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COMMUNAL TENSION IN UGANDA

RAMKRISHNA MUKERJEE

THIS paper deals with the origin and growth of communal tension in Uganda today. To keep it within a reasonable size, the views of the authors mentioned in this paper will be referred to only by the page number of their publications; their exact statements will not be quoted unless they are considered very necessary. For the same reason, the data discussed in this paper will not be presented in a detailed tabular form; only the final calculations will be noted and their sources will be mentioned.

Uganda, a British Protectorate in East Africa, with an area of ninety-four thousand square miles, was declared by Emin Pasha in 1890 to be "the pearl among the countries all round here". People came from various countries in search of the "pearl", and now the present population of about four millions in Uganda is composed of the Africans belonging to various "tribes",¹ and Indians, Goans, British, other Europeans and Arabs. These people are broadly classified into three communities, *viz.* Africans, Asians, and Europeans. According to the census made in 1948, the three communities in order of their numerical importance are as follows :

Africans (99.1%); Asians (0.8%); and Europeans (0.1%).

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- (1) The writer would prefer to use some nomenclature other than *tribe* to describe the different African peoples. The word, *tribe*, in its true anthropological significance, should represent an *undifferentiated* group of people with little, or no class relations developed among them. But, as will be seen from this study even before the Europeans came to Uganda, these African peoples had a well-developed or a rapidly developing social structure of established kings and chiefs and of the common people (with or without domestic slaves).

The different groups of African peoples, however, have not yet fully dev-

Like the rest of British East Africa, Uganda has been the happy hunting ground for the White Man interested in "primitive peoples" for more than a century. The pioneers, *viz.* the explorers, missionaries and early administrators, always indulged in an ethnological survey of the country in their memoirs (e.g. Speke, Stanley, Baker, Lugard, Johnston). Some of them wrote what are still the best available ethnographic literature on the peoples of Uganda (e.g. Roscoe). Later came the anthropologists, economists, historians and political "travellers"; in fact, all who can broadly be labelled as social scientists today. They studied the function of some institutions among certain groups of people, or presented an economic or historical review of the happenings in these territories, or wrote traveller's tales to acquaint the Western public with the present-day situation in this part of the world. (e.g. Mair, Hailey, Coupland, Huxley).

In almost all these studies, dealing with Uganda, in particular, or with East Africa in general, there is an implicit admission, and sometimes a categorical statement, that the British Colonial Administration is fulfilling its duty of trusteeship for people "not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world" (Cmd. 3234), and is thus not avoiding the "White Man's burden" to uplift the backward Africans from their primitive social organisation to the present level of world civilisation. (cf. Johnston, Vol. 1, P. 298; Huxley, pp. 199-201, p. 365). Some of these social scientists would admit

veloped into national units with a common national consciousness within each of them, and being differentiated from one another by this consciousness. In a separate communication the writer intends to show that the African peoples are now undergoing this phase in their course of development. For the present, to indicate the transitional phase in their evolution from tribes to national units (or nations), the African peoples in this study have been described as "tribes", in absence of a correct and accepted term.

The distinction between the common use of the term and as it is used here should, however, be borne in mind because the tribal people are generally regarded as living under a social organisation which is not amenable to such modern concepts as *freedom* and *democracy*. The classification of the Africans as tribal peoples has, therefore, a sinister meaning behind it. (e. g. Huxley, p. 365). It may be of interest to note that an interesting parallel to this attitude of the foreign ruler to the native people is found in the description of India as a "Village Continent" (Dutt).

that the British administration in the earlier period was not always so good for the natives as it might have been, but the general concensus of their opinion is that the present system of Native Administration and Indirect Rule is certainly beneficial to the Africans. (cf. Mair 1938, p. 286; Coupland, 1939, pp. 487-488, Malinowski, p. 161). Similar views have also been frequently expressed in the last few years by the Colonial Office in London (e.g. Colonial No. 228) and by the Protectorate Government (e.g. Worthington. 'Notes by the Governor of Uganda').

The impression one receives from these views is that Uganda is a happy member of the British Commonwealth. But do the facts bear out these opinions? Even to a casual observer the daily life in Uganda reveals a good deal of segregation between the communities in all spheres of life, leading to the development of inter-communal tension. For example, there is very little social intercourse between the three communities, except through the missionaries. There is not a single African house in Kampala, the main town of the Protectorate. Similarly, in other towns also, like Soroti, Lira, or Gulu, the Africans live on the outskirts of the towns. The Asians and Europeans live within the townships but they live in separate zones. In small towns, like Gulu, this is very well marked. The Europeans occupy the best sites, the next best goes to the government, Asian and a few African employees, and then to the Indian traders; the Africans live in the "bush".

Almost every town has a European club, like the Gulu Sporting Club. Non-Europeans cannot join these clubs. They may be admitted occasionally only by special invitation. The Asians have not organised many clubs, except in large townships like Kampala or Entebbe. There are several African clubs; but, as Huxley noted about the Acholi Association in Gulu; "in the debating club, politics are barred. At the last meeting the topic 'Where does the rainbow come from' was discussed" (p. 243). Such precautions are even considered necessary for the comparatively "primitive" people like the Acholi, of whom she was told by "a man who had spent all his working life among Nilotic tribes": "We Europeans can never get to the bottom of the Bantu mind...But these Nilotic peoples—they think as we do". (p 240).

It may not be fortuitous that the experienced administrator's inability to understand the Bantu mind has developed at a period when the Bantu people like the Baganda are expressing some definite political views. Early administrators, like Lugard or Johnston, had no such difficulty with the Bantus. Whatever may be the reason for this attitude of a foreign administrator to the Africans today, it suggests the existence of a good deal of tension between the two communities. It is worthy of note that later Huxley had the occasion to meet and hear from the Bantu people and their intelligentsia that the Native Administration is reactionary and bureaucratic and that the Protectorate Government does not look after the interests of the Africans. The Baganda college students at Makarere told her that they wanted to be lawyers, because they cannot trust the Indian and European lawyers to fight their cases.

Evidently, such social and political inequalities have given rise to communal tension. But the economic life of Uganda seems to have given rise to much more tension than has the social or the political life. In fact, in absence of any outlet for releasing this tension in either the social or the political life to which the French Colonial Administration is stated to be better adapted (Mair, 1938), the growing communal tension, based primarily on the economic differentiation of the communities has taken a violent form. It is only in the economic sphere that the three communities regularly meet one another. Most of the Africans live on peasant cultivation; only a few earn their living as wage-labourers in some form of menial service, and an almost insignificant proportion of the Africans has taken up a professional career or a clerical job. Poor educational facilities are a serious limitation to the Africans in choosing a career. (*cf. Uganda Blue Book, 1945*). Moreover, even those who are so employed are put into a lower grade than the Asians. In the Government departments the average salary of the Africans in 1948 was £29 for the whole year! (*Estimate, 1948*).

The Asians, barring a few very wealthy Indians owning sugar factories, cotton ginneries or some form of wholesale trade, are in control of the retail trade, and also work as subordinate officers and clerks in the government departments and commercial establishments.

The Africans thus come in contact with them in almost all forms of daily transactions. The Asians' position is thus intermediate between the Europeans and Africans. In economic gains also many of them are in this "middle" position. Thus, in the government departments the Asians' annual salary in 1948 was £ 220, on the average, which was about eight times higher than the average salary of the Africans (Ibid).

The Europeans, of whom more than 80% are British, according to the 1931 census, are the high-salaried officers. They run the government departments, and several banks and other commercial organisations, like the National Bank of India, the Standard Bank, Uganda Company, Smith Mackenzie & Co. etc. In the government departments their average annual salary in 1948 was £660, which was three times the corresponding average for the Asians and twenty-one times the corresponding average for the Africans (Ibid). Some of the Europeans are also engaged in export or wholesale trade, and a few in missionary activities. They control the entire political and a part of the economic power of Uganda.

For obvious reasons, the Africans are not satisfied with their present position. But their discontent took a long time to come out in the open. In 1944, probably for the first time, the tension between the communities was openly stated in a publication named *Buganda Nyafe* (Buganda our Mother), which the authorities noted to have had a "very wide circulation" (Whitley, 1945). Communal tension in Uganda did not remain limited to a few pamphlets as mentioned above. In January 1945 serious disturbances broke out, Army and Police had to be brought in from Kenya to suppress them. Several Africans were killed, hundreds were imprisoned. Although the Commissioner of Inquiry gave his opinion that only a few native politicians for their personal benefit had engineered the trouble, he noted in his report how the socio-economic situation gave rise to "dissatisfaction among the Bakopi", or the peasant class, and among those who "may be called the 'intelligentsia'" (Whitley, 1945, p. 12).

The scientists and administrators, however, did not consider that a fundamental change in the situation was necessary, (cf. Mair 1938 p. 288; Whitley, 1945, p. 2; Hall, p. v; Huxley, p. 365). But whilst the scientists and administrators were complacent about the situation in

Uganda since the first open manifestation of communal tension in 1945, the conditions were steadily worsening. In January 1948, the League of Uganda Citizens declared in an official circular, *Matter of the Moment*, that the Africans should not submit to the present situation of being deprived of economic opportunities by the presence of the Asians. On the 24th January 1949, the President of the African Labour Party wrote to the Chief Justice of Uganda, complaining of "Colour Discrimination". Furthermore, this upsurge did not remain only on paper. Another serious disturbance broke out in April 1949 just four years after the first disturbance, proving that the tension between the communities was growing all the time.

It should be mentioned that a few scientists and administrators have lately taken a rather critical attitude towards the consequence of imposing the Western Civilisation on the Africans in some direction (e.g. Malinowski). But such cases have generally been regarded either as "mistakes" in the mode of approach of the White Men, or as an "error" in timing the course of change in African life. (e. g. Malinowski 1945, p. 4, pp. 145-148, 161, etc. and Tongue). Although such a critical attitude takes account of the fact that everything is not as satisfactory as could be desired, it fails to explain why the situation is getting worse day by day. The root cause of the "trouble" has not been revealed, because, as will be shown later, the answer was sought in the socio-psychological super-structure of the society, and not in the basic economic relations of production (Malinowski 1945, p. 8; Tongue).² However, in spite of the fact that such a *subjectively* sincere attitude to the welfare of the Africans was fundamentally based on an abstract "value-judgment" of the Western Civilization, probably Tongue, with his "twenty years of close and intimate contact with a variety of tribes in Uganda", was getting nearer to the truth than many other scientists. He noted in 1935 (p.363):

"Closer contact with Europeans of all types, particularly

² Tongue noted "(The African) is possessed of great potentialities—shrewd and full of practical commonsense, he has not yet reached the stage when abstract ideals can make much impressions on him.....He is being given all the privileges of individual liberty without any preparation to enable him to realise the personal responsibilities that accompany it, with the unfortunate result that liberty to him too often means license." (p. 364).

during the hostilities caused by the extension of the Great War to African territories, has resulted in a definite loss to our prestige...the native is under no delusion as to our short-comings, and no longer regards us superior moral beings. This loss of respect has encouraged him to believe that he can, and will, attain an equality with us in every respect at a not too distant date".

If such was the effect of the contact during the First World War, one can imagine how it has been intensified during and after the Second World War, when the Africans went beyond their home territory, as far as Europe, India and Burma, and, on return, only less than 4% of the total number enlisted could be absorbed in positions suited to their training and experience during the war by the Central and District Employment Bureaux. "The majority of ex-soldiers returned to the agricultural pursuits in which they were engaged before joining the Forces".(cf. Uganda, 1949, pp. 82-83).

Even such a mild politico-economic explanation of the situation was not acceptable to many, although, as noted above, their relevance to the occasion could not be completely ignored by Whitley, Hall (the Governor) and other administrators. Thus, Whitley, in reporting on the 1945 disturbances, recommended setting up a Special Branch of the Intelligence Bureau of the C.I.D. "to keep the authorities thoroughly posted as to what was going on amongst the people, sense public opinion, and try to obtain the earliest and fullest possible information of any subversive activities." He complained that "like the Assistant Director, Security Intelligence" he has also "encountered a wall of silence" from the Africans he met. Therefore, he asked for a close vigilance of the native people, and, as a positive measure to stop the recurrence of such troubles, also suggested "encouraging the formation of social clubs especially in the out-districts...(in which) politics should be rigidly banned". (p. 29). But the attitude of distrust of the Africans towards the British had been so ingrained in the next few years that even an organised department failed to sense the situation in 1949. The prophylactics of social clubs also failed miserably. The 1949 disturbances were of much greater intensity than the former, and also involved many more people.

Evidently, the scientists and administrators have not been able to assess the situation correctly. It cannot be doubted that the situation is indeed much more serious than can be explained by "Mistakes" and "Errors". "Mistakes" may occur accidentally without any serious consequence in the long run; "Errors" can also be eradicated by paying local attention. But when an inherent weakness of a system formulates itself into an idea, and that idea grips the masses, it becomes an irresistible force. In short, reality has forced the foreigners—scientists and administrators—to detect the disease of discontent among the natives. But the diagnosis for a cure has yet to be made. They have failed both in judging the intensity and the character of the tension between the communities, so that the measures they used to stop them were futile. In British India similar precautionary measures were taken by setting up a Special Branch of the Intelligence Bureau of the C.I.D., but that could not stop the national movement: in due course of time it was victorious. It is, therefore, the duty of a sociologist to explain the situation in Uganda by taking into account the forces working in the society, so that due measures may be taken by the communities for establishing a harmonious life.

The writer is of the opinion that the incomplete understanding of present-day life in Uganda is the result of a superficial analysis of the effects of the contact between the three communities, viz. Europeans, Asians and Africans, and of the consequent evolution of the social structure. A society evolves by the resolution of the contradictory forces working within it. A study of the present situation in Uganda must not, therefore, be limited to describing the apparent prosperity of the Africans, because of the introduction of a cash economy through economic crops, or their happy life as a result of an efficient administration looking after the "needs" of the people by rendering better forms of public service and other amenities of life. A scientific analysis should go deeper into the problem, and explain what are the contending forces working within the society, and who really gains by the resolution of these forces which superficially appear to increase the wealth of the people. Obviously such a study needs both an historical analysis of the situation and an analysis of the present socio-economic structure which has evolved out of the historical development.

The following is a brief account of an analysis on these lines which

the writer undertook during his stay in Uganda. Before discussing the data it may be of interest to note that, from an examination of the available material, the writer has come to the conclusion that in Uganda—(i) there has not been any fundamental change in the relation between Black and White from the earlier to the recent period of contact, and (ii) that the British (with the Asians) and the Africans represent such contradictory interests that a resolution of these interests to the advantage of all the communities is most unlikely under the present socio-economic system. Indeed, the real prosperity of the African depends upon the disintegration of the interests of the British and Asians.

A Historical Retrospect : Pre-European Period.

