

# MAN IN INDIA

Vol. XXXIII]

April-June, 1952

[No. 2

## SARAT CHANDRA ROY

ON the occasion of the 11th anniversary of the death of the late Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy, we would like to recapitulate Roy's role as an anthropologist and his views on field research and methodology.

Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard says, that anthropology is essentially a British product. That may be so in a limited sense. It is, however, one of those advances in the history of human knowledge which by their very nature are universal, and the common property of mankind. The subject may have had its birth in England, but scientists and humanitarian savants from all lands and climes have contributed their mite to its nurture. Here in India the late Sarat Chandra Roy heads the list of such people. Before Roy, some work of a general nature was done by Sir H. H. Risley ("The People of India," "Tribes and Castes of Bengal" etc.), at the turn of the last century; but it was Roy who, nearly two decades later, introduced the preliterate communities of Bihar to the world. That ushered in a new era in Indian ethnology and in the annals of her forgotten tribal communities.

Roy was born on November 4, 1871. He had his education at Calcutta, wherefrom he took his M. A. Degree in 1893, and his B. L. degree in 1895. His career as a student was distinguished. In 1897 he took up practice as a lawyer at Alipore, in the Twenty-four Parganas district, Bengal. The next year he moved to Ranchi, to work in the Chota-Nagpur Judicial Commissioner's Court. Roy could have had little realization of how this transfer of the venue of his practice was to change not only the entire course of his own life, but also that of India's tribal population. His practice brought him into contact with the oppressed Munda village communities. He felt that justice was not being done to them. With a lawyer's keenness for detail

and unusual penetrating powers he prepared a detailed ethnographic account of these village communities. His book "The Mundas and their Country" was published in 1912. It was the first book of its kind to appear in India; and it attracted due attention, eliciting recognition from the Provincial Government. India had found her first native ethnologist.

It was fortunate that Sir Edward Gait was at that time the Lieutenant Governor of Bihar. He saw the merit and future of Roy's work and gave him financial assistance for his research work. The result was another monograph, "The Oraons of Chota Nagpur" published in 1915. In 1929 he delivered a course of Readership lectures to the Patna University which were published under the title "Principles and Methods of Physical Anthropology." In 1921 he founded a quarterly journal devoted to anthropological and allied interests. It was called "Man In India." Till the publication of "The Eastern Anthropologist" a few years back, "Man In India" remained as the only organ for publishing anthropological material in India. To this day, it has done work of inestimable value in the cause of Indian anthropology. To resume the list of Roy's works, he published his work on the Birhors, entitled "The Birhors" in 1928, and later he gave us the "Oraon Religion and Customs." The next publication was the "Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa," (1935). His last important publication was a two-volume study of the Kharias, in the preparation of which he was assisted by his son, Shri R. C. Roy, now one of the editors of "Man In India": Besides, he wrote numerous articles which were printed in Indian and foreign journals. This makes an impressive record. But it must be hastily added that our appreciation is not governed by quantity. Roy's work was throughout of a very high calibre. Professor D. N. Majumdar writes in a recent issue of "Man In India": "Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy took at least ten years of intensive field work for one tribe..." (Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 45). Roy's "The Mundas and their Country" must remain his *magnum opus*. It set not only the pace, but also the pattern for field work in India that was to follow. His studies were comparative and typological. He compared the Oraons with the Mundas and showed that they had similar patrilineal social systems, "the same type of village Panchayat, and a wider organization composed of a number of *parhas* or federations associated together for certain common purposes. Unlike the Mundas, however, the Oraons have no regular ancestor-cult, although the spirits and supernatural powers that they believe in and strive to appease, are generally of the same pattern and

in a few instances common with those of the Mundas. One noticeable distinction is that whereas all the calamities of life are attributed by the Mundas to the spirits, the Oraons' first impulse is to attribute them to witchcraft or the Evil Eye. Roy was also the first to draw attention to the existence of a well organised dormitory system for the bachelors among the Oraons, a system which he subsequently discovered among the Kharias and other tribes of the "Central Belt."\*

Roy concentrated his work and efforts in and near about the highlands of the Santal Parganas among the Munda speaking peoples. The result was intensive and authoritative details about the social, religious and cultural life of these people. There is a lesson in Roy's method. Concentrated and intensive work is of much more use in the field of anthropology than extensive work. The merit of Roy's work has been acknowledged by all anthropologists who have come into contact with it. This was a great achievement indeed for a country lawyer.

Roy has also made important contribution to the prehistoric archaeology of India by his excavations and researches in sites, locally called, "Asur" in Chota Nagpur. Remains of tanks, brick structures, sepulchral stones, various kinds of pottery, stone implements; bronze and copper articles; iron objects and kilns; phallic symbols etc., were found by him. No human remains were found. Writing about these sites in *Man in India* (1937, p. 226), he tried to connect the 'Asura' culture of chalcolithic times in Chota Nagpur to the Indus Valley Culture. The 'Asura' culture bears evidence of an earlier town-dwelling culture, characterized by the use of both stone and metal implements. Roy concludes from "a copper toy-cart recovered at Himi in the Palamau district and now placed in the Patna Museum", that these people must have been using wheeled vehicles.

Roy's views on anthropological theories are given in an article that he wrote in *Man*, (September 1938, No 172). "An Indian outlook on Anthropology"). After pointing out the main and well-known defects of the evolutionary and diffusionist theories he comes to functionalism. He criticizes the functionalists for their inability to recognize the importance of evolution and diffusion. He writes: "To picture a group at work is a worthy aim. To picture it without drawing attention to evidences of evolution within, or borrowings from without may lead to misconceptions". He points out that the lowly cultures that the functionalists use as the ground plan on which civilizations are built, are not

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\*"Essays in Anthropology Presented to Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy." p. vi

free of borrowed traits. Borrowings persist in "imperfect (even a decadent) form". Having pointed out the weakness or 'impotence' of the functional school to use his own word he goes on to praise its integral outlook in the true scientific spirit. He points out its helpful and realistic method of presentation. He affirms his faith in the "organic unity and dynamic nature of culture" "the vital function that each item and aspect of the culture fulfils in the entire scheme of it, and the bond that unites them all into a whole". This is exactly the impression we get on reading Malinowski's "Scientific Theory of Culture." If Roy had lived to read the reorientation of the theory, he might have modified some of his criticisms, for Malinowski did admit of the importance of evolution and diffusion. He, however, says that all items of a culture, whether borrowed or acquired through evolution, are integrated in it and are not anything like superfluous or "functionless." Roy proceeds on to say that since functionalists study only certain institutions in their relation to other institutions and the culture as a whole, functional studies can only supplement and not replace, the old monographic studies. Here also the contemporary functionalists will not disagree with Roy.

Most interesting, however, are Roy's views on the methodology of research. He emphasises the importance of learning the language of the tribe or group which one has to study. He did so himself. He also stresses the need of acquiring objectively by self-identification with the people to be studied, whom one must approach with great sympathy and understanding, "Concentrated contemplation of facts, scenes and incidents, as well as outstanding personalities," may help in acquiring an understanding of the *Dharma* or spiritual nexus of a people that "integrates, sustains and nourishes" their culture — thus may illumination be gained. He puts religious fervour into his work when he stresses meditation (*dhyana*) and acquisition of intuition as essential for a true understanding of a people and their culture. He wants to see unity in diversity through sympathy. Roy was essentially a humanitarian, by choice and practice. That he was an anthropologist was probably an accident, but nobody would deny the value judgments that he put down as criteria of identification, and Roy's work is interspersed with this basic recognition.

It is too early as yet to pass a final verdict on Roy and his work as an anthropologist. Suffice it to say that he has been the first and the chief architect of Indian Ethnology. As a humanitarian he ranks unrivalled.

T. N. M.

## THE RACIAL PROBLEM OF BENGAL\*

By T. C. Roy Chaudhury

THE population of Bengal, as we find it at present, is composed of a number of castes and subcastes besides a number of religious and sectarian groups. The Census Report for Bengal, (1901, p. 368) gives a detailed list of castes of Bengal under seven heads :

1. Brahmans.
2. Other castes ranking above clean Sudras, such as Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Kayasthas.
3. Clean Sudras—*e.g.*, Sundras.
4. Clean castes with degraded Brahmans such as Chasi Kaibartas and Goalas.
5. Castes lower than the above whose water is not usually taken, *e.g.*, Sunris (Shahas), Suvarnavaniks etc.
6. Low castes who abstain from beef, pork and fowl *e.g.*, Pods, Namasudras, Bagdis etc.
7. Unclean feeders *e.g.*, Chamars.

Subsequent censuses have only grouped and regrouped them under different heads with the object of finding out which should be labelled as depressed class.

A proper enquiry into the population of Bengal necessitates a thorough investigation into each and every one of them both in social and physical aspects. But this requires a band of workers and protracted investigation over a long period of time. So I have confined myself to only a few of the castes mentioned in each of the seven groups noted above.

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\* Extracts from the Sectional President's (anthropology) address, Indian Science Congress, Calcutta, 1952.

I have taken somatometric measurements and observations of 167 Radhi Brahmans, 179 Varendra Brahmans, 114 Pascatya Vaidika and 100 Daksinatya Vaidika Brahmans and have compared them with 100 Vaidyas, 62 Daksina Radhi Kayasthas, 56 Vngaja Kayasthas, 100 Goalas, 100 Pods, 100 Namasudras and 100 Bagdis also measured by me. All of them belong to Bengal proper. They practically represent all the main groups. The measurements were taken according to the principle as laid down by Martin and with Martin's set of instruments.

For the present I have confined myself to the treatment of stature, head breadth, head length, head index, nose height, nose breadth and nasal index. A detailed treatment is reserved for the future.

First I shall compare the different sections of Brahmans and try to find out their constituent elements. Next, I shall compare each one of the castes with the Brahmans. And finally I shall try to find out the constituent elements of the population of Bengal.

#### The Brahmans

It has been shown (History of Bengal, Vol. I, The University of Dacca, 1943, pp. 395-97) that by the 7th to the 12th century A. D. Brahmans established themselves all over Bengal and since then their number has been augmented by fresh batches from different parts of India. Their subsequent division into Radhiya, Varendra, Vaidika, Sakadvipi etc. took place sometimes before the close of the Hindu period.

In this paper I have taken into account the Radhi, Varendra and Vaidika Brahmans. The Sakadvipi and some other sections such as the Sarasvatas, Vyasa, Parasara, Kaundinya, and Saptasati, of whom references are made in the *Kulakarikas*, are left out, as they are scarcely to be met with. It may be that they have merged into one or other of the three sections dealt with.

There is no appreciable difference in stature among the Radhi, Varendra and Pascatya Vaidika Brahmans. The Daksinatya Vaidikas, however, have a slightly taller stature (about 13 mm) than the other sections. They also agree in head length but differ from the Daksinatya Vaidikas in having slightly greater (about 3 mm) length of the head. In head breadth, however, the Radhiya and Varendra Brahmans form one group and the two sub-sections of the Vaidikas another group—the latter having slightly smaller (bet. 1.3 to 1.6 mm) head breadth. But these differences in head length and breadth are of minor importance and

they do not affect the shape of the head—the deficiency in head length of the Vaidikas has been compensated by the deficiency in head breadth and all the sections agree in the possession of medium heads.

While there is a close agreement between the Radhi, and Varendra Brahmans, the Pascatya and Daksinatya Vaidika Brahmans differ among themselves in some respects. Again it is apparent that the Pascatya Vaidikas agree more with the Radhi and Varendra Brahmans than with the collateral subsections. Is it that the Daksinatya Vaidikas form a group of their own, neither agreeing with the Pascatya Vaidikas nor with the Radhi and Varendra Brahmans?

The Radhi, Varendra and Pascatya and Daksinatya Vaidika Brahmans are living in practically the same environment for a pretty long time, the only difference is that the Daksinatya Vaidika Brahmans probably came a few generations later. Is it then the result of convergent evolution due to living in practically the same environment and following the same avocation of life?

It is seen that majority (*i.e.*, more than 50%), of the people are of medium stature (Radhi—58.2%, Varendra 54.6%, P. Vaidika 59.8% and D. Vaidika 59%). There is also a good number (about 25%) of tall and from 8 to 20.7% of short individuals in all the sections. Thus there is a practical agreement in the distribution of stature in all the sections except that the D. Vaidikas have smaller number of short and a greater number of tall individuals.

All the sections also agree in the tendency to brachycephalism with a greater incidence of medium heads. In nasal index also the four sections agree in the possession of leptorrhine noses (from 66% to 78.1%).

I have seen what averages and specifications reveal. Although a convenient method to express complex groups of figures they are not a safe and satisfactory procedure in as much as a people is an assemblage of a number of characters which taken together make it what it is. For this reason I have correlated stature with cephalic and nasal index in order to find out the typical characteristic of the group.

Taking the Radhi and Varendra all the sections manifest a good and almost the same percentage (Radhi—33.0%; Varendra 34%; P. Vaidika 35.1% and D. Vaidika 35.0%). This *i.e.*, medium stature, medium to broad head, leptorrhine type may, therefore, be taken to be the prevailing one among the Brahmans of Bengal. The next in order of importance is the tall-brachycephalic-leptorrhine element. It occupies the third place in all

the sections except among the P. Vaidikas, where it is fourth in order of importance.

Now, let us see what the measurements of the other members of the upper castes, the Vaidyas and the Kayasthas, reveal. For this I shall compare them with the Radhi Brahmans only as they are in close agreement with other sections and the most numerous of the Brahmans of Bengal.

There is close agreement between the Radhi Brahmans and the Vaidyas in stature and head form, but the two differ in nose form. Dr. A. Mitra of the Indian Museum has also measured a number of Vaidyas. He gives St. 1658 mm., C I. 79.3, N I. 70.9 as the characteristics of the Radhi Vaidyas and St. 1669 mm., C I. 70.9 as the characteristics of the Vangaja Vaidyas. It is, therefore, seen that my series closely agrees with the series measured by Dr. Mitra.

As in the case of the Radhi Brahmans, the incidence of medium stature is the greatest (Radhi 58.2% and Vaidya 66%). But the Vaidyas have a greater tendency to brachycephalism than the Radhi Brahmans. Again while the latter have a majority (68.3%) of leptorrhine individuals, the former tends to be mesorrhine (55.0%), of leptorrhines their percentage falls to 43.0.

Correlating stature with cephalic and nasal index (Table VI) it is seen that while the Radhi Brahmans show a preponderance of medium-mesocephalic—leptorrhine type (19.8%), the Vaidyas have a greater incidence of medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine type (23%), and the medium-mesocephalic-leptorrhine type is second (16%) in order. Next in order of importance is medium-brachycephalic-leptorrhine type. Thus while the Brahmans have been taken to be characterised by medium stature, meso to brachycephalic-leptorrhine type, the Vaidyas may be taken to be characterised by medium-mesocephalic-leptorrhine to mesorrhine type. The third element of any importance (10%) is medium-brachycephalic-leptorrhine type.

### The Kayasthas

Next caste included within the upper group is the Kayastha. In Bengal they are mainly divided into two subsections, the Dakshin Radhi and Vangaja. Other subsections such as the Uttar Radhi and Varendra are scarcely met with.

There is a close agreement between the two subsections of the Kayasthas in cephalic and nasal indices and some difference in stature.



It may be due to small number of individuals measured. (It is unfortunate that the series could not be enlarged). The present series, however, agrees with Dr. B. S. Guha's series for 100 Daksin Radhi Kayasthas (Census, 1931) and Capt. R. N. Basu's series for 100 Vangaja Kayasthas in cephalic and nasal indices.

Although there is an agreement in height the Kayasthas differ from the Radhi Brahmans in having slightly broader nose and taller stature.

The Vangaja Kayasthas include as many as 25% of short individuals, whereas among the Daksin Radhi Kayasthas stature is almost evenly distributed between below medium to tall. But still medium stature is in the majority (D. R. Kayastha 71.0%; Vangaja Kayastha 53.6%). It is further seen that the D. R. Kayasthas have a greater number of brachycephaly (30.6%) than the Vangajas (17.9%). The latter, however, has a preponderance of leptorrhines (64.3%) as against the former (48.4%).

Both the subsections show a prevalence of medium-mesocephalic-leptorrhine type (D. R. Kayastha 21.0%; V. Kayastha 23.2%) and of medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine type (D. R. Kayastha 17.7% and V. Kayastha 10.7%). In this respect their agreement is more with the Vaidyas than with the Brahmans. The third element among them (14.5% among the D. R. Kayastha and 7.1% among the Vangaja Kayasthas) is characterised by medium stature, brachycephaly and leptorrhiny. In the subsequent pages I shall take the Daksin Radhi Kayasthas as representative of the Kayasthas as my series for them is more in agreement with the measurements of others.

A Kayastha may, therefore, be taken to be characterised by medium stature, mesocephalic head and lepto-mesorrhine nose.

#### The Goalas

The medium-mesocephalic-leptorrhine type is an important element (28%) among the Goalas. It has also been shown that its frequency is also greatest among the Radhi Brahmans and D. R. and V. Kayasthas. Next in order of importance is the medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine element (12%). But while there is a persistence of medium brachycephalic-leptorrhine and tall-brachycephalic-leptorrhine type among the Vaidyas and Kayasthas, the medium-dolichocephalic-leptorrhine and medium-brachycephalic-leptorrhine type are almost of equal frequency (10% and 9% respectively), among the Goalas.

A typical Goala may, therefore, be taken to be of medium stature, mesocephalic and leptorrhine to mesorrhine.

From among the lower castes I have selected only three, the Pods, the Namasudras and the Bagdis and have measured one hundred individuals of each.

### The Pods

The Pods differ from the Radhi Brahmans, the Vaidyas, both the subsections of the Kayasthas and the Goalas in being of lower stature, but they agree with all in cephalic index except the Goalas and in nasal index except the Radhi Brahmans and the Goalas. Moreover in absolute measurements of the head and nose, the Pods suffer a diminution.

The Pods have a preponderance of shorter stature and dolichocephaly like the Goalas and the Vangaja Kayasthas. It will be presently seen that in these respects they agree with other members of the lower group. It will also be seen that the incidence of mesorrhine nose is greater in them than in the higher and intermediate caste groups.

Correlating stature, cephalic and nasal index it is seen that the incidence of medium stature-mesocephalic-leptorrhine type is the greatest (17%) and the medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine type (12%) is next in order, and almost of equal frequency (11%) is the medium-brachycephalic-leptorrhine type. In these respects the Pods agree with the Kayasthas and Goalas. It may be noted that the medium-brachycephalic-leptorrhine type is all along present from the upper castes up to the Pods.

### The Namasudras

There is a close agreement between the Pods and the Namasudras except in stature—the former being slightly taller (23.9mm). They differ from the Radhi Brahmans, Vangaja Kayasthas and Goalas in stature and nasal index and from the Vaidyas and Daksin Radhi Kayasthas in stature only.

The incidence of short stature and narrow head which we first noticed among the Vangaja Kayasthas increases more and more as we proceed from them through the Goalas and the Pods up to the Namasudras. They, as well as the Pods, have a greater incidence of mesorrhine character.

Correlation of the three characters shows that the medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine type is an important element (16%) among them. Next of importance is the short-mesocephalic-mesorrhine type (14%). It may be noted that the medium—mesocephalic-mesorrhine type plays a comparatively important part among all except the Radhi Brahmans.

### The Bagdis

The Bagdis are of lower stature, narrower head and broader nose than the other two members (Pods and Namasudras) of the group. In absolute measurements also they suffer a diminution except in nasal breadth which is slightly higher than the rest.

There is still greater incidence of lower stature, narrower head and broader nose in them than in other members of the group.

Both the short-dolichocephalic-mesorrhine (20%) and medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine (20%) elements are equally important in the make up of the Bagdis. Next of importance is the short-mesocephalic-mesorrhine element (17%). These three elements taken together (57%) warrant us to form an idea of the Bagdis as a short to medium statured, dolichocephalic to medium headed mesorrhine people.

The Radhi Brahmans, both the subsections of the Kayasthas, the Goalas and the Pods agree in having a comparatively large percentage of medium-mesocephalic-leptorrhine individuals, the Radhi Brahmans differ from others in the possession of a large percentage of brachycephalic-leptorrhine character (22.2%) and the others mesocephalic-mesorrhine character. The D. R. Kayasthas, however, approach the Radhi Brahmans in the possession of brachycephalic-leptorrhine element. Thus the Radhi Brahmans may be taken to form a separate group and the D. R. Kayasthas a group intermediate between the Radhi Brahmans and the Vangaja Kayasthas, the Goalas and the Pods. The Vaidyas are more allied to the last three castes than to the Radhi Brahmans. Further, although the Namasudras and the Bagdis agree with the Vaidyas, both the subsections of the Kayasthas, the Goalas and the Pods in the incidence of medium-mesocephalic-mesorrhine character (16% and 20% respectively), they differ from them in having a greater percentage of short-dolicho-mesocephalic-mesorrhine character.

From these data I would suggest the following tentative conclusions:—

1. The brachycephalic-leptorrhine character which is found in the Pamirian or Dinaric type according as the stature is medium or tall, is more dominant in the Radhi Brahmans (22.2%) and the D. R. Kayasthas (20.9%) than in the Vaidyas (12%), Vangaja Kayasthas (8.9%), Goalas (12%), Pods (12%), Namasudras (0) and Bagdis (0). From this it appears that the Pamirian or Dinaric element plays an important part (in varying proportion) in the composition of the upper groups.

Risley tried to explain the brachycephalic element by bringing in the Mongolians. The absence of salient mongoloid characters among the Bengalis in an appreciable percentage has now been definitely proved by later researches. Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda tried to explain it by Alpine element from the Pamirian region. Dr. B. S. Guha (Census of India, 1931, Vol. I Part III pp. LXX—LXXI) also tries to explain it by Armenoid element (a branch of the Alpine stock) not from the Pamirian region but from Persia and Baluchistan side. Prof. Chakladar (Presidential Address, 23rd Session, p. 9) also finds a brachycephalic Alpine and a dolichocephalic Mediterranean type in Bengal. But in a subsequent pamphlet (Racial Elements in the Population—on Indian Affairs 1944 p. 22) Dr. B. S. Guha observes that “the Dinaric type is well marked in Bengal and Orissa” A. C. Haddon—(Races of Man, 1924, p. 28) takes as the area of distribution of the Dinaric “The Illyrian mountain system with some extensions into the Carpathians, the north to south mountain system of the western Balkan Peninsula and of Greece, probably among the Little Russians” *i. e.*, farthest away Bengal. We have no record of migration of such a people into Bengal. On the other hand the Pamirian plateau is quite near and movement of people from that region into India is now well established. Moreover the tall stature and the extremely long and “more often convex nose, with the tip bending sharply towards the lip” and flat occiput characteristic feature of the Dinarics, as noted by Dr. Guha (Ibid p. 21), is of rare occurrence in Bengal. Further the incidence of the tall-brachycephalic-leptorrhine character is of lesser importance than the medium-brachycephalic-leptorrhine character.° So the preponderance of medium to tall stature associated with broad head and narrow nose leads us to suspect a Pamirian rather than a Dinaric infusion. The tall stature might as well have been contributed, by the tall northern dolichocephals for as yet we are not in a position to say whether as a result of crossing or influence of environment all the characters undergo a simultaneous change or one character changes in one direction and another in a different direction or one character is dominant over the other.

2. The short to medium stature associated with narrow head and nose has already been considered to be due to the Mediterraneans.

3. The tall leptorrhine character found in association with narrow or medium head is also found in varying proportion (Radhi Brahmans 9.4%, Vaidya 8%, D. R. Kayastha 8.1%, Vangaja Kayastha 8.9%,

Goalas 8%, Pods 2%, Namasudra 2% and Bagdi 1%). This may be due to the northern dolichocephals (proto-Nordics) specially among the Radhi Brahmans, Vaidyas, D. R. Kayasthas, V. Kayasthas and Goalas. Prof. Chakladar also thinks (Ibid p. 14) "the Aryans (long headed) spread from the Arabian sea up to the plains of Assam—and those living in the far east, as well as the extreme west, were developing customs and manners that differed from the ancient traditions of the Vedic Aryans." He further observes (p. 18) that "the fact that they (peoples bearing Indo-European features) extend almost in a continuous line from the borders of Assam eastwards to the Ocean tends to prove that they passed from India, and thus must have crossed the whole width of Northern India to the Patkoi range and beyond."

4. The presence of dolicho-mesorrhine element in association with short or medium stature in an appreciable percentage among the Namasudras (21%) and the Bagdis (30%) suggests strong Dravidian influence. It is, however, present among the upper castes as a trace (Radhi Brahmans 3%, Vaidyas 3%, D. R. Kayasthas 3.2% V. Kayasthas 1.8%. But it is slightly more important among the Goalas (6.1%) and much more among the Pods (14%).

5. The striking absence of dolicho-chamaerhine element either with short or with medium stature excludes the possibility of a Pre-Dravidian or Nisadic element in the composition of the upper castes. There is, however, a faint trace in others—Goalas (1%) Pod (1%), Namasudra (2%) and Bagdi (3%). So there might be, if at all, a possibility among the Bagdis and the Namasudras.

6. Finally it appears that the basic element of the population is Dravidian to which is added a Mediterranean element and a strong Pamirian (Alpine) element specially in the Radhi Brahmans and D. R. Kayasthas and a minor infusion in the Vaidyas, Vangaja Kayasthas, Goalas and Pods. To these was added a minor dolicho-leptorrhine Indo-European elements in the Radhi Brahmans, Vaidyas, D. R. Kayasthas, V. Kayasthas and Goalas. The Pre-Dravidian or Nisadic element is faintly traced in the Namasudras and Bagdis.

Now, let us see how far these findings of mine are corroborated by history. We are told that the population of Bengal was different from the Vedic Aryans both in race and culture, that Bengal was unknown or little known to the Vedic Aryans and that it was not till the later Brahmanical period that the people of Bengal came to be known to the Vedic Aryans and even then they were regarded as *dasyus*

(History of Bengal Vol. I. The University of Dacca, pp. 33-6). In the Vedas the *dasyus* are described as black in skin colour as opposed to the white skinned Aryans and that they were constantly at war with the Aryans. The Manusamhita and the Mahabharat speak of Pulind, Savara etc. as *dasyus*. So Dr. R. C. Majumdar draws the following conclusion "that the early settlers in Bengal and Orissa were closely allied tribes of non-Aryan Origin" (Ibid p. 39-40). But a gradual process of Aryanisation began "with the infiltration of Magadhan settlers; merchants, soldiers officials and agriculturists and Brahmans, Sramans and Yatis, to minister to the religious needs of the Brahmanists, Buddhists and Jains and also to bring within the fold of Aryan or Upper Indian religion and culture, the non-Aryan tribes of the land," sometimes in the 1st millennium B. C. and the "political connection with Mauryan Magadha only helped the movement which had begun earlier" (Ibid p. 375). At that time caste organisation was in a formative stage. Some indigenous people such as Vangas, the Savaras, the Pulindas, the Pundras etc. (all belonging to the non-Aryan group) were classed as Kshatriyas, free marriages were allowed between immigrant Brahmans and native people and majority of them were classed as Sudras (Ibid p. 563). It was not till the early centuries of the Christian Era that the high class Aryans poured into Bengal in large number and it has been presumed that the assumption of the sovereignty of Bengal by the Guptas (320-650 A. D.) gave a new impetus in this direction and that it did not suffer under the long rule of Buddhist Pala Kings (from the 8th century A. D.). And when the Aryans secured a firm foot-hold in Bengal, the society came to be divided into a number of castes and subcastes due partly to the development of different arts and crafts and professions and partly also due to racial and religious differences (Ibid p. 565).

We are not definite when caste distinction took a definite shape. But the striking similarity between the list of castes as given in the Brihat-dharma Puran (dated not later than the 13th or 14th century A. D.) as quoted in History of Bengal, Dacca University (p. 568) and the various castes of Bengal in the 19th century (Ibid pp. 573-74) leads us to believe, as Dr. Majumdar also believes, that the framework of the caste system almost reached its final shape during the Hindu period. It has also been shown that although marriage among members of the same caste was the ordinary rule, intermarriage between a male of a higher and a female of a lower caste was regarded as valid down to the last days of the Hindu period (Ibid p. 575) and "the restrictions about

interdining is also of later development" (Ibid p. 577). It will, therefore, be not too much to presume that when there was the sanction for intermarriage, unauthorised union was not an impossibility.

Thus it appears that there were a set of peoples in Bengal like the Savaras, Pulindas, Pundras etc., that they were different from those who came later on both in race and culture and that intermarriage and interdining were allowed.

Now the question is who were these earlier ones? We have seen that there is a faint trace of Pre-Dravidian or Nisadic element among the Bagdis and Namasudras. We have also seen that they agree in the possession of a good percentage of Dravidian element. So it may be presumed that the early population of Bengal was composed of a Pre-Dravidian or Nisadic (though very slight) and a Dravidian element the latter predominating. To these were added a Mediterranean element as is found among the Vangaja Kayasthas, the Goalas and the Radhi Brahmans. There is also a Pamirian element which is appreciable among the R. Brahmans, Vaidyas, D. R. and Vangaja Kayasthas, Goalas and Pods. We have also seen that there were peaceful infiltrations of Aryans from Upper India since the 1st millennium B. C. This might be responsible for the tall-dolicho-leptorrhine and tall-mesocephalic leptorrhine elements which are found in varying proportions (8-10. 4 P. C.) among the R. Brahmans, Vaidyas, D. R. and V. Kayasthas and Goalas. This might be the Aryans from Upper India now known as Vedic Aryans and whom Prof. Chakladar (23rd Presidential Address p. 17) speaks of as long-headed Indo-Europeans and who are supposed by him to have come later on, on the basis of the absence of such a type in Mohenjo-daro.

Now, if this is the position—if there is no hard and fast distinction between caste and caste so far as constituent elements are concerned and if there is no rigid sanction of Smṛiti writers about intermarriage and interdining, then why is there so much fuss about superiority or inferiority, why is there the clamouring of one caste leader to be recorded in the census as a branch of one or other of the four statutory, if I am allowed to use the term, castes, or why is there the question of untouchability or depressed castes and the consequent provisions for the depressed classes? In Bengal, we have no such depressed classes of the Madras brand. Till 1916, the term depressed classes was unknown in Bengal. In that year the then Government of Bengal prepared a list of thirty castes. The Commissioner for education used it in the quinquennial

report on education in India for the year 1912-17. The Census Report for Bengal, 1921 also framed a list of forty castes. The list was further revised and enlarged (numbering 188 all told) in the Census Report for Bengal and Sikkim, 1931. (Vol. V Part I pp. 502-3). But none of them are quite definite as to who should be branded as depressed classes. It was imposed on Bengal by alien rulers as a part of their policy in Communal Award. It was confirmed by the Poona Pact (1933) in spite of vehement opposition from Bengal leaders like late Prof. J. L. Banerjee who characterised it as "manufactured in the political laboratory of Mr. Prentice" and Mr. J. N. Gupta "as constitutional monstrosity." No doubt there are educationally and economically backward classes (not depressed) and it is the duty of the state to ameliorate their position. Provision should be made for their education and economic betterment. They should be given equal rights with adult franchise. But there should not be any reservation. It cripples them for good and creates bad blood between caste and caste. It means a loss of efficiency - a loss to the national well-being, it is "undemocratic, ununifying and unequilibrating."



## THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE KANIKKARS<sup>1</sup>

*By Jyotirmoyee Sarma*

THE Kanikkars sparsely inhabit the reserved forests of the southern and the central sections of the Travancore State. In the Census of India of 1931 the population of this tribe was reported to be of 6,659 persons with 3,525 males, and 3,134 females<sup>2</sup>. The population had declined between 1911, and 1921, but it had again made a rapid increase between 1921 and 1931<sup>3</sup>.

The tribe has been studied previously by Thurstone<sup>4</sup>, Iyer<sup>5</sup>, and Pillai<sup>6</sup>, and it has been noted by them that features of the culture of the Kanikkars vary from one area to another. While on a field investigation tour for the Department of Anthropology undertaken in the months of January and February of 1949 in the State of Travancore, the writer had the opportunity to observe and study five Kanikkar settlements. Of these four were in the Southern administrative division of the State. The Koirakui settlement in the Pachipara area near the Kodyar dam at the north of the Kodyar river and west of the lake of the same name was the first to be studied. Next observed were Mottamudu and Chembikunnu settlements in the Kallar area in the Nedumangad taluk. After these the writer visited the Bamanabaram settlement in the Palode area also in the Nedumangad taluk. And the final visit was paid to the

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1. This paper was read at the Indian Science Congress Session, 1950, at Poona.

2. *Census of India* 1931, Vol. XXVIII—Travancore, Part II—Tables, by N. Kunjan Pillai. Trivandrum: Government Press, 1932, pp. 156-157.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

4. E. Thurstone, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Vol. III, Government Press, Madras, 1909.

5. L. A. K. Iyer, *The Travancore Tribes and Castes*, Vol. I, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1937.

6. *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. XXVIII, Parts I and II.

Villumala settlement in the Kuluthupuzha area within the Pathanapuram taluk in the Central administrative division of the State.

According to the prevalent local languages of the areas, the tribe speaks Tamil in the southern section, and Malayalam in the central section of the state. The names of the clans (*illangnal*) differ in the various sections, and the mythologies concerning their origins vary. Differences prevail in the details of the important social ceremonies such as marriage and funeral. The tribe shows tendencies of change from a matrilineal social order to a patrilineal one in the present day. And there are also differences in the modes of agriculture and in the general standard of living.

The Kanikkars who live in the interior forest ranges occupy areas that are difficult for the outsiders to enter. They admit that they select the most secluded and the most inaccessible areas in the hills so that they will not be bothered with visits from the non-tribal people of the locality commonly referred to by the interpreters as the 'local people.'

The population within the settlements of the secluded areas is small and consist of fifteen to thirty adults. The huts are built close together where the settlement is founded on a steep hill as in Chembikunnu, or they are of a little scattered formation leading toward the top of the hill where the hills are rolling, as in Koirakui and Mottamudu. The sides and the bottom lands of the hills are usually cultivated. The fields under cultivation are near to the huts according to the suitability of the land. The ground is dug with the digging stick. Tapioca is the staple crop. Yams, bananas, and dry paddy are also grown. If the land is suitable wet paddy may also be cultivated in which case the land is ploughed with oxen. The Kanikkars do not drink milk. So cows are not kept in the settlement unless the local men keep them there for pasture in the forests. The Kanikkars go hunting in a group about once a week, and hunt small game, birds, deers, black monkeys, etc. They do not eat beef and scorn the idea. The traditional form of hunting is with the bow and the arrow. These are still used together with the country gun at least one of which is permitted to be kept with the headman of every settlement.

The Kanikkars have the tradition of leaving a settlement in a group or individually and settle in a new one. Settlement may be forsaken due to the failure of crops or disturbance by wild animals, usually the elephants. These vacated settlements may be resettled if the conditions improve. Individuals may also move from one settlement to another if

the crops on their particular fields fail, or for any other reasons. On the whole, however, the settlements visited had been continuously settled for at least two generations, and in the present day individual migrations were professed to be more common than group migrations.

In contrast to the above communities, the settlements in the reserved forest ranges near Palode and Kuluthupuzha are in areas easily accessible from the plains. The topography of the land on which the latter settlements are established is characterized by small hills, and wide valleys. The settlements are not at much elevation from the plains lands. Moreover, there are logging camps on the way to these settlements. The forests are considerably cleared, thereby making the way to the settlements readily accessible. These settlements are larger both in population and area. The residents number at least fifty adult persons. The huts are scattered over an area of one or two square miles. Here the land is rolling, and each householder builds a hut on the top of a hill, and cultivates tapioca on the sidelands, and wet paddy on the bottom flat lands. The land is ploughed with the help of oxen usually owned by the headman and borrowed by others. Thus every settler lives near his fields at some distance from other members of the village.

The settlements of Bamanabaram and Villumala visited by the writer were founded three generations ago. According to the rules of the Travancore forest department, a Kanikkar can cultivate any land that he can clear with the permission of the forest officials and the headman, but the new land is only added to the areas already under cultivation. Moreover, the tendency is to keep on cultivating the same plots of land, and new fields are added only by the more ambitious persons. If a Kanikkar is industrious enough he will have several fields and plenty of crops for harvest.

In these settlements the Kanikkar culture is much in contact with the urban culture of the local people. There prevails a greater need of money, and more ways of earning money than in the interior communities. We may here compare the settlement of Chembikunnu which is six miles from Kallar with the Bamanabaram settlement which is three miles from the town of Palode. Although the distance between the two towns is twenty eight miles by motorable road, the Kanikkars can travel between the two settlements by a path through the hills which is only eight miles long. The Kanikkars of Bamanabaram know of the people of Chembikunnu although they do not marry with them. In both the settlements the same type of clan (*illom*) system prevails. The entire population is

divided into only two clans (*illangnal*), as against the system of multiple clans of Koirakui and Mottamudu. The main difference between Chembikunnu and Bamanabaram is that the former is set in the interior hills with a moderately self-sufficient economy whereas the latter is near the plains and its economic system is more dependent on the area around.

Bamanabaram is in a section of the forest reserve that is very close to a logging camp under the custody of the forest department where many local people work. Moreover, the distance between one part of the settlement and the main road to Palode is only one mile. So the Kanikkars of Bamanabaram come into daily contact with the local people. Sometimes the latter come into the fields of the settlement for grazing cattle, or with the hope of finding some forest products for their personal use, although they are forbidden to enter Kanikkar villages unless in an official role. The Kanikkars, on the other hand, are given the authority to protect all forest products, and they can prevent trespassers, or can report them to the forest department. So there are opportunities for conflicts, and they do arise over many issues. Sexual attachments between members of the two groups are also possible. In Chembikunnu this problem did not arise, but in Bamanabaram a few such cases have occurred and people talk about them.

On the other hand, feelings of personal liking and friendships grow up between the tribal and the local people near Bamanabaram. The residents of Chembikunnu did not have any association with the local people except as forest officials and buyers and sellers in the markets. In Bamanabaram, however, the Kanikkars frequent the tea shops in town and come into personal contact with the local people. They chat together and the Kanikkars there learn many things about the world outside.

Moreover, some of the residents of Bamanabaram send their children to the State primary school in Palode. The children of the Chembikunnu settlement do not go to school, nor do the children of Koirakui and Mottamudu. There are no schools near these settlements. Only three children of Bamanabaram attend school at present, and six persons have gone to schools previously from this settlement, who are now between twenty-five and forty-five years of age. They have had schooling of one to four years. The headman of Bamanabaram did not go to school, but expects to send his children there.

The above comparison of two of the settlements indicate that considerable differences prevail between the communities due to the amount

of contact with the plains people. We need to bear this in mind while we further observe the organization of the villages.

In their general studies the internal structure of the Kanikkar villages has also been noted by Thurstone<sup>7</sup>, Iyer<sup>8</sup>, and Pillai<sup>9</sup>. According to these authors, it is organized around a headman, his assistant, and a grouping of the elder men of the village in the form of a council. They meet in a building called the *pattupara* and decide matters of importance to the village. According to these writers, the *pattupara* is also used by the bachelors of the village to sleep at night, and may be used by forest officials if they have to spend the night in the forests. The present writer especially observed this organization in more detail. In each of the settlements she inquired into the actual functions of the headman and his assistant, the occasions on which the councils are called and the work done in them, and the usual place for these meetings.

In course of the investigation the headman of each settlement was identified for the writer by the forest officials as well as by the residents of the settlement. Then the headman was interviewed by the writer in regard to general information about the settlement, and his functions within it particularly. A genealogy was taken of the headman of each of the settlements in order to see the mode of inheritance of status. Several other persons of the settlements were then interviewed in similar manner. In these latter interviews attempts were made to check the information given by the headman. If any points were contradictory, the person being interviewed was asked to explain, and the headman was reapproached for an explanation. Sometimes the contradictions were due to loss of memory, but in two instances the informant misinformed the writer deliberately because he was ashamed to tell the truth.

The forest department of the Travancore State helped this investigation throughout by providing with guides and English speaking interpreters. In each of the areas the latter were forest officials of that particular range, and, therefore, had some knowledge of the general pattern of the settlements and knew some of the Kanikkars by name.

In every Kanikkar settlement the writer found a headman called the *Muthkani*, or the elder Kani, who is recognised as the leader both by the residents of the community and the forest officials. The formal grouping of the settlement takes place around him. The *Muthkani* looks

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7. Thurstone, op. cit., p. 169.

8. Iyer, op. cit., p. 9 and p. 32.

9. Pillai, op. cit., p. 414.

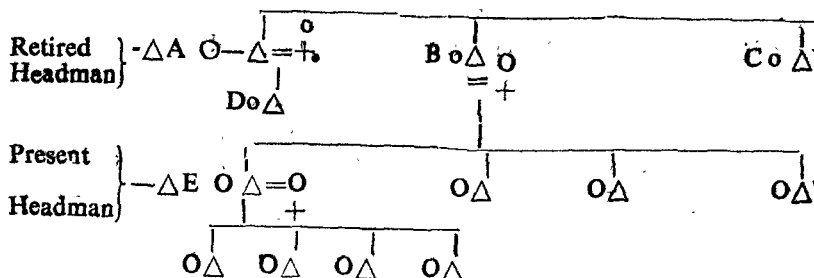
after the welfare of the community both in line of social ceremonies and the maintenance of law and order. The permission of the *Muthkani* is needed when people make selections of new land for cultivation, and when they go hunting in a group. The rewards of hunting are divided equally among all members of the settlement in his presence. If there is any stealing of crops from the village fields or any quarrelling between persons, appeals are made to the *Muthkani*, for help. Moreover, the latter has received some new powers from the State government. The forest officials give him instructions regarding the work needed to be carried out for the forest department by the Kanikkars. All Kanikkars must work for the forest department whenever they are needed. They are given orders to collect minor forest products, such as honey, wax, cardamom seeds, seeds of various fruit trees, etc. They are also called to make boundary lines of the forests by marking trees, work on the replantation of forest areas, etc., whenever necessary<sup>10</sup>. The *Muthkani*, passes out the instructions he receives from the forest guards to the members of his settlement, and supervises their work.

A new *Muthkani* is selected at the death of a previous one or if the latter is too old and physically incapable of holding office. Even though the title is supposed to be inherited, according to the Kanikkar rules, by the sister's son<sup>11</sup>, only one such case was found in the five settlements investigated, that in Koirakui. Traditionally if there is no actual sister's son, the title is to go to a classificatory sister's son. However, persons of entirely different relationships are found to inherit the title. In Mottamudu the view was expressed that if a sister's son lives in another settlement he will not be selected for the title. The *Muthkani* of a settlement must be one living there, and for this reason a son may succeed his father in preference to a sister's son.

In Chembikunnu a strikingly unexpected case of inheritance was found, and a genealogy is presented of it. Here the successor to the headman was the father's brother's son, A, the retired *Muthkani* had no sister, and, therefore, no sister's son. He had a son, D., but still his brother B.'s eldest son, E., was given the title of *Muthkani*. The retired headman was still living, and he explained to the writer that the title was to be inherited by an *anudhravan* (meaning nephew—either sister's son or brother's son). Since he had no sister's son, as

10. *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. XXVIII, Part I, pp. 428-429.

11. Iyer, *op. cit.*, p. 32.



an *anudhravan*, his title was given to his brother's son in preference to his own son. This sentiment could not be traced in any of the other settlements, however.

In Bamanabaram the present *Muthkani* succeeded his mother's younger sister's son. Here it looks like the maintenance of the old order since the relationship is one of sister's son in the classificatory sense. But actually the present *Muthkani* was selected by the Forest Range Officer for his ability, and declared for the post when the Conservator of Forests once came to visit the settlement. His relationship to the previous headman is only a coincidence.

In the Villumala settlement where much of the social setting of the Kanikkar community is changed, the title of the *Muthkani* is expected to go to the son, and not to the sister's son. Here descent is traced through father in regard to the inheritance of property also.

The approval of the forest department is necessary in the final selection of the *Muthkani* for a settlement. In Bamanabaram and Kufuthupuzha the elder men of the community select the nearest relatives of the *Muthkani* living within the settlement in order of preference, and present the names to the forest range officer. The forest officers recommend a person among them who shows the best qualities in merit of leadership, industriousness, and obedience to the forest department for the position of the *Muthkani*. The person approved is usually the man who is most preferred by the Kanikkars, but even if he is not, the informants state that they will accept him as their leader.

If a new *Muthkani* does not know all his functions, the elders of the community guide him, as in Koirakui. In Chembikunnu where the previous *Muthkani* is still living he gives instructions to the new *Muthkani* regarding his official duties. The meetings are yet

Note:—Δ for males. O for females.

held in the verandah of the old man's house, and will be so until the new *Muthkani* extends his verandah to hold more people.

It is definitely recognized that a *Muthkani* has under his control a particular area or a settlement of Kanikkars, and his authority does not extend to any other settlement. A *Muthkani* is not subordinated to any other Kanikkar chieftain, and the *Muthkanis* of the various settlements have equal status. It was related, however, that if an important issue arose, and a *Muthkani* needed the suggestion of another of his status, he would invite the latter of a nearby area to come and hear the case. The *Muthkanis* of nearby settlement know one another, and exchange their thoughts when they meet.

The *Mantravadi* (magician) or the *Pujari* (Priest) have more traditional roles than that of the *Muthkani*. The former have no secular tasks to perform, and so they get no official recognition from the forest department as leaders. The power of the *Pujari* in performing the sacred rites, however, is considerable. It may be that the *Muthkani* also acts in the position of the *Pujari* if the latter person is lacking in the village, and provided that the *Muthkani* knows the rites and his ability to perform these rites is recognised by the members of the settlement. This was found to be the case in Mottamudu. Or it may be that the *Pujari* acts in the place of the *Muthkani* if the latter is disabled, or not experienced enough as in Koirakui. The *Pujari*, of this latter community helps the *Muthkani* execute all his functions and is the informal leader of the settlement.

The *Muthkani* has an assistant to help him in the execution of all his functions. The latter is called *Velakani* in Koirakui, Mottamudu, and Chembikunnu, and *Muthavere* in Bamanabaram and Kuluthupuzha. The assistant calls the men of the settlement together in times of meetings, passes out any instruction from the *Muthkani* to the members of the community, and supervises the work of the Kanikkars for the forest department along with the *Muthkani*. If the latter is absent from the settlement for any reason, the assistant may carry out all his functions in regard to calling meetings, and advising people.

According to the old Kanikkar rules, as cited by the informants, the assistant should be the *machambi* (sister's husband or wife's brother or mother's brother's son) of the *Muthkani*. But only in Koirakui was this found to be the case. In the other settlements the assistant was chosen for his abilities, regardless of his particular relationship to the *Muthkani*. In the first three settlements the leading men together



selected the assistant to the *Muthkani*. In the settlements of Bamana-baram and Villumala, however, the forest department expressed its wishes in the selection of the assistant also. Since the assistant carries out the forest duties in the absence of the *Muthkani*, the forest department feels it necessary to see that he is well fit for the position.

When an important issue arises in the community the *Muthkani* sends his assistant to tell all the residents that such a case has happened, and that they should assemble in the house of the *Muthkani* for a meeting. The issues in which the decision of the whole community is required are sexual offences, stealing crops from another's fields, or serious quarrelling and assault. Occasions for these serious meetings, however, do not arise very often. The members of the settlement are called for a meeting by the *Muthkani* more often to receive instructions from the forest department regarding the work to be done. They are also accustomed to being called together once a year to be told by the *Muthkani* that they should bring offerings on the *Onam* festival, a day of religious importance in the beginning of September.

This meeting is called *Sabha* by the Kanikkars, and is termed as the *council* by Iyer. The *Sabha* is composed of the adult men of the settlement. No number is specified. Women may be included in certain cases of marriage decisions, but that is not common. The *Sabha* is supposed to be held in the *Pattupara* as mentioned previously, but it is usually held in the verandah of the *Muthkani's* house. A *pattupara* structure was found only in Koirakui and Villumala. In the three other settlements the yard or the verandah in front of the *Muthkani's* house was referred to as the *pattupara* by the inhabitants when they were directly asked about its existence. In these places it was stated that the separate *pattupara* structure had broken down or that a new one was to be built soon. Only in Koirakui was the *Sabha* held in the *pattupara*. Its use as a bachelor's dormitory, however, was here discarded. If anybody needed the place for sleeping he used it, but there was no regularity about it. In the Villumala settlement the *pattupara* was found to be used for purposes entirely different. Here religious meetings are held within it. It is not supposed to be used by the *Muthkani* for calling a *Sabha*, nor is it to be used as a bachelor's sleeping place. The residents of the settlement claim that the purpose of the *pattupara* structure here has always been for religious gatherings.

The political meetings are held on the verandah of the *Muthkani*, and this verandah is not referred to as the *pattupara* in this community.

The Kanikkars believe that the breach of certain rules is punishable. Traditionally in cases of serious offences the *Muthkani* is supposed to call a Sabha and discuss the offence. The members of the Sabha may suggest a punishment, and the *Muthkani* reaches a decision by talking it over with them. In cases of minor offences the *Muthkani* is to decide the punishment himself without calling a Sabha. In the present days, however, the *Muthkani* usually judges the offence himself and gives the punishments. Offences which violate the laws of the outside communities, such as stealing, assault and refusal to work for the Government are being punished more and more by the State. If any serious cases of these types take place, the *Muthkani* informs the forest guard, and the matter is settled by the forest officials. This is especially prevalent in the communities near the Plains.

The following offences are mentioned in order of gravity in the five settlements studied. The most serious offence of all in the sentiment of people is illicit relations between men and women of the same or non-marrying *illangal* (clans), and sexual indecencies in general. The offence mentioned next in seriousness is refusal to work for the forest department. Only in Chembikunnu is such an offence held casually. Stealing, quarrelling, lying to people, or using insulting language, and behaving badly in a Sabha are mentioned as offences in all communities, and their seriousness is judged according to the particular happening. Refusal to give the customary free service to the *Muthkani* once a year is mentioned as an offence but a minor one, and in Villumala such refusal is not an offence at all.

The Kanikkars expect chastity before marriage, and infractions are condemned but made to adjust themselves. Punishments inflicted for relations between men and women of the same or non-marrying clans are more severe than punishments for the same offence between men and women of marrying clans. In the first three communities an offending couple of the marrying clans is supposed to be punished in the following manner. The girl and the boy involved are asked to be present in a Sabha and be judged. This Sabha includes relatives of both parties besides the usual adult men of the village. In Chembikunnu it was related that sixteen relatives from both sides are asked to be present if they are

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13. B. Mukherjee, "Dual Organization among the Kanikkars of Travancore," *The Journal of the Indian Anthropological Institute*, 1948, pp. 47-55.

to be had. The girl and the boy are then individually fined, the sum of which is decided by the Sabha. The sum varies according to the ability of the persons to pay. In Koirakui it ranges from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 10/-, in Mottamudu about Rs. 5/- and in Chembikunnu from two annas to five rupees. The fine is divided among the people regardless of whether they are relatives or not. If the parties involved cannot pay at all they are just beaten. They are then asked to marry and no stigma is attached to them thereafter.

In the communities near the Plains the gathering of the Sabha in order to judge such offences is not mentioned by the informants. Here the Muthkani plays the main part in the judgment and carrying out of punishment. He slaps or beats the offenders and then asks them to marry.

In cases of sexual relations between persons of the same or non-marrying clans, however, the situation is more serious since the offending persons cannot make their relationship legal through marriage. In the first three communities the parties involved are supposed to be asked to be present before a Sabha and fined in the manner mentioned above. The cases indicate, however, that the headman may take care of the matter himself by punishing the persons concerned directly. After this they are supposed to be banned from the community and theoretically they should not be able to find accommodation in any other Kanikkar settlement. But actually in the present days complete excommunication is not common. On the other hand, each of the offending pair is asked to marry someone of the right clan. The men of the community get together and make suitable matches for the pair. No man can refuse to marry a girl in such a case if asked by the Muthkani to do so. Someone is to be compelled to marry her.

There was a case in Mottamudu of an illicit affair between a girl and a boy of the same clan, both of about twenty-five years of age but unmarried. The affair had continued for three months. The Muthkani was then informed of it by a close relative of the girl. He scolded the man involved, and drove him out of the settlement to settle elsewhere. The girl was married to a man of a proper clan a month after this incident. The girl was related to the Muthkani, and so he had an added incentive to compel a proper man to marry her. She was the Muthkani's elder sister's daughter's daughter. The Kanikkars accept the nearness of such relatives very casually.

Normally when a man marries he or his parents make selection

from the eligible girls of marriageable clans. These are supposed to be his cross-cousins, direct or classificatory. It is not always possible for a man to marry in his own settlement since the population is so small that no eligible girls may be found. The Kanikkars do not make children marry. Boys usually marry at the age of twenty, and girls at the age of sixteen. An exception was found in the Villumala settlement where girls of ages twelve and thirteen were married. This seemed to be an added indication of the Hinduization of the community, and the fear of molestation of girls by local men as expressed by the informants.

In cases of pregnancy or childbirth before marriage, if the persons involved are of marrying clans, they marry after they are judged and fined as described above. If the persons are of the same or nonmarrying clans they are made to marry into the proper clans right away. The children stay with the mother, and there is no stigma attached to them. Since a person belongs to his or her mother's clan, there is no confusion in tracing the descent of an illegitimate child.

In cases of illicit relations in which one or both parties are married the persons involved are supposed to be punished by fines in the presence of a Sabha, beaten, or excommunicated. But actually in the present day there does not seem to be any clear cut means of dealing with such cases. The tendency is to keep quiet about such matters and thereby dismiss them if possible. If they become public, however, the parties are punished and attempts are made to stop the affair. In Bamanabaram, for instance, once a young man was attempting to seduce a married woman. When found out, the man was scolded by the *Muthkani*, and told to sleep in the latter's house thereafter. The woman was not guilty, but she was beaten by her husband for leaving the house without his permission. The man in question was so ashamed that he left the community and went to work in a logging camp in Kuluthupuzha.

In the communities near the Plains there arises a new type of problem not present in the interior communities, that of affairs between Kanikkar woman and local men. Again in Bamanabaram an instance was cited of an affair between a married woman, and a local man of Assari caste. The latter was working in the forest area as a cattle boy and a grass cutter. He would come daily to cut grass near the house of the girl involved, and would laugh and joke with her. After three months this was found out by the members of the Kanikkar community. The Assari was beaten by these men. So, as reprisal, that night, the Assari brought some of his companions near the settlement

with offensive intentions. When the girl's family got news of the aggressive party, they came to the *Muthkani* for help. Nothing happened that night, but the next morning the *Muthkani* went to report to the range officer with the guard, and four men of the Assari's party. When the police inspector received the *Muthkani's* report, he instructed some police constables to arrest the aggressive party. All nine men of the Assari's party were arrested and brought before the range officer. The charge against the Assari party was illegal entry into the forest area. The men were finally let free after they were beaten by the range officer, and they had to promise never to enter the forest area again. They also gave one hundred rupees to the police. The husband of the girl involved gave the police fifteen rupees as a tip.

The types of sexual offences here mentioned are not reported frequently in any of the villages. In Koirakui and Chembikunnu no cases were cited to have happened in the village itself, and instances were given from other villages within the knowledge of the informants. In the other villages only two or three cases were cited in the lifetime of the elder men of the community. Of course, we have to realize that the population of the settlements is so small that there cannot be too many offences. And, moreover, such affairs may go on secretly without the knowledge of the residents, and also the informants may be shy to report the happenings. Therefore, no statements are here made on the frequency of such offences. It seems, however, that the informants were cross-examined so much that they would tell the truth only after their initial shyness. And only in Yillumala it was complained that affairs went on secretly without the knowledge of others. Such complaints were not heard in the other communities.

The offence most frequently cited among the Kanikkars is refusal to work for the government. In the communities near the Plains it is punished more severely than in the first three communities. Refusing to work for the government is instigated by demands of the government officers at irregular times that interfere with the normal activities inside the Kanikkar settlements. Thus in the Bamanabaram settlement it was stated that they are called to do boundary work at harvest time. So they cannot spend as much time working or supervising their own fields as they think necessary. Moreover, they get very little remuneration from the government. In all the settlements when a man finishes work on his own fields, he works on other's fields for either food, or money, or both. Thus they have a fixed income from the others

which is about Re. 1/- to Rs. 2/8/- per day, the amount increasing according to the nearness of the communities to the plains culture. In working for the government at this period, on the other hand, they get half or less than half of the above amount. Therefore, government work is not popular, and some people have to be forced to do it. Moreover, it is a foreign element to the indigenous Kanikkar culture, and in the communities where the people are not sophisticated enough to realize that they are working for the government as an obligation for the right to live in the reserved forests, it is hard to force people to do such work.

In the Koirakui settlement if a man refused to do government work, he would be given a good beating with cane or with hands. After such a beating he would follow the party to work. It was stated that such refusals were not very frequent, and, therefore, did not constitute a major problem.

In Mattamudu a few such cases were reported. The *Muthkani* scolded the offenders and told them to live near the boundary of the settlement. So when there is boundary making to be done these men cannot go elsewhere, and are compelled to do the work. Nobody here has been beaten for such an offence. Once or twice the *Muthkani* called the attention of the forest guard to the offending person, but otherwise he handled the situation himself.

In the Chembikunnu settlement there is no prescribed form of punishment for refusal to do government work. If anyone refuses to do it, he is told by the *Muthkani* to live at some distance from the settlement so that he will not be called to do the work. The *Muthkani* does not force anyone to it.

In the Bamanabaram settlement, however, people are forced to work for the government. The *Muthkani* first advises an offender telling him that he should not refuse. If the latter refuses again, he will be beaten by the *Muthkani* and will be threatened with the prospect of having to leave the settlement. After this threat he is expected to work, but if he does not do so even then the *Muthkani* tells him to leave the settlement. Seven families have been driven out because of this offence. The men of each of the families were warned by the *Muthkani* five times, but still they would not work. So the *Muthkani* drove them out. These cases happened over a period of seven years. The first family was driven out nine years ago, and the last two years ago. The *Muthkani* made the decisions regarding these families him-

self with the help of the forest guard. He did not call any Sabha. The persons evicted then settled outside the reserved forests on registered lands, and worked as coolies in the plantations or industries nearby. They show thereby a tendency that when members of the community become individuated enough to want to live apart from their protected forest life, they assert themselves by refusing to work for the government.

In Villumala no specific types of punishment were related. It was the general assertion that the *Muthkani* would make a man work even if he did not want to do it. But the actual occurrences of such cases could not be disclosed.

There is not much stealing in the Kanikkar villages, and if there is, it is in the form of stealing crops from the fields. Stealing is usually judged and punished by the *Muthkani* himself. If the quantity stolen is large, the *Muthkani* may take some action against it by asking the man to give back the amount stolen. Or the man may be warned not to do it again, and be asked to compensate in money. As the Kanikkars do not steal outside their tribal community, the forest range office does not need to be informed. If the offending person is incorrigible, the *Muthkani* may threaten to report him to the forest guard of the area. However, if the quantity stolen is small and there are no definite clues as to who stole it, or if the man who stole is in great need, the *Muthkani* overlooks the misdeed. The attitude taken is that one has plenty, the other has little, and so there is no harm if the latter takes a little from the former. The Kanikkars hardly, if ever, steal articles other than food.

In Koirakui if a man cannot return the articles stolen, or if he is so poor that he cannot pay the cost of the articles, he will be just beaten. In Mottamudu five cases were reported to have happened of men stealing harvests from others' fields, such as tapioca, areca nut, etc. When a man was found to steal, he was taken to the *Muthkani* who scolded the man in such language and manner that he was impressed not to do it again. The man was also asked to compensate in money. In Chembi-kunnu where also edible things were stolen, if the thief was caught he was taken to the *Muthkani* who questioned him and insulted him in public. The man was asked to compensate for the things stolen either in money or in goods. If he was unable to compensate, however, he was left alone. Nevertheless, if he repeated the offence, he was asked to borrow the money and pay the compensation.

Some young members of Chembikunnu were interviewed by the writer. They admitted that crops were stolen from their fields. One young man was the brother of the *Muthkani*.<sup>o</sup> He said that when his tapioca was stolen, the *Muthkani*, although he knew who stole it, did nothing. On the other hand, the latter told his brother that the quantity stolen was not much, and he had enough tapioca in his house, whereas the man who stole had none, and, therefore, the latter should be allowed to keep it.

Another young man related, however, that a year ago one maund of tapioca was stolen from his fields and he found out who did it. So he went to the *Muthkani* and reported the matter. They told about it to the guard in charge of the area. Then all three of them went to the house of the offender and found the tapioca. The man had hidden it, but the guard searched the house and found it. The latter then beat the offender, and in the presence of the guard, and the *Muthkani*, the tapioca was weighed. The offender was asked to pay Rs. 2/8/- the price of a maund of tapioca.

These two cases cited are different in nature, and illustrate the different approaches of the *Muthkani* to stealing. Stealing by one who does not have enough to eat is treated considerably. Also the latter case reveals that the role of the forest guard in the supervision of the Kanikkar communities is increasing. Although the headmen of the communities do not always admit the power of the guard, investigations in the matter tend to bring it out.

In Bamanabaram one or two cases of stealing tapioca, paddy, etc. occur during harvest time every year. According to the headman, only the poor people steal. So sometimes they do not even care to find out who did it. Nobody ever broke into the house to steal. The *Muthkani* said that nobody would dare to do so since almost all of them had guns. There was no fear of stealing money, since they never kept it in the house. Whatever amount of money they had they always kept it on their person. There was a case, however, of the *Muthkani's* gun being stolen once. This was done by a local man. It was reported to the police, who investigated the matter and returned the gun to the headman. The man who stole it was sent to prison for one year.

In Villumala the *Muthkani* stated that theoretically he is supposed to inform the forest department if there is any stealing, and the latter in turn is to report it to the police. But no case has been dealt with in this manner here. Both the *Muthkani* and his assistant asserted that



what little stealing takes place is from the fields, and even that is not very often. But if it does the *Muthkani* beats the offender to give him a lesson.

The increasing contact between the Kanikkars and the local men has brought about more conflict in the nature of serious quarrels and assaults. Quarrelling was considered to be an offence in Pachipara, Motamudu, and Chembikunnu, where it took place sometimes between the members of the settlement over decisions such as the division of land, or some minor issues. The informants stated that these quarrels were usually of a minor nature. In Bamanabaram and Villumala the same type of quarrels occurred, but above them were the incidents of quarrelling between Kanikkars and local men which resulted in serious assaults. In Bamanabaram disputes sometimes arose as to which land one should cultivate. One inherits the land of cultivation from one's father, or his mother's brother or both, but he also extends his land by adding to it some parts himself. The disputes may arise during this extension. Or they may be between the son and the nephew of a deceased as to who will inherit the land. Such disputes were settled by the *Muthkani* by scolding the parties, making a division of the property, and telling the persons to preserve peace. In Villumala also disputes were admitted to arise over the boundaries of paddy fields. In one such case that occurred in the year previous to this investigation, the two men who were quarrelling were brought before the *Muthkani*. He slapped them, took them to the fields, and showed them their boundaries. Quarrels between Kanikkars and local men, however, arise over issues of trespassing the forest territory. The Kanikkars have the right to forbid all trespassers. Or the conflicts take place over the attempts of local men to seduce Kanikkar girls. One such case has already been mentioned. Other cases have been related to the writer in Bamanabaram that have led to beating and blood-shed, and the forest officers have had to step in to pass judgments and to preserve peace.

No cases were reported, however, in any of the settlements of the Kanikkars ever murdering a man, whether Kanikkar or any other. In Bamanabaram the headman recalled a story that when his ancestors settled in that locality some seventy-five years ago they had to fight with the local men. In the skirmish two of the latter were killed. But there have been no killing of men individually in the nature of murder even in stories.

Lying was reported as an offence, but not a very serious one. The

feeling was that most people do lie, but as long as it does not hurt anybody it does not matter. But if a man lies on a matter of importance and injures another by his pervication, he will be punished by the *Muthkani* with a beating. But usually for telling lies, or using insulting language to anybody, or misbehaving in public, a man will be warned not to do it again. The *Muthkani* of Villumala settlement stated that stealing, quarrelling, and lying increased with greater contact of the Kanikkars with the Plains people, and that in the old days the Kanikkars were honest. There is no doubt that truthfulness is regarded as a virtue among the Kanikkars regardless of whether it is practised or not.

The last offence mentioned is the refusal of free service to the *Muthkani's* fields one day a year. It is a custom among them that every able Kanikkar man must give this service, They may work there together, or they may work individually, according to their convenience. Giving this service for one day is the same as a man working on another's fields any other day, except that he does not claim any wage for it. In all settlements except Villumala it was reported that men give this service freely one day a year without compulsion, or that if any one refused to do so he would be brought under compulsion. In Koirakui a man would be fined two annas if he is considered rich, and will be beaten if he is poor. Such punishments are said to drive a man to work. In Mottamudu, Chembikunnu, and Bamanabaram, however, if it was inconvenient for anyone to render this free service the *Muthkani* would wait until the person found it convenient to do so. No punishments were given. In Villumala, on the other hand, custom was looked upon as a matter of the past. Here the *Muthkani* and the others stated that people used to work free on the *Muthkani's* fields one day a year, and now some may do it, but no demands are made for this service.

In conclusion it may be said that this paper indicates the prevailing tendency of disruption of the integrated tribal culture of the Kanikkars. The system of inheritance of the title of the headman seems to have undergone much change, especially now that it needs the approval of the forest range officer in some communities. There do not seem to be any uniformities as to when the Sabha should be called and when they are actually called. The power of the headman does not seem to be clearly defined, and in the present days it seems to have augmented by the decline of the Sabha, and the recognition given to him by the State for supervising forest work. But at the same time his power has declined, since the forest guard now performs many of the duties of the headman, and is looked up to by the latter. Also the lack of uniformity in the methods of punishment between the traditional and the modern ways is noticeable.

## GODDI KINSHIP AND AFFINAL TERMS

By *W. H. Newell*

**T**HE Gaddi people live in the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh on both sides of the upper Ravi river and the Budi Nadi. They are primarily an agricultural people but during the winter, when much of their territory lies under snow, they leave their homes for lower altitudes, either working in the capital, Chamba, or else crossing over the 15,000' Dhaula Dhar range to work in the Kangra Plains. Certain families in each village also own large numbers of sheep which they graze on the upper slopes of the ranges during the summer or on the Kangra plains during the winter. To those who have never been to Bharmaur, the *tahsil* where they live, the Gaddis are regarded as wanderers but, in actual fact, every Gaddi has a fixed habitation, which only lack of food and unpleasant weather conditions compel him to leave during the winter.

They wear a distinctive costume woven from their own wool with a woollen rope round their waist and both men and women can be easily distinguished from other Hindu inhabitants of the district. To outsiders the term Gaddi is accordingly used to describe all those who wear this costume but to the Gaddis themselves the term Gaddi is only used to describe the middle castes. A Brahmin Gaddi will always call himself a Brahmin, a Rajput Gaddi will nearly always call himself Rajput. It is only the Khattris, certain Thakurs and Rathis who, when asked their caste will reply "I am a Gaddi". Sipis and other low castes on the other hand, are looked down upon and none of the higher castes will ever consider them Gaddis, even though they wear the *chola* like any other citizen of Bharmaur. All Gaddis are devout Hindus and certain of the Rajput castes have a tradition that they were driven from Lahore by Aurangzeb for their religious convictions. Be that as it may, there is little doubt that there was a strong Hindu community in Bharmaur, at least 700 years before these refugees arrived and it seems more likely that these immigrants merely took a place in the social system which was already firmly established. One reason for this belief is that in an old MS preserved by a Brahmin in Bharmaur, a description is given of the

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I heard of no examples of going up a caste.

origin of the names of the Gaddi *als* (*gotra* subdivision). These *gotras* are however distributed among *all* castes. To give an illustration only from the Bashisht *gotra*.

Brahmin Bashist *gotras* consist of the Sumpolu, Kelelu, Mat, Juku, Maratu, Jirg, Bhuksan, Lungi, Chupetu, Chabaru, Tiperelu, Changeru, Bardan, Sadrantu, Chatameru, Pargis, Bagran, Paten, Sundete, Bani, Muradu, Luttu, Chakerotu *als*, a total of 24.

Rajput Besisht *gotras* consist of Tregah, Suketia, Pukeru, Kershan, Cheretu and Aerial *als*, a total of 7 Khatri Besisht *gotras* consist of Chotar, Singran, 2 *als*. Tarkar Besisht *gotras* consist of Chotar, Singran, 2 *als*. Out of 35 *als* of a Brahmin *gotra* no less than 11 are now classified as lower castes. In the Utum *gotra* the corresponding figures are Brahmin 5, Rajput, 10, Khatri 11, Tarkar 9. This distribution of *gotras* among all castes is puzzling to some Gaddis themselves. The same *parohit* who owned the MS above explained it in the case of some *gotras* by the following story.

A *risne*, one of the original founders of Bharmaur lived a very wicked life and horns started to grow out of his head. He performed a big *yagham* ceremony to avert this disaster and to have the horns removed. Those who took part in this ceremony were made Brahmins and those who did not became Rajputs and Khatri. This Brahmin stated however that this applied only to certain *gotras* such as Bahradwaj but he could not say what others.

An alternative explanation of this mixing of *gotras* among castes is to assume that each family had the *gotra* system before the caste system was inaugurated. There is no evidence to shew this was the case.

A third explanation is that of intermarriage. This is extremely unusual between castes however. The only example that could be remembered in the whole village was the following. "Durga's grandfather from Kale village was Sunkal *gotra* and Kola *al*. He fell in love with a Sipi (low caste) in another village so his children became Sipsis because he went to live with her. Hence Durga is a Sipi with a Brahmin *gotra* and *al*. However he has the same *burton* (systems of gift exchange on ceremonial occasions) as his grandfather and now lives in Kharia village. It is only the caste and place of residence which is changed in a case like this. All else is the same although of course no *parohit* (priest) would be willing to perform such a marriage". It is my belief that the number of non-Brahmin *gotras* is due to this inter-caste

marriage. Its great infrequency at the present time presupposes that the Gaddis must have lived at Brahmaur for a long while if the frequency remained the same. There is also a certain amount of archaeological evidence for the long period of time the Hindu form of society has been at Bharmaur. This is all summarized in Vogel's "Antiquities of Chamba" and so will not be mentioned here.

At birth a Gaddi acquires rights and duties in four main interlinked systems, the village community, the *gotra* system, the caste system and the relationship system. It is not possible to understand the fourth without saying first a few words about the first three. In Margaret Meade's "Kinship in the Admiralty Islands"<sup>1</sup> it is said about the Manus system that it can be regarded "as a system of legal devices, of possible categories in terms of which an individual may act. The intelligent and enterprising invoke these categories to suit their own economic ends. "To understand trade" in Manus means actually to understand the manipulation of the kinship categories, to exploit one's possible relationship claims to the full and to be able to find ways of rewriting any relationship should it seem desirable. Samoan society presents the picture of a fixed hierarchy into which the able climb. Manus presents each individual with a set of possibilities which the most able will recognise and use". The Gaddi system shows features both of the possibilities of manipulation of the kinship systems for individual ends and that of a fixed hierarchy into which the able climb. But to a very great extent the "fixed hierarchy" of the kinship values has been replaced by values outside the system, the caste and *gotra* systems and the manipulation of relationship terms for personal ends is done almost entirely through the manipulation of only those terms through affines. Again the manipulation of the kinship system for their own ends means in Manus economic ends, but in Brahmaur it is less economic than what for a want of a better word I will call prestige. Every Gaddi has two separate sorts of economic transactions, one which is determined by a system of gift exchange between individuals, between groups and between one group in one caste and one in another. These arrangements known as *burton* are determined by tradition and by what one's father did. I can ask certain Sipis to carry slates from the valley up for my roof without payment but at harvest time these Sipis will attend and I will give them a certain traditional

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(1) Margaret Meade, Vol. XXXIV American Museum of Natural History, NY 1934, P. 310.

share of my harvest. The other sort of economic transaction is the "normal" type of transaction, the attempt to sell one's goods or one's labour for as much as possible and in return to make as much money as possible. But this type of economic activity is not an end in itself but is almost always an attempt either to get oneself married or one's sons or one brother's sons. These marriages in turn will give one increased opportunities to make use of one's affines to make more money, and so on. At the same time by having a well-built house, by being able to help destitute villagers of the same caste related to you, by celebrating a big *narwala* (all night vigil and feast dedicated to Siva) one acquires status in one's community. But the connecting links in this process are kinship terms acquired through affines.

A village consists of those people of different castes and *gotras* who own houses in a certain area or who are related to some person owning houses in that area. Gaddi houses are very substantial edifices often three stories high and consisting of at least fifteen rooms. Usually each separate family unit owns one floor of the house belonging to the whole joint family. They are made of both wood and stone and have heavy slate roofs. Each village is within half a mile of another and consists of about 20 families on an average. The biggest village among the Gaddis is Bharmaur, (which had perhaps 80 families) and in some cases the village consists of only one family who has lived on one spot for generations and has gradually dwindled. During the course of time it has often happened that the fields belonging to some village have been sold by its owner to someone else living elsewhere so that sometimes half the fields round a village belong to non-residents. Ownership of such a field gives one no rights in the adjoining village. On the other hand it sometimes happens on the contrary that a person has no fields at all and has to make his living by depending on the charity of his neighbours or by helping in the fields during the busy season. Such a man is a member of the village if he owns a house there. In the village of Goshen in which I stayed during October and November of 1951, of 20 families the heads of all the families except one had their great grandfathers also members of the village. The one exception was in the case of a family who had land both at Chobia village and at Goshen and had divided the land up between two brothers one living in one place and one at the other. However the village also consisted of a number of people who had come to live there, through relationship with someone there. This is often but not necessarily for economic reasons. Other reasons for changing one's residence is because your uncle has no

son, because in your own village the division of the land does not give you enough to live on, and so on. In addition there are also those women who have married into village families. There are also numbers of families who are forced to leave the village for economic reasons. In Goshen out of the 20 families, two were brassworker Sipis who held no land. There was no work for any of the brothers. One Ranake had 5 brothers and 3 sisters, all of whom were married. At his table for him to support was his wife, his three sons, two daughters and his daughter's child (her husband having died), a total of eight people. Also in the village in the adjoining house was his elder brother's son, wife and child. All his four younger brothers were forced to go elsewhere for a living.

In spite of the long history of most of the Gaddi villages, the ties of village will never weigh as heavily on the conscience of a person as those of caste or kin affiliations. Most of Goshen villages consisted of Rajputs and the three Sipi families were called in for their professional functions of playing musical instruments and making brassware when either was needed but there was no feeling of responsibility towards them. Because of the weakness of village ties *per se* the strength of other ties is correspondingly strengthened. In a Gaddi village there are no village work-groups doing things communally as in other parts of the world. Of course there are communal groups doing work on each other's fields and helping each other cut wood in the *chhei* for marriage but this is based not on territorial propinquity but on the principle of *burton* (gift and labour exchange) or on individual requests<sup>1</sup>.

Every person belongs also to a special *gotra* and *al*. The *gotra* in certain respects could be regarded as a clan presided over by the senior living male member were it not for the fact that it does not appear to me to be thought of as a descent group from an ancestor at all. The attitude seems to be far more that of a label which describes one's own family in preference to all others. The best parallel outside India could well be the English surname. Every *gotra* is divided up into a number of *als*. One old Brahmin told me that these *als* were originally means of describing two brothers who separated and adopted these names. To an average Gaddi however an *al* and a *gotra* is really the same thing and a

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(1) This is a very relevant point with reference to the Indian Government proposal to set up *panchayats*, because it is too easily assumed that the village is the natural unit for community of interest just because of the fact that the inhabitants are territorially adjacent. *Panchayats* might heighten differences inside the village based on kin or caste differences.

Gaddi when asked his *gotra* will say either his *gotra* or *al* name depending on his personal attitude. The *gotra*'s main practical use in the kinship system is by describing a group the members of whom cannot marry. If one cannot marry within a *gotra* it also follows that one cannot marry within an *al*. It is the *parohits* who pay special attention to this matter and in the case of someone who knew his *al* name but not his *gotra* the *parohits* would prohibit the marriage if the couple were of the same *gotra*. The origins of *als* are lost in the midst of antiquity. The following are some of the typical meanings which a well-educated Brahmin will tell you. An ordinary Gaddi does not know them however and his attitude is much the same as in English society to someone who gives one the meaning of one's Christian name. These are all Basisht Rajput *gotra als*.

Tregan Used a measure of yarn instead of an arrow.

Suketia said "I am always happy" (Suki).

Pukeru liking for killing birds.

Hershan Father used to say "har, har" (Shiva).

Purshan a stout man.

Cheretu suffered from *chereda* (scabies).

Aerial Inhabitant of Aura village (opposite Dragetti below Kunni village, about 10 miles away down the valley).

In making a list of those people in the village together with the names of their relatives, I tried to obtain not only the names of their *gotras* but also their *als*. Among those people who were living, this was not very difficult but I was surprised how often a person could not remember the name of his father's father nor the name, *gotra* or *al* of his father's mother. One's *name* is one's personal possession and once one is dead one's name is dead too; one's *gotra* is a family possession but it does not consist of all those living and dead descended from a common ancestor but those related in ways other than through marriage with the senior living male member. It is true that theoretically in the marriage ceremony the senior living father's elder brother of the bride goes through the ceremony of transferring her from her *gotra* to that of her new husband but if asked her *gotra* she will always first say her father's *gotra* in preference to her own. But with this exception there is no means of acquiring a *gotra* other than the one in which one is born. The *gotra* is not a worshipping community and there appear to be no



worship of ancestors among the Gaddis<sup>2</sup>. In this respect the Indian *gotra* is quite different from the African systems described in "African Systems of Kinship and Marriage", of the Chinese systems and of the Roman systems<sup>3</sup>. Again in the matter of inheritance, the unit was the living joint family of brothers and their descendants and to claim part of one's inheritance, one has not so much to prove one's *gotra* as to show one's relationship as a male heir to one's father. There is no feeling in favour of keeping one's joint family intact and, in the normal course of events, on getting married one would naturally set up a separate hearth and claim one's share of the inheritance. No regular services or ceremonies are held in honour of one's dead ancestors, other than the commemorative services to someone who has just died and the ceremony known as *saradh*. But this ceremony is not an individual itemisation of the names of those who are dead but seems to just express the respect which one owes to those who were before oneself in the *gotra* system. Whereas in China over one's ancestral altar one has an "original" ancestor from whom all are descended, among the

(2) One possible exception to this might be that when a couple die without male children, a carving of a man and wife are set up before the village shrine. However I think it is more likely that this is connected with the idea that the task of man is to worship, and that when there is no one living to do so then the image must do it. But it is a worship of Shiva, not one's ancestors.

(3) "African Systems of Kinship and Marriage" edited by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde, International African Institute, 1950. The best description of the Chinese system is "The development of terminology of kinship in the Chinese family and the relationship between kinship terminology and the foundation of the family" by Ruey I Fu in the "Min Chu Shue Nian Jiou Chih Kan" for August 8th 1948 (in Chinese). The Roman system at first seems to have a superficial resemblance to the Gaddi system. De Coulanges says "Pour qu'elle entre dans la nouvelle religion (meaning family worship of ancestors) elle doit être dégagee de tout lien et de toute attache avec sa religion première". In the house the bride touches the sacred fire and eats (p. 44). But he latter goes on to say "Or, une antique croyance commandait l'homme d'honorer l'ancêtre; le culte de l'ancêtre a groupé la famille autour d'un autel. De la première religion, les premières prières, la première idée au devoir et la première morale; de là aussi la propriété établie l'ordre de la succession fixe; de là enfin tout le droit privé et toutes les règles de l'organisation domestique. Puis la croyance grandit et l'association en même temps. A mesure que les hommes sentent qu'il y a pour eux des divinités communes ils s'unissent en groupes plus étendus. Les mêmes règles, trouves et établies dans la famille, s'appliquent successivement à la phratrie, à la tribu, à la cité. (Fustel de Coulanges "La Cité Antique" Librairie Hachette 1885 p. 148) In Rome the principal cult of the fire and of ancestors gradually extends until it covers all forms of association, the clan, tribe and city. But among the Gaddis this very same principle which might once have been important is shrinking until the caste, the village and almost all other forms of organisation are covered by rules based on different principles, mainly religious, marriage as a sacrament, the importance of caste brotherhood and so on. The differences between African, Chinese, Roman and Gaddi systems is very important because the use of the words. "clan and ancestor worship" to cover the very broad differences in custom is likely to be more confusing than helpful in understanding Gaddi society.

Gaddi it is though the living count backwards from themselves and have just kept the ceremony as a regular part of the yearly ceremonies, but which is peculiar to themselves alone and is not a village or caste affair. However I must admit that this whole question requires further study and investigation on the part of an observer. What however is quite certain is that the *gotra* is not regarded as those people who are descended from a common ancestor as opposed to another *gotra* descended from the brother of the ancestor of that *gotra*. There are no "maximal and minimal lineages" in the sense that Dr. Fortes uses the words in Africa<sup>1</sup> as the people do not think of their *gotra* as a descent group but as a large family of living people having ties of blood with each other and performing certain actions in common and being linked together by ties other than marriage. The commonest two occasions in which the unity and solidarity of the *gotra* receive open expression lies in the marriage and funeral of a member. In the various ceremonies round the *bedi* at marriage the oldest father's brother hands his daughter or niece to the bridegroom's father. But only he is present at the ceremony. Other *gotra* members do not have to be present to certify this transaction. At the wedding not only are *gotra* people present but also guests and the bridegroom's people. At death however only members of the *gotra* are present. If the person who has died is a woman however, mourning and wailing take place at both her husband's and her own home with the two *gotras* separate. Both families have a ceremony at which the *parohit* must preside shewing that although the woman, theoretically changes her *gotra* at marriage, at the same time she is a loss to her parent's *gotra*. Nevertheless, in spite of this in former times, if her husband died she was under an obligation to marry one of his brothers. I am afraid I did not get an opportunity of attending a death ceremony in a woman's father's home so that I cannot say whether the mourning is due to the fact that her *gotra* lost a member or whether it is merely a ceremony shewing the final stage in the process when the girl leaves her family at marriage, a continuation of that *rite de passage*.

The following list of kinship terms reflects the *gotra* system. Figures in brackets are the wives or husbands of the persons concerned.<sup>2</sup>

(1) Meyer Fortes, "Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi", Oxford University Press, 1949, Part one.

(2) These kinship terms do not claim to be complete. There are many alternative and often the Urdu terms are used instead of the Gaddi terms.

*3rd generation up*

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Father's father's father | <i>Purdadu (Purdadi)</i> |
| Mother's father's father | <i>Purnanu (Purnani)</i> |

*2nd generation up*

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Father's father | <i>Dadu (dadi)</i> |
| Mother's father | <i>Nanu (nani)</i> |

*1st generation up*

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Father                                       | <i>Chach (ijji)</i>         |
| Father's brother (elder)                     | <i>To (tei)</i>             |
| Father's brother (younger)                   | <i>Kaka (kakt)</i>          |
| Mother's brother, father's<br>wife's brother | <i>Manma (manmi)</i>        |
| Father's sister                              | <i>Bubi (buba)</i>          |
| Mother's sister                              | <i>Masi (masard, mausa)</i> |

*Same generation*

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| Brother, father's brother's<br>son, mother's brother's<br>son, father's sister's son,<br>mother's sister's son                            | <i>Bhai (babi, buraji)</i> |
| Sister, father's brother's<br>daughter, mother's<br>brother's daughter,<br>father's brother's<br>daughter, mother's sister's<br>daughter. | <i>Bahan (banwa)</i>       |

*1st generation down*

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Son  | <i>Buter, beta (nuhu)</i>  |
| Daughter   | <i>Dhiu, beti (Jawayi)</i> |
| Brother's son  | <i>Badria, bhataja</i>     |
| Brother's daughter   | <i>Badre, bhateji</i>      |
| Sister's son, wife's sister's son  | <i>Bhanerja</i>            |
| Sister's daughter, wife's sister's<br>daughter, husband's<br>sister's daughter | <i>Bhanerja</i>            |

*2nd generation down*

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Son's son, daughter's son              | <i>Puteru</i>   |
| Son's daughter, daughter's<br>daughter | <i>Dhioteru</i> |

In the above terms one will see a distinction between one's father's father's *gotra* and one's father's mother's *gotra* by the use of different terms. There is a distinction between one's father's elder brother and father's younger brother based upon the additional respect towards the head of one's *gotra*. There is also a distinction between the attitude towards one's mother's relatives and one father's. In the marriage ceremony the mother's brother plays an important part in giving away the bride (but not the bridegroom). He is responsible for bringing the *bedi* to his sister's home and he is religiously superior to other relatives in the ceremony. As the bridegroom is represented as a god in his family, so is the mother's brother represented as the religious representative of a goddess, his sister's daughter, in the ceremony. One verse of a song the women sing in the marriage ceremony known as the *kunia dhan*, giving away of the bride, is as follows.

*Nagar bajare badi bigandi  
are, Lia mere ohachuo  
bedi vikandi aie*

In the bazaar *bedis* are being sold, O father's brother, go to purchase the *bedi*

*Aisa kian leni mulakeri man  
gani Lia mera tawuo  
bedi Vikandi aie*

How can I buy? They are too dear, O father's elder brother, go to purchase the *bedi*

Answer by second group of girls.

*Chachu na landa,  
kaku na landa*

Father's younger brother will not buy it, father's elder brother will not buy it

*Le mere dermie moli ho  
Tawua na landa, bawua  
na landa*

O pious mother, go to buy it Uncle will not buy it, brother will not buy it

*Le mere dermie moli ha*

O pious mother go to buy it.

But this *bedi* is bought not by the mother but by her brother shewing clearly that he is his sister's representative and that his sister still has religious rights in her own family<sup>1</sup>.

This distinction between the different uncles is not however carried on to their sons, all of whom are brothers. In the first descending

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(1) This type of religious descent through females reminds one very strongly of the attitude towards sister in Tonga. In a Gaddi village there is a very marked division between the sexes which is reflected in a constant suspicion of the female sex's chastity on the one hand, and in the male's attention to women on the other. I always had to be extremely careful always to talk to the women in the presence of a male relative. See E. W. Gifford, "Tongan Society", Bernice Puani Museum Honolulu, 1934.

generation a religious distinction is again made between descendants of one's sister and brother. The *bhanerja* is regarded in a different way by his uncle from either the uncle's *bhanerja* or sons. As one Gaddi said to me, "Just as I respect a cow so also do I respect my *bhanerja*". The attitude to both is a very good parallel.

In the second generation down there is a distinction of sex only, just as among *EGO*'s own generation. It is interesting to note the various emphasis in this system.

- (a) The vertical principle of descent and *gotra* affiliation is only made a mark of distinction in the senior father's, grandfather's and great grandfather's generation.
- (b) The principle of alternate generation shown as it is expressed through the pairing of generations. The father's generation and his son's generation form a block linked by the religious ties of mother's brother to his sister's son and daughter, by the relation of father to son and mother to daughter. As a *bhai* has special duties towards each one of his father's generation's relatives so does a *dhioteru* have towards his senior generation. In the village in which I stayed there was only one grandfather with grandchildren more than a few years old so that I could not observe any special attitude of the grandfather to his grandchildren. However on one occasion I visited another village with a bride at the *sudenej* ceremony (in which the bride finally goes to her husband's home, a year after marriage) and the principal part of the leader of the bride's party was taken not by the bride's father but by her grandfather. Just as brother and sister are all equal no matter who their father were so are grandsons all equal in respect to their fellows. <sup>1</sup>
- (c) The marked distinction in functions of the senior generation. Since the Gaddis are patrilocal, the head of the joint family is the economic head of the family but because of the attitude of the Hindu religion towards the relationship of the sexes, there is a marked religious community between a man and the children of his sister.

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(1) See A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, "Study of Kinship Systems" in the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society for 1941. He has enlarged on this principle of alternate generations somewhat more fully in "African Systems of Kinship and Marriage" p. 27.

This is not to say that women are allowed to control a ceremony but there is a realization on the part of the men during the marriage ceremony that they are the delegates of the women. This is reflected in the six separate terms for father's generation.

I should mention here that these groups of relatives cannot be expanded or contracted at will like those connected through affinity mentioned below. Since a relationship more than two generations up is usually forgotten the use one can oneself make of these relatives for economic or other transaction is more or less beyond one's control. If your father had only one brother or sister there is nothing one can do about it.

I have dealt with the village system, and the *gotra* system in so far as it modifies the kinship system; I will now deal with the third factor, the caste system. The caste system is mainly of use as a means of controlling marriage. The caste rule is this "No person may marry outside his own caste". This rule is modified by the fact that for purposes of caste, Brahmins are regarded as one caste; Rajputs, Khatri (Jats) and Thakurs as one caste; and Rathis and Sipis as a third and fourth. All men of one caste within the above limits can eat common food and sit round a common fire drinking *sur* (a mild sort of beer) together. In the village of Goshen, of 20 families, all Rajputs married Rajputs except one girl who married a Khatri in Mulkota village. The other exception is that in the case of a widow remarriage, the widow can marry someone of a lower caste. The ceremonies at which widows get remarried are however considerably different from an ordinary marriage. The caste system is very rigorously enforced and no one whom I asked could think of any instance other than the one mentioned on the first page of caste infringement. Caste for the purposes of this article is a principle of horizontal stratification within which the advantages to be gained through affines may work.

*Affinal terms.*

Husband

*Lara* (literally bridegroom). The wife addresses her husband as *ji*, *abo* or *area*.

Wife

*Lari*. Husband uses personal name in direct address.

Husband's father, wife's father *Khora, jabra.*

Husband's mother, wife's mother *Khaho, jabri.*

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Wife's brother   | <i>Sala (salan).</i>         |
| Wife's sister  | <i>Sali (sadhu).</i>         |
| Husband's sister's son, wife's<br>sister's son           | <i>Bhanerja.</i>             |
| Husband's sister's daughter, wife's<br>sister's daughter | <i>Bhanerji.</i>             |
| Wife's brother's son                                     | <i>Bhatija.</i>              |
| Wife's brother's daughter                                | <i>Bhatiji.</i>              |
| Husband's elder brother                                  | <i>Jheti (jhetan).</i>       |
| Husband's elder brother's son                            | <i>Jheputra.</i>             |
| Husband's elder brother's daughter                       | <i>Jhetutri.</i>             |
| Husband's younger brother                                | <i>Deor (deoran).</i>        |
| Husband's younger brother's son                          | <i>Deoratra.</i>             |
| Husband's younger brother's<br>daughter                  | <i>Deoratri.</i>             |
| Husband's sister   | <i>Rhanu (bhanwa, bhai).</i> |
| Children's wives' father, children's<br>husbands' father | <i>Kurmu.</i>                |
| Children's wives' mother, children's<br>husbands' mother | <i>Kurmuni.</i>              |

From the above list, which is not complete as all alternative terms have not been written down, it can be seen that there are almost as many affine terms as there are of those who can trace direct relationship to the *gotra*. It is just as though, as soon as a person is dead, the community loses all interest in him, and tries to extend as far as possible among those who are related to *EGO* by marriage.

In Bharmaur the following principles are expressed.

- (a) There is no distinction between individual families and lineal ancestors as in China where the father's father and the father's brother are addressed differently. In the Gaddi kinship system there is no difference and I have tried to show that the *gotra* is not a clan in that sense as in Africa, China or Rome.
- (b) Patrilineal or matrilineal emphasis. Among generations senior to *EGO* there is a patrilineal emphasis with the exception of the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son in which there is a relationship between mother and daughter. (Certain gifts are always

given by the mother to the daughter in the *saj* ceremony after marriage, saris, rings, a trousseau box and so on. This is the girl's possession (not her husband's). In the generations below *EGO* there is no emphasis expressed in the terminology, all grandchildren being called by the same term.

- (c) Generation: A very clear distinction, no two generations being called by the same term. This is modified in practice by age; however, a person of the same age as oneself being called by a reciprocal term even though of a different generation.
- (d) Sex: There are two principles of sex differentiation. In Gaddi language the feminine of a noun is made by adding "i". The second principle is in forming an entirely new word. Both means are used to express the feminine. But in all cases the "i" ending means the wife of the person concerned with the following exceptions.

The sister of one's brother's son, *Bhaterja* is *bhateji*.

The sister of one's sister's son, *bhanerja* is *bhanerji*.

The sister of one's wife's brother, *sale* is *sali*.

The sister of one's husband's elder brother's son, *jhetutra* is *jhetutri*.

The sister of one's husband's younger brother's son, *deoratra* is *deoratri*.<sup>1</sup>

I should like to suggest that these five apparent exceptions to the rule that the ending "i" indicates a wife is due to the fact that with respect to *EGO*, one's attitude is one of complete equality to them both irrespective of sex, and that their husbands or wives, are not regarded as the equivalent of their husbands in the same way as for example, the husband's elder brother's wife partakes of the authority of the husband's elder brother. For example as a man will co-operate and regard almost as his greatest friend his *sala*, so will he joke and make fun of his *sala's* sister, just as she will tease him unmercifully in public. In fact it is possible for a man to marry his *sali*. Similarly a man has equal responsibilities to his *bhateja* and *bhateji*, his *bhanerja* and *bhanerji*, just as his wife has towards her husband's brother's children.

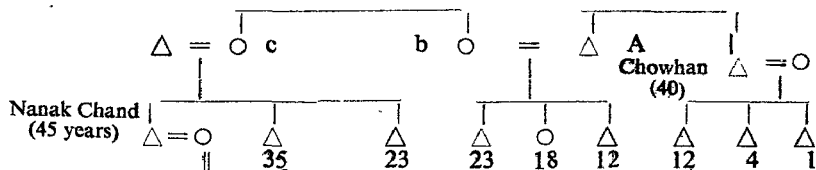
- (e) Age and seniority: In *EGO's* own generation, one can call one's elder brother *mota bhai* and one's younger brother

(1) I have not included son, *beta* and daughter, *beti* in this list as they are, properly speaking Urdu words and are by no means as common among Gaddis as *pater* and *dhiu*.



*niko bhai*. *Mota* and *niko* are the usual words for big and small. With this exception all seniority is based upon that of age. The rule is that in greeting a relative of the same male sex, if senior to bend down and touch his feet as though you were putting dirt from under his feet upon your head, if contemporary with you, to raise your hand to your forehead and to use the greeting "Salaam", and if junior to wait until he addresses you first. The distinction is between relatives and non-relatives, but once a relative the distinction is between people of different ages. It is possible to make different generations "equal" and to change one's relationship term by this means. Here is an example to show how this is possible and also to show how one can make use of certain relationships by marriage to strengthen feelings of friendship between people.

*Example* :—Nanak Chand is *sala* to Chowhan because Nanak Chand's mother was sister to Chowhan's brother's wife. In turn Chowhan is *banwa* to Nanak Chand. In the diagram blacked-in-figures signify death, eldest members of the family on the left.



As Chowhan's eldest brother, A, is dead, he takes his place, is responsible for bringing up the children, and, in former times, would have married b. Accordingly c is regarded as his wife's sister, *sali*. But as Nanak Chand is a few years senior to him in age he could hardly call him "wife's sister's son" so he becomes his *sala*. Conversely, Nanak Chand moves up to his dead mother's position and so calls Chowhan his sister's husband, *banwa*. This example was not very clear even to the two people concerned but the point was that because of this former marriage tie, they regarded themselves as relatives and were continually helping each other from mutual liking and so sought for some means of describing their relationship to each other which expressed this. The relation of "wife's sister's son" implies a form of inequality unsuitable to the way they were acting and unsuitable to their equal ages. If the

*Note*:—△ for males, ○ for females.

two people had disliked each other this relationship would not have been kept up and, if Nanak Chand marries again and has a child, may not be kept up by his successor.

This example also illustrates the way in which in the eyes of the Gaddi, marriage through affines is of more importance than relationship traced through one's grandfather or above. The link through brother and sister is of more importance than common descent from an ancestor. Because one's sister goes to another village, it does not mean she has broken her connection with her brother. In fact the opposite is the case. Because one loves one's sister, *therefore* the family into which she has married is to be specially helped and assisted. One's sister's children are to be specially honoured *because* of the affection, respect and love one has for one's sister.

It is important to note also that in the above terms through marriage, the wife has a different attitude towards the husband's elder brother (and his children) and the husband's younger brother (and his children). With the latter it is one of complete equality with a mutual joking relationship but with the former, it is one of respect with the covering of the head in his presence.

The rules of marriage are as follows :—

- (a) No person may marry anyone outside his own caste or within his own *gotra*. This is subject to the qualifications mentioned earlier.
- (b) No one is permitted to marry anyone if they have a common relative within three generations.

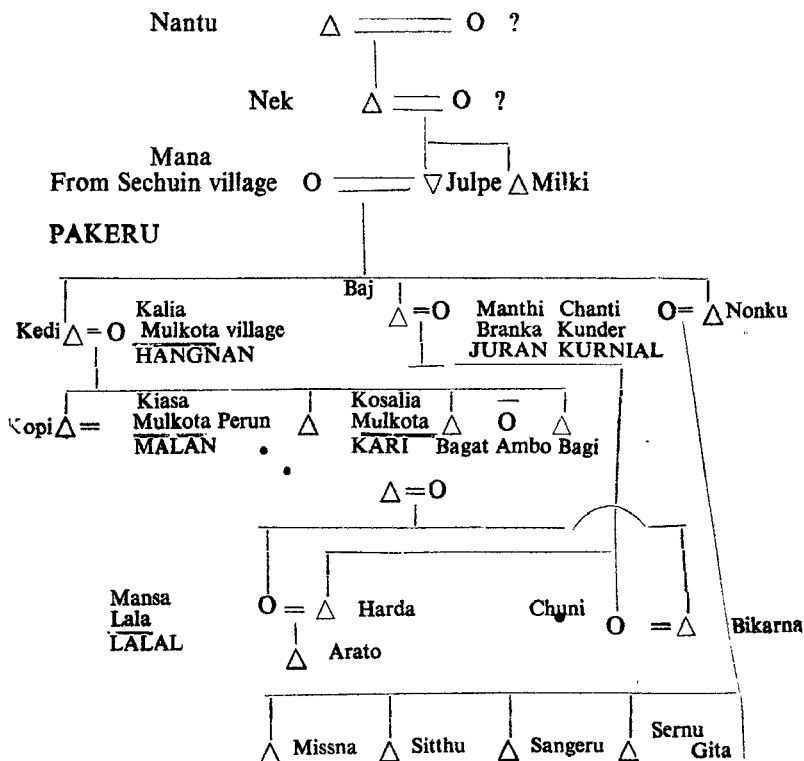
This rule is modified by the fact that two families can exchange sisters and frequently do so. The explanation given by the people themselves is that once the girl marries she leaves her own *gotra* and accordingly releases herself from this rule. Two brothers cannot marry two sisters however as one would expect if this rule were correct<sup>1</sup>. Here is one genealogy from Goshen village which demonstrates this.

The family above has 20 mouths to support, pays 8 rupees land tax and owns about 200 sheep and 8 cows. Villages are underlined from

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(1) The Gaddis explained this by saying that if a man's brother were to marry his wife's sister or a woman's sister to marry her husband's brother it would be just as though a brother or sister were to marry each other. Nevertheless in the event of his wife's death he could marry the girl himself. If one were to feel the strength of the brother-sister tie in Bharmaur, one would realise that this is a very likely explanation notwithstanding its common sense from the point of view of the breaking of the *gotra* link.

which the wives come and their *gotras* or *als* are printed in heavy type. The family is of Rajput caste and Babauria *gotra*. I could not get any information about the brothers or sisters of Nek and Nantu, as they had been almost forgotten. The family owned two houses with Raj and his family living in the top and smaller one and Kedi with his and his deceased brother's family in the lower. They held all their property and lands and animals in common however. Please note that Raj's son and daughter married his *nuhu* and *jawayi* and that the wives of Kopi and Perun both came from the same village as their mother had originally come from, different *gotras*, and were also in no way related.



In the above instance Raj was from Goshen village while his *jawayi* was from a different village about three miles distant. But of the 20

Note:—Δ for males, O for females.

families in Goshen three have exchanged sisters within the village shewing that the village community is no bar to his form of marriage. But because of the principle of "sibling solidarity" there will be no confusion of relationships. In my opinion, this marriage is almost a preferred form of marriage and one will always look first to one's friends to see whether they have any eligible sons. Sometimes a sort of chain develops by which one will marry a daughter into a certain family if another family will give their daughter to a third, and the third to the fourth finally coming back to the son of the first. In the absence of a dowry system this is all the more surprising but the reason appears to me to be connected up with the idea of *burton*, gift exchange by which one does not desire always to be under an obligation to another party which cannot be repaid adequately. For the reason I have explained already the family into which the sister marries is religiously superior to oneself. The interesting thing about this form of marriage is that formerly on the Punjab plain in the area about Jullunder I was informed by a reliable Sikh informant, if your sister married into a certain village it was absolutely prohibited for you to find a wife from that village. The family into which you married your sister was so much above you that for you also to find a wife there would be an insult not only to your sister but to your sister's new family. No feeling of this sort exists among the Gad-dis. I think the reason for this is because of the idea of *burton*, of reciprocal obligations between two families joined by marriage. Whether any similar form of gift exchange existed at Jullunder between the families concerned I have no idea.

(c) In choosing a wife or husband each family tries to adopt the motto "*gharbar*" to see whether the wealth and character of the couple are about equally matched. One is able to have more than one wife if one is a man or if the first wife has died, but the excuse for this is usually that the first wife has had no male children.

*Relationship patterns.*

*Husband and wife*: The ideal relationship is based upon that described in the *Ramayana* between Rama and Sita. This book is read at least once or twice a year in public from cover to cover at festivals. During the marriage service the women sing a song one verse of which is as follows which describes the attitude of wives to husbands;

*Kari, kari, raje Ram do kari,*

Mystic line, mystic line, Rajah Ram's mystic line,  
*Kari bunya na jandi*

A mystic line not to be crossed over.

This has reference to a scene in the *Ramayana* when Ram was deceived into going into the jungle by a *raksha* (devil) in the form of a deer. He left his younger brother behind to look after Sita but on hearing false cries of help in the jungle, she falsely accused Ram's younger brother of hating his elder brother and made him go into the jungle to prove his fidelity leaving Sita alone. Before Rama departed he drew a line round the hut where Sita was with strict instructions not to cross over it.<sup>1</sup> Ravan came to Sita in the form of a hermit and persuaded her to cross over the line when he stole her away. From that moment Sita's difficulties began, from disobeying her husband. This line is an ideal representation of the duties of a wife among the Gaddis. As long as they know what is right and obey their husbands as their lords, there will be no trouble but once she loses that respect for her husband who is to say what trouble will result. On the other hand, the husband's attitude to the wife is one of assistance and advice and love. Marriage is a sacrament (an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace) with two complimentary halves making a unity.

*Husband to wife's brothers and sisters*; Between *salas* and *salis* there is a joking relationship and mutual co-operation. During one marriage ceremony I saw the bride's mother's brother (who came from another village) to be so mercilessly teased by his *sali* that he was forced to get up and leave the room.

*Wife to husband's elder brother and brother's wife*; One of mingled respect and equality. The woman keeps her head covered in his presence.

*Wife to husband's younger brother and brother's wife*; One of slight condescension with complete equality. They can touch each other, joke with each other and after death, can marry each other.

*Brother and sister*: One of complete equality with the sharing of each other's secrets. A brother will never betray a sister or *vice versa*. All Gaddi relationships can be divided up into three groups, those of seniority based on age, that based on a relationship between husband and wife in which sexual intercourse is possible, and that between brother and sister. Of these the third is the strongest tie. It is signi-

(1) I can find no description of this line in my copy of the *Ramayana*. Nevertheless all Gaddi firmly believe in it and it may also be identified with the line drawn round the *hawan* by the *parohit* in which the marriage ceremony takes place. These women's songs are not obligatory parts of the marriage service but are made up impromptu by the women on the spot. Nevertheless there is considerable continuity in them as every woman takes part in at least four or five marriage services a year and can easily learn the words from those older than herself.



It might be worth observing at this stage that I have never seen parents striking their children or children being rude to their parents. The Gaddis abhor violence in any form and never fight among themselves. According to the police officer at Chamba he has never heard of a case of murder among the Gaddis. Even when the Gaddis have drunk a large quantity of *sur* actual fights never break out as the other people present always intervene to prevent them arising.

• *Husband and wife towards parents-in-law*; This is based on respect and deference. A man will often go to his father-in-law for monetary or other assistance especially in a project for which he himself is responsible and in which he cannot call upon his own brothers. The women will never mention the names of any of the senior members of the husband's family especially father-in-law, mother-in-law, husband's elder brother (*jheti*) not his grandfather, grandmother or sister and in the case of the male members will always remain covered in their presence as she will in the presence of strangers. If she has to refer to them she will do it through a nickname or through an oblique reference such as saying "the father of so-and-so". The husband in turn will always refer respectfully to those of his wife's family who are older than his wife.

Such in brief is a short description of the Gaddi kinship system. Several points can be seen from the above description.

(1) The great importance of marriage which enables a family to emphasise those relationships which are helpful to it and to neglect those which are not. Within the joint family one has one's classificatory brothers and sisters and through one's wife one has her brothers and sister as the brothers and sisters of the wives and husbands of the above.

(2) The lack of importance of the descendants of one's grandfather and great grandfather as traced through their *gotra* affiliations. It is true that there is a distinction between one's father's father and mother's father but hardly one villager could tell me how many brothers each had or whom their other descendants were unless they happened to live in the same village.

(3) The importance of a common caste and village community as gurduring the limits within which marriage is possible and thus extending the circle of relationships. It is just as though there is a horizontal principle of stratification based on marriage and developed through the village and caste which has grown at the expense of the vertical classifications of *gotra* and descent groups.

(4) The importance of religion as a guide to the proper relationships to one's relatives. In the marriage ceremony, the mother's brother brings the *bedi*, the father gives away his daughter, the father's elder brother pronounces the words which separate her from her *gotra*, the mother fastens on the bride's nose-ring, the bridegroom's father gives the first rupee in the *saj* ceremony as an earnest of his intention to strengthen relationships with the bride's family and so on. I hope to write more fully on this subject in a subsequent article. Religion is continually emphasising the different duties and tasks of the relatives. In this respect among the Gaddis religion is the basis of the kinship system just as it defines the caste system. All are interlocked and must be understood as a unity.

Prof. Radcliffe-Brown<sup>1</sup> says, "One of the most important questions to ask about a system is, in what way, if at all, it makes use of unilineal kinship as distinct from cognatic kinship". He states that there are four types of the unilineal type, the patrilineal type, the matrilineal type and that using both patrilineal and matrilineal forms. This is undoubtedly true as far as it goes but a system of this kind can not really be studied adequately unless full consideration is also taken of the systems of affinity with which it is related. These systems of affinity may also be of many forms. Among the Gaddis the existence of a strongly stratified caste system has extended those with whom one can be connected by marriage to almost any lengths to which a man may desire. But there is a marked absence of any "preferred" type of marriage based on kinship. The restrictions on marriage are all concerned with those to whom one *cannot* be married. The large number of alternatives to whom one can become married, the great importance put upon the marriage service (the main service lasts for 36 hours almost continuously excluding other auxiliary feasts) and the strong feeling of caste solidarity (in preference to village solidarity) has caused a decreasing emphasis to be placed upon the importance of keeping up kinship ties above two generations up. More work should be done upon the importance of economic ties in strengthening these types of relationships.

Another minor point which strikes an observer from the West is the complete absence of any cross-cousin marriage. Over most of Asia one of the forms of cross-cousin marriage is the preferred type of marriage; among the Gaddis themselves one gets the mother's brother-sister's son relationship which is the basis of the cross-cousin marriage system

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(1) Op. Cit. p. 84.



among the Tongans for example. Why is it absent? It seems to me that the answer to this question lies in the terminology of those of *EGO's* own generation, all are brothers and sisters. The mother's brother-sister's son relationship applies only to the relationship between a superior-inferior generation. The mother's brother's son is brother to the sister's son, and the mother's brother's daughter is sister to the sister's son. Therefore for any marriage between them even to be contemplated would be incest. The strongest impression that an observer has of Gaddi society is the strong co-operation between brother and sister as siblings. I was not long enough in the Gaddi community to find out whether there is in fact any incest between brother and classificatory sister nor what feelings the community has to such an infringement. But it is here I feel quite sure that the answer to the absence of cross-cousin marriage is to be found.

## A NOTE ON VOTIVE CLAY FIGURINES USED IN A FOLK-RITE OF BENGAL

By S. R. Das

LIKE *Alpanas* (folk painting) clay figurines are also used in some folk rites observed by the un-married girls of Bengal, most important of which are the *Yama-pukur-Vrata* and the *Mag-mandal Vrata*; while in the latter only two figurines of conical shape are used; in the former, rites are observed particularly with clay figurines, both human and animal.

To observe the *Yama-pukur* or *Yamabudi-Vrata* a miniature tank is dug in the courtyard with four openings at four corners and the figurines are placed on *Tulsi* leaves on all sides of the tank. Earthen images are made of Yama-Yami, Yama's mother's sisters, Yama's father's sister, washerman and washerwoman, fisher-man and fisher-woman, crow, heron, kite, tortoise, crocodile, etc. In some places of the district of Burdwan the figurines made are of Siva, king's son, Yama's mother's sister, Yama's father's sister, Yama's wife, *lichu*-seller's wife, *bel*-seller's wife and the fish-seller's wife. Figurines illustrated in the plate are of those used in the *Yama-pukur-vrata* of Eastern Bengal (Faridpur). They are *Yamabudi*, a Brahman and his wife, three birds (crow, kite and crane), two aquatic animals (tortoise and crocodile). While observing the rite all these figurines are addressed as witnesses of the act of pouring down water in the dug out tank in the name of the dead relatives.

These figurines are made of clay brought from the nearest tank or river by the observers themselves. Sometimes several ingredients are mixed with this clay, mainly jute-fibres and husk<sup>1</sup>. These are to be mixed proportionately with clay for avoiding crack while drying the figurines in the sun. These figurines are made simply by moulding with fingers, and occasionally with a bamboo blade for incision and polishing. In no case the figurines are burnt.

Such figurines may roughly be divided into two groups—human and animal. Generally speaking they are given basic shapes and no attempt is made of indicating the fingers, toes etc. But despite such basic shapes and forms they possess the same vitality and energy which

we notice in the clay figurines of pre-historic and historic periods. It is undoubtedly very interesting to note that such figurines bear close similarity in form and technique, in character and purpose with those discovered at the pre-historic sites of Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa.

Human figurines of both sexes are met with. Three types of these have been illustrated (figs. 6,7,8). Of these again Fig. 6 is the most interesting. It is the figure of *Yamabudi* in whose honour the *Vrata* is observed. She is complete with hands and legs which are entirely lacking in other figurines. Others are more or less summary presentations. Such summarised presentations are not also rare at Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa<sup>2</sup>. Like some of the Mohen-jo-daro figurines the heads are round and the neck short. Another characteristic feature of the female figurines is a knob at the back of the head. These knobs stand for the tuft of hair, a characteristic feature also present at Mohen-jo-daro<sup>3</sup>. Hair on the head have been shown by incisions with a bamboo-pin. In Figs. 7, 8 the eyes are slightly oval and the eye-balls are affixed in the shape of earthen pellets. In all the Mohen-jo-daro figurines, eyes have been represented by pellets of clay<sup>4</sup>. Both Marshall and Mackay opine that such a technique of representing eyes is not common in other parts of the ancient world<sup>5</sup>. This applied eye form is not also common in historical periods. "The more normal eye forms are a circle incised with a reed or some other instrument having a dot in the centre and raised circle and dot produced by a stump impression"<sup>6</sup>. In the *Vrata*-clay figurines as well the eyes are represented by pellets of clay<sup>7</sup>. Nose has been formed by pinching up earth from both sides. This pinching makes a slight hollow on either side forming the outer wall of the eyes, and the earthen pellets are placed in them. In most cases eye-brows have been indicated by incision while at Mohen-jo-daro eye-brows have been indicated by strips of clay<sup>8</sup>. The nose in all cases is very pointed and prominent, but the wings of the nose are not very broad; rather they are on the same plane with the forehead. Nostrils have been shown by small hollows below the wings of the nose. Like some of the figurines from Kish, the mouth has been represented by incision or cut, while in the Mohen-jo-daro figurines the mouth is formed in many cases by an elongated pellet.

Most of the human figurines (except Fig. 6) lack in hands and feet; only the arms are shown by pinching up earth from both sides. Elevated portions of the breast have also been shown by pinching up earth while at Mohen-jo-daro pellets of clay have been used for the same. In Fig. 6,

however, we find a woman seated with stretched-out legs and holding a child in her left arm. Such seated female figures with children have been found also at Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa<sup>9</sup>. Legs have been formed out of one piece by cutting in the centre. The fingers and toes have all been indicated either by incision or by cut. But most of the figurines have not been provided with complete hands and feet.

Absence of limbs, legs, etc. has been explained by Prof. Kramrisch as due to "*rupa-bheda*" or differentiation of form. She says "the absence of limbs, legs, etc. or the fact that they are made as short conical stumps, shows these figurines in the process of acquiring distinct form; they are stages towards "*rupa-bheda*", differentiation of form"<sup>10</sup>. She has also referred to the fact that this ontology of form may be compared with the description of Agni, "when man first born in his ground and referred to as footless and headless hiding both his ends". But this absence of legs, etc. in some of the figurines may have been due to the fact that they are figurines used for magical purposes. From very early times images were made without hands, and they were intended to perform magical rites. Even today clay figurines are sometimes made without hands and legs and that frankly for magical purposes. This is also clear from the fact that all these figurines are completely nude. We shall see later that this nudity is due either to the sacredness attached to these figurines or to their magical properties. No attempt has been made to show any trace of dress either by pinching up earth or by incisions. Moreover there is little attempt at ornamentation; only in a few figurines attempts have been made to show traces of necklace with the help of incised dots in two rows. Fig. 7 being the figure of a Brahman has been provided with a sacred thread indicated by incisions. It seems that this attempt at ornamentation is a recent characteristic.

Of the animal figurines we have here two varieties; birds and aquatics. Of the former 3 species are known, crow, crane and kite (Figs. 2,3,4,5,10). The technique of modelling these figurines is almost similar to the clay modelling of birds of the same species discovered at Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa<sup>11</sup>. A lump of clay compound is taken and then moulded with fingers by pinching up earth from all sides. Like the Mohen-jo-daro figurines these are also provided with stands as perches<sup>12</sup>. Tails of the birds are more or less broader than the body and traces of wings are shown by incisions. Eyes and noses are very clear and the former as usual have been represented by clay pellets.

As to the aquatic animals only two species are generally known, turtle or tortoise and the fish-eating crocodile. Both these figurines are also known from Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa. Turtle is a very common aquatic animal, figurines of which have been found most commonly among ancient ruins of many countries. Models of early Nile turtle have been found in Egypt and amongst the figures painted on the pottery discovered at Susa<sup>13</sup>. The specimen of turtle found at Harappa is, however, a little bit different from that of Mohen-jo-daro. The Harappa turtle has its upper shell indicated by incised lines on either side of the spinal ridge<sup>14</sup>. The upper shell of the Mohen-jo-daro figure is, however, indicated by incised dots<sup>15</sup>. Like the Mohen-jo-daro figurines the turtle figure used in the *Vrata* is also more or less round with its neck peeping out at one end. The upper shell has been indicated by incised dots, here, as well on either side of the spinal ridge. The sternum is slightly concave. Eyes have been indicated by earthen pellets and mouth by a little cut.

Similarly the crocodile (Fig. 9) has affinity to the crocodile figurines of Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa. It is, no doubt, a fish eating crocodile i. e. *Gavialis Gangeticus*. This is a very common aquatic animal in the rivers of Bengal, particularly in lower Bengal. Its face is elongated and the eyes have been shown as usual with earthen pellet. Tail is no doubt a little shorter than the body. The outer surface of the body has been shown by numerous incisions. This figurine is exactly similar to those of Mohen-jo-daro<sup>16</sup>. Some terracotta crocodile figurines have been also found at Harappa<sup>17</sup>.

A comparative study thus proves the general similarity of the *Vrata*-figurines with those recovered from Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa, not only in form but also in technique. Thus we have traced the continuation of Mohen-jo-daro technique in clay figurines of Bengal.

These clay figurines used in *vrata*-rite are also associated with magic like the Indus Valley figurines. That the Indus Valley figurines were so associated admits of no doubt.

Both Marsnal and Mackay hold that most of the clay figurines discovered at Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa are sacred and bear magical significance. Marshall is definitely of opinion that the figurines representing women with children were sacred images worshipped for magical purposes<sup>18</sup>. Marshall says, "Women with children in arms or in a state of pregnancy may be assumed to be ex-veto offerings, perhaps with magical significances for the purpose of procuring offsprings"<sup>19</sup>. Similarly

Dr. Mackay observes, "I no longer regard the female figurines from Mohen-jo-daro as other than those of the Mother-Goddess, as toys; they either have a votive purpose, specially the figures of a woman suckling a child which was perhaps a thanks-offering for a child-birth, which had its counterpart in Egyptian figures; they were intended to provide a wife or concubine in the next world, whose fertility was indicated by the infant at the breast. No infants are represented with the female figurines of Sumer and I know of a very few examples from Egypt<sup>20</sup>. Speaking about some terracotta female figurines of the Mauryan age Coomaraswamy observes that these types may have behind them a long history, they may have been votive tablets or auspicious representations of Mother Goddess, and bestowers of fertility and prototype of *Mahadevi* and *Lakshmi*<sup>21</sup>. The female figures used in our *Vrata*-rite, also stand for the same purpose. The female figure with a child in her arm is no doubt the Mother-Goddess. She is worshipped for the purpose of procuring offspring or as a thanks-offering for child birth or for becoming an ideal wife in the next world. She is the bestower of fertility. In this connection particular reference may be made to another similar rite namely *Garsi* observance in the district of Mymensingh. In this rite the figurines are made of rice-paste and there is an additional figure of a pig. On the completion of the rite the pig is sacrificed and all the images are buried in the dug-out miniature tank. Both the rites are reminiscent of the earlier worship of the mother-Goddess. The placing of an effigy of a baby in her arm under the *man-kachu*-plant suggest her association with vegetation and fertility. The effigy sacrifice is undoubtedly a reminiscent of primitive human sacrifice before the Mother Goddess. This is also a common feature in many other folk and higher Brahmanical religious rites. On the *Bhol* of *Bhola* day a human effigy of straw is burnt for killing vermins. During the *Holi* festival (Faridpur dist.) a human effigy of rice-paste is burnt; on the *navami*-day during the *Durga Puja* a human effigy of rice-paste wrapped in a *man-kachu*-leaf is sacrificed before the Goddess who is, no doubt, the great Corn Goddess of Bengal. All these are reminiscent of the ancient and primitive practice of human sacrifice to the Mother Goddess as was done by the Maria Gonds to secure vegetation. This worship of the Mother Goddess is very ancient and is essentially pre-Aryan but seems to have received Brahmanical sanction as *Sakti* i. e. the female manifestation of Energy and is believed to have control over magical power and secret operations of nature. When properly propitiated *Sakti* imparts her power to her devotees. Besides, in this particular rite ancestor-worship plays its part. According

to the *Vrata*-story, the grand-mother suffered from want of water in the abode of Yama ; her son's wife redeemed her from this pitiable condition by offering water to her. By the observance of this particular rite the ancestors are provided with water after death. This is also clear from the *Chhad*as or spells which are uttered at the time of the offering of water<sup>22</sup>.

That these figurines were used for magical purposes becomes apparent. The human figurines, it will be noticed, always appear in couples. This explains their magical significance in a fertility cult. The most important fact revealed by these human figurines is that they are completely nude. This is also true with regard to the work of the Mohen-jo-daro figurines. Dr. Mackay says, "what we generally regard as images of earth or Mother Goddess are practically nude, save for quantities of jewellery, a wide girdle and the remarkable head-dress<sup>23</sup>". Nudity in all cases is of special significance for the observance of magical rites. Gordon also admits that, "we may safely conclude that all the nude figures of an iconographic rather than secular style can be classed as Goddess for the purpose of procuring divine assistance<sup>24</sup>. In all likelihood these figurines are worshipped to obtain offering or as thanks offerings for children or as a magical rite to relieve ancestors from sufferings and distress.

This becomes clear also from a study of the figurines of birds and aquatics. Sacredness attached to animals, is, no doubt, of prehistoric and primitive origin. Regarding the Mohen-jo-daro animal figurines Marshall "says the animals which thus appears to be held sacred are those which are remarkable for their strength, courage, etc. i. e. to say for the *mana*". They might have been held sacred also because of the fact that they have magical power of one or the other<sup>25</sup>. Perhaps as in ancient Egypt, the majority of the animals held in reverence as a relic or even an actual continuation of totemism<sup>26</sup>". This is equally true of the animal figurines of our *vrata*-rite as well, and they too contain magical properties. This will be evident from a consideration of the folk beliefs about the figurines used in our *vrata*-rite.

As already observed, two kinds of animals, birds and aquatics, are used in this particular *vrata*-observance. Among the birds the most important one is the crow. Crow is uncanny but is still held sacred. Most of the primitive tribes believe that the souls of the dead ancestors reside in crows. Even today the Hindus of Bengal believe that the crow is the ancestor who must be offered the *Havishvannam* before it can be consumed by others. The *pinda* or the offering of the

funeral rite is thrown to the crows and if they eat the *pinda*, the ancestors are supposed to have partaken of it<sup>27</sup>. In many parts of Northern and Western India, balls of rice are thrown to the crows to eat on the 12th day after death. It is commonly believed, if the crow does not eat it, the spirit wanders in misery; if, however, it does, the people are assured of the happiness of the spirits. Even if a crow is not available, an imitation crow is to be made of grass and the ball of rice is to be touched with it. In this connection it is highly interesting to note that in the *navanna* festival of Bengal, the first eating of new rice of the year, is particularly associated with ancestor-worship. The *pitris* or the ancestors are to be fed first. The crow is considered as the representative of ancestors and is therefore to be fed first. In Sylhet offering made to the crow is called *Kakabali* i. e. offering to the crow. It is also supposed to be a messenger of Yama<sup>28</sup>. This shows that the offering made to the crow is nothing but offering made to the ancestors. Again the crow is supposed to possess certain magical powers for averting evils. As it has a long life so its brain is supposed to be a specific remedy against old age. The cawing of a crow indicates the coming of a guest, and burglars often carry a stick from the crow's nest and a piece of charcoal for helping them to work in the dark. Its feathers are also used for the performance of other magical rites<sup>29</sup>.

The kite and the crane are also worshipped with the same end in view. It is well known that they are fishing birds *par excellence*. Sacredness attached to the kite is due to various reasons. A sub-caste of the *Khatri*s in the Punjab worship the kite because of its having once assisted in saving the race from extinction from plague<sup>30</sup>. Kite, though not generally held sacred, is used in many magical rites. Children with weak eyes are cured by an application of antimony mixed with the yolk of a kite's eggs. When a sweeper suffers from rheumatism a kite is killed on a tuesday; its bones are peeled out and they are then applied on the affected joint. This is supposed to be an unfailing cure. The crane similarly stands for magical properties.

Similarly the tortoise and the crocodile are revered and worshipped for the same reason. Turtle or tortoise is a mythical animal both in the East and West and held sacred in many countries of the world<sup>31</sup>. As to the sacredness attached to the turtle discovered at Mohen-jodaro Dr. Mackay says, "Whether any sanctity was attached to this creature in early Sindh, it is as yet impossible to say; but the fact remains that the first found model of a turtle was unearthed in the building beneath the *Stupa*, while it is good reason to suppose that it was sacred"<sup>32</sup>. The



turtle is again a totem among many primitive tribes who worship it for success in fishing. The Garner fishermen sacrifice tortoise to their Goddess *Khala-Kumari*<sup>33</sup>. The tortoise is also regarded as the abode of the souls of the ancestors and hence worshipped. It is also supposed to be the reincarnation of the former dead<sup>34</sup>, and is further considered to be the representative and the vehicle of deities in many countries. In Sumer the turtle represented the water-God *Ea* or *Enki*. In India it is the vehicle of the Goddess *Yamuna*. Besides, turtle-shell is often used as a protective against evil eyes. Magical rites are also observed with turtle for securing food and ample produces. Even in earlier Sanskrit texts such as the *Taittiriya Samhita* we find recommendation for the performance of a rite with tortoise for securing food. The rite consists of anointing the tortoise with curd mixed with honey and filling the head of the man-victim with the same material<sup>35</sup>. Tortoise is still an object of a cult in Bengal. It is believed that longevity may thus be attained. Similar ideas are also present amongst the Chinese and Ceylonese<sup>36</sup>.

But the crocodile is more important than the turtle. It is also held sacred in many countries of the world. They are seen in abundance in the rivers of India, and are dreaded because of their dangerous habits. The primitives regard it as the abode of the souls of the dead. In S. Africa some tribes draw the figure of a crocodile on the ground and worship it at the girls' initiation ceremony. In India the crocodile is worshipped and often reared by some like fishes in tanks. At Nagar-Talao tank (near Karachi) tame crocodiles are kept and fed by the pilgrims. Some of the wild tribes of Baroda worship *Magardeo* in the form of a piece of wood shaped like a crocodile and supported on two posts<sup>37</sup>. The Sonjharas or the gold-washers catch a crocodile and worship it, and when the rite is done, they allow it return to the river<sup>38</sup>. But this animal also possesses magical properties and is regarded as a symbol of progeny. Bones of crocodile are also used in charms and as protectives against evils. It is regarded as a symbol of progeny, and hence the Dhimar fishermen of Central Provinces must kill and eat a crocodile at the marriage ceremony. The Hindus of Bengal used to throw away the first child in the *Ganga-Sagara* to be eaten by the crocodiles and as a merit to have more children. Later it came to be associated with deities. In ancient Egypt the crocodile was the incarnation of the God *Sebak* worshipped individually and collectively<sup>39</sup>.

In India *Makara* is the *vahana* or vehicle of the Goddess of the Ocean. It is also the vehicle of the Goddess *Ganga*. Even today the

Hindus of Bengal worship *Ganga* as riding on the crocodile. The nymph of the *Gangas* rides on a *gharial* and *Mudana* has an alligator on his flag. Hence she is called *Makaradhvaja*<sup>40</sup>.

Finally it would be interesting to note that similar ritualistic practices as those in the *Yama-pukur-vrata* were observed in earlier times. Here are at least two instances where we can find definite archaeological confirmation of a most widely practised *vrata*-ritual at Taxila and Ahichchhatra. Miniature terracotta votive tanks have been discovered at Sirkap (Taxila) dating from the 2nd century B. C. to the 3rd century A. D.<sup>41</sup> It is 10½" square and 2½" deep. Each of these tanks is provided with a chamber like shrine on one side. A flight of steps descends from the shrine to the bottom of the tank. In two tanks a female figurine has been placed in the shrine while in others the figurine is standing on the right side of the steps. There are four lamps at such corner of the rim and perched midway between the lamps are four birds. Inside the tank are aquatic animals, a tortoise, a frog, etc. These terracotta votive tanks are exactly similar to the tanks dug out to-day in the courtyard of a Bengal village-home for the observance of *Yama-pukur-vrata*. The female figurine who is, no doubt, a Goddess is most probably the *Yama-budi*, the mother-Goddess or Goddess of fertility. The stems may indicate an ascent to heaven by the performance of the rite. In the *Vrata*-tank there is an altar on which the *Yamabudi* is seated. This altar serves the purpose of the shrine in the terracotta tanks, but the figurines of birds and aquatic animals are present.

It is thus clear that pre-historic and primitive ideas can be traced in the folk worship of the clay-figurines of to-day. From artistic and stylistic points of view the clay figurines of our *vrata*-rite are almost similar to those discovered at Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa. Mohen-jo-daro figurines are more sophisticated being provided with numerous ornaments and head-dresses than the *Vrata* clay figurines which are essentially simpler in form and character. Despite this simplicity they possess the same energy and vitality as we find in Mohen-jo-daro figurines. Besides, like Mohen-jo-daro figurines they are also worshipped for magic. The human figurines, particularly the figure of *Yamabudi* with a child in her arm, stand as a symbol of procreation and fertility. Worship of animal figurines is also associated with magic, ancestor worship and totemism. A critical examination of the rituals associated with this *Vrata* proves that it is essentially a fertility cult. This is quite in accord with the magical significance of the clay figurines used.



## REFERENCES

(1) In many earlier Sanskrit texts we get varied descriptions of ingredients to be mixed with clay for modelling images of deities. See Banerjee, Development of Hindu Iconography, p. 245. (2) Marshall, I. V. C. pl. LXXVII, 34; M. S. Vats, E. H., Vol. I. and Vol. II. p. 97. (3) Marshall, Vol. I. p. 541, pl. xcv. (4) Ibid p. 340. pls. XCLV XCVLL; Mackay, Further Excavations at Mohen-jo-daro. Vol. I. p. 270, pl. LXXII. (5) Marshall, Vol. I p. 340. Marshall thinks that the practice of representing eyes with earthen pellets is particularly found in Mesopotamia and India. At Kish eye-pellets were sometimes incised to represent the pupil. We find only two examples of this type at Mohen-jo-daro, Pl. XCV, 14-15. (6) J. I. S. O. A. Vol. XL. 1943 p. 166. (7) Dr. Mackay thinks that the use of round and oval pellets for eyes have originated in the middle east.....pellets for eyes began in Sumer at C. 2600 B. C. and in India at about the same time. In Egypt, however, these are not known before the 12th dynasty and in Greece this technique appears to be used in Thessalian period. See F. E. M. Vol. I., p. 263. (8) Marshall, Vol. I. P. 341, Pl. CLI, (a), 6,7,8 (9) Vats, Vol. I. p. 204 Pl. LXVI, 9, 10, etc. (10), J. I. S. O. A. Vol. VII. 1939. P. 411 (11) Vats, Pls. CVI., 4,3, XXVIII; Marshall, Vol. I. p. 49; Mackay Vol. I. P. 285. (12) Ibid, Pl. XVIII, 5, 6; Pl. LXXX. 21, 25 (13) Petrie, Pre-historic Egypt, p. 13 (14) Vats, Vol. I. p. 303; pl. LXXXII. (15) Mackay, Vol. I. p. 285, pls. LXXXVII, 21; LXXXX, 6; Marshall Vol. I. p. 348. (16) Marshall, Vol. I. p. 343, Pl. XCVI, 14 (17) Vats, Vol. I. pp. 333-40, 430-36, Pl. XCIV. (18) Marshall, Vol. I. p. 339; Mackay, Vol. I. pp. 276, 259. Marshall thinks that such a figurine is to be identified with the figure of Mother-Goddess familiar in Mesopotamia and other countries further to the east. See Marshall, Vol. I. p. 49. This female figurine with a baby reminds us also of a terracotta female figurine discovered by Jackson. "With the possible exception of a single fragment a small shaven head, it is noteworthy that every one of the terracotta-human figurines or fragments which have come to light represents the form of a woman. There are several, of very different sizes, which represent a naked woman in a sitting posture, in only one case holding a baby in her arms. The specimen is exactly similar to one found at Buxar and the head in both cases is primitive in type See. J. F. O. R. S. Vol. XIII. pp. 126-27 (19) Marshall, Vol. I. p. 49; pl. XCV. 24,29,30, (20) Mackay, Vol. I. O. 642 (21). Coomaraswamy, History of Indian and Indonesian Art, p. 21 (22) J. I. S. O. A. Vol. XIV. 1946 pp. 92-93 (23) Mackay, Vol. I. p. 265 (24) J. I. S. O. A. Vol. XI, 1943; pp. 179-9, (25) Marshall, Vol. I. p. 74 (26)

J. I. S. O. A. Vol. XI. 1943 p. 139. (27) Crooke, Religion and Folk lore of N. India, p. 371. (28) Man in India, Vol. X. pp. 257-60. (29) Crooke, p. 434. (30) Ibid (31) in Hindu mythology Vishnu in the form of *Kurma* recovered the valuables lost in the deluge and dived into the Sea of milk and made its back the base by which gods succeeded in churning the ocean. (32) Mackay, Vol. I. p. 287. (33) Crooke, p. 379. (34) Frazer, Golden Bough, Vol. VIII. pp. 173, 178; Vol. XI p. 204. (35) Q. J. M. S., 1938-39, pp. 395-396. (36) Indian Antiquary, 1928. P. 107; Williams Middle Kingdom Vol. II. p. 259; Tennent, An Account of the Island of Ceylon, Vol. II. p. 632. (37) Crooke p. 377. In Kerala also the Crocodiles are fed in river and tank. See M. I., Vol. VII pp. 42-46 (38) Crooke, p. 377. (39) Wideman, A Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, p. 191. (40) Gupta, Hindu Holidays, p. XXII. (41) Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1915-1916. pl. VIII (a); 1924-25, p. 53. Several Specimens of Votive tanks have been also found at Ahichchhatra. See Ancient India, No. 4, pp. 125-26.

## NOTICE OF BOOKS

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### THE STORY OF PREHISTORIC CIVILISATIONS:

*By Dorothy Davidson, 1951, C. A. Watts & Co., Ltd., London,*

*Price 12s 6d net. Pp. 1-266.*

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**I**N recent years there has been a spate of introductory and popular books from England and America on Science, Civilisations, Art, Antiquity and so on. The Penguin and Pelicans publication in Prehistory, especially those of Childe, Pigott, Hawkes and others are excellent and have advanced popular knowledge in the fascinating subject of Prehistoric civilisations.

Dorothy Davidson's earlier book, *Men of the Dawn* (Thinker's Library) gave a simple account of the Old Stone Age (Palaeolithic). The book under review gives a general survey of Neolithic civilisations of the Near East and Europe, with a detailed framework, which the authoress claims, will serve as an introduction to specialised literature and smaller books in the field. Indeed, due to somewhat detailed textual descriptions and discussions, the book has acquired a sort of text-book like form, particularly with regard to its treatment of Europe.

The book is divided into three parts: Part I deals with the Near East, and parts II and III which form the bulk of the book deal with neolithic colonisations and cultures of Europe. In simple and lucid language, the writer opens the story of neolithic civilisations in the Near East in Palestine and Sudan. The Natufians in Palestine and the Negroids in Sudan provide a sort of link between the food gatherers and the food producers. The story then moves apace to the first farmers of the Near East and brief descriptions of its various peoples and their cultures follow. We are, however, still at large about our knowledge of the first home of agriculture, pottery or stock breeding, although evidences at hand suggest the Near or the Middle East as such. A feature (or rather lack of it) that strikes the reviewer is the complete absence in the book of any reference whatsoever to the neolithic cultures of South and S. E. Asia.

After a brief survey, the story of prehistoric civilisation from the Near East then enters Europe (Part II) and neolithic colonisation of

Europe takes place by a series of migrations (according to the writer by four main routes). Under new impetus, various cultures developed in different parts of Europe, yet many traits in the complex (Mother goddess and pottery designs, for example) recall the Near East. The neolithic trail westward is followed and the rich Danubian and related cultures are vividly described. In the following Part Three, a detailed picture of the expansion of the Western Neolithic culture (which spread from Africa and Spain) and the Megalithic cultures of Iberia, France and England (which came by sea from the Eastern Mediterranean) is given. A separate chapter is devoted to the prehistory of Scandinavia. The short closing chapter of the book deals with the peoples of the transitional period in Britain.

The book is replete with numerous textual and heading illustrations in line but photographic reproductions are conspicuous by their absence. There are two chronological charts, one of the Near East and Egypt and the other of Europe. The datings, however, in the former chart are tentative and there are gaps while those in the latter do not agree with Prof. Childe's datings which are lower. The two back-cover maps suffer from binding. If the book is intended for an introductory study, a glossary of technical terms would have been helpful. A short bibliography has been given at the end of the book. Notwithstanding a few omissions and commissions, the book is highly informative and the reviewer congratulates the learned writer for her painstaking endeavour, her easy style and above all her popular presentation of the complex story of by-gone civilisations of which so little is known and so much is given.

D. Sen.

#### BRITISH ANTIQUITY

By T. D. Kendrick (Methuen & Co., 21 S net)

The book is not one more addition to the countless works dwelling on the records of pre-historic Britain. Animated by a very different purpose, T. D. Kendrick makes a bold and refreshing excursion to the historical literature of medieval and early modern ages to trace the manner in which the minds of successive ages responded to the baffling problem of antiquarian beginnings. Within a deceptively modest dimension the book covers a wide range of scholarship and offers a critical and lively account of antiquarian thought from the 15th to the early 17th century. The first chapter is added by way of an after-thought to introduce the reader to the main issues on which a fierce controversy was waged for five centuries, 1135—1635. It discusses the theory of the Trojan origin of the Britons which gained currency

with the publication of *British History* by Geoffrey of Monmouth in 1135, and mentions besides the Glastonbury legends of St Joseph of Arimathea and of the bones of King Arthur. The second chapter is devoted to John Rous and William of Worcester whose antiquarian labours were to break new grounds for future ages in spite of much that was tame and fanciful in their vision of the past. Stress has been justly laid on the drawings and on the history of arms as sketched in the Warwick Rolls of Rous, and on the pioneer work done by William of Worcester in the survey of Bristol long before the great cartographic undertakings of the 16th century. The central attention of the author hinges on the renewed interest of Tudor England in the "British History" view of its early beginning, the bitter dispute that raged over this thorny question and the profound influence it exercised on the thought and literature of the Tudors and early Stuarts. A special chapter is given to John Leland whose brilliant itineraries redeem him from the obscurity to which his biographical and archaeological labours would have otherwise condemned him in our own days. In succeeding chapters the author passes in swift but searching review of over an array of zealous disputants; the foreigners led by Polydore Vergil and Buchanan who scoffed at the British History view, and the army of the faithful who stuck loyally to its defence under Leland, Price and Lhuyd and were reinforced by Camden and by the Institutionalists. Out of this intellectual wrangle were to crop up not only new freaks of credulity like the theory of settlement by the Samotheans and the Phoenicians, but one can discern as well the rise of a new interest in the 'practical past' and the emergence of the modern antiquary who was 'one third herald, one third lawyer and one third theological disputant.' The author has not missed the importance of the study of Saxon antiquity for its own sake and the impact of the discovery of the Red Indians of the new world upon the medieval notions about the Picts and the Britons. The closing chapter is an essay on the growth of topographical study based on personal observation to which the labours of Leland, Camden and Carew gave a new direction and significance. The service of heralds in the matter of genealogy and church monuments is not ignored and with rigorous limit, the author has swept over a rich and prolific period during which the human mind has travelled from loose mythology, and vague imagination to the *terra firma* of rational assessment of evidence and objective investigation. The book is an admirable achievement of wit and erudition. A ponderous mass of abstruse materials has been enlivened by keen



critical perception and that sympathetic comprehension that does not abhor strenuous labour. The numerous well-chosen plates which enrich this small volume are suggestive of the author's long absorption in antiquarian studies.

R. C. Mitra.

### INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL SCIENCE

*A Survey of Social Problems.* By G. C. Atteberry, J. L. Auble, E. F. Hunt, and Masiko, Jr. New York; Macmillan Co., 1950.

Revised edition, Vol. 1, pp. xxv+819 Vol. 2, pp. xxiii+826

This is a text book written for first and second year students of junior colleges in the United States by several of their experienced teachers. The latter have written the book with full understanding of the difficulties faced by students in an introductory course of social science and have used a system of presentation which has been found to be most beneficial for their learning.

The book offers in a systematic and coherent manner the problems and the subject matters of the main fields of social science, such as Anthropology, Economics, Human Geography and Demography, Political Science, and Sociology. The students are not made to learn the differences of each of these academic fields, but rather the integrated knowledge from these various sciences are focused on each of the social problems and situations studied. Thus in the chapter on "Technology" its development is noted from the early technologies of man as found in the anthropological literature to the mechanical technologies of modern United States.

The book is written with the "problem approach", that is, the social facts are presented around the social problems with which the students are familiar. This makes the subject a matter of more genuine interest to the students than an abstract theoretical analysis would do.

Besides the four authors mentioned, there are seven collaborating authors. One or more chapters are written by all these persons. The product, however, is the result of complete collaboration between them, so that the student may pick up easily from one chapter to the next.

The book is of limited value to the Indian students, however, as the social problems and facts presented are mainly concerned with the American society. Text-books on social science lack the universality of the text-books on natural sciences which can be adapted for use in any country regardless of the languages in which they are written. In social

science the social problems and facts which interest a student most are those of his own society. And as the societies themselves are widely variant the text-books too need to vary. To the advanced students books on other societies are valuable in providing him with a comparative viewpoint, but for the beginner, books on his own society not only simplify matters but also lead to produce a critical attitude toward his own social environment which is most essential in social science. And this all leads to mentioning the lamentable state of the growth of social science in this country. It will probably be years before Indian teachers will be in a position to write such text books for the use of their own students when we consider the small number of places where the social sciences are taught, the few teachers, and the lack of development of serious social research in this country which is primarily necessary for the bases of text-books.

Meanwhile the book under review may be used discriminatingly by Indian teachers if they take the trouble to explain the entirely foreign matters to the students. The first volume which deals with human geography, anthropology, sociology, and economics does have universal elements and may be adapted for use. The second volume, however, deals entirely with the American system of government, and unless especially interested in the subject it will not be of much use to the general Indian student at the introductory level. J. Sharma.