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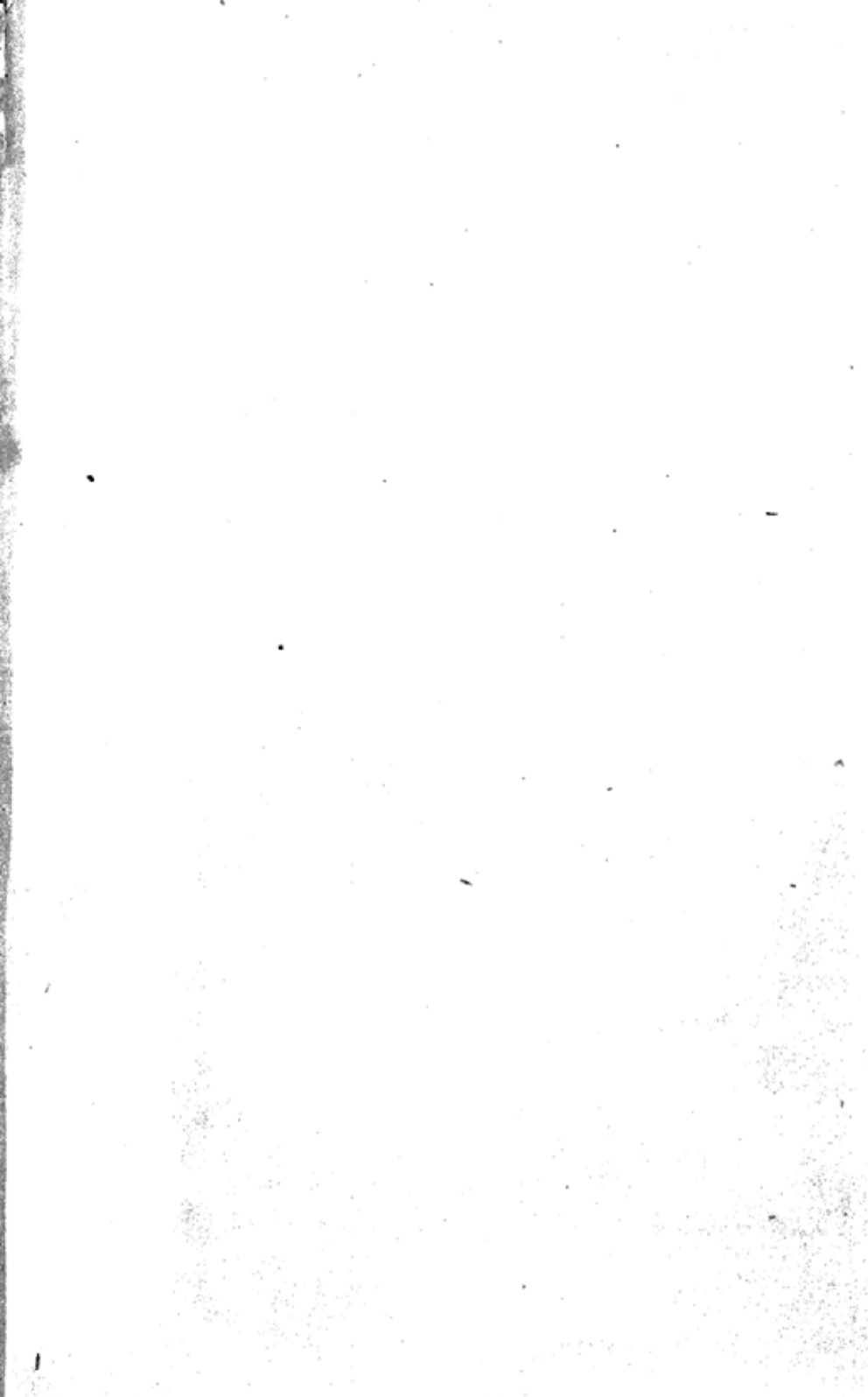
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## RACES AND CULTURES OF INDIA

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# RACES & CULTURES OF INDIA



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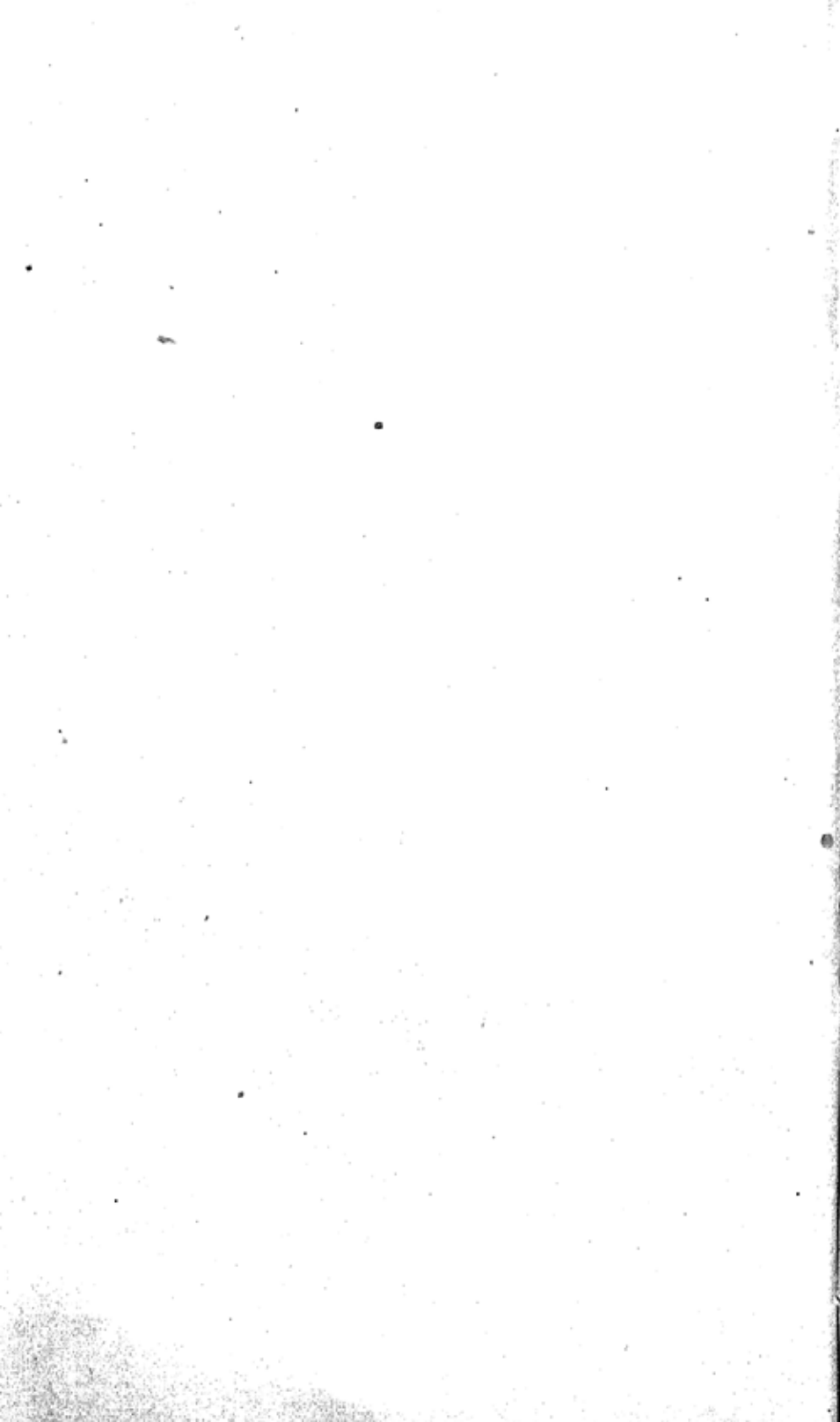
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## PREFACE

More than half-a-century ago, Sir Herbert Risley wrote his book on the People of India. This was an outstanding contribution to the study of races and cultures of India. Since then a number of books have been written by eminent scholars who have directed our attention to particular phases of Indian culture and pointed out the various limitations of Risley's methods of study. The Census Reports have also added to our knowledge of Indian races, tribes and castes. Besides, several trained investigators have studied various primitive people and institutions and much of the anthropological theories are being reviewed today in the light of new evidence.

Anthropological studies have, in recent years, in the west, been largely devoted to problems of administration of primitive and backward communities under the political control of European peoples and also to various problems of acculturation and decay arising from the clash of cultures and contact of races. In India such vital issues concerning about 30 million persons have not as yet attracted the scientific attention they deserve. What is happening among the primitive and backward communities of India today? What is the condition of those who move from fields to factories, from the tribal villages of Chota Nagpur and Chattisgarh to the liminal towns, and distant plantations? How do these periodical movements affect the life, customs and modes of settled agricultural tribes?

As a field worker I have from time to time, investigated problems of collective living and the adjustment of the major primitive and backward peoples of India. I have had opportunities to live among them, see the working of their tribal beliefs and customs and the imponderables of their culture, and also the marked effects of economic transition and cultural maladaptation. Several current theories about the origins of marriage, dormitory and the social structure could be reviewed in the light of new data. Materials on social anthropology have also been supplemented by systematic racialological data derived from serological and somatological investigations. An attempt has therefore been made to define precisely the racial backgrounds of cultural life, and assess the respective rôles of race and environment departing from the usual exclusive emphasis of ethnological materials in the study of social origins. The preliminary results of many such enquiries have already been published by me in the pages of scientific journals and periodicals, both Indian and foreign.

In April, 1943, I was invited by the then Government of India to deliver a course of lectures to the I.C.S. probationers



and minor chiefs who received their training at Dehradun. I planned to put before them the outlines of the main problems regarding primitive culture in India, in a way which might satisfy the requirements of their training, and at the same time, presenting in brief compass the entire field of Indian anthropology in the light of new methods and materials. Both these purposes are indeed difficult to fulfil in the same publication and my treatment of the problems has of necessity been of a summary kind.

A knowledge of the races and cultures of the country should be regarded as an indispensable pre-requisite for an efficient administrative system. Such recognition has already proved of immense benefit in countries with a large aboriginal or primitive population. While anthropological research has been drawn upon for the purpose of political administration in Africa, America and Oceania, little attention has been directed by the Indian services to the study of Indian peoples and cultures. One should also add that the help, that the administration has rendered to those engaged in such studies has been meagre and half-hearted.

The process of transition from tribe to caste, the assimilation of the tribal substratum in the main body of the Indian caste system, has been going on for centuries. The *laissez-faire* policy of the Government with respect to the tribal population has done much wrong to the latter. Many tribal people have become extinct or have suffered exploitation without redress. The importance of the aboriginal problem has not been recognized in India. Even the 1919 Reforms did not do justice to the large primitive population in the country. The new constitution has placed some of the larger aboriginal tracts under the special responsibility of the Governors, excluding or partially excluding them in special areas though difference of opinion exists about the recognition of such territorial and political divisions. In spite of the provision made in the constitution, the smaller tribes or those widely scattered in different provinces have been faced with detribalization and exploitation by landlords, administrative officers, traders, merchants, and even missionaries. Missionary activities often have not shown understanding or even scruples and their general effect has been to sap the vitality and destroy the optimism of many primitive groups. Roy, Mills and Hutton among others in India have stressed the necessity of controlling missionary enterprise in tribal areas.

Problems of primitive culture today are multifarious. In all these, an attitude of sympathy and first-hand knowledge of primitive life and institutions are indispensable. To mention one such problem, education is a major responsibility of a

modern state ; the expenditure on education may be taken as a test of the *bonafide* of a government. Now, for the millions of primitive people in India, education is wholly carried on without the aid of writing, and mainly through the medium of the spoken language. The institutions that cater to the needs of primitive children in India are mostly managed and controlled by private or state-aided missions, both Hindu and Christian. It may fairly be estimated that not more than 5 p.c. of the children from aboriginal homes receive any institutional care.

Contact with civilization has disorganized and disintegrated primitive life everywhere and the primitive people in India have been detribalized to an appreciable extent in recent times. With the weakening of tribal authority and indigenous religious sanctions the effects of contacts have been more disruptive than is imagined today. The main purpose of education is to strengthen the feeling of responsibility in the people and to conserve the values in society which have stood the test of time or the incursion of alien ideas, and have helped them to survive. Any scheme of education devised for the tribal people must take notice of the indigenous methods of training and must be broadly based on what has been of abiding significance to their cultural life. The system of dormitory life, for example, should be carefully studied. If reoriented to suit the present needs the youth organization of the dormitory is likely to prove a bulwark to these tribes who still jealously guard it as a treasure and a legacy.

## 2

The present study deals with the races and cultures of India. But that does not mean that I have planned to set down all that is known and has been said about the people of India. It is only designed to introduce readers to a subject, the importance of which has not yet been properly evaluated. The first two chapters deal with race elements in India. The rest are devoted to the study of culture, particularly that which is lived by the majority of people, the tribes and the less advanced castes. It is these people who constitute the backbone of Indian life and labour today and provide the threshold of Indian culture.

Mystical beliefs about the brotherhood of man have justified claims of equality of racial opportunity for further social development, while racial supremacy and racial exploitation have been reviewed in the background of 'biological realism' which has sanctioned certain patterns of behaviour, and even prejudices which are otherwise difficult to uphold. Racists in Germany for generations have extolled the virtues of the

Nordic or the so-called Aryan race, and have stressed its claims to superior status, also as creators of civilization, while their colleagues in England admit isolation of types in prehistoric times but find no justification for racial claims today ; for whatever innate differences exist between races, they are clearly of the overlapping character. The former probably base their arguments on nothing more serious than 'self-interest and wish-fulfilment' while the latter lose their way in the labyrinth of racial blends and combinations.

In India, although not much scientific study of races has been attempted, raciology has been used as an applied science determining the social distance between ethnic groups and perpetuating social incompetence. In recent times a classification of the people of India has been made into 'martial and non-martial races'—a classification that is evidently based on the assumption that the fighting qualities are inbred and hereditary though geneticists have never commented in favour of such claims. Constitutional differences no doubt are found to exist but the classification appears to be based on prejudices for which politicians have from time to time sought the sanction of genetics and of physical anthropology. In fact racial types have not shown any positive correlation to qualities necessary for survival, but stamina, grit, temperament even diligence and perseverance, can be affiliated to particular social groups, though a classification on provincial or linguistic basis may not give any definite idea as to their distinctive cultural equipments. Be that as it may, a study of race and race elements in Indian population will equip the social scientist and the politician, the social reformer and the average citizen alike with the necessary knowledge of some of the fundamentals of social life. Race, although it may not be the determinant of cultural progress, certainly does enter into culture, for it is a constitutional equipment which no doubt largely accounts for the higher energies and adaptations of man. In any case a simple presentation of certain aspects of the biological evidence could be usefully employed to discourage false caste claims in India while the facts of human biology will certainly mitigate caste and communal antagonism as well as untouchability if this biological evidence is widely disseminated among the masses.

A knowledge of customs, practices, art, religion, morality and law is of great practical importance to those who deal with people in the course of their multiple contacts with them. A study of civilization is not enough, for while the records of our achievements are available, those of the savage and semi-savage groups are only orally transmitted among them from generation

to generation. That is why anthropologists distinguish between culture and civilization and study the latter as including those whose life and achievements are already known in writing and literary records.

Indian administrators must know how to tackle such urgent problems of tragic mismanagement of primitive areas and of the decline of tribal populations, as has been evident in many tracts of India. In Africa, Oceania and other parts of the world with primitive and backward populations, anthropology has helped the administration of these countries by throwing light on habits and prejudices which might present obstacles to economic development or the improvement of farm practices and raising the standards of public health and native dietary. In India the land law and money-lenders' impunity have often been responsible for the wholesale expropriation of tribal groups. The ubiquitous contractors' methods of recruitment and employment of labour in forest areas have been a fruitful source of detribalization and loss of morale. Tribal peoples in mining and other industrial centres have also shown greater susceptibility to epidemic infections. Hindu ideas have affected their food habits and the once varied dietary of the aboriginal population has become narrowed and ill-balanced. Investigations on these and similar lines can aid the administration in meting out justice to the primitive and backward peoples and in devising various welfare measures and programmes. An acquaintance with the methods and technique of anthropology will in fact be of great help to the administrator, the magistrate, the police, and even to the merchant.

While provision has been made in the important British Universities to train probationers in the Colonial service, the Colonies have made it obligatory for its civil servants to equip themselves with a training in anthropological theory and practice. The Indian government with a large primitive population, with extensive tribal areas, has not yet felt strongly the need of such training for its officers who are responsible for law and order, also for the welfare of the people. The injustice, hardship and oppression that have been the lot of primitive and aboriginal elements in the Indian population for want of such knowledge in the officials entrusted with their affairs, have been voiced by men, both Indian and European who know them and understand their points of view. It now rests with the administration to take a genuine practical interest in the study of primitive life and its problems.

Even if it be a welfare measure, one expects to see our administrators, the police officers and even the teachers of

schools and colleges to take an informed interest in the study of Indian culture both primitive and advanced. This can be realized if anthropology is also made a subject for study for all examinations which recruit men for the services. In one province in India alone, in the U.P. for example, we have 14 lakhs of criminal population, in settlements and outside, given to a life of crime from birth, about whom very little is known except from the police administration report wherein we are told that in one year alone they were responsible for 34,000 cases of burglary and 3,400 cases of cattle-lifting and for half a million worth of property destroyed or seized by them.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I cannot close this preface without mentioning my debt to Sir Theodore Tasker, Kt., C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S., the then Supervisor, I.C.S. training, Dehradun, who was deeply interested in anthropological study and research. He had attended all my lectures, and was kind enough to go through the manuscript. I am also thankful to my students at Lucknow who have from time to time pressed me, to put my lectures into print, till I could postpone it no longer. I am grateful to all the authors whose work I have referred to in the chapters, whom I have mentioned in the bibliography. It was my intention to give full record of the literature on the subject and any omission therefore should be taken to be the result of oversight and not deliberately intended. Some of the materials in the book appeared as articles in periodicals and scientific journals and I must thank the editorial boards of these publications particularly of *Man In India*, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal, Journal of the Gujarat Research Society and of the American Oriental Society, for permitting me to reproduce these in essentials sometimes. I am thankful to my pupils Miss Anima Mukerjee, M.A. and Mr K. S. Mathur, M.A., for preparing the index to the volume and to my wife Mrs Madhuri Devi, B.A. for general help in the preparation of the manuscript for the press. I would also like to thank Prof. K. P. A. Pillay, M.A., Sambalpur College, Orissa and Mr P. Mukerjee, Civil Secretariat, Lucknow for helpful suggestions. To the Universal Publishers and Messrs Inland Printing Works my thanks are due as they have made a good job of it in times such as these.

D. N. M.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Within an incredibly short period of the publication of the book it was sold out and a second edition was called for. I was hardly prepared for it but I accepted the verdict of the reading public as an indication of the growing popularity of humanistic studies in India. A second edition could not be taken up immediately due to the difficulties of printing and of obtaining paper, which still continue to worry authors and publishers.

While the reviews of the book have been more appreciative than critical, and the purpose for which the book was published was amply served, I cannot, however, ignore some of the valuable suggestions that have been offered by sympathetic and learned reviewers. For example, Prof. J. H. Hutton of Cambridge has drawn my attention to two minor points which lie in his fields of research, one regarding the dress of the Kuki girls, and the other on the laws of inheritance among the Sema Nagas. I am grateful to him for the information supplied to me which I have incorporated now. I have tried to include other suggestions as far as they were compatible with the needs and scope of the topics dealt with in the book. The chapter on Caste Origins has been rewritten to include some new data and the chapter on 'Race Factors' has been reviewed in the light of recent anthropometric and serological Survey reports of the United Provinces, by Mahalanobis, Majumdar and Rao, 1949, and of Gujarat. Most of the other chapters have also been revised, rearranged and brought up-to-date.

India is probably the only big country in the world today where anthropology as a science has not had much recognition. The material on Indian tribes and castes, to which a few good monographs have of late been added, was mostly collected on administrative level and for 'administrative facts'. Unfortunately Indian Universities have not played much significant rôle in furthering the cause of anthropological research. A Government department of anthropology has been created recently and it has to be seen if it can rise above administrative level and satisfy the requirements of scientific objectivity. During the last two to three years, however, more activities have been directed towards anthropological research by the Universities. The Universities of Delhi, Osmania and Patna have started departments of anthropology or are doing so, while the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, have founded a Chair for applied anthropology and tribal Welfare. The Universities of Calcutta, Lucknow and Bombay were already teaching anthropology for the degree examinations; Lucknow this year created a Chair in anthropology. This is all very good and we

shall be happy if the initiative of anthropological research, which, begun with the Calcutta University in 1920, is taken back by the Universities from the Government, as we feel that more can be done by the Universities, if the latter are properly subsidized by the Government, than by a Government department. We would suggest that a Research Fund Association for humanistic studies be created by the Union Government, and schemes submitted by the Universities be assessed for their utility and from the point of view of the competence of the personnel available for carrying them into effect.

We feel that the title of the book is a bit too ambitious and we also know that a book which deals with all the aspects of the subject could only be a treatise on general anthropology for which demands in India are not either significant or vocal. No understanding of races and cultures would be complete without a thorough knowledge of the tribes and castes which constitute the backbone of Indian life and labour today. 'The Races and Cultures of India', therefore, is meant to emphasize the importance of such studies in India, and is only the fore-runner of a more competent analysis to follow.

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D. N. MAJUMDAR

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## CHAPTER I

### RACE AND CULTURE

"The racial concept" according to Huxley, "is almost devoid of biological meaning as applied to human aggregates". This is because the word 'race' as popularly used in literature or in the social sciences possesses no definite connotation. For example, it may be used to denote a class of population determined by the possession of a common trait or certain aggregation of traits. The white race contains at least three distinct racial strains which own various shades of white skin. Very often a group of persons who "ancestrally have lived in a country for a number of generations," like the English, the French or the Chinese, are called a race. We even speak of the 'human race' meaning a group of people all of whom, as viewed by the monogenists, i.e. those who believe in single origin, have descended from a common ancestor. Any culturally homogeneous group of people is also known as a race. We also speak of martial and non-martial races, as if the fighting quality is inborn and not acquired through years of instruction and tutelage. It is because of the various uses to which the word 'race' is put, that we have today a Jewish race, an Anglo-Saxon race, a German race, an Islamic race. Anthropologists, however, take the word 'race' in its zoological sense. 'If the people of one race could be distinguished by physical markings, then they constitute a race'.

Much confusion exists in anthropological literature regarding 'race' and 'nation'. While some anthropologists find no difference between 'race' and 'nation', others find the two categories separate and distinct. Sir Arthur Keith, for example, finds no difference between race and nation. The same factors that are responsible for the evolution of nations, viz. 'patriotism', 'herd instincts', 'consciousness of kind', are also indispensable for race formation. The Finns, he cited as an example. The Finns are of the same stock as the Swedes. Every tenth man in Finland speaks the Swedish language and they are of the same physical type as the Swedes. The Finnish language is of Asiatic origin and it is tending to be separate from the European family every year. Today the "Finns are a nation and are evolving a race as well. They will sacrifice every economical consideration to enhance their status and independence." The latest Finno-Russian clash is an example of this race struggle, a 'race for race-building', a 'process' which receives the euphemistic name of 'self-determination'."

Sir Arthur Keith takes race and nation as synonymous,

but H. G. Wells and Dr Piddington take them as 'distinct categories'. To the former, nationalism is a manifestation of qualities, 'deeply seated in the functional constitution of the human brain'; the latter considers it 'as superstition' and 'anachronism' which man would do well to get rid of. Exaggerated nationalism has expressed itself in violent racialism in Europe, and it is no wonder that the objective evaluation of racial traits has been abandoned for racialism which is a 'dangerous myth' in the words of T. H. Huxley and A. C. Haddon.

Diametrically opposed to each other, though the views are, 'race' and 'nation' will remain and exercise their influence in the growth and development of world order and civilization. Nation is a regional concept; it is artificial in its make-up and subjective in its ties. The common elements in nation-formation are the contiguity of the people forming a national group, a regional background to which the people have been used to for generations, and a group sentiment—one of the most primitive emotional stimuli encouraged by the requirements of modern state-craft. A nation may comprise of a number of different racial elements; it may represent a hybrid stock like the English. It may just as well represent two racial types, the Nordic and the Alpine, as in Germany, or it may be composed of a solid Mediterranean base with Alpino-Nordic top-dressing as in Italy. The geographical setting largely determines the nature of the material elements of a national culture,—what food should be taken by the people, what dress should be worn, what kind of festivals to be observed, what types of shelter to be raised.

A consciousness of homogeneity which develops an understanding between individuals composing the group, a mutuality of obligations and a reciprocity in economic transactions, all have engendered a national outlook much more exaggerated in Europe and Japan than elsewhere. All these give a stamp to the regional group, and perhaps more. Even religion in recent years has proved the basis of nationality and the partition of India into India and Pakistan has emphasized religion as a cement of nationality particularly for the latter.

If a group of people who by their possession of a number of common physical traits can be distinguished from others, even if the members of this biological group are widely scattered, they form a race. The racial differences must be based on significant 'hereditary traits not affected by any environmental influences.'

In a troubled world like the one we are living in today, there are infinite number of problems which complicate our life and social relations. We have quarrels over ideologies, between countries, between parties both within and outside

them, and we have racial and sectarian prejudices and colour bar. So long the latter merely determine personal relationships we are not much worried but when large issues like colonization and emigration, segregation or pegging are decided on narrow information on such important scientific problems it is necessary that the scientist should come forward to explain and inform the public on matters bearing on his own field of work particularly when these are transferred to the plane of politics and become the topic of excited controversy. Besides, recent studies of the problems of human inheritance are so important to posterity that it is natural that the public should take an interest in them. Any account of modern genetics in its application to man is incomplete without a knowledge of the race problem and that is how a study of races and race elements in the population has become necessary.

The absence of standard techniques of measurement and want of definite knowledge about the racial significance of the various physical traits in man, explains diverse schemes of classification formulated by ethnologists. Thus Linnaeus and Cuvier divided the human group into three races. Blumenback classified it into five races. Haeckel established 12 races in 1873, but increased the number to 34 in 1878. Denniker found 13 races and 30 sub-races. Sir Arthur Keith simplified the task by introducing a fourfold classification on the basis of skin colour, viz. white, yellow, brown and black races and traced them to the functioning of the glands. Eickstedt and Eugen Fischer distinguish three main races, Europid, Negrid and Mongolid, which the former subdivided into 18 sub-races. Most of these schemes are based 'partly on morphological traits and partly on geographical location'. Some classifications are based on descriptive features. Duckworth on the basis of cephalic index, prognathism and cranial capacity divided mankind into seven races : Australian, African Negro, Andamanese, Eurasiatic, Polynesian, Greenlandish and South African. Ronald B. Dixon went into details and found fundamental types within the same racial stock. G. Elliot Smith divided mankind into six races, Australian, Negro, Mongol, Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean and this classification has provided a working scheme for further analysis. Judging from the various schemes into which human groups have been classified, the problem of racial classification appears to be insoluble. But if we develop a technique by which the peoples of the world could be divided into distinct groups, allowing for hybridization of course, the races are likely to be different from regional groups, from the nations of the past, or of today.

The ancient people were organized on the basis of hordes or tribes ; the tribes were political groups within a geographical setting. The members of a tribe all spoke the same language. The headquarters of the tribe developed into cities and the political power of the tribes was transformed into 'city states, which today are nations'. In the words of Sir Arthur Keith, 'nations are big tribes welded together by force'. But the same race was split up into various tribal groups and thus 'tribe' and 'race' are not synonymous. While the central authority of the tribe could shape the city state, and ultimately evolved the present-day nations, the disintegration of tribes has favoured fission into clans and smaller territorial units developing independent dialects and scattering away from the original tribal moorings. The various vagrant and criminal tribes in India like the Sansis, Bhatus, Karwals, Geedhias, Haburas, all could be traced to the same or allied racial stock, but they have separated by fission into endogamous clans with distinct linguistic labels sometimes, each led by strong gang leaders. The nature of the region has had much to do with the shaping of the forces that cemented or disintegrated the tribal bonds. Thus the forests and inhospitable hills in India where the tribal groups settled down due to inaccessibility and lack of communications encouraged fission and fragmentation into smaller units, into totemistic or eponymous clans.

With the development of agriculture, the original clearers of forests became the owners of the soil, and others who came after them or their camp followers were conceded inferior status as tenants or serfs thus developing a sort of dual organization of economic classes in the tribal regions. In the plains where pastoral life flourished or agriculture secured a stable control over food supply, the lure of the plains attracted new hordes and compact living and the needs of protection and defence established a strong tribal organization with political ambitions. The absence of natural refuges and hiding-places encouraged the forging of new tools and implements for offence and defence and laid the foundation of civilization. While the hills and fastnesses have nourished and still nourish scattered communities, the plains of Egypt, Europe, and India have seen the merging of races and the fusion of cultures wherefrom has diffused in all directions the arts of life and living. Thus several tribes have come together and developed a common culture, a uniform set of rules and restrictions, a common language and a consciousness of kind, all of which have forged a patriotism identified today with a regional complex.

The measurement of the crania and of the bony structure

of living persons, for example, provides comparative material and the degree of accuracy in measurements obtainable has led to their adoption by anthropologists. The skeletal remains of pre-historic man and his handicraft are the only available evidence of man's ancestry. The requirements of comparative anatomy have encouraged the use of anthropometry and craniometry, and different techniques have been evolved. In recent years, attention has been directed to the study of the soft parts of the human body, to 'blood groups' and even to the chemical functions and physiology of the human organism; but as yet, no standard technique has been agreed upon, and comparative material is scanty and insufficient.

There are two types of anthropological characters. These are definite and indefinite. The definite characters are those which submit to quantitative estimate, and can be expressed in mathematical terms; while indefinite characters like the colour of the skin, of hair, of eye are difficult to measure and they are not capable of expression in terms of figures. Attempts have been made to measure colour, or the texture of hair, but they remain more or less descriptive for obvious difficulties.

The inheritance of physical characters in man has not been studied with respect to the important somatological traits which are believed to possess racial significance, as for example, the length and width of the head, the shape or form of the nose, or even stature. "If ever the genetic analysis of man sufficiently progresses we shall be able to make frequency maps for all the more important genes which distinguish human groups." Certain abnormal traits like brachydactyly, or cacogenic mental traits like feeble-mindedness or insanity have been studied and they have been found to follow Mendelian laws of inheritance. Experiments with animals and plants stand on a different footing to those on man, who is difficult to experiment with. The effects of race crossings, for example, cannot be studied beyond the first or second hybrid generation, and that too if the interests of the investigator do not disappear in the meantime. The usual method is to compare the traits of parents and their own children, of brothers and sisters growing up in similar or different surroundings, or the study of twins. Boas's famous inquiry into the physical character of the descendants of immigrants into America referred to the anthropometric study of the immigrants born in Europe and their children and grand-children born in America, in other words an inquiry into the physical traits of three generations. Unfortunately all the physical characters used in anthropological classification have a complex multiple factor inheritance each being determined by more

than one pair of genes or unit factors so that even if the characters are studied in inheritance they may not be of adequate diagnostic value.

The recognition of group differences in metabolism and reproduction, in the number of red corpuscles and the amount of haemoglobin in the blood, the rate of pulsation, vital capacity and muscular strength has led some anthropologists to view these characteristics as racially significant, but clinical researches have established these differences as due 'partly to the amount of proteid consumption,' to habits of diet and nutrition. The growth of the body and racial traits are controlled to a certain extent by the 'endocrine glands which produce hormones having growth-controlling properties.' Doubleday traced the decrease in fertility to the same conditions which led to a reduction in the death rate. He suggests, 'that the hormones assist in regulating the fertility of the germ-cells, that the output of hormones by the endocrine glands is regulated by the nervous system which responds to action of the environment, and that the variations in the degree of fertility in response to the direct action of the environment, will bear an inverse proportion to the development of nervous energy.' Sir Arthur Keith traces racial differences to the functioning of the different glands. The greater activity of the pituitary gives the Caucasian his height or stature, bulk of body, prominent chin, and strong eye-brow ridges; a greater activity of the interstitial gives the Caucasian a more robust appearance, a quicker development of physical character and luxuriant growth of hair on the body. Supra-renal glands favour the growth of body and pigmentation of skin, and also regulates development. Pigmentation is believed to be the direct result of climate, though many authorities disagree on experimental grounds. It is also said that the amount of pigmentation is in direct proportion to the 'light of the country' to which the ancestors of man adjusted themselves by 'centuries and milleniums of survival in health and vigour'. The ease with which the Negro can radiate heat, makes him better suited to the tropics but this fact, also puts him at a decided disadvantage in the cooler or temperate zones. The shape of the nose which is the most distinctive racial character in man, is said to vary with altitude, though little statistical correlation exists between wide nostrils and high altitudes. Even if we admit that differential functioning of the glands does explain race differences, we have still to explain why such functional differences do exist between different racial groups and even within the same race.

Although we possess little authentic data on the inheritance

of somatological traits or what traits are racially significant, we have a lot of raciological literature which extols or under-rates the various observable physical features of man. Systematic efforts have been made by raciologists to show that the 'foundations of civilizations are to be sought in the differential qualities of races'. They contend that the 'Aryan branch of the white race (Nordic race) is the superior race, as superior to some other races, as is a grey-hound to a poodle dog'. Those belonging to the Nordic race have great wishes and incessantly work to satisfy them. They are physically and mentally superior and as such they are the fittest to survive in the struggle for existence.

Imperialism at the end of the nineteenth century, besides developing an individualistic-capitalistic economic structure of the Euro-American type, has produced three other results. A theory of 'racism', a social theory of diffusion which was parallel to and a justification of imperialism, and a shrewd emphasis on a more careful and accurate study of primitive races so that the imperialists, in the words of Geoffroy Gorer, 'could govern the subject races in their colonial possessions without having to massacre them.' The white man in the tropical countries wanted cheap labour, markets and slaves; in the temperate, he wanted space to settle. Both depended on the removal of friction and hostility and that was how the study of primitive people gained a functional status with governments charged with the administration of primitive and backward peoples. The theory of diffusion that all social improvements were derived from a single source (usually Egypt) was a great justification for the repetition of this process by a single conquering power, usually England or Germany. Recent studies of savage cultures, the attitude of the white man with regard to the 'native' who is still regarded as half an animal, the study of social disintegration among the aboriginal population in India, in Melanesia and Australia which shows that the 'native' cannot stand the strain of coping with sexual antagonism or family conflicts unprotected by the traditional customs or protective myths or the study of dissolving social structures and the effect of disorganization on individual psychology, all have been taken as evidence of the competence of the imperialist powers as colonial rulers.

It was Vacher de Lapouge who uttered the following prophecy in his book, *'L'Aryen son rôle social'*, exactly fifty years ago. 'I am convinced,' wrote Lapouge, 'that during the twentieth century, millions will slay one another because of a degree or two more or less in the cranial index. By this sign, which will replace the biblical shibboleth and the criterion of kindred



speech related stocks will recognize one another, and these new sentiments will proceed to the extremity of national extermination'. It is historical falsehood, said Houston Stewart Chamberlain, to ignore the role of Germanic tribes in the rescue of agonizing humanity from the clutches of the everlasting bestial. Herman Gauch believed that the Nordic race which is the Aryan race of Germany, can only pronounce correctly and emit clear sounds while all others make noises like animals. The Jew is a man, said Goebbels, but what kind of man? A flea is also an animal. Arthur Gobineau thought that the Nordic branch of the White race had the original monopoly of beauty, intelligence and strength, but hybridization with inferior stocks have combined beauty with lack of physical stamina, strength with lack of intelligence and intelligence with ugliness. Cicero asked Atticus in the first century B.C., not to obtain slaves from Britain, because they were so stupid and so utterly incapable of being taught that they could not be taken as part of any household of Athens.

Discriminating biologists think and most anthropologists agree with them, that it is not possible to discuss problems of race without proper knowledge of the laws of heredity, while modern genetics in its application to mankind must not ignore the race problem as such, as otherwise much of the pseudo-science that has developed round the word race will continue to exercise its baneful and uncongenial influence on a wider public. The dangers which false knowledge about heredity and race relationship can lead to, has already been demonstrated in the 'racism' of the Nazi brand which resulted in the calculated murder of millions of Jews and Poles by the Nazis.

It is not the Nazis or the Fascists who are alone to blame. Racial prejudices and race riots have infected the American body politic, the Australian soldiers during the last global war in Japan were not allowed to mix with Japanese women and inter-racial marriages are not recognized in America or in Australia. The Australian soldiers escaped penalties for breach of social code by temporary marriage under Shinto auspices, which the Japanese looked down upon as a semblance of concubinage while the race relations between Japan and Australia became strained. In recent years, 'race riots' have become too frequent in America and have awakened the Americans to the seriousness of the problem. Prof. Ashley-Montague, writing about this unhappy state of affairs, recently remarked, "We in the United States have every hope of eradicating the contagion of 'racism' from our body politic, but hope alone will not suffice. We must act, and in order to do so, intelligently, we must know

what this disease is and how it may best be dealt with." Every decent man or woman should acquaint himself or herself with the facts relating to the race problem, so that he or she may be prepared to deal with it in an intelligent, efficient and humane manner. While the need for a scientific evaluation of race problem is widely recognized today, race prejudice and race arrogance have developed a superciliousness in many people, which must be tempered with reason and based on scientific knowledge, and that is only possible when we know the difference between 'reason and rubbish' as it pertains to the concept of race. Race crossings have been banned in various countries, immigration laws restrict demographic mobility, discrimination is made against coloured and minority groups in the armed forces, in industry and even in social intercourse, so much so that every right thinking person in such countries has to hang his or her head in shame in awareness of the guilt committed in their country.

The greatest sinners in this respect are probably the anthropologists. The need for quantitative description of human form led to the development of anthropometry and craniometry but the shape of the head was probably never meant to determine social status or political rights and privileges. The fact that anthropologists do not agree on any scheme of racial classification, shows the limitations of the metric methods as applied to the human race. Anthropometry or somatometry has more important task than it has been assigned to it by the racists. An example of the use of somatometry for practical ends has recently been demonstrated by a noted English anthropologist. During the war, we are now told, anthropometric research carried out in the Medical Directorate of the Air Ministry in England, was chiefly concerned with non-medical problems. For example the safety, welfare and efficiency of the flying personnel in the service depend on the physical fitness, on an examination and understanding of the physiological effects of the exceptional conditions to which air men may be exposed, and also on the design, equipments, the dimension and lay out of spaces and aircrafts etc. The conditions of modern warfare need the initiation of rigorous tests of ability and physical fitness, so that we might find out the grades of fitness represented by the protective personnel for specific jobs.

The race problems as we know today are the results of migration and contacts of peoples. They have developed into a disease during the last 3 to 4 centuries. There are many political units today which among them have divided the surface of the earth. Some have a few thousand, others millions of

square miles ; some have the most fertile plains, others are left with deserts, marshes and high altitudes. The geographical distribution of people should not be confused with racial expansion for the nations of today are composite races. While skin colour has been the determining factor in the grouping of powers, particularly of the white races, economic ideologies have also brought into the same political fold, different races ; also the same race has split into opposing camps for 'national survival'. No definite classification, therefore, of nations on biological grounds can be made or would be theoretically sound. Mere occupation of a territory by a people does not produce problems of any magnitude. It is probably the influence that the various groups exert in the important spheres of life that produce the seeds of discord or friction between groups. The aggressiveness or pacifism of a people makes war inevitable or peace primary ; that leads to domination as well as subjection under the exploitative mechanism that imperialism has set up, while the rapid development of communications, all the time making each conscious of the presence of the other. The increase of populations, rise of industries and the demand for raw materials in consequence, the growth of cities and also of standards of competence, implemented action and living, all have engendered a sense of insecurity among the peoples of the world and this insecurity has produced complexes of superiority or inferiority, which in their turn determine social attitudes, race arrogance and class struggles. How far the new economic ideologies are patterned on the father-fixation is difficult to say. The psycho-analysts would, however, read in the authoritarian role of the capitalists or the imperialists the desire to represent themselves as the protectors of the under-privileged and the have-nots, who rebel against the father-complex, against the kind of security worked out for them, which go to make the poor poorer, and the rich richer.

No body would blame the country or the nation which anchors itself on her past achievements, her chivalry or her other heights of achievements or excellence. It is only when the nationals of the country forge slogans for exclusiveness, and set up new mechanisms for the extension of political authority on backward peoples that economic exploitation and cultural domination become irksome shackles of serfdom. A primitive or infantile urge for segregation, has produced a consciousness of kind within a racial and cultural group, a majority or minority, a racial, sectarian or religious group and hostility and hatred spread their tentacles to deface and efface the vestiges of tolerance, understanding and mutual

regard. If imperialism has done anything, it has consolidated national exclusiveness which is another name for self-determination. It has broken the barriers of race to produce new groupings based on privilege, preference and prejudice, that is why race and class, colour and competence have been equated in practice.

The raciologists claim that cultural differences are determined by differential racial heredity and equipment. The superior races can create superior cultures. The Aryan branch of the white race are the superior race, have superior wishes and are therefore creators of civilization. Race mixture has today produced blends and combinations which have created indifferent stocks, incapable of fulfilling the task for which they were meant, so that civilization is bound to decay due to dis-eugenic selection. Racism based on principles of eugenics is regarded as the panacea for all the ills which the various national groups are suffering from. Against this we are told by the culturologists that races have been sub-divided into sub-races. The Caucasian race contains at least three distinct strains, if not more. Inter-racial differences are often found less pronounced than intra-racial differences. We also know that the same race has participated and does participate in different cultures in space or time. Different races also are found to shape the same culture pattern. Racial traits are relatively constant but culture has undergone complete transformation in most cases. Culture grows by accumulation; it is cumulative, it is the social heritage. Therefore the explanation of cultural progress should be sought not in race but in environment.

Scientific opinion, however, lies somewhere between the two extremes. Some, for example, do not ignore the scientific evidence of heredity, yet find little justification for 'ardent racial appeal.' Huxley and Haddon agree that in the early stages there were isolated types but today these have mixed. We see before our eyes the effects of crossing. 'The cross does not become an average of two types but produces a great diversity of races.' Blending of types makes it difficult to speak about pure ethnic type. Cultures cannot be associated with racial types; the effects of migrations and diffusion of cultures are too obvious to need any proof. Besides, no single scheme of classification can explain the physical features of the peoples of the world. Intelligence tests and various physiological studies have failed to differentiate human groups. Therefore 'the Nordic hypothesis is a myth; it is 'mere wishful thinking.'

The best that we can say today is that it is useless to tag

cultural or national characters to physical types as has been done by Gunther. To quote Penniman, "until it is possible to develop a standardization of criteria for physiological and psychological data similar to that employed in physical measurements and to treat such data quantitatively by statistical methods, we cannot possibly connect psychological and cultural traits with somatic forms and develop Captain Pitt Rivers' science of Ethnogenics, the study of human history in terms of changing race, population, and culture." (Man, 1936, 107).

True, races have mixed, blended and segregated, producing diverse ethnic types, even homogeneous ones, as in the case of some hybrid groups. Mahalanobis on the evidence of anthropometric data collected by the late Dr N. Anandale came to the conclusion that the Anglo-Indian population in Calcutta were tending towards homogeneity. Neither have races remained constant, as the culturologist would assert. From prehistoric times onward, racial traits have continued to modify themselves, due either to race admixture or to the effects of selection, natural, sexual or lethal. After the French revolution, the average stature of the army recruits in France fell by one inch, and today the stature in all European countries has increased by an inch or more. Eugenic measures, conscious or unconscious, public opinion, and race consciousness have encouraged a new attitude towards mate selection, and racial heredity is expected to improve or be stabilized. "As long as ability marries ability," wrote Galton, "a large proportion of able offspring is a certainty and ability is a more valuable heirloom in a family than mere material wealth which moreover will follow sooner or later." This is true in a sense. The future of nations may not be distinct in the near future, but that of family strains appears brighter in spite of the crises the wars have brought into the world.