The natives of the soil, who have inhabited this country from ancient times, are usually classified under three main linguistic groups: Bantu, Nilotic and Hamitic. The largest of these belong to the Bantu stock, comprising the most prominent "tribe" in Uganda, the Baganda and the others, such as Banyoro, Batoro, Banyankole, Basoga, Bagishu. The principal Nilotic peoples are the Lango, Acholi, Alur. The Hamitic stock is mainly represented by the Teso. In addition to these three divisions, there is an interesting group composed of the Bahima and the allied people, probably a Nilotic stock.

These "tribes" were in different levels of development when the Europeans first came to this country. Thus, the first European traveller found the Baganda living under a central monarchy and governmental machinery resembling the feudal system (Speke). Lugard, who "was despatched to establish the influence of the Imperial British Africa Company in Uganda" in 1891, described the Buganda kingdom as representing a barbaric civilisation" (Lugard, Vol II .p.I). The other important Bantu element in this country, the Banyoro were also living under a rival hegemony but their organisation was weakened by internecine struggles (Lugard, Johnston). On the other hand, the Nilotic people, like the Acholi, had a rudimentary political structure, mainly based on a strong patriarchal and clan system, although under the leadership of their chiefs they were also developing towards a centralised political system at the time when foreigners like Samuel Baker or Emin Pasha first visited their country (Gray, p.121).

This difference in the degree of political development of these people had its effect on their overt reaction to outsiders. Thus, the Nilotic people, like the Acholi, offered their allegiance to the foreign rulers mainly for protection from the predatory slave traders and cattle raiders. (Ibid): whilst, the same situation was utilised by the semi-feudal rulers of the Bunyoroitara and Buganda to increase their wealth and power by making the "primary production of slaves...a state monopoly operated by the rulers, who dealt with Arab traders as middlemen in the chain of distribution" (Thomas, 1949 a, pp. 31-32).

Because of this contrast in the rate of political development in the different areas of the present boundary of the Protectorate, the establishment of British rule in Uganda affected these people differently in the political sphere. From ancient times the African kingdoms are accustomed to trading with foreigners (Roscoe, Emin Pasha, etc.). Because of their long history of contact with foreigners, when the British came to form a permanent relation with them, it resulted in several political agreements, viz the 1900 Agreement with the Buganda Kingdom, and similar agreements with the Kingdoms of Unyoro, Ankole and Toro. Even such a political agreement was not considered necessary with the peoples like the Acholi, Lango or Alur.

As a result of the difference in the political structure of various groups before the advent of the Europeans, the economic life of the African peoples was also seemingly different. Thus, due to intercourse with the Arab traders from the coast, the Baganda had a greater facility in trade and in exchanging their goods than had the Acholi. After a few years of governing the equatorial province which included part of the present Acholi area, Emin Pasha was well aware of the contrast between the rate of development in his region and that of the region further south which was then ruled by the kings of Baganda and Banyoro, etc. (Pasha, p. 125). But, although Emin Pasha was not sure whether it would not have been better "to say farewell to philanthropic whims" and follow the "southern" system at the expense of moral scruples regarding slave trade to bring prosperity to his province where slave-trade was strictly forbidden, the life of the common people, in fact, was not very different in both areas. They lived in a subsistence economy growing their food crops and hunting for meat

and skins. The primitive method of hoe-cultivation remained the only technique of production in all areas. Domestic slavery was prevalent in Uganda in those days, but it had very little effect on the economic life of the country. As explained by Lugard (Vol. 1, Chapter VII) this form of slavery should be clearly distinguished from the "acquisition of slaves" for trading with the Arabs, which was really a profitable concern. The domestic slaves were obtained mainly as captives in war or by inheritance. They became part of the owner's family, and very seldom were sold. Moreover, within the limited scope of a subsistence economy, they could not appreciably affect the social relations of production.³ Thus the common people in all areas, with or without domestic slaves, had similar ways of living.

On the other hand, the kings and the chiefs indulged in the other form of slavery (Johnston, Vol. 1, p. 216; Lugard, *Ibid*), but the money which came to them by trading with the Arabs in ivory and slaves was not invested to develop the state of productive forces of the country. In fact, the entire system of production in all areas remained as primitive as before. The money was used by the then ruling class for political intrigues, to uphold their prestige or to establish greater power.

This point is important to note because when the Europeans first came to this country, African economic life had already entered into a period of stagnation. In place of organising a better economic life of the people, changes in the society were being effected only in the

(3) The presence of domestic slaves, although of little consequence in this economy, was a potential reserve of energy which was later utilised with the change in the character of the economy during British rule. The production of cotton in Uganda today depends entirely on the available labour power. Except in a few areas, there is still more land than can be cultivated by the available native energy. The invested capital in hoe-cultivation is of a negligible quantity, so that the limiting factor in production today is human energy. The abolition of domestic slavery has therefore considerably helped to develop this economy. This material advantage derived from the "freedom" of slaves should be borne in mind, especially because, as will be shown later, it is the foreigners who really benefitted from the cotton economy of Uganda. From an objective viewpoint, therefore, the administrators' intervention in this period to free the slaves does not seem to have only a moral basis.

political sphere. As mentioned earlier, even among the Acholi an incipient political leadership leading to an established chieftainship was coming into being, in this period. But such a change in the political super-structure without a basic foundation in a developing economy was unstable and fissiparous. Reference has already been made to internecine struggles among the Bunyoro. Early literature on Uganda abounds in descriptions of such political strife among the Baganda, Banyoro, Banyankole and others (Johnston, Vol. 1, pp. 235, 592, 684, 716, etc.)

On account of this weakness in the social structure of the African peoples, whereby a few kings and chiefs with their courtiers and underlings were divorced from the life of the masses, the Europeans could so easily overpower them and establish themselves in their territory. It may be of interest to note that during the first period of making treaties in Uganda, the British pioneers made treaties with contending African chiefs and kings to help them to undermine one another's political strength. (cf. Thomas, 1949 b, p. 174).

This contradiction in the apparent difference in the economic and political life of the different African "tribes" and the underlying uniformity in the ways of living of the common people needs a deeper understanding that indicates that even at that period the Africans were not in a tribal state. A class organisation was well-developed or quickly developing among them, and the social structure reflected a significant difference between the life of the common people and of the chiefs and kings. The former indeed represented a large family of "brothers" with similar interests in life, while, the rival interests of the ruling class were dissipating the wealth and strength of the "tribes".

It is highly conjectural where this tension in the native life would have led the Africans if they had been left to themselves. But it is important to note that the European visitors of the middle nineteenth century took full advantage of this peculiar development of the social structure in Uganda (that is, of the "primitive" economy and futile political intrigues), to establish their "mercantile" civilisation in this territory. It should also be observed that, in the name of preserving the traditional institutions, the foreign rulers supported, from the

beginning, the interests of the past ruling class, and within limits have still maintained them in power by means of a form of "Native Administration" and "Indirect Rule". (cf. *Native Administration*, 1939; Clause 6 of the 1900 Agreement with the Buganda kingdom). On the other hand, because of the basic unity of the African people, the British rulers could easily subject the entire country to a uniform type of economic exploitation with the introduction of cotton, groundnut and sesame as cash crops by means of hoe-cultivation. But, such is the course of history that, by preserving the decadent political hierarchy and by reducing the whole country into one economic area, the foreign rulers also planted the seeds of their own destruction. The African people today represent a community of interests against their native rulers, the British administrators, and their associates, the Asian community.

Period of Conquest.

Life in Uganda in this period was characterised by the fact that several imperial powers from Europe came to Africa with a view to establishing themselves among the Africans. Thus, besides the contradictory interests of the natives within their "tribes", there now appeared two other categories of contradictory interest, viz.

(i) between the Europeans and the Africans, and (ii) within the body of Europeans, that is, between the rival powers trying to oust one another to secure territories in Africa. The social structure of Uganda in this phase of history thus became more complicated.

To examine the forces working within this social structure it is first necessary to understand why the Europeans came to establish their rule in Uganda. Needless to say, some individuals came to dedicate their life as Christian Missionaries to uplift the benighted Africans, and some also came for individual gain irrespective of any class interest.⁴ But colonising Africa was the true purpose of the

(4) Lugard gives a few instances of the true missionary spirit of the Christian Fathers in the early days of contact between Black and White. Johnston speaks of a Mr. Stokes, an Irish ex-Missionary merchant, who wanted to remain as an adventurer without declaring his permanent allegiance to any European power. But he was finally the victim of "cold blooded and wholly indefensible murder" by his own compatriots (Johnston Vol. I, pp. 230-231, footnote). This shows how impossible it was, even in that period, to remain as an "individual" for personal gains only.

coming of Europeans to Uganda. Indeed, Lugard, who came to administer Uganda before Johnston, was more candid about the British interest in Uganda than his successor. Johnston wrote in 1902 that the British Government "commenced the Protectorate from motives of pure philanthropy" (Vol. I, p. 298). But in 1893 Lugard had written:

"I do not believe that in these days our national policy is based on motives of philanthropy only. There are some who say we have no right in Africa at all, that 'it belongs to the natives'. I hold that our right is the necessity that is upon us to provide for our ever-growing population either by opening new fields for emigration, or by providing work and employment which the development of oversea extension entails—and to stimulate trade by finding new markets, since we know what misery trade depression brings at home".

It may be of interest to note in this connection that in the entire process of change which was set in motion after the initial contact between Black and White, the Missionaries and the pioneer traveller's and adventurers were either completely identified with the total interests of the capitalists of their country, and thus served as the "spiritual" or the "pioneer" flank of the entire army of the official and non-official rulers, or they were eliminated from the society's life.⁵

It follows from the above that the real need of the Europeans to come to Africa at a particular period of their history requires a more detail-

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- (5) Lugard mentions how frequently the missionaries became involved in factional intrigues as well as in national politics. The Wa-Ingleza and the Wa-Fransa factions were set up and their native followers were encouraged to fight, not for the freedom and prosperity of their land, but in order to establish the supremacy of their land, but in order to establish the supremacy of England or France in Uganda. Some of these missionaries refused to dissociate themselves from politics, and declared that it was their duty to instruct their native followers in secular matters also: (Lugard, Vol. II, pp. 66-67, [19,452] Gordon, speaking of the Uganda Mission, said: "as it is composed, it is more secular than spiritual" (p. 183). He, therefore, wrote to the missionaries indicating what political attitude they should take. The role of "pioneer" travellers, like Stanley, in shaping Uganda's life under British occupation, will be described later.

ed analysis than can be obtained from general statements on the need to expand markets for trade goods. Usually in studying the cases of contract between Europeans and other peoples, the word "Europeans" is used without any qualification to connote not only a superiority of the former in material culture but also in spiritual values. But the writer is of the opinion that, as evidenced from the above, terms like "European" or "Western Civilization" should be qualified as "mercantile" in connection with the present study to denote the specific phase of this widely generalised form of material and spiritual outlook which was, in essence, the result of the best flourishing capitalist system in one part of the world (Dobb).

The term "mercantile" should not, however, be considered as synonymous with the school of Mercantilists or the principles of the Mercantile system except in so far as the "Mercantile trade-theories (could) acquire a meaning...as applied to the exploitation of a dependent colonial system" (Dobb, p. 204). It is not possible here to go into a detailed discussion on this controversy, but for a correct understanding of the situation in Uganda the distinction between the implied meaning of the mercantile system and its common generalisation on the "purity" of the profession of trade and commerce should be borne in mind. Dobb noted (pp. 203-204) :

"Their policy chiefly depended for its success on its application to a system of *colonial trade*, where political influence could be brought to bear to ensure to the parent country some element of monopoly".

The primary feature of a "mercantile" civilization would, therefore, be to look-out for new territories, and occupy the land as a colony. In the following pages the relation between the Europeans (British) and the Africans in Uganda will be first described, and later the relation between the rival European powers will be dealt with.

The first phase of contact between the Europeans (the British) and the Africans in Uganda was marked by the former's quest for new territories (Speke, Baker, Stanley). In 1862 Speke was the first European to enter into the present boundaries of Uganda. Samuel Baker discovered Lake Albert in 1864. Stanley visited Uganda in 1875 and informed the Christian world of the openings for missionary enter-

prise in the kingdom of Buganda. Later, Lugard noted (Vol. II, p. 591): "We have a prescriptive right in East Africa and its lakes".

The need for occupying Uganda as a colony was also made very clear by the British capitalists. Several Chambers of Commerce sent deputation to Her Majesty's Government to urge "the absolute necessity, for the prosperity of this country, to open new avenues for commerce such as that in Equatorial Africa should be opened up, in view of the hostile tariffs with which British manufactures are being everywhere confronted". (Lugard, Vol. I, pp. 379-380). The Government also was not lagging behind in this campaign. On 6th February 1892, the then Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, "Spoke strongly in this sense" at Liverpool. The next Foreign Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain, even went further and "pointed out at Birmingham how directly to the advantage of the workmen this policy of prudent but continuous extension is". As reported by the

of 2nd June 1892, he said ;

"I say that the future of working classes of this country depends upon our success in maintaining the Empire as it at present stands, and in taking every wise and legitimate opportunity of extending it."

The British ruling class was not just content with the knowledge of their true mission in Uganda, and by explaining the necessity of such a mission to the people for their "benefit". As cool businessmen they also calculated the debit and credit sides of the venture. The London Chamber of Commerce came to the conclusion that "the first expenditure...pay both by extension of trade and shipping, and in the growth of national power and status...investments of this class are invariably good in the long run,..." (cf. Annual Report—Section, Uganda—20th April 1893).

Having thus decided upon the soundness of their scheme to annex Uganda to the British Empire, the next move of the British ruling class was, of course, to establish a political domination over the Africans. As the history of this period shows (Lugard, Portal, Johnston), this was not a difficult task. The king of Buganda, Mwsnga, brought under control, the king of Bunyoro, Kabarega was driven out of his kingdom, agreements were made with the kings and chiefs of Ankole

and Toro, the British Flag was flown over other chieftainships, and within a period of only eight years from 1888, (the year of the proclamation of the Royal Charter to the Imperial British East Africa Company), "the Protectorate was extended to most of the other regions which are now included within the present 'Uganda' and this term was thereafter applied to the whole territory" since 1896 (Uganda, 1949.)

The relations between the rival European powers in sharing African territory were not, however, so easily and so quickly settled as was the case between the British and the Africans. In consolidating her possessions in Uganda, Great Britain had to come to a settlement with the Germans and the Belgians, the two other Imperial powers which were then active in Equatorial Africa. (6) It took a long time, from 1890 to 1910, when after twenty years, "on 14th May, 1910, three agreements were signed at Brussels by the delegates of the three Governments whereby their respective boundaries were, in general terms, decided upon." (Thomas and Spencer, p. 34.)

