remains to be proved quantitatively.
- (5) We agree that the criticism has substance behind it.

On the whole, we would still like to ask the correspondent if any of the Mros of Chittagong Hill Tracts are to be found in West Bengal.

24. 3. '58.  
Calcutta,

S. S. Sarkar

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Kolami, A Dravidian Language :** By M. B. Emeneau. *University of California Publications in Linguistics, Vol. 12, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955. Pp. XVI+302. Price \$.3'00.*

**Toda, a Dravidian Language :** By M. B. Emeneau. *Transactions of the Philological Society. 1957.*

The publication of Caldwell's *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages* (1856) was undoubtedly an epoch-making event in the domain of Dravidian research. The next big event, which took place in the realm of Dravidian studies exactly 50 years later, was the publication of the *Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IV* (1906). LSI's contribution to Dravidian studies was considerably weakened due to the fact that a major portion of the Dravidian speaking area was excluded from the operations of this survey. The limitation of LSI in this direction will become obvious when pointed out that 9 books were devoted in it to the study of Indo-Aryan, and 3 books to Tibeto-Burman, while only one book of LSI, i.e., Vol. IV, was devoted to the study of two important speech-families, namely, Dravidian and Munda.

Nevertheless, much good was done to the study of Dravidian even by the publication of such scanty material to be found in LSI-IV. The principal contributions of LSI to Dravidian studies lay in the following :

- (i) It made a fresh attempt at a synthetic and analytic study of the Dravidian family of languages.
- (ii) It listed all the Dravidian speeches known at that time.
- (iii) It acted as an impetus for further work, particularly on the Dravidian tribal tongues on which the published data in LSI are too meagre and unsatisfactory.

In course of a quarter of a century after the publication of LSI-IV, there appeared important monographs on four principal non-literary Dravidian languages spoken by the primitive tribes. They are, Brahui (Bray, 1909, 1936), Gondi (Trench, 1919, 1921), Kurukh (Grignard, 1924) and Kui (Winfield, 1928, 1929). Mention

should also be made of the monographs written by Schulze (1911, 1913) and Fitzgerald (1913) on Kuvi, which is an important Dravidian speech, relate to Kui, not listed in LSI.

Our knowledge of Dravidian was considerably enhanced on account of these fresh descriptive materials. This will be borne out by the fact that the synthetic (or comparative) studies in Dravidian made by L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar in the thirties of the present century, and by Jules Bloch (1946) were more well-grounded than those made by scholars in the first and second decades of this century.

But even after the publication of those descriptive grammars and dictionaries, there remained a number of Dravidian tribal tongues listed in LSI, viz. Toda, Kota, Badaga, Kodagu, Kurumba, Kolami, Parji, etc., our knowledge on which at that time was quite superficial. All Dravidists were then feeling greatly handicapped on account of these gaps in Dravidian material. It was to remove these lacunae that Professor Emeneau spent 3 years in India from 1935 to 1938, doing field-work on a number of important tribes and speeches. We are grateful to him for this timely expedition, also to those institutions and scholars in U. S. A. (See *Kota Texts* I, Preface) whose assistance made this fruitful trip possible.

In our opinion, Emeneau's field-work in India from 1935 to 1938 is the third big event in the domain of Dravidian studies. With great skill and concentration he was able to collect valuable materials on many of the remaining little known Dravidian tongues listed in LSI. After his return to U.S.A., important articles and books on Dravidian linguistics and culture began to flow from his masterly pen. The two works under our present review are his latest major contributions on Dravidian. A detailed linguistic review will be out of place here. I will mention some of the outstanding features.

Emeneau's *Kolami* is remarkable because it presents a large mass of material on the different dialects of this important tribal speech, drawn from various sources, viz., the author's own field-notes, the published works of Setumadhab Rao and other previous writers, and Burrow-Bhattacharya's unpublished field-notes. The book, therefore, practically embodies all important linguistic informations on Kolami available upto the year of

publication of this book. The descriptive analysis of the language (Chs. II-VIII) has been executed with the thoroughness characteristic of the author. The etymological vocabulary is also quite full and shows his admirable command over the entire Dravidian material. In chapter X of the book the author has discussed the comparative position of Kolami, drawing different isoglosses inside Dravidian. The scope of discussion here, although somewhat limited, it marks a definite progress in the comparative and historical study of Dravidian linguistics.