## CHAPTER II

### RACES IN PREHISTORIC INDIA

The years of man's career on earth must be estimated in hundreds of thousands, probably even more than a million, but the evidences we possess are not sufficient or conclusive as these are largely conjectural. 'There are,' wrote Sir Herbert Risley, 'no cave deposits, no sepulchral mounds or barrows, no kitchen-midden, no lake dwellings, no ancient fortified towns such as modern research is now unearthing in Greece and no sculptured bones or weapons portraying, the vicissitudes of the life of primitive man.' This was written half a century ago. The tropical climate and the insects and pests have obliterated, no doubt, much of the evidence that we possessed, but the influence of the climate and of the soil and minerals, has been probably overestimated. The spade and the shovel have not been used as they should have been, and a poor country could not have indulged in the luxury of digging for the sake of it alone. It is true that the bones that have been found, have not shown any advanced stage of fossilization. In a subcontinent like India, the conditions for fossilization of bones are not or could not be the same everywhere. Bones of even 2000 years old discovered from historical sites are not, fossilized nor the ones unearthed in Mohenjo-daro. Some have taken the lime carbonate as destructive of bones but many of the palaeontological remains in India have been taken from limestone caves. In any case, all the knowledge of Indian prehistoric age we have had so far, could be written on the back of an anna postage stamp. It is only during the last three decades, however, the prehistoric and proto-historic archaeology have unearthed through excavation, skeletal and material remains which make our inferences significant. We have in recent years, stumbled into a lot of useful material on Indian prehistory and proto-history and we can now lay our hands on field data which illumine though yet dimly, several milleniums of the cultural history of our country. Though mostly conjecture, as it was before, it remains today the indispensable tool to sculpture the procession of milleniums of our forgotten antiquity.

One fact must be borne in mind and that is that Indian prehistory cannot be dissociated from that of the rest of Asia. The geographical character of Asia, the possible division of Asia into two parts, the low lands of Mesopotamia, India, China and Manchuria, must have had much to do with the dispersion of the human types. Two fifths of Asia are occupied

by two large plateaus ; there are areas where no settled life is possible, they are steppes and deserts ; even the lowlands of Siberia are partly made up of marshy forests which probably did not favour permanent settlements. Kropotkin thinks that the most suitable cradle of civilization must have been Mesopotamia. Haddon suggests that man might have evolved somewhere in Southern Asia and he also says that it was possible that the early groups were not unlike one another but 'possessed a tendency to variability' which was controlled and directed by geographical fixation or isolation.

River terraces in India have yielded a large variety of stone tools and implements which can probably be equated with similar artifacts in Europe and Africa. The mesolithic industries of Europe and Africa find their counterparts in the microlithic industries of India though the chronology and sequence of these industries are yet uncertain. Microliths have a very wide distribution in India. In the Mahadeo hills, (M. P.) all along the South east coast in Hyderabad State and in Mysore, Central India and in Cultural Gujarat even as far as Sind and the Punjab, various sites show not only the abundance of microliths, but significant details which enable a tentative approach to the dating of this culture. The Gujarat microlithic culture according to H. D. Sankalia is earlier than that of Mohenjo-daro while the association of microliths with neoliths in comparatively higher levels and the occurrence of microliths alone in the lowest levels in Mysore, raise the problem of sequence as also of continuity of origins. From the stratigraphical evidence so far available it is possible to suggest that no tools of human origin have been found in the early pleistocene beds but the various stone and flake industries can be tentatively traced to the middle and the upper pleistocene strata. Prehistoric research in recent years has outlined two different manufacturing traditions of similar antiquity one along the Indus and the Sohan terrace and the other from the basal Narbada group of Central India. "The Sohan industry with its primary focus in the north, produced pebble choppers and flakes and cores of Clacto-Levalloisean types, and evolved on its own lines." The other tradition is the core tool or the hand axe with its primary focus in the Peninsular portion especially round Madras and is probably related to the European or African *Coup de Poing* industry. The neolithic sites in India are distributed in upper Sind, and in the Sohan valley, in northern Punjab, and in the Assam hills, in the north-east. The palaeolithic industry is concentrated mostly in the South, the proto-neolithic phases have been found in northern and western India but the

microlithic phase of the proto-neolithic is in the South of the Vindhya and rarely in the north.

It is only when we come to discuss the tangible products of prehistoric man that we are on a firmer ground, and although the stone implements available are those which have been collected on the surface, the evidences are substantial in favour of a cultural history on the basis of material objects and human handicrafts. The oldest stone implements are usually the large crude flakes, found in the boulder conglomerate on terraces in the Indus and Sohan rivers. On the basis of Zeuner's dating, these flakes probably could be placed at the end of the lower pleistocene, in the antepenultimate glaciation and may be more than four thousand years, which is the date provisionally regarded as that of the Chinaman, *Homo Pekinensis*. In Northwest India this crude flake industry was followed by a series of pebble tools comprising large cores and flakes, and described by their discoverers, De Terra and Paterson, as 'Early Sohan'. In conjunction with them occur in some places hand-axes of a type recalling forms of the European Acheulean. Somewhat later, probably in the penultimate glaciation, appear Levallois-like cores and in the late Sohan Levallois like flakes dominate over the pebble implements.\*

This Levalloisian-like industry persisted into the last glaciation, and was followed by a blade industry of upper palaeolithic character, contemporary perhaps with the middle Aurignacian of Palestine and probably 50,000 to 60,000 years old.

In any case, the palaeolithic and neolithic cultures of India have been located with knowledge, and whoever were the people responsible for the cultures, the latter were widely distributed. The palaeolithic people probably first occupied the peninsular India and continued its drift to northern India, to the Sohan Valley in the Punjab, but the neolithic sites being mostly located in the Eastern parts of India meant either the migration of the palaeolithic people towards the east or the intrusion of the neolithic people from the south east. These questions cannot be answered with the present knowledge we possess of prehistoric cultures of India.

The tropical climate of India, we have already referred to above, does not favour the preservation of organic matter, and this is one of the most important causes for the paucity of

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\*C. Von Furer-Haimendorf. Notes on Stone Age in India, also H. de Terra and T. T. Paterson, Studies on the Ice Age in India and Associated Cultures (Washington, 1939) pp. 294, 295.



human skeletal material. There are not many craniological and skeletal types discovered in India, and those that have been discovered, are not of any great antiquity either, so that conjecture still remains the most fruitful source of evidence regarding race origins. The two crania, one found in Bayana on the bank of the Gumbhir river on the Bayana-Agra railway, in the alluvial deposit 35 feet below the level of the river bed, without any accompanying mammalian bones or artifacts of any kind, and the second one found in Sialkot in the Punjab, within the watershed of the Indus in 1912, by Lt. Q. W. G. Hingston, on the site of a deep *nallah* six feet below the level of the adjoining cultivated land, also without any other evidence are not enough to iron our doubts regarding their antiquity, into conviction. The bones of the Bayana skull and of the Sialkot skeleton were of dirty chalky grey colour, inclined to crumble and very similar in consistency to the human remains recovered from burial of a bronze age or later date in England. In both the skulls, as reported by Sir Arthur Keith who examined them at the request of the Bombay Anthropological Society, the facial parts and a great part of the bones of the skulls were missing but the nasal bones in the Bayana skulls were available. Keith believed the skulls to be of males, but they were of small size, the maximum length of the skull in the case of the Bayana is 178 mm. and 180 mm. in the Sialkot. The width of the skull in both the specimens, were almost equal; 127 mm. in the case of the Bayana and 128 in the case of the Sialkot. The vaults of the two skulls were dissimilar, the Bayana vault was 108 mm. and Sialkot 119 mm. The thickness of the vault varied in both the cases from 3.5 to 7 mm., just as one expects in a modern crania. According to Keith, the shape and size of the two crania are such as are obtainable among the people of the Punjab today, and on the evidence of the narrow nasal bones in the Bayana skull, Keith takes it to be 'narrow prominent Aryan type'. While no evidence of animal bones or of human artifacts was available with regard to the Bayana and Sialkot crania, the bones excavated at Nal could be dated on the evidence of urn burial, bones of birds and animals and broken fragments of pottery, and the remains of a 'bone pin'. The burials were in groups sometimes and so a comparative study is possible. The general character of the Nal bones, resembles those of the Sialkot and the Bayana.

The racial status of the ancient human remains in India, is not easy to decipher, but there is not the slightest doubt that the various finds mentioned above and in Mohenjo-daro, and Harappa indicate a number of racial types. These may be

provisionally identified as the proto-Australoid, Mediterranean, and the Armenoid branch of the Alpine race. The Nal and the Sialkot conform to the Mediterranean stock or are predominantly so, while the Bayana may be taken as a mixed type, a conclusion with which many anthropologists agree. Other specimens like those of Kish and Makran show a family likeness with the three types already described. The Makran skulls collected by Sir Aurel Stein found in 'cinerary pots or funeral vessels are also of a pale fawn colour and extremely fragile and resemble those found at Nal and Mohenjo-daro. The vault of the Makran skull (B) is high and similar to that of the Nal, but the fine nose of the Makran skull affiliates it to the Caspian or Nordic type. Dudley Buxton finds two racial types in the Kish remains and these he calls Alpine and Mediterranean. In Maski, Raichur district in Hyderabad, have been discovered a large number of urn burials and the skeletons exhibit two racial strains, one the Mediterranean and the other the Armenoid branch of the western Alpines. The proto-Australoid element is not conspicuously absent, for the suggestion of this type is supported by the craniometric evidence, though the prominent elements in the Maski remains were the first two types. The present population of Maski also belong to a longheaded fine nosed type and a broadheaded fine nosed one while occasional traces of flat nose associated with long heads could be affiliated with the proto-Australoid racial type.

The Mohenjo-daro civilization has been dated between 3250 and 2750 B.C. and the main features of the civilization were probably derived from Mesopotamia. The megalithic cult of India bears similarity to the Mediterranean and it is likely that South India must have been known to the Mediterraneans and the latter probably came by sea, though land immigration was also possible. Even if such maritime contacts with the peninsular India, cannot be definitely established, the possibility of deriving the Mediterraneans by the land route from Mesopotamia, the evidence of irrigation, of dams constructed for agricultural purposes, the links with pottery found at Nal in Baluchistan, copper objects and terracotta figures, establish beyond any doubt of the infiltration of Mediterranean culture through the north west. The Mohenjo-daro civilization must be 'Dravidian' in origin, and the racial type to which the Mohenjo-daro people belonged to probably was Mediterranean. The proto-Australoids who were the earliest inhabitants of India were a neolithic people at the time the Dravidians were building up a city civilization on the Indus Valley. The iconic character of Mohenjo-daro civilization

also puts the lid on the controversy, for the proto-Australoids believe in impersonal force or power and even today they have not succeeded in concretizing this power in the shape of gods or idols representing them. The Mediterraneans must have been matriarchal and none of the proto-Australoid tribes, except those who have been influenced by the dominant matriarchal people of Malabar, are matriarchal or were so in the proto-historic times.

The Indus Valley civilization or the Harappa civilization as R. E. M. Wheeler puts it, has pushed the story of Indian civilization backwards, into the third millenium B.C. The cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro which constitute the urban centres of the Harappa culture, a centralized civilization comprising a large area between the Arabian Sea and the foot of the Simla hills were flourishing some thousands of years before any Aryan speaking people came to India, for their cultures were even superior to that of Elam or Sumer. The Indus Valley civilization reached a high mark of achievement. The stages of this civilization, at least four of which are known viz., Amri, Harappa, Jhukar and Jhangar, indicate the rise and fall of a single civilization, localized in the Indus drainage, 'Mohenjo-daro and Harappa being the florescence.' The Harappa stage, must have had trade relations with Sumer and it was certainly influenced by Mesopotamia. It probably received the grains and metallurgy from the west but most aspects of this culture must have had an indigenous origin, as competent anthropologists think.

It is a pity that such a highly developed civilization should have met the fate of abandoned cities, destroyed temples, and damaged forts, but that the Indo-Aryans had no part to play in the destruction of this culture, is beyond cavil. Between the Indus Valley civilization and the Aryan invasion of India, there is a gap for which no archaeological evidence exists, and we have to speculate on the advent of 'an uncitified semi-civilization and peasantlike and half aristocratic culture', though it could claim a liberal use of bronze or copper, grains, cattle, horses, chariots and wagon, the plough, wool and weaving, gold, patriarchal chieftains, and a tribalized society, with worship of nature, myths and rituals of sacrifice. The aniconic character of the Indo-Aryan civilization leads one to the conclusion that the Indo-Aryans, met the Mediterraneans and the Alpines in the Punjab over whom they dominated and superimposed their culture and the Vedas which make slighting references to their enemies, may mean an intolerance, backed by physical prowess. But no sooner the Indo-Aryan civilization spread out of their

moorings in the Punjab, and spread to the Gangetic plain—there is more reason than one to think so—than the cultural superiority of the Mediterraneans, asserted itself and transferred the nomadic and the aniconic civilization into an iconic one, and a mixture of races, on the basis of *Anuloma* (marriages that allowed) and *Pratiloma* (marriages that were tabooed), i.e., hypergamous marriages, produced a cultural synthesis which has resulted in an oneness of mind and spirit, a consciousness of kind which is the primary and fundamental basis of nationhood. The Indo-Aryans spread in two directions, one following the foothills of the Himalayas and the other through the south of the Punjab, bifurcating into two streams, one following the course of the rivers in northern India, the other into Gujarat and Deccan, Aryanizing wherever they passed through.

The prehistoric finds at Maski, Mysore and other centres in Peninsular India tell the cultural history of the Deccan during the last 3,000 years or more. At least three layers of cultures are represented at Maski in the Raichur district in Hyderabad, as evidenced from the pot burials and artifacts discovered in association. Yazdani dates the funeral pottery, polished stone implements and chert flakes about 1,000 B.C. or even earlier. The beads and chank articles and some of the terracotta figurins, he thinks, date from 500 to 300 B.C., while the seal impression and ornamental pottery and some terracotta figures date from 500 to 700 B.C. Maski must have been an important culture centre in prehistoric as well as in proto-historic times. It was at any rate a great centre for 'bead and chank industries'. Bruce Foote included a glass industry also in this period but the specimens collected on the surface are believed by Yazdani to be of 'felspars mixed with clay which gives a glassy appearance'. The raw materials for the various industries found at Maski particularly shell and bead must have been brought from distant places, even as far as Persia showing a maritime trade between Maski and the Arabian Sea coast, also with the Mediterranean belt, which was under the control of the Carthagians, Romans and Arabs. Egyptian influence through trade and association must have penetrated into India and even the far east, while bronze, cereals, tamed animals and many other culture elements of Europe including religious cults are traceable to the near east. Traces of gold working also have been discovered in Maski and the gold dust found on the sandy bank of the Maski river must have tempted immigrants from far and near to work the industry and build up an urban culture superimposing on indigenous moorings. Wheeler gives the sequence of the cultures revealed by the series of pits dug by the Archaeological

Survey of India at Brahmagiri in Mysore, in the table below, to be read from bottom to the top.

1. The Brahmagiri stone axe culture, a crude chalcolithic culture extending to a maximum height of 9 feet from the natural surface which is sub-divided into one earlier and the other later.

2. The megalithic culture, an Iron Age Culture identical with that of the local megalithic tombs and pit-circles extending to a further height of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  feet.

3. The Andhra culture extending to the surface, a further height of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet— $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

All the three cultural layers were found to be overlapped by significant overlaps. It is reasonably certain, opines Wheeler that Andhra culture began at Brahmagiri towards the middle of the first A.D. the local megalithic culture ended at or near that date, though the beginning of the latter culture is difficult to date as any theoretical attempt to build up a time scale upon the depth of strata is admittedly fraught with peril, the data can only be guessed, and Wheeler would on the evidence of stratigraphical accumulation of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  feet or occupation soil over a considerable area, suggest two centuries. In other words, speculation puts the Brahmagiri megalithic culture in Mysore in the third to second century B.C.

## CHAPTER III

### RACE ELEMENTS IN INDIA

H. H. Risley recognized three principal racial types in India, viz., the Dravidian, the Indo-Aryan and the Mongolian. The first two mixed, in varying proportions in the different provinces, with each other and with the Mongolian elements while the third was confined to the north-east frontier and Assam. Risley's 'Dravidian' like the 'Aryan' is a linguistic group and not racial and 'at least 3 races have been found to constitute it'. The Scythians who were known to be Mongolian, had little influence in western India and the extent of Mongolian infiltration in Bengal has been exaggerated. Risley traced the broad headed or brachycephalic element in India's population to the Mongolian or Scythian sources. The brachycephaly in Bengal and Gujarat is difficult to derive from the Mongolian sources, as all Mongolian peoples are not brachycephals; besides the Mongolian epicanthic fold, though found in the Darjeeling and Chittagong hills, is absent in the Bengal castes, the higher strata consisting of Brahmins and Kayasthas are free from it.

A. C. Haddon disagreed with Risley's racial classification and put forward his own analysis of racial elements. The oldest existing stratum according to him is represented by various pre-Dravidian jungle tribes. 'The Dravidians may have been the original inhabitants of the valley of the Ganges in Western Bengal, after many wanderings, apparently across India, they settled mainly in Chutia Nagpur.' 'The Aryan-speaking people first migrated into India early in the second millenium B.C.' Their infiltration was slow and gradual and probably extended over centuries. They first occupied the fertile lands of the Punjab, their progress south-east being barred by the deserts of Rajputana. Their expansion eastward for a long time was hindered by the dense forests which then covered the middle plains, but eventually they spread along the valleys of the Jumna and the Ganges. The brachycephalic element in Indian population is traced by Haddon to Alpine immigration and the history of this immigration has yet to be written. From the east and north-east the first Indo-Chinese invasion appears to have been by Tibeto-Burmans. The Shans from the head-waters of the Irawaddy began to conquer Assam at the end of the 8th century A.D. Thus the pre-Dravidians, the Dravidians (brunette dolichocephals), the Indo-Aryans (fair dolichocephals), Indo-Alpines (brachycephals) and Mongolians constitute the racial elements in the population of India.

J. H. Hutton without claiming that his views are the final

word on race in India has given a scheme into which "the fact at present known about race will fit without distortion," as he puts it. The earliest occupants of India were probably of the Negrito race but they have left little trace on the mainland or the peninsula. These were followed by the proto-Australoids whose earliest ancestors could be traced to Palestine. Next came an early branch of the Mediterranean race, speaking an agglutinative tongue from which the present Austroasiatic languages are derived. These are credited with a crude knowledge of agriculture and a megalithic cult. From eastern Europe, came a later wave of Mediterranean immigration, more advanced than the earlier hordes, equipped with a knowledge of metals and 'who developed the city states'. These were probably connected with the Indus Valley civilization.

The brachycephalic element in the Indian population, is derived from an earlier immigration of the Armenoid branch of the Alpine race, those who developed a high standard of civilization by the end of the 4th millenium B.C. These probably spoke the Dravidian language and had much in common with the prehistoric peoples of Mesopotamia. "This civilization was flooded in the west during the third millenium B.C. by an immigration from the Iranian plateau and the Pamirs, of a brachycephalic race speaking perhaps an Indo-European language of the Pisacha or Dardic family." From the east there was a widespread movement of the southern Mongoloids southwards to the Bay of Bengal, and into Indonesia which had some reflex influence on India from the east. Finally, 'the dolichocephalic Indo-Aryan race entered the Punjab about 1500 B.C.'

Dr B. S. Guha<sup>1</sup> distinguishes the basic Mediterranean element common to Brahmins and the upper caste population from a 'superimposed Alpine strain in western India and Bengal, a very early immigration into India and also from a proto-Nordic element connected according to him, with the 'Aryan' invasion of north-west India. He also finds four types among the aboriginal population of India : (1) A short, long and moderately high-headed strain with often strongly marked brow ridges, broad short face, the mouth slightly inclined forwards and small flat nose with the alae extended, (2) A dark pigmy strain having spirally curved hair, remnants of which are still found among the Kadars, and the Pullayans of the Perambicullan hills, (3) A brachycephalic Mongolian type constituting today, the main component of Assam and north Burma, (4) A second Mongoloid strain characterized by medium stature, high head and medium nose but exhibiting like (3), the

<sup>1</sup> Census Report, India, 1931, Vol. 1, Pt. III.

typical Mongoloid features of the face and the eye. This element constitutes the major strain in the population of the hills and not inconsiderably of that of the Brahmaputra valley.

The first of these types according to Dr Guha is predominant among the aboriginal population of central and southern India, and also have penetrated into the lower strata of the Indian caste groups. C. S. Venkatachar affiliates the Gonds of the Central Provinces with the pre-Dravidians of the south on whom the Dravidians have imposed their language and due to some causes in the regions of north-east Madras, there must have been a large-scale displacement of the tribes into the interior of the central regions. The pre-Dravidians of whom Venkatachar speaks in this connection are a 'dark Negroid race of low culture characterized by a physical type of very short stature, low forehead, flat face and nose.'

#### THE NEGRITO IN INDIA

Regarding the racial status of the Indian tribes, conflicting views are held by anthropologists. The basic substratum in India has been claimed by some as the negrito who must have been displaced or supplanted by the proto-Australoids. The Negrito is no doubt domiciled in southern Asia, but judging from the tribal population in India today, there is certainly no weighty evidence in support of a Negrito racial stock in India. Negroid features, however, have been reported in the coastal parts of India and the infiltration of the Negroid element must have taken place during the eighth to the tenth century A.D. Haddon has referred to an early dark Negroid race in Susiana, and its drift to India is not impossible.<sup>1</sup> Even if the Andamanese are Negrito, it is not certain that they were ever so adventurous or important to have spread all over India, and constituted a substratum of population in this vast sub-continent. Had it been so, the Negrito features would have been scattered all over northern India but neither in the north nor in the south, the true Negrito is a formidable element today nor was it ever in earlier days. 'Curious and interesting as they are from the point of view of general anthropology', wrote H. H. Risley (*People of India*, 1915, p. 32), 'the Andamanese have had no share in the making of Indian people. The anthropometric data collected by Major Molesworth, led him to conclude that the Andamanese, on anthropometric evidence were different from the aboriginal tribes of India, and Sir William Fowler and Sir William Turner came to the self-same conclusion on the strength of craniometric evidence.'

<sup>1</sup> Haddon, A. C. *The Wanderings of Peoples* (1919), p. 25.



Both Fowler and Turner agree that the Andamanese heads differ in essential particulars from those of the Dravidians, and the latter considers, 'that no direct evidence of either a past or a present Negrito population in India has yet been obtained (Ibid p. 32). The Andamanese are short-headed, broad-nosed, with a low cranial capacity which when compared with the proto-Australoids indicate divergence of great significance. L. A. K. Iyer<sup>1</sup> mentioned a Negrito element among the Kadars and Pulayas of Cochin and also among the Uralis and Kanikars whom he found with frizzly hair, but no specific mention has been made of the incidence of this character and no microscopic examination of hair is available to support Iyer's reference. Aiyappan<sup>2</sup> recently has pricked the bubble of a Negrito element among these tribes, and he takes these tribes as 'flesh of our flesh' ; indistinguishable from the local population and that the so-called Negrito type features can be found among a handful of people, the rest of the tribal people conform to the usual south Indian type, viz., proto-Australoid. Writes Aiyappan, "The so-called aboriginal tribes are wrongly believed to be different from the plains' peoples in ethnical and racial origins; while a very small percentage of some insignificant tribes such as the Kadars of the Annamalais show the frizzly hair—the individuals with this characteristic can be counted on one's fingers, the majority of the tribes are for racial purposes indistinguishable from the plainsmen in the adjoining regions. Speaking of the Reddis, Haimendorf<sup>3</sup> says, 'In physical type the Reddis are decidedly more primitive than the Koyas and it appears that the basic racial element is of Veddid affinities. The dark skinned and curly haired type dominant among the Chenchus in which there is probably a Malid strain, is also represented, but besides these primitive types there are numerous individuals with more progressive features and it seems indeed that the Reddis are by no means, a racially homogeneous population'. Ruggles Gates<sup>4</sup> has used Negrito in a rather loose sense, for he writes about the Pulayas, 'The wavy hair and slightly negroid features (broad nose and somewhat thick lips), are characteristic'. About the Uralis, he writes, 'the Uralis are a tribe isolated in the jungle at the end of a lake

1 Iyer, L. A. K. (1936) *Anthropometry of the Primitive Tribes of Travancore*, Proc. Ind. Acad. Sci. 4, 494-513.

2 Report on the Socio-Economic Conditions of the Aboriginal Tribes in the Province of Madras, Madras Government Press (1948) p. 3, Report on Tribal Welfare.

3 Tribal Hyderabad, Four Reports by C. von Furer-Haimendorf (1945) p. 12.

4 Human Ancestry, by Ruggles Gates (1948) p. 152.

in the Nilgiri hills in Southern India.' Aiyappan denies the 'Kolarian' origin of the Chenchu or of the Konda Reddi or Koya, who 'cannot be distinguished by any bodily peculiarities from the Plains Andhra, if, he were dressed in the plains' fashion and spoke without his dialectical peculiarities. The hair is very heavy and the features somewhat Australoid.' Further he says, 'the Kanikars, Uralis and Kunibas, all show certain Australoid characters in different degrees. They also show some evidence of Negrito ancestry in the short stature and the somewhat kinky hair.'<sup>1</sup> Eickstedt in 1933, recognized a Gondid and a Malid jungle type among the tribal population but the Malid is not Negrito. Even in the Mohenjo-daro, proto-Australoid features have been claimed. The Mohenjo-daro skulls are dolichocephalic and brachycephalic, and the longheaded type has been taken to be proto-Australoid, though Keith<sup>2</sup> detects affinity of the longheaded element with the Sumerians and Caucasians and demurs to its being identified with the proto-Australoid. The result of the study of 15 skeletons belonging to Mohenjo-daro, by Basu in collaboration with Guha showed two races. Race A had a long head, high cranium, prominent brow ridges, but these may not be proto-Australoid; the other race B, with a high narrow nose, is Mediterranean, but most of the skulls can be traced to mixture between these two racial types. Of the six skulls excavated in earthen ware urns in the Tinnevelly district of South India (1900), Zuckerman (1930) found one to be Australoid, but not of the most primitive character; the other described was Mediterranean. Elliot Smith<sup>3</sup> finds a definitely Australoid and also an Armenoid strain at least among the better preserved specimens, in the Adichanallur skulls. We would rather agree with Gates that the mixture of Australoids with northern invaders had occurred pretty early, and a thorough examination of racial and serological traits of south Indian tribes may throw considerable light on race origins. The Australoid or proto-Australoid features are found throughout the length and breadth of the Indian sub-continent, but had there been an assimilation of the Negrito race by the Indian population, the characteristic Negrito traits like woolly hair and broad head associated with flat nose and dark complexion, would have been met frequently in northern India as well.

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<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. p. 152.

Zuckerman 5, 1930, The Adichanallur Skulls., Bull. Madras Govt. Mus. N. S. 2 : 1-24.

<sup>3</sup> Elliot Smith. CC. 1911. Le cerveau d'un Tasmanien. Bull. et Mem Soc. Anth. Paris 2 : 442-450.

The racial origin of the proto-Australoid is not more definite as the views of competent anthropologists do not seem to be unanimous. If the Neanderthals of Europe survive today in the Australian, the proto-Australoid might have an Australian ancestry.

Quatrefages defines Negritos as brachycephalic. Dr Guha<sup>1</sup> finds the Kadars dolichocephalic but calls them Negrito, because, 'among the individuals with frizzly hair, there was a marked tendency for a rise in the index to mesorrhiny (mesocephaly ?) as shown by two individuals having 77.34 and 79.29 as the values of their index which, in his opinion, indicated that the basis of this Negrito type was probably brachycephalic or at least meso, as in the Semang (mean C. I. 79.0) but large admixture with a primitive dolichocephalic race had affected the general shape of the head. We have no access to the Kadar data as these are unpublished. It may be legitimately pointed out that the occurrence of a few brachycephalic individuals according to length-breadth index of the head or of the skull among the Kadar and Pullayans, for example, does not necessarily prove the existence of Negrito strain or a negrito substratum. The classification of races into groups on the basis of their range of variation in cephalic and nasal measurement is yet not possible, as any population with an average C. I. of 75 or 76, would certainly contain some brachycephalic individuals within their range of variation 'as evidence of mixture with a population having a brachycephalic average unless miscegenation is otherwise indicated.' The more we study human material on the evidence of osteometry, craniometry or somatometry, the more we are convinced of the need for caution in interpreting the data, while the statistical techniques or tools so far evolved to aid our analysis are not by any means sufficient to iron our doubts into conviction. An appropriate example is provided by the fact that Dr G. M. Morant, and Dr T. L. Woo,<sup>2</sup> failed to identify the Andamanese with the Negrito on craniometric evidence as the shape of the Andamanese head is very similar to those of the neighbouring Burmese or Javanese, a finding which makes it abundantly clear that mere craniological data without reference to the limb proportions, somatological and integumental characters, may land us in error. So is the case with head form and other physical traits. The same fact emerges, from Sir William Turner's analysis, "judging from the racial characters of the skull," writes Sir William Turner, "one draws the conclusion that there is no difference of moment in the form and proportions

<sup>1</sup> Census Report of India, Vol. I, Pt. III, 1935, p. J.

<sup>2</sup> Bigra 2-B.

of this part of the skeleton between the Dravidian and Kolarian (Munda) tribes and support is given to the view of their essential structural unity as advocated by Risley, a conclusion for which support is difficult to obtain. Lapique carried out some racial investigations among the Kadars, Pullayans and Malsers in the Annamalai hills and found traces of brachycephaly which Quatrefages considers a negrito trait. Lapique measured 32 adult men and 24 adult women in two Kadar settlements in the winter of 1903-1904. Discussing the Kadar data, Guha writes, 'whatever might have been the original type, there can be at any rate no doubt that this was Negrito, a conclusion reached independently by both Lapique and myself and the photos of the Kadars (figures 1-3 a, plate II, Census Report of India, 1931, Vol. I, Pt. III) it is hoped will remove all further doubts about it.<sup>1</sup> Lapique did not get any evidence of a pure Negrito race in India and his Negro-Paria race was sub-dolichocephalic in head form which he thought had disappeared by prolonged and gradual intermixture. B. K. Chatterjee and A. Mitra<sup>2</sup> quoted an extract from Lapique originally mentioned by Thurston, and conclude as follows, "Prof. Lapique then leaves us in no doubt that he found no Negrito population in purity comparable to the Andamanese, and other Negritos but only a *metis* population, half savage and half Paria. From these he proceeded to reconstitute by measurements what he considered to have been the Negro-Paria race, sub-dolichocephalic in head form which he assumed to have disappeared probably by prolonged and gradual inter-mixture." The tendency to mesocephaly noticed among the Bhils need not be taken as evidence of their affiliation with the Negrito, but this may be traced to an admixture with a brachycephalic race. The racial status today of all proto-Australoids cannot be similar, as milleniums of race mixture with other strains must have diluted the purity of blood among them. The Bhils who are identified with the Mundas, the Hos, and other cognate tribes of the Austro-Asiatic sub-family of languages, is a case in point. If we compare the various indefinite characters of the Bhils, the temptation to class them as distinct from the rest of the proto-Australoid groups is difficult to get over. Elsewhere I have referred to the appearance of the Bhils which does not distinguish them from the agricultural castes of Gujarat.<sup>3</sup> The Bhils have a complexion varying from olive to copper and dusky brown, and they possess fine nose, at one end they approach

1 Census Report of India, Vol. I, Pt. III, 1931.

2 Indian Culture, Vol. VIII, 4.

3 The Raciology of the Bhils, J. Guj. R. Soc., Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 226.

the Gujars in the shape of their nose, at the other end they are found to own flat nose though the incidence of the latter may not be very high, particularly among the Bhils of Gujarat. The Bhil women are of light complexion, graceful and compare favourably with their Gujarati neighbours. In stature, they usually show average Indian height, lightly built, weighing less than the average weight of the Indian labourer though it is not very complimentary to their wild and unfettered life in the jungles. Their eyes are full, expressive and dark, the women always excel men in intelligence and industry. There is no evidence of Mongolian fold. But Negroid features are met with particularly among the Bhils of Ratanpur in the Rajpipla State, Gujarat, where a colony of Negroes have been domiciled for centuries, mixing with the Bhils and other tribal elements to produce a *jus connubii*. An analysis of the anthropometric and serological data on the Bhils, throws interesting light on the racial status of the Bhils.<sup>1</sup> The Bhils show significant differences from the high caste people of northern India, viz., the Brahmins of U. P., and Chattris who are longheaded and leptorrhine.<sup>2</sup> But the tribal Korwa, Majhi, Panika, Kharwar, as well as the criminal tribes of northern India, are also distinguished from the Bhils on anthropometric grounds.<sup>3</sup> The narrow nose of the Bhils, if nothing else, entitles the Bhils to separate consideration from the proto-Australoid. The significant ratio with regard to nasal length, is very high between the Bhils and the proto-Australoid tribes of Mirzapore and Palamau, being above 10.0 while between the Bhils and the Brahmin it is 1.94, between the Bhils and the Chattris or Rajputs, it is 3.75. This means that the Bhils approach the higher castes of northern India in some of the physical traits, and are distinctly different from the other proto-Australoid tribes. Guha<sup>4</sup> finds racial relationship between the Bhils and the Chenchus on the basis of co-efficient of racial likeness (C. of India 1931, Vol. I, pt. III, p. xlix) worked out from his own unpublished anthropometric data. Otherwise also the Chenchus are widely known as close to the Bhils. E. W. E. Macfarlane quotes anthropometric data to suggest racial affiliation of the Bhils with the Oraons, and the Maria Gonds, but serological data she obtained, show differences and she admitted her difficulty to explain the same. (Macfarlane, E. W. E. The Blood Groups in India, Am. Journal of Physical Anthropology,

<sup>1</sup> Report on the Serological Status of Castes and Tribes of Cultural Gujarat (1950).

<sup>2</sup> Anthropometric Report, U. P., Sankhya, Vol. IX, Pts. 2 & 3, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Census Report of India Vol. I, Pt. 3, p. xlix.

Vol. XXVIII, 4, 1941). C. S. Venkatachar<sup>1</sup> offers the following hypothesis regarding the origin of the Bhils (Ethnographic Account of the Bhils of Central India Census. Rep. India 1931, Vol. I, Pt. III, 1935), "There is no doubt they (the Bhils) represent a race which inhabited India earlier than the Aryans and the Dravidians. Very possibly they are proto-Mediterranean race who spread far and wide when a climatic crisis occurred in the grass steppes of Sahara and it is the race which is responsible for the industry associated with the final Caspian culture in the Vindhya." Again he writes, "The Bhils are one section of the great Munda race which occupied the pre-Dravidian India and had for its home the central regions across the Vindhya and it is perhaps in contact with the Dravidians on the outside in Gujarat they acquired their present appellation." Linguistically the Bhils cannot be identified with the Oraons or the Mundas though popular belief exists about a common origin with the latter. Grierson describes Bhili as a language of the central group of the inner Indo-Aryan brand.<sup>2</sup> It has about 20 dialects, with Bhili and Bhilodi. The number of persons speaking the language was estimated by Grierson to be about 40 lakhs, the language being spoken in Gujarat, Rajputana, Central India, Khandesh and Berar. 'The Bhil dialects', writes P. G. Shah<sup>3</sup>, 'form a continuous chain between Rajasthani, through Gujarati, Khandeshi and Marathi. The Marathi influence is only of a superficial kind and the general character of the dialect remains Gujarati.' According to Rev. C. Thomson,<sup>4</sup> the Bhils form a completed arch resting upon two distinct pillars one representing the aborigines of India, and the other Aryan. Rev. Thomson calculated about 84 p.c. of the Bhili words, compiled from Rajputana and Mahi Kanthia, being derived from Sanskrit, corresponding to those used in Gujarati and 10 p.c. were of Persian origin, the remaining could not be deciphered. Shah<sup>5</sup> finds the Bhil language similar to modern Gujarati and evidently 'Aryan in genesis and in use.' Although race and language are not inseparably connected and language is no test of racial affinity, the almost dissociation of the present day Bhili language from the Munda and Dravidian languages cannot be easily accounted for. If the Bhils spoke a Munda tongue, the isolated Bhil communities should have preserved traces of Munda affiliation for language or the genius

1 Census Report of India 1931, pp. 51-60.

2 Grierson,—Linguistic Survey of India p. 435.

3 Shah, P. G.—Non-Hindu Elements in the Culture of the Bhils, Essays in Anthropology, presented to S. C. Roy, p. 182.

4 Thomson C.—Rudiments of Bhil Language, 1875, p. vi.

5 Ibid.

of it is extremely conservative and does not change so easily and completely as we notice among the Gujarat Bhils. Thomson does not believe that there is any connection between Bhils and Dravidian languages of southern India nor with Gondi, Santhali and Koli. There are no doubt some Bhili words for which there is no Gujarati equivalent. These may have been introduced into the Bhili dialects by the contacts the Bhils have had with other tribal people. According to T. N. Dave,<sup>1</sup> Gujarati and Bhili are too closely related to admit of separate headline, 'The Bhili dialects, for example, are Gujarati as far as Jara (south of Udepur), Dungarpur, Bansvada, Ali Rajpur and Barwani to the east, and they become slowly and slowly more alien to the different neighbouring Rajasthani dialects as we go further to the east.' Sewell thinks that 'the proto-Australoid of India is associated with the Australian aboriginal on the one hand and the Rhodesian skull on the other.'<sup>2</sup> The Palaeanthropus Palestinus is supposed to be a link between the various primitive racial elements. Many anthropologists take the Rhodesian, the Peking Man and Homo Soloensis of Java as belonging to the same racial stock, though Sewell would like a family relationship of Australian aborigines with the last type viz., homo Soloensis, of Java. Prof. J. H. Hutton, has referred to an opinion of Col. Sewell, in which<sup>3</sup> the latter indicated the 'possibility of the derivation of the proto-Australoid type in India from a leptorrhine western type through a series of climatic modifications.' A transition has been observed by Sewell,<sup>4</sup> 'commencing in the Kish skulls with a nose that is long and narrow, passing through the Al-Ubaid skulls where the nose is slightly shorter and broader, then through the Adichanallur and Mohenjo-daro skulls in which these changes are more marked to the maximum alteration found in the Veddahs. Similarly the series presents, corresponding relations in the height of the orbit and the degree of prognathism, as well as in the bizygomatic breadth.' If such a range is possible for ancestral racial stock, it is not difficult to trace a brachycephalic trend in a dolichocephalic race and opinions elsewhere support such a possibility as evidenced in the enquiry into the descendants of immigrants in America. Mohenjo-daro skeletal material is probably of comparatively later date and hence does not account for the original inhabitants of India. The proto-Australoid is normally dolichocephalic but as the brachycephalic

1 Dave T. N., J. Guj. Res. Soc. Vol. X, April 1948, pp 80-134.

2 Sewell & Guha. Mem. Arch. Survey of India 35, pp. 191-200.

3 Census Report, 1931, Vol. I, Pt. I,

4 Ibid.

trend is also met with among them, though the latter is not associated with woolly or frizzly hair, a character which is essential to the Melanesic division of the Oceanic Negroes. Neither the Melanesian Negroes, nor the Negrito, accounts for the Indian aboriginal and the proto-Australoid is probably derived from the west. This may link the latter with a type of pottery and a neolithic culture, but that may not prove racial origin, similar to the dynastic Egyptians. Dr Hutton has given a number of possible threads of Melanesian advance from the east to the west.<sup>1</sup> The Melanesian physical type occurs according to him, markedly in the hilly tracts that divide Assam from Burma and in the Nicobars, with mongoloid mixtures in both the areas; he also thinks that this type occurs without the Mongoloid admixture in the Malabar coast, though the chances, he admits, of being misled by directly African elements, are great. Melanesian Negroes have been regarded by some as enlarged Negritos, and therefore with a different origin, but as William Howells<sup>2</sup> says, 'it is pulling rabbits out of hats.' How far African elements are responsible for the Negrito features in the coastal population will be worth an enquiry. Is it the cultural parallels that make Dr Hutton<sup>3</sup> postulate a Melanesian element in India's population, viz., the disposal of the dead by exposure, and the separation of the skull, communal houses, head hunting and canoe cult. If these traits have been introduced into India by the Melanesian people, the latter must have had a dominant role to play in the cultural life of the country, but the limited distribution of the Melanesian type culture in India does not warrant such a hypothesis. Besides, cultural parallels need not be always due to diffusion and totemism, the blow gun and the boomerang which Dr Hutton traces to the proto-Australoids, need not necessarily be indigenous to the latter. Totemism is not a single institution, and surface parallelism does not establish single origin either. Totemic traces have been found in large parts of the world, and different races are found to subscribe to the totemic creed. Exposure of the dead, the megalithic cult, and the canoe cult need not necessarily be Melanesian in origin. Hooton<sup>4</sup> has quoted Indian Census Report (1931, pt. 3) as this was till recently the latest document on race elements in India; and referred to the Negrito and the proto-Australoid in the Indian population, which he thought must have mixed and produced the

1 Census of India, Vol. I, Pt. I, 1931.

2 Mankind So Far (Lon. 1947), p. 298.

3 Census of India, Vol. I, Pt. I, 1931.

4 Hooton, Up. from the Ape.



'pre-Dravidians'. Serologically it remains a paradox why the Indian tribes show a small B incidence, though the Negrito are high in B.<sup>1</sup> The Australoids have A without B, and the Paniyans and some tribes of interior India show a high A percentage. The B incidence is high among the Mundas and among the Bhils as depicted by Macfarlane but neither the Bhils nor the Mundas subscribe to the Negrito type. Gates has recently traced the proto-Australoids to the Pithecanthropus and about the origin of the Negrito, he thinks, the latter probably originated later than the proto-Australoids. At any rate, writes Gates, 'their spread appears to have been at a later date (p. 355, Human Ancestry). It is also suggested that, the B blood group has spread much later than O or A. These facts, if they are corroborated by further research, point to the proto-Australoids as the earliest substratum in India and not the Negritos as claimed by some anthropologists. The Kannikars have short stature and kinky hair indicating Negrito relationship, but the Chenchus are definitely Australoid possessing curly hair.<sup>2</sup> The large incidence of B, has been suggested due to Negrito mixture, among the Mongoloids, which later on filtered among the population of India as a whole, but the Chwan Miao in Western China have a very high B percentage, higher than it is found among the Chinese.<sup>3</sup> The Bhils according to Macfarlane<sup>4</sup> have a high B incidence but the same is not true of the Rajpipla or the west Khandesh Bhils and recent linguistic research by the Gujarat Research Society has indicated the possibility of a new approach to Bhil 'raciology'. The racial status of the Bhil on anthropometric grounds is uncertain and the general conclusion, that one is tempted to arrive is that the Bhil is a generic term used to include all those people who live by the chase, i.e., those who use the bow and arrow—the term 'Bhil' being derived from the Tamil word 'Bhilawar' or a bow man.<sup>5</sup>

The biochemical index calculated from the formula  $\left\{ \frac{A+AB}{B+AB} \right\}$  does not distinguish the Paniyans, the Konyak Nagas, the Angami Nagas and the Lushais from the Europeans who possess a higher biochemical index than most other races, the index being always above 2.5, but most of the Indian castes and tribes show a Bio-Index of 2 and below, thereby indicating a homogeneity in serological

1 Gates, R. R. Human Ancestry, p. 355.

2 Ibid p. 357

3 R. R. Gates, Human Ancestry p. 356. qu.

4 Macfarlane, E. W. E., J. Roy. As. Soc. Bengal, 7, Pt. I, 15-24.

5 Racial Problems in Asia, by D.N. Majumdar & I. Karve, Indian Council of World Affairs, Pamphlet (1948).

status. The distribution of the blood groups in India is still erratic to warrant any racial hypothesis, though the percentage variation in O and A may indicate the degree of racial purity or isolation of the social groups. Besides, as we have pointed out among the Tharus,<sup>1</sup> the high incidence of B in India may be due to the selective effect of climate or disease, as the malarious tracts are found to be dominated by B, thereby indicating probably the greater resistance of the B blood group to malaria, a fact which may be corroborated by further research. The high B incidence in India may be due as well to mutation but that is difficult to prove with our present knowledge of blood groups and human genetics. In any case, the B in the Negrito cannot explain the high incidence of B blood among the Indian tribes and castes, and a Negrito substratum for India is definitely premature to emphasize in the context of our serological knowledge. The proto-Australoids have a lower value of B, than it is found among the higher castes, Hindus and Muslims, and the Negrito affiliation of the proto-Australoids is therefore more academic than real. We therefore, conclude that the earliest inhabitants of India were the proto-Australoids who may have received some infiltration of African or even Negrito blood in the Coastal parts of India at later periods. The proto-Australoids if they have mixed, as they must have, have assimilated or have been assimilated by an early Mediterranean stock, and here and there with a brachycephalic element, of an 'unrecorded prehistoric origin'. As we have found among the proto-Australoid Hos,<sup>2</sup> there is a gradual and perceptible change in physical features among the Ho boys of a school in Chaibassa, and this fact may substantiate Sewell's view of a continuous range of variation noticed in the Kish skulls till we reach the Veddahs of Ceylon.