In the meantime there were several boundary commissions (such as the Anglo-German Boundary Commission, 1902-04; Uganda-Congo Boundary Commission, 1907-08) to demarcate the share of territory between the contending powers. It was necessary to come to a quick settlement because "in the last years of the nineteenth century German East Africa had become a terribly pushful neighbour" (Ibid, p. 29) and several disputes also arose between the British and the Belgians. Furthermore, from the beginning of this unsettled period, there was a "treaty-making competition" with the native chieftains to establish political rights of the rival powers (cf. Thomas 1949 b, pp. 173-174). Unfortunately, relations between the rival powers could not be adjusted so peacefully. Indeed, such was their lust for occupation, and sometime the tension between them became so great, that, on one occasion at least, military force had to be resorted to establish claims to His Majesty's territory (cf. Thomas and Spencer, p. 34). However,

(6) France was about to enter the field of conquest of Uganda at about the end of the last century, but a timely warning from the British administrator to Her Majesty's Government maintained the balance in favour of the British. (cf. Lugard, Vol. II, Chapter XL).

as mentioned earlier, finally the tension was resolved satisfactorily, and the only power to deal with the people of Uganda remained the British.

The above outline of the happenings in Uganda during this period was necessary not only to maintain continuity in the account of the evolution of the social structure, but also to indicate the unsettled period the natives of the soil had undergone to make them acquiesce to the rival demands of the imperial powers. It has been noted earlier that the African chieftains were used by the rival powers to acquire supremacy over their territories. But did the Africans gain, at all, by this tension between the European powers, as the latter (the British) had by taking advantage of the tension within the African life of that period? The answer is in the negative. However, it may be of interest to note that Mwanga, the shrewd king of Buganda, tried to utilise the state of rivalry between the European powers in his favour. The scheme, of course, ended in failure; the crude diplomacy of the king of a "barbaric civilisation" was much too obvious to the astute British administrator Lugard (cf. Vol. II p. 17).

From this time on there remained no tension within the community of "Europeans" in Uganda from the national or political aspects. The term European became synonymous with "British". The few non-British Europeans living in Uganda today cannot be counted as a separate force in any way. In short, the present use of the term European in the affairs of Uganda, instead of the more appropriate term British, is more an euphemism than a reality. Henceforth, Uganda became the recognised field for the exploitation of British interests only.

Period of Occupation and Experiments.

To a large extent this period ran concurrently with the period described above. But, while the previous period dealt with the common object of the imperialist powers to occupy colonies and the conflict which arose between them and with the Africans from their "scramble for Africa", the following pages will show how the victorious power, the British, set about the task of subjugating Uganda politically and economically. Such an account of the initial contact between the British and the natives of Uganda was

considered necessary because, as will be seen later, British actions during this period gave birth to the deepest political and economic tensions between the two communities.

In this period the social structure of Uganda embraced the Africans and the British only.⁷ The contradictory interests within the African community have been mentioned earlier. Similar contradictions did not arise among the British, because they came with the single purpose of occupying Uganda as a colony. Therefore, the only new form of tension which could develop within the social structure of this period was due to the contradictory interests of the British and the Africans. The British interests in this period can be classified under two categories —(i) establishing the political control over the Africans, and (ii) finding the best method of exploiting the subjugated territory. In order of priority the political control of Uganda will be dealt with first.

Contact between the British and the Africans in its earliest stage was characterised by an open campaign by the immigrants to grab the native's territory. The British administrators completely ignored or despised the rights of the Africans. Thomas and Spencer noted (p. 45):

“There was little time for study of the ethical aspects of native land tenure...If at all possible, however, the ‘amiable farce’ of treaty making was, on account of its political significance, gone through.”

Major A. B. Thurston, who was one of these treaty-makers, has described in his book, *Africans Incidents* how this “amiable farce” of treaty-making was gone through; how in exchange of a few “shillings worth of beads” the chiefs signed the treaty without knowing about its contents or its implications. It may be of interest to recall that such a political “ceremony” was performed only in the case of an established chieftainship; otherwise, the “sites” were simply “appropriated”.

Because of the weakness in the social structure of Uganda in the pre-European period, as mentioned earlier, no tension was manifest in this period between the Africans and the British over this diplomatic

(7) Although an appreciable number of Asians were settling in Uganda in this period, they did not as yet represent a distinct force till the next period.

expropriation of the former's property, but this, in this end, gave rise to the deepest political tension between the two communities and is now being expressed by the slogan of "Africa for the Africans".

The next move of the foreign rulers, which, in the light of their stated intentions, follows logically from the above account of the annexation of Uganda, is how did they intend to fulfill their "mission". Stanley, the explorer, clearly stated the British demands to the Africans in his letter from London, dated 25th June 1900. This was addressed to Zakaria, a Regent of the kingdom of Buganda, and ran as follows :

"The English want coffee, skins, ivory, rubber, gums and such things. Those who live with you should never be able to say that food is scarce, therefore, there should be plenty of bananas, corn, potatoes, vegetables, fish and meat. You will have a railway, and white people will be coming and going continually to do all manner of business with the Waganda.....If Uganda has nothing to sell to the White man, then we travellers who have done so much for Uganda will be utterly ashamed."

Stanley did not rest content only with doing "so much for Uganda". He also informed the British capitalists of the possibilities of the production of raw cotton in Uganda for which they were then paying forty millions yearly to America and were still confronted with hostile tariffs and fluctuations in supply. (*The Times*, October 4th, 1892). As will be seen later, Uganda's economy was finally based on the production of raw cotton by the Africans.

To fulfill the demands stated above, the British administrators set about in earnest. The importance of building railways in the new territories to transport raw materials to the mother country was early realised. (cf. Stanley's letter, 1900). Mr. Winston Churchill, on return from his tour of Uganda as the Under-Secretary for the Colonies in 1907, "anticipated its becoming one of the most valuable of our tropical possessions" and considered that "the Railway was vital to its development, and to its extension urgent". (cf. *Uganda Notes*. April 1908). Thus both Stanley, the explorer, and Churchill the administrator, voiced the demands of the British capitalists. It

may be of interest to note that "the railway is primarily a goods line, and rates have been adjusted to enable the principal crops of cotton from Uganda, to be exported as economically as possible; it is therefore the policy to counter balance low export rates...by high import rates." (Hailey, pp. 1583-4).

The British capitalists naturally reacted immediately to such a favourable situation. Several firms applied for concession to speculate on the best form of exploiting the country. (cf. Thomas and Spencer, pp. 20-21). The government also concentrated its energy to build railways (as mentioned above) and roads and new towns for trading activities within the Protectorate and a quick export of the resources of the country, (cf. Thomas and Spencer, pp. 22-23, p. 43; Hailey, p. 1557). From about the second decade of the present century the interests of the British capitalists were directed towards a definite end. Cotton became the most important cash crop of the Africans all over Uganda, (cf. Thomas and Spencer, Carter), and thus, for benefit of the foreign capitalists, as will be explained in the following, the territory was brought under one form of economic production.

The social structure of Uganda in this period did not undergo any significant change in the form either due to political or economic contradictions, but, although it was not openly manifest, the interests of the foreign capitalists being properly defined, the seeds of the contradictory economic interests of the British and Africans were now sown.

Uganda Today

The development of the social structure of Uganda in this period centred round the operation of the cotton economy. Henceforth the social structure consists of the three communities of Africans, Asians (Indians) and Europeans (British). It has been mentioned earlier that the Indians were settling down in Uganda during the last period when the British rulers were busy in occupying the country, and conducting experiments to exploit its potential wealth. But they did not represent a distinct social force until in present Uganda they could join in the scheme of exploiting the Africans through the cotton economy as an ally of the British capitalists. It would, therefore, be necessary to examine how, owing to the peculiar history of the contact

of peoples in East Africa, the three stages in the operation of the cotton economy, which is indeed the main (and practically the only) economic enterprise of Uganda today (cf. Hailey), are controlled by three communities. Evidently, a complete understanding of the origin and growth of communal tension in Uganda, that is, of the contradictory interests of the three communities inhabiting today, would depend on such an analysis.

The position of the Africans as growers of raw cotton is determined by their traditional occupation of hoe-cultivation before the Europeans came, and because since then there has been very little development in their socio-economic life under colonial conditions. Industrialisation of the country is practically nil; besides some secondary industries of the processing variety, viz. the cotton ginneries, a few coffee-hulling factories, one tobacco factory and sugar factories, there are no other important industries in Uganda. Therefore, they have very little opportunity to enter industrial occupations. As mentioned previously facilities for a fair amount of education is extremely limited so that only a small proportion of the Africans can think of taking up a remunerative occupation.

The last stage in the operation of the cotton economy is represented by the British. At the early stage of the growth of this economy, when cotton was traded in a free export market, viz., the Liverpool Cotton Exchange, the British as inland and overseas merchants mainly controlled this business. Later, after an intervening period of free export conditions in which both British and Indian interests prevailed, the Government machinery took over the control of cotton-sale. From the enormous cotton profit which the Government earns from this business, together with the huge amount of revenue, tax, and custom duties collected because of the cotton economy (Dalal), the government maintains the interest of the British Community within the internal economy of the Protectorate through an impersonal channel. 8

8. The following details will show how the Uganda Government represents the interests of the British community within the internal economy of the Protectorate. According to the 1931 Census 68 per cent of the European population in Uganda (of whom 82 per cent were British) were gainfully employed. This suggests that not many of them settle down in this country; they come at-

The middle stage in the operation of the cotton economy is represented by the Indians, who form the bulk of the Asian community. They buy raw cotton from the Africans, gin and bale the cotton lint, and hand it over for export. Thus they play the role of intermediaries between the Africans and the British. This intermediate position of the Asian community between the Africans and the British is not accidental; it is the logical culmination of their long history of association with East Africa. The Indians (the term being used to include all people living within the geographical sub-continent of India) have been in contact with East Africa, mainly in the sphere of trade and commerce, since Roman times. But they never represented the ruling class, and all the time worked for the wealthy landowning Arab in the past and later for the British as "middlemen" between them and the Africans. (cf. Coupland, 1938, p. 27: Lugard, Mukherjee). In the political sphere also they were intermediaries. They were the cause of the first British relations with Zanzibar (cf. Royal Charter conferred upon the Imperial British East African Company by Queen Victoria in 1888); and later also directly helped the British to conquer Uganda as soldiers fighting under British command (cf. Lugard, Johnston).

It is, however, worthy of note that their stability as intermediaries in Uganda was possible only under a colonial power. Although the

their working age, with or without a family, and leave the country on retirement. As has been mentioned earlier, they are in control of the Government and some large business organisations. In the 1931 Census 88 per cent of the "occupied" Europeans were returned as "Workers", of whom half were in the Government departments and the rest in professional non-government occupations (excluding clerks). As explained above, many of these non-governmental highly paid officers can be maintained in Uganda because of the cotton economy. The same is also true for the Government services (cf. Dalal, p. 195). Since the salary of the "European" officers form a large share of this expenditure, government control of the cotton industry definitely serves the interest of the British community in Uganda. As noted by Lugard in 1893, this is one way "to provide for our ever-growing population". Moreover, as the writer has shown in a separate communication a large proportion of the cotton surplus balance which is now intended for use in the Post-War period to "develop" Uganda (Worthington, p. 12), will mainly serve the interest of the British. The Protectorate Government thus represents the interests of the British community living in Uganda, and also at Home, through an impersonal channel.

Indians had worked with the Arabs for a much longer period, they could not have thus established their position. But with the advent of British imperialism in Uganda, they penetrated into the country, and settled down to exploit the natives as intermediaries (cf. Johnston, Vol. 1, pp. 293-295; Lugard). Finally, their role in the life of the Protectorate was fully revealed when the colonial power began a determined exploitation of the resources and labour of the country through the cotton economy.⁹

The Indians participated in this economy first as cotton buyers from the African growers and as carriers of the seed cotton to the ginneries owned by the British. It may be of interest to note that the occupation of cotton-buying was previously the occupation of the Africans (cf. Carter, pp. 2-3). But the Indians first ousted them from this occupation, and later also took over the ginning industry almost completely from the Europeans. Before the First World War the Uganda ginneries were owned by three British concerns. But the proportion of ginneries owned by the Indians gradually increased in course of time; it was 77% since 1930, and after the last war the figure rose to 90% (cf. A. R. A. D.; Government Circular on the Ginnery Sites Approved upto 31st March 1949). Thus they have fulfilled their role as intermediaries between the Africans and the British in the main economic organisation of the country, and have effected a substantial change in the social structure of Uganda.

9. It has been said that "the almost spectacular prosperity enjoyed both by the people and the Government of Uganda is largely due to 'King Cotton'". (Dalal, p. 195). The British Government also often declares that one of their great achievements in the Non-Self Governing Territories is the introduction of the cotton economy in Uganda. But the writer has shown in a separate communication that "behind the propagation of this myth is a shrewd system of exploiting the native people for the benefit of the foreign capitalists" (Mukherjee). It has been proved there that while the African growers get the least amount from the cotton economy, much of it is taken back from them by the British rulers through administrative and commercial channels, and their lackeys, the Asians, who function as "intermediaries" in the operation of the economy as buyers and ginneries of raw cotton. Not only that, by means of this economy the Africans are permanently kept at the mercy of the foreign exploiters. The money that the African growers receive from this economy can somehow maintain their existence on land, and thus, while in fact serving the foreign

The social structure of Uganda today presents a pyramidal form of a few Europeans (British) at the top (0.1%); a larger number of Asians (Indians) in the middle (0.8%); and the vast number of African people (99.1%) at the bottom of the society. Because of this peculiar evolution of the social structure of Uganda under colonial conditions, the three communities today represent a class structure in a broad sense. The African sell their labour-power for production, the British in Uganda and the foreign capitalists reap the fruits of their labour, and the Asians obtain their share in the profit as intermediaries. And this contradiction in the capitalist system aligns the Africans and the British at two opposite poles of community of interests, with the Asians functioning as a buffer between the two and looking to the ruling class for a share of the exploited wealth. Since under the present socio-economic system, the welfare of the Africans depends upon the dissolution of the vested interests of the conquerors and their allies, (and developing the country's economy for the benefit of the Africans), the writer has come to the conclusion that it is impossible to resolve the tension created by the contending forces to the advantage of both the Black and the White, unless there is a fundamental change in the social relations of production in Uganda.

capitalists as the source of labour-power for their profit, they can continue with the illusion of living the traditional life as sons of the soil. In good seasons they also receive some extra money to spend in *dukhas* (shops run mostly by Indians) to buy clothes and sundries. But because of their extremely low income from the cotton economy, which was calculated to be less than the wages received by any grade of semi-skilled labourer, and is even less than the wages of an unskilled labourer in the Sugar Estates, the building industry or the Public Works Department" (Ibid), they cannot afford to invest money in capital equipment to mechanise agricultural production. For the same reason, scientific manuring or any other means of improving the soil is virtually absent. Thus, the apparent "prosperity" gained by the Africans from cotton only ties them to the stagnating economy of cotton production without developing the productive forces: They have no resources and opportunities to break away from it. Even the demobilised soldiers come back to put on this yoke of slavery in absence of a better chance in life (Uganda 1949, pp. 82-83):

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SONGS OF THE ANAVILS OF GUJARAT

T. B. NAIK

The Anavils, also known as Bhatelas, are found in the Surat District and the neighbouring Baroda territory; and is the second largest Brahmin caste of Gujarat. They are the best cultivators, of South Gujarat. The word *anavil* in Sanskrit means unspoilt, the dignified title which they claim. It may also be derived from Anaval, a Baroda village about fifty miles east of Surat, known for its hot springs. Of the term Bhatela, two explanations are offered: one would connect it with the tribe of Bhats; the other deriving it from *bhat*, rice, translated as ricemen, an appropriate term for them as they are the most successful rice-growers. There is also a theory that some later Brahmin settlers from North India called them *bhrastalas*, the fallen, and hence the name. It seems they are the earliest settlers in South Gujarat because unlike other Brahmins the whole body of the Anavils are laymen or Grihasthas; and it was probably under their management that South Gujarat was redeemed from forest and brought under cultivation.