Emeneau's *Toda, a Dravidian Language* though not exactly a book, deserves mention here, because it is a major contribution on, and covers various aspects of, a little-known important tribal speech of the Dravidian family. There were some earlier attempts to study and record the Toda language which is equally interesting and aberrant like the Toda people themselves. Even Rivers in his ethnographic classic, *The Todas* (1906), tried to incorporate as much linguistic material as possible. Rivers disclaims being a "philologist" but says, "I had had a fairly large experience in taking down unwritten languages phonetically". But this language is phonetically so difficult that all previous attempts failed to give a satisfactory account of it.

Sapir, therefore, laid this task upon Emeneau, a worthy pupil of his no doubt. And I have heard that Emeneau received special phonetic training from Sapir to be able to conquer this language.

The heart of every field-worker will be filled with admiration when he sees in this treatise how skilfully Emeneau has distinguished between the 3 't'-s and 'd'-s (besides the fricative 't'), 3 'r'-s, 4 'l'-s and 8 sibilants in Toda. The meticulous care with which he has studied the phonetic subtleties of this speech is indeed worthy of emulation. The remaining sections (§§ 23-66) have been mainly devoted to the comparative and historical studies of Dravidian (in some respects an extension of the Ch.X of his *Kolami*). In this connexion, his enunciation of a methodology to be followed in comparing two languages, his treatment of past tense in Dravidian, and his treatment of the phonetic developments in Toda with reference to Proto-Dravidian, deserve special notice.

The traditional languages still spoken by some primitive tribes in India are our cultural heritage. They provide important

link with the past. They bear important relics of our prehistoric culture. But their very existence has become precarious now-a-days which is shown by the recent rise in bi-lingualism and multi-lingualism among the tribal-population of this country. These little-known tribal speeches should therefore be recorded correctly and studied, before they completely disappear. Emeneau has earned our gratitude for the lead he has given in this direction. We would now request him to speed up the publication of other monographs on the Indian tribes and languages on which valuable materials are lying with him.

S. Bhattacharya

**Two Studies of Kinship in London**, *London School of Economics, Monograph on Social Anthropology No. 15, Edited by Raymond Firth, University of London, The Athlon Press, 1956, Price 13s. 6d. Net.*

In this monograph, kinship has been studied in South London Borough and to provide comparative material, kinship pattern has been investigated also among the Italian immigrants of London. The results of the field investigations have been recorded in the book. In the introductory essay Prof. Firth points out the importance of such studies. According to him an understanding of the kinship system in any society is essential as a clue to the workings of some of the most fundamental relationship, sexual, marital, economic, in that society. Surely the importance and utility of such studies cannot be too much stressed. The two studies side by side with the conclusions arrived at provide very interesting reading.

Some of the features of the kinship organization of the Italianates, such as shallow depth of generation, presence of pivotal kin, proportion between recognized and nominal kin are similar to those of the South Borough kinship organization but there are other features peculiar to the Italianates. Some of those are : the greater lateral range of recognition, the larger average number of recognized kin, the significant increase in the locally resident kin from first to second generation, a higher proportion of cousin marriages.

The gradual cultural assimilation of Italianates, it is pointed out, is far from being the sharp "Americanisation" reported for the Italians in the United States.

H. D. Ghose



**The Arab Block in the United Nations.** By Dr. G. Moussa Dib, *Djambatan Ltd. International Educational Publishing House, Amsterdam, 1956, Price not mentioned.*

In five chapters the author has dealt with the problems facing the Arab States vis-a-vis the great Powers and has shown how these problems have been tackled within the framework of the United Nations. The book will be read with profit by persons interested in the subject.

H. D. Ghose

**South East Asia—in perspective.** by John Kerry King, 1956, *Macmillan Company, New York, pp. XVIII + 306. Price—\$ 5.00.*

The book has little to say on Anthropology, nor does it deal with the South-East Asian people. It is a book which delineates United States' policy towards the newly emerged sovereign countries of South-East Asia. The book may be of use to those who are interested in the policy of the United States towards South-East Asia, which is nevertheless vulnerable.

D. P. Sinha

**Studies in Ancient Technology.** By R. J. Forbes, 1955, Vols. 2 & 3, *E. J. Brill, Lieden, Netherlands, pp. 215 + 268, Figures 84, tables XXXI.*

R. J. Forbes' book, *Studies in Ancient Technology* (in three volumes), is a valuable compilation of material on technology and hence an important document for all libraries and every institution interested in the subject. The volumes under review present a diachronic picture of the origin and development of Irrigations and Drainage, Power, Land transport and Road-Building, the Coming of the Camel, Cosmetics and Perfumes, Food, Alcoholic beverages and Vinegar, Crushing, Grinding and, Paints and Pigments. The author has taken much pains to collect material from varied sources and to organize the same. However, there are some blemishes, such as on page 138 (Vol. 2) where the author misses to give the age while making comparison between the postal service of Greece and Persia. Further on page 160 (Vol. 2) there is a mention about the streets of Indus cities without any reference to their age.