The Nisadas which Chanda claims to be represented by the dark, short statured and broad nosed jungle tribes of India are the 'pre-Dravidians' of Haddon and according to Chanda were the original speakers of the Munda family of languages, their descendants through contacts, adopted either the Indo-Aryan or the Dravidian dialects or patois. Dr Konow has found similarities of the Munda with Monkhmer and Pater Schmidt finds common elements between Munda, Khasi and Nikobar, Wa, Sakai and the Monkhmer. That the Munda family of languages had a much wider distribution has also been suggested by Gates and S. C. Roy. There is therefore more reasons than one, we

<sup>1</sup> J. Roy, *As. Soc. Bengal*, Vol. VIII, I, 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1949).

think, to regard the earliest inhabitants of India as proto-Australoid or Indo-Australoids.

Excluding the doubtful Negrito, we do not think it is necessary to distinguish the various tribal groups included so long under the 'pre-Dravidian elements' in the Indian population. The Mundas and the Oraons though they speak different languages, do not differ much in racial traits, nor do the Malpaharis of northern Bengal and Bihar though they have been found to exhibit statistically significant metric differences with the Oraons with whom they have cultural as well as physical ties. Such significant differences exist between the various branches of the 'White' or 'Caucasic' races. The Alpine, the Mediterranean and the Nordic are the various branches of the White race, but in spite of many differences in mental and racial traits, they represent a homogeneity, and can be grouped under one large racial type. The various tribes like the Mundas, the Santhals, the Juangs, the Korwas, the Saoras, the Parjas, the Khonds, the Chenchus, the Irulas, the Panyans and many jungle tribes in the South, particularly in the larger native states can be affiliated to the same racial stock and may not be independent races or even types.

Linguistic differences should not be considered insuperable barriers to the identification of these tribes as units of the same race, for race and language may not be interdependent though phonesis is believed to be a physical function by many. The Brahui dialect in Baluchistan is an example in point, and many advanced languages in India bear traces of Austric and Dravidian affinities. The Bhili language has been identified with the Munda sub-family of the Austro-Asiatic family of languages but competent research by Dave has found the Aryan origin of many Bhil words. The physical features of the Bhils, and their blood groups cannot be explained if they are identified with the Munda tribes. The Warlis of the Thana district, Bombay-Presidency, whose language was affiliated to that of the Bhils of Khandesh, have been found by Dave to have no connection with the Munda form of speech.

Dr Hutton refers to the speed with which the Nagas change language and how the latter splits into dialects not even mutually intelligible (The Sema Nagas, by J. H. Hutton p. 266). Seven Semas, for example, happened to meet by the roadside one evening each coming from a different village. They asked one another what they had with them to eat with rice. Each mentioned a new thing, atushch, gwomishi mugishi, amusa, akhetre, etc. but when they opened their respective bags, they all produced chillies.

The tribal groups, particularly those whom Risley affiliated to the 'Dravidian' are dolichocephals and platyrrhine. There are others who speak the Dravidian family of languages, who are dolichocephalic but not platyrrhine. Guha on the basis of 'co-efficients of racial likeness' finds the Telugu and Malayali closely related, and similar relationship does exist between the Telugu and the Tamil. The Telugu, he says, 'forms a link between the Malayali and Tamil who between them do not show much affinity.' The Kanarese and the Malayali are at the two ends, the former representing the broad-headed and the latter the long-headed type. But if we base our arguments on linguistic evidence alone, both these types must be affiliated to the same stock for both the languages can be traced to the Dravidian family.

The dominant racial type in the South is represented by a dolichocephalic leptorrhine stock of medium stature and brownish complexion which has mixed in varying proportions with the tribal groups on the one hand, and a brachycephalic leptorrhine element whose influence is well marked among the Kanarese and also the Tamils. This brachycephalic element is Dr Haddon's 'Alpine' type which must have filtered into India in prehistoric times as is supported by the Harappa skeletal finds. It is found fairly widespread throughout the central belt of India from Gujarat through Central Provinces to Bengal. To the north this type has mixed with a fair dolichocephalic type known as the 'Indo-Aryan' type of Risley, to the east the brachycephalic type has been assimilated by the mongoloid tribal groups. It is difficult to believe that the Indo-Aryans were all dolichocephals, for in the area from which they have migrated, the existence of a brachycephalic element has already been proved and the needs of an invading race must have caused a dilution of the 'Indo-Aryan' blood. Nor is it a fact as we have already indicated that all Mongolian people are brachycephals.

As we proceed from the Punjab to Bengal and the Punjab to Peninsular India, there is a gradual lowering of stature and physical build. The average stature in the Punjab is 168.4 cms. It falls to 165.5 in the U. P., 164.0 in Bihar and 163.0 in Bengal and in the Darjeeling hills it is 161.05 and 159.2 in the Chittagong hill tracts. Guha estimates the average stature in U. P. as 166.86 which is lowered to 163.89 in Maharashtra, 164.46 in Gujarat, 165.97 in Bengal and 163.74 in South India. This progressive lowering of stature is partly racial and must partly be due to nutritional standards which are different in different provinces.

The average cephalic index in the U. P. castes is 72.8 and in the Punjab it is 74.0 according to Risley's calculation. There is

a progressive broadening of the head as we pass from the U. P. to Bengal, 74.9 in Chota Nagpur, 75.7 in Bihar, 76.9 in Bengal, 80.7 in the Darjeeling hills and 79.9 in the Chittagong hill tracts. Recent data collected by us point to the same conclusion. The average cephalic index in the U. P. is 74.51 increasing to 78.96 in Bengal, 77.31 in Orissa, 75.32 in South India, 80.27 in Gujarat and Kathiawar and 77.59 in Maharashtra. The same is the case with the nasal index. It is 70.2 in the Punjab, 78.9 in the U. P., 80.0 in Bihar among the artisans, 87.4 in Chota Nagpur tribes, 78.7 in Bengal, and in the Darjeeling and Chittagong hill tribes it is 82.7 and 77.7 respectively. We do not yet possess sufficient data to map out the frequencies of these anthropometric characters and the existing data are meagre and erratically distributed. The nasal measurements admit of great personal error, and techniques are not uniform either.

The Anthropometrical and Serological Survey of the United Provinces carried out under the auspices of the Census Operations 1941, have shown the degree of affiliation and remoteness among the various tribes and castes of the Province.<sup>1</sup> The following summary of the results of the Survey will explain the racial status of the castes and tribes in the U. P.

1. The tribal groups represented by the Korwas, the Cheros the Panikas, the Kharwars, the Majhwars, the Rajhwars, the Oraons are all significantly different from the caste groups. They possess dark brown to black complexion, flat nose, short stature, long head and low sitting height in proportion to stature. The hair on the scalp is thick and curly, very dark in colour, while that on the body is thin and sparse. The lips are usually thick, the chin not prominently developed and the teeth small and irregular. The forehead is not large, neither is it vertical. Except for the Korwas who are thickset men and of robust constitution, the tribal groups are lightly built but yet hardy and of delightfully gay disposition.

2. The various artisan castes, like the Koiries, the Kurmis, the Kahars, the Ahirs and the Mahomedans do not differ much from each other in physical characteristics. The Mahomedans of the U. P. as well as the artisan castes do not show any great dissimilarity from the caste Hindus as such, the Brahmins or the Khatriyas. They have, it appears, a slightly lower racial status than that of the latter. The general conclusion seems irresistible however, that the Mahomedans of the U. P. have no separate racial status than that indicated by the artisan elements. Either there has been an intermixture between them or

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<sup>1</sup> Sankhya, Vol. IX, pts. 1 & 2 (1949)

both represent the self-same racial stock ; probably the latter.

3. The Doms and the Chamars, two exterior castes of the province, though today they represent the lowest rung of the social order have a higher racial status than that ordinarily accorded or conceded to them. They are farther from the tribal groups. Leaving aside the large hybrid elements among the Dom whom competent eyes would trace to their general laxity of the marital code, the average Dom is a more handsome person than the Chamar. It is possible that both the Doms and the Chamars have had a higher cultural status and their present low social position and general degradation were due to social or political disabilities imposed on them from outside. It is not merely true to say that the laxity of morals of the Dom women has resulted in a lot of illegitimacy and hybridization but it is equally a fact that the incidence of handsome and attractive features among the Dom women is a cause rather than the consequence of such miscegenation. Whatever the cultural status of the Doms and the Chamars may be, they are not racially distant from the artisan castes, not very much at any rate.

4. The criminal tribes like the Bhatu and the Karwals, the Haburas and the Bauris have little in common with the tribal population either with the tribes of Mirzapur or with the Mongoloid tribes of the Tarai, though their association with the Brahmins and the Khattriyas are more real than otherwise.

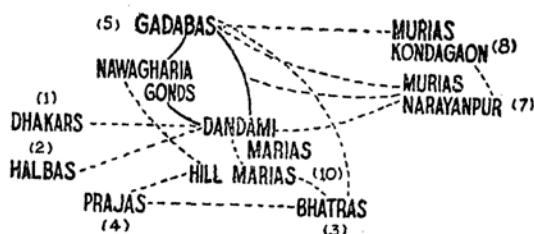
5. The Brahmins and the Khattriyas, both belong to the same racial stock, the latter are more mixed than the former. The Brahmins appear to have maintained their racial status more than the other castes and there does not exist any significant racial difference between the eastern and western Brahmins though popular beliefs may not corroborate it.

6. The Tharus and the Bhoksas represent a Mongoloid stock and their remoteness from the castes as well as the tribes of Mirzapur is definite.

Both anthropometry and serology point to a gradual lowering of the racial status from the Brahmins to the aboriginal tribes and the order of social precedence may be said to correspond with the degree of racial purity or hybridization. If the Brahmins for example, started with a diluted blood, they have succeeded in resisting further dilution more than the other castes, but if they had started with purity, they have maintained it more than the other castes. The Survey showed that the classification of the castes in the United Provinces cannot be absolute and that racial types may not be determined with the existing technique. The switch-on to genetic study of the social groups is necessary both

in the interest of anthropometry and of the qualitative improvement of racial types.

In a recent racial survey of the Bastar State now in the Madhya Pradesh we found a progressive lengthening of the head towards the mountain regions as is illustrated by the fact that the Hill Marias possess the longest head (184.57), next to them come the Bhatras who are immigrants into Bastar and then the Kondagaon Marias (183.58). The Halbas, who are plain dwellers and also urban, possess the highest mean head length C. 1 (79.82). Nowhere perhaps have social precedence and racial distance been found so correlated as in Bastar.



REDUCED C.R.L.	<3
"	3-6
NO IN BRACKETS ORDER OF SOCIAL PRECEDENCE.	

The anthropometric data shows the alignment of the various tribal or cultural groups, with respect to the Hill Marias who are the most primitive group in Bastar. They also show the affiliation of the Dhakars to other groups. The Dhakars and Halbas are the high caste people of the State and they do not have any close association with the tribal groups, the Marias, the Murias, the Parjas and the Bhatras. Between the various tribal groups there has been much of intermixture but the racial distance from the Halbas and the Dhakars explain their social status in the State.

How far the artisan castes in India are recruited from the tribal stock, can be illustrated by a statistical evaluation of the anthropometric data. Grigson in his monograph on the 'Maria Gonds of Bastar' has referred to cultural transition. He writes that a large number of persons returned as members of the Hindu functional castes, the graziers, potters, fisherman, weavers, blacksmiths and others, are in reality members of the primitive tribes speaking their language and only differentiated from them by their occupation. There is nothing in their appearance to

distinguish these persons from other aborigines of the State ; they follow their religions whether enumerated as such or as Hindus. The Kurukhs are a fishing caste in Bastar. They are found in numbers near about Chitrakot where there is a natural fall receiving its supply of water from the Indravati river. A comparison of the anthropometric data of the Kurukhs, with those of the Marias, reveals no significant statistical difference. They are for all practical purposes samples of the same population. Similar investigations elsewhere will provide irrefutable data about the tribal origin of many functional groups in India.

In the cis-Himalayan region, in the Dehradun district, in Garhwal, Rawain and the Simla States we have three important racial strains. The highest altitudes are inhabited by the Tibetans and other Mongoloid people, the central belt is composed of a tall, fair race represented by the Khas-Rajputs and Khas-Brahmins, the Kanets, the Bhats, and a comparatively dark aboriginal type represented by the Doms, a generic name used to include all artisan castes, the Kolis and the Koltas, the Bajgirs, and the Oadh, who are originally of Dom extraction. In the Jaunsar Bawar area of the Chakrata sub-division of the Dehradun district the lowest rung of the social ladder is occupied by the domestic drudge, the Kolta, traditional 'hewer of wood and drawer of water'. He lives by serving the high castes and is bought and sold for agricultural labour. Higher than the Koltas, there are a number of artisan castes, the Bajgirs, the Oadh, the Chamar who cannot hold any land but must serve the zemindars who are either Rajputs or Brahmins. The rigidity of the caste system is not much felt in these parts, and inter-marriage between the Khas-Rajputs and Khas-Brahmins has not been barred by the rules of caste endogamy.

From a comparison of the statistical data and from the co-efficients of racial likeness, we could find the racial status of the three cultural groups, the Brahmins, the Rajputs and the artisan castes. While the Brahmins and Rajputs do not show any divergence, the artisan elements cannot be taken to be racially of the same stock as that represented by the Brahmins and the Rajputs. The co-efficient of racial likeness, between the Brahmins and the artisan castes, is 7.713 and that between Rajputs and artisan castes 7.021. But between the Brahmins and the Rajputs the C.R. L.<sup>1</sup> is 0.525 which indicates very close association, so much so, that the two castes may be taken as samples of the same population. It is also evident that though the difference between the artisan castes and the higher castes

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<sup>1</sup> Coefficient of Racial Likeness.



represented by the Brahmins and the Rajputs is greater, that they are not extreme types is evident from the C. R. L. values. There is association between all the three samples which is perhaps due to intermixture which must have occurred during centuries of contacts, cultural and otherwise.

From the Racial and Serological survey Report of Cultural Gujarat (1950), the following passage may be reproduced. This summarizes the race elements in this part of the country.

Both from the definite and indefinite characters, the two racial strains in Gujarat, Kathiawar and Cutch are easily distinguished, but the intermediate rungs of the racial ladder follow imperceptibly one after the other, producing a more or less homogeneous ethnic type. The Muslims of Gujarat, unlike those of Bengal, are more akin to the higher caste elements and the historical origin of the various Muslim groups in these parts do not allow any scope for a different conclusion. The Khoja are similar to the Luhana, the Miana, and the Bhadela to the Bhatia and Parsi and the Rajput and Mehr have association with the Muslims. The Oswal of Cutch show occasional epicanthic folds in their eyes, and their origin would be an interesting study, the rest of the groups do not exhibit any Mongoloid infusion. The Muslims of Cutch and of Kathiawar and the Sunni Bora show occasional traces of woolly hair and thick and inverted lips, but the Negroid affinities are due to absorption and not to any substratum of a Negrito race. Elsewhere it has been mentioned how the Negroid population have been formed in Gujarat, this probably occurred between the 8th to the 10th century. In Ratanpur, in the Rajpipla State, we have a colony of Negroid population. Their reputation as sorcerers and healers and their shrine built upon the ruins of a desecrated Hindu temple attract people from different parts of Gujarat. The Negro element is also found in the Kathiawar States and in the coastal areas of Kathiawar and Cutch, there is quite a considerable number of the lower castes who have assimilated Negro features ; but the Negroes have not any important contribution to make to the peopling of Maha Gujarat and do not share in the blend represented by the members of castes high and low, in this particular region.

The Kunbi Pattidar have been taken as a distinct racial type by Guha and Venkatachar, the former on anthropometric grounds, the latter on the basis of historical evidence, but there is no significant racial difference between the Kunbi Pattidar and other castes with similar cultural status in Maha Gujarat. (See Race Realities in Cultural Gujarat, Guj. Res. Society, Publication, 1950, pp. xi & xii).

Anthropometric Data from Risley's Series<sup>1</sup>

			Stature	C. I.	N. I.
Jats	..	..	—	79.8	63.1
Rajput	..	..	174.8	72.4	71.6
Sikh	..	..	171.6	72.7	68.8
Khatris	..	..	166.2	74.0	73.1
Deshasth Brahmin	..	..	164.2	76.9	79.3
Kunbi	..	..	160.0	77.4	79.2
Koli	..	..	160.1	77.5	76.4
Maratha	..	..	163.2	78.3	80.1
Nagar Brahmin	..	..	178.8	79.7	73.1
Sadaru Lingayat	..	..	165.8	77.7	73.4
Jangam Lingayat	..	..	165.1	79.1	74.5
Nayar	..	..	165.1	73.2	76.7
Malaiali	..	..	163.9	74.4	77.8
Paniyan	..	..	157.4	74.0	95.1
Bhil	..	..	162.9	76.5	84.1
Kurui	..	..	160.8	75.7	82.6
Oraon	..	..	162.1	75.4	86.1
Santal	..	..	161.4	76.1	88.8
Korwa	..	..	159.5	74.4	92.5
Brahmin	..	..	165.9	73.1	74.6
Kayastha	..	..	164.8	72.6	74.8
Chattri	..	..	166.1	73.0	77.7
Kurmi	..	..	164.2	73.3	79.2
Tharu	..	..	161.4	73.9	79.5
Chamar	..	..	163.0	72.8	86.0
Kuki	..	..	156.6	76.2	85.0

Anthropometric Data (Indian Census, 1931)<sup>2</sup>

			Stature	C. I.	N. I.	F. I.
Bengali Brahmin	..	..	168.03	78.93	67.71	91.68
Bengali Kayastha	..	..	167.07	80.84	68.11	89.32
Orissa Brahmin	..	..	164.29	77.31	70.46	89.21
U. P. Brahmin	..	..	165.47	72.48	69.56	89.66
Baghel Rajput	..	..	169.18	76.28	70.42	87.40
Nagar Brahmin	..	..	164.86	81.38	69.05	83.66
Bania Jain	..	..	164.27	80.58	70.26	83.21
Audich Brahmin	..	..	164.78	78.77	69.70	84.66
Brahma Khattri	..	..	163.95	79.70	65.84	86.18
Mahratta	..	..	163.81	78.71	72.42	85.57
Saraswat Gaur Brahmin	..	..	162.97	77.42	71.18	89.87
Nair	..	..	168.99	72.51	72.28	90.39
Tamil Brahmin	..	..	164.06	77.36	71.92	89.94
Khasi	..	..	156.91	77.30	77.40	84.50
Chenchu	..	..	164.95	72.89	81.38	85.26
Nicobarese	..	..	158.92	76.76	83.87	82.08

<sup>1</sup> C. I. = Cephalic Index ; N. I. = Nasal Index.<sup>2</sup> F. I. = Facial Index.

**Anthropometric Data on Gujarat Tribes and Castes<sup>1</sup>**

		Stature	C. I.	N. I.	F. I.	S. I.
Bhatias	..	165.81	82.91	73.58	81.40	51.76
Kunbi Pattidars	..	164.20	77.99	75.29	82.75	51.13
Sunni Boras	..	162.90	79.91	70.33	84.50	52.39
Rajput	..	164.33	78.12	68.49	84.22	53.43
Luhana	..	164.57	79.45	71.83	83.36	51.61
Khoja	..	164.53	79.95	70.32	84.43	51.39
Nagar Brahmin	..	163.73	79.59	71.78	82.68	52.21
Oswal Jain	..	163.98	79.53	77.77	82.52	51.28
Rabaris	..	163.22	80.27	69.26	85.50	50.46
Audich Brahmin	..	164.34	77.97	71.44	83.18	51.44
Parsis	..	167.73	82.47	67.67	83.05	51.24

**Anthropometric Data, U. P. Survey (Census, 1941)**

		Stature	C. I.	N. I.	F. I.	S. I.
Brahmin	..	165.07	72.89	72.16	87.74	52.25
Agharia	..	167.47	73.31	72.81	87.89	50.17
Chattri	..	163.33	72.12	68.08	89.72	50.36
Muslim	..	162.45	72.16	71.23	88.97	50.37
Bhil	..	162.92	75.62	77.54	85.62	—
Dom	..	166.53	73.69	75.98	90.76	50.55
Ahir	..	161.37	73.76	73.35	86.88	52.27
Kurmi	..	161.35	72.97	73.90	87.99	51.70
Tharu	..	163.33	72.33	76.22	86.43	51.17
Chamar	..	161.88	72.92	75.41	86.80	49.66
Tribal groups	..	160.69	72.69	80.80	87.08	49.97
(Pooled mean)						

<sup>1</sup> S. I.= Sitting Index.

	(Kish)	(Nal)	(Bayana)	(Sialkot)	(Veddah)	R. C. S. Museum	Maski (means of M 16 and M4)	Maski M.B.	Mean values of Sakarna (Egypt series)	Mean values of Palestine (Lebanish) series	Means of C.D. Rawceit	Macalver's Prehistoric Egyptian series
1. Glabella Occipital Length (L)	191.5	188.5	178	180	176.5	163.0	163.0	185.0	186.9	184.7	185.1	184.5
2. Greatest Breadth (F)	180.7	182.0	127	128	132	141.0	141.0	198.0	138.7	136.8	134.9	132.4
3. Mfn. Frontal Breadth (B1)	90.0	93.0	90	98	90.4	92.0	92.0	89.0	96.5	95.5	91.1	91.1
4. Bregmatic Breadth (J)	131.0	120.0	136	—	122.1	—	—	132.0	127.8	128.4	125.6	126.5
5. Bregmatic Breadth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6. Nasal Length (NH, L)	—	—	49	—	—	—	—	31.0	31.2	31.4	48.9	50.4
7. Nasal Length (NB)	—	23	23	—	—	—	—	26.5	25.4	25.2	25.1	25.1
8. Auricular Height (Au H)	—	120	120	—	—	—	116.0	113	114.8	115.6	115.6	115.6
9. Basal-Bregmatic Height (Hr)	132.3	146	131	140	150	—	—	138	135.4	133.8	135.2	133.9
10. Nasal Alveolar Height (G+H)	62.0	72.0	—	—	—	—	—	63.5	71.9	70.1	67.6	70.6
11. Orbital Breadth (Or)	41.0	40.0	—	—	—	—	—	39	38.0	38.0	42.0	38.1
12. Orbital Height (O2)	32.5	33.0	—	—	—	—	34	33	32.5	32.7	32.3	32.7
13. Basion to Nasion (LB)	—	99.5	—	—	—	—	—	101	102.7	100.7	99.3	100.9
14. Basion to Prosthion (Prosthion to L)	—	90.0	—	—	—	—	—	94	98.0	94.9	94.7	96.1
15. Basion to Opisthion (fm)	—	36.0	—	—	—	—	—	36.0	36.7	37.0	—	—
16. Breadth of Foramen Magnum (fm)	—	38.0	—	—	—	—	465	38.0	30.4	30.4	30.4	—
17. Horizontal Circumference (U)	—	538	—	—	—	—	—	504	518.3	518.1	511.0	511.0
18. Transverse Arc (Q)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	29.9	30.9	30.9	30.4	—
19. Arc Nasion to Bregma (S1)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11.9	12.9	12.9	—	—
20. Arc Bregma to Lambda (S2)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13.5	13.0	13.0	—	—
21. Arc Lambda to Opisthion (S3)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11.0	11.6	11.6	—	—
22. Total Sagittal Arc (S)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	37.1	37.5	37.5	37.3	37.3
23. Facial Breadth (GB)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	101.0	96.5	94.4	95.9	95.9
24. Length of the Molar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25. Breadth of the Molar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
26. Fawcetts b.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
27. Thickness of the Parietal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
28. Index Cephalic	68.3	70.0	71.3	71.1	69.1	83.9	83.9	74.5	74.2	74.3	73.0	71.8
29. " Nasal	44.44	46.9	(?)	—	—	—	—	52.0	49.5	49.4	51.1	50.6
30. " 100 H/L	69.1	71.5	73.5	77.7	73.6	83.9	83.9	101.5	72.8	72.7	73.3	72.6
31. " 100 B/H	—	89.4	96.9	91.4	93.3	—	—	102.6	102.6	102.4	—	—
32. " 100 G/H/G:B	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	62.0	74.3	74.6	70.6	86
33. " 100 O2/O1	79.3	82.5	—	—	—	—	—	84.6	83.6	82.7	74.9	74.9
34. " 100 fm/fm	—	77.8	—	—	—	—	—	77.8	83.3	82.7	55.8	55.8
35. Length of Palate (G1)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	53	40.3	40.3	1379.5	1379.5
36. Breadth of Palate (G2)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	48	—	—	—	—
37. Cranial Capacity in cc.	—	1442.9	—	—	—	—	1341.9	1341.9	1367.9	1425	—	—

Table Showing the Metric Data on Series of Skulls in India and Outside.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BLOOD MAP OF INDIA

A new technique has been adopted by anthropologists to test the interrelation of racial groups as it is based on the distribution of 'blood groups' and blood group is a genic character transmissible by heredity and follows Mendelian laws of inheritance. A discussion on raciology is incomplete without reference to 'blood groups' evidence for what it is worth.

Discussing the racial distribution of blood groups Dr J. H. Hutton suggested in 1931, that a "proper investigation of blood groups by caste would yield most valuable results." Such investigations are proceeding and very soon we expect to get reliable data on caste basis. We are, however, using the available data to see how far blood groups can tell us about racial types and race mixtures.

Genetic study of human differences has not been possible yet. There are four types of differences recognized between the races. Differences in skin colour, hair form and the like probably depend on rather few genes. Skeletal traits which can be studied in man, past and present, overlap so much that races can hardly be distinguished by such differences. Differences of ability and temperament which give rise to differences in cultures are so overlaid by the environmental factors that they often lose their significance. Except blood groups which are determined by certain easily identified genes to be found in the human species, it is unlikely that much progress could be made with the different anthropometric factors except perhaps for the genes responsible for a selected group of well-marked physical characteristics. The only other method of studying human inheritance has been by analysing pedigrees and family strains. This certainly cannot be an exact method and results obtained thereby in the case of the inheritance of a number of abnormal characters have not proved indisputable.

Blood groups as indices of racial relationship have an advantage over anthropometric characters. Serological difference in the blood cells are 'purely constitutional in nature determined by heredity and not influenced by environment.' The substances which characterize the blood groups are present in practically every tissue of the body and have been found 'in soluble form in the serum, saliva and urine'.

The variation of the blood groups in man is a little complicated as 'the gene determining this character has three allelomorphs' or according to the latest information, four. The interaction of these allelomorphs produces four blood groups

which are described as groups 1, 2, 3 and 4, or more conveniently O, A, B, and AB. The relative frequencies of the four blood groups in various samples of population have been determined and the relative frequencies of the gene allelomorphs have been deduced from them. The frequency of the genes A, B, and O are denoted by  $p$ ,  $q$ , and  $r$  which may be obtained by the formula<sup>1</sup>:—  $r = \sqrt{O}$ ,  $p = \sqrt{O+A} - \sqrt{O}$ ,  $q = \sqrt{O+B} - \sqrt{O}$ . The racial significance of blood groups has not been properly evaluated but the geographical distribution of the blood groups indicates that they may be interpreted as ethnically significant. Anthropologists are, however, anxious to find out, how far blood groups data uphold the evidences of anthropometry and craniometry. It must be noted that "the blood groups require a special technique for their study, and overlap to such an extent that racial differences can often only be detected in populations of some hundreds." (J. B. S. Haldane, *Anthropology and Human Biology*, Man, 1939, 163). This makes it necessary to survey many such characters, anthropometric, craniometric and biochemic to be able to classify races.

In 1900, Landsteiner discovered that normal individuals belonging to the same species differ with respect to their blood groups. His method was extremely simple. He mixed the serum of one normal individual with the blood cells of other normal individuals and found that in some cases instead of minor reactions which he expected the serum of some individuals induced the 'red blood corpuscles of others to clump together or agglutinate,' while in other cases the blood remained unaffected. By means of such agglutination tests Landsteiner divided the human beings into three groups, which two years later were increased to four by Sturli and Decastello. In 1910 Von Dungern and Hirsfeld (*Zeitschrift F. Immunitats*) definitely proved that the four blood groups are inherited while the 'exact mechanism of heredity was defined by Bernstein in 1925.' Von Dungern and Hirsfeld in 1911 discovered the existence of sub-divisions of the blood groups A and B, while three new individual properties in human blood were found by Landsteiner and Levine.

In addition to the A and B agglutinogens, human erythrocytes may contain a variety of 'antigenic components'. The two other agglutinogens besides, A and B are M and N. Clinicians very often do not attach much significance to these in blood transfusion while they have not either entered much into anthropological serology. Another agglutinin Rh has

<sup>1</sup>Birdsell, J. B. and Boyd, W. C. 1940. Blood Groups in the Australian Aborigines, *Am. Jr. Phys. Anth.*, 27, 1.

been found in the blood cells of man irrespective of their A, B, O group. The notation *Rh* has been derived from the fact that 'a similar agglutinin is found in the red blood cells of rhesus monkeys. It is found in the red blood cells of 85 p.c. of American and English white subjects. Khanolkar found only two cases out of a hundred Indians investigated, these two were one Parsi and one Christian. With the sera supplied by the Cambridge University Department of Genetics, I could get only 5.17 p.c. *Rh* negative in the Lucknow people (Journal of Heredity, 1949). The importance of the *Rh* discovery lies in the fact that it may be possible for *Rh* negative woman who is pregnant with a foetus whose blood cells are *Rh* to develop an antibody against the agglutinin or any *Rh* negative person may form such antibody if transfused with *Rh* positive blood. Cases of affected infants who have developed jaundice, anaemia or are still born should be investigated with respect to *Rh* factor. The genetics of the Rhesus factor and the understanding of it have increased tremendously in recent years while the racial significance of the *Rh* factor with its subtypes, and of the agglutinogens M and N is awaited with interest by physical anthropologists.

In anthropoid apes which are the nearest kin of man biologically identical blood groups occur.<sup>1</sup> There exists in man two types of serum agglutinins and two types of agglutinable substances in the red blood cells. The four blood groups depend upon the presence or absence of agglutinogens in the blood cells and two agglutinins in the serum or plasma.

If we denote agglutinins as  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  ( $\alpha$  being anti-A and  $\beta$  being anti-B) and the agglutinogens as A and B, we shall be able to explain how the four blood groups arise. Agglutinin  $\alpha$  reacts with the agglutinin A to produce agglutination or clumping. Agglutinin B similarly reacts with the agglutinin B. In the same individual A and  $\alpha$ , B and  $\beta$  cannot co-exist. In blood transfusion, blood must be so selected that A and  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  and B may not be brought together.

Agglutinable substance in cells		Agglutinin in Serum
O	(nil)	$\alpha\beta$
A	A	$\beta$
B	B	$\alpha$
AB	AB	(nil)

In gorilla and chimpanzee earlier only the A blood group had been found but in 1940, B has also been reported from gorillas.

<sup>1</sup> Munich Med. Woch. 49 : 1690, 1902.  
 Zeitschrift, F. indukt. Abstammungs. U. Vererbungs 37 :  
 273, 1925.  
 Proc. Soc. Exp. Biol. and Medicine, 24, 609, 941 (1927).

Of 76 Chimpanzees tested, 71 were A and only 5 were O<sup>1</sup> of the 4 Gorillas tested all were A. The Asiatic Orang-utan showed 4As, 5Bs, and 2ABs out of 11, and of 10 Gibbons, there were 2As, 6Bs, and 2ABs. Thus the African anthropoids show all A with a sprinkling of O, while their Asiatic colleagues show a high percentage of B. Orang (5+2)B and AB, Gibbon (6+2)B and AB. Landsteiner and Miller<sup>2</sup> who discovered that the blood serum of apes may agglutinate the 'erythrocytes of other individuals of the same species,' failed to find agglutinogens corresponding to the human agglutinogens A and B in lower monkeys.

From the data cited above, it will appear that it may not be possible to distinguish races on the basis of blood groups as every race possesses the four blood groups.

The four blood groups have been given various nomenclatures but after the Health Committee of the League of Nations have recognized the classification into O, A, B, and AB, this has become the International nomenclature for the blood groups. Further sub-divisions of A into A<sub>1</sub> and A<sub>2</sub> provides sub-groups A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>1</sub>B, A<sub>2</sub>B. These sub-divisions do not prejudice transfusion, but may be very useful in paternity tests and in crime detection.

In 1919, Hiraszfeld tested soldiers of many nationalities and the results have shown that all races have a high percentage of O. The American Indians of purest blood approach 100 per cent O blood groups<sup>3</sup>. If we take the gene frequencies they manifest a rarity of the genes p and q; the Ainu have a high value of p and q and a relatively low value of r. The gene p shows a high concentration in Europe and also in north-eastern Asia and from west to east in the Euro-Asiatic continent the frequency of q increases rather steadily from west to east but drops to the south where among the Australian aborigines q has a very low value (4.4 according to Tebutt and McConnel and nil according to Cleland).

The North American Indians of purest blood show 100 p.c. O, though Matson and Schrader (1933) have discovered a high percentage of A among two related Indian tribes, viz., Blackfeet and Bloods. This A concentration among the latter requires some explanation. Gates suggests that these tribes were a fresh centre of A mutation<sup>4</sup>. We propose to revert to this muta-

<sup>1</sup> Gates, Sonderdruck aus Zeitschrift für Rassen Kunde. Jahrgang 1939, Band IX, Heft 1.

<sup>2</sup> Journ. Exp. Med. 43, 841, 853, 863 (1925).

<sup>3</sup> Wiener: Blood Groups and Blood Transfusion.

<sup>4</sup> Gates, R.: The Blood Groups and Other Features of the Mic-Mac Indians, J. R. A. I. Vol. LXVIII, July-December, 1938.



tion hypothesis at a later stage. Gates in his article on Eskimo Blood Groups and Physiognomy (*Man* 1935: 36) has shown that in the few cases which could be tested the pure Eskimo type of face went with the O group, while the Eskimos who plainly showed white and Indian mixture (the Indian being half-bred white) had the A group. Gates was very fortunate in discovering this correlation, but our efforts to correlate typical aboriginal faces with any particular blood group has not been successful. However, for purposes of estimating the frequency distribution of the blood groups such evidence of correlation is not of any material significance.

The presence of Caucasic affinities among the American Indians raises difficulties in the matter of their racial affiliation, and some scholars have put them as a separate race (Blumenbach, 1775). The Australians are mainly O with A (Cleland, 1929, n.<sup>1</sup> 226; O, 43.88, A 56.20). The same author (1930) found 41.60 O and 58.4 A among 296 Australians. Lee found the following percentages; n.377: O 60.3, A 31.7, B 6.4, AB 1.6 while Tebutt and McConnell by investigating 1,176 cases came to the following percentage distribution of blood groups among pure Australians: O 52.6, A 36.9, B 8.5 and AB 2.0. The Maoris possess high A percentage, 39.5 p.c. according to Phillips, and the Hawaiians 60.8 p.c. according to Nigg, while Cleland got 56 to 58 p.c. A among the Australians. Tebutt and McConnell, however, discovered the percentage varying from 31 to 38 only.

From the above surveys it appears that the Australians, the Maoris and the Hawaiians possess very little or no B. The A in Australia and Oceania appears to be comparatively higher than in north-west Europe and equally that of the Americans who have the highest A in these parts. The large incidence of A in Europe has been taken by some authors as a racial trait of the white race. Yet the Nordics, however, are less rich in A than men of Alpine or Mediterranean ethnic groups. The B, however, is not widely distributed among the primitive peoples. The Bantus have 19.2 p.c. B (Pyper, 1930), American Negroes 20 (Snyder), Solomon Islanders 16.8 (Howells, 1933), Papuans 13.2 (Bijlmer, 1932), Fiji 9.4 (Howells, 1933), Samoa 13.7 (Nigg), the pre-Dravidian tribes of Madras 9.0 (Macfarlane), and Paniyans 7.6 (Aiyappan), the Angami Nagas 11.5 (Mitra), the Konyak Nagas (British India Association Research Committee on Blood Groups,) 10.2. From the data above, it appears that the B element among the aboriginal tribes may not be indigenous to them and may have been

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<sup>1</sup> n represents size of the Sample.

received by infiltration from other sources, or that 'B has begun to appear much later' as is claimed by Gates.

The northern Hindus (Hirszfelds) showed a very high percentage of B as high as 41 p.c. While among the southern Hindus, Bais and Verhoef discovered 31.6 p.c. B. Malone and Lahiri who tested 2,357 samples also found 37.2 B among the Hindus, which, however, has been used by all these writers as a generic name including as it does all people living in Hindustan. This significant B concentration has given rise to a large amount of speculation about the possible source of the B incidence. One fact which has already been pointed out by E. W. E. Macfarlane and bears repetition is the heterogeneity of the samples tested by these authors.

Bernstein advocated a theory in which he claimed an original pure race, in which neither A nor B agglutinin existed. This was the R-race. A B-race has arisen from this R-race somewhere in Asia and an A-race had its centre of characterization somewhere in Europe. If this theory could be proved, then probably it would have laid the foundation of a genetic classification of races. Ruggles Gates has reinforced this hypothesis by his mutation theory, which claims A and B as independent mutations from O. Statisticians, however, doubt the validity of the mutation hypothesis, as the present frequencies of four groups would have required at least a quarter of a million years if not more. Earlier investigations among isolated and peripheral people had shown the absence of the four blood groups, particularly among the Amerindians, but later research detected concentration of all the groups in the human race, and even anthropoid apes are found to possess all the four blood groups in varying proportions. We shall revert to this discussion later on.

A racial classification on the basis of serological data was made by Ottenberg (1925) who divided the people of the world into six 'strikingly different types viz., (1) European; (2) Intermediate, (3) Hunan, (4) Indo-Manchurians, (5) Africa-South-Asiatic and (6) Pacific-American'. Snyder found seven types on the basis of genic frequencies or p.q. factors : (1) European, (2) Intermediate, (3) Hunan, (4) Indo-Manchurian, (5) Africo-Malayasian, (6) Pacific-American and (7) Australian. In all these classifications the European has been found to belong to a distinct serological type due to the large incidence of A and little of B, while the Indo-Manchurian group is distinguished from other groups for its large B percentage. If both A and B are mutations from O, the serological evidence cannot account for racial differences. Although

a large percentage of B is found among the various castes in India, its incidence increases eastward: the Paniyans, a proto-Australoid tribe have 60% A and 20% B, while most of the primitive tribes in India show comparatively small incidence of B. The bio-chemical index worked out by Hirszfels show that the Europeans possessed a higher bio-chemical index than most other races. In the case of most of them the index was found to be above 2.5. Below is given the bio-chemical indices of the various castes and tribes in India (all authors).

## Bio-Chemical Index

Above 2		Between 2 and 1		Below 1	
Konyak Nagas	3.1	Khasis	1.0	Bengali Kayasthas	.83
Paniyans	4.1	Anglo-Indians	1.7	Mahisyas of Bengal	.59
Angami Nagas	2.8	Bengali-		Bengal-Muslims Urban	.96
Lushais	2.25	Brahmans	1.0	Do. (Rural)	.65
		Khasas of the		Bagdis of Bengal	.75
		Himalayas	1.05	U.P. Kayasthas	.71
		Korwas	1.46	„ Chamars	.54
		Bhoksas	1.86	„ Doms	.62
		Mundas	1.02	„ Tharus	.63
		Chenchus	1.73	„ Criminal Bhatus	.64
		Nairs	1.50	„ „ Karwals	.65
				„ Shias	.78
				„ Sunnis	.66
				„ Kshattriyas	.85
				„ Brahmins	.93
				„ Kurmis	.68
				Todas	.63
				Rajputs	.89
				Pathan	.94
				Maria Gonds	.82
				Marhattas	.83
				Syrian Christians	.94

The bio-chemical index calculated from Indian data does not justify any classification of the races which puts the Europeans into a distinct serological category, for some of the groups whose serological index was found to be about 2.5 and above were Paniyans, Konyak Nagas and the Angami Nagas. In other words, the Mongoloid and the Australoid or proto-Australoid tribes, fall under Hirszfels' 'European types'; the Lushais, the Chenchus, the Bhoksas, the Korwas, the Anglo-Indians, the Nairs fall between 1.0 and 1.9 and the rest of the groups have an index of 1 and below. Nothing therefore can be derived from the distribution of the bio-chemical index. The chosen limits are arbitrary. A modified race index was calculated by Wellisch on the basis of *gene* frequencies but the results did not instil

greater optimism than that provided by Hirszfelds' index. Ottenberg found the blood groups remarkably stable where there was little or no racial admixture. The high incidence of O among the peripheral or isolated people has been regarded by Snyder as an indication that 'the majority of the peoples with a proportion of O exceeding 50% are island peoples, or peoples living in regions more or less isolated, and so physically less liable to mixture'. The variation of the O percentages in India as found among the various samples investigated is given below.

O in the samples investigated  
(All authors)

Chamars	36.67	Mundas	33.33	Angami Nagas	46.06
Kayasthas	36.04	Chenchus	37.00	Lushais	32.63
Doms (Hill)	36.0	Paniyans	20.00	Konyaks	45.70
Shias	35.85	Maria Gonds	28.46	Khasis	35.17
Brahmins	34.30	Todas	29.50	Anglo-Indians	37.28
Muslims		Black Jews	73.60	Bengali-Brahmans	35.20
(general)	32.58	Nairs	38.80	" Kayasthas	32.00
Khasas	30.49	Syrian	36.40	" Mahishyas	32.50
Kshattriyas	30.84	Christian	—	" Muslims	28.33
Kurmis	34.58	Mahrattas	29.25	Muslims (Urban)	33.10
Bhoksas	30.55	Rajput	28.80	Bagdis of Bengal	29.93
Korwas	31.97	Pathan	29.30		
Bhatas	27.43	Jat	33.20		
Tharus	27.08				
Khatris	32.00				

The general conclusion that suggests itself on the basis of the above data is that the incidence of O in India is nearly equal in all provinces and about one third of the observed frequencies are of O blood. The Naga tribes like the Konyak and the Angami have the highest O among the tribal groups, the proto-Australoid tribes except the Paniyans have all more than 30% O, the higher castes in India have a comparatively higher value for O than the lower castes, and in one viz., the Black Jews of the Deccan, the O percentage was found as high as 73.60%. The lowest O also was found among the Paniyans. If O is the core out of which other groups have been evolved, as held by some serologists, then the distribution of O in a population may indicate the degree of racial purity, an assumption which, however, is extremely unsafe to make with the serological data available till now.

An attempt has been made by us in the United Provinces and Gujarat Anthropological Surveys to find out the racial significance

blood groups.<sup>1</sup> The serological evidence is not enough to indicate racial distance between social types though, when these are read along with anthropometric data, a general measure of race affiliation and distance can be found out. 21 samples were tested in the U.P. and their interrelations examined. It was found that the various social types in the Province could be arranged in a scale of racial precedence so that as we proceed down the scale, the racial status of the groups diminishes till we come to the tribal elements, whose distance from the high caste groups is definite and pronounced. We took two mixed samples and we arranged the other samples on the basis of their distance from them. On one side we found all the higher castes, on the other the various tribal groups. This was the broad picture, but when we attempted to compare the various castes among themselves we found that the differences in most cases were not statistically significant—a fact which probably showed that there was little correspondence between race and occupation, for most of the castes are normally occupational groups.

What is true of blood groups today is that there is a higher frequency of A in Europe, of B in Asia while the peripheral people and primitive peoples of the world show little or negligible incidence of B or AB groups. Malone and Lahiri, Macfarlane, and Majumdar who have done extensive serological surveys in India, find a sufficiently high concentration of B in India and the intensity is maintained in China, Mongolia, Japan and in Malayasia. Recent efforts to study blood-groups on caste and community basis in India have shown that A diminishes significantly from the high castes to low castes while the latter show a preponderance of B, which, however, is not found among tribal groups in India. Both Macfarlane and Majumdar have suggested hybridization as a significant factor in determining a concentration of B among mixed castes, while the latter has found a high B percentage among those social groups, castes and tribes in India who are exposed to unhealthy and inhospitable regions or are habitual victims of malaria.

The fluctuations of blood groups in Europe according to Woolard and Cleland prove, if anything, that the inhabitants of Europe today are thoroughly mixed. Another factor that has emerged from large-scale serological surveys in India is that in provinces where the race elements are not very different the fluctuation in percentages of the various blood groups among the social groups examined is more or less parallel. In Gujarat, where the Muslims have been recruited mostly from the high

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<sup>1</sup> Majumdar, *Race Realities in Cultural Gujarat*, Guj. Res. Soc. Publication (1950).

caste groups, they show a similar 'blood groups' frequency to the latter while the Muslims of Bengal, the majority of whom have been converts to Islam from the aboriginal and semi-aboriginal classes, show an unmistakable serological association with the latter. But blood group is only a single anthropological character and should not be made to tell more than what it can, just as mere dolichocephaly (long head) or platyrrhiny (flat nose) by itself gives us no clue to identity or dissociation of supposedly racial groups.