Almost all the Anavils worship Shiva. Though obstinate and somewhat rough and quarrelsome, they are a contented and orderly community, enterprising, friends to education, hospitable and liberal. Though the majority are peasants, many have taken to liberal professions; some of them are in the administrative and educational services, as well as in the political life also; and many more are becoming traders and town dwellers. The caste is thus losing its rural moorings and it is very likely that along with it, may lose before long some of its cultural peculiarities, its queer customs and its folk-songs, the latter especially are fast disappearing. In the present paper I have tried to give some of the old folksongs of this people. Most of them have been collected by me, the rest supplied by my wife. *

I.

The Anavil girls sit at the hand-mill to mill wheat, *juwar* or any other grain. To relieve them of the fatigue and monotony of this work, scores of songs exist. There is nothing to beat these songs in their gentle pathos, sweet poignancy and a masterly depiction of the social forces that touch the hearts of all. These are known as *Khayanan* in the whole of Gujarat. A few examples follow :

(1)

Pearls are broken :
 My heart has gone sour;
 I don't want to obey
 The words of my man.

(2)

If dies my sok¹
 I will dye my Sari gay
 And tie my man
 An embroidered turban, hay.

(3)

Rama weeps
 Laxman wipes his tears
 Bharat comes and asks :
 "Where is Bhabhi, brothers?"

(4)

The pet cuckoo
 Plays in the court
 My dear baby X
 Dines with her grandpa.

1. Co-wife.

(5)

Radha is my father's daughter.
 And Krishna his son-in-law
 Vasudev is his Vewai
 My father is fortunate.

(6)

Much of water
 Is bad in a little of whey
 Comes from a big family
 That wife of my Thakerbhai.

(7)

More than my brother
 I love his sons;
 Brother has gone down in my eyes
 Because of you, O Bhabhi.

(8)

A copper dish
 Inlaid with jewels
 Will be used by my brother
 For his Sandhya.¹

(9)

Surat was burnt
 And Rander, populated.
 The Britons made mischief
 When my brother was alone.

(10)

I finish my cooking
 And sit out-side
 I wait and wait, to see
 If my brother comes.

1. Morning prayer

(11)

My Subodhbhai is a Vakil
 And Vinodbhai a doctor
 Rameshbhai begins his study
 With English A. B. C.

(12)

I wash rice
 And "Osaman 1" is left.
 My Bhabhi looks squint
 O, in the reign of my brother.

(13)

My brother is a simpleton
 And Bhabhi a crooke
 I, the sister, lost
 A place in the brother's heart.

(14)

Go to Bombay: from there Malad is no far
 Try to open the talks
 For the betrothal of my sister.

(15)

In the street
 Plays my Bharati dear
 A shining pearl's necklace
 Adorns her neck.

(16)

I had gone,
 Just for a stroll
 The fool Chhotu Vashi 2
 Could not recognise me.

1. Brother-in-law.

2. Decantation.

(17)

Some body planted
 A *bet*-tree on the village skirt
 I am helpless, poor
 Without mother dear.

(18)

As when breaks a pot
 The sherd tumbles here and there,
 The daughter's lot
 Is the same when her mother dies.

(19)

My father found on the Tapti banks,
 A *sasra*¹ for me
 But he did not try
 To see that man's face !

(20)

There's scarcity of water
 In the big city Surat
 My brother will go
 And construct some *uaws*².

(21)

With an axe on his shoulder
 The husband looks a Negro
 I wonder why
 Father gave him his daughter !

(22)

The daughter and her mother met
 On the bank of the lake

1. Husband's place.
 2. Step-wells.

They wept and tears ran down
To fill the lake to the brim.

(23)

O, my father dear
What crimes have I committed ?
That on Holi and Dewali
I have to stay at my husband's ?

(24)

The Khari went dry
And the bucket was filled
Mother-in-law is just;
I like her very much

(25)

The machines of Kashi
Go very slow
Rides on the front horse
The brother of my Kusumben

(26)

Sweet to the 'in-laws
Indispensable at her father's
Like Indrapuri in Moshal ¹
Is my daughter dear.

(27)

With mother in my Mahier
With Sasu in my Sasra
Very little I know
How the days slip by ?

(28)

Which sister will cook ?

1. Mother's parent's place.

And which will serve
 And who will give
 A little *ghee* in food ?

(29)

Dear to my father
 I sat on the window
 But O, once
 He could not know me ?

(30)

I go to fetch water
 My pots give way
 My brother at home
 Asks, "Where is my ben ?"

II.

The marriage songs which follow in this section will give an idea as to what the whole ceremony is like. Songs 1 and 2 are sung when invitations are sent to the relatives, specially to the sister who is very important sociologically for the whole occasion. While the third song suggests that all the preparations are made ready, number four is sung when eatables are prepared some days in advance, when it is what they call "peno chadhoo". From four to six days everybody is happy, preparing for the day and singing. In the mornings and evenings they sing song, especially numbers five and six and seven are for the morning and the eighth song can be sung any time. On the day of the actual marriage, a *chori* or a small square platform has to be prepared where fire can be lit as a witness to the union of the bride and the bridegroom. In the afternoon the women go to bring earth, *gornati*, for this *chori* singing song number nine. When the bridegroom's party starts for the village of the bride they sing number ten. After they reach the bride's village, they are given a place where they can rest for a while. Then they are invited to the marriage booth by the bride's party which sings song number eleven; they, of course, go and sit in the *mandap* when both

parties go on praising their own and abusing the other party. Songs 12, 13 and 14 will be sufficient to show this. The last one is sung when the bride goes to her husband's place.

1

An inkpot of gold and a silveren pen
Write the invitation cards with these in details,
Let the first card be sent to Bilimora
Whence will come my sister Shantaben.

It's a long way from here so I will require a motor-car
My *datan* shall be in a German-silver *lota* together with
brush and powder.

Ganges water shall be the water to wash my face.

For bath, O brother mine, a copper tub.

Nine yards deep filled with *gangajal*,

Shall be furnished for me.

For dress, brother mine, a silken petticoat,

A Banarasi *sadi* and *potolas* of Patan

Shall be given to me.

My meal shall have courses of five sweets,

thirty-two vegetables and *chatnis* numerous.

And for *mukhvas* you shall give me

betels and cloves, betel-leaves from the

South and cardamons from Arabia.

And sleep I shall on a beautiful cot

covered with *mashru* mattresses and silken bed
sheets.

If you can supply me these, O brother,

I will surely come to attend the marriage at your place.

Otherwise I will remain out of the picture.

2

In the *mandap* bring a stool

And invite the *Joshis* from *Ashapuri*

For I want to write an invitation card

Call our *bhanel* *Girishbhai*,

For I want to write an invitation card
 Tie it to the hem of my brother,
 Let him go to our sister's place,
 "O sister, are you asleep or awake?"
 Come with me to your *mahiar*
 There's a marriage ceremony there."
 "O brother, whence do you come
 And whither do you go?
 O stranger, what king's son you are?
 And who is your mother?"
 "Excuse me brother mad that I was,
 I could not recognise the brother that came to my door."
 In the front are jingling the bells of my brother's
 house
 And behind it comes the chariot in which is
 seated my sister.

(3)

Tie seven sweatmeat packets with threads of
 real pearl,
 Send one of them to the *Joshi* and tell him :
 "O *Joshi*, come soon to find out the auspicious
 day."
 Send the second one to the cloth dealer;
 Ask him to come with all the valuable clothes.
 Let the third be sent to the *bania*
 And let him bring the food grains all.
 The fourth must be sent to the potter
 So that he brings the *maydev* for the occasion.
 In this way all the seven packets are sent to different
 professionals so that they might come earlier for the
 preparations of the marriage occasion.

(4)

A *champo* is planted in *Dwarika*
 I do not know his name who planted it
 He is *Magandhai*; there's marriage at our place

He has an axe on his shoulders
 I do not know the name of that wood cutter.
 He is X; there's marriage at our place.
 She has keys tucked in her belt and issues orders,
 I do not know the name of that big gun.
 She is our Sitabai; there's marriage at our place.
 I do not know the name of the teacher who has
 a pen behind his ears
 He is our X: there's marriage at our place.
 Who is it that laughs and skips over the whole
 house ?
 She is our sister; there's marriage at our place.
 Who is it that is cooking in the kitchen ?
 She is the daughter-in-law of the house; there's
 marriage at our place.

(5)

Repeat Rama's name.
 In the early morning, Devki asked for *dātan*
 She asked for it twice, thrice, repeatedly.
 But Rukshmani did not listen to her.
 From the attic came down Shri Krishna.
 "My mother is as auspicious as the Ganga.
 And who dare insult her?"
 "The woman Rukshmani in our family
 Did not hear me, son!"
 Get up my brother, Laxman
 Take your sister-in-law to the Ganga bank.
 Build her a hut there and keep her in it.
 Satisfy, thus, our mother's wishes."
 "O dear, what is my fault ?
 And why do you send me away ?"
 "O fair one, you are the apple of my eye"
 And so satisfy my mother's mind.
 Stay there for some days;
 Come home after the sixth month complete."

(6)

The sun rose like the petals of *kewda*
 A beautiful morning is this.
 Get up from your sleep, husband of Mani Vahu,
 A beautiful morning is this.
 Take the *lota* of water and *datan*
 A beautiful morning is this.
 Sit near the *Tulsi* plant to brush your teeth
 A beautiful morning is this.
 Rub your face with a towel
 A beautiful morning is this.
 Repeat Shri Rama's name
 A beautiful morning is this.

(7)

A small platform on a big one ;
 On it the branches of this *rai champa* sat a parrot
 And chirped some words.
 All my gods were roused from sleep :
 From Dwarka awoke Ranchhodji,
 In Kashi, Vishwanath and in Andeshwar god Shiva,
 In Kolwa woke Hanuman
 What did all the four do ?
 They put all the savour in our marriage occasion,
 Chirped the parrot and awoke my four brothers.
 From the attic rose my brother X
 From the sleeping room brother Y.
 Brother Z from the front room and from the cradle
 Awoke my little brother Ramanlal.
 What did all the four do ?
 They put all the savour in our marriage occasion.
 A small platform or a big one,
 On it grew a plant of *bhang*
 On which sat a crow and muttered some ugly words.
 All our *jama's* were roused from sleep
 From the *gali* woke, from the dung hill B

From the forest C and from the desert D
 What did all the four do ?
 They swept clean all over dung hills.
 Welcome is the marriage ceremony.

(8)

In the prime of her youth is our Shantaben
 She does not speak, however try her father may.
 "O daughter, why is your face woe begone and eyes
 terrified ?
 "Father, my face is happy looking and eyes bejewelled.
 Please do not find out a black husband for me :
 Please do not find out a black husband for me :
 The black will put the whole family to shame"
 In the prime of her youth is Shantaben
 She does not utter a word, however try her uncle
 may
 "O niece, why are you woe begone and why your
 eyes tear filled :
 "O uncle, I am alright.
 Please do not find out a tall husband for me :
 The tall will snap the *torans* away."
 To the brother thus asked, she says, "Don't find fair
 husband for me.
 He will be very much proud"
 To the Mama thus asked she says, "Don't find out a
 dwarf husband for me ;
 He will be easily blown away."
 To the brother-in-law she says, "Please find me an average
 man for a husband.
 He will bring fame to our whole line."

(9)

Please bring the *gormati* from the Jamuna and the Ganga
 And prepare *choris* out of it.
 Call painters from Surat to draw pictures on them.
 And call *rangaris* from Bombay to colour them

Invite Joshis from Ashapuri and ask them find out the
muhurat.

Please bring the *gormati* and prepare *choris* out of it.

(10)

Saffron sprinkled the bridegroom rides the house.

Him will see his father with pride.

Praise be to my brother

He rides the horse and his uncle will see him.

Praise be to my brother ;

His sister and his aunt, his mama and his brother

Will see him with pride.

Praise be to my bride-groom brother.

(11)

Red is the *Kasumba paghdi*

And round it is a border of *jari*

O Vewais, come soon with your *varghoda*

Bring what our dear one desires:

A necklace of real pearl you must bring.

O Vewais, come very soon to the marriage booth.

Bring for our dear one a pair of silken clothes.

Red is the *Kasumba paghdi* and round it a border of *jari*

O Vewais, come soon to the marriage booth.

(12)

The bride's party is adorning the marriage booth like
bankrupts.

And like a jewel is the brother of our sister.

The bride groom's party is sitting in the verandah like
a bankrupt group.

And like a worm in the gutter is the brother of the groom,

Like the stitches of embroidery is the uncle of the bride

The bankers are adorning the marriage booth

But like a babool thorn is the uncle of the groom

The bride-groom's party is sitting like a group of
bankrupts.

The Mama of the bride is like a golden gown.
 The bankers are adorning the marriage booth
 The Mama of the groom is like a mango tree-
 The bride groom's party is sitting like a group of
 bankrupts.

(13)

The train has come from **Bombay**.
 It has brought many goods.
 Look, my sister, the train has come.
 In the train is rice, the *janaiyas* are all without teeth
 Look, my sister, the train has come.
 In the train are brought *totas*. the *janaiyas* are all tall
 Look, my sister, the train has come
 In the train are brought asses, the *janaiyas* are all Parsis
 Look, my sister, the train has come.
 In the train are carried *pawalis*, the *janaiyas* are all
 Mavalis.
 Look, my sister, the train has come.

(14)

Looking round her a huge crowd
 The red red horse was a little afraid
 The horse went to Hansapur and was pleased with it.
 But no, it cannot compare with my Amalsad.
 The horse went and was pleased with Moganbhai
 But no Moganbhai cannot compare with my Khandubhai
 The horse went and was pleased with Thakarbai.
 But no, Thakarbai cannot compare with my Lalitaben.

The whole idea there is to compare the bride's party with the
 bride groom's, the constituents in the same position being compared
 in both the groups, e. g. the village of the bridegroom with that of the
 bride; the father of the former with that of the latter, etc.

(15)

O Sister, a bird which was smiling and playing on the
 bank of the lake,

Is going away.

Look back your father hearkens you

You are going leaving his affection to your husband's place
why did you change so soon ?-

Look back, your mother beckons you.

You are going, tearing off her heart to your husband's
place.

Why did you change so soon ?

[In this way all her relations are referred to.]

III.

Alunan, a festival of young girls who are not married is observed in the month of Akhad, beginning from the 11th day of the month and being celebrated on the 2nd of the dark half of the same month. The girls cannot eat anything but wheat or rice, ghee, chillies and sugar. Salt is taboo and therefore, the festival is called Alunan, saltless. Walking is also prohibited. They worship *Rannyadev*, sprouted grains, probably a goddess of fertility and then marry this *Rannyadev* to some of their friends. On all the five days, the girls dance many dances : *fudardi* which is a duet where two girls holding each others' hands move round and round at top speed, *popto ghumavavo* in which one girl sits on her legs holding the thighs of another who stands, both of them the foxtrot and *dolanian* a cross-going dance. In all these, songs are inevitable e. g. is sung with *dolanian*; 13th goes with *fudardi* and 11th is sung while *popto ghumavavo* is danced.

(1)

On whose head did I see a green basket ?

I saw it on the head of Dolto, the son-in-law of the
family.

In whose stable did I see him picking up cowdung ?

I saw him in my brother's stable.

I took him to be a *Khalpo* and beat him with shoes

I took him to be a *Dhed* and pelted him with stones

I took him to be a *Dubla* and beat him with my sticks.

He says " For god's sake do not beat me ;

I am *Khandubhai's* son-in-law.

(2)

Magno, the son-in-law is fond of vegetables ;
 He goes out to pick mangoes from the trees.
 On his head is a basket load of mangoes and a bundle
 of fuel-sticks.
 O Shantaben, take them off his head, your spouse that
 he is
 Shantaben took the load off his head and cut his skin
 with her finger.
 Weeping and sighing he went to his mother;
 "Come my dear one, who made you weep ? asked she,
 "It was the sister of Thakarbai, mother" he replied.

(3)

In a field of green grams
 Entered a bullock
 Magno, the son-in-law says "He is my father".
 While running downfields he fell down
 He was tied with leathern ropes;
 And carried home
 Shantaben prepared *roti*;
 But one was a little less fried;
 So she was beaten twenty-times with a *belan*.
 In a field of green grams
 Entered a buffalo.
 Magno says: "It is my mother".
 While running upfield she fell down.
 She was tied with a rope and carried home.

(4)

A good red rose
 Was blooming in the rose-garden,
 When come the *sasra* to call her home;
 A red red rose
 Was blooming in the rose-garden
 When come the *sasu* to call her home;
 And brings a pair of carts to carry her home.

In this way all the in-laws are shown to be coming to invite the small daughter-in-law to her husband's place and they bring not one but two conveyances so that she may be pleased to go with them; then at the end;

A red red rose
Was blooming in the rose-garden,
When came the husband and to call her home,
He brings a pair of whips to ask her go home.

(5)

O mother, I had gone apicking *Kantolas*
There a serpent stung me; [repeat this line, O Amba]
Call my *sasra*, O mother ;
She will pound those leaves
Call my husband, O mother,
He will bring me a pot of nectar ;
Call my cowife, O mother ;
In the pot is my *Kathli*
Let her adorn her neck.
In the box are my clothes
Let her wear them
In the chest is my *ghond wank*
Give that also to her.

(6)

The witch comes and goes
And wanders uselessly :
The sister has put on a *Chundadi*.
I want to know, O Maniben
What's your father like ?
The sister has put on a *Chundadi*
Like a king in his durbar
Is Maniben's father !
The sister has put on a *Chundadi*
I want to know, O *Ranahodji*
What's your father like ?

The sister has put on a *Chundadi*.

Like a serpent in the forest.

Is Ranchhodji's father :

The sister has put on a *Chundadi*.

In this way all the relatives of the girl are compared to good things; those of the boy to bad ones.

(7)

A tomtom is beating,

Who is that brave brother of mine that marries a second
wife?

It is my brave M. that marries a second wife

And who is that wife of his that weeps in the house ?

It is P., his queen, that weeps in the house.

And who is her *Nanand* that consoles her?

"Don't weep, Bhabhi, my brother will not bring a second
wife.

(8)

A creeper was climbing a hedge

It was seen by my *Deyar*

My *Jeth* had plucked it

My *Sasu* started cooking.

Her eyes are blue and she looks a cat !

My *Sasra* sat for his meal

His pigtail is standing, and he looks a monkey.

My *Jeth* came from the fields.

He has an axe on his shoulders; and he looks a shephard

My *Jethani* comes from the tank;

She has tucked up her *Sadi* at the back and she looks.

Dhedi.

My *Deyar* came from the school ;

He has his satchel hanging from his shoulders and he
looks a barber.

My *Nanand* came from her *Sasra* :

Her hair are loose and she looks a witch.

(9)

The floods of Bhaderva are rising
 Bhadervo is raging loud
 Who is it that is being carried away in the floods ?
 Bhadarvo is raging loud
 In them, Ranchhodio is being carried away,
 Bhadervo is raging loud.
 Who becomes sorry on this ?
 Maniben becomes sorry on this
 Bhadervo is raging loud.

(10)

The crane comes and the crane goes
 It loafs here and there
 Whom does the crane carry away ?
 It carries away Pashpa Vahu ;
 And Mangubhai runs after it.
 My cots are getting unused.
 My ornaments are rushing away ;
 My cardamons are getting spoilt ;
 My betels are rotting ;
 My money is being wasted.
 The crane comes and the crane goes.

(11)

I want *ar*; I was *sar*;
 A *sadi* from your *sasra*
 A wife by a second marriage,
 A bread as big as a mill stone,
 A papad as large as a plate,
 Are wanted.
 Look, O Desai, how we dance !

(12)

A slender stick to play the *dolaniyan*:
 How fine is the dance ?

The pipal tree has got new leaves:
 How fine is the dance?
 The *Khakhra* tree has borne *Khajans* on it;
 How fine is the dance?
 My brother beat my *bhabhi*;
 How fine is the dance?

(13)

We are dancing the *fudardi*,
 Moving round and round
 And playing with a babool doll.
 Babool is *avario*,
Dhamdachhani madi,
 My *Sasra* married a squint-eyed girl,
 She wanders in the fields
 And collects *chola* beans
 The *cho'la* plant was cut down
 The *Jamai's* eyes were hurt.

(14)

Which village has a large number of *Jamais*, O bee?
 Hansapur has a number of them, O bee!
 Which of them is the dearest, O bee?
 Ranchhodio is the dearest of all, O bee!
 Seven asses were grazing, O bee,
 One of them delivered, O bee,
 Ranchhodio began to milch it, O bee;
 The ass gave him a kick, O bee;
 He was thrown on the ground, O bee;
 Then came *Maniben*, dear, O bee.

(15)

There are beans in my yard;
 Who collects them?
 I collect the beans.
 My *sasra* is a *Patel*, *Sasu* a *Patalen*,
 Who collects the beans?

My *Jeth* is a *Vakil*, *jethani* a *Vaklan*
 Who collects the beans ?
 My *Divar* is a teacher, *Deyrani* a mistress;
 Who collects the beans ?

IV.

Here the first five songs are "Jack & Jill" rhymes sung by the children at play. The last ten are *garbas* sung in *Navratra*, the first nine days of the month of *Aso* of the Hindu Calendar. They are a sort of dance-songs, and are a well known feature of Gujarati art.

I.

Clap your hands, kiddies
 Mama brought you a cocoanut;
 The cocoanut is rotten
 It was given to *Mami* to eat
Mami said, she would jump into the well.
 Mama says "Gladly will I show you the way".
 It will take some time,
 And let pearls be brought.
Mami, let's go to fetch water
 We will look round the *Bania's* house on the way
 The *Bania* gave a note;
 My *mami* is very sweet
 Let her be sweet,
 She must bring a pot of water.
 The pot was placed on the door.
 A scorpion went up in her hair
 There's also a serpent there
 That of course is our *Mami's* father.

(2)

Dhammak Ladu
 *A ser of *Khaudu*
 Let me cook some leafy vegetables.
Chyand Myand
Chyand Myand.

Children catch each other's ears and repeat these lines, each time rhythmically jolling on each side.

(3)

Children keep their hands on one another's & then go on repeating.

An pan

A doll gave a feast to the marriage party

The party remained hungry

And go up with plates in their hands;

We filled cocoanuts in those plates

How are your children brother ?

They are well and happy

And there steps are silken

Raja Bhoja

Tara Toja

We are free from all work

Let us jump, ho !

(4)

Aling dalling

Tilla tol

On a stool sat the *Dhal Dhadvka*.

Ukka dhukka

Karia Kathi

You are broken and therefore free !

(5)

O ! You stand without a support

Kiddy, your ahklet jingles sweet,

Our Mama gave you *Khichdi* to eat

That was not cooked well.

Your Mami danced

Let her dance:

o (6)

Raja Janak's bow has to be strung :

My father's condition is very hard;
It cannot be strung: I am still unmarried.

Letters were sent to all countries
The greatest of kings were invited
But the bow could not be strung.

From Lanka came Rawan
He had ten heads and twenty hands !
But the bow could not be strung.

From north and south came two boys
Who were housed in the flower garden
But the bow could not be strung.

One of the two strung it and broke it in three
It was all his victory

The bow was now strung
Janki garlanded him in the court
As the bow was broken,
She is now no more a *Kumari*.

(7)

The Pandawas sat down to play the dice,
Shakuni entered the court room.
They forgot what they had learnt;
Thus they played and lost everything.

In the first game, they lost their books & villages
In the second, they have no place to live

In the third, they lost the whole earth
In the fourth, the wife, Draupadi was gone.
Then came Dushasan running
He began to remove Draupadi's upper garment
O, in which birth must I have committed sin ?
That I am thus treated, wept she.

" I married five husbands
When others get only one"

Anybody who sings this song of the Pandavas
Shall get Vaikunta.

(8)

○ Rama Patel,

The Moghals came and surrounded the fort.
 The king dug a tank but there was no water !
 The Moghals' tank was filled with milk !
 That is the prowess of mother Kalika-

(11)

Mother Batucara is very powerful
 Let us go and offer her prayers.
 We will see her and become happy
 We will stay in Arasur and tell her our miseries.
 In Arasur lives Ambaja and in Pawagarh, Mahakali.
 In the south is Tulaja and in Chunwal is Bahuchariji
 To the mother incenses are burnt, *chir* and red blouse
sacrificed.
 The Brahmins recite the Vedas near her.
 And women sing auspicious songs,
 Whoever goes to the mother gets her wishes fulfilled
 Let us go and offer her prayers.

(12)

On the first of the month, O slender Girdhari, come to
my house
 On the second a child sat outside and I got it round
 On the third, O friend, let us invite the lord of the
three worlds with pearls,
 On the fourth, a sweet woman was seen gossiping on the
road to Mathura.
 On the fifth, come sweetly to my home.
 On the sixth, O dear God, save us your *bhaktas*
 On the seventh, a woman of Gokul calls you.
 On the eighth, God was born and I like him.
 On the ninth, a Gokul girl is observing a Vrat.
 On the tenth, *mama* Kans was killed in Mathura.
 On the eleventh, he married the beautiful Satyabhama.
 On the twelfth, the mighty god covered the whole universe.

On the thirteenth a woman washes her wealth. 1
 On the fourteenth, let us all play *rasa*.
 On the fifteenth, all the fifteen bays to sing this
 praises are over.

(13)

Which fair *Vatu* You' ll like, *achko machko kareli*
 I'll like *Rukhi Vatu*, the fairest of them all ,,
 She is so short, what will you do with her ,,
 O she can do enormous work. ,,
 We will seat her on a high pedestal. ,,
 And adorn her with a basketful of ornaments ,,

(14)

Tonight the sight is so beauteous
 It's worthwhile playing.
 I request you, O *Ambika*
 Come and join me in my *garba*.
 "How can I come alone, there are friends with me".
 Put on your *Chir* and Red blouse
 Let collirium adorn your eyes !
 The starlet shine on your forehead,
 And your *jhanjhar jhum* around.
 Your petticoat is of fine different stripes,
 Your *sadi* has a golden border
 Your blouse is greenish in colour
 And there's a necklace of pearls round your neck.
 Come, O mother, and join my *garba*.

(15)

Mehendi was sown in *Malwa*, to *Gujarat* went its colour
 O I got *Mehendi* coloured !

1. A Hindu ceremony falling on the 13th of the dark half of the month. On this day each family worships *Laxmi* in the form of Silver coins by washing them and then anointing them with *Kumkum*.

The young *diyar*, was a loveable chap,
 he brought the *Mehendi* plant,
 He crushed it and with the colour filled some dishes
 And to the *Bhabhi* said "colour your hands, *bhabhi*"
 "What's the use colouring my hands? The one to see
 it is away.
 "A lakh rupees cash if somebody goes to him overseas
 "And let him be beloved lord of my cowife:
 Your sister marries, so soon come home'.
 "Let her marry and let the bride-groom's party stay
 with us for many days".
 Then tell him,, the lord of my cowife" Come soon,
 your brother gets married".
 "O let him get married, but go as many persons as
 you can in his *jan*".
 Tell that beloved of my cowife that his mother breathes
 her last.
 'Let my mother die! Burn her under the bet-tree, you all'.
 Then tell him who is my beloved that his dear one's
 eyes are sore !
 "Soon friends, soon comrades ! Get ready and let us go"

THE PATTERN OF A POLYANDROUS SOCIETY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO TRIBAL CRIME

ANIMA MUKHERJI

Jaunsar Bawar is one of the most important Parganas of Chakrata Tehsil in the Dehra Dun district of the Meerut Division in the Uttar Pradesh.

This area is noted for its rugged beauty. Precipitous mountains and deep dark ravines with few patches of flat land interspersed here and there, form the natural landscape. Flat ground is extremely rare except in the Valley; Cultivation is laborious as well as precarious. Rivers and rivulets traverse the hill-sides but they usually run dry in the summer, and with the approach of the rainy season they assume huge dimension's foaming and gushing forward, enabling the timber from higher altitudes to float down to lower regions.

Every perennial water channel offers the site for location of a village provided the adjoining hill-sides can be terraced for agricultural purposes. Of course, the cluster of houses must be well protected from the blasts of chilly winds in winter and pathways must give them access to the adjoining villages beyond the chasms and gorges.

Jaunsar is not too poor in flora and fauna. The higher regions are thickly forested with trees of various species. But the declivity of the slopes being too steep, such places are not usually inhabited and the people cannot take full advantage of nature's bounty.

Villages are usually found in the valleys, on the hill slopes where the gradient is not too steep. The forest offers the timber for their attractively designed substantial houses. Of late the *Deodar* forests have been closed down by the administrator and less durable *Chir* is available so that expensive stone houses can be seen cropping up here and there.

Close by the houses lie the picturesque terraced patches. The rocks are usually made up of limestone, hence terracing on the slopes becomes a real job for these sturdy people. Further, water must be brought to the fields through skilfully constructed Kuls and *Patnalus*.

Men and women, boys and girls all must work incessantly to fight nature's niggardliness. They toil hard from morning till evening to eke out a subsistence of a sort and the leisure hours they pass off gaily drinking and smoking. The inhabitants are on the whole gay, frank and credulous people. Talkative and hospitable, they make friends easily. The men wear scanty dress, the women don a heavy attire and particularly love to adorn themselves with varieties of ornaments.

Ethnically they form several distinct groups.¹ The members of higher groups, Rajputs and Brahmins are usually "tall, handsome, fair complexioned, possess a long head, vertical forehead, leptorrhine nose, hazel eyes with sprinkling of blue, curly hair and other features well cut and proportioned". Then there are the dark aboriginal Doms known as Koltas and the arisan castes. These belong perhaps as Dr. D. N. Majumdar opines, to an Australoid stock. The former are the masters, the latter their serfs. "The Mongolian element has entered from the North and the North East and has influenced their physiognomy in no uncertain way." This much about the physical features and the nature of the people and their environment, and now let us look at their social structure.

Their social structure is patternized into an hierarchical organisation. The upper classes, the Zemindars and the artisans, hold the land whereas the lower groups particularly the Koltas till recently could not become land owners according to the local code. They are virtually slaves, live close by their master's houses and usually work in lieu of food and drink. They are given plots of land, worst patches, work upon them with the cattle provided by their masters and in return part with the major portion of the produce during the harvest time. Their marriage and other expenses are borne by their masters and in consequence the Kolta's debt goes on mounting and his progeny becomes the mortgaged slaves of the master. Disabilities of dress, food and drink, darken his days. This feudalistic type of land settlement has received some sort of religious sanction and they have become resigned to their fate. Only of late a slight stir is visible among these folks.

1. See Majumdar, D. N. The Racial Composition of the Polyandrous People of Jaunsar Bawar, *Jou. U. P. Hist. Soc.* Vol. XIII, Pt 2, 1940. pp 35-50.

The territorial unit to-day is the village. It is believed that the *Khasas* immigrated to this land in groups, each under a headman or *Thokdar*. Villages being of limited size, they scattered themselves in two or three or even more number of villages, constituting a *Khat* or *Patti*. The *Thokdar* became the *Sadar Sayana*. He enjoyed certain privileges and prerogatives; he could demand free services from villagers, he was entitled to special presents during birth and marriage in the families residing within his *Khat*. On the other hand upon him lay the responsibility of defending and safeguarding the welfare of the *Khat*. Gradually the village *Sayana*, the headman, assumed more and more powers and to-day he wields supreme influence over the social life of his people. With the help of the village *panchayat*, he penalizes the social derelict thereby suppressing individuality and personality development. The people are generally of the Apollonian type, committed to precedent and tradition and have learnt to dread the growth of individualism which is disruptive. This tendency is further strengthened through the operation of a strong *Sayana* system, a relic of feudalism. With the help of the *panchayat* he imposes fines and wergeld for adultery and orders restitution in case of thefts, as well as tackles cases of witch-craft thereby enhancing the social solidarity, and ensuring material cooperation, which is so very indispensable among these folk wresting a livelihood from such an unfavourable surrounding. There is no doubt that this deep attachment and subservience to the headman has immense influence in bridling violent outbursts among these ancient people.

The priest and the diviner both are held in high esteem in this society; their religion is a synthesis of tribal beliefs and Hindu rites. Magic and religion have been coalesced in their daily practices. Oaths and ordeals as well as magical rites hold in check many covert and semi-criminal activities.

In their hierarchy of Gods, *Mahashu* holds the topmost place. The people have implicit faith in his omnipotence. Often, when evidence is lacking in a court case, the parties proceed to his temple and swear to the righteousness of their cause, any misfortune that be falls afterwards is attributed to the wrath of the God against the perjurer. It is usual for a man to come to the temple and confess audibly his wrong deeds, thus hoping to redeem his sin. Such is the

depth of their faith. Perhaps this dread of divine vengeance suppresses the overt expression of sinister desires among these credulous folk.

Anti-social women, witches, can invoke the devil gods and bring disaster and disease to others. The diviner can ward off the evil influence of their black arts with counter sacrifices.

They are a patronymic patrilineal, patrilocal people. Dr. Majumdar traces in the Khasa social structure an evidence of a submerged matriarchy.¹ Their law of inheritance and the double standard of morality have been ascribed to cultural miscegenation. The daughters of the village, the *dhyantis*, enjoy inordinate sexual freedom and this can be regarded as the remnant of matriarchy whereas the wives, the *rantis* are subjected to marital stringency which reminds us of the despotic influence of patriarchy.

The eldest son enjoys certain extra prerogatives regarding inheritance of property and intra-familial relationships. Usually a family consists of a group of brothers and one or more wives jointly shared by them. It is surprising to note that despite polyandry, the society assumes a highly disparaging attitude towards women. There the wives are quite unlike their Tibetan sisters who, "with their pipes in their mouths, magnificent in their confident strides are usually followed by three to five husbands who trot behind them like slaves".

Polyandry and polygyny, monandry and group marriage are all prevalent among these hill people, although the first mentioned type is the traditional & the most common form of conjugal alliance even today.

Various theories have been put forward to explain the origin of polyandry. Sex-disparity may encourage, if not initiate, this form of marriage. In two of the villages investigated, this proportion of males to female was 3:2 and 7:4 respectively. But how far polyandry is the outcome of sex-disparity and how far it results in a disbalanced demography is a moot problem. There is, however, no absolute co-relation between excess of males and polyandry.

Same with economic considerations. No doubt the desire to maintain the family property undivided and the necessity of wresting

1 See, *Fortunes of Primitive Tribes* (Luck. 1944).

a livelihood from a favourable environment through cooperation, as well as the difficulties of maintaining separate families may stylize the marriage in this particular form. But can economic conditions shape the marriage form by itself ?

Nevertheless biological factors coupled with extremely hard economic conditions have helped to maintain polyandrous unions in this region. Of course isolation is also a potent conditioning factor.

“At the same time, the low birth rate and the intense desire for male children explain the existence of polygyny among them. In fact, with the break down of barriers, with the steady impact of Brahminical ideas, some people are developing a dislike for polyandry. As economic conditions allow, as is the case with most of the *Sayanas*, they prefer polygyny to polyandry. The well-to-do and the progressive among them are sending their sons down to the plains for education; this is accelerating the decline of polyandry among these people as well as the rising tendency towards monogamy among some of them.”

It is rather paradoxical that despite the relative scarcity of females, hardly any premium is put on the female child. As already stated they occupy a low status. Right from an early age they are burdened with minor domestic duties. It is a common sight to see a girl of seven or eight taking care of her infant sibling. Too many restrictions and a few permissive attitudes are the striking features of the discipline technique adopted by their parents or rather fathers. This has perhaps, some influence on their ego development and teaches them to adhere to the traditional social pattern.

Their low status may be due to the fact that they take up anti-social attitudes when they fail to produce children. Apart from any deeper psychological factors that may be involved, children are a dire necessity in their subsistence economy for they provide the insurance against privations and hardships of old age. Hence of the many motives underlying marriage in the simpler societies, none is so strong as the desire for children. Therefore a barren woman has no status in the family, and there is every possibility that she will be divorced. She is regarded as a cursed person. A deep sense of frustration com-

bined with public contempt and pity eventually drives her to anti-social deeds. The village people ascribe the miseries and woes of the village to her. Many an innocent girl is rejected by the husband only because her mother is supposed to be a "Dakin". Man Singh of village Laddi divorced his first wife because her mother had such a notoriety. In other cases mothers and wives are deserted by sons and husbands. Perhaps because she is imagined to be the source of so much trouble, she is held in such a low esteem.

In this connection we should note the use of the word *malik*. The *chhut* rules allow divorce to men and women alike. But in reality it is well nigh impossible for a woman to seek divorce. When she wants divorce she must pay a fixed sum of money, as demanded by her husband's people. As such she must find out a person who is willing to bear this divorce-compensation. He pays the compensation and becomes the new '*malik*' or lord of that woman in literal sense of the word. She is but an economic pawn in the hands, at first, of her father and then her husbands. Theoretically she can choose any man, she can divorce husbands any time she likes, but in reality she must give herself up legally to that person who can afford to pay the bride-price or bear compensation for divorce. No wonder she is relegated to such a debased status. She does all the work at home, she even shares her husbands' works on the fields, but in return enjoys scanty powers amounting to a few domestic prerogatives. In most cases she is only a domestic or marital slave.

Their culture pattern gives very little scope for anti-social activities and we witnessed a relative dearth of aggressive outbursts or even violent verbal quarrels. The simplicity of their culture pattern has entailed a homogeneity in their scheme of values. This thwarts the development of individuality and acts as an insulator of social cohesion against anti-social aberrations.

The most striking crimes are those associated with witchcraft. As already stated these people are steeped in superstitions and every disease or disaster can be pinned on an anti-social woman. Usually the victim seeks redress through the diviner's assistance. But at other times they take the law in their own hands, and torment and tyrannize or even murder ruthlessly the victim of their suspicion.

Often an unaccounted for murder can be traced back to the dread of witchcraft. Recently a woman was found lying in a ditch in a nearby village of Chakrata Tehsil and the suspicion was that she had been deliberately murdered for the people believed that her practice of the black-art has brought disease and death in many of the village families.

Desertion is one of the most common consequences of such suspicion. Jurgi, wife Amri of Jungrai had to file a case against her husband for the restitution of her marital rights. On the other hand Kachlu Kolta of Majhgaon could not bring his wife Jhinni to his house for five years, for Jhingotia, the girl's father, had suspicion of his mother's traffic in the black-art. His (Katchlu's) repeated requests failed to move his father-in-law, and at last he had to go to the court.

At other times the suspicion is so strong that even the sons do not hesitate to ill-treat their aged mother on the suspicion of her being a *dakin*. Two or three persons died in the family of Bir Singh of Balatha village. He became suspicious of Rai Bali, somehow won the cooperation of the whole village and compelled Rai-Bali's sons to turn her out of the house. She took shelter in her brother's house and from there pleaded innocence and begged of her village people to permit her to go back to her sons, house; all her efforts failed to bring redress and lastly she decided to seek the help of the court.

Minor troubles over witchcraft are matters of common occurrence. But their culture pattern offers an outlet for the dread of witches and the hatred subside after a shortwhile, and in most of the cases referred to the Tehsil, compromise is achieved outside the court.

It seems possible that the prevailing customs of polyandry and polygyny may stimulate jealousy and consequent aggressive tendencies among these people. But as we probe deeper into their culture-pattern, we realize that their routinized customs have eliminated or at least held in check the possibilities of overt expression of material jealousies and consequent breach in social cohesion.

The usual marital customs allow the eldest brother to marry a girl or girls and the younger ones have access to her or them as the case may be. But under all circumstances he enjoys special marital prerogatives. There is every possibility that this will stir jealousy and

other associated impulses in their hearts and make the home resonant with bitter words. Or perhaps the wife may show particular liking for one of the brothers with similar consequences. For instance, Jaywanti, the fourth wife of Mansingh and his brothers have more liking for Shobal Singh, but under the pressure of social customs, she must serve and oblige Mansingh. But she does get opportunity to show her preference and she can tactfully avoid others on some pretext or other. But she won't like the separation of the brothers, for that will entail economic hardships for the whole family and perhaps partial starvation will snatch away her little ones from her. A sure knowledge of the disruptive influence of jealousy on the whole family, and consequently on society, obviate its overt manifestations to a great extent. But when feelings become too bitter and the scheme of collaboration fails, then they take recourse to separation. Under such a condition the wife remains with the eldest brother, the other brothers are helped financially by the former in their efforts to secure wives, at times the existing wives are appropriated by the brothers in order of their seniority through mutual agreements.

When there is a single wife, access to her is not indiscriminate and is usually settled by precise social customs and mutual arrangements. Hardships of economic life, and the virtual necessity of winning others' cooperation, teach them to focus their attentions on others, and as such control their own impulses; again owing to the existence of celibacy and the possibilities of extra-marital sexual relations, sexual jealousy does not usually flare up to the peak points of aggression. Among these people, as among the Marquisians studied by Kardiner, "sexual aim is not repressed". "This factor would tend to an attitude in the man permitting sexual gratification with the same object without fall in self-esteem." This factor may lower the opportunity for the growth of association between the tender and the sexual relation, hence may keep jealousy in check.

All the same defiances are not rare, and often the wife shows preference for one of the younger brothers. The eldest one may enforce separation and if she has got intense dislike for him then she seeks escape through divorce, if circumstances permit, otherwise she bears her lot in silence.

Again one of the brothers may try to win the love of the wife by giving her special presents but the other brothers do not try to check him, "for then he will divert his attentions to one of the village 'dha-yantis' and that will mean a financial loss to the family" remarked Jayanti. 'But', she continued "if any of the brothers claims any one of the children as his own, and if the wife supports his claim, then certainly a row will flare up in the family". But all the brothers are well aware of the eldest brother's social prerogatives to impose separation, hence such indiscretion is extremely rare.

Among the co-wives too, the possibility of violent outbursts is eliminated by the specific working of the security system. Speaking of the Marquisians, we know of some people, that men suppress jealousy because their cooperation is indispensable in the economic sphere. But their women take to covert jealousy as its suppression is not imperative for they are kept out of all economic activities. But in Jaunsar, women share their husbands' works on the fields, their services are more or less indispensable, as such their behaviour pattern cannot permit open manifestations of jealousy.

Again they do feel unhappy when the husbands show preference to another woman, but then the new-comer relieves them of the drudgery to a considerable extent, and their limited prerogatives, as the senior wives, are protected through the intervention of society. At times when the junior wife becomes the proud mother of a son, the senior wife, particularly if she is sonless, may become acrimonious, may even try to use magic to harm her or her child. But such cases are rare for as soon as she is detected, she will be divorced and payment of the compensation is rather difficult. Or perhaps she will be turned out of the house, and will have to bear life-long obloquy. At times when the senior wife, feels jealous of the junior one, she works with extra zeal and fervour so as to recapture the admiration and recognition of the husband. Instead of fretting and fuming, she strives hard to retain and monopolize certain duties, duties which are considered in the light of privileges. She mothers all the children, and even pretends to mother the junior co-wives. The structure of social prestige built round these privileges may be compensatory in function.

Crimes of passion and jealousy are usually held in check in family life, but often they tarnish the social fabric.

Dhamo of village Jhusood became rather intimate with Choto, a village *ranti*. Nayan Singh, Choto's husband, decided to avenge himself on Dhamo. One day he met Taro, Dhamo's wife on the field and persuaded her to yield to him. Perchance, Dhamo appeared on the spot, he felt outraged and poured out his wrath in a flood of vituperations. Nayan Singh told him that since he had been carrying on with his wife, he too was justified on being intimate with Dhamo's wife, Dhamo would not listen to him, neither was he willing to place the case before the village *panchayat*, for he was apprehensive of the punishment that would be meted out to him for his share of the crime. Blind with fury he (Dhamo) cut off a lock of her hair, the worst possible insult for a woman in this area. She, unable to bear the insult sent it to her father Chait Singh through a Kolta. He took her away to his village and later on filed a case for the recovery of her conjugal rights.

All these details were collected from the village people, the court only records such cases as those of ill-treatment and desertion. For usually they try to disguise the real nature of the crime, as such aberrations are intensely despised and dreaded by these people.

Thus we see that their social structure is so ordered, their culture pattern is so weaved that the possibilities of overt jealousy and consequent violence must be circumscribed. This does not indicate the absence of envy and jealousy, as has been often mentioned by earlier writers, it merely indicates that the social pattern diminishes the scope of their exercise. Provocations are few, rewards of impulse control are worth attaining. Social sanctions can be easily imposed, as conformity is indispensable, for the very existence of the society hinges on the organized cooperation of its members. Hence not only jealousy in family life but mutual aggression as a whole is less marked among these people. Jealousy appears not infrequently when they get drunk during festivals. But as soon as they sober up they feel ashamed of their pitfalls and try to make up through apologies. They prefer to abide by the traditional pattern rather than incur social opprobrium and censure.

BRATAS IN BENGAL

(*A Cult of Beauty*)

CHARULAL MUKHERJEE

Amongst the plethora of customs observed by the Hindus of Bengal, *Bratas* engage our attention as the most peculiar feature of the religious practices (using it in the widest sense) of women-folk. Although the ill-starred widows are not debarred from the observance of a few of them, most of the observants of these folk-rituals are either maidens or married women.

The dictionary meaning of *Brata* is "an act of religious devotion voluntarily undertaken." *Brati* is one "engaged in observing vows" and we are reminded how Tagore named his boy-scouts of Santiniketan as "Brati-Balak". To be more precise according to Sanskrit root meanings, it is an action that leads to merit and on practising it, one's sin wanes on purgation. The Prakritibad dictionary in Bengali, cites the example of *Chandrayana Brata* under this category, but we should remember here that it is a religious ritual of penance done with the help of priests.

In undertaking these *Bratas*, it is however, essential that the vow of observing them should be taken, but whether or not all of them can be considered as strictly religious practices, if by "religion" we mean "a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life";¹ it presents a fascinating problem to the ethnologist called upon to disentangle skeins of magic, whether considered as *magic* or *magic maleficia* (good or bad), the double expression often applied by Apuleius², and religion, the higher rung of the magic-ladder.

At this stage we want to present before the readers an account of two such *Bratas* specifically aiming at the attainment of the body beautiful, before we analyse their constituent elements in the light of

1. Sir J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough* (Abridged edition), P. 50.

2. L. Thorndyke, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, (New York, 1929), Vol. II

science. These are termed "Nakhchuter Brata" and "Ruphaluder Brata" and may be translated as the vow of "nail-paring" and the vow of "turmeric charm".

NAKHCHUTER BRATA

Let us now examine the first, viz. the vow of nail-paring in some details. This vow, according to custom, is taken on the fourth day of the full-moon of *Chaitra*. In some localities, the completion of the vow requires four years, while in others, the entire ritual is finished in one year. To our knowledge, this *Brata* is now prevalent in Krishnagar, Nabadwip and Hooghly in Western Bengal, and enquiries revealed that some steps are skipped over here and there to suit special conditions, but the general features all agree.

The most essential requisite of the *Brata* is a female barber. The *Brati* woman must observe the taboos of not paring her nails from the last day of Magh to Falgun. And as *Chaitra* is ushered in, she is customarily prohibited from massaging her body with oil, till the ceremonials are concluded. When the day arrives, a piece of napkin (*gamcha*), five pieces of turmeric, five shells of *cowrie*, five betel-leaves, five betel-nuts, five *batashas* (fried cake of treacle), some honey, the vegetable *parawal*, locks of jute-fibres dyed in black are kept in readiness by the votary. Next she invites a married woman on the fourth day of the full-moon of *Chaitra*, gets her nails pared by the barber woman and the edges of her feet painted by means of the red pigment, *alta*, after rubbing them well with a piece of porous brick. The devotee herself combs the hair of the invited female guest and daubs her forehead with vermilion. Then she keeps the five pieces of turmeric, *cowrie*-shells, betel-leaf, betel-nut and a *batasha*, (fried treacle-cake) in the new napkin. It is now customary for the *Brati* to rub the back of her guest till such time as she gathers dirt sufficient to make a doll-like puppet with the greasy material, and it is forthwith shaped into form. Next the nails of the woman under the vow are pared, a few ends of her hair are cut and kept tied in the napkin. When this process is gone through, the woman-guest is made to wear a *sari* with a red-border and seated on a wooden seat on the floor. A puppet is now sketched on her back with honey and touching the *parawal* on to the eyes of the pictorial representation, the *Brati* chants as follow:—

"Let my eyes look like *panawal* cut into halves".

Next the feet of the guest is dipped in milk mixed with *alta* (red pigment) while she prays :

"Let my complexion be like *alta* mixed in milk."

A well-shaped banana is now taken out and the fingers of the invited lady are measured with it, while the *Brati* utters the wish :

"Let my fingers be shapely like bananas."

Then the locks of jute dyed in black are placed over the hair of the guest as the wish is recited :

"Let my hair be long like these jute-fibres and thick and dark and curly like black glossy silk."

The chantings and prayers over, all these articles are tied into a corner of napkin. It should be noted in passing that the foregoing rites are observed for four years consecutively.

Now it is time for the woman-guest to be ceremonially treated to a meal. Custom requires that in the first year she should be fed with fried grams and sweetened fried-paddy. In the second year, she is given curd and fried-paddy, flattened rice and sweetened fried-paddy in the third, while the last term entertains her to a feast of *loochi* (fried wafers in charified butter), fish and vegetable curry together with a sumptuous dish of sweets and fruits. As she dines, a lamp preferably of *ghee* or oil is lit and after dinner she is presented with iron-bangles,¹ lac-bracelets, *alta*, casket of vermilion, a napkin, hair-oil recipes, a mirror, a comb, a fan and a rupee. Now it is time for the *Brati* to carry the lamp lighted on her head to a tank where it is ceremonially immersed along with the nail-parings.

The fourth year brings the folk-ritual to the climax of completion. Four married women are invited and seated face to face. Their nails are pared by a barber woman and bodies rubbed with oil and bathed. Next their feet are painted with *alta*, they are made to wear red bordered saris and seated on wooden seats facing the south, north, east and west. Then as on previous years, the dirt on their backs are again

I. Undoubtedly worn to chase away evil-spirits that do harm to married women. Iron is widely used in Bengal to exercise ghosts.

shaped like dolls and the wishes are chanted as already recorded, and the guests are entertained. The same presents follow and the burning lamp is dipped in water by the *Brati* as she plunges in a tank or river along with the nail-parings.

RUP-HALUD BRATA

The object of the *Brata* is to gain beauty. Like the previous, this is also observed by maidens and married women for four years. It starts on the last day of the Bengali year with the ceremonial anointing of a married woman with pasted turmeric and other ceremonies and continues for the whole of Baisakh. On the last day of Baisakh of the fourth year, four married women are dressed in appropriate robes, given toilet and other presents like the one we have seen treated, gets better things as a red-bordered cloth dyed yellow in turmeric, a silver vermillion casket, a mirror, a comb, a fan and a rupee.

The scope of our enquiry is too limited to allow us to trace the origin of these customs, but we should remember that as long as our desires do not end in death, the animal-world engages itself in a worldwide *Brata*-like ritual. Human desires on earth and their mimetic representation in appropriate ceremonies have been here cast into a commonsense mould and we may usefully quote here the observations of F. C. Bartlett in his *Psychology and Primitive Culture*, throwing light on the point: "We study the features of the ceremonial, and it seems to us that the practice must spring from, or at least be accompanied by, certain beliefs. Now if we picture some individual, setting him, for the time being, entirely outside his social group, some striking occurrence in his life leads him to associate an animal let us say with the birth of a child, or with the securing of food. By the inevitable laws of association, acting upon him just as they might conceivably act on any other individual in any other natural environment, he connects the animal with the child or food, and may come to regard the first as the cause of the second. More than this he persuades others of the connexion. The spreading belief, also by a common psychological process, finds dramatic expression in a form of ritual."

Now a few notes on the magical significance of the requisites of the *Brata* and the attending ceremonies may not be out of place.

The observance of the taboo of not paring the nails and cessation from the use of oil possibly serves the purpose of conservation. In the analogous practices referred to in anthropological literature we read how while the Sea Dayaks of Banting in Sarawak were out fighting, the women might not oil their hair lest misfortune might befall them. The Kai of Northern New Guinea carefully secrete nail-parings, and teeth in the belief that should these fall into the hands of enemies, they might be used to harm the owners by a process of contagious magic. Similarly the Tumbuka of Nysaland lay them in ant-holes just as these nail-parings were immersed in water by the *Brati*, beyond the reach of possible harm. As regards the puppet representation practised in the ritual it is indeed a specimen of white magic. But it would not be at all irrelevant to refer to a parallel, although in the realm of black magic. Thus we see how a Malay charm requires the "nails, hair, eye-brows, spittle and so forth of your intended victim enough to represent every part of his person, and then make them into his likeness with wax from a deserted bees' comb and scorch the figure by holding it over a lamp every night for seven nights and say ;

It is not wax that I am storching
It is the liver, heart and spleen of
so-and so that I scorch." 2

The Indian custom of burning the effigy of an enemy called "Kushaputtal" may also be cited here.

The point that almost all the ceremonial requisites number *five* can be studied in the context that *five* in Hindu ritual is a mystic number with a good significance. Gods are offered "Pancha Naibedyā" (five offerings), the feeding of five Brahmins in a feast is at least second best. The five deities are offered food before the Brahmin takes his meal and five we hear is extolled in the essay on "The Ei at Delphi."

The other requisites namely vermilion, *alta*, red-bordered sari have occult virtues associated with the very colour. Added to this, the use of honey in drawing the puppet on the guest's back can only

1. Sir J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, p. 49.

2. L. Thorndyke, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, p. 212.

aim at producing a sweet result. Honey or sugar-candy, we remember, is put into the mouth of new-born babies so that they may have sweet speech and a new bride in Bengal is applied honey in her ear and given a *sandesh* in her mouth with the expressed wish that whatever she may hear may sound sweet and anything she may speak may be of sugary significance. And last but not the least, the burning lamp on the head of the *Brati* reminds one forcibly of the perpetually burning lamp in the little shrine at Nemi for the safety of the Emperor Claudius and his family and the worship of a perpetual fire, cared for by the holy maidens at Latium and the Catholic practice of dedicating holy candles at churches may also be cited in this context ¹

An analysis of the rituals described leads to irresistible conclusion that their object is attainment of the body beautiful. This cult of beauty worship leads from an instinctive biological urge of women to look beautiful in the appropriate season of life in tune with the plant and animal kingdom. To fulfill this aim, the ceremonials that are gone through are really magical processes intended to compel the unseen powers to grant to the *Brati* her wish. On the principle of *similia similibus* (like producing like), which goes by Frazer's phrase of homeopathic magic, the various aspects of female beauty in the eye, face, fingers, and hair are conjured by the law of Similarity into the beauty of the half-cut *parawal*, face like a betel leaf, fingers shaped like bananas and hair like dark jute-fibres. And by puppet representations, they are actually made to come in the physical contact of married women, thought to be repositories of good luck in coverture, prized by women in general. The feeding of married women-guests and presenting them with customary articles of toilet are only intended to be charms to conjure unseen forces to transmit their luck to the devotee by the Law of Association and "silent sympathy" that moulds Lucy's form to beauty in Wordsworth.

Religion presupposes pleasing super-human deities by prayers and sacrifices and implies a pliable natural law, and magic, the lower step, implies coercion of unseen spirits in an inflexible order of the universe. Not that in the wishes chanted, there are not elements of prayer. But

I. Sir J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough* (Abridged edition, 1933) p. 3.

it is certain that it does not lie underlined, although there are many *Bratas* attended by them. All that we can understand from them is that it may be the relic of a state of society when the function of the priest and the sorcerer whether individual or public, was not clearly differentiated. "To serve his purpose man wooed the will of gods or spirits by prayer and sacrifices while at the same time he had recourse to ceremonies and forms of words which he hoped would of themselves bring about the desired result without the help of god or devil. In short he practised religious and magical rites simultaneously".¹

That the *Bratas* as described show a non-Aryan origin is perhaps undisputed. They reveal a fusion of cultures between Aryan culture and the practices of the "Anyabratas" as the pre-Aryans were called. But these call for voluminous evidence. All that we find here goes to show that in the state of human mind and thought represented in the *Bratas*, the women simply desire to arrest the superhuman deity by rites and chants on the unconscious logic of magic which is however diluted with and reinforced by faint elements of religion.

* I. Sir J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough* (Abridged Edition 1933), p. 52.

INTER—TRIBAL RELATIONS, A STUDY

S. C. Dube

In the wide and extensive regions of tribal Middle India and the Deccan where a number of tribes at different levels of culture co-exist in a common habitat, varying patterns of inter-tribal relationships are noticeable. To the student of social adjustment and culture-change the mutual relations of the tribes themselves on the one hand and their relations with the neighbouring castes and sects on the other, provide very interesting material for study. In this paper I propose to analyse the nature and problems of inter-tribal relations from three culture-areas: the Gond-Kamar-Bhunja area of Chhattisgarh, the Gond-Kolam area of Adilabad and the Koya—Hill Reddy area of Warangal.

I

In the Gond-Kamar-Bhunja area of the Bindranawagarh Zemindari in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, the Gonds constitute the landed peasantry and live in common villages inter-mixed with the other Hindu castes. Although they have retained their tribal organization, beliefs and ritual, their economic position as well-to-do cultivators and their socio-political influence as members of the ruling race—the Zemindars of Bindranawagarh being Amat Gonds, has naturally brought them the leadership of the village community. Thus, the Gonds today associate themselves more with the Hindu castes and seek to differentiate themselves from simple folks like the Kamars and Bhunjias who are economically poor and backward. Yet they generally concede that they too are a tribal element in the population and that they had close associations with the other tribes in the legendary and the not-too-distant past. The Kamars stand on the other extreme. They have maintained their semi-isolation, and still possessing a remarkable tribal feeling; they have successfully resisted alien influences in several phases of their culture. Although a part of the tribe has come to the plains, a great majority is still in the hills and forests and nearly nowhere do they like to live in common settlements with other tribes and castes. An exception to this general-rule may be

made in remote villages, where being in overwhelming majority they may permit one or two outside families to settle down in the vicinity of their villages. Their virtually self-sufficient economy of the past is breaking down at several points, but it still retains some of its remarkable distinctiveness. Standing mid-way between the Gonds and the Kamars, the Bhunjias have in some spheres gone a long way in adopting alien modes and patterns, but in other respects have zealously maintained their old-time conservativeness. Among them the Gonds are numerically a large and dominant community; the total Kamar and Bhunjia population being just a fraction of their total strength. Of all the three tribal groups the over-all influence of Hindu beliefs and social patterns is present in varying degrees, but they still have in their cultures certain distinctive elements which may mark them out from one another. As they live in close symbiosis, they have naturally been forced to work out their patterns of mutual adjustment.