All the chapters in both the volumes are followed by comprehensive bibliography. Tables, figures and plates make the volumes more precise, illustrated and useful.

D. P. Sinha

**Paramahansa Sri Ramakrishna**, by R. R. Diwakar, *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty, Bombay. 1956, pp. 300. Price Rs. 2 only.*

Sri Ramakrishna was a great sage and savant. He appeared in the Indian firmament when India had need of him. Hindu religion was in danger of being swamped by the onrush of Christianity and the zeal of so-called English educated people. To them Indian religion stood only for idolatry. Raja Rammohan Ray and the Brahma Samaj tried to stem the tide and show Indian religion of Vedanta in its true perspective. At this juncture appeared Sri Ramakrishna, who taught the people that God was one and absolute and that all religions led to that fountain head as did all rivers to the sea. He by his life example has shown that a man attains the highest spiritual excellence when he identifies every man and beast and even the meanest particle animate or inanimate with *Brahman*. The author has brought out all these aspects ably in his book.

H. D. Ghose

**Studies in Applied Anthropology.** By L. P. Mair, *London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology No. 16. University of London. The Athlone Press. 1957. Pp 81.*

L. P. Mair in this book suggests how our knowledge of primitive, simple, peasant, preliterate and prindustrial societies can be applicable to useful purposes. Changes are going very fast in these societies due to various processes of acculturation and some of these changes are welcomed in these societies and some are resisted. Mair is of opinion that what an anthropologist can do is to show where any resistance is likely to be shown to innovation. It is also sometimes possible for him to foresee the implications of a proposed policy over a wider field. He is also of the opinion that anthropologists' knowledge can best be utilized not by prescribing policies but in calling attention to the possibly unforeseen implications of the policies proposed by Government.

In this book Mair lays more emphasis on African native people and discusses in detail the growth of economic individualism in African society, chieftainship in modern Africa, modern develop-

ment in African land tenure, and the contribution of social anthropology to the study of changes in African land rights. The application of anthropology in the underdeveloped territories has also been fully discussed.

Thus we see that the book is of great use not only to students of anthropology but also to the Government officials who want to execute certain policies in the tribal and underdeveloped areas.

A. B. Saran

**Some uses of Anthropology : Theoretical and Applied.** *Edited by J. B. Casagrande and T. Gladwin. Published by the Anthropological Society of Washington, D. C. 1956. Pp. 120.*

The book is a collection of eight papers coming from the pen of a number of American anthropologists. It deals essentially with relationship of anthropology with other fields like psychiatry, public health, administration, law, medicine and education. There are three papers dealing with problems of indigenous peoples in contact with modern civilization. Thomas Gladwin's paper on "Anthropology and Administration in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands" deals with applied anthropology in Micronesia and he discusses the role of the anthropologist as an adviser to Government. William H. Kelley in his paper on "Anthropology and the Administration of American Indian Affairs" discusses the urgent need to turn anthropological attention to the proposed termination of Indian wardship in the United States. John Bennel's paper on "Cross-Cultural Education Research and Study of National Acculturation" deals with the problem of complex culture. It is a paper on the Japanese students who had been to United States at different periods in the twentieth century. Dr. Cobb's paper on "The Relationship of Physical Anthropology to Medicine" shows the utility of anthropological data in clinical medicine. Dr. Cobb thinks that one can never predict when demand will arise from a clinical field for data which only the well equipped and staffed laboratory of physical anthropology can supply. Moreover in his human relationships with his patients the physician may profit greatly from a background in cultural and physical anthropology. Benjamin Paul's and George Devereux's papers also reflect the role of anthropological theory and practice in the field of medicine. In the last paper Dr. Margaret Mead reviews the entire

field of "Applied Anthropology". She shows that in the field of applied anthropology research work should also be undertaken in industry, in urban development, in social work, in international relations, in psychological warfare and education and the problems of race relations.

The book is of interest not only for anthropologists but also for persons interested in other physical and social sciences. In the end brief biographical sketches of each of the contributors have been included.

A. B. Saran

**The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animal.** By Charles Darwin. With a Preface by Margaret Mead. *Philosophical Library*, New York, 1955. Pp 372. Price \$ 6.00.