Malone and Lahiri who tested a large sample of over two thousand people from northern India belonging to various castes, failed to keep the data from different tribes and castes distinct with the result, as pointed out by Macfarlane, that this does not give much idea about the incidence of any particular blood group in the population. As the Indian castes are endogamous and in spite of centuries of contact, they have tried to retain their endogamy by occupational and other taboos, an arrangement on caste basis would have been of great value in estimating the frequencies of genes involved. Similar remarks could be made against the data collected by Bais and Verhoef (1928) for Tamil tea garden coolies in Sumatra. These authors, we are told (*ibid*) were natives of various parts of south India and Ceylon and belonged to several low caste and untouchable strains, all classed by them as 'Hindus Southern'. Although Hirsfeld's estimate of B percentage among the Hindus may not be accurate as appears from the recent blood groups data from India, there is no doubt that India has a high percentage of B. The Todas of the Nilgiri hills (Pandit, 1934) show 38 p.c. B, Pathans (Malone and Lahiri) 30.0, Marhattas (Correia, 1934) 34.0, Jats (Malone and Lahiri) 37.2, the Santhals, Mundas and Oraons (Malone and Lahiri) 36.8, Bengal Depressed Castes (Macfarlane) 42.7, and Bengal Mohammedan (Macfarlane) 40.0, the Chamars of the U. P. (Majumdar) 38.3, the Bhatus and Karwals, two criminal tribes of northern India (Majumdar) 39.8 and 40.6 respectively and the Doms of the U. P. and Bihar (Majumdar) 39.4 p.c. B.

B is very high in India and decreases in all directions (H. J. T. Bijlmar). To the west of India B decreases till it reaches its lowest incidence. "B dwindles into insignificance in the south-west of Arabia and Africa." The predominance of B in India and Mongolia inhabited by different racial stocks requires explanation. Japan and China have a high percentage of B. Of 29,480 subjects investigated in Japan (Stiffan, Wellisch and Miyaju, 1927) 30 p.c. show O, 22 p.c. A, 38 p.c. B and 10 p.c. AB. The aboriginal Chwan Miao of Szechwan Province, West

China, shows a high B concentration, viz., 39 p.c. (Yang, Beh, and Morse). The Chwan Miao are a very isolated, segregated, financially poor group of people almost certainly with no European contacts living in the mountains at an elevation of about 3,000 ft. They eat very little meat and few vegetables, their chief diet being maize or rice.

From the data thus reviewed, the predominance of B in India appears very significant. India must have had a great influence in the dispersion of B, if it had its centre of characterization in India. It may have spread to Africa through western India and eastward to the Malay Archipelago and farther east. The small or insignificant percentage of B among Australians, American Indians and pure Polynesians 'shows perhaps diffusion from these areas to India and not the other way.' According to Howells (1938) 'B spread from Central Asia and India through Indonesia to the Phillipines along with Hindu influence as late as the first millenium A.D. and filtrated into Europe and still later with oriental trade'. The decrease of B from Central Asia to west Europe is interesting because Hindustan where B is highest is believed to be inhabited by Aryan-speaking races or branches of the white race.

The preponderance of B in India among the depressed castes in Bengal, and the criminal tribes in the U. P. and the lower incidence of B among the population of Assam, Burma and Tibet indicate the possibility that India has been a centre of dispersion of B. As a large number of samples have been tested during the last few years, we are now in a better position than we were before with regard to the blood groups distribution data.

Macfarlane tested 44 bloods from the Bhils of both sexes in the Kannad Taluk of the Aurangabad district in the extreme north-west. She found 31.8 p.c. O, 13.6 A, 52.3 B and 2.3 AB. This result, if corroborated, should be considered significant. 'It may be', writes Macfarlane, 'that in the Bhils we have one of the reservoirs of group B in India from which it has percolated to higher social castes, for the Bhils have an ancient tradition as soldiers and artisans.' In collaboration with the Gujarat Research Society and the University of Bombay the author had done some anthropological investigations among the Bhils of Gujarat and the blood of 369 Bhils of both sexes were typed in December 1941. The data from the Bhils gave the following percentages: 37.5 p.c. O, 27.5 p.c. A, 26.0 B, 9.0 AB. A second tour of Gujarat in 1943, which was also organized by the Gujarat Research Society, concentrated on the anthropological study of the Rajpipla Bhils and the blood group

percentages obtained from 156 Bhils<sup>1</sup> of Malsamot plateau of the Satpura hills confirmed our previous data from the Panchmahals. Thus Macfarlane's estimate of B concentration could not be corroborated and we have to seek for reservoirs of group B elsewhere than among the Bhils. Recently Mrs Uma Basu has collected some blood groups of the Bhils and she finds an analogous percentage distribution to that tabled by the author.<sup>1</sup> The Bhils have been described as an aboriginal group. I think the time has come when we should revise our ethnological nomenclature, for as in blood group distribution so in other racial traits the Bhils do not show many aboriginal traits. The classification of the Bhils with Kols and Santhals, I think, has been more for symphony than for fundamental ethnic similarities.

Although the four blood groups are found distributed in varying proportion in all countries, the rarity or predominance of one or more of these groups in a country requires explanation. O is found in all races, only it is found to occur in a pure state among the American Indians. Recently it has been shown that the American Indians who have been known to be mixed indicate a high A concentration. A is predominant in western Europe and B among the Asiatic peoples. These facts have made the following theory of the origin of the blood types plausible. 'In man only the property O existed originally, A is a later mutation and originated in the west from where it spread towards all parts, particularly eastward.' There may be other centres of A mutations as, for example, Indo-China. B may have originated in Asia and may have spread through migrations. But the fact that A and B are found among the anthropoid apes as well, throws some doubt on the mutation hypothesis. But as Snyder points out, there may be parallel independent mutations in man and apes. This, we are told by Gates, 'is entirely in harmony with modern genetic conceptions.' The fact that many of the primitive and peripheral peoples possess O and A, suggests that A is a primitive trait in man and must have developed earlier than B. If the four groups all existed in man, as is suggested by some scholars, the distinction of the blood groups today may probably be explained by isolation and migration.

It has been estimated that the rate at which mutations occur in the case of a character like blood group with no selective value, is insufficient to explain their maximum frequencies

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<sup>1</sup> Proc. Indian Science Congress Assoc. Poona, 1950. Abstracts of papers, Anth. Section.



today. If A and B are mutations from O, then according to Wyman and Boyd, 'it would require 7,45,000 years for the genes A and B to attain their present frequencies.' Gates has proved with the aid of Fisher, that 'if the rate of mutation from O to A were one in 1,00,000, then without any intervention of selection there would be 10 per cent of A in the population after 2,50,000 years.' The present frequency would require so high a mutation rate that many consider it simply improbable. While some, however, still believe that 'there are periods during which particular mutations occur at a greatly increased rate.' As I have already pointed out elsewhere, the blood groups data are yet insignificant to enable us to claim the validity of any existing hypothesis. Whenever two sections of the same people have been tested by the same author, one living isolated or inbred, the other outbreeding, one living on the hill-tops, the other in the plains' district, divergent results have been obtained.<sup>1</sup>

Macfarlane made a careful study of the distribution of the B element in the Indian population. She thinks that B has been in India for millennia and may have originated there in the ancestors of the lower castes of the north-east where the highest concentrations are found, whence it has diffused into the higher castes. As the amount of O and B are found to vary inversely, she thinks that there may be genes for O in these low caste people with a relatively high mutation rate for B.

From a comparison of the blood groups data available yet, it appears that the B concentration is most marked among these social groups which have passed from the tribal to caste status or those which are known to be hybrid castes. The depressed castes in Bengal show a high B concentration, so do the criminal tribes of northern India. The Paniyans (Aiyappan), the Naga tribes, Angami and Konyak, the Bhils all exhibit lower percentage of B. But as soon as we include in our survey those tribes which are known to be mixed or those who from the nature of their occupation or otherwise allow inter-tribal marriages and extra-marital relationship with neighbouring tribes and castes, the percentage of B suddenly increases. Further data is required to substantiate the point, but all the same it appears that hybridization may have something to do with the increase of incidence of a particular blood group in the population. But we should not forget that blood group is only one character and unless we discuss blood groups with anthropometry and indefinite and integumentary characters, we shall be led to pitfalls.

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<sup>1</sup> Blood Groups of Tribes and Castes of the U. P. with special reference to the Korwas, J. R. A. S. B., Vol. IX, 1943, pp. 81-94.

If we arrange the serological values of A-B of all Indian tribes and groups available, we get the following negative values :

CASTE OR TRIBE	A-B	CASTE OR TRIBE	A-B
Hazaras	.. 14	Bengali Kayastha	.. 11.7
Jat	.. 11	Bengali Brahmins	.. 12.0
Khatris	.. 5	Bengali Mahishyas	.. 19.4
Rajputs	.. 5	All non-caste Hindus	.. 17.8
U. P. Hindus	.. 12.7	Mohamedans	.. 16.7
U. P. Kayasthas	.. 12.7	Santhals	.. 14.6
U. P. Khatris	.. 9.1	Maria	.. 8.1
U. P. Chamars	.. 20.6	Chenchus	.. 19.0

CASTE OR TRIBE	A-B	CASTE OR TRIBE	A-B
U. P. Doms	.. 16.6	Goanese	.. 6.5
U. P. Doms (Hills)	.. 13.8	Mahrattas	.. 7.3
U. P. Bhatus	.. 15.1	Nairs	.. 13.1
U. P. Karwals	.. 18.0	Paniyans	.. 52.8
U. P. Tharus	.. 20.6	Syrian Christians	.. 2.2
		Tamils	.. 5.4
		Todas	.. 18.5
		Bhils	.. 1.5
		Patelas	.. 1.5

A classification of the tribes and castes into the following groups with values, (-5 and above), (-5 and -15) and (-15 and below) gives the following arrangement with respect to their A-B values :

(-5 and above)	(-5 and -15)	(-15 and below)
Paniyans (S. India)	Tamils (S. India)	Non-caste (Hindu)
Chenchus (S. India)	Khatris (Punjab)	Mohammedans
		(Bengal)
Nairs (S. India)	Rajputs (C. India)	Mahisyas (Bengal)
Syrian Christian (S. India)	Hazaras (Punjab)	Dom (U. P.)
	Jats (Punjab)	Bhatus (U. P.)
Bhils (S. India)	Bengali Kayastha	Karwals (U. P.)
	(Bengal)	
Patelas (S. India)	Brahmin, Bengali	Todas (Nilgiri)
	(Bengal)	Tharus (U. P.)
	Goanese (Goa)	
	Marhattas (Bombay)	

Thus the highest negative values are obtained among the criminal tribes, the Tharus, the non-caste Hindus, Moham-

medans, and Mahisyas of Bengal. These castes and groups, as we know, are of mixed origin. The Tharus are a mongoloid tribe with mixed non-mongoloid traits. They claim hybrid descent from Rajputs and Nepalese. The Mohamedans of Bengal are a heterogeneous group because their ranks have swelled by conversion. The large percentage of O among the Muslims of U. P. (Majumdar, *Current Science* 1943, 12 ; 269-270) and a lower incidence of B show perhaps a higher degree of isolation or ethnic purity of the upcountry Muslims. This is corroborated by the percentage distribution of blood groups among the urban Muslims (Macfarlane) who belong to Bengal as well as to upcountry centres, more to the latter we suppose. Again the low value for B among the Muslim population outside India, also a very high incidence of A distinguish these from Indian Muslims. The Mahisyas originally of aboriginal descent have been fortunate in assimilating non-aboriginal features, while the non-caste Hindus of Bengal are certainly not a homogeneous group. The Doms we have already described are a mixed group, so are the Karwals and Bhatus. Thus either the rate of B mutation is accelerated by hybridization, or the source of B dominance requires intensive investigation.

That this is the experience of field workers will be evident from what Macfarlane observed on the basis of a large number of investigations. She noticed that in the few instances where there were data from two related communities in one locality (except in Cochin) the lower caste or that which probably contains more 'Dravidian' admixture show a high frequency for B. We should put the 'Dravidian' out of this statement as we think the term is a misnomer. If this be true, it is necessary to collect data from groups living in the same locality. Until such data are available the mutation hypothesis should wait. Like many other anthropometric tests the biochemical evidence should be handled with caution till the data speak for themselves.

In the Anthropological, Serological and Health Survey of Bengal completed in 1946 under the auspices of the Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, we have blood grouped a few thousand people belonging to the various castes, Hindu and Muslim. Although we wanted to obtain blood groups data caste-wise, we found that surnames did not give any clue to caste origin particularly among those who were claiming higher social status. Often caste names camouflaged the status of the caste and a little inadvertence in recording surnames made our task of grouping difficult. I should think, a regional grouping today would serve the same purpose as that based on caste. The

close and intimate relationship that exist between castes living in an area are likely to afford a clue to the genetic equilibrium of the population and for every such area a weighted average incidence of blood groups need to be worked out before the various percentage distribution of blood groups can be suitably compared. The various castes of the United Provinces are found to vary with respect to the incidence of A blood and the gradual tapering of A percentage from the Brahmin to the artisan castes and to the exterior section of the population has perhaps more than a passing interest. The blood groups percentages of the various tribes and castes of the United Provinces have shown that there exists a correlation between blood groups and anthropometric characters, a conclusion which is expected to canalize serological research to the determination of racial types.<sup>1</sup> The Brahmins and the other upper castes show significant serological distance from the tribal groups as also from the Muslims and artisan castes, but while the tribal groups approach the artisan castes more than they do the higher castes, the artisan castes and Muslims stand as intermediate between the higher castes and the tribes showing common origin with the former on the one hand and assimilation of tribal blood on the other. The criminal tribes have not much in common with the tribal groups and both from anthropometric evidence and from serology it can be said that the criminal tribes belong to the same stock as the high castes except that they are more mongrelized than the latter.

To sum up: On the basis of our knowledge of blood groups data in India it may be assumed that the fluctuation of the percentages indicate considerable admixture between the various racial and cultural groups and that the migration into India could not have been from one direction alone; the decrease of B from east to west and from the south to the north read along with the distribution of cephalic and nasal indices may be considered racially significant but until we get further data on blood group distribution we shall not be able to construct migration charts of races.

The small size of the samples, the difficulty of regional grouping of tribes and castes, the absence of serious efforts to eliminate family strains in the samples investigated, above all, the insufficiency of the data, prevent us from speculating on the origin of any particular blood group in any part of the country and we need to wait for further data.

Recently blood groups of Muslims have been determined

<sup>1</sup> Eastern Anthropologist, vol. 1, No. 1, 1947.

at Calcutta by Macfarlane, and Greval and Chandra. The former grouped 120 Muslims from Budge Budge (24 Parganas) and 136 urban Muslims from Calcutta, and the latter 321 mostly urban Muslims in connexion with the blood transfusion service of Calcutta. Also 400 Muslim students at Lucknow have been grouped by us. The denomination Shia and Sunni were either given by the students or assigned by our Muslim colleagues. Doubtful cases were excluded. When two brothers were found to belong to the same group one of them was excluded from calculation.

The accompanying three tables give the blood groups of the Muslim students of the Lucknow University, representing the U. P. Muslims, and those of their co-religionists in other localities further east and west geographically. The last Table (No. VI) gives the A B O percentages of U. P. castes and tribes. In an earlier publication, viz., *Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1947, we put the percentage values based on a larger number; we had eliminated certain amount of sampled blood for uniformity in the method of randomisation adopted in the Racial and Serological Survey, U. P. (1941) but through inadvertence, the percentage of A B O bloods was not corrected. This however does not do any violence to the statistical part of the work, though we are recalculating the values and we shall publish the same in a subsequent number of the E. A.

In the data published along of Indian blood groups, care had been taken to scrutinize the Indian samples, and only those which appeared to us completely reliable have been reproduced. We do not however claim that we have exhausted the available data and all reliable ones.

TABLE I

*Blood Groups of Muslims and their Gene Frequencies*

	O+A	p	q	r	Author
(1) Turks ..	74.80	.256	.135	.667	Hirzfeld
(2) Arabs ..	72.00	.238	.151	.616	Altounyan
(3) Syrian Muslims	84.90	.252	.081	.669	Boyd and Boyd
(4) Tunis Muslims	78.88	.211	.112	.681	Caillou and Disdier
(5) Pathans ..	60.60	.209	.222	.541	Malone and Lahiri
(6) Hazaras ..	57.00	.157	.254	.566	do.
(7) U.P. Muslims	57.06	.177	.245	.584	Majumdar
(8) "Shias" ..	61.32	.165	.218	.598	do.
(9) "Sunnis" ..	55.09	.159	.259	.575	do.
(10) Budge Budge Mohamedans ..	51.60	.174	.282	.582	Macfarlane
(11) Urban Moha- medans ..	62.50	.200	.209	.572	do.
(12) Calcutta Moha- medans ..	54.10	.188	.264	.543	Greval and Chandra

TABLE II

*Blood Groups of Muslims of the U. P.*

		O	A	B	AB
Muslims (326)	..	34.05	23.01	33.74	9.20
Shia Muslims (106)	..	35.85	25.47	33.96	4.72
Sunni Muslims (220)	..	32.73	21.36	36.82	9.09

TABLE III

*Blood Groups (contd.)*

		B+AB	O	A	B	AB	Author
(1) Turks (500)	..	25.20	36.80	38.00	18.60	6.60	Hirzfeld
(2) Syrian Arabs (1,149)		28.00	38.00	34.00	20.00	8.00	Altunyan
(3) Syrian Muslims (199)	..	15.10	44.70	40.20	11.60	3.50	Boyd and Boyd
(4) Tunis Mohame-							Cailou and
dans (500)	..	21.20	46.40	32.40	15.80	5.40	Disdier
(5) Pathans (150)	..	39.40	29.30	31.30	33.30	6.10	Malone and Lahiri
(6) Hazaras (100)	..	43.00	32.00	25.00	39.00	4.00	do.
(7) U.P. Muslims (326)		42.94	34.05	23.01	33.74	9.20	Majumdar
(8) "Shias" (106)	..	38.68	35.85	25.47	33.96	4.72	do.
(9) "Sunnis" (220)	..	45.91	32.73	21.36	36.82	9.09	do.
(10) Budge Budge							
Mohamedans (120)		48.30	28.30	23.30	40.00	8.30	Macfarlane
(11) Urban Mohame-							
dans (136)	..	37.50	33.10	29.40	30.90	6.60	do.
(12) Calcutta Moha-							
medans (321)	..	45.70	29.50	24.60	36.40	9.30	Greval and Chandra

TABLE IV

*B in Primitive Groups*

The Bantus	..	..	19.2% (Pyper, 1930)
American Negroes	..	..	20.0% (Snyder)
Solomon Islanders	..	..	16.8% (Howells, 1933)
Papuans	..	..	13.2% (Bijlmar, 1933)
Fiji	..	..	9.4% (Howells, 1933)
Samoa	..	..	13.7% (Nigg)
The Pre-Dravidian tribes of Madras	..	..	9.0% (Macfarlane)
Paniyans of Madras	..	..	7.6% (Aiyapan)
Angami Nagas	..	..	11.5% (Mittra)
Konyak Nagas	..	..	10.2% (Br. Ass. Res. Com. on
			Blood Groups)
Khonds (M. P.)	..	..	10.8% (Majumdar)
Australian Aborigines	..	..	8.5% (Tebbutt & MacConnell)
Australian Aborigines	..	..	6.4% (Lee)
Korwa (U. P.)	..	..	20.4% (Majumdar)

TABLE V

*B in India*

Hindus	..	..	..	41.2%	(Hirszfelds)
Southern Hindus	..	..	..	31.6%	(Bais and Verhoef)
U. P. Hindus	..	..	..	37.2%	(Malone and Lahiri)
Pathans	..	..	..	30.0%	(Malone and Lahiri)
Marhattas	..	..	..	34.0%	(Correia)
Jats	..	..	..	37.2%	(Malone and Lahiri)
The Santhals, Mundas and Oraons	..	..	..	36.8%	(Malone and Lahiri)
Bengal Depressed Castes	..	..	..	42.7%	(Macfarlane)
Bengal Mohammedans	..	..	..	40.0%	(Macfarlane)
The Chamars (U. P.)	..	..	..	39.3%	(Majumdar)
Bhatu (U. P.)	..	..	..	39.8%	(Majumdar)
Karwals (U. P.)	..	..	..	40.6%	(Majumdar)
Doms (U. P.)	..	..	..	39.7%	(Majumdar)
Tharus	..	..	..	37.5%	(Majumdar)
Tharus (Females)	..	..	..	42.7%	(Majumdar)
The Todas	..	..	..	38.0%	(Pandit)
Muslims of (U. P.)	..	..	..	33.7%	(Majumdar)

TABLE VI

	(n)	O	A	B	AB
1. U.P. Kayastha	(111)	36.04	19.82	32.43	11.71
2. " Khattri	(125)	32.00	24.00	33.60	10.40
3. " Chamar	(150)	36.67	18.67	39.33	5.33
4. " Dom	(179)	32.96	22.90	39.67	4.47
5. " Dom (Hill)	(125)	36.00	20.00	33.60	10.40
6. " Tharu	(240)	27.08	17.08	37.50	18.33
7. " Bhatu	(113)	27.43	24.78	39.82	7.96
8. " Karwal	(155)	25.81	22.58	40.64	10.97
9. " Korwa	(147)	31.97	35.37	20.41	12.25
10. " Muslim	(326)	34.05	23.01	33.74	9.20
11. " Shia	(106)	35.85	25.47	33.96	4.72
12. " Sunni	(220)	32.73	21.36	36.82	9.09
13. " I.T. College Students (Girls)	(202)	34.65	21.78	38.61	4.95
14. " Khasa	(246)	30.49	30.08	28.05	11.38
15. " Khasa (Artisan)	(108)	25.00	24.07	40.74	10.19
16. " Kshattriya	(415)	30.84	26.75	32.77	9.64
17. " Brahmin (Basti)	(203)	31.53	29.06	31.53	7.88
18. " Brahmin (Lucknow Students)	(816)	27.96	29.57	35.48	6.99
19. " Kurmi (Children)	(107)	34.58	19.63	34.58	11.21
20. " Lucknow University Students	(582)	32.65	22.34	36.77	8.25
21. " Bhoksa	(144)	30.55	19.44	36.11	13.89

\* Percentage distribution of ABO blood in the Castes and Tribes of the U.P. (U.P. Anthropometric and Serological Survey, Census Operations, 1941).

## CHAPTER V

### HABITAT, ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Primitive man is subject to the powers of nature, to its wealth, to the flora and fauna, to the hills and valleys, rivers and forests. He develops a code of social life based on his interpretation of his environing conditions. His tools are those which he can shape well from the materials available, and his interest in his environment is that of 'survival in health and vigour' and not the gain or profit which efforts and application may bring today. He uses tools because he wants to satisfy his needs, and tools help him towards that end, but never does his tools make him work as in the modern economic system, 'for it makes a slave of its designer.' Income is priced not for aggrandizement, nor for the sake of profit, but for effecting an equitable adjustment between resources and social group needs. The surplus produce is spent in feasts and festivities, and a leader is one who can entertain the most. If there is any impetus required, vanity furnishes the key to such social custom or etiquette. Leaders are not those who possess property or wealth; they are often without them. They are expected to lead their people out of harm's way, to warn them of impending trouble or calamity, to direct them to new means of control of food supply, to organize methods of exploiting the resources of the habitat.

The interests of the family are often subordinated to that of the kinship group as the latter is responsible for protection and also for providing individuals and families against starvation. A sort of social equality is practised, which makes primitive culture appear atomistic sometimes. All these elements, distinguish the primitive cultures from their modern counterparts, no doubt, but do not represent fundamental differences as they exist between man and animal. Progress has not been unilinear, evolution as pointed out by Thurnwald, is an accumulative process, operating in societies of different levels and aggregations, each one having its own life. There is justification for capitalism, there is also justification for inefficiency or improvidence. Primitive system of exchange and barter fulfil the same purpose as does the highly developed exchange system in international trade. Deny a primitive group of its natural subsistence, deny the forests to hunters and lumbermen, the system of exchange and distribution they have built up by experience will be immediately snapped and a new order must shape itself or has to be forced on them.

The Santhal and Munda who were gleaners and hunters



not long ago, have entered the maze of industrial economy. They live in urban surroundings, eat available food from the markets, spend money on jewellery and trinkets which they never did before, and what is more, join in demonstrations, shout slogans, strike work and have produced leaders from among themselves. While their clansmen at home will flee from strangers if alone and are likely to be caught, climb up trees to escape contacts, eat worms, insects, toads and even reptiles, wear little or no clothing, offer sacrifices of hens, pigeons and goats to sylvan spirits and ancestral shades and observe innumerable taboos and social customs, their advanced compatriots will look upon such conduct as reprehensible and will even disown their whilom clansmen. The communal system of economics, of land tenure, of collective farming which so long has protected him from ruin and starvation, becomes irrelevant and irksome. Interest in money economy produces a sort of irresponsibility which releases him from the clan yoke, makes him independent, detribalized, remote, but the opportunities available for a higher standard of life makes him work for money and he soon adjusts himself to his new economic environment.

Primitive society has tried to work out some kind of adjustment between material needs and the potentialities of the environment. Four factors enter into this kind of adjustment: the size of the social group (1), the material needs of the group (2), the resources available (3), and the degree of skill with which the resources are tapped and exploited (4). What the material needs of a group should be, is not primarily a function of the resources available, nor is it always determined by the size of the social groups. What these material needs are and how they should be satisfied, and for whose benefit the adjustment should be made, differ from society to society.

Among gleaners and hunters, the quest of food leads them from forest to forest and the search for roots and berries make them wanderers with no permanent or stable organization for production. The needs of food quest may make association of a few families conducive to economic life and group solidarity and mutuality of obligations maintain the social order. The desire for food production does not ordinarily extend beyond meeting the primary needs of the group, family or collection of families, and thus competition is not much evident in primitive society. Yet clash of interests between groups and friction among individuals do take place, and even hunting groups are known to partition the hunting area among families, or distribute the plants among the various families

constituting the social group, which lead to extinction or to transition or to other types of economy. The *Mohua* is a free crop in many tribal areas in India and the tribal people make a kind of beverage and also use the flowers for preparing cakes. The trees in a settlement are usually divided among the families in the neighbourhood which eliminates chance of friction between families or groups of families. The social organization of hunting groups has been built up by the needs of economic life, by the cooperation of individuals in food quest, and as such cooperation is sporadic and intermittent, we find the settlements scattered and the economic organization less integrated.

The hill Kharias who are confined to the inhospitable hill fastnesses of Mayurbhanj, Dhalbhum (Singhbhum) and Barabhum (Manbhum) have not been much disturbed by contacts with outsiders. The country they inhabit, does not afford much scope for an easy life and they are constantly faced with the problems of food supply. In their efforts to eke out their meagre subsistence they have developed some skill and ingenuity and their invention of tools and implements and techniques of production, have secured to them some control over food supply.

The iron ores in their hills provide them with material for their tools and implements, those that are required for hunting, fishing, lumbering, for manufacture of utensils, furniture, combs, limeboxes etc. The vegetable products, gourds, barks of the trees and leaves, provide them with the necessary containers for storing grain and water, and protection against rain and heat, ropes and strings required for making their improvised leafy shelters, and for making beds and ladder which they use to climb hills for collecting honey. Bamboos which supply posts for the house, are also sliced to make mats, baskets and fences.

The hill Kharias have not yet taken to agriculture seriously enough, and those of them who practise the primitive *jhum*, do not derive all their sustenance from such crude efforts. Honey, fruits and edible tubers still supplement their meagre produce from the fields. The men go out into the forests for days, even weeks, during which the women manage the household and look after the children. Rice is their staple food, but every day the Kharias cannot afford boiled rice and many families consider themselves extremely fortunate if they can have rice once a day. Often they have to take boiled vegetables, edible leaves and tubers for days together while rice is a luxury they can ill afford. Those of the hill Kharias who live near prosperous

villages situated at the foot of hills, may secure work as day labourers, but they usually receive their wages in kind. Rice or *bhuya* (fried rice) is given as wages and the hill Kharias even today prefer such remuneration to money payment.

The hill Kharias catch birds or trap them. They may eat them or sell or barter them for food, rice or vegetable. They have learnt to value things which they can sell to others and thus the hill Kharias are often seen to deal in mangoes, silk cocoons and certain odorous resins for which local demands exist. The *jhum* fields do not allow double cropping. Usually the Kharias raise a kind of pulse in the *jhum* land which they call Ramakali or (Urid Kalai). During the rains they are free from work in their *jhum* fields and many go to the forests for collecting honey, fruits and roots and for months the Kharia settlements present an amazonian appearance.

The size of the Kharia settlements differs according to their cultural stage. The hill Kharias live in groups of five to ten families, in huts scattered over the hillside at distances of a hundred yards or more, but the more advanced Dhelki Kharias live in regular villages with sacred groves, dancing arenas and the village burial ground where the bones of the deceased relatives are ceremonially interred at intervals. The Christian Kharia villages are neat, and more compact, with the houses more substantially built. The hill Kharias and also the Dhelkis build dormitories, where the bachelors and the maidens live separate, but the Christian villages have abandoned the practice.

Usually one rectangular house serves all the purposes of the Kharia family, as it is partitioned into sleeping and cooking apartments. The materials for house construction are available locally. The village dormitory where it exists, is a 'pretentious habitation for tribal manhood' and all the skill of the tribe, particularly of the young men is spent in making it suitable for common residence. The substantial families imitate the style of dormitories in building their houses. The kitchen may be part of the house or as it is found among the Dhelki Kharias, it may be a separate hut facing the main house. The domestic architecture of the Kharias is in line with that obtained among the other sections of the tribal population in Chota Nagpur, extremely simple and unpretentious.

The hill Kharias even now make fire by the stick-and-groove method and match-boxes are a luxury even to the substantial cultivator. A small flat piece of wood in which a hole has been drilled is held firmly under the feet and a stick is inserted into the hole to allow a rotatory movement, the friction producing fire which ignites the leaves placed below the piece of

wood. In many villages they have indigenous forges for making iron blades for their implements, the mechanism of which is similar to the ones in use among the Lohars and Agharias of Chota Nagpur.

Hunters and gleaners as the Kharias are even today, their food supply is met mostly from the forests but the preparation of their food differs from those of other tribes in the neighbourhood. Raw meat is not eaten by the Kharias and beef is unpopular with all sections of the tribe. Salt is very popular with them and they take plenty of it with their food ; meat is salted and dried, vegetables are boiled with salt, and the advanced section of the Kharias have learnt to prepare curry with vegetables, onion, powdered turmeric, pulses and meat, salted to taste. This preference for salt may lead to some physiological change and such aspects of nutrition in primitive society require careful investigation.

The Kharias have experimented with all kinds of leaves and tubers as food and have developed a taste for a large number of leaves and flowers. These they boil in water or put in steaming hot starchy water drained off boiled rice. The nutritive value of such food is not known but it appears that the partiality of the Kharias for vegetable food, particularly, for leaves and tubers, has its source in the scarcity and shyness of animals in their forests and the irregularity of supply of animal food. The use of cakes from flowers which are fried in earthen pots and ground into flour is popular with the substantial section of the Kharias ; *Mohua*, *Sarguja*, *Til* are the ones commonly used for the purpose. Fruits and roots also serve as medicines and recipes for their common ailments. Black berry juice is fermented and preserved for months which tastes like vinegar ; tamarind provides sauce for rice. Like most other Munda tribes, the Kharias cut meat into small pieces and wrapped in leaves, they roast them in the fire and eat them as a delicacy. The advanced section of the Kharias, the Dudh and Dhelki Kharias now prefer boiled meat, salted and spiced, though turmeric powder and pepper are the only spices used by them.

The Kharias like the other Munda tribes brew a kind of rice-beer. In some parts, distilled liquor has become popular because of its intoxication and the abandon which result from it. *Mohua* is distilled by the excise contractors and the *arakh* thus prepared is replacing their home-brewed ale. The rice-beer must be prepared with all the customary rites, and the first drops must be offered to ancestor spirits, before others are allowed to taste it. The fermenting properties of roots and leaves have been discovered by the Kharias through long periods

of 'trial and error', and those who know them have kept the knowledge a secret and not every house can prepare this life-giving drink.

### THE KUKIS

A case of human adjustment to the habitat, or how far environment shapes cultural progress is afforded by the Kukis, a Mongoloid tribe living in the Lushai hills in Assam. The Kukis are known by various clan names. Those of north Cachar hills are called Biete Kukis and Khelma Kukis. To the north of the Lushai range in the forest-clad hills dwell the Darlungs. The Lushai are the most important of the Kuki clans. The Lushai chiefs rule over the country between the Karnafuli river and its main tributary, the Tuilampai on the west, and the Tyao and Koladyne rivers on the east, while their southern boundary is 'roughly a line drawn east and west through the junction of the Mat and Koladyne rivers' and their most northerly villages are found on the borders of the Silchar district. The Lushai and others with distinct Lushai affinities are found scattered over wide areas, they are found in the southern borders of Sylhet, in Tipperah and in the north of Cachar hills, and the Chittagong hill tracts also contain some Lushai villages.

The non-Lushai clans can be grouped under five sections, according to the classification given by Col. Shakespeare. They are (a) the Thadan Kukis, (b) the old Kuki clans, (c) some Kuki clans who have come under the influence of Lushais and who live among the latter but are under the rule of Thangur chief, (d) some Kuki clans who live with the Lushais or in the immediate neighbourhood but who have not yet lost their separate identity like those described under (c), and (e) the Lakheres or immigrants from the Chin hills from where the Lushais claim their origin. This classification does not, however, establish the Kuki clans as distinct ethnic types, for in practice it is difficult to distinguish one Kuki clan from another and the various clans represent the same cultural pattern. N. E. Parry who wrote about the Lushais in the Census Report of 1931, Vol. I, Pt. III, has referred to the 'levelling influence' of the Lushais and has shown how they have succeeded in absorbing most of the Kuki clans and how even remote Kuki clans have not escaped their cultural influence.

The Kuki clans such as Fanais, the Paihtes, and the Thadan have all come under Lushai influence and before many years

have passed they will be practically indistinguishable from the Lushais. Most, if not all the Kukis have adopted the manners and customs of the Lushais who have conquered the other clans in recent times and though traces of the original dialects spoken by these clans survive, the process of absorption with the Lushais has become more or less complete.

The Kuki villages consist of tiny settlements in the jungles, of four to five huts, built of bamboo and cane. The Kukis are 'by temperament nomadic'. The peculiar vagabond strain if not controlled 'leads to villages splitting into hamlets and the latter sub-dividing till, as in the Manipur hills, we find single houses in the midst of dense jungle several miles from the next habitation.' This vagabond strain also manifests itself in the custom by which 'each son of a chief as he attains marriageable age is provided with a wife at his father's expense and given a certain number of households from his father's village and sent forth to a village of his own.' Henceforth he rules as an independent chief and his success or failure depends on his own talents for ruling. He pays no tribute to his father but is expected to help him in his quarrels with neighbouring chiefs, but when fathers lived long it was not unusual to find their sons disowning even this amount of subordination. The youngest son remains not only in the village but also inherits all the property. 'Economic conditions engender social habits' and today on account of the difficulty of establishing new villages, the tribal code with respect to inheritance has undergone modification and primogeniture has replaced the inheritance of the father's property by the youngest son.

The Kuki clans like many other primitive groups in India and elsewhere are self-sufficient in all the details of their economic requirements. The dress of the Lushai and other Kuki clans is quite simple. The men put on a cloth 7 feet long and 3 feet wide and many wear a white coat with the 'sleeves ornamented by cloth lines skilfully woven with white thread sometimes dyed red.' The chief's dress is similar to that worn by the common people except that he may put on a *Pagri* (head-dress) 'to which he fixes the tail feather of the king crow.' The women are not very fond of dress either, they put on a small piece of cloth just enough to cover the waist downwards with a second overlap. In the interior parts the Kuki girls may not put on any substantial dress round the waist, though they cover the private parts by hanging a piece of rag from a string round the waist, but they must cover their breasts. Often Kuki girls may be seen walking with a cloth wrapped round the body. Lushais and other Kuki clans are not fond of tattooing and even when they

do tattoo, the designs are extremely simple. The tattoo marks often are meant as 'mementoes of love affairs' during 'care-free bachelor days'. Men and women put on the same kind of ornaments except those of the ear which are peculiar to women, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish men from women on account of the absence of hair on the face and on account of the self-same method of tying hair in a knot on the scalp. Smoking is very popular and both men and women smoke a lot. Men and women have different kinds of pipes which they make themselves out of a particular species of bamboo found in the Chin hills. The Lushai and Kukis have learnt the use of firearms but a century ago, their only weapons consisted of bow and arrows, 'a kind of spear, the blade of which is made longer and diamond-shaped, and a *dao* made in the pattern of its Burmese counterpart.' The warriors use a kind of shield made of bison hide adorned at the two upper corners with tassels of goat's hair dyed red. Besides the spears and the *dao*, bamboo spikes are also used. The arrows are furnished with barbed iron points and are carried in a bamboo quiver with a leather cap to it.

When we come to describe the economic life of the Lushai Kukis we find that there is a wonderful adaptation of craft and economy to the habitat. Culture and habitat are found to be interdependent and the more primitive the social groups the greater interdependence between the two. The tools, utensils, houses and indeed a great part of the material equipment in the lower cultures will show a direct relation to the available resources. When, for example, we examine the economic life of the Kukis we cannot ignore the dominance of the bamboo on the material life of the people.

The Darlungs, a section of the Lushai have settled on the banks of a small streamlet which has its source in the Thlong river. The streamlet practically dries up in the winter months while in the rainy season it becomes impossible to ford it. The rainy season in these parts extends over eight months in the year and the Darlungs usually live isolated for the greater part of this period and articles which are indispensable for their daily needs have to be procured by them during the four or five months of the open season when they can freely move out of their settlement. Of course on urgent occasions, they can and do go out even during the rains, but never without risks, for the route lies through dense bamboo thickets where insects, worms and leeches multiply in the rainy season and even the Kukis are afraid of the poisonous bite which they fear may produce malignant fever. When they pass through the forest under the canopied bamboo trees,

the leeches drop down like drops of water falling from the leaves after a heavy shower, and no sooner these come in contact with the skin, than there is seen a swelling of the part accompanied with terrible pain resulting in malignant fever. This if it does not prove fatal, makes him an invalid for a long time.

The forests inhabited by the Kukis are thickly clothed with bamboo, there is hardly any other species of trees to be seen and on all sides the small hillocks are covered with dense bamboo thickets which are difficult to negotiate even in broad day light. Unless a man knows the part thoroughly well, it is not easy for him to trace the tracks left by the Kukis which are sometimes through streamlets leaving no impression of the foot track. Assam is notorious for its herds of wild elephants, whose depredations are frequent in these parts. A large number of these wild elephants are annually captured and trained and even substantial cultivators possess elephants which are employed to draw timber from the interior of the forest. Tigers and leopards are not frequently met, but deer, bison and wild buffaloes are abundant. Wild bears and boars are also hunted by the Kukis. The domesticated animals are the dog and the pig, the former is meant for watch, the latter supply them with meat. The flesh of the dog is eaten in times of scarcity. Whenever they have to propitiate some spirit or deity, they sacrifice pigs or fowls, and rarely buffaloes which are also domesticated by them. The Kukis share their huts with these animals. Goats, ducks and fowls are reared by them for food as well as for periodical sacrifices to the host of divinities and nature powers whose intervention they have to seek in cases of disease, epidemics and agricultural calamities.

In the jungle, the nomad Kuki builds lightly and a habitation of sorts can be erected in a few hours with bamboo mats as walls and with leaves for the thatch to keep out the rain. Where the Kukis live a settled life, they construct large solidly built houses, 50 to 60 ft. long, 15 to 20 ft. wide and 7 to 10 ft. high. The houses are built on long bamboo poles, the lower halves of which when covered up provide accommodation for cattle and pigs. Each house has a few bamboo cages, kept on either side of the entrance, in which fowl and pigeons are kept. The Kuki women rise early, fill their baskets with empty bamboo tubes in which they store water for drinking, trudge off before daylight to the spring which lies some way down the hill. The tubes are filled with water whose supply is usually scanty so that they take some time in returning with the basket-load of tubes.

The Kukis provide most of their technological requirements from the bamboo forests. The baskets are made of bamboo,



the mats are made from bamboo, the tobacco pipe, nets for fishing, traps for animals, weaving apparatus, and even the oven is made in bamboo containers. The leaves of bamboo are used as roofs of houses, as protection against the rain and sun and in earlier days they used to hang them round the loins. The green bamboo shoots serve as delicacies which they boil with rice. Their houses are made of bamboo and even the musical instruments are of bamboo. In one word bamboo is the pivot of Kuki material culture.

The Darluns like other Kuki clans practise *jhum*. They clear a tract by fire, cultivate it for a year or two and then abandon it for another tract where they pursue a like process. When they clear the jungle for *jhum* they leave one tree in the middle of the field as a refuge for the tree-spirit. The scorched, twisted solitary stump gives the impression that some spirit has chosen it for an abode and when the harvesting season arrives they take care to offer sacrifice and prayers to the spirit believed to be residing on the stump, as otherwise their efforts may not be rewarded with a bumper harvest. Where the Kukis live on the hills they have not taken to terraced cultivation for which they say they must know the appropriate rituals and sacrifices. The Kukis therefore have not learnt to cultivate wet rice and the only method of cultivation known to them is *jhum*. In some parts of the Kuki country, Santhal coolies have been imported to teach wet cultivation to the Kukis, and gradually it is expected that they would get over their prejudice against the introduction of this new method of cultivation.

When the fields are ready after *jhum* and the seeds are sown, as the monsoon rains begin to pour, the Kukis get themselves completely drenched in the belief that such soaking is good to the crops. Despite all the precautions taken by the Kukis, with all their dances and sacrifices, the economic outlook of the Kukis is not very hopeful. They have little or no ambition in life. They have no thoughts for the 'morrow'. When the harvesting season comes, the fields are full of ripe sheaves of paddy, but they do not know what to do with the yield of their fields. They carry home only as much as they require for food during the interval between two harvests. The remainder of the crop is left for the domesticated cattle. But before a couple of months expire the major portion of the grains are spent in brewing liquor of which they are incredibly fond or they exchange it for country liquor.

Both the Kharias and the Darlung Kukis are more or less isolated from civilization. Both are greatly influenced by their respective habitat and show wonderful adjustment to the forces of their

environment. The *Sal* forests provide the Kharias with most of their requirements, while the bamboo has done much to feed, clothe and shelter the Kukis. The economic life of the Kharias moves round the *Sal*, the Kukis have made the bamboo the pivot of their economic life. The blossom of the *Sal* trees is therefore of religious significance to the Kharias and the bamboo forests are considered sacred by the Kukis whose gods are supposed to dwell there.

#### THE GONDS OF BASTAR, M. P.

Bastar is an important State of the Eastern Agency.<sup>1</sup> There is a large aboriginal population, all of Gond extraction. The Marias, the Murias, the Parjas, the Bhatras, the Gadabas, are some of the tribal groups there. Most of the tribal villages in Bastar are self-sufficient. There is usually a family of blacksmith in the village or several villages may have one such who supplies the small needs of the people. The artisan elements in the population of these villages do not seem to have a separate origin. They are probably recruited from the tribal substratum. For example, some Muria who was skilled in iron smelting and was adept in making iron implements may have been allowed to ply the trade of iron-smith and his descendants have taken to this occupation and form today the functional group known as iron-smiths. The iron-smiths in the Maria country not only possess similar physical features but speak Maria, possess the same clan names as the Marias and even intermarry with the latter. Similarly, among many other tribes of the locality the artisan elements owe their origin to the tribal stock and still have kept their ranks open. Among the Saoras who are widely scattered in the Ganjam Agency Tracts and the Vizagapatam district of the Madras Presidency, there are a few occupational groups such as the Arisis who weave cloth for the tribe, the Kundals who make baskets and the Lohars, who are iron-smiths. All these are Saoras by origin and still marry in the tribe, though from the cultural point of view, they resemble the artisan elements in other parts of the country. Some of these groups have, however, become independent and although there is no theoretical bar to marriage outside, they usually confine it to their group. This, however, suggests a plausible solution of the origin of caste. The caste system in its present form may be a post-Aryan development, but the essential characteristics which favoured its growth and persistence were most probably of tribal origin. The Kurukhs, Kewats or Dhimar who live by fishing in Bastar afford examples on this point.