Comparatively speaking the social status of the Gonds is regarded as higher than that of the other two tribes. However, the Kamars and Bhunjias, being more autochthonous, have considerable feeling of tribal superiority. Being numerically small and economically weak they cannot effectively assert it. On the contrary, the economically better off and socially influential Gonds invariably describe themselves as Gond Thakurs. Thakur may mean both a master and a Kshatriya, and by implication the Gonds claim both these status. In their turn, the Kamars and the Bhunjias look forward to the Gonds as their social ideal. In fact the endogamous Chinda division of the Bhunjias has cut itself off so much from the Chaukhtias, that today they are more akin to the Gonds than to the sister brand of the Chaukhtias. In everyday life, therefore, the Kamars and Bhunjias practically take for granted the social superiority of the Gonds. The material and social consequences of this assumption are now beginning to show themselves clearly. While the older Kamars and Bhunjias still retain their old modes of dress and decoration, particularly hair styles, those of the younger generation increasingly seek to emulate the Gonds. Those who have taken to plough-cultivation build substantial houses and decorate them in the Gond style. Following the Gond example, these Kamars and Bhunjias

are making their marriage rites more elaborate. While the Gonds are moving in the direction of Hinduization, the other two tribes are content to follow their examples. The socially accepted rules of etiquette demand that the Gonds should be shown sane special regard and consideration. When the larger Panchayats of the entire village community, comprising different tribes and castes assemble, the honour of presiding over them almost invariably goes to the Gonds.

The contacts and cooperation, however, do not go very far. The Kamars and Bhunjias, unlike the Gonds of this area, still have their separate dialects. A major section of the Kamars and a considerable section of the Bhunjias even now practise shifting cultivation. The ritual life of the two tribes is remarkably different. The Kamars hesitate considerably in breaking their age-old exclusiveness. Even in the recent past they have demonstrated a psychological disposition to remain attached to their old ways. The Chaukhtia Bhunjias make claim to tribal superiority for their *chokh* (i. e. purity, from which the name Chaukhtia is derived) which according to them is based on two of their unique customs. Firstly they strictly follow the practice of a token pre-puberty marriage in which a girl is nominally married before the commencement of her menstruation to an arrow or a similar object. Secondly, in order to preserve the sanctity of their deities, lodged invariably in the hut used for cooking, they do not let anyone other than those belonging to the clan touch that hut. This rule is so strictly adhered to that even a girl of the family after she is married is not allowed to enter the kitchen of her parental home. For their respective socio-religious matters, like the Gonds, the other two tribes have their own tribal Panchayats.

Because of these differences, therefore, unrestricted social intercourse becomes impossible. The Gonds would not deem it fit to eat or drink at the hands of the Kamars and Bhunjias. Men and children among both the Kamars and Bhunjias can partake of Gond food but their women-folk cannot. Their tribal restrictions in this respect are very strict and the Bhunjias particularly prescribe permanent ostracism of such women. If they come to attend Kamar or Bhunjia marriages

the Gonds must be given a high place of honour. They must be seated separately. They would not participate in the common feast but would have to be given raw food separately so that they may cook it independently elsewhere. Kamars and Bhunjias too do not partake of each other's food. However, in marriages they sit together but cook and eat at different places. In the realm of sex the taboos for maintaining sex exclusiveness are more strict. Although there is considerable leniency with regard to those matters inside the respective tribes themselves, intrigues and liaisons outside are very strictly dealt with. For social rites and ceremonies the occasions when they meet are very few indeed. Being poor the Kamars and Bhunjias rarely invite any outsiders. The Gonds may occasionally invite them out of charity. In their rituals and ceremonials too the tribes maintain a certain distance. Their Baiga magicians are separate in each case, although at the time of need they can be consulted by anyone irrespective of his tribe. They do not assist one another at the time of funeral or confinement. In religious rites and ceremonies, the occasions for them to participate together are very few. They join together at the time of tying up the tiger-spirit or for hunting witches when the epidemic of cholera spreads. Where their fields are in close proximity they also participate nominally in the ceremonial feast of sowing and harvesting.

Thus the Kamars and Bhunjias must be regarded as exclusive and independent groups who have accepted the leadership and superiority of the Gonds only in some narrow and limited spheres of their life.

II

Adilabad presents the picture of a composite tribal society. Here, the Kolams, still using the hoe, represent the autochthonous element, and the Gonds constitute the aboriginal landed aristocracy. The Pardhans, as elsewhere, are attached to the Gonds as minstrels. Kolams of Adilabad are again a class of minstrels, although they are distinct from and poorer than the Pardhans. All these tribes are marked out from the rest of the rural society by their practice of cow-sacrifice and distinctive myth and ritual. The only tribe not practising cow-sacrifice in this area are the hoe-using Naik-pods.

Some Kolams have their exclusive settlements but on the whole the villages of all these tribes are mixed ones and they do not entertain any sentiment against such villages.

This tribal society is well-integrated. The Gonds had power and influence but they did not disregard the older inhabitants of the land, the Kolams, who continued to worship the territorial deities for them. With their remarkable ceremonial, the Kolams effectively occupied the place of *Pujaris* or priests to the Gond chieftains, landlords and cultivators. The Kolams are therefore not regarded as an inferior people. Many of the Gond-Kolam-Pardhan rituals and ceremonials are identical and common, and in them a Kolam priest officiates. Kolams do not refuse Gond food. Similarly, it is not considered sinful for a Gond to partake of the food in a Kolam house and if they hesitate in this, their hesitation is engendered only by their feudal concept of higher status. Both groups consider matrimonial alliances and sex-intrigues improper, but there are cases on record where offsprings of such unions did not have much difficulty in finding a place in one of the two groups.

This must not, however, lead us to think that the Kolams are just an off-shoot of the Gonds. In physical type, language and primitiveness of their economy they are remarkably different from the Gonds. Known for their great powers of divination they worship *Ayak* and have elaborate magico-religious rites. In the farces and dialogues staged by Gond comedians during marriage ceremonies and at the festive *Dandari* season, comic element is often provided by the depiction of the still primitive and uncivilized ways of the Kolams.

In relation to the Gond, the Pardhan stands on an altogether different footing. He regards the Gonds as his *dhani* or master. The Pardhan as a professional minstrel is traditionally attached to one of the Gond phratries and is by social usage entitled to their support. The elaborate ritual and ceremonial life of the Gond would leave a void if the Pardhan is removed from its scene. Naturally enough the Pardhans beg and eat from the Gonds, but the Gonds cannot reciprocate. The status of the *Tollio* is similar but a little lower.

The tribal society of Adilabad, according to my Gond informants, differ from the rural Hindu community in three respects:

(a) The tribals practise cow-sacrifice at the occasion of Persa Pen's worship in the month of Balsakh; and at the time of the cremation and *Karanu* ceremony of a dead person. On all these occasions or whenever a cow is killed by a carnivorous animal, beef is freely eaten by them.

(b) Among them the bride is first brought to the bride-groom's home and then the marriage rites are performed. Among other castes it is customary to perform these rites at bride's house.

(c) The tribes are particular about keeping a woman out from the normal socio-religious routine of life as long as her menstrual flow lasts, while these rules are not as strictly adhered to by the other castes.

Of these the first is easily the most important. In their developed peasant culture, the Gonds have naturally evolved an elaborate ritual and the Kolams and Pardhans share it in a considerable measure. Hindu sentiment against cow-sacrifice has of course asserted itself in this area too, but the united strength of tribal opinion has been able to hold its own. The Naik-pods alone in tribal Adilabad refrain from beef-eating. Similar in economy to the Kolams, at some places they live in mixed villages, at others in their exclusive tribal settlements. They have mostly adopted Telugu, although a few of them still speak their own ancient dialect. Their economy varies from region to region; in some areas they use the digging stick, in others, they are plough-cultivators, while in the open country-side they are mostly agricultural wage-earners. They do not eat food cooked by another tribe, and like the Hindu castes claim superiority over the Gonds, Kolams and Pardhans.

It is noteworthy that the Kolams who are, in their physical features and tribal economy, similar to the Kamars have in this area developed an entirely different pattern of relationship with the Gonds whose position in Adilabad resembles greatly the status of the Amat Gonds of Chhattisgarh.

III

In the Warangal district of Hyderabad specially in the Godavari gorge, the principal tribes are the Koyas and the Hill Reddis. The Koyas are an offshoot of the Gonds, numerically large enough to constitute an independent section of the great Gond tribes. They are known by their distinctive bison-horn and peacock feathered head dress worn during their dances. A considerable portion of the Koyas still speak their own dialect. The Hill Reddis belong to the same area and still largely maintain their primitive methods of shifting cultivation. They have lost their ancient dialect and have now universally adopted Telugu as their language. While there are several exclusive Koya or Hill Reddy settlements, the number of large mixed villages having both these tribes is also considerable. In these villages separate clusters of Koya and Reddy houses are constructed on two different portions of the same site. However, vast patches of land or 'jungle' do not separate them.

The Hill Reddis differ from the Koyas in one major respect. While the Koyas practise cow-sacrifice, the Reddis do not have any such custom. Being numerically strong the Koyas could resist Hindu sentiment against cow-sacrifice, although it did mean some loss of social prestige for them in the eyes of their Hindu neighbours. On the contrary by observing the Hindu injunction the Hill Reddis actually rose higher than the Koyas in the esteem of the Hindu population. Cow-sacrifice has a vital place in a Koya funeral and as such they regard it as an essential element of their culture. The Koyas eat beef, the Hill Reddis do not touch it. They have other differences too. In the mode of the dress of their women-folk there is slight but noticeable difference. In their dances of the Mango Festival the Koyas never participate. On other occasions in their respective dances the Koya and Hill-Reddy women dance separately, never mixing with each other. The Reddis cannot accept Koya food, but the Koyas do not object to food cooked by the Reddis. Ordinarily they mix about freely, but they avoid touching each other at the time of eating. Sex relations between the two tribes are of course strictly forbidden.

Notwithstanding these differences, their participation in each other's social and ceremonial life is remarkable. In all the crises of

human life-cycle they join and assist each other. At the time of confinement Koya and Hill Reddi women attend on each other without any restrictions. Similarly, in marriages they invite each other. The Koyas make separate seating arrangements for the Reddis and give them raw food to be cooked by themselves. In the Reddi weddings the Koyas sit separately, but cooked food is served to them. In funeral processions they go together, although a Koya would not help in carrying a Reddi corpse or vice versa unless it becomes absolutely necessary. In the religious ceremonies of Bhudevi Panduga (worship of Mother Earth), Mamidikaya Panduga (Mango Festival) and Danavai Panduga they act jointly, priest of any one group officiates. They separate only at the time of eating.

In this area we see a third pattern of inter-tribal adjustment. Although the Reddis are regarded by the general consensus of Hindu opinion as relatively higher than the beef-eating Koyas, the exigencies of a life in a common but isolated, secluded and distant habitat have forced them to evolve an adjustment which works quite smoothly.

NOTICES OF BOOKS

“INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY.” Vol. I: By Dr. Ralph Piddington, Reader in Social Anthropology, in the University of Edinburgh: Published by Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1950: Pages 442: Price 25 shillings.

This book is designed to introduce to the beginners, particularly the University students, the science of social anthropology and is therefore eminently suitable as a text-book on social anthropology. The author has tried to make the subject easy of understanding and has given copious examples to explain and elucidate the different aspects of primitive culture. The author has also given notes for the guidance of teachers and students which should prove very useful in the study of the subject.

There are eleven chapters in the book and they cover almost the entire range of social anthropology. At the end of every chapter, a bibliography has been given, thus providing the inquisitive student materials for further detailed study. A special feature of the book is that the important terms and definitions are given in bold types to attract notice and impression in the mind of readers.

The treatment of the cultures of peoples is based on the functional method. After a broad survey of primitive cultures throughout the world and a description of the types of social organization found in the primitive communities, the author goes on to state the general principles of cultural analysis and to deal with primitive economics, land tenure, religion and magic.

P. K. M.

The book is thus a very useful text-book on Social Anthropology and together with Vol. II (to be published later) will be a very valuable addition to the literature on Social Anthropology.

“NATIVE PEOPLES OF THE PACIFIC WORLD:” By Prof. Felix M. Keesing of Stanford University: Published by the MacMillan Company of New York, 1947, Pages 144.

This book is one of the series called the Pacific World Series, published under the auspices of The American Committee for Inter-

national Wild Life Protection, describing the natural history and peoples of the numerous islands of the Pacific Ocean. This book was originally written for the use of the armed forces in the Pacific War theatres, but still it will prove very useful to the general reader who wants to have information about this part of the world, in a handy form.

The book is divided into nine chapters, bearing on ethnography, language, government, economics, social customs and religion. The chapters are full of useful and interesting details about the life and lore of the various peoples inhabiting this vast region. The book contains a number of interesting pictures depicting the various phases of the life of these people.

The two appendices give useful statistics and chronology of these regions.

P. K. M.

"SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY:" THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE: By J. S. Slotkin, Assistant Professor of Social Science, University of Chicago: Published by the Macmillan Company of New York: 1950, Pages 604; Price 36 shillings.

This book, as the Preface says, is an attempt to provide a systematic introduction to social and cultural anthropology. The book is divided into sixteen chapters with two indices. The book is literally crammed with references culled from various sources providing materials for comparative study of customs and behaviour of peoples under different environments. Copious references to the original works should help the inquisitive student to follow up the study in greater details but the author has failed to utilise his opportunities by wrong selection of literature and a superficial acquaintance with anthropological facts. Professor Louis Wirth in his Foreward points out "that Dr. Slotkin's work shows convincingly how much social anthropology has to offer in this direction to sociologists, political scientists, economists, psychologists, jurists and other special students of human behaviour by confronting them with insights gathered from societies other than our own". This is probably right in a way but the treatment of the subject by the author leaves much to be desired.

P. K. M.

"THE CHILDREN OF HARI": A Study of the Nimar Balahis in the Central Provinces of India: By Stephen Fuchs: Published by Verlag Herold. Vienna. 1950, Pages 463.

This exhaustive monograph by Father Stephen Fuchs, published in the series called "*Wiener Beitrage zur Kulturgeschichte and Linguistik*", deals with the entire life and lore of an untouchable caste in Central India called the Balahis. The author made detailed study of every phase of the life of this community during his ten years's work among them as a missionary. He had thus ample opportunity to study them at close quarters. An illuminating foreword has been contributed by Dr. Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf. In his concluding chapter entitled "The Future of the Balahis", the author has made many shrewd observations about the future position of the untouchable classes in general and the Balahis in particular, which deserve serious consideration by all who have the welfare of the backward classes of India at heart. The missionary point of view need not be a handicap in presenting scientific data, and Rev. Fuchs has fairly got over hurdles, though, sceptics can pin him down to some of his observations as depicting a perspective.

P. K. M.