The present book is an authorized edition of Charles Darwin's book published for the first time as early as in 1872. The publisher of this new edition has added at the end of the book some examples of recent work which carry on the enquiry which Charles Darwin initiated. The inclusion of twentyone figures and eight photographic plates depicting the expression of the emotions in man and animals adds to the value of the book.

A. B. Saran

**Social Change in Malabar.** By M. S. A. Rao, M. A. Ph. D. *The Popular Book Depot, Bombay*. 1957. Pp. 228 including Appendix, Bibliography and Index.

The book is both important and interesting primarily because it deals with changing family patterns of the matrilineal Nayar and the patrilineal Nambudri societies. Mr. Rao describes not only social change but also gives ethnographic details about traditional culture. The book opens with an introduction which provides a detailed account of habitat and the history of the land. With the advent of science and its application to industry many avenues of livelihood are opened and the expansion of technical knowledge has led to the breaking of hereditary nature of occupation, which were once associated with particular castes. The new economy has brought class stratification in society.

The author has then comprehensively dealt with family life, specially the *tarawad* and *illam* organizations. Modern conditions

have changed the behaviour patterns and the concept of paternity is an important factor responsible for changing *tarawad* structure. Monogamy is prevalent and the cross-cousin marriage is now out of practice. Marriage of junior Nambudiri brothers among their own community is again a new feature. Ancestor-worship in *tarawad* has now fallen into disuse. Religious activities have been minimized to meet the more urgent needs of life and rigid rules of pollution are also losing their hold.

The book is a valuable contribution to Indian Social Anthropology.

K. N. Sahay

**Theory and Practice of the Social Studies :** by Earl S. Johnson (1956) Macmillan and Co. New York, Pp. 475 Price \$ 5.75 Net.

The book is chiefly designed for teachers engaged in Secondary Education ; and although some of its principles may have wider application, they primarily relate to the pattern of teaching imparted in the United States. The author's aim has been to put together both substantive knowledge and theory in the social studies with the art of teaching of them.

He has also attempted to synthesize the various phases of social knowledge and pointed out one of the serious gaps in Secondary Education that is, between liberal and vocational education. Planning an education must take into account the culture of the people for which it is designed, and Professor Johnson touches the crux of the problem, when he adds that education must serve the needs of the individual and the society.

D. P. Sinha

**Archaeology and Society :** Graham Clark (3rd rev. edn.), Methen and Co., London : pp. 272 ; illustrations 52 ; plates 24. Price 25 sh.

*Archaeology and Society* has seen two decades since its first publication, and has undergone three editions, beside being translated into French, Russian and Polish languages.

Professor Clark's method here can be said to be one of 'comparative ethnography.' To quote him, 'if we can no longer follow the Victorian ethnologists in the stages they deduced from comparative ethnography, at least we may agree that in attempting

to reconstruct those of prehistoric times from the contemporary evidence provided by archaeology we should do so with the insights to be gained from a study of living peoples at a broadly analogous stage of development' (p. 173). Although we find a note of caution in the above approach still the fear of falling in the evolutionist's pitfalls from which Social Anthropology has so tiresomely tried to escape, looms large. Professor Clark's effort is vigorous, yet one wonders, if it could be effectively approached without refining the methodological tools.

A reading through the chapters on the reconstruction of the economic, intellectual, social and spiritual life of the prehistoric people points out that some of the generalizations may not hold good. To illustrate: a general similarity between such widely separated social groups such as the Bushmen, Vedda, Andamanese and Tasmanians which are grouped under one 'cultural horizon' (by Thurnwald and quoted by Clark, p. 163) may be as distinguishing as their variations in details. However on a certain level of abstraction, Julian Steward's concepts of 'socio-cultural integration' and 'cross-cultural regularities' may be fruitful as a methodological tool (*Theory of Culture Change, 1955*). These concepts may be evaluated in order to interpret archaeology in terms of social history.

While the merits of the book are much and varied, Professor Clark's concept of 'primary and secondary prehistory' is stimulating. The book will remain a notable contribution to archaeology, prehistory and historiography.

D. P. Sinha

**Die Twiden : Pygmaen und Pygmoide in Tropishchen Afrika.** By *Martin Gusinde. Vienna, 1956.*

Professor Gusinde has personally investigated almost all the pygmies of the world and is at present, the foremost authority on this variety of the human race. The present publication is a summary of his two earlier monographs which describe the results of his 1934-35 expedition among the pygmies of Central Africa.

Professor Gusinde has named the pygmies "Twiden", a nomenclature proposed by him in 1945. The word "Twiden" is formed out of the Bantu root *twa*, meaning little, which is derived

from Sumerian. The Twides of tropical Africa are divided into three geographically separated areas :

- (1) The Eastern Twides in the region of the Ituri River—the so-called Bambuti. Linguistically they fall into three divisions—(a) Efe, (b) Basua and (c) Aka. Total population about 32,000.
- (2) The Southern Twides in the region of the Great Lakes—namely the Twa in Ruanda, Urundi and Uganda. Total population about 9,000.
- (3) The Western Twides of the west equatorial forest region known as ba-Binga, Guielli, ba-Chwa and other smaller groups. Population between 80,000—100,000.

The Twides are mainly food-gatherers. A large number of them in Ruanda has taken up pottery making while another group of the southern section has taken up fishing. Some amount of cultural symbiosis with the Negroes is also evident among the southern Twides. The Twides are an alithic people. No stone or metal is used in their arrows and spears, though of late, the Negroes have introduced iron among the Twides. From the Negroes the younger generation of the Twides has also learnt the piercing of the upper lip and the ear lobes, tatooing and the filing of the upper incisors.

The band and a certain form of totemic orientation are the most important form of social organization among all the Twides. The band is a small group of blood relatives, but actually comprises entire families of all male relatives. The wives come from other bands with which the relationship exists all through her life.

The religious belief of the Twides has been very much affected by the Negroes and only a few tribes have been investigated from this point of view.

The Twides speak a Bantu dialect. Whether the Twides possessed any language of their own has been a problem since a long time. The Bantu language is spoken by some or several men and women but it appears from current discussions that the original Twide language is still used within the band.

In physical features the Twides can be clearly distinguished from the Negroes. The Eastern Twides are the shortest of all. The average male stature is 144.03 cm while that for females 137.04 cm. The head is relatively large (cephalic index for males, 76.47 ;

females, 79'30) resting upon thin body with short legs and long slender arms.

The Southern Twides are taller than the Eastern group and as such can be put in the category of pygmoids. There appears to have been some Negroid or Nilotic intermixture.

The Western Twides are on the average taller than the Eastern group. They are constitutionally stronger and sometimes muscular.

In conclusion Professor Guusinde discusses the biogenetic origin of the pygmies and largely dwells upon the views of Eugen Fischer and Staffe. He has pointed out the optimum adaptation of the Twides in their present environment and proposes a formula: "Ohne Urwald gabe es Keine Pygmaen" (without the virgin forest there can be no pygmies).

S. S. Sarkar

**The Principles of Psychology.** By William James, Dover Publications, Inc. 1950, Two Vols. 94 illustrations, Pp. 1408, Price \$ 4.

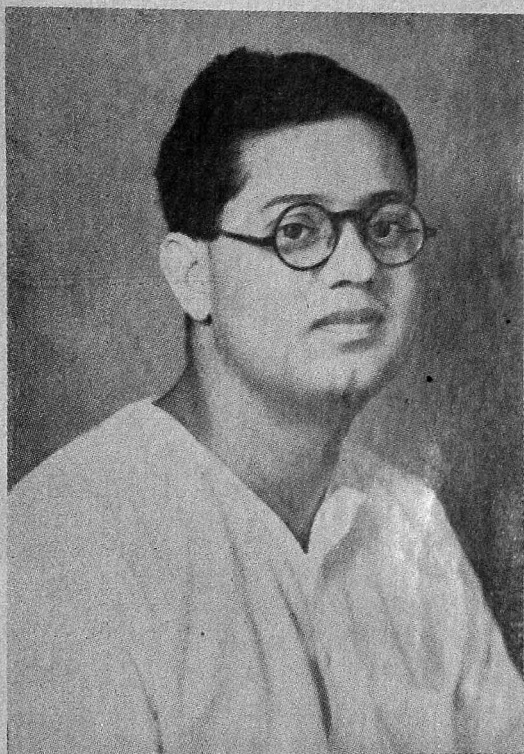
Much has already been said about the book since its first publication as early as in 1890. Obviously then, the book does not need any introduction now in as much as it has already, during these seven decades, recorded its impression amply on those interested in the history and development of the science of psychology and who, in turn, have taken care to profit from the book and also to judge it from all possible standpoints. Difficulty in re-introducing the book and adding anything to existing fund of judgments is thus evident.

As a classic, the book may be said to be as distinguishing as William James himself, and it is difficult to separate the one from the other. James' book 'contains his personality.'

The Dover Publications, Inc. must be congratulated for making a cheaper edition of the book and thereby, increasing the possibilities of wide circulation.

A. K. Sinha





Born 12 October 1911 . . . Died 28 August 1958

Bhabesh Chandra Roy  
Editor, Man-in-India, 1955-58

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