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<sup>1</sup> Now included in Madhya Pradesh.

The Kurukhs of Chitrakot are physically akin to the Marias. Even trained eyes will not be able to detect any difference in their make-up. Even now Kurukhs marry non-Kurukhs; the wild Maria girls may take the Kurukhs as their husbands. All tribes and groups in Bastar take to fishing as a diversion but its adoption as permanent occupation by the Kurukhs and their use of rod and line in fishing and their divorce from the land have widened the social distance of the latter from the Marias from whom they are evidently recruited. Yet these Kurukhs are indispensable to the social economy of the Maria country as they barter their catch in rivers and tanks for grain at customary rates.

The same may be said about the Rawats of Bastar. They are found scattered all over the country and their occupation is tending the cattle of the people. They are usually paid in kind by the people but they also sell milk and its produce to travellers and administrative officers who may need them. The Rawats appear to be recruited from the tribal population, for there is hardly any difference between them and the population they serve. In the interior of the Maria country and elsewhere, where the population is purely aboriginal, the need of domestic servants for travellers and administrative officers of the State must have been felt and a particular family was selected and granted the sacred thread by the State so that it could be of use to the visiting public. A clean caste was created among the unclean aborigines and today they attend all villages where there is a *Paikguree* or if previous information is sent to them.

The material culture of the people of Bastar is very simple indeed, and in spite of cultural miscegenation we have mentioned above, the wants of the people are not varied. The usual tools and implements made by the local smiths are the plough-share, axe-blades, arrow-blades, etc., while the plough and wooden hafts for the axe as well as bows and arrows are made by the people themselves. The ornaments which decorate women are not all locally made. Some of the bead-necklaces are imported stuff and even the armlets and rings are brought by itinerant vendors or are bought from the local weekly markets. Beads and cowrie shells are also locally woven into garlands and often these are coloured from indigenous dyes by the women. Aluminium ornaments are of recent origin and are not made by the local artisans. Various kinds of ear-rings are used, many of which are Japanese or of German make, but the indigenous method of dilating the lobes of the ear has not fallen into disuse.

In the interior, various forms of tattooing are still found

and though it is difficult to trace any relation between the types of tattooing and totemism and other social practices, the belief in their efficacy is not questioned by the Maria and Muria. The Halba and Dhakar do not usually tattoo but all other tribal groups take to some form of tattooing. The hair is tastefully decorated and white bamboo combs are used by women to make the coiffure look extremely pretty and attractive. Half a dozen or more combs usually of indigenous make are put in rows on the coiffure and are very much prized by the girls, as they are usually presents from young men of the *Gotul* (dormitory) who are their admirers. These combs have a special fascination for a girl till she chooses to settle down as wife, when she has to content herself with the one which was presented to her by her lover and husband. As soon as the girls leave the *Gotul* permanently and this happens on marriage there is a waning of interest in the matter of dress and decoration and youth gradually drops its charm and attractiveness and surrenders to the exacting role of maternity and motherhood.

There is no industry worth the name in the State, the principal occupation of the people being agriculture and lumbering. The wild tribes are still accustomed to their nomadic life in the forests and supplement their gleanings there by crude cultivation. The usual method of cultivation is the *dippa* (*jhum* of the Kuki) which is the common form of agriculture practised all over the world wherever virgin forests exist. A piece of land is selected for the purpose, the trees are felled and the clearings are then set fire to. When the field is thus ready, they dig holes and sow all kinds of seeds together or use very small or miniature ploughs for scratching the field and sow seeds broadcast. Sacrifices are then offered to the mother goddess and other godlings of the forest and also to the spirits of their ancestors, dances are held in their honour and when all these rites are done and none is omitted, they expect a bumper crop sometimes two-fold, sometimes none at all. Before the seeds are dug in or sown in the usual way, some are ceremonially dedicated to the mother goddess who is also the goddess of corn, and the blood of the sacrificed animals is poured on the packet of seeds enough to soak it and to fecundate it as it were.

On the forest-clad slopes of the hills whose declivity is not too steep for agriculture *Penda* or a kind of terrace farming is practised. The method of cultivation is similar in both the cases, the fields in either case have to be left fallow for two to three years after every year of cultivation so that fresh growth of vegetation may be possible. Where water is available, arrangements are made to irrigate the field by channelling

water from higher levels, or more commonly the moisture of the soil is maintained by placing logs of wood which prevent water running to waste. Even then sacrifices are to be offered, dances have to be performed and the necessary vigil has to be kept during certain critical stages in the growth of the plants particularly when the crops ripen and the harvesting is on.

In areas where permanent clearings have been made, agricultural practices conform to the usual type met with, in other parts of the country, though adequate arrangements for irrigation and manuring do not exist. Where knowledge of agricultural practices has been diffused and greater security of crops has resulted, the same incentive to sacrifices or magical practices does not exist and the elaborate rites and practices of the wild tribes have been replaced by thanks-giving services such as is provided on the occasion of the ceremonial partaking of the new crop. But security of food supply has brought in more leisure and a multiplication of wants born of a new philosophy of life, so that wants that were unknown among the wilder groups have become real with consequent efforts to satisfy them. But insatiate wants like unfulfilled wishes have produced a social discontent. Competition though not so acute as yet, has replaced custom in some form and hunger of a few families for more land has ousted others from the moorings of their fields. On the other hand social and ceremonial needs have driven many to the arms of higher castes who have manoeuvred to retain the services of these landless families to meet the increasing needs of farm labour.

When an aboriginal labourer faces a need for cash either to meet the expenses of ceremonial marriage or to meet the obligations of the bride to her maternal uncle whose son should have been legitimate claimant to the former's hand and who therefore should be compensated or when he is in need of money to pay some fine to the State or the village Panchayat and cannot raise it by selling the holding which is inalienable or by disposing of his personal belongings which are few, he takes a loan from his master under whom he might be working and agrees to repay it in the form of agricultural service.

In days when the aboriginals lived in compact areas and the tribal organization was integrated and strong the individual requirements like these were met by voluntary subscription as among the tribes of Chota Nagpur where even today bride price payable in cattle is subscribed by the members of the clan or the village concerned. With the settlement of the higher social groups in the neighbourhood, the individual members of aboriginal tribes have come in contact with the former either as

suppliers of flowers or of small work of their own handicrafts or as drummers, labourers or bearers of palanquins.

While tribal solidarity has suffered disintegration due to the possibility of existence independent of village community, the dependence of the individual families divorced from tribal occupations has been real, so that their economic helplessness has become a source of their exploitation by the caste people. The idea of obligation and honesty, which these people have, make it impossible for them to leave the master's service, so long as they have not liquidated the debt and this may mean and very often means lifelong servitude. When the debt remains unpaid and the man dies, his son has to take up the burden of debt on his shoulders and continue as a *Kabadi* or lifelong servant in the master's family. The master very often pays a further advance towards the latter's marriage and thus the debts increase so that for generations the *Kabadi's* future and that of his descendants are mortgaged. Iniquitous terms imposed upon the *Kabadi* by his master and even continued ill-treatment and under-nourishment have not provoked any protest from the former who is wont to accept his lot with philosophic quietude. So long as he does not pay the debt and therefore serves the creditor, the latter has to pay certain remuneration which is expected to keep the *Kabadi* and his family out of starvation. The rate of remuneration varies in different Tahsils of the State.

Besides the *Kabadi*, there are in Bastar various kinds of servants whose relations with their employers vary according to the demand for agricultural labour and the customary rules prescribing their remunerations and conditions of service. There are the farm servants, for example, in Kondagaon and Bijapur Tahsils who do not take any advance from the master. In Bijapur a small advance of Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 is taken, with promise to work for the agricultural year. Usually the servant gets a remuneration of Rs. 4 per year, 1 *paila* of *dhan* or 1 *sol* of rice, salt and chillies and tobacco daily and also one or two annas for liquor on festive occasions and two pieces of cloth in winter. In Konta Tahsil where the *juari* crop prevails, there is no such system of employing servants. Those who are without land often help those who have, the latter paying some consideration at the time of harvesting. The *Petposa* system which provides for a relative or relatives in distress, allows the latter to live permanently in the house of a man, without any agreement as to service to be rendered or remuneration to be paid, and help the family in all its economic activities.

The *Kabadi* system, however, is mostly met within settled areas and is less prevalent in areas where the aborigines live in compact groups or where the alien settlers have not penetrated much. The usual remuneration of a *Kabadi* though subject to variation in different Tahsils is as follows: 12 *khandis* of *dhan* per year, 6 *khandis* of *dandi mudi* at the time of threshing and reaping, 6 *khandis* of *kator dhan* at the end of the harvest, cash remuneration of Rs. 2 per annum, clothes, Rs. 6-8, salt, etc., for about 8 as. and food at odd times. If all these are regularly paid it comes to Rs. 5 per month on the basis of pre-war prices, but as everything depends on the sweet will and pleasure of the master concerned, the situation sometimes degenerates into ruthless exploitation by the employers concerned. The *Kabadi* was to live in small outhouses, within the compound of his master's house and should be within hearing distance from the family.

Vigorous attempts have been made from time to time and are being made by the present administration to eradicate the evils of the *Kabadi* system and it has been declared illegal in Bastar. But it is at best doubtful if the general release of the *Kabadis* has solved their problems, for agrestic serfdom in some form or other is bound to remain where the possibilities of independent existence are limited. As land is available in plenty and the State is not callous to their interest, gradual settlement of these *Kabadis* on new lands, will be possible but the *Kabadi* system shows how different social units living in the same cultural environment, develop a relation of interdependence so much so, that the existence of one group without the cooperation of the other is threatened and often end in maladaptation.

## CHAPTER VI

### ECONOMIC GRADING

The grading of the tribes on the basis of their economic life and occupations and in accordance with any approved scheme of classification is indeed difficult as most of the tribes possess either marginal cultures or follow more than one occupation. The tribal stage does not provide for any specialization of functions and as such a variety of occupations are followed by a tribe. When a tribe takes to one specialized occupation it behaves as a caste, as for example, the Biyars and the Kharwars of the Mirzapore district, U. P. have taken to manufacture of catechu and are popularly known as Khairahis.

The economic life of a tribe cannot be described as a simple stage either of direct appropriation or one of mere accidental collectors. The fact that a tribe uses all kinds of occupations to eke out its subsistence and combines hunting with honey gathering, lumbering with the chase, shifting cultivation with domestication of animals, shows the complexity of economic existence in the lower culture.

An economic stage suggests a pause or a halt in the march of cultural progress followed by a push forward, and not a continuous development. The idea of stages in economic life has been introduced in sympathy with the evolutionary schemes of cultural progress, that of a regular series of gradually advancing stages based on the uniformity of the working of the human mind which enables different human groups to produce, in similar conditions the same inventions and to develop similar institutions from the same germs of thought, or 'elementary ideas'. As Morgan puts it "like the successive geological formations the tribes of mankind may be arranged according to their relative condition into successive strata."

As regards the evolution of the stages, historical interpretation provides for a fundamental unity of economic life and also for an unilinear economic progress of mankind from the collection stage, to hunting and pastoral to agricultural. Recent findings fail to substantiate this unilinear theory of economic development. The Maoris, we are told by competent authorities, cultivate the soil, but as they had no cattle they could not possibly have passed through the pastoral stage. A number of American tribes cited by Alexander von Humboldt, fall in this category. The dependence of primitive groups on their natural surroundings has been emphasized by Hildebrand and Huntington and others. The former supports a multilinear development of economic life. Gide and Walker both are



adherents of the unilinear theory of economic progress. The anthropo-geographic school has played an important role in this controversy by emphasizing the geographic influences on human cultural life. Both Frederick Ratzel and Edward Hahn have brought forth unimpeachable evidence against the classical hypothesis and it was through their efforts that the unilinear theory has been abandoned, but 'its place has been taken over by a number of new schemes in which the principle of evolution still played a leading role.'

The scheme of Adam Smith who classified economic culture into hunting, pastoral, and agricultural stages was modified by List who laid down five stages of economic development. His scheme includes hunters, shepherds, agriculturists, handicraftsmen and those who follow industrial pursuits. Hildebrand has criticized the classification on the ground that 'it did not take into account the experiences of other parts of the world, the evidence being based on the experience of one country, viz., England.' Hildebrand's scheme divides economic culture into three periods: a period of barter, one of money, and lastly one of credit. Ernest Grosse regards the various types of economy as being primarily determined by 'the drive of economic efforts working itself out in the particular material environment.' He does not take the types of economy, as stages of development, as he thinks that 'a particular type of economy may emerge from local conditions of life.' Culture according to him is determined by economic factors and 'social institutions are mirrors of economic conditions.' Grass for example, tried to work out a synthesis of the old evolutionary approaches and he divided the economic life into a number of stages of general economic development, viz., collectional economy, cultural nomadic economy, settled village economy, town economy and metropolitan economy. The stages are not conceived as evolutionary, but merely as types. Forde refutes the idea of economic stages for he does not think that people live at economic stages and he finds no single exclusive economy but combinations of economies in the growth of cultures. Both Forde and Herskovits agree as to a five fold division of economies, collectional, hunting, fishing, cultivation and stock-raising and a people need not abandon one economy to adopt another.

Others object to the undue emphasis on economic motive in the shaping of cultural institutions, and they have pointed out the psychological basis of culture. Thus the theory of grades or stages of culture, of an unilinear development of society has had a mixed reception and field anthropologists have brought forward new data to upset its claims.

The most simple method of classifying social groups is on the basis of food quest. The advantages of this method are manifold. As food quest takes most of the time in primitive society the entire social life revolves round it. The economic pursuits contributing to the securing of food, in savage society, and the methods of food supply are jealously guarded by a series of taboos and prohibitions, by elaborate rites and rituals, by traditions and social prescriptions which are developed through a long process of 'trial and error'. Besides, the simpler the society, the easier it is to find out the importance of economic efforts in food production, as with primitive people 'the manner and mode of securing food are intimately linked with social ways.' One such classification has been given by Nieboer who divides economic life into : (a) gleaners, (b) hunters, (c) fishers, (d) agricultural nomads or hunter-agriculturists, (e) settled agriculturists of a lower grade who also hunt or tend cattle, (f) superior farmers who have complex implements, and (g) nomad shepherds. These types, however, are devoid of any sequential significance.

As we pass from the savage to advanced groups, food supply assumes a less important role in shaping social institutions and thus a scheme of classification based on food supply or the methods by which food is secured by social groups, fails to achieve its object. As pointed out in a recent publication by a group of British sociologists, M. Ginsberg and others, man obtains food by a combination of various pursuits and occupations. He keeps cattle, he tills the ground, he irrigates his fields, practises rotation of crops besides hunting, fishing, gleaning and collecting fruits and berries. Some social groups fish and hunt, others do a little agriculture along with cattle-raising, while a third group may combine dairying, poultry and pastoral industry to secure control over their food supply. What culture is there that does not believe in multiple pursuits in quest of food, and how difficult therefore it is to classify cultures on the principles of food quest. The defects of this method of classification have suggested a new orientation of our attitude to primitive economics, for a complex trait like food quest must be studied from manifold angles.

It has been suggested therefore that we should link up our data on the methods of food supply in simple societies with other characteristics such as technology, art, magic, religion, mode of disposal of the dead, the forms of marital life, head-hunting or types of association commonly met in primitive society. The attempt made by Ginsberg, Wheeler and Hobhouse to link up such data has not produced any satisfactory basis of

classification of tribes and cultures though the possibility of finding some sort of correlation between principal culture traits was not ruled out by an analysis of primitive institutions. Much of their difficulties we should think was due to the heterogeneous and often chaotic data obtained from existing literature on tribal cultures, for scientific evaluation and presentation of ethnographic data have been of recent practice.

Two schemes of grouping have been tried with respect to the primitive and backward cultural groups in India. Sir Herbert Risley has given a racial classification of tribes. He has divided the various tribal groups into : (1) Dravidian, (2) Mongolian, and (3) Turko-Iranian. Sir Herbert Risley's Dravidian includes all the pre-Dravidian and Australoid tribes, and we may call it Munda-Dravidian, as in tribal organization, we do not find much difference between the tribes of the Chota Nagpur plateau and those of the south. The Munda-Dravidian tribes have two types of organization : (a) totemistic and (b) territorial. In the former, a tribe is divided into a large number of clans, each of which is named after an animal, plant or material object. Each clan has its settlement which often represents an entire village so that a clan also becomes a territorial unit. Among the Hos, for example, a *Hatu* (village) is often inhabited by a major *Killi* (clan) with a sprinkling of families belonging to other clans. The major clan, *Marang Killi* of the village supplies the hereditary village headman or *Munda* and also the tribal priest (*Deuri*). The Khonds of Orissa are divided into village units or *Gochis* which are exogamous sections of the tribe. Each village has its headman who is assisted by a number of subordinate village functionaries but owing allegiance to a divisional headman.

The Mongolian tribes of Assam are either matriarchal as for example, the Garos and Khasis, or patriarchal like most of the Naga tribes. They are organized into *Khels* or territorial units which function as social and political groups either ruled by hereditary chieftains or kings or tribal headman enjoying feudal rights and privileges. The unsettled conditions still prevailing in this culture zone make isolation and scattered holding full of dangers and we find large and compact settlements containing 2,000 to 5,000 individuals or more. Each *Khel* fortifies itself against predatory raids from neighbouring *Khels* for food or women or both. Common social needs bind together members of a *Khel* for corporate undertakings and joint action. The Turko-Iranian groups are welded together on the principle of blood-feud and common vendetta, and though some tribes recognize kinship due to common ancestry, mythical

or historical, most of them recruit fresh blood by offering the prospect of a share in the tribal land at the decennial distribution and the lure of a settled life so difficult to secure.

We have seen how various social groups at different levels of culture secure food in similar ways so that the classification of the peoples of the world on the basis of food quest can be carried upto a certain limit. The same may be said of the kind of classification detailed above. For, in India we have a more or less uniform type of rural or territorial organization. Also it will be fruitless to argue whether this uniformity is due to its origin at a single centre, among, for example, the tribal people, then its diffusion everywhere or the system has filtrated from the top, among the Indo-Aryan groups, to the various tribal peoples who possess this organization.

The Nairs of Malabar who are not primitive or much backward, are a matriarchal people. The unit of the Nair territorial organization is the Tarawad or the matriarchal family presided over by the senior male member locally known as Karanavan. Several Tarawads constitute the Tara or local unit and the Tara-Kuttam or the council of the Tara contains the representatives of the various matriarchal families. Several Taras are organized into a Nad presided over by a Pramanigal, Tathasthar or district chief, and several Nads fit in into a Sime or region with Simetoka at its head. Similar territorial organization has been noticed in Coorg, in the Malayalam countries, among the Rajputs and other castes of Indo-Aryan descent.

In the Census Report of 1931, we have for the first time a grouping of tribes according to their social distance. The exterior or the interior castes, represent 'clean' and 'unclean' social groups, and the scheduled list include groups whom the Brahmin and other high castes avoid for fear of pollution and from whom the high castes would refuse water and also the hubble-bubble. The hierarchical order of the Hindu social system encourages social mobility within limits and thus the problem of grouping of tribes becomes complicated. The spiral system of social order in India may be represented as following the order given below:

Brahmin, other high castes, clean castes, unclean castes, tribes.

Although theoretically much group mobility is possible in the spiral system, conservatism, social inertia and regard for "ceremonial purity" and a group philosophy with pessimism as its sheet-anchor, have contributed to segregation of the social groups one from the other, thus making the Hindu system more or less inelastic. Superficial observers still cling

to the view put forward by Risley (People of India, Chapter on Physical Types, p. 4) in describing Indian culture. "Here in India," says Risley, "we have before our eyes a society in many respects still primitive which preserves like a palimpsest manuscript, survivals of immemorial antiquity. In a land where all things always are the same, we are justified in concluding that what is happening now must have happened very much in the same way, throughout the earlier stages of human society in India." We cannot, however, ignore the fact that the Hindu social system allows for a certain degree of social mobility and it is characterized by fusion as well as fission. The fishermen castes of the Nellore district in Madras have fused into one caste while the Kayasthas of the U.P. have split up into various endogamous sections. Due to changes in the social code of the tribal groups many are now in the caste fold, many are incorporated as clean castes from whom the high castes do not refuse water. The Gonds of Bastar have provided a functional caste, locally known as the Rawat who do domestic service for the Brahmin and other high castes. The Rajbanshi and Koch of northern Bengal find it possible to raise their social status, by marrying into Kayastha families in Bengal and a slow process of accession to Kayastha strength has been noticed for years. The Kayastha and Ambastha (Vaidyas) of Bengal claim Kshatriya and Brahmin descent respectively and their claim to this status has been loudly upheld by propaganda and organization. The Ambastha, however, are challenging the Brahmins, though in the south-eastern districts of Bengal, inter-marriage between Kayastha and Ambastha has been a recognized practice for centuries. The claim of the Ambastha may have the same fate as that of the Nai caste in the U. P. for they call themselves Nai Brahmin but even today they are the traditional masseurs and surgeons to the rural people.

The upward movement of social groups is possible when two or more groups come to live together and one is influenced by the other. Primitive groups in contacts with superior cultures have learnt to imitate the latter, subject to limitations of differences of speech and of material resources. Where such contacts have not been permanent the tribal groups still live their own life and it is possible to group them according to some principle. Prof. T. C. Hodson defined primitive culture of India as follows : "If a group in its material activities refuses experiment, declines the trial of new methods and is illiberal of naturalization towards fresh attitudes, it is in jeopardy of stagnation, even of retrogression, it must be assigned to the lower culture." Most social groups, tribes and castes in India come

under this definition, yet we know they have a peaceful philosophical attitude to life, and possess a highly developed sense of values, abiding and unerring.

The large number of tribes we find in India today, some of whom have come into contact with advanced cultural groups, and others still living isolated from contacts with civilization, may be classified on the basis of (1) territorial distribution, (2) linguistic affiliation, and (3) occupations. The following list though not meant to be exhaustive, will give a territorial classification :

Assam	The Garo	The Angami Naga
	The Lushai Kuki	The Sema Naga
	The Mikir	The Chang Naga
	The Abor	The Lhota Naga
	The Dafia	The Konyak Naga

#### The Khasis

#### Bengal and Bihar

The Polia  
The Maler  
The Oraon  
The Santhal  
The Munda  
The Ho

#### Orissa and Madras

The Khond	The Praja, The Irula
The Saora	The Toda
The Chenchu	The Panyan
The Lambadi	
The Sugali	
The Kota	
The Badaga	

Bombay	..	The Bhil, the Katakari, the Koli
C. Provinces	..	The Gonds (Muria, Maria, Bhatra, Praja) the Koya, and the Korku
Hyderabad	..	The Gonds (Maria, Muria and Raj Gonds) Bhatra, Dhruva, Gadaba, the Chenchu
U. P.	..	The Tharu, Bhoksa, Khasa, Korwa, Biyar, Bhuiya, Majhi, Chero, Kharwar, Raji

(2) Linguistically the tribes may be divided into a number of groups based on their affiliation to the various families of languages.

## THE AUSTRO-ASIATIC LINGUISTIC FAMILY

The Munda, the Ho, the Santhal, the Kharia, the Korwa, the Gadaba.

## THE DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTIC FAMILY

The Oraon, Maler, Khond, Saora, Parja, Koya, Paniyan, Chenchu, Irula, Kadar, Malser, Malaryan.

## THE TIBETO-CHINESE LINGUISTIC FAMILY

The Naga tribes of Assam, the Garo, the Kuki, the Mikir, the Dafia, the Abhor, the Khasi.

The third classification may be based on the occupations usually followed by tribes. There are not many occupations in India but there are innumerable tribes. The same also is true of castes ; although castes follow particular occupations, there are more castes than occupations, so that many castes are agricultural today, and many live by the pastoral industry, by mining and by domestic service. The various occupations followed by tribes are given below :

Collection of fruits, berries and tubers, rearing and collection of cocoons, *Sawai* grass etc., gathering honey, fibres and making strings and ropes, manufacture of catechu, *gur*, pottery, spinning and weaving, lumbering and selling of fuel from the forests, hunting and fishing, raising cattle, *jhuming* of forests for crude agriculture, terrace farming, settled agriculture, mining and labour in factories and plantations.

## ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

(1) *The Khasis*

The Khasis are a matriarchal tribe of Assam. Like many other tribes of these parts, they are divided into various divisions. They are divided into four social classes : (a) the Royal Clan known as Ki Siem, (b) The Priestly Clan known as Ki Lyngoh, (c) the Minister clan and (d) the Plebeian clan. As there are four clans so there is a definite order of social precedence among the clans but intermarriage between them is not banned by any precise social injunction. The Khasis are mainly concentrated in the Jaintia and Khasi hills, also in Shillong. The Khasis cultivate the hill sides and terraced cultivation is the rule but only it is done in the flat valleys. The base of these valleys is divided into several small divisions or compartments by means

of fairly high embankments or walls and the water is allowed into these compartments when desired by means of skilfully contrived irrigation channels which are occasionally a mile or more in length. Recently the potato which is a cash crop has been introduced into the Khasi land and according to Mills, it has profoundly affected the agriculture of their country. The rainfall in these parts is very heavy, usually about 400 inches in the year and the usual method of cultivation is *jhum*. Under this method an area of jungle is cleared on the hillside and a crop is grown in that area for two or three years. This has been the ancient form of cultivation and millet, job's tears etc., have been raised for centuries. But with the introduction of the potato a radical change was effected. It led to overcropping, to lack of fallow and the impoverishment of the soil. Today a remedy in the shape of rice cultivation has been introduced in some areas to replenish the exhausted soil. Yet the rice yield is very poor. The building materials usually consist of wood, stone, bamboos, reeds, cane, thatch, slate and palm leaves. Previously there existed a taboo against building a house with stone walls on all four sides and against using nails in building but today the force of the taboo has disappeared. The position of the youngest daughter is very important among the Khasis. She is the custodian of the family property and performs the religious ceremonies. Thus property descends in the female line and the younger daughter inherits as a trustee for the family. The Khasis usually cremate their dead though persons who die from contagious diseases like cholera and small pox are buried. Recently the Khasis have largely embraced Christianity and the contacts with aliens have introduced a lot of discomforts among them.

#### (1) THE NATS (CRIMINAL TRIBE)

The Nats are found scattered all over the U.P. Crooke calls them 'a tribe of so-called gypsy dancers, acrobats and prostitutes'. Their origin is not definitely known and there are numerous sections and sub-sections of Nats and each of the sections especially in Mirzapur are of totemistic origin. The tribal organization of the Nats elsewhere is very complex and it is often difficult to distinguish them from other vagrant tribes. Most of the Nats have returned themselves as Hindus though there are some Muslims, among them. The Nats are found also in the M.P., Bombay and Bengal. Their main occupation is singing and dancing, acrobatics, conjuring, manufacture of articles out of fibres and grass, straw and reeds, which they sell. They also dispense medicines for incurable diseases and lost vitality, their



women are of easy virtue and are a source of their income. The Nats keep dogs and hunt and eat vermin and small animals. They are also expert rope dancers.

## (2) THE BIRHORS

The Birhors are a nomadic tribe in Chota Nagpur and are a dying tribe. They belong to the same racial stock as the Hos and the Mundas. They are found mostly in the Ranchi district. They are divided into exogamous clans most of which are named after animals and plants. The Baiga is very powerful among the Birhors. He presides over birth and death ceremonies. He performs the name giving ceremony and is always consulted during illness. The Birhors possess the institution of village dormitory; the boys of the village live separately, the girls also share a common hut among them and marriage within the village is forbidden. The Birhors live by manufacture of ropes from creepers. Monkey catching is a favourite pastime for them and they have developed great skill in capturing monkeys by nets and traps indigenously manufactured. The nomadic section of the Birhors move from settlement to settlement whenever death occurs and the village Baiga must lead the people to new sites where before the families settle down the Baiga must propitiate the village deities and receive the sanction of the latter. The priest usually gets possessed during the course of propitiation and claims that he can interpret the wish of the spirits. Sacrifices of fowls, pigeons and goats are regularly made to a host of spirits and powers, most of whom are conceived as impersonal, viz., *Bongas*. Death is the occasion for great celebration, the body is interred along with an earthen pot containing rice and pulses and care is taken to minister periodically to the spirits of the departed. The Birhors partake of almost all kinds of meat except that of cows, cats, snakes, dogs, rats, crows, and bears.

## (3) THE RAJIS

The main area of concentration of the Rajis are Almora and Askot in the Kumaon hills. They are found in smaller numbers in the lower Himalayan region. They are divided into exogamous clans and are monogamous. A small brideprice is usually demanded and invariably paid. Widow remarriage and junior levirate both are allowed. Unfaithful wife or one afflicted with leprosy can be divorced. They bury the dead; they do not have any *sraddh* ceremony, neither have they any

priest, nor purification rites after childbirth, though they claim to be Hindus. The Rajis are chiefly engaged in the clearing of forests and in order to ward off evil influences in their work they perform certain rites. They are a nomadic people, moving about in search of jungles to clear and virgin soils in which to sow seeds. They burn down scrubs and sow seeds on the ashes. They also manufacture rude wooden vessels which they exchange with neighbouring people for coarse cloth and grain. Their trade is carried on with known and trusted agents with whom they do not have any direct or personal contact. They come with their products at midnight and place them in the courtyard of the agents and also keep some symbols by which the latter know what they want in exchange. Next night when all are asleep they stealthily enter the courtyard of the agents and take what they get in exchange. They are known locally as 'invisible traders'.

#### (4) THE SANTHALS

The Santals are one of the largest tribes in India, numbering between two to three millions. They are found mostly in Bihar but in recent years have spread far and wide. They are found as agriculturists in Northern Bengal, as tea garden coolies in the Assam plantations and as industrial labour in Jute Mills and Cotton Textiles. They speak the Munda language of the Austro-Asiatic subfamily of the Austric family of languages but today have become polylingual in many parts. The Santals are a totemistic tribe, split up into a large number of exogamous totemic clans, taking their name from animal, plant and material objects. They have an elaborate territorial organization based on the *Parha* system and the headman of a village exercises social and political authority over the clans within its borders. In some big villages the social authority may vest in a social Panchayat but the village headman, unless his prestige has suffered due to his allegiance to the administration, has a great voice in the affairs of his village. The Santals live by agriculture supplemented by the chase. From the middle of April onwards the people of the countryside have excellent hunts. They follow different practices in regard to cultivation of different crops. Rice is sown in beds, the seedlings being transplanted. Millets are sown broadcast and the same is the case with most other cereals. Maize is planted each corn separately in the furrows by a man or woman following the ploughman. The Santals are among the best clearers of jungle in India but must learn a good deal to become good

cultivators. Where virgin forests abound, the Santhals have spread by clearing the forests but when the same patch is cultivated year after year, they do not care to improve the prospects of their agriculture by irrigation, manuring or rotation of crops.

#### (5) THE SAORAS

The Saoras are found to inhabit the area adjoining Khond tracts in Madras but are very much different from the Khonds. The Saoras of the Ganjam agency tracts live under very primitive conditions and women often go about in a disgusting state of nudity. The Saoras are not very gay or friendly and they usually are found to be reserve, suspicious and even obstinate. The Saoras are divided into a number of village units and marriage within the village is prohibited and they do not countenance cross-cousin marriage like many of the Dravidian tribes. The Saoras own a number of endogamous sections and geographical propinquity determines cultural relationships between groups. The Saoras of the Ganjam Agency tracts practice terrace cultivation in the valleys and steeper slopes. Except for paddy cultivation, sowing is done broadcast. They build houses with stone and mud and use thatch either of sago palm or tamarind branches. Bricks and tiles have not entered the Saora country and are taboo to them. The Saoras use the bow and arrow, also knives and axes which they use in hunting. Their musical instruments are the drum and the ordinary tomtom, also brass bells. The men are good dancers, the girls line up in rows behind the male dancers and keep steps.

#### (6) THE CHENCHUS

The Chenchus are located in the Nizam's territory on a hill range densely forest clad infested by wild animals. According to the last census there were as many as 53 *Pentia* scattered over hills and valleys. Each *Pentia* consists of 15 to 25 huts. They wander about a tract of a few square miles gathering honey and berries and digging out roots. Weapons of warfare they have none. The only equipment the men have is the bow and arrow. The Chenchu is noted for his truthfulness and honesty. He is also kind and hospitable. The Chenchus have not learnt the art of agriculture. "I do not know how to till the ground" is the answer invariably given by them. But they do know the domestication of animals such as goats and chicken. Dogs are their pet animals. Their food consists mainly of roots and berries. Herbs and fungi are also eaten. *Mahua* flower provides both food and drink.

Animal flesh is also taken when available. The Chenchus are divided into five totemistic septs. These septs are exogamous, marriage within the totemic clan being regarded as incest. A man, whichever sept he may belong to, may not marry any but the daughter of his mother's brother or that of his father's sister. Some Chenchus burn their dead while others bury them.<sup>1</sup>

#### (7) THE KADAR OF COCHIN

Kadar means forest-dweller. They live in the interior forest tracts and never on the outskirts or adjoining plain areas. They are not racially pure. Generally they are amiable and not much given to offence. They live in huts, 15 to 20 of which are grouped together to form a village. In the past they lived chiefly on jungle roots and tubers. They are not vegetarians and like all sorts of game and fish but would not touch the bison and the bear, whether living or dead. They are also fond of honey and the honey-gathering season is a jolly time for them. Marriages take place only after puberty. Exogamy is the usual custom but endogamy also is not unknown. Marriage between sister's and brother's children is allowed. The institutions of polygyny and polyandry are absolutely unknown among them. They are strictly monogamous. The Kadars are engaged in the collection of minor yields of the forest like honey, wax, cardamom etc. They also help in elephant-capturing operations. They have been allowed by the State to cultivate forest land free of tax but do not take much advantage of it, due to, among other reasons, the fear of wild animals. Cultivation on a large scale they consider sheer waste of time. Their activities in this sphere are, therefore, limited to a few bananas, yams and kitchen vegetables planted round their huts. Recently due to contact with men from the plains they are showing signs of physical and moral deterioration and many of them are falling prey to sexual license and several other vices, besides diseases like syphilis and diabetes, the first fruits of civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> For a fuller description read '*The Chenchus*' by C. von. Fürer-Haimendorf also, Tribal Hyderabad by the same author.

## ECONOMIC STATUS OF TRIBES

Where Found	Hunting and Collectional stage	Shifting or Jhum Cultivation, lumbering, manufacturing catechu, etc.	Settled agriculturists who keep poultry, cattle, know weaving and spinning, pottery and terraced farming.
U. P.	Raji	Korwa Saheria, Bhuiya, Kharwar	Tharu, Majhi, Bind Bhoksa, Khasa, Kol
Bihar	Kharia, Birhor	Korwa Asur	Munda, Ho, Tamaria, Oraon
Bengal	Kuki	Garos, Malpaharia	Polia, Santhal
Assam	Kuki, Konyak, Nagas	Naga tribes, Lakheras, Garos	Khasi, Manipuri
C. P.	Hill Maria	Muria, Dandami Maria, Gond	Parja, Bhatra
Madras and Hyderabad	Koya, Contareddi, Paliyan, Kadar Hill Pantaram	Khonds, Kurumba, Gonds, Saora, Mudavan	Badaga, Kota, Irula, Parja
Orissa	Juang	Saora	
Bombay			Bhil, Gond

## CHAPTER VII

### TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

Tribe, caste, sect and class are the various categories of social stratification found in India. A tribe is a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well-assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations. A tribe is ordinarily an endogamous unit, the members of which confine their marriage within the tribe. Several clans constitute a tribe, each of which claims kinship between the members belonging to it, based either on totemistic division, territorial contiguity or common residence. A tribe is a political unit in the sense that the tribal society owns a political organization, either recognizes hereditary tribal chiefs or the several sections of it are welded into a territorial group ruled over by clan chiefs or hereditary kings. Each section of a tribe, a clan or sept has a council of elders who assist the hereditary headman in tribal affairs and perfect solidarity and group affiliation characterize the attitude of the members towards the tribal authority.

Much confusion has arisen in recent years due to the rather indiscriminate use of the two words, tribe and caste, which are the special features of the social organization of India. These words have been used by many as synonymous and therefore many tribes have been described as castes while a number of castes have received tribal designation.

The minimum definition of a tribe as suggested by W. J. Perry 'is a group speaking a common dialect and inhabiting a common territory'. The definition that we find in current literature on the subject is that given in the Imperial Gazetteer and may be stated thus: a tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous, though originally it might have been so. A caste in its simple sense is also a collection of families bearing a common name, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and very often speaking the same dialect, though it is always endogamous. When the same caste is found in two geographical areas, speaking different dialects, there is no social relationship between them and no intermarriage takes place, so that the groups may be taken as distinct castes though with the same appellation.

Among the lower castes the rules of endogamy are not

strictly followed, and there are cases when two or more lower castes have fused into one social group. Again there are tribes who are endogamous in its strictest sense so that the distinction between 'tribe' and 'caste' becomes rather arbitrary. Endogamy is an essential feature of the tribe, though inter-tribal marriages are breaking the limits of endogamy. In Africa craft-groups are endogamous. Among the Masai, Gallas and other Hamitic or partially Hamitic people, the smiths form a distinct group whose marriages are confined strictly within their own body. Dr Rivers describes a tribe as a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speak a common dialect and act together in such common purposes as warfare. He does not include the geographical factor, that is, habitation of a common territory, as a feature of the tribe, because most tribes possess nomadic habits. True, nomadic habits are associated with tribal life, but it is always possible to identify a tribe with a particular territory. It is also difficult to accept Rivers' definition of unity of the tribe in warfare for there are many tribes who do not possess any tribal chief and any tribal government, centralized or otherwise, and it is certainly not true that wars were always inter-tribal. Prof. Brown cites instances of wars usually fought by one part of the tribe against another part of the same tribe. Further, the existence of a simple government within a tribe is not a unique feature of tribal organization. Most of the lower castes in India possess a caste government in the Panchayat system which is being replaced by the caste 'sabhas' or associations with a working committee. Thus we find that the distinction between tribe and caste particularly between the tribes and the lower rungs of the Hindu social ladder is difficult to establish. Another ingenuous explanation makes it possible to distinguish the tribal group from the castes by insisting on the economic independence of tribal polity. The caste system according to this explanation is an economic organization of social units based on a definite scale of social precedence according to economic occupation, such that, though at any one moment it may appear immobile and rigid yet on a wide view it appears to possess a degree of elasticity and local variation according to differences of economic pressure. It is at best doubtful whether this simple distinction between tribe and caste is warranted by facts. A tribe like a caste of the lower order, today follows an occupation in many areas. Thus we get hunting, pastoral and agricultural tribes. The tribal returns recorded in the Census of 1931 reveal a heterogeneous category including Muslim tribes of Pathans, Baluchis, Brahuis or Mapillas, comparatively primitive tribes like the Toda or

Nicobarese who still worship their own tribal deities ; those who have become partly Hinduized like most of the Bhils and Gonds where the tribal name is on the way to become a caste name, those largely Christianized like the Oraon or the Lushai and others wholly Hindu, like the Manipuri but retaining their distinctive language and culture.

From very early times, there has been a gradual and insensible change from tribe to caste and many are the processes of conversion from tribe to caste. The lower castes of today, most of them had a tribal origin. Risley describes four processes by which transformation of tribes into castes is effected. The processes may be stated thus : (1) the leading men of an aboriginal tribe having somehow got on in the world and become independent landed proprietors, manage to enrol themselves in one of the more distinguished castes. They usually set up as Rajputs, their first step being to start a Brahmin priest who invents for them a pedigree hitherto unknown, (2) A number of aborigines embrace the tenets of a Hindu religious sect, losing thereby their tribal name, (3) a whole tribe of aborigines or a large section of a tribe enrol themselves in the ranks of Hinduism, under the style of a new caste which though claiming an origin of remote antiquity is readily distinguishable by its name, (4) a whole tribe of aborigines or a section thereof, become gradually converted to Hinduism without abandoning their tribal designation. To these four processes may be added a fifth in which an individual member of an aboriginal or semi-aboriginal tribe adopts a sur-name and *gotra* of a particular caste, manages to enrol himself as a member of that particular caste, and gradually intermarries with the members of that caste. His wealth and influence attract members of the caste he aspires to belong, and thus in the long run he may establish himself as a permanent member of that caste. Cultural contact of the tribes with the Hindu castes leads slowly and quietly to the adoption of Hindu ideas, and prejudices and participation in Hindu festivals and attendance at Hindu temples follow by paying a certain fee to the Brahmin.

Poverty leads members of the priestly caste to degrade their occupation and they become spiritual guides of the aspiring tribal groups. The tribes are enjoined to adopt the social customs and outward religious observances of their Hindu neighbours and the social and religious differences are reduced to a minimum. There is no formal abandonment of one ritual for another. These Brahmins insist on the theory that the tribal groups have lapsed from a higher social status with a traditional ancestry, however remote it may be, to which they are formally



admitted after they have performed such ceremonies of purification as may be prescribed by their spiritual preceptor. The Kharwars of Palamau and Mirzapur who claim a higher origin and wear the sacred thread, the Polias of Dinajpur, Rungpur, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar who claim to have originated from Kshatriyas and call themselves 'Rajbanshis', afford instances in point.

Among the Munda tribes of Chota Nagpur, Bihar, several totemic groups (those named after plants or animals) or territorial units constitute a *Parha* or *Pir* presided over by a divisional headman to whom the headmen of the various classes own allegiance. Several *Parhas* or *Pirs* make up a tribal area. Among the Khonds of Orissa and of the Ganjam Agency Tracts, the tribe is divided into a large number of exogamous village units or *Gochis* which combine into small or big territorial groups so that affiliation to the village does not exclude loyalty to the larger territorial unit. The Gonds of the Central Provinces are divided into a large number of clans which can be grouped under four classes. Some clans like Goha (lizard), Tekam (teak plant), Loha (iron), Tiram (fire) are totemic groups. Some clans like Subhedar, Mujor (obstinate), Pedam (village headman), Lonchatia (salt lick) are nickname clans. The Mahanadia, the Jaunpuria, Sarangadia, Sargujia, Ratanpuria clans are local or territorial units, while there are clans which are named after eponyms such as Shandilya, Kashyap and others. Some of these clans have split up into smaller units either due to their migration and adoption of new cultural traits. Dr Indrajit Singh finds it possible to group the Gonds into three classes, viz., the aristocracy, the tenantry, and the labourers. The first are represented by the Raj Gonds, they include Malguzars, Patels and other proprietary bodies of the village. Then come the Dhur Gonds (Dust Gonds) who are the tenants or simply commoners. The Raj Gonds and the Dhur Gonds have the same origin and they even today do not disown such relationship. The Pardhans, and the Ojhas or the magicians are included in the second group as they represent an indispensable artisan class. The Pardhans were originally bards and genealogists and were attached to pedigreed families or those with distinction. The third class, viz., the labourers who have not enough to support themselves with, who generally work as farm labourers and are employed by the substantial cultivators like the Mandal, Malguzar or Patel or other well-to-do tenants. The farm labourers engaged on yearly basis are known as Kamias.

In recent years, the isolation of the tribes who had been living more or less undisturbed in inaccessible hills and

fastnesses, has been invaded by advanced cultural groups, just as the plough has invaded the forests due to the pressure of population on the soil. Many tribal groups have been detribalized or have been scattered all over the country so that many of these have lost their territorial affiliation. The various castes of the Hindu social system recognize social distance between them though the principle on which such distance is measured has been vaguely conceived by the social groups concerned. The tribal groups also own such distance between the members of the same clan or tribe as well as between those of different tribes. This is based partly on a fear of the evil *mana* of strangers, which is in essence similar to the transmissible psychic power in man recognized by Hindu Society. A tribe forbids its members to marry outside the tribe, the same is the case with caste. Inter-caste marriages do take place, inter-tribal marriages are also known, the Oraon-Munda, the Kharia-Munda of the Ranchi district providing such examples. A member of a caste must marry within the caste and outside the *gotra* or sept to which he is affiliated by birth. A member of a tribe must not marry within the clan he belongs to, but must marry in another clan belonging to the tribe.

A clan is named usually after an animal, plant or natural object, sometimes after a nickname. A *got* is a section of a caste which takes its name from some mythical or a religious person, though not always, but that is not very important in social stratification. A caste is identified with a profession or occupation but not in every case, for while there are only few occupations, there are hundreds of castes. That is why Nesfield grouped together the landlords, the agriculturists, the agricultural labourers, the fishermen under 'castes connected with agriculture'. Today a Brahmin is a jack-o'-all-trades and so is a member of a tribe. The difficulty of securing livelihood by following one particular art or craft is felt by the various artisan castes and they do not confine themselves to any particular occupation.

The changed economic situation of today makes it necessary for rural communities to move to urban centres, and tribes which eked out their subsistence by a judicious combination of gleanings, hunting, and crude agriculture, find it indispensable to send out people to distant factories, to mining towns and plantations. These have settled in various parts of the country, and thus a tribe is no more a geographical unit as it used to be. Untouchability, segregation, ban on commensality may arise from the concept of *mana* as has been explained by J. H. Hutton. (Census Rep. 1931)

The high castes and the tribes are at two opposite ends of the Indian social structure, the intermediate rungs are filled by a large number of castes which either have progressed from the tribal stage or have receded from their initial status by non-observance of customary rites and practices, by inter-marriage forbidden by caste code and by adopting new customs and novel occupations and partaking of forbidden food. But these intermediate groups subserve the same purpose as the middle class in an industrial society, the only difference being that they are self-conscious, in other words, they know that there exists some consciousness of kind, some kind of similarity between those who are united under the caste label. Social mobility is restricted in the case of the castes, while in the industrial society, although social distance between the high and the low rungs is greater, the distance can be covered by ambitious and successful individuals or class. The lower castes provide a buffer in Indian society, and play the part of the middle classes, whose advent today has been made possible by the requirements of the present-day system of production.

As the tribes enter into caste economy, as the lower castes emerge with occupational status, the primitive attitude to life undergoes significant modification. The importance of the blood bond, or the kinship group is forced to the background, the communal economy of the clan is superseded by individual desire for gain and property, money assumes importance seldom it was given before, and the ties of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation are reoriented to suit new conditions. Tribal customs and practices which established social life lose their value, and the choice of leader and of mate is guided by different considerations. The tribal elders are pushed to the background, the priests are required to satisfy a more exacting clientele, and public opinion finds out excuses for failures and new behaviour patterns. Individuality begins to assert itself and a desire for social equality manifests itself which reduces the status of clan chief and sacerdotal head to impotence sometimes. New customs find favour with the people and new prescriptions for their old maladies gain popularity with astonishing quickness.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CASTE ORIGINS

The functional classification of tribes makes it necessary to discuss another type of social stratification, viz., the caste system, which is a unique institution in India. The caste system has been studied mostly from the academic point of view and much of the literature on the subject refers to the origin and history of the institution or its evil consequences. We do not possess many accounts of the institution as it functions. The investigators were so much overwhelmed by the sanctity of the ancient literature of the country that their efforts were mostly confined to harmonizing the knowledge of the institutions as they were recorded and detailed in the sacred writings with known practices of the people. A recent writer on castes, Prof. Ghurey, has emphasized the great role played by the Brahmin priestly caste in India. According to him caste is, 'a Brahmanic child of the Indo-Aryan culture cradled in the land of the Ganges and thence transferred to other parts of India by the Brahmin prospectors.' He also thinks that endogamy, the outstanding feature of the system, was first developed by the Brahmins in the plains of northern India and thence conveyed as a culture trait to the other areas. There are in India various types of endogamy, tribal, geographical, territorial, sectarian and even linguistic. All these can hardly be accounted for by diffusion. The *mana* concept, for example, could produce tribal endogamy in India and regional boundaries have affected marriage field in several parts of India. Caste principles are often found functioning in areas remote from Brahmanic influence which has provided material on the basis of which Dr Hutton has worked out his pre-Aryan theory of caste to which we shall refer later on.

The Rig-Veda often mentions the classes of population as Brahman, Ksatra and Visah but as Apte has argued, 'the non-mention of the fourth or lowest class except in the Purusa-Sukta does not prove its non-existence.' If the earlier and later periods of the Rig-Vedic age differed at all with respect to the development of these social classes, it was in the reorganization and consolidation of the fourth class which presumably received to its ultimate deterioration vast accretions in the intervening period, in the shape of the native advance into India and who were absorbed into the Aryan fold. (V. M. Apte, *Were Castes Formulated in the Age of the Rig Veda?* Dec. Coll. Bull. Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, p. 35). The actual mention of the caste system in Avestan literature as comprising of the priest, the

charioteer (the chief of warriors), agriculturist and the artisans and an identical division of the society in ancient India may point to a common origin of the caste system specially because the Indo-Aryans are only a branch of the same race which moved towards Persia. The Sudras according to Apte existed in the Rig Vedic Age though mention of it is found only once or at best twice. The inclusion of the natives of the country variously known as *Dasas*, *Dasyus* in the Sudra class relegated the Sudras to an inferior status and their dilution of blood kept pace with the absorption of the indigenes. If the fourfold division is found in the Rig Veda, it is probable, as Apte has argued, that the caste system was not formulated in the Rig Vedic Age. A comparison of the Indian caste order with the social stratification as existed in Rome and Greece on the basis of which M. Senart traced the caste system as the normal development of the ancient Aryan institutions, from the *gens*, *curia* and tribe of Roman people, from the family, *phratry* and *phyle* of ancient Greece, point to a common origin of the higher castes in India and goes against Ghurey's theory that the cradle of caste was in the land of the Ganges 'from where it was transferred to other parts of India by the Brahmin prospectors.'

Bonnerjee thinks that caste system was 'introduced by the Indo-European conquerors and that it had its origin in primitive superstitions and in a belief in magic and he regards the Indo-Europeans as possessing primitive superstitions and a belief in magic'. Bonnerjee would find it difficult to explain why outside India although social stratification has been found to exist, hereditary classes did not develop. As Roy has pointed out, 'neither the Patesis or priest-magistrates of Sumerian cities, nor the ancient Egyptian Pharaohs of the Fifth Dynasty who as priests of the Sun god Ra (?) combined in themselves the kingly as well as priestly offices, nor the ancient Cretan officers who combined in themselves the functions of both priest and king nor the ancient Gallic Druids, appear to have constituted a separate hereditary caste.' If Bonnerjee thinks that the germs of castes were all that the Indo-Europeans and the Dravidians possessed, and from these germs there grew up in India the whole complicated system of caste as he maintains in his rejoinder to Roy's criticism of his article (*Man in India*, Vol. XVII, No. 4. p. 286) there is nothing to quarrel about but such germs also existed among the primitive and aboriginal tribes of India, as Dr Hutton has conclusively proved.

It was W. H. R. Rivers, who with his knowledge of field technique, recorded the actual functioning of the caste

system in the south. He found that the various castes of the south recognize social distance among them and a quantitative estimate of avoidance could be had from the social incompetence traditionally prescribed. Recently S. S. Nehru in his book, 'Caste and Credit' has given us a functional evaluation of the caste structure as it affects rural credit. If we had followed up Densil Ibbetson's analysis of the factors determining the origin of the caste system, we could have gone much farther in our understanding of the nature of social stratification in India than the knowledge we possess today about it.

The complex nature of the caste structure is evident from the fact that, after a century of painstaking and meticulous research in the history and function of the social system, we do not possess yet a valid explanation of the circumstances that might have contributed to the formation and development of this unique system. There are today as many theories of the caste origins as the number of those who have written on it. Yet, it must be admitted that no social institution except totemism has been studied from so varied angles as the caste system.

The ancients who believed in the divine descent of man and in special creation have explained the caste system as derived from the person of the Supreme Creator, Brahma. This theory has been described by the Hindu law-giver Manu with a wealth of details, which is still accepted by the orthodox section of the population in India. So long as religion will keep its hold on the minds of people this theory must appeal to many. The orthodox theory can be divided into two parts. While the first is theoretical in the sense that it assumes a mystical origin of the four *Varnas*, the second explains the working of the four-fold social division and is partly historical and partly functional. The fact that many of the castes are hybrid ones which have resulted from inter-marriage on the principles of hypergamy and of *anuloma* or prescribed and *pratiloma* or forbidden unions, as they are found even in the present times, has given some status to the orthodox point of view. Mysticism or magic should not be taken as substitute for ignorance and the orthodox hypothesis therefore does not commend itself to careful observers. If, however, we take the divine origin of the *Varnas* as an allegorical explanation of the functional division of society, the theory assumes practical significance.

The association of castes with occupations has suggested functional interpretation of the social system, and some writers have gone so far as to claim that 'function and function alone is responsible for the origin of the caste system.' The social distance between castes, high and low, arises according to

them from the nature of the occupations, the superiority or inferiority of the caste being determined by the superiority or inferiority of the occupation followed by the caste. This hypothesis ignores the racial point of view, for as Nesfield holds, there is no racial difference between castes, the only difference being in the function followed by the people.

India is a melting-pot of races. Invasion after invasion has shattered the isolation of racial groups and disparity in the sex proportion, natural to invading peoples, has no doubt led to intermixture with the indigenes; but the fact that the institution of hypergamy is an ancient practice in India shows the anxiety of the various racial groups to preserve their blood uncontaminated or excessively diluted. There may not be much racial difference between the higher castes. As such, there may not be great variation of physical features in groups occupying a particular geographical region or parts of it, but some racial difference between 'high' and 'low' social groups does exist and is apparent to one who knows the country and its people.

Even if there does not exist any ethnic dissimilarity between the castes, the few occupations followed in India do not account for the innumerable castes that one finds in any particular region. Agriculture claims more than 67 p.c. of the population and thus a constellation of castes and tribes can be identified with agriculture as their main economic pursuit. That makes the functional interpretation of the Hindu social system, extremely dubious, though function is one of the main planks on which the social stratification is obviously based, or had its moorings in the past.

The existence of tribes in various stages of cultural progress and transition of tribes to one of interdependence, provided the starting-point of the evolutionary hypothesis of Denzil Ibbetson. The turning-point in the career of a tribe comes when it abandons its wild and nomadic life and adopts a particular occupation as its principal method of economic subsistence. This is the guild stage in caste history, and is common at some period or other of economic progress to all peoples in the world. The formation of guilds or occupational groups naturally led to the recognition of skill and importance of the various guilds. In an industrial society, the technicians have assumed a dominant and even dictatorial status. In mediaeval times, the guilds vied with one another for predominance in accordance with their economic status exercising various degrees of pressure on the social life of the country. The exaltation of the priestly guild was soon followed by the priests insisting on the hereditary

nature of their occupational status, and this led to the formation of endogamous units, as more and more of the guilds wanted to conserve the social status and privileges they enjoyed and to secure these permanently for the members of the guild. The Brahmins set the ball rolling and the various other guilds followed suit and a hierarchical organization established itself.

One of the criticisms directed against the above hypothesis is that in no other country guilds have formed castes, though guilds exist everywhere. Yet such criticism is not necessarily valid. The various elements, traits or fundamentals, which constitute an institution may not combine in the same proportion, some of these may become exaggerated or attenuated, some may even drop out while units of an institution may change with physiographic and economic changes. This makes it possible for similar traits to evolve different institutions in different cultural regions. The defect of the hypothesis lies in the fact that it, like its predecessor the functional theory, ignores the racial differences between the social groups constituting the hierarchy. Besides it is difficult to believe that a social stratification of such complexity as the caste system of India, owes its origin to a priestly division of society, and to the desire of levitical supremacy. Tribes pass on to the caste stage, but they seldom move up much higher in the scale of precedence; nor does the caste status of the tribes mean any metamorphosis or a sudden reorientation of attitudes to life.

The racial significance of the caste system was recognized by Sir Herbert Risley, who traced the origin of castes from the Indo-Aryan immigration into India. The prehistoric migration of the Indo-Aryans from Persia, where a four-fold division of society was known, laid down the structure of social grouping; and the clash and fusion of cultures between the invading people, on the one hand, and the indigenes on the other who belonged to separate racial stock inferior to the immigrants, brought about the super-structure which is the caste system. Endogamy which is a fundamental trait of the caste system was absent in Persia because the people belonged to the same race and shared a common culture. The racial dissimilarity between the invaders and the invaded emphasized the importance of breed, while cultural differences between them did not encourage amalgamation or large-scale miscegenation. A compromise was worked out, inter-marriages were allowed till such time as it was necessary. In other words a *jus connubii* was formed, after which the various invading groups closed their ranks to the indigenes. That is how Hindu law-givers recognized inter-caste marriage as it was necessary. It is still practised in



the outlying parts, for example, among the Rajputs and Brahmins of the cis-Himalayan region.

As it is found in other countries, where race contacts have taken place, hypergamous marriages were insisted on, so that the invading group refused to marry their daughters to the indigenes, though they did not mind taking women from the latter. This led to the introduction of a matrimonial code prescribing *anuloma* marriages and forbidding *pratiloma* though the high incidence of the latter was a challenge to orthodox conceptions of social justice. The history of the caste system in India is a record of a perpetual social tension and of protests and revolts against the prevailing social code which succeeded at times but very often failed in their objectives, and which might have released individuals from caste tyranny but put a tighter shackle round the social groups. The rigidity of the system has grown through centuries of practice and precepts; and what the clash of cultures and mixture of races produced in olden times, new impacts of races and cultures are likely to unmake in the decades to come.

In his report on the Census Operations of India, 1931, J. H. Hutton has contested the post-Aryan theory of caste, and has laid special stress on pre-Dravidian taboo on food and marriage based on a fear of the evil *mana* of strangers. He thinks that the primitive attitude to taboo, the occupational division of society as is found among the Naga tribes in Assam, and the superstitious regard for everything strange and unfamiliar, might have shaped the structure of Indian society. In other words, the fundamental elements of the caste system have been functioning in primitive cultures from very early times and the Indo-Aryan immigrants had only to superimpose an occupational grouping on a crudely stratified social structure. It is not difficult to trace endogamy, occupational division, and untouchability from the dread of uncanny *mana*. The untouchability that had developed in the south, and which is the most rigid we know of, has been found, to be mutual. We are told by competent authorities that it is not the Brahmins alone who avoid the Holiyas, but the latter must not approach the former without being sure that his influence has become innocuous so far as himself and his material possessions are concerned. That is how, when a Brahmin enters the Parachery of the Holiyas, men and women from the settlement come to the outskirts of the village to greet him with cowdung solution, broomstick and a garland of torn shoes, these, the Holiyas say, disarm the Brahmin of his evil *mana* and the Holiyas have little to fear from consequent social intercourse with the Brahmin. The ignorance of the *mana* or *bonga*

of a person makes a Ho of Chota Nagpur avoid his contacts, and in hostels of aboriginal boys there are innumerable food groups which maintain social distance as well as taboo commensality.

The principle of *mana* is recognized by almost all primitive tribes of the world, but the caste system has not developed in any country except India. Among the Mongoloid tribes, notions analogous to the *mana* of Oceania occur as also again among Indonesians and Melanesians, but without any caste stratification. In Polynesia the concept of *mana* is both patent and latent and is recognized as a source of personal distinction, but there is no stratification as we find in India. S. C. Roy has made an exhaustive survey of the *mana* principle from primitive to modern religions, but nowhere does he find any proof that the *mana* principle has shaped social grouping. It is only with the Zoroastrian ideas of personal purity that Roy finds something more nearly akin to the principle underlying caste division, and thus he brings us round to the Vedic Aryans' conception of a mysterious supernatural power of the same nature as *mana* expressed by the word *brahma* which Pargiter long ago considered to express something akin to *mana* and also to be that quality in virtue of which the Brahmin caste claimed or was given its superior status. "If *brahma* is connected with the root *brih* to grow, to become strong, as Haig and others suggest, the analogy deserves careful attention specially in connection with the Hindu philosophic notion of *gunas* or fundamental quality, which further determine the *Varna* or social class, determined by description as the word itself implies." There would therefore not seem to be any reason, says Roy, for looking beyond the Aryan outlook in the world and mankind for the *mana*-like principle which Hutton's explanation of caste presupposes.

The concept of *mana* or *bonga* does explain the social distance and personality fixation. It has given rise to innumerable taboos and avoidances. It regulates individual behaviour and group responses, and its importance to tribal life and conduct must be conceded. It is therefore possible to trace the roots of social stratification in tribal cultures in the *mana* principle, but how far it has contributed to the origin of the Hindu caste system is a matter of opinion.

To Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy, the Hindu caste system was rather the outcome of the interaction between the Indo-Aryan *Varna* system, on the one hand, and the tribal system of the pre-Dravidian and the occupational class-system of the Dravidian, on the other. The religious element that kneaded

and leavened the resultant dough and set its seal on the perfected system was, besides the Indo-Aryan concept of *Karma*, a certain 'taboo holiness' that came to be attached to the Brahmin for his accredited possession of a special spiritual energy (*Brahma-Sakti*) born of the predominance of the *satva guna* sustained and stabilized through well disciplined continence. The fact that this Indo-Aryan concept of 'Brhama-Sakti' along with the associated concepts of *Kshatra-Sakti* and *Vaisya-Sakti* happened to fall in line with, and so came to be regarded as a more sublimated manifestation of the pre-Dravidian's concept of 'soul substance' with its associated taboos and of the psychic power attributed by the Dravidian to his priest-magicians, facilitated the later adoption by the cultured Dravidians, of the Aryan theory of the spiritual values of the *Varnas* with their respective dominant *gunas* and appropriate *karmas* or functions. And the result was an attempt at a gradation of castes (as subdivisions of the four primary *Varnas*) among the numerous classes and communities based on occupational, racial, sectarian and other distinctions that had long existed from before in the Dravidian country and that now came to be consolidated under the pilotage of Indo-Aryan sacerdotal legists presumably with the increasing cooperation of Dravidian reformists as part of the comprehensive socio-religious polity since known as Hinduism. Roy does not believe that caste as a more or less unalterable social structure that it now is in India, has emerged either in the pre-Dravidian epoch of tribes, or in the Dravidian epoch which was an epoch of classes. Roy finds analogous ideas regarding the concept of *mana* or soul substance between the pre-Dravidian forest tribes, the proto-Dravidian and the Indo-Aryans and think that they would appear to have acted and reacted upon one another with increasingly close contact of different cultures and partial intermixture of the different races in India.<sup>1</sup> This view, I think, will find corroboration in the theory we have outlined above, for caste is a composite structure and though the various cultural groups referred to by Roy are vaguely defined, the fact that the caste system has assumed such complexity in India, is due to the clash of cultures and contact of races.

The use of the word 'caste' originally of Portuguese derivation, which meant nothing more than social divisions, to signify the entire social system of the Hindus naturally has complicated the issue. As K. de B. Codrington says, 'the abstract semi-literary and wholly arbitrary definitions of the Portuguese word 'caste' should be jettisoned and we may revert to the Sanskrit words which were used by the ancients to describe the social

<sup>1</sup> *Man in India*, Vol. XVII, No. 4, pp. 252-254.

grouping. That will, I think, give us the clue to the origin of the unique system.

The word *Varna* means colour as well as class, but the three high castes were originally distinguished one from the other by the various shades of colour that were found in the earlier days, resulting from the intermixture between the immigrants of Indo-Aryan racial stock and the indigenes either of pre-Dravidian or proto-Mediterranean racial affiliation. Various factors contributed to such race mixture ; scarcity of women among the invading group, the settled life with a house and all that it connotes among the indigenous population which naturally attracted the nomadic elements of the immigrant population, highly developed Dravidian culture with its matriarchal system, temple-worship of the mother goddess, rites, rituals and temple architecture, priesthood and learning, all have contributed to a racial miscegenation.

The clash of cultures and contacts of races crystallized social grouping in India, and endogamous groups were formed which jealously guarded their racial purity and cultural integrity against wholesale admixture and miscegenation. The three *Varnas* or more resulting from hybridization have tried to maintain these claims to superior status by keeping to themselves the important professions and avocations and jealously restricting the liberties of others with respect to these means of livelihood. The influence of the Brahmins was utilized for imposing the *Varna* tradition upon the social conditions found in the country and incidentally to include within their fold the indigenous tribes and castes and social groups. The ancient literature of the country bears ample proof of class struggles consequent on a social monopoly of the learned professions and occupations, and the fact that rights claimed by the Brahmins had to be conceded in special cases to others is proof that social justice demanded such reorientation of attitude, but political supremacy of the higher social groups helped to maintain such monopolistic social attitudes.

The caste system in India should be identified with Brahmanism or the three original *Varnas* which, in due course, as is but natural, had to concede rights and accommodate ambitious social groups and thus a hierarchial organization had evolved, due to impacts between 'pressure groups'. The higher castes or the original *Varnas* had to admit other social groups and rank them as 'clean' as opposed to those who were unclean both of body and mind, in race as well as in culture. The various social groups which possess little social status in the caste system, but are yet units of it, have been recruited from the indigenous

populations, both pre-Dravidian and proto-Mediterranean, Australoids and Dravidians (to mention linguistic groups) and, although a sort of uniformity of culture is evident, detailed investigations would prove fundamental differences between them. Nesfield said that the superiority or inferiority of occupation is represented in the hierarchy of the castes. We should think that the status of the caste depends upon the degree of purity of blood and the extent of isolation maintained by the social groups. The Brahmins have maintained greater racial purity. The tribal groups have also maintained their purity of blood and have kept away from contacts and they represent today, as before, the lowest social status. In between both there are innumerable social groups which differ with respect to their blood and their cultural affinities. The whole of this system is miscalled the Hindu caste system.

In the list of exterior castes appended to the Census Report of 1931, we find a number of tribes who are treated elsewhere as primitive and are shown under tribal religions, such are, for example, the Korwa, the Tharu, the Bhil, the Bhuiya, the Chero, the Kanjar, the Kol, the Nat and 1,233,512 tea garden coolies who are mostly recruited from the aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur and the Deccan. A number of tribes who have within historic times been transformed into castes, such as the Bhumij, the Malasar and the Paniyan have also been placed in the list of exterior castes. This shows how difficult it is to distinguish tribes from the lower castes. The usual practice followed in many provinces is to list primitive tribes when they come within the Hindu system, as depressed. So long as these tribes remain outside the pale of Hinduism proper little disability attaches to them in social and civic matters. The non-Hinduised hill and forest tribes are mostly excluded from the total of 'exterior' castes, while criminal tribes are mostly excluded from the exterior category. This may mean that when the tribal stage is superseded by that of caste, which is effected when a primitive tribe reaches a certain stage of social progress and are incorporated in the Hindu society, the disabilities manifest themselves. The numerical strength of Christians in India is due to the success of Missions in converting millions of those who have left the hunting stage of their economic existence and adopted crude farming or have become agrestic serfs or have parted with their agricultural land due to economic distress or to the cunning of their neighbours. Contacts between cultures, lead to blending of cultures, and tribal groups have been affected in no uncertain way. It is but natural that the tribal cultures must give place to more efficient systems of socio-economic cooperation, and a

stabler quest for food and other vital needs. Recent changes in the economic environment have introduced certain problems among the tribal people, the solution of which has necessitated a reorientation of their cultural life and in the years to come we shall find greater progress and a rapid assimilation of customs and practices of their advanced compatriots, but along with the benefits that a higher cultural life may afford, the social stigma attached to the backward castes will descend on them.

The same nervousness that we have found among the tribal people to identify themselves and be absorbed in the Hindu social system is found among the lower castes and other groups who have lately been recruited from the tribal stock. There are four distinct social orders in India which may be placed in a hierarchical gradation. They are (1) the Brahmins, and their patrons of the ruling class known as the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas, (2) the clean castes from whom the former take water but may not eat *kaccha* food (cooked), (3) the unclean castes who are tabooed from contacts with the first group and (4) the tribes. The unclean castes and some of the tribes have been included under the omnibus designation of exterior castes. While the clean castes are anxious to improve their status in the social hierarchy by assuming the designation of the higher castes and the surnames that belong to the latter, the unclean castes pertinaciously advance their claims for inclusion in the Kshatriya caste. Thus Babhans, the Barhi, the Bhat, the Nai claim to be Brahmins, the Dosadhs claim to be Gahlot Rajputs, the Sunri as Shaundik Kshatriya and the Kalwar as Haihaya Kshatriya. It appears that the gradual upward movement of the Hindu social order follows a regular system and although the social distance between the highest group represented by the Brahmins and others and the rest has not been very much disturbed or scaled up, in many parts of India, there has been greater approach between the social groups constituting the bulk of the population in the country. It is also a fact that there has been a decrease of the *mana* of the priestly caste which has led to a lowering of the social prestige of the Brahmins. While new castes have evolved from older ones by migration, change of custom, change of religion from one sect to another, adoption of unfamiliar occupation and so on, there is today a general anxiety to fusion between the sub-castes and between different castes. Wealth and weight, political or otherwise, work as mighty levellers of subcastes. If a member of a lower subcaste acquires money, power or authority, he marries immediately into a higher subcaste and gradually identifies with it. Thus most of the subcastes of the Brahmin caste in

Bihar and Orissa are gradually being amalgamated into the common genus. The Chasa of the Puri district are trying to inter-marry into and pass themselves as members of the Khandait caste while the latter in their turn are trying to inter-marry and pass themselves off as members of the Karen caste. In Kerala the fishermen and the washermen castes are aiming at amalgamation and sooner or later will fuse themselves. The movement towards amalgamation of subcastes is similarly noticeable among the Brahmin of Orissa, the Ahir of Bihar, the Aguri and the Baidyas of Bengal while in Northern India, the Ahirs and the Ahars and the Barhais and the Lohars are also fraternizing in order to improve their social status, the Nunia, Gola, Kharkar and others of the Uttar Pradesh are fusing into one caste and are claiming Rajput status, which they support on the basis of racial similarity, a fact which we have also testified on the evidence of anthropometry, (*Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol. 3, Nos. 2 and 3, 1950). Thus caste is a dynamic system and the oft repeated rebuke by foreign writers, that caste is incompatible with nationalism, is based on prejudice if not ignorance. Fusion as well as fission, are the principles of evolution, just as in the multiplication and division of the cells, and cultural dynamics can forge solidarity if that is essential for survival.

## CHAPTER IX

### CASTE INCOMPETENCE

The 'depressed' castes are those who suffer from various social and political disabilities, many of which are traditionally prescribed and socially enforced by the higher castes. They are 'untouchables', 'Harijans' and carry pollution. They are often denied the use of public conveyance, roads, wells and schools, they are also debarred from entering places of worship, temples and sacred enclosures. In some parts their shadow carries pollution and they should not approach public thoroughfares without warning or walk on them so that their shadow in front or behind, may not be trodden by the Brahmins. In one part of the Madras Presidency the untouchables and Pariahs can use the roads at midday, when the sun is vertically overhead and the shadow is at a minimum. Such restrictions cannot be enforced under present conditions, though tradition may still claim loyalty to usage.

The distinction between Brahmins and non-Brahmins exists in all provinces; in the south such distinctions account for considerable social disabilities of the latter. In other parts, the disabilities are on the decline and are tending to disappear. Such distinctions have their origin in the ceremonial purity of the Brahmins, and do not have any racial significance. The disabilities of the so-called 'depressed' castes is not ceremonial but founded on racial and cultural differences and therefore slow to disappear.

The total number of 'depressed' or 'exterior' castes has been recorded as fifty millions, of which forty-one millions are found in the provinces and 9 millions in the states.<sup>1</sup> This forms 21 p.c. of the Hindu population (as recorded in the 1931 Census) and 14 per cent of the total population. The estimate of depressed castes is not easy. Some of the disabilities on the basis of which the provincial lists have been drawn up are not real, others are attached to occupation, as for example, that of Bhangi, Dom, and Dosadh. The Brahmin today does not always follow the occupation traditionally prescribed for him, he only professes to follow these, though his real occupation may be one which is looked down upon even by the exterior castes. Many exterior castes follow clean occupations but the antagonism that exists between them and the high caste Hindus of the locality, perhaps orally transmitted from generation to generation, still finds expression in contemptuous epithets addressed to the individual members of the caste concerned. While some castes who suffered from social and political disabilities in the past have claimed

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<sup>1</sup> The layout as it existed in British India.



superior status and were admitted to it by the higher castes of the locality, there are others who have recorded themselves as exterior for political prospects and their foresight has already been rewarded to some extent.

"The occasion of this Census (1931)," writes Dr J. H. Hutton, "coming as it did at a time when political reforms appeared imminent, complicated the already plentiful return of numbers of exterior castes. A number of conflicting forces were at work, as apart from the natural desire of individuals of exterior castes to raise their own social status by making themselves out to be something other than they were recognized to be by their neighbours, a definite movement was set on foot by the Hindu Mahasabha for the return of all Hindus simply with no qualifications of caste or sect." The effects of such propaganda on the total number of exterior castes is difficult to ascertain as counter-propaganda and appeal by the exterior caste leaders and the prospects held out by them and their sympathizers encouraged social groups with imaginary grievances and inferiority complex, to record them as 'exterior' for census purposes.

Social disabilities of a kind exist in all countries ; they must be numerous and rigid in those where two or more distant racial groups with graded cultural status have settled down and are in constant contacts. Among the higher castes in India, the Brahmins have so long secured to themselves rights, which are jealously guarded against being encroached upon and the non-Brahmins though recognized as 'twice-born' suffer from disabilities not less irksome than those that have fallen to the lot of the exterior castes. The Brahmin's *hookah* must be kept apart, no one can sit on the same seat with a Brahmin, a high caste man other than a Brahmin must take the dust from the latter's feet as often as he meets him, no Kayastha or Sudra must leave behind his plate on which he has been served food by a Brahmin ; he must remove it himself. The Brahmin will not take water in the same glass or pot from which others may drink water. Every householder must therefore keep earthen glasses or those made of stone or marble, in which the Brahmin can drink water. A Kayastha or a Vaidya in Bengal must not invite a Brahmin to a feast in which *kachcha* food is served, the latter can only take *pakka* food or food prepared by Brahmin alone. The Brahmin levies many a tax on other castes and in marriage, social ceremonies and in religious worship, he must be satisfied before others. Even today a Brahmin widow in Bengal would take a ceremonial bath if touched by a non-Brahmin 'twice-born' caste, whom in Bengal she addresses by the uncomplimentary

epithet of Sudras. If such disabilities obtain in the relationship between 'twice-born' castes, it is no wonder that the exterior castes, who belong to different races and cultures, should share more acute disabilities.

The figures of exterior castes in the various provinces and states are given in the Census Report of 1931. As no uniform tests could be applied, the figures are based on the standing of the castes in the various provinces and the express desire of the latter to get recorded as 'exterior' castes. Although the provincial census superintendents have claimed authenticity for the figures, we think they are a bit exaggerated. For example, Assam records 37 p.c. of the total Hindu population and 21 p.c. of the total population as 'exterior' yet there do not exist any significant disabilities for them. Candidly enough, the Census Superintendent of Assam puts his case for 'exterior' castes as follows: "Under the orders of the Census Commissioner for India, a list of depressed and backward classes has to be prepared for every province in India. The invidious task of preparing such a list for Assam has, therefore, been laid upon me and I am compelled, however reluctantly, to assume the functions of a modern Ballal Sen. 'Depressed' as used in India in connection with caste has come to be associated particularly with persons belonging to certain castes in Madras who are unapproachable, whose touch necessitates immediate purification and who are not allowed to read in the schools along with other boys. There is, I am glad to say, no such degree of repression in Assam, an unapproachable caste is unknown here and boys of all castes are freely admitted into all schools and colleges. Nor are there any difficulties worth mentioning as regards the drawing of water by all castes from public tanks and wells." This led the Census Superintendent to suggest the term 'exterior', which has been adopted by the Census Commissioner for India for all-India enumeration. The percentage of exterior castes to the total population of the provinces and important states are given below :

Assam	..	21	Bombay	..	8	Hyderabad	
Bengal	..	14	C. P.	..	1	State	.. 17
Bihar & Orissa	..	15	Madras	..	15	Mysore	.. 15
U. P.	..	23	N. W. F. P.	..	Nil	Jammu and	
						Kashmir	.. 5
Punjab	..	5	Baluchistan	..	Nil	Travancore	35

The percentage of distribution of exterior castes in the various provinces shows that the disabilities are more pronounced in those areas where there are a large number of primitive and aboriginal population.

The exterior castes in Assam number 21 p.c. and Assam is inhabited by a large number of aboriginal tribes who are being gradually converted to Hinduism. In the other provinces and states, the exterior castes and tribes belong to the pre-Dravidian; Australoid or Mongolian elements in the population. To take a particular example, Uttar Pradesh contains a mixed population, and Risley described them as Aryo-Dravidian. The order of social precedence in the U. P. may be represented by a social pyramid with the Brahmins at the apex.

Brahmins (1)

Bhat, Bhuinhar, Taga (2)

Rajput, Khatris (3)

Kayasthas (4)

Baniya, Jats, Gujar, Ahir (5)

Kurmi, Kunbi, Mali, Banjora, Bhar (6)

Tharus, Rajis, Kalwar, Teli, Kol (7)

Dhanuk, Dosadh, Kori, Pasi (8)

Chamar, Dom, Bhangi (9)

1—5 represent the Indo-Aryan stock, though mixed in varying proportions between themselves and with the next group (6). The latter are mostly agricultural castes who have mixed with tribal groups, yet have maintained much of their original racial traits. In these provinces, the agricultural castes (6) have more of Indo-Aryan features than in Bengal where the pre-Dravidian strain is more discernible. The tribal groups (No. 7) are either of Mongolian or pre-Dravidian stock, but variously mixed with Indo-Aryan elements. Groups 8 and 9 are miscellaneous groups whose social status has resulted from their occupation, which is unclean and considered degrading by the higher groups. Even the tribal groups refuse to touch them, not for fear of ceremonial pollution but for the unclean occupations they have chosen to adopt. The Chamar tans hides of dead cattle which he gets from the higher castes, professional or cultivating, in exchange for which he makes shoes for them and skin bags with which the urban municipalities water the streets, a common sight in Indian towns. The Dom is an eater of leavings and carrion, a beggar, a thief. The nature of his work either as scavenger or as a provider of light for the funeral pyres at the burning *ghat*, brings him in daily contact with people of other castes and the lure of immediate reward has appealed to the

women of the tribe so that immorality as a profession of women has had significant influence in shaping the physical features of their descendants.

Another significant fact in connection with the social map of the U. P. is the geographical distribution of the castes. In the western United Provinces most of the high castes are distributed, while the eastern parts of the province are inhabited by the lower castes, so that social precedence increases as we proceed from the eastern to the western districts. Recent migrations have helped the infiltration of the higher castes into areas they were absent or negligible in strength and in course of a few decades the distribution of the social types may be uniform in the whole province.

The position of the depressed or exterior castes can briefly be summarized as below :

1. Depressed castes are not depressed in all provinces, the same caste may be depressed in one province but may not suffer from any social and political disability in another. In the M.P., even in adjacent districts, the same caste has different social rights and disabilities.

2. Where the depressed castes are numerically small, the disabilities are rigid. Where they are numerically strong and have developed strong caste organization, their disabilities are less or on the decline.

3. Where the castes are all of the same race or are largely so, social disabilities are not numerous and are usually confined to those whose function is considered degrading.

4. Where the higher castes are not numerous and the depressed castes form the bulk of population, the degree of ceremonial pollution observed is very small, and often we find little disabilities attached to the inferior castes and social groups.

5. A caste may be depressed but individual members of the caste who have succeeded in life, and who are wealthy and own property, have been admitted to a higher social status, and even have wives from the Rajputs or pseudo-Rajputs.

6. Tribal stage does not carry with it any social stigma, but that may be due to isolation and remoteness. As tribes enter the caste economy, their status varies in accordance with their number or importance to the higher castes. The Santhals in the various health resorts of Bengal, and Bihar in the Santhal Parganas itself, do not suffer from social disabilities, on the other hand they refuse water and food from the higher castes who must require their services. The Sahas and Tilis have exerted varied pressure in the village economy of Bengal and have secured rights which are not exercised by their colleagues elsewhere.

## CHAPTER X

### TOTEMISM AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In India many tribes and castes are found to claim mystic ties with some material object, animal or plant species. They are the totemistic people, though many of these have either forgotten their totem or do not attach much importance to such mystic connection. The name totem was first learned from the North American Indians by the Englishman, J. Long, in 1791. J. F. Maclean was the first to understand the significance of totemism as a primitive social institution. Besides Australia where the institution flourishes most, totemism is found in some parts of Africa, in North America among some American Indian tribes, and in South America it has been found to exist only in two tribes. In India a large number of tribes are either organized on a totemic basis, or they hold animals and plants as sacred or observe taboos regarding eating or killing the animal or destroying the plant.

Most totemistic tribes are either in the collectional stage or have learnt to supplement their gleanings from the forests and their humble gain from the chase, by crude farming such as by burning forests and sowing on the ashes. It is not surprising therefore to find that animals and plants figure prominently in the totemic structure of primitive tribes and castes everywhere. Many totems are parts of animals, the liver, the heart, the entrails, or the juice of a flower or fruit and its kernel. Such partition of the totem animal or plant may have been necessitated by multiplication of original groups, as the same totemic group has split up into more than one totemic clan to meet the growing needs of social life. In Chota Nagpur, for example, when a totemic clan becomes numerically very large, it splits into sub-totems and the latter content themselves by adopting as their totem, parts of animal or plant which designated the larger division out of which they have regrouped themselves. Another fact can be noticed, usually neighbouring tribes living in the same geographical area possess similar totems though they do not recognize kinship obligation among them.

The characteristics of totemism may be summarized as below. The killing of certain animals or eating them is tabooed. The totemic animal when it dies, is ceremonially mourned and buried as a member of the clan concerned. The skins of animals which are the totems of clans are donned by the totemic group at specified solemn occasions. Many totemic groups paint their persons with the picture of the totemic animal, and take the pictures as their coat of arms or even tattoo them on

their bodies. The totem animal, if dangerous, is propitiated and it is believed that it would spare the members of the totemic clan. If the totem plant or animal is edible, the members may eat them at ceremonial occasions or by offering excuse to the animal. The clan recognizes mystic ties with the animal species and believes that the animal will foretell the future, protect and warn the members of the tribe. The assumptions with regard to totemism are that totemic organization is universal. Some kind of religious regard for totemic animal or plant exists; taboos are connected with totemic objects and symbols and totemic kinship makes exogamy obligatory.

The Ethnographic Survey of India under the direction of Sir Herbert Risley collected relevant data on totemism and since then monographic studies of tribes have added to our knowledge of the distribution of the institution. The Santhals have more than 100 clans all named after plants, animals and material objects. The Hos have more than 50 such clans, many being common with the Santhal. The Mundas are divided into more than 64 exogamous clans. Although inter-tribal relations are not much recognized, the various tribes of the Munda racial stock own similar totems, and most of these have some use to the tribes, either as edible fruits, roots, plants and animals, or are injurious or harmful birds or animals, all found in the areas they inhabit.

The Bhils are divided into 24 clans, some of which are named after animals or plants. As they have been Hinduized and their origin and affiliation are still difficult to ascertain, the clan names may not give any clue to their social structure. Many tribes in Orissa, the Kurmi, the Kumar, the Bhumia, who have advanced in culture in recent years, are named after serpent, pumpkin, jackal and other totems. The Katkaris of Bombay, the Gond tribes of the M. P. and the Central Indian Agency also have clan names after the fauna and flora of their habitat. The Dhelki Kharias, a major section of Kharias of Chota Nagpur plateau, are divided into 8 totemic clans, viz., Soren (rock or stone), Muru (tortoise), Samad (deer), Barliha (a variety of fruit), Gharhad (bird), Hansda (the eel), Mail (dirt) and Topna (kind of bird). These names show how a totem may be an animal, plant or often material object or parts thereof.

Some Indian tribes are divided into 3, 4 or more phratries and some of the clans in a phratry may have an animal and plant name. The Bauris of Bengal (Bankura district) are a depressed caste and they own four major divisions, Malla, Dhala, Sekhoria and Mana. Some investigators take them as geographical divisions. The Mallas are from 'Malla bhumi',

the Dhalas are from Dhalbhum and the Mana from Manbhum. Each of these phratries is a closed and endogamous group and contains 5 to 20 exogamous clans. Totemic traces are noticed in their reverence for the striped heron and the dog, and in their taboo of horsedung, but most of the clans have little to do with animals or plants.

The Bagdis, Mahisyas and Koras of Bengal have animal clan names, but no totémic beliefs as are met with among other totémic tribes. The Kora originally from Chota Nagpur and most probably belonging to the Munda stock, venerate tortoise, duck, fish, egg, etc., but they are not organized on a totémic basis.

Whether respect for animal or plants constitute totemism is a moot question. It is not necessary to suppose that it has any direct relation with totemism as such. In India even persons belonging to higher castes offer sacrifices and prayers to objects of nature as well as animal or vegetable species. Rivers and rivulets are generally sacred and a regular cult is found about them. The *tulsi*, the *bel*, the *bot* are objects of worship, but these are not totems of social groups. In most parts of Eastern Bengal the tiger has a cult and it is ceremonially worshipped on certain occasions. Hymns of prayer are sung by young village boys and girls and every household contributes to this worship. The monkey and snakes are sacred to the Hindus; they would not kill or destroy either. The cat is protected by taboo and tradition. The maltreatment of a cat is considered an ill omen and every year the Hindus of Bengal propitiate the cat to secure effective fertility to women. The killing of a cat is taboo and the man who inadvertently kills a cat has to pay an equal quantity of salt to the Brahmin to expiate his remissness. The cow is said to represent all the deities known to the Hindus. She is the abode of all 'Rishis'. The bullock is sacred to the god Shiva and for its indispensability in agriculture caused a cult to be woven round it. The she-buffalo among certain sections of the Hindus is compared with the Kal Purusha, the popular belief being that it is the favourite vehicle of Yama, the god of Death. The elephant is the vehicle of Indra while the horse is sacred and clay models of it are paraded before the goddess presiding over epidemics, also for its mythological role in the Aswamedh sacrifice. The tiger's skin is considered holy and used by the ascetics in their austerity exercises. The mouse is the vehicle of Ganapati and is worshipped with him. The peacock is sacred because of its association with the goddess of learning; the eagle is sacred for being the vehicle of Vishnu. The crow has an uncanny role as it must

be fed and propitiated during mortuary rites and oblations as the manes or ancestral spirits are believed to take the form of crows to eat of the food specially dedicated to them. The persistent crowing of the bird is considered ominous as the crow is said to be endowed with a second sight and can foresee danger. An orthodox Hindu will not therefore kill a crow.

As Hopkins has said, by calling everything totemism, totemism has been found to be universal. The functional analysis of totemic customs will lead to a reshuffling of the totemic traits on the basis of their cultural significance. If animal worship in any form is taken to be totemism, even the Semites, Aryans, and Egyptians have practised totemism. Even the Mahenjodaro people can be identified, as totemistic. According to Sir John Marshal, some animals and trees were conceived as personal deities and endowed like human beings with destructive attributes and functions. A number of animals found on the seals must have been objects of worship, if they were not worshipped, they were regarded as sacred or taboo, 'possessed of magical powers of one kind or another and for that reason were used as amulets.' The racial types found in the Mahenjodaro are not extinct in the present population, it is possible to believe that the ancestors of the totemic tribes living today had also observed some plant taboo, and 'practised some form of zoolatry'. Many Indologists have suggested totemic traces in the Vedas. Oldenberg thinks that the fish and dog peoples of the Rig Veda were totemistic clans. Macdonnell and Keith (*Vedic Index*, Vol. 1, p.378,) find in the sigru tribe occurring in one of the passages of the Rig Veda, a suggestion of totemism as sigri means horse radish. The invocation of plants in the Vedas as divinities and the existence of hymns in praise of plants, perhaps disclose totemic beliefs. Later Vedic texts mention offerings made to plants and the adoration paid to large trees passed in marriage procession (A. A. Macdonnell, *History of Sanskrit Literature* p. 111).

A. C. Haddon traced totemism from the fact that many primitive groups originally lived on a particular animal or plant species and also traded with the food and exchanged it with other tribes. In course of time they became known to others by the names of animals or plants which were vital and important to their life. Frazer thought primitive men formed some kind of magic production and consumption club so that each totem clan undertook the preservation of a certain article of food for the good of all the others. The omnivorous nature of primitive diet does not favour such rationalization and planned economy.



Sir James Frazer has given many alternative theories. As the data became profuse, their interpretation naturally became difficult. The belief in an outward soul might have suggested to primitive man the security of lodging the soul in totemic animal and plant, so that the possessor might become invulnerable as risks to life in predatory life are indeed great. Frazer later on moulded this theory into what is known as the 'conception theory of totemism'. The savages were ignorant of the process of procreation or of the role the male plays in fertilization and thus totem animal becomes the ancestor of the clan, the animal sometimes mysteriously fecundating the woman.

Hopkins thinks that totemism rests on food supply. The totemic tribes at the time of Agatharcides regarded their cattle as parents. In the *Harivansa*, which reflects Hindu beliefs of circa 400 A.D., the same idea is presented that 'whereby one is supported should be his divinity, in other words, the provider is god to those provided for.' It is also the point of view of the Todas, to whom the buffalo is sacred, because the buffalo gives them food. Similar is also the Hindu idea about cattle, particularly about the cow. Australian custom supports this view as the non-edible totems are believed to be of later origin. Among the Begandas of Africa, 'the totem is holy because it is not eaten, it is not eaten because it is injurious, it made their ancestor ill.' The worship of totem objects, according to Hopkins, is a secondary stage. Many plants and animals are worshipped, but they are not totems of people who worship them. Against this, we have Wundt's theory that totemism underlies all religions, and that underlying the totem, is the belief that the worms crawling out of a dead man's body are his souls. Durkheim also takes totemism as an elementary form of religious life, but to him, the totem animal or plant is the collective representation of the social mind. Tylor interpreted totemism as ancestor worship, in other words, a form of ancestral cult. The soul does not remain disincarnate forever after death but animates another living body. Lower psychology does not draw any definite line of demarcation between the souls of men and beasts. So they believed in the possibility of transmigration of human souls into the bodies of the lower animals. So the religious respect inspired by the ancestors is quite naturally attached to the animals. Animals are the most common totems of social groups where totemism is found to exist, but plants and material objects are also frequently found as totems, and ancestor worship, plant worship and fetishism all must have contributed to the growth of the totemic beliefs and practices.

Boas, Hill Tout and Swanton, all believe that 'totemism has been derived from the generalization of the individual totem.' Some eminent man having found by experience the value of a totem, chose it for himself by his own free will, 'transmitted it to his descendants, these later multiplying as time went on, finally forming the extended family known as a clan. Thus totem became collective.

A study of the origin of totem clans among some of the important tribes of Chota Nagpur has given interesting data on totemic origins. The tribes of Munda ethnic stock are divided into a number of exogamous septs or clans, taking their name from some animal, plant or material object. The origin of the Kujur sept among the Oraons has been described by Roy in his monograph on the tribe. When an Oraon had fallen asleep under a Kujur plant, a flexible twig of the plant entwined itself round his body and protected him from molestation. Accordingly the man took the Kujur plant for his totem and his descendants now form the men of the Kujur sept. Evidently the man was in the dense thickness of some forest where he was surrounded by danger from wild beasts.

Traditions regarding the origin of certain clans among the Tamaria, described by a Tamaria himself, indicate that the totemic animal or plant is believed to have helped or to have protected the human ancestor of the clan or been of some peculiar service to him. The origin of the Pandu Bing clan is thus narrated. A Tamaria woman went to a river to fetch water. There was none at home to look after the child which the mother had left behind. The mother having bathed in the river, filled her earthen pitcher with water. She then placed it on her head and hastened home. On returning she found, to her bewilderment, a cobra or Nag or Pandu-Bing protecting the baby with its extended hood over the head of the baby. The serpent glided away as soon as the mother appeared on the scene. The descendants of the child all belong to the Nag-gushti or serpent clan and none belonging to this clan would dare harm a Nag or serpent with beliefs in reciprocity. The Kamal sept of the Tamaria originated in the following manner. While out on a hunt, the members of the party killed a deer and the meat was distributed among the hunters. One of them kept the meat that had fallen to his share on a Kamal leaf (lotus leaf). As he did so, others named him after the leaf and his descendants belong to the Kamal clan.

Stories of clan origin are many and can be cited in their hundreds. Most of the stories connected with the origin

of totem clans among Ho, Munda and the Santhal explain how the totemic relation has emerged out of dire necessity at a time when human help could not be requisitioned or was of little avail. Analysis of such evidence leads us to conclude that the spirit of totemism is to be sought not in a religious attitude toward totemic objects or emblem, not in a gradual process of postulating in totems the higher powers or spirits who influence the destiny of the savage, nor in the social or economic necessity of preserving species of edible products of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but in a simple adjustment of social order which could bring about a sympathetic relation between man and his environment. Such a relation subserves the needs of human adaptation to the habitat. So far as Indian totemism is concerned, an accidental connection between a group of animal or vegetable species seems to have been the rule, as will be evident from a number of examples printed elsewhere. This is why Risley who recorded the evidence of totemism and totemic survivals, could not vouchsafe for the religious aspect of totemism in India, and assumed that religious side of totemism was in disuse, but the social side, i.e., exogamy, was invariably associated with totemism. The theories centre around an arbitrary concept of totemism which has been arrived at "by first shuffling the so-called totemic state, divorced from their respective cultural background, and then searching for their common denomination" (*Man*, June, 1934, No. 113).

The totemless Hindu, and many aboriginal groups who are not totemistic are endogamous, while members of the same totemic clan may and often do marry among themselves. The various hypotheses we know of exogamy do not warrant a supposition that totemism and exogamy are causally connected. Frazer holds that totemism and exogamy are distinct in origin and nature though these have accidentally crossed and blended in many tribes.

If kinship ties determine the limit of marital choice, if the fact of kinship is important in the choice of mates, the blood ban may have forbidden many tribes to marry within the clan. When the clan multiplies beyond convenient size, and kinship is difficult to trace due to migration and social distance, an exogamous clan may develop into an endogamous group. Thus it is kinship and not totemism that determines the limit of marital choice and a totemic group is also a kinship group. A village or a part of it behaves as a local unit and marriage within the village has been tabooed by most of the primitive tribes in India. The higher castes are organized into *gots* or *gens* of Roman

times and the *got* kinship forbids intermarriage among those who are affiliated to the same *got*. Distance has produced endogamous groups out of the same social group, and many of the high castes are divided into endogamous sections as they happen to occupy parts of the same country, geographically divided. The Kanaujia Brahmins of the U. P., the Barendra and Rarhi Brahmins of Bengal, the Saraswat, the Sarjupari and the Gangari are all territorial units of the same caste.

Migrations have split the same tribe into two or more endogamous sections. J. P. Mills (*Man*, 1935, 94) explained how the Eastern Rengma Nagas about 400 years ago (according to Naga tradition) split off from the main or western body and migrated eastwards closed in by the Sema and Angami from behind. Today there are many cultural differences between the two sections of the tribes. The Chamars of the U. P. who have migrated to the eastern districts of Bihar and to Bengal constitute an endogamous caste while the Santhals of Chota Nagpur now widely scattered in Bengal and Assam recognize no kinship with the parental stock and have formed endogamous sections. The Nai of the U. P. do not marry with the Nai of Bengal who are emigrants from the former province. The Kurmi of Bihar have split up into endogamous sections on account of changes in social standards, those who conformed to Hindu practices, allowed child marriage and prohibited widow marriage, refused to recognize those who still cling to tribal habits of thought and action and practise widow remarriage which is contrary to orthodox Hindu sentiment. On the other hand, the fishing castes of the Nellore district have sunk their cultural differences and have fused into one community. The tribal Bhumij of Bihar treat with scant courtesy their traditional code of marriage, which did not allow inter-tribal marriage, and the reformist sections of the Ho and Munda are anxious to level up clan barriers for new requirements of marital adjustment. Today we have everywhere two tendencies at work, that of fusion and fission, segregation and accretion, and perhaps when tribal cultures began, the same tendencies were functioning, but the struggle for existence was so keen, the equipments were so inefficient that 'food quest' absorbed all the interest of a tribe, leaving little room for the play of these tendencies.

## CHAPTER XI

### YOUTH ORGANIZATION

The institution of village dormitory is found among most of the aboriginal tribes of the Chota Nagpur plateau, viz., the Mundas, the Hos, the Oraons, and the Kharias. It is also found in the Madhya Pradesh, among the Gonds and the Bhuiyas. Most of the Naga tribes in Assam, the Aos, the Memis, the Lhota, the Angamis, the Semas, the Chang, the Konyak tribes of the Naga hills, and the Kukis possess this institution. Many tribes of Melanesia and polynesia are also known to own dormitories.

The Mundas and the Hos call it 'Gitiora', the Oraons call it 'Jonkerpa' or 'Dhumkuria', the Bhuiyas, 'Dhangarbassa', the Gonds know it as 'Gotul'. The Aos and the Semas call it 'Morung', the Memis have two names for it ; the men's dormitory is known as 'Ikhuichi', while the girls' one is termed 'Iloichi', and the Angamis call it Kichuki. All young bachelors of a Munda *tola* or village have a fixed common dormitory in the house of a Munda neighbour, who may have a hut to spare for the purpose, while the unmarried girls of a village sleep together in the house of a childless Munda couple or in the house of a Munda widow. The girls are taken care of by an elderly matron of the village who exercises a general supervision over their morals.

The bachelors of an Oraon village must sleep together during night in the Dhumkuria which is generally situated at the outskirts of a village. There is also a separate house for the girls where the latter pass the night under the guardianship of an elderly duenna. In case a house is not available for the purpose, the girls are distributed among the houses of widows. The Hos also possess two houses, one for the unmarried young men and the other for the maidens of the village. But the girls are often distributed among the houses of widows.

Many Gond villages in Chhattisgarh and the feudatory states have a large house near the village where unmarried youth and maidens collect, dance and sing together at night. Some villages possess two, one for boys and one for the girls. The Bhuiyas have the same system as the Oraons. The bachelors of the village sleep in one large house. Col. Dalton mentioned some villages having a house for maidens which they occupied without any elderly matron to look after them. Among the Lhotas, every Khel (division of a tribe) possesses one common bachelors' house or Morung, and many of their customs and practices are associated with it. 'It is the sleeping place of every Lhota boy from the

time he puts first his *dao* holder till he marries, the rule being only relaxed in the case of boys who are allowed to remain at home and nurse an ailing and widowed mother or when the house is no longer habitable.' In the latter case the Lhota boys collect and help in reconstructing the house. Anybody absenting himself must pay a heavy fine.

Among the Angami Nagas, however, the Morung is not always resorted to by the bachelors but is used on occasions of ceremonies and *gennas* (pollution). In some Memi villages, the girls share the same dormitory as the young men. The boys sleep on an upper platform, the girls in a lower. The Murias and Marias of Bastar state possess sleeping barracks outside the village, where boys and girls meet nightly to play and dance and sing till they fall asleep. The Marias have a Gotul in every village, but the boys and girls do not always share the same house, as among the Murias of Kondagaon (Bastar). The Gotul institution appears to have developed to perfection in certain Muria villages, where it has effectively superseded tribal or clan organization. In the Muria Gotul the boys and girls who share the same Gotul are not all of the same clan, and unions of boys and girls, when they develop into permanent friendship, may end in marriage, if necessary. This is possible because both among the Murias of Narayanpur and those of Kondagaon, among whom the institution is very highly developed, the villages are not scattered like those of the Hill Marias, and several clans share the same village or different wards of it.

Life in the dormitory is associated with many customs and observances. Some of these have a traditional antiquity, others have been added in the course of their experience of the functioning of the institutions. Tribal groups living in and around urban centres are gradually abandoning their indigenous customs and practices. Those, for example, that did not possess separate houses for the girls, are having such houses built. The Christian villages have lately resorted to girls' dormitory with an aged dame in charge. Writing about the Oraon dormitories, Col. Dalton showed how the Oraons have a regular system of fagging in the Dhumkuria. The smaller boys serve those of larger growth, shampoo their limbs, comb their hair and so on, and they are some times subjected to severe discipline to make men of them. Where the boys and girls share the same dormitory as among the Gonds, the part of the small boys is played by the girls. As soon as the girls enter the Gotul after supper, they are to bow to the Sirdar or captain of the dormitory, after which each girl takes a boy, combs his hair and massages his hands and arms to refresh him. They then sing and dance

together till late at night, when they get tired and retire to their beds.

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In Bastar, the Murias have a regular organization, their captain is called Sirdar and the master of the ceremonies, the Kotwar, while there are other officials bearing the designations of State officers. The Oraons also have a similar organization and the captain known as Dhangar Mahato has an acknowledged position among the village officials. The roots of political organization are to be traced to these dormitories which are characterized by group solidarity and discipline. The Dhumkuria fraternity, remarks Col. Dalton, are under the severest penalties bound down to secrecy in regard to all that takes place in their dormitory and even girls are punished if they dare tell stories. 'They are not allowed to join in the dances till the offence is condoned and it is the severest punishment that can be imagined by a girl'. The girls, otherwise very frank, will withdraw as soon as questions regarding their dormitories are put to them. Nothing makes a Naga girl look more distressed than a single question on their Morung life. Dr Hutton describing the discipline of the Memi dormitories, remarks that 'publicity is probably an efficient bar to flirtation.' The social solidarity found in the dormitory reflects to a great extent on the tribal life and thus accounts for the spontaneous discipline that characterizes the conduct of primitive life.

The Muria Gotul has a hierarchy of functionaries. The names of the officers are often borrowed from the titles of Zepindari or State servants. In Padelibhum, the head of the dormitory is always known as the Leyur Gaita and below him are the Leyur Majhi, the Jalarsi, the Laharu, the Baidar and the Kamdar (cf. Grigson, *The Maria Gonds of Bastar*). The head officials of the Gotul in Narayanpur are as follows: Salau, Baidhar, Siladar and Kotwar. The Salau is the chief of the Gotul. He is responsible to the elders of the tribe or village for all that happens in the Gotul. The Baidhar looks after the collection of fuel, clearing and sweeping of the Gotulguree, the Siladar is responsible for the attendance at the Gotul, he has to keep the inmates informed about the programme in the Gotul and to report their behaviour to the Salau. The Kotwar does the work of bailiff and has to call the members both male and female, whenever the Gotul functions are ordered by the Salau.

The Salau, or the head of the Gotul, has certain definite privileges allowed by custom as, for example, he can love a

particular girl and declare it in public. The girl of his choice enjoys certain privileges which are denied to other girls. So long as the Gotul is informed of his choice no male member of the Gotul has a right to approach her or make love to her. The Salau has also the further privilege of having as many girls as he desires to keep about him. So long as the chief of the Gotul does not marry, he remains in sole charge of the Gotul institution, but after marriage a new Salau is elected. The election, of course, must be unanimous.

A Gotul member after marriage is not welcome in the Gotul. In case a married member frequents the Gotul, there is no tribal law forbidding his entry or his participation in Gotul life. The chief of the Gotul can only request him not to frequent the Gotul but in case the latter does not abandon his intentions, the Gotul brotherhood takes recourse to certain conventional methods which ultimately bring about the desired effect. First, some member of the Gotul will be deputed to steal a fowl from his house, then a second one, a third one till all the birds are stolen from his pen and eaten up by the Gotul brotherhood. If that is not enough, pigs, sheep and even cattle will share a similar fate till depleted resources lead to domestic quarrels between husband and wife so that either he has to sever his connections with the Gotul or face divorce proceedings before the tribal 'panch'.

While married people are not allowed in the Gotul, special consideration is shown to the widows and widowers who want to share the Gotul, for there is no restriction against such persons and in one Gotul, in Narayanpur, the Salau was actually a widower, who confidently said that he had no intention of marrying again. The position and prestige of the Gotul girls are determined by the age and importance of their associates, but the Salau's mate wields considerable authority over all the girls of the Gotul, and powers and privileges are often exercised by other girls in accordance with seniority and also according to their influence with the Gotul officials.

The unions of Gotul mates, as well as those between Gotul boys and non-Gotul girls, or viceversa, are not regarded as complete unless the couple after marriage spends a night with the Gotul fraternity. It is on this occasion that the Gotul ceremonially acknowledges the transfer of loyalty of the newly married couple from the Gotul to the village, which henceforth claims their undivided allegiance. This night generally witnesses a battle of wits between the Gotul fraternity and the village represented by married couples in which the married or the mature group is subject to various criticisms for acts of omission and commission.

The Gotul organization has a tremendous effect on the social



life of the tribes concerned. It is not only a club where the two sexes cooperate in developing tribal solidarity and to direct their energies to productive channels, but it is here that the necessary training for the duties of tribal manhood is inculcated through a system which has the sanction of traditional experience. Training in discipline is an important feature of Gotul organization wherever it exists. The Muria Gotul is more or less independent of tribal control, but the assistance of the Gotul can be had by the village on payment of certain specified fees, agreed mutually by the Gotul chief and the villagers who are in need of such assistance. In case the headman of the village needs the service of the Gotul boys, the chief of the Gotul is called in for help and this of course is ungrudgingly given, but individual villagers must pay for their services. Among the Marias where the Gotul is not so elaborately organized the Gotul boys are only fed by the families who may require their services and no wages are paid for their labour.

Tribal life in India, as elsewhere, is characterized by an absence of a hierarchy of economic organization. Absence of a well-assessed division of labour in primitive society does not favour the development of hereditary skill or technique which leads to the formation of artisan classes, or guilds, so that spontaneous cooperation in domestic and economic life becomes essential. The dormitory therefore affords the training ground for educating the children of the village in all matters relating to the social and economic life of the tribes, so that they may participate in all activities of social or economic order.

The dormitory house is usually situated in the heart of the jungle among the wilder tribes or away from the villages as in Bastar, so that except the inquisitive investigator, no stranger may even stumble into it. In many of the Oraon villages, the dormitory house is found located at the centre of the village without any big road leading to or from it, or is built adjacent to the headman's house. It is purposely kept closed on all sides with only a small hole serving as door through which one can just crawl in and out. The inside of the room is dark and filled with smoke most of the time the room is in use, and little is visible from outside.

In his account of the dormitory life among the Murias and Marias of Bastar (Maria Gonds of Bastar, O. U. Press) Grigson<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Grigson in his book on the *Hill Marias of Bastar* and Elwin in his book on the *Murias and Their Gotul*, have given elaborate accounts of Gotul life. Grigson's account is richly documented and gives a faithful narrative, much of which we had occasion to verify by first-hand investigation among the tribes of Bastar.

writes as follows : "Boys and girls of an age to visit the dormitories are known as Leyur and Leyas respectively. All the boys assemble at the dormitory in the evening for dancing, games and social and sexual training, sleeping on there after the departure of the girls to their homes late in the night. The girls attend at the dormitory in the evening, each girl being paired off with a boy of an Akomona clan. The girls have to comb their boys' hair and massage their arms and legs, to dance with them and to be initiated into the mysteries of sex with them. Marriage frequently follows these dormitory unions, but by no means it always does."

Our investigations, however, did not corroborate this for the mating of the girls and boys in the dormitory is not so deliberately done as described by Grigson. We discussed with the members of various dormitories in Kondagaon and Narayanpur, if the girls have to attach themselves to particular boys in the Gotul and whether the Gotul chief has to see that the mating is between persons of Akomana clans, marriage with whom, if necessary, is not barred by the rules of clan exogamy. We were told that such an arrangement was not possible as the strength of the two sexes depend on the resources of the village. Any such convention would be a serious infringement of personal liberty and would militate against the prevailing practice, which allows sufficient latitude to the sexes to select their partners in life. On the other hand we were told that it was the unwritten code of conduct in the Gotul for a girl not to bestow her favours in public to any individual, for that would be coupling her name with some boy who may not marry her. This, however, does not mean that the girls do not have their sweethearts. There is not a single girl whose eyes are not fixed on one or more of her acquaintances of the other sex, but she generally conducts herself in such a way that no other member of the Gotul gets an inkling of her intentions during the early overtures. This is why every evening a girl usually selects a new friend, massages him, combs his hair and looks to his comfort. Even if she remains with the friend of her choice, she does not grudge doing odd bits for other boys who may need her assistance so that no suspicion may arise about her choice.

Lessons in the various agricultural operations, in hunting, in honey-gathering and other minor economic pursuits are imparted in these Gotuls through mimetic dances depicting them, while ideas about the sanctity of tribal discipline, social approbation, social justice, reciprocity of obligations, law and order in society, as well as the relations between efforts and rewards, between crime and punishment, are inculcated through stories

and anecdotes which graphically describe individual doings and their repercussions on the social life of the community.

Sex-training is regarded as an indispensable discipline in dormitory routine and various methods are adopted to give the inmates a knowledge of sex practices. In the Oraon dormitories there is a central post, usually the trunk of a tree, in which a slit is made for sexual exercise, and the novice has to mimic the sex act in presence of his elders. In the Muria Gotuls the same objective is achieved by mimicking sex intercourse or by appropriate songs and rhythmic movements of limbs in dances, and through anecdotes describing the method and processes of the sex act, and its importance to tribal life and conduct. The sexual act is not taboo in the Muria Gotuls, but it must take place under cover of darkness. The officials of the Gotul organization often take advantage of their position and indirectly assist in the training of the novice and the non-initiate. The girls usually resent the actual act being performed in presence of the Gotul fraternity.

The popularity of a Gotul depends upon the personality of Gotul boys who can attract girls to the Gotul. In many big villages among the Murias there are several Gotuls in close proximity to one another and there are rivalries between the various fraternities for attracting the girls of the village. This is possible if the girls get sufficient attention from the boys and also if the Gotul programme is more sufficiently attractive for the girls. Generally speaking the attendance at the Gotul can be kept up by the personality of Gotul officials and the ingenuity of the boys in providing variety entertainments.

In one of the Gotuls in the Kondagaon Tahsil one dark night at about 1 A.M. we flashed a torch through the small entrance and we found three groups in three corners of the big house, each consisting of 6 to 10 persons. Closer inspection revealed the composition of the groups. In one corner a young man about 20 years of age was lying on his back and six girls of ages varying from 14 to 20 sitting or reclining round him, three to his right and equal number to his left, all eagerly listening to his recent exploits, as we were told afterwards. The youngest girl was massaging an arm while the eldest one was caressing the hair of the boy, while the rest were reclining with their heads touching the side of the young man's body. The flash of the light had the immediate effect of making the girls conscious of their uncovered body which they started to cover. In another corner two young men were surrounded by five elderly girls, most of whom had passed their teens and all discussing with great concern a case of elopement. A Gotul girl had eloped with a

young man of her choice ; her father wanted her to marry her cousin, her maternal uncle's son ; the preliminaries were gone through but the girl did not approve of this union. She had already expressed her wishes to her comrades in the Gotul, her parents were informed but they did not view it seriously. The relevant facts of the case were being gathered by the Salau from the elderly girls, who appeared to know much about the case. The third corner was occupied by several boys of ages varying from 15 to 20, some lying on their backs, others sitting while two girls were sandwiched between two boys, who had their hands round the necks of the girls. This corner was most noisy and peals of laughter from the girls and loud conversation of the boys could be heard as we approached the Gotul. Nothing that we saw was suggestive of any licence in sex relationship, but the interesting grouping that we discovered in the Gotul throws light on the organization of the Gotul fraternity.

There are age grades in the Gotul. The fraternity is divided into groups based on age and although the mean age of the Gotul fraternity we investigated was 14.9, there were as many as 5 grades into which the 39 inmates were distributed. Besides these age grades there were also sex grades and girls usually kept together unless there were unusual attractions to separate them. When a girl is asked to join a particular group of boys, she manages to persuade some of her friends, so that a single girl is seldom found in any of these groups. Girls usually sit together or join the boys but they rarely pair off with boys. Outside the Gotul also we found similar groups sitting by the side of fire in which both the sexes were equally represented. In one group three girls were massaging a boy, who, we were told, was the last arrival in the Gotul and thus was receiving the attention of the Gotul girls, all others evidently had been treated previously.

The distribution of work by the Gotul officials was, as admitted by them, on the basis of this age grading in the Gotul and every age grade was aware of what its members were expected to do, whenever their services were requisitioned by the village or their labours needed for the Gotul itself.

The relations of a Gotul girl with her family so long as she remains a member of a Gotul are of secondary importance to her, and although she has to do some routine duties for the family to which she belongs, her interest centres round the life and activities of the Gotul of which she is a willing participant. Her allegiance to the Gotul often militates against her larger interests of the family and village solidarity, but the strict discipline of the Gotul with its lure of amatory life puts a severe

strain on her loyalty to her family obligations. But the other aspect of this double allegiance is of very great importance to the clan or tribal solidarity, for the interests in children which parents must necessarily have, and the affections they possess are not centred on their own children only, but extend to children in general and the Gotul which to the village is a symbol of tribal manhood receives the fostering care of the village. Quarrels often arise among the inmates of Gotul which may assume serious proportions, and the arbitration by the Gotul officials may not satisfy the parties to the dispute but seldom do such cases involve the parents of the children concerned.

The Gotul institution is found in a state of high elaboration among the Murias of Kondagaon and those of Narayanpur; it is practically absent among the Parjas (Dhruvas), Gadabas and other tribal groups whose social position is superior to the former. It is present in a less complicated form among the Dandami Marias and in a rudimentary form among the Hill Marias, both of which are culturally inferior to the Murias. The Parjas and Gadabas have some common houses where young men of the tribe find shelter during the night, but there does not exist any arrangement or organization among those who share the same roof. The Marias, as we have already mentioned, possess the dormitory institution but it exists in embryo only. The dormitory among them is a men's club where the able-bodied hunters sleep at night and the unmarried girls visit the young men, if and when they like. When the men are engaged in agriculture and sleep in the corn houses, particularly when the crops ripen, the dormitories are either closed or inhabited by idlers and those whose services are not needed by the families to which they belong, it being the usual custom among the tribes for the senior male members to sleep in the corn house.

The Gotul organization does not appear to have anything to do with sexual segregation, for such segregation is not usually found in those tribes possessing dormitories. Besides, most of the tribes which practice this institution allow sufficient liberty to the women and slips of morality so long as they are confined to the tribe, are scarcely heeded. The facts we have already detailed above show that the dormitory fraternity is composed of various clans, marriage among whom is not barred by clan laws. Thus the necessity of sexual segregation is hardly enough to explain the origin and continuance of the institution.

The relevant facts which have bearing on the origin of this institution are as follows :

1. The distribution of this institution among hunting and nomadic tribes is extremely significant.

2. The need of protection of the tribal group from the ferocious denizens of the forest as well as from the alien and hostile groups who may prey upon them for women or cattle or for both. The ablest hunters of the tribe had therefore to keep together for this purpose.

3. The need of keeping awake during the night or major part of it for purposes of protection. These people usually take rest in the early hours of the night and during the day time which make possible the dormitory life with its nightly bonfires and its varied programmes of fun and festivities.

4. Sex acts are usually tabooed during the busy agricultural season when men work strenuously in the fields or go on ceremonial hunting in the forest, the women therefore have to keep together for some periods of the year as any violation of this has disastrous effects on the economic life of the family and the social group.

5. From the time new crops shoot into corn and till the harvesting is over all the men sleep apart from their wives in their fields while the latter sleep in the village. This also leads to the compulsory segregation of the sexes.

6. Husbands, for example, among the Marias, and Murias are not allowed to sleep in the house with their wives so long as the navel cord of the new-born child does not fall.

7. Wives have to live separate for three to five days either in the communal hut or any special one provided by the family during the period of menstruation, when it is taboo to see men, and associate with anybody not so polluted.

8. Sexual relationship is not allowed between husband and wife during the first few years after child birth or till the child weans.

9. As Grigson writes, "The Hill Marias are still doubtful about the propriety of men sleeping in the house and regard the jungle or some place overshadowed by the thick leaves of the *Siari* (*Baubinia Vahillie*) creeper as the right place for intercourse between man and wife, there is a prejudice with them against cohabitation with wives in their houses." It may be either due to a belief that the god of prosperity or the ancestral spirits get annoyed or to the fact that the shades of the ancestors are usually sheltered in the house or a part of it, so that the sex acts performed in the house would have the same effect as doing it in public. The sanction for this custom may be traced to the belief that such irregularities result in damage to crops by pests or in the complete loss of yield and general

calamities such as excessive precipitation, inadequate rainfall, diseases of cattle and crops and the various epidemics which claim their toll from the people.

10. Most of the hunting communities which possess the dormitory institution are very sparing in the construction of houses. A family usually possesses one hut which may be partitioned to accommodate cattle or for housing the ancestral shades. Husband and wife sleep in one room with immature children and when the latter grow up they need to be removed and wherever the dormitory house exists, they are conveniently housed in it.

Institutions can often be traced to simple beginnings, and also to a single source. This monogenist attitude the anthropologist appears to have inherited from the biological sciences in which anthropology is deeply rooted. Recent researches do not prove the legitimacy of the monogenist view of evolution as it had been found that when history began men found themselves already possessed of those characteristics of skin colour, hair form and the shape of the head, which serve as the marks of race. The fossil remains of man that have been found in various parts of the world, and the handicrafts of extinct types of man during the last one century, afford 'tangible evidence of the antiquity and diversity of the human family and of the range of its earlier migrations'. If such is the case for the hypothesis of monogenesis in the sphere of organic evolution, its application to cultural evolution has to be watched with greater vigilance. Most of the anthropologists of the historical school have held monogenist views regarding the origin of social institutions and it is this that has rendered their explanation of dubious value. The functional school of anthropology owes its consolidated position today to the failure of the monogenetic historical school in interpreting cultural origins, as field investigations in selected areas under controlled condition have raised issues, the solution of which could not be arrived at on the basis of single origin.

The origin of an institution, a custom or a religious rite may be an accident, as inventions usually are, but the complicated machinery of social formation that we have inherited today has gathered its complexity and momentum in course of its career. A group may take an animal or plant name to designate itself, another may be known to trade or live on a particular animal or plant species by which it may be known to the outside world, an individual may take as his or her guardian angel which might appear to him or her as a protector in dream, a woman may name her son or daughter after the animal which

she believes to have mysteriously fecundated her, but the complex institution of totemism we find among many social groups owes its complexity to many traits whose identity is difficult to distinguish today. It does not matter how or what accident was responsible for the origin of an institution, in most cases it is a minor incident in the life of an individual or that of a human group, but it is essential to know how the institution has grown, how the different elements of the traits-complex have been grafted to the original trait stem. Once a particular idea or a custom is introduced by an individual and is adopted by the social group for utility or for spectacular effect 'it would be kept alive and strengthened by ideas and sentiments not in themselves adequate to start the custom'. Such is the case with most of our social institutions.

The principles which underlie the survival of social institutions are indeed numerous. An institution, if borrowed from an alien source, remains for a time unchanged. The people who borrow it can easily adapt themselves to the institution, as the borrowers need not enter into the spirit of the institution but can depend upon mere imitation.

A cultural trait, borrowed or indigenous, remains unchanged if it cannot be fitted into the existing structure of the society or if any change in form leads to maladjustment. Again an institution may be put to several uses. So long as it subserves a number of purposes its position in the social life of the community is readily conceded to but as soon as it is found that the trait or institution does not fulfil the interests which it used to do, it loses its hold on the social life of the group concerned.

An institution, as we have said, may be introduced by accident. The belief in its efficacy may keep it alive in an unchanged form. Interest in it deepens if it can be put to more and more social uses. The larger the number of social contexts into which a trait fits in, the greater the number of interests it fulfils. The survival value of an institution is proportional to its utility, as every cultural form is an instrument of adaptation. Its role is to render the process of adjustment of the group to its milieu, as also of the intra-group adjustment smooth and easy.

The longevity of a trait therefore rests upon the number of interests that it stimulates. When, again, some of the interests that are usually answered in an institution may not find satisfaction in the accepted form, or when a new object or trait diverts the attention of the group from the cultural form, it decreases in popularity and disintegrates altogether or remains in an attenuated form. Thus an institution may survive through the principle of graded utility. This is how the dormitory



institution among the tribes of Bastar we have discussed above, appear to have survived.

The dormitory is a group organization. Its origin may, as we have already referred to, be traced to the campings where the ablest hunters of the community took their shelter for purposes of defence and protection of the weaker members, but in course of time other traits slowly been woven round it and the elaborate *Gotul* of the Murias is the result. With a settled life and a better control of food supply, predatory excursions of neighbouring groups for women or for cattle become rare, but economy of accommodation in the house, helps to maintain this communal organization as the members find it a convenient place where to sleep in and a venue for their communal activities. Association of men and women in the dormitory helps to make the group life vivid and concrete. Opportunities for inter-communication between the members of the group set up a group standard of social life and the effects of deviation from the group are seen more in their proper perspectives. It is in the dormitory that a system of discipline may be rigorously tried and the success in this direction has contributed not a little to tribal and clan solidarity and apparently slavish compliance to traditional usages as we find in most of the primitive groups. Training of boys and girls in the usual economic pursuits characteristic of the group, in social and ceremonial duties, in sex and associated matters is inculcated through the dormitory organization and thus the latter fulfils an important role in the tribal life of the community concerned. Above all, the dormitory institution where it exists, ensures tribal endogamy by controlling the movements of women within the tribal area and prohibiting social intercourse between men and women belonging to different tribes. How far this has been achieved or not depends on the effectiveness or otherwise of the dormitory organization.

## CHAPTER XII

### FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

Family is the standard social unit to-day and it has been found in some form or other in almost all levels of cultural development. The form of familial grouping has varied from time to time and different types of family have been observed in different societies in point of time and space. We have matriarchal and patriarchal families, polyandrous and polygynous families, we have families resulting from voluntary and involuntary monogamy, from group and trial marriages. It is indeed doubtful if any other social institution has raised more problems than it has been possible to solve, as the family has done.

Baschofen and others traced matriarchy from group marriage and patriarchy has been claimed to have established itself due to male personality development or from consideration of property. Morgan traced the evolution of family from a stage of primitive promiscuity and Marx and Engels developed the theory of origin of family on the basis of historical materialism, as the reflex of the socio-economic relations of man. They believe that each social epoch of man's production determines the form of family and they have castigated the marital code of to-day and the ideal of monogamy as unnatural and bourgeois. Westermarck believes that monogamous family has existed in all levels of society and even some birds and animals are monogamous, while others have found polygyny side by side with monogamy and incest as the rule rather than exception. We know that the polyandry of the cis-Himalayan tribes exists along with monogamy, polygyny and even group marriage when several brothers, for example, marry several wives without any exclusive right of any brother to any one wife. Some anthropologists have challenged the validity of Westermarck's contention about the extent and priority of family and has discarded it as rationalization, an effort to differentiate man from the animal, ennobling the former at the expense of the latter, an effort to establish the culture of man, his distinctiveness and remoteness from the animal. Malinowski has in a sense accepted Westermarck's position and distinguished man from animals, on the ground that among primates, there is a rutting season which is absent in man, indicating a difference in kind between man and animal. Hamilton does not accept this biological postulate, and E. Kempt finds no period of heat in female among the primates who accept males at all times. Sokolowsky discovered no period of rut, in primates and many others, Yerkes, Bingham, Hartman, Gerriet Miller all corroborate Sokolowsky, Kempt and Hamilton. In his *Sex and Repression in savage*

Society, Malinowski says that the family is the only type of grouping that man has carried over from the animal stage and he even denies the possible existence of sexual promiscuity, for, gregarious tendencies according to him, was not the root of human organization. If the biological postulate on which such generalizations are based, is found to be wanting, the whole superstructure of moral ideas of Westermarck falls to the ground. Many to-day take Westermarck's hypothesis of monogamy as wish fulfilment thought superimposed on an anthropological edifice: others hold that the theory of family and monogamous marriage derive its sanction from 'the myth of middle class morality and perfection and the vulnerability of which was demonstrated during the first world war'; the break up of the nineteenth century code of morality and of *laissez faire* economics and 'the lack of confidence in the absolutist concept of evolution must have exercised tremendous restraint on the social sciences with the result that a relativity in the sphere of the social sciences has been found to be a safe anchorage with the family as the nucleus of progress.' The extreme claims of Morgan, Marx and Engels, who trace the origin of family from sexual communism through stages and from a system of social production, seldom find corroboration from ethnographic evidence, though their arguments may appeal to a class-ridden society with opposing interests. Just as the discovery of monogamy among savage tribes does not prove its universality, the presence of license and sexual lapses in savage society does not confirm promiscuity as an initial stage. But both Westermarck and Morgan's theories survive today, not because they are true, but because the theories are based on a dynamical concept of the family. The theories are substantiated today, not because they are accepted by the social sciences but because the class interests are so hostile to each other that in the context of such hostility and antagonism, both the interpretations hold partial key to the social situation created by the productive technique of the day. The middle classes find in the family an institution of strength and permanence, the labour finds in Marx and Engels, the vindication of their class prejudices against the moral and sexual code of the old. Both the views are therefore significant and that is why family is still what it was at the same time it was not what it is.

But exceptions need not disprove what otherwise may not be easy to prove. We are so much used to the concept of the patriarchal family of the monogamous type that we think it is synonymous with 'family' and the trouble lies there. Family is a group of persons who live under the same roof, are connected by blood and own a consciousness of kind on the basis of locality;

interest and mutuality of obligations. It is a defence unit as well as an aggressive one, and its permanence is sanctioned by common property rights and residence under the same roof. That is why brothers separating set up different families, daughters marrying out belong to other families, while distant relations and friends become members of the family and are addressed as uncle, son, brother and sister, even if there is no consanguinity or territorial affinity. In this sense, family may be artificial but it is in this sense that family has existed in all levels of culture and non-recognition of this fact has encouraged speculation.

Family in a sociological sense, consisting as it does of husband, wife and immature children, has existed in all phases of human cultural development, though side by side with the individual family, other forms more integrated or loose, have appeared and often the emphasis has been transferred from one to the other, without finally disintegrating the original nucleus grouping. The Australian aborigines practice a kind of group marriage, in which all the women of one clan are considered to be *Nupa* or prospective wives of all the men belonging to another clan and the terms of relationship in use among the Australians show a classificatory type of nomenclature in which children address as father, not the physiological father but all those who stand to their mother in the relation of potential mates. But just as the classificatory term 'father' may be used to denote father and his younger brother or brothers in a society which allows the younger brother of the husband to marry the elder brother's wife or *Bhabhi* after the death of the latter's husband, and yet there is no disturbance of family ties and relationship, the group nomenclature in kinship among the Australian aborigines does not preclude familial relationship and even under conditions of group marriage in which there is no exclusive right of any man on any woman, family has existed and persist today. In the now defunct matriarchal society of the Nairs of Malabar or among the Tiyaas the husband is a casual visitor and the children grow up under the roof of the mother, protected by the mother's brother and taking the name of the mother's family, the unit of social grouping is the matriarchal family consisting of the mother, her children and all her relations on the female line, and the mother's brother who is the head of the family. The mother continues the line and the mother's brother represents it.

In the fraternal polyandry prevalent among the people of Jaunsar Bawar and other cis-Himalayan and trans-Himalayan people, though several brothers may marry and share one wife, the family is a stable organization. The eldest of the brothers

monopolizes rights to property as well as to the wife. Partition when effected is so uneconomical as a result of the unequal division of property between the brothers, the eldest of whom gets the lion's share, the others if they separate go without much or anything of economic significance, that all the brothers must live together, and depend upon conventions traditionally established. The latter allow the necessary freedom and license to the partners to this arrangement.

India is primarily an agricultural country. More than seventy per cent of her population are directly or indirectly attached to agriculture and this is India's strength as well as her weakness. If the productive technique is crude or inefficient the country must remain backward and so it is with India. Her agriculture is carried out with primitive tools, her peasants are illiterate and fatalistic, her communications are not well developed, the distributive organizations are imperfect and nature still dominates the affairs of peasant life and the peasant's prospects. The vagaries of rainfall, the absence of efficient irrigation, the lack of markets, the absence of cooperative organizations, illiteracy, prejudices and the impact of a rising urban economy on an age old system of production and exchange, account for the type of life Indian country provides and a pattern of life has been woven and integrated for centuries which impede India's national progress. Although much headway has been made during the two years of independence, and there is pulsation of life, even in the remotest hills and fastnesses, the conditions have not yet changed and cannot change by magic.

Indian family life has been characterized by attitudes which are largely derivative. In no other country does exist such eloquent examples of the sanctity of domestic life, of such abiding relationship between father and son, between brother and brother, between man and wife, relationship not merely of consanguinity of kinship, territorial or totemic, yet durable, intimate in values and responses. Epics of all countries exaggerate war and conquests, clash of personalities and contact of peoples, but the Ramayana and the Mahabharat depict such duties as are incidental to the Indian theme, man's absolute ideals, Rama's love for his wife Sita, the respect and obedience that a son should have for his father, the sacrifice expected of him, and of a brother for a brother, the standard of conduct for kings which should transcend intimate ties of kinship or even of bonds of affection and love in the interests of the country. That is probably India's chapter that is undergoing revision, an orientation in the context of dynamic problems facing her to-day. Indian family life has been an enigma to the foreigner. A

European finds entirely different sets of values, attitudes, inhibitions and fulfilment, a pattern that has successfully withstood the demands of flesh and the compulsion of human drives. Regional differences have produced new alignments of kinship, have encouraged joint living and joint worship and even sanctioned polygyny for immediate or remote end and personality development has lagged behind or has been suppressed in the interest of the society. The speed of life in an agricultural society is naturally different from that in an industrial country, for agriculture encourages leisure, thrift and joint living. With an advance in the technique of production, families combined into joint establishments, and the needs and requirements of the new agrarian economy have produced what we know as 'joint living', unique in its conception, efficient in its function and vulnerable to a point, so that a change in the methods of production, a greater tempo of life resulting from urbanization or industrialization has moulded and disintegrated the pattern of India's traditional social life. Ideas and ideals reinforce personality development and the West has done much to encourage separatism while education and progress have changed values and made new adjustments necessary. In a relatively static society as agriculture sanctions, the individual is dependent on his family, on the property which is joint and in the opinion of the members of his society and that is how family pattern determines individual initiative and corrects maladjustments. Agriculture has stabilized family life everywhere, separations are infrequent, divorce uncommon, early marriage an ideal. This is because the family occupies a central place in agrarian economy as the unit in a productive sense. Each member has a role and a share of responsibility in production. Leisure and seasonal festivals are so interspersed that the family members need to participate in common home activities. The nature of work makes daily contact and cooperative efforts indispensable. The needs of industrial life are different and the functions of family therefore undergo change. The house becomes an apartment or a set of furnished and unfurnished rooms, the women if they do not work in the factory, have more leisure and the historic functions of family, such as regulation of sex life, the care of the sick, cooking and washing, education, religious training, and protective and affectional interests lose their importance except probably sex and child care, so that the status of woman undergoes significant change. If women are bread winners, the relations within the family and its function change more radically and psychological factors assume greater importance. Where labour consists of males as in most parts of the country to-day, the stress and strain of factory life reach

the breaking point and in the absence of a home, man faces a social eclipse, and the emotional life finds in drink and vice an escape which again lead the way to disintegration and social pathology. Small family, and mass childlessness as is seen in the West, bad housing, low income and lack of company and of contacts, low vitality and malnutrition affect balance and develop nervous strain which produce neuroses, and cheap cinema and low amusements drain off income and reduce social security, ultimately leading to disintegration. Selfishness, vulnerability to vices, diseases and prostitution, these have, where they are focal, changed values and social mores, and have encouraged fission within the family. The remedy lies in a perventive therapy in which the youth must be trained to face problems of marriage and family responsibility with knowledge and conviction. The speed of urban life must be countered by a planned domesticity which can be secured by an understanding of the personality factor, and man and woman must meet on terms of equality. This is possible, for in the din and dust of urban life, man needs the peace of home, of family life to which he must turn with faith and love and that is what family has secured before and can do to-day, if only the ideals and functions are fully understood.

We have in India all forms of marital life, such as the polyandry of the matriarchal Nairs, the fraternal polyandry of the cis-Himalayan tribes, the polygyny among the Mohammedans and backward castes of Hindus, and diverse other methods of securing wives.

The Hindu law-givers recognized eight different forms of marriage (Manu, Ch. 3, Verse 20). In the *Brahma* form, the parents invite a learned and virtuous young man and make over their daughter to the latter along with clothes and ornaments. In the *Daiva* form, the father of the bride performs a sacrificial ceremony and the learned Brahmin who officiates in the ceremony, is not paid any *dakshina*, but is offered the bride, properly decorated and bejewelled as his fee. These two forms of securing wives are considered 'holy' and 'divine', and as such very desirable. The *Arsha* form of marriage is based on a system of barter, in which the father of the bride receives from a young man a pair of cattle or two, in exchange for his daughter whom he weds to the latter. The *Prajapatya* form is not attended with any solemnity or ceremony, the bride is given away to a young man of choice, extolling the virtue of the married state and praying that the union may turn out to be happy and prosperous. In the *Asura* form, which is practised by the aboriginal tribes even today and also by the backward

communities, the relatives of the bride receive money from the bridegroom and there is no limit as to the amount required to be paid. The *Asura* form differs from the *Arsha* in the nature of the transaction. Whereas in the *Arsha* form the bride receives a pair or two of cattle, in the *Asura* form the bride price is settled by the parties and there is no custom controlling such exchange. The *Gandharva* form which is marriage by mutual choice, obviates the role of the parents as the couple decide to marry without even consulting their guardians. The *Rakshasa* form of marriage is by abduction, sometimes carefully planned and executed but sanctioned by legal code. Predatory life as well as rivalry and hostility between groups lead to constant warfare, as is the custom among the Naga tribes, and the invading group overwhelm the invaded, kill the men and carry away the women, such conditions necessitated recognition of unions of men from the invading group with women of the invaded and thus it was made a legal form of wedlock. The last form is known as the *Paisacha* by which even raped women have been given a social status, and the man who rapes a woman in sleep or when she is incapable of protecting herself, is allowed to keep the woman as his lawful bride.

Hindu society now recognizes only two forms, the *Brahma* and the *Asura*, the higher castes preferring the former, the backward castes the latter, though here and there among the higher castes the *Asura* practice has not died out as, for example, the orthodox Kulins of Bengal would even today certainly protest against marrying their daughters to non-Kulins by decorating their daughters with ornaments or marrying them at their own house; they would either demand money in exchange for their daughters or would send their daughters to the house of the bridegroom, to be ceremonially married there or they may insist on both as they usually do.

## 2

In most parts of India, among primitive tribes, marriage is a simple affair, in which the couple concerned decide to settle down as man and wife without the ado of ceremony. In most tribes sufficient latitude is given to young men and women to find their partners by mutual choice and even where marriage is arranged by the parents, the young persons concerned are consulted before the final ceremony. The Kukis of Assam, the Darlungs, for example, allow probationary marriage where the young man is allowed to live with his sweetheart in the latter's



house for weeks and even months; after which if they temperamentally suit one another, they agree to marry and settle down. Failure to adjust themselves to each other leads to the break-up of the union; the young man has to pay Rs. 16 as compensation to the girl's parents in the event of separation.

The Bhils as they are found today do not appear to be a distinct social group in Gujarat. Elsewhere also they are indistinguishable from the lower ranks of the Hindu social structure and usually conform to the Hindu culture pattern, though in the Gwalior State Sir Manubhai Mehta finds it difficult to distinguish the Bhils from the depressed Hindus living on the outskirts of the villages (*Man In India*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4 p. 265). In spite of the very careful comparison and meticulous research, Shah<sup>1</sup> could not find many non-Hindu elements in the culture of the Bhils of Gujarat and those that he found were not commonly observed by the Munda speaking race or the primitive tribes of Travancore, Madras or Cochin. While he has brought out a large number of variations from the orthodox Hindu culture pattern, very often he has stumbled against a core of similarity between the orthodox practices and what are observed by the Bhils, and he put it as a moot question whether they originated with the aboriginal races and were copied by the Aryan invaders or vice-versa. We would add that if the Bhil practices were compared with popular customs observed by the Hindus in different parts of India, the non-Hindu complexion of the traits would have been difficult to maintain. If custom and practices change every few miles among the tribal population in Assam it is no wonder that they would do so in other parts, particularly where the Aryan culture has been superimposed over other existing patterns. The megalithic cult is taken as an evidence of the Austric affinity of the Bhils but the funerary monuments are not the monopoly of the Munda tribes, they are found in Assam, Burma, South India and in Gujarat and it is raised by most of the lower Hindu castes. The carving of human figure on stone representing the deceased on horseback with sword, lances or shield sometimes on foot, but invariably clothed in the best attires in keeping with the warrior's vocation, which they are innocent of in flesh today, may speak something other than what the stone does among the primitive pre-Dravidian, Mongolian or Australoid races.

The Bhils own two endogamous groups among them. The Ujale or pure and Mele or impure and there is the third group who are lower in status as 'they play music and are singers by

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<sup>1</sup> P. G. Shah. Non-Hindu Elements in the Culture of the Bhils, Essays in Anthropology, presented to S. C. Roy.

profession'. Although considerable intermixture has taken place among the Bhils the Ujale Bhils restrict their marriages to themselves occasionally taking brides from the Mele but refusing their daughters to the latter. In recent times there is growing a popular feeling among the Bhils that this distinction should be abolished and the inter-marriages between the two groups should be allowed, but prejudices die hard and it may take decades before this wholesome attitude is adopted by the entire Bhil tribe. The fact that the Bhils are scattered over so wide an area is another reason why such distinction cannot be effective. Each of the Bhil groups is subdivided into a number of sects which are exogamous and marriage is prohibited among the members of the same sect. Besides these restrictions the village Bhils do not marry in towns as one Bhil told me that 'the morality of the women living in towns cannot be vouchsafed.' The elders look with frowns at such marriages and these urban groups more or less now constitute an endogamous section not very rigid though as money often attracts the village girl to the town with its charms and allurements. The Bhils all marry adult, a girl seldom marries before she is fifteen and a man seldom before he is twenty. Child marriage is the privilege of the substantial household and only the village headman or well-to-do cultivators indulge in this luxury. Premarital license is recognized among the Bhils and should a man and woman be found to be very intimate before marriage, the tribal elders may enforce discipline by naming the woman as the man's wife but they are not allowed to go through any regular ceremony. If a man desires to marry a girl who has had illegitimate intimacy with another man, he can do so, should the girl agree, but if any child is born of premarital intimacy, the tribal society pins the responsibility to the man concerned and the latter has to bear the expenses of maintaining the child born outside wedlock. In those marriages where the Bhils marry young the ceremony is a simple affair confirming the promise to marry by the exchange of clothes and sweets accompanied by the distribution of *gud* and of liquor drinks to those present.

In marriages settled by the parents, four persons from the boy's side go to the girl's house to settle the betrothal. If the girl's guardians are willing a sum of rupees five to seven is paid to the Panches who purchase *gud* and wine and entertain the caste people. The betrothal becomes irrevocable. On an auspicious day, the bride and the bridegroom in their respective houses are anointed with oil and turmeric. The bridegroom in his house and the bride in her, is daily taken in procession round the village and both move from shoulder to shoulder as it is

usual for them not to touch ground during the ceremony. It is also necessary that the bride and the bridegroom have to maintain strict silence during this period and even if others laugh, they have to remain stiff and silent and it often becomes a very grim ordeal for them. But this test of endurance has to be gone through and for a week or so both are disciplined into the life that waits them after the formal ceremony. During the period the villagers join them, bring with them their own food and provisions which they present to the family entertaining them. In one of the marriages we witnessed in a village in the Jessawada Taluka, the bridegroom, a young man of twenty one, was having his *Bana Baithana* ceremony and he was being danced day and night on the shoulder of his friends and relations, and even the aged mother was seen to dance with him on her shoulder, amidst a gay and admiring crowd. The bridegroom was then seated on a *charpoy* with a handkerchief on his nose, and keeping mum all the time while the crowd indulged in boisterousness and hilarity. Occasionally the father came with a *hookah* and offered to his son who would smoke it and return it to his father and all attempts to make him speak or laugh would be of no avail as he is determined to maintain silence, come what may. When tired he would make some sign which is readily understood by his kith and kin and he would be carried to his sleeping apartment on the shoulders, by his father or some near relation. During this ceremony which usually extends over seven days, all the villagers and relations come and visit the prospective bridegroom and the bride in their respective houses and presents and gifts pour in from all quarters.

After the *Bana Baithana* ceremony is over, a temporary pandal is erected on four poles covered with branches of *jamun* leaves and all round a thread runs with mango leaves deftly woven into it. The pandal may also be decorated with flower and flags. The first ceremony under this pandal takes the shape of a feast in which four unmarried boys and girls are seated and sumptuously treated to a special preparation of wheat and maize or *Makka Thuli* after which the relations and friends are entertained with food and liquor. The bridegroom then comes tastefully ornamented with a dagger and sword in hand attired in red and white, the usual marriage costume of the Bhils. He also puts on a scarf round his waist. He is then made to stand under the *Mandap* and the mother comes with a rice-pounding pestle, arrow and grain thrasher which she moves round her son's face and four specially made cakes are thrown at four corners of the *Mandap*. All preparations complete, the bride-

groom with his party leaves for the bride's village and usually reaches the latter at dawn.

In the presence of the bridegroom the bride also goes through a similar ceremony. The *Mandap* in the bride's house is the venue for the binding portion of the ceremony. Here the bride lights a lamp and immediately the bridegroom is brought to the *Mandap* his duty is to put out the lamp. The relations of the bride then tie the ends of the upper garments of the couple and the bride's brother join their hands for which he receive some *gud*. Then the *Kankan* and copper ring are put on the wrist and finger of the bride respectively and the ceremony is complete. After the marriage is over, a *hom* is performed by a Brahmin but in his absence an elderly member of the Bhil tribe does it. Oblations of *ghee*, oil seeds etc., are offered and round the fire the couple move seven times. In the non-Hinduized villages the couple move round a branch of *shami* tree (*Prosopis spicijera*) twelve times, the bridegroom leading in the first six, and the bride in the remaining six.

Besides the orthodox practice detailed above, marriage by capture or by force is popular among the Bhils. In many tribes the difficulty of providing the bride price has encouraged willing persons to stage a capture marriage mutually planned so that paying the requisite brideprice is obviated.

Among the Hos, for example, when a boy and a girl feel attached to each other they inform their respective parents or guardians. If they disapprove of their union, they stage a capture, the bridegroom acting as captor and lover and under romantic circumstances they decide to become man and wife.

The Bhils allow young men to marry according to their choice and the Gol-gadhedo ceremony symbolizes the freedom of choice exercised by the tribe. During the 'Holi' festival in the Jessawada Taluka, Panchamahar district, in Gujarat, young men and women practise a folk dance round a pole or a tree to the top of which cocoanut fruit and *gud* are tied. All those young women, married, unmarried and widowed, who want to dance, do dance around the pole in the inner circle and prevent the men reaching the centre, while on the outer circle the young men dance to the same tune. The trial of strength begins when a young man attempts to break through the inner ring and reach and climb the pole to eat the *gud* and break open the cocoanut. In doing so, he meets with strong resistance from the women, and if he succeeds in reaching the pole, the women catch him by his clothes, strike him with broomsticks and tear the hair from his head and may even scratch flesh

from his body, though all this is done in good faith. Should the young man succeed even after such ordeal in climbing the pole, and reaching the sweets and the fruit, he passes the last test of valour and has the right to name a girl as his wife and take her away without any further attention from the crowd. The girl who becomes the prize feels proud of her status and even afterwards remembers with admiration the part played by her partner in obtaining her hand. Although elopements are far too common, the Bhil girls who marry under the Gol-gadhedo seldom separate. Ordinarily, however, girls and boys mutually agree and plan their marriage and the Gol-gadhedo only sanctions their union.

The Prajas or Dhruvas of Baster till recently, used to confine the marriageable girls of the village in an underground cell where young men desirous of matrimony were to join them at night and make their choice. Carefully careless they would leave their brass bracelets with girls of their choice, so that next morning the parents of the girls concerned could identify the Romeos of the village. Where tribal beliefs and practices have been disintegrated, even today the girls of a village gather together under some improvised leafy hut at the outskirts of the village for a few weeks before the Dusserah festival, and young men of the village or those from the neighbouring villages frequent the hut, dance, sing, and woo their sweethearts till exchanges of gifts take place and the intimacy is talked about in the village. The choice is then implemented by the parents of the young man, who carry pots of liquor and rice to the house of the bride who have the option of accepting or refusing the gifts. In the latter case the gifts are doubled and negotiations take definite shape.

The Hos and cognate tribes of Munda ethnic stock must pay a heavy bride price. The Hos pay in coins and cattle, the Mundas only in money. The bride price depends on the status of the parents and varies from *killi* to *killi* (clan to clan) as well. As the parents and relations are required to finance young men to obtain the required bride price, the young folk of both sexes are less free to select their partners. Yet the final selection lies in their hands and they can signify their refusal at the time of the ceremonial distribution of *illi* (rice-beer). As soon as the bride and the bridegroom are brought for the first time publicly together and it is done at the 'Era Thil ceremony', they exchange glances and have to inform their respective relatives of their mutual approval. This is done by the bridegroom offering *illi* to the bride who if she approves of him, has to distribute the liquor to all relations after partaking of it herself.

The bride will then on her part, offer the liquor to the bridegroom who has to repeat the formality. The bride, even if she is willing, may not immediately accept the leaf-cup from the bridegroom as it is customary for the latter to offer some money, clothes or jewellery to elicit her public approval.

Marriage in tribal society is neither a sacrament nor is it indissoluble in life as is found among the Hindus. Primitive society recognizes the chances of friction between man and wife in domestic life and also provides for maladjustment. Divorce and mutual separation are freely allowed for incompetence, cruelty, desertion and adultery. With all such provisions, divorces are infrequent and the divorcee, man or woman, does not enjoy a great social status or respect. Where the men are subservient to women, the former are the aggrieved party, and public opinion favours the aggressor. The Tharus of Nainital Tarai afford an example of female dominance and often the husband has no alternative but to pray to God for redress against maltreatment by the wife.

In the Chota Nagpur area, women enjoy considerable freedom of movement and husbands have to behave and treat their wives as equal partners. Where caste influence has permeated, the free movement of women has been circumscribed, and the lack of opportunities for intercommunication has pushed the women into a subordinate status. Restriction on the freedom of women has encouraged polygyny and domestic quarrels are of frequent occurrence in polygynous families.

### 3

Adultery is punishable by the social code of most primitive tribes, and the tribal or clan panchayat has to see that such offence is not frequent in the society. Where tribal solidarity has not been greatly disturbed, ex-communication and heavy compensation to the aggrieved party reduce the incidence of adultery but in tribes in the process of detribalization and disintegration, tribal supervision and vigilance have failed to check adultery and, fine, and ostracism are no cure for such social lapses. Yet, the tribal elders frown at such guilt and public pressure though ineffective in most cases, tries to assert itself by limiting the social freedom of the persons concerned. Time was, when an adulterer inflicted punishment on himself, just as any person violating a social usage or order committed suicide to escape the consequence of the act, and saving the society from disaster, afterwards. Today, he pays money compensation and gives tribal feast and if these are not enough, he leaves

the village for a period of a year or so, so that people may forget his social lapse.

Where women are dominant and choose their partners in marriage, as among the Tharus of Nainital Tarai, adultery is not infrequent. The tribal elders convene meetings to fix the guilt and punish the offenders, but the complaint must be preferred by the husband himself, or by the wife as the case may be, but as women are the usual culprits, the husband dares not accuse the wife unless he can enlist the support of his friends. Every tribe, however, has its penal provision against adultery and some tribes view it with great horror. Tribal gods are believed to be offended and misfortune visits the family concerned. Even the wandering and vagrant tribes who allow sufficient latitude to their women in this respect have laws which are strictly enforced against those guilty of such social lapse.

The Nats, the Sansiyas and the Doms, allow laxity of morals and licence within the tribe, but would not tolerate any between their women and men belonging to other tribes or castes. Strict injunction is given to women in this respect, and the women may tempt, decoy and develop intimacy with strangers if that is required for their profession of crime, but they should not violate the tribal code regarding sexual licence. How far such demarcation is possible is a matter of belief. In cases of adultery being proved before the tribal elders the offenders have to compensate the aggrieved husband or wife as the case may be, and also the tribal people, which can be done by standing a dinner to the elders or a tribal feast. In some tribes, the man and woman found guilty, are allowed to live as man and wife but in most cases they are left to shift for themselves among hostile and whispering neighbours.

Premarital licence is recognized in tribal society and in those tribes where late marriage is customary, virginity is not essential for marriage. Among the Munda tribes girls and boys are allowed to mix freely and marriage may not take place even after they pass their teens. Where the bachelors and maidens of the tribe are housed together, as among the Gonds of the Central Provinces, sex training is imparted in traditional ways, and the youth of both sexes learn the mystery of sex before they unite to live as man and wife. Where tribal custom has now been modified to suit changed social outlook, licence is allowed during festivals and ceremonies but the curtain is dropped on such licence immediately the festival terminates and the ceremonies end.

Many tribes again have introduced child marriage partly as a claim to higher social status, as it is a recognized practice

among their Hindu neighbours, and partly as a measure of restricting premarital licence. The village elders and substantial families among the Mundas and Hos of Chota Nagpur plateau, the Bhils of Gujarat and Nimar (C.P.) have popularized child marriage to restrict licence, though the freedom of movement obtained in these tribes finds frequent expression in later years in the child wife's refusal to settle down in the husband's house or deserting the husband by planned elopement. In the Dehradun district, the Jaunsar Bawar, also in the Simla hills, child marriage does not always mean that the girl when she attains puberty, must come to live with her husband. A return of the bride price and the expenses involved effect a release of the girl from the marital obligation.

## 4

All the tribes of Munda descent in Chota Nagpur and elsewhere have to pay bride price to marry. In earlier days, they probably paid this in cattle, as money economy had not asserted itself. The Hos today pay both in cattle and money, the Mundas and Santhals in coins, though some exchange of gifts, clothes, etc., is more or less indispensable among the substantial section of these tribes. Under a system of quasi-communal economics, marriage was not difficult, as the bride price was provided by the community by voluntary subscription, a common pool controlled by the village Munda or the Mahato. Every family in earlier days used to keep extra heads of cattle to fulfil its obligations to the clan. Even today, the obligation is recognized by the community but due to increased wants and an individualistic attitude to life, the form remains, though the function of the custom has certainly changed, and voluntary assistance today does not provide the means of securing wife to the less fortunate villagers.

The substantial cultivators, the village headman and also the priest, if the latter serves a group of villages or owns service land as in most parts of Chota Nagpur, spend two to three hundred rupees. Some spend more. A new tendency has been evident for some time past among the ranked people, particularly those who live in the neighbourhood of urban centres, and have been influenced by contacts with higher castes among the Hindus, to reciprocate gifts between families entering into matrimonial alliance. The bride price is paid in money, cattle and jewellery but the parents of the girls also make substantial gifts to the bridegroom and feel proud about such display of status. In the lower classes, the average person, for example, toils hard to secure bride price and marriage among the Munda tribes



is becoming more and more difficult for these people. While the substantial section is adopting child marriage, an intolerable situation has been created among the poorer Hos and Mundas of Chota Nagpur.

Marriage among the Munda tribes was settled by the young people concerned. Mutual choice decided who should marry whom, and as the bride price was paid in cattle subscribed to by the clan, young people had no great hurdle to cross. The ceremony was a simple affair. The bride painted vermilion on the forehead of the bridegroom and the latter reciprocated the same before an admiring crowd. The ritual part of the marriage was very simple, indeed, and tribal feasts and friendly visits made the union binding and memorable. The bridegroom's party assembled at the outskirts of the bride's village where a mock fight took place in which the bride's people were soon overpowered, and triumphantly the bridegroom, his friends and relations of both sexes, entered the bride's village and obliged the members thereof by their cordiality and appreciative demeanour.

With the introduction of money economy and its effect on the communal system of economics, a sort of adjustment could be anticipated, for most of the tribes of Munda affiliation were living in compact areas under a system of protective administration or assisted by philanthropic agencies. But Hindu ideas about marriage and social propriety permeated aboriginal cultural life and the parents became shy of marrying their daughters as it involved receiving bride price which was excessively high for their means. With the increase of their wants, girls were sold to the highest bidder till the parents who received high bride price were looked down upon by the community. The former therefore did not exhibit any anxiety to marry their daughters though a high bride price was coveted by the parents and even if it meant some social status for the bride. The proposal for marriage therefore was to come from the bridegroom's side, and the institution of 'go-between' who negotiate marriages was introduced. Many families today have memorized the amount of *gonong* or bride price they have paid in their marriages and even young boys and girls know by heart what *gonong* their parents had paid to marry. Men and women who married without payment of bride price, or paid nominal amount hang down their heads in shame and yet many are the families who have married without paying bride price.

As marriage involves payment of bride price, the middleman negotiates between families desiring to marry boys and girls, and the arranged marriages have become customary among substantial cultivators and tribal officials. The average man

has to find out some other way to secure wives, and tribal society recognizes irregular forms of marriage, as otherwise the tribal structure is likely to disintegrate beyond recovery. Thus the tribal society has to sanction irregular forms of mating, though the elders and those who can well afford, have adopted elaborate rituals and ceremonies which bring them inline with their neighbours, the caste people.

Although the tribal groups are at the bottom of the social pyramid, the adoption of traits of one group by the other does not follow any spiral order, on the other hand, it has been found that the tribal groups have adopted customs and traits belonging to the clean castes but have not been greatly influenced by contacts with the unclean ones.

The various methods of securing wives among the Munda tribes have been detailed in the monographs by Roy and recently in 'A Tribe in Transition'. These have been devised to meet the needs of their cultural adjustment. Tribal economy has undergone transformation due to contacts with advanced groups. Payment in kind has been replaced by money transaction, and the voluntary assistance previously given to young men by the members of the clan or village to help indigent families is no longer obligatory or generous enough. Thus the marriage of Munda maidens is indefinitely postponed and young men find it extremely hard to marry and settle down. So long as the parents are alive, the question of maintaining the unmarried daughters does not arise but when the latter have to share the establishment with their brothers and sisters-in-law quarrels and bitterness do arise which make joint living impossible at times. There are hundreds of songs in Munda language detailing the sufferings of aged maidens, the tyranny and maltreatment of elder brothers' wives and the lack of attention on the part of eligible young men. The jealousy of the elder brother's wife and of the step-mother is described in songs popularly sung by maidens all over the Munda country. The following is typical :

Elder brother's wife's jealousy

Step mother's jealousy

Clouds above tremble as they quarrel

Stomach, stomach, I am hungry

Water, water, I am thirsty.

Where, Oh Hili (E. B.'s wife) water can be found ?

King's tank, queen's tank

Go, find it there ?

Even a glass of water is denied by the elder brother's wife or the step-mother, and the aged Munda maiden is directed towards the village tank to drink water.

Thus side by side with ceremonial form of marriage which is rich with varied folk rites and customs which is given a high status in tribal society, irregular forms of union are recognized and the two popular forms of union among the Munda tribes are (1) Oportipi and (2) Anader. The first is marriage by capture or by use of force. When young men desirous of marriage fail to secure the bride price or who want to marry girls of their choice but are prevented for tribal or personal reasons to do so, they may plan and capture the girls of their choice. If the girl does not make any loud protest or does not refuse to take food from her captor, she remains as the lawful bride of the latter and no payment of bride price is required to validate the union. In some cases the man responsible for the capture may negotiate with the parents and settle a bride price which the girl's parents usually accept, thus giving a formal status to the irregular union. In the Kolhan today, capture marriages are mutually planned and executed and thus are devoid of any criminal motive.

In Oportipi marriages, it is the bridegroom who plans and forces his choice on the girl he wants to possess, but in the Anader it is the girl who forces herself into the household of the man she is passionately fond of. Her intrusion is not liked by the parents of any young man but her determination is ultimately rewarded by the family, by allowing her to stay in their house as the lawfully wedded wife of their son. First she stays as a domestic help, as a drudge. She works her way up against a hostile family, even the young man, her choice and goal in this case evades her, does not remain in the house, neither the parents at the initial stage want their son to develop any intimacy with the unwelcome member in the house. If the young man was already familiar with the girl, he might steal visits into her room, but the parents must not know, as in that case it becomes really hard for the girl. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, the girl succeeds in her mission. In most cases, the young man sympathizes with her, and that gives her the necessary courage to pursue her intent desire. Thus both the forms of marriage are legal in the Munda country, and provide the necessary escape from the hard conditions of life, resulting from high bride price and its associate evils. Such has been the solution of the marital problem in earlier days under unsettled conditions which made the Hindu society recognize eight forms of marriage, and the Hos and Mundas under conditions of detribalization have forged similar practices to tide over social crises.

## CHAPTER XIII

### POLYANDRY

The various conditions under which man and woman 'come together to love, mate and produce children' are of great interest to the sociologist as it is with the average normal man and woman. Courtship, love and mating in any society are influenced by 'the way the sexes face one another in public and in private as well as the economic cooperation that is demanded of them'. Westermarck has shown that monogamy is as old as human society but that it is not the only kind of marriage is sufficiently clear from the religious and sacerdotal literature in all parts of the globe including the Bible. Unless polygamy is banned by law, its incidence is pretty widespread.

Among the lower cultures in India polygyny is a very common institution. In some tribes the possession of a number of wives determines the social status of the person concerned and various standards are insisted by the tribes which allow such practice. Polygyny is found among the Nagas and most of the pre-Dravidian tribes, it is found in Africa, Australia and New-zealand. The Mohammedans are allowed to take more wives than one, and in the eastern districts of Bengal, the high fertility of the Mohammedans is partly ascribable to the widespread practice of polygyny. This is how one district in Bengal i.e., Mymensingh, alone is responsible for settling a large part of Assam. Polygyny was also popular among the Kulins of Bengal and the social history of Bengal during the last one hundred years would provide interesting data on the incidence and consequences of polygyny as well as hypergamy. With the growth of individuality in women and the changed economic conditions, polygyny has a restricted role to play in future.

Polyandry, though far more restricted than polygyny, is still being practised in various parts of the world. It is found among certain American Indians, the Eskimos and among the tribes of the Alaskan coast of north America. It is found among the south sea Islanders, in the Malay Archipelago, and the island of Lancelot, but 'rarely reported from Madagascar'. It is found among the Wahuna of East Africa. In Tibet it was and still is the traditional practice. From Kashmir to Assam, among the Mongoloid people in some form or other polyandry is reported. The Todas and Kotas of the South and the Tiyans practise this form of marriage. In Ceylon polyandry is said to have been common but 'was suppressed by the sixties of the last century'. It was also said to have been practised in Arabia felix and from mythological evidence it

appears that it was frequently resorted to by the Aryan-speaking peoples. Westermarck says that polyandry is generally confined to non-Aryan, Tibetan or Dravidian tribes and castes, i.e., among the Mongoloid people and those speaking some branch of the Dravidian family of languages. Polyandry is commonly practised today in Jaunsar Bawar, in the Dehradun district, in the Simla hills, in Rawain and neighbouring tracts, by the Rajputs and Brahmins who belong to the Indo-Aryan stock, also by the artisan castes who are of mixed descent, so that it is not correct to say that polyandry is a non-Aryan institution. There are two types of polyandry in India. In one the husbands of a woman are brothers, in the other they may not own any kinship. The Todas and the Kotas allow cousins and even clansmen to share their wife or wives.

From the distribution of polyandry, it appears that it is not a primitive institution. The Tibetans and other Mongoloid people are not primitive in the sense we understand the term, nor were the Nairs who till recently practised this form of mating. The evolutionists have explained polyandry as an important phase in the development of marriage. For example, Morgan postulated an elaborate scheme with consanguine or Malayan family based on the supposed inter-marriages of brothers and sisters in a group, to Punalulan or Hawaiian family founded upon the supposed inter-marriages of several brothers own or collateral to each others husband in a group, Syndasmian or pairing family founded upon the marriage of a male with a female under the form of marriage but without exclusive cohabitation, to patriarchal family or the marriage of one man to several wives and finally to monogamian family, founded upon marriage between single pairs. According to Morgan, therefore, no fewer than fifteen normal stages in the evolution of marriage and the family must have preceded marriage between single pairs and of the family itself in the modern sense of the term. MacLenan says that polyandry must be regarded as a modification of and an advance from promiscuity.

The evolutionists believe that the matriarchal form of family organization is prior to the patriarchal. In the matriarchal system, the mother's family designation is given to the children, as the latter live with the mother and the mother's brother becomes the habitual guardian of the family. Husbands in the matriarchal societies are only visitors and do not wield any authority over the children. But many matriarchal societies allow the husband to live independently with his wife by setting up separate establishments within the matriarchal group, and though land passes on from mother to daughter, certain

kinds of property also pass from father to son. The next step would be for the father to pass on his own name to the children, so that the children get their affiliation not to the mother and her family but to the father. The final stage is reached when land is also passed from father to son with provision perhaps for the maintenance of the daughters. Thus patriarchal society may develop out of the matriarchal through a long process of transition in which the different features of the patriarchal society are gradually acquired and handed on to the children. Today, most of the advanced societies are patriarchal no doubt, but there are some which may be called maternal-paternal, for the features of both the structures are found among them.

That property considerations have influenced the structure of social life is common knowledge to field anthropologists. Matrilineal system of inheritance can be traced to the requirements of horticulture and the introduction of the plough has displaced woman in agriculture at least from her being the sole agriculturist of the family or clan. Social needs, such as the performance of religious ceremonies and obligation to cremate the deceased members of the family and to inter their bones in the family resting-place under the clan stone (*mawbah*) have made the Khasi vest the family property in the youngest daughter. Mills has pointed out the complications that have arisen from contacts of the Khasis with non-Khasis, particularly when the custodian of the family property changes her religion, as different interpretations have been put by interested parties among the Khasis both Christian and non-Christian. Misconceptions have arisen due as Cantille (*Notes on the Khasi-Law*) says, to the fact that courts use the legal term 'heir' for the custodian of the property instead of treating her as the head of a Hindu undivided family as she really is. The matriliney of the Khasis is associated with the tribal customs prescribing the role of the youngest daughter in family worship and general mortuary rites.

Both the Khasis and the Garos, are passing through a transitional stage of maternal-paternal descent. The Garos marry the youngest daughter to the maternal uncle's son, who becomes *Nokrom* and assumes guardianship of the property. The Christian converts among them maintain the matriarchal system, but are trying to read in their customs implications which never existed. Inter-marriage with non-Khasis of Khasi women has complicated the Khasi system of inheritance. The children of a Khasi woman by a non-Khasi are eligible to inherit the property of the former, but under particular rules, the property of the non-Khasi husband is equally transferable by

law to the children. The situation today lies, as Mills puts it, in the following lines: 'If the man abandons the woman and his children or leaves her a widow, she will in due course take their shares from what she leaves according to Khasi custom. If, on the other hand, the man sees through the upbringing of the children, they will grow up non-Khasis and inherit according to his custom. Or as not infrequently happens, death or other causes may part the couple when some children are grown up and some are still small and in such cases half the family will grow up Khasis and the other non-Khasis.' (Essays in Anthropology Presented to S. C. Roy, Lucknow, 1942).

In the Nayar form of Polyandry which is usually known as of the matriarchal type, a woman may have a number of husbands who may or may not be related. So long as a woman lives with one of her husbands, the other husband or husbands cannot have any effective marital rights over the wife. K. M. Panikkar (J. R. A. I Vol. XLVIII) denies the existence of non-fraternal polyandry among the Nayars and observes that the only type of polyandry to be found among the Nayars is of the fraternal variety. Dr Aiyappan (*Man*, 1932, 99) believes that the non-fraternal polyandry was generally circumscribed within an Iangu (endogamous group) and was subject to the supervision and control of the head of the extended matrilineal family. That polyandry did not only apply to certain areas of Malabar where the Nambudiri tyrannized over the Nayars, as contested by Panikkar, has been fully demonstrated by Aiyappan. In the Toda and Kota form of polyandry, the husbands are brothers or clan mates, so also among the Tibetans and other Mongoloid people who practise polyandry. Amongst the Tibetans several brothers share one wife and the latter comes to live with the husbands. If therefore paternity is not certain among the Nairs or among those who follow the matriarchal type of polyandry, the line of paternity at least is certain amongst those who practise the fraternal variety. The actual father in both the cases is not known. Biological fatherhood may differ from sociological fatherhood. This is how all polyandrous societies possess some conventional method of ascertaining parentage. In Jaunsar Bawar, for example, if the brothers marry one wife the eldest of the three brothers will be addressed by the children as 'Bari Baba', the second who may be in charge of the cattle will be addressed as 'Dangar Baba', the third who may be with the flock of sheep is 'Bhedi Baba', and so on.

The Khasas of Jaunsar Bawar live in joint family. A group of brothers live together with one, two or more wives under the same roof, the brothers sharing the wives without any exclusive

right of any brother to cohabit with any one wife. The children are maintained by the family and there is a conventional way of ascertaining fatherhood among them. The eldest born child is fathered upon the eldest brother and the next child on the second and so on. If four brothers have two or perhaps one wife between them and four or five children are born, but one of the younger brothers marries again, the children remain with the woman and the latter cannot go to the younger brothers but must live with the elder, but children are entitled to equal shares from the four brothers which are paid to the elder. If they separate the elder brother bears the expenses of their marriage.

Customary laws of inheritance make the eldest brother receive the lion's share of the property in case of partition. According to the laws of inheritance in force, property is divided in the following way. After deducting one thing of each kind and one field for Pitans, viz., on account of seniority, and half of that field, viz., Kanchoo, for the youngest, all the rest are divided equally among them. The family house in Jaunsar Bawar belongs to the eldest brother, the garden belongs to him, the crops are his, and the cattle and sheep are owned by him and the wife and children, and their maintenance and control are his. He is the governor of the family, the custodian of the property, and his brothers accept his rule and authority without grumble. Cases have been found when a younger brother has rebelled against this social and economic monopoly, has forced the elder brother to a partition of the family property or to the granting of exclusive right of cohabitation with a particular wife, but inasmuch as he has gained in his individuality, his wife has deserted him afterwards. It may sound strange to a capitalistic society but it is a fact that if a man happens to be the only son of his parents and is sufficiently well provided with patrimony, he stands little chance of keeping a wife, for a wife would not care to live with one man as she would have to do all the work for the family. He must therefore find out his cousins or collaterals before he decides to marry for a woman would like to marry a group of brothers, as that would further secure her against widowhood. The brothers who have to move out from home frequently on errands or on business, with cattle or sheep, do not fail in their duty to their common wife or wives as one of the brothers can always live with the latter to meet the obligation of the married state.

The hard and meagre life on the bleak tops of hills, the extreme difficulty of lone existence, or independent living, make partition of property uneconomic. Cooperation between villagers and members who constitute the family group is



indispensable not only for maintenance but also for protection against organized theft and robbery. Big families on the other hand are more conducive to securing a living than a small one. When I asked a group of Jaunsaris why they still preferred to live under polyandrous conditions while their neighbours, the Garhwalis, hate this institution, I was told that they did not envy the latter. The Garhwalis, they said, left their homes due to the disintegration of joint family. Previously land in Garhwal was measured in acres, then by roods, then by poles, then by yards and feet, till they all left their home and are today distributed all over the country as menials, domestic servants or army recruits. The Jaunsaris and their neighbours in Bawar, love their home and do not want to emulate the Garhwalis.

The effects of polyandry are diverse. A firsthand inquiry in Jaunsar Bawar revealed that polyandry is not the only form of marriage practised by the people, monogamy and polygyny, sororal and indefinite, are frequently found, while extra-connubial relations are permitted under specific conditions. There is a double standard of morality recognized by the Khasas. A woman in her husband's village must observe strict rules of propriety and marital obligations but daughters in the village are not required to conform to any approved social code; thus allowing undue licence to the latter. But wives in one village are daughters in another and periodical migrations make extra-connubial intimacy possible.

Although it is possible for a group of brothers to marry more than one wife, at a time, in practice a family seldom has more than two wives living together with the group of brothers as husbands. Usually the divorce of a wife is followed by another marriage. It is also a fact that the number of children in polyandrous families is very low, for 4 to 5 brothers between them possess 3 to 4 children and sometimes less. Besides there is a preponderance of male children. The incidence of sterility in women is very high. A husband waits 2 to 5 years to see if the wife bears any child; if she fails, she feels that she is not much wanted in the house and thus she seeks a new home. If she is not wanted in the house, if she is lazy or suffers from sexual disease which is a frequent complaint in these parts, or if she is guilty of some grave social misdemeanour, such as unwillingness to cohabit with the eldest brother so long as he remains in the house, she is divorced and the next husband of the woman has not to pay any big dowry either. But if she wants to leave her husband herself and if she does not suffer from any disease or has already proved her fertility, the husband usually demands

an exorbitant price from her fiancée and this amount must be paid by the latter if she is to marry him. In such case, the larger the number of divorces, a woman goes through the higher the bride price she fetches, for the bride price must provide for compensation to the previous husband and his family.

The larger the number of social contexts into which an institution fits in the greater the number of interests it fulfils. The longevity of an institution or a trait depends therefore on the function it performs or the interests it stimulates. The institution of polyandry has survived in Jaunsar Bawar as it fulfils a variety of purposes. The origin of an institution may be due to single or multiple causes. Polyandry may be the result of a disturbed balance of the sexes. Economic conditions engender social habits. Property consideration among the Tibetans, Todas and other groups are perhaps responsible for polyandry. The custom of hypergamy under pre-control conditions may lead to destruction of female children and a consequent shortage of females may result in polyandry. But the durability of the institution depends upon the persistence of the stimuli that have given shape to the institutions.

Westermarck in his *History of Human Marriage* (1911) said that the chief and immediate cause of polyandry was no doubt 'a numerical disproportion between the sexes' although in the later edition of this classical work he did not stress this point too strongly. In those areas where polyandry exists as a solidified system of marital relationship of traditional antiquity as, for example, in Tibet, Sikkim, in Ladhak, Lahoul and other parts there is hardly any numerical disproportion between the sexes among the 'effective population' (by effective is meant the population after deducting those in monasteries and others who have taken a vow of celibacy). Sir A. Cunningham says that in Ladhak, the females outnumber the males and Moorcroft and Trebeck (*Travels in the Himalaya Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab, in Ladhak and Kashmere*, Vol. I, p. 322) came to the conclusion that 'the women of Ladhak in consequence of their great proportional number, find it difficult to obtain subsistence'. Risley did not think that polyandry of Tibet and Sikkim was due to any disproportion between the sexes as he found the sexes fairly equal there. The undue prominence of the maternal uncle, the extraordinary freedom of women, double standard of morality enjoyed by women among the Khasas, all suggest matriarchal matrix on which a patriarchal culture has been superimposed. The feudal system which still survives in this area, accounts for an elaborate territorial organization

based on a confederacy of Thokdars or Sayanas, and also consequent desire to concentrate power in the senior male member of the family. These have given rise to a rigid code of joint living and co-partnership and may have sanctioned the prevailing type of marital life in these parts.

## CHAPTER XIV

### KINSHIP CATEGORIES

#### 1

There are different ways of classifying relatives. Blood, parentage, marriage and contiguity of residence are the usual determinants of relationship in human society. Relationship may be lineal or collateral, matrilineal or patrilineal, by descent or by marriage, the latter often cross-cutting blood relationship. Professor Kroeber, from a comparative study of tribal systems, as they are found, formulated the principles according to which known systems of relationship are ordered. The chief categories of relationship as conceived by Kroeber prevailing in the world today are as follows :—

1. The difference between persons of the same and of separate generations is recognized ; father and grandfather, uncle and cousin are examples.

2. The difference between lineal and collateral relationships is maintained. Father is distinguished from father's brother.

3. Difference of age within one generation is recognized as, for example, the distinction between the older and the younger brother.

4. The sex of the relative ; except cousin the English terms of relationship are all discriminative of sex.

5. The sex of the speaker is recognized in the terms of kinship. The father and mother may receive one designation from a man and another from a woman. Among the Marathas, a man calls his brother's child *putanya*, while a woman calls her brother's child *bhaca*. The Bhotiyas address elder sister as *pota* when a man is speaking and as *tata* when a woman speaks, younger sister's husband as *tete* (man speaking), but when a woman addresses him, she says *poa*.

6. The sex of the person through whom relationship exists. In most of the advanced systems, this category is not operative and conventional qualifications are added to distinguish relations as, for example, 'paternal grandfather' and 'maternal grandfather'.

7. Blood relatives are distinguished from connections by marriage, father-in-law from father.

8. Recognizes the condition of life of the person (dead or alive, married or unmarried) through whom relationship exists. This is not operative in advanced societies.

Of the eight categories 3, 5, 6 and 8 are not operative in English and most European and Indo-European languages but the rest are recognized.

There are two principal systems of kinship terms, one in which the terms are applicable not to single individual person, but to classes of relatives which may be very large, and the other in which the terms denote single individual person. Even in the terminology of relationship of most of the Caucasian peoples, which Dr Rivers speaks of as the 'family' system, sometimes a group of individuals is denoted by one common term so that the difference in the two systems, classificatory and descriptive is one of degree only. In the former, a term is used to denote a large number of individuals while in the descriptive system of terminology a term refers ordinarily to one single individual.

The Sema Nagas use one word *aza* to denote mother, father's brother's wife and mother's sister; the same people use *apu* to denote father, father's brother and mother's sister's husband. Again they use *ani* to denote father's sister, wife's mother, husband's mother, husband's brother's wife. The Angami Nagas use *thi* to denote wife's elder brother, wife's elder brother's wife, mother's brother's wife, father's brother's wife, elder brother's wife, husband's elder sister etc. Amongst the Hos of Chota Nagpur, mother's brother, father's sister's husband and the father of both husband and wife are all called *hoyar*. Again, father's sister, mother's brother's wife and mother of both husband and wife are denoted by *hatom*.

The essential characteristics of the descriptive type as defined by Morgan are (1) that the terms express actual blood relationship, terms such as father, sister being only applied to persons having actual blood kinship with the speaker, (2) that the collateral lines are kept distinct from each other and divergent from the linear, so that the terms nephew and niece are applied to persons related collaterally, the divergence of the successive generations being indicated in the names employed and (3) that in most cases except for the nearer relatives, the terms are descriptive, i.e., there are in what he believed to be the typical and normal forms of the system, no general terms like uncle, niece or cousin, the person being specifically described as father's brother, sister's daughter, mother's brother's son.<sup>1</sup> The classificatory system, on the other hand, reckons kinship between groups rather than individuals and the collateral lines are not kept distinct and divergent from the lineal.

<sup>1</sup> In this system, all the kinship terms refer to the single biological family comprised of man, wife and children. Terms for other relations not included in the family are usually vague and indefinite.

## 2

The question of the origin of the terminology of relationship has been approached from different standpoints. Professor Kroeber claims that descriptive terms are more precise and as in English, restricted in categories, whereas classificatory recognize more categories but express them less efficiently. The purposes to be served by the two systems are the same in each case, and tribal differences are to be explained 'as matters of psychology rather than sociology'. Professor Kroeber believes that nothing can be inferred from the particular systems of kinship terms a group uses, and thus the study of kinship systems has little practical use. 'Kinship terminologies are arbitrary, and unexplainable by any principle other than accident'. Against this nominalistic point of view, we have also to consider terms of relationship which can be deduced from social functions or from particular kinds of marriage.

Dr Rivers has proved that terms of relationship arise from social functions antecedent to their use.

The Hos use the term *hoyar* to denote mother's brother, father's sister's husband and the father of both husband and wife. The custom of cross-cousin marriage is very much prevalent amongst these people, and as a result of this form of marriage, the mother's brother and the father's sister's husband get to the position of father-in-law, consequently the Hos possess only one term to denote mother's brother, father's sister's husband and the father of both husband and wife. For wife's sister, most primitive societies have no special term. Sometimes it is conventional to address her by a term of endearment or mild reproach as *sali* in Bengali. Wife's sister is a potential mate and as such a separate term is not required.

The Semas use the term *angu* to mean 1. mother's brother, 2. mother's brother's child (uncle), 3. husband's father, 4. wife's father, 5. husband's brother, 6. wife's father. Thus the Semas use the same term for as many as six relations and it is also used to include persons of two generations. The Semas are polygynous, not only chiefs marry a number of wives, the well-to-do Sema will at once take to more wives than one. The ordinary Sema may often avoid a second wife for poverty but the tribe as a whole is polygynous. The Semas allow a widow to inherit her husband's property, so when a Sema is seen to marry his deceased father's widow, we may explain it by reference to the law of inheritance which obliges a Sema to marry his own father's widow, other than his own mother of course, in order to be able to inherit the property otherwise devolving upon the widow. If of course the widow does not agree to the marriage

sanctioned by custom, she is allowed to depart from her husband's shed, with all the movable property her husband left and which she has a right to inherit. The general rule is that the widow of the deceased marry the sons of her deceased husband and live in the family as governess or mistress of the family property. In case a man dies leaving only young children, the property of the deceased devolves upon the man's brother who takes care of the property and after his death, the nephews and sons of the deceased stand in the same relation to the widow of the deceased. Dr Hutton suggests an origin for this custom. "It appears likely", writes Dr Hutton, "that it may have its origin in its obvious advantages. The widow naturally wishes to retain the care of her children but as these pass into the guardianship and keeping of her husband's heir, she can only do so by marrying him, a procedure which also ensures her retention of the ornaments that formed her dowry. This also avoids, from the point of view of male, step-mother." Of course, if the widows, as is but natural, are so zealous of taking care of their children, this could easily be effected by a sanction from Sema society. As widows serve useful purposes in the domestic circle, the care of the children might naturally have been left with them. As regards the retention of the ornaments, the Sema laws allow a widow to depart from her husband's shed with all the movable property her husband had left and which she has a right to inherit, in case she does not agree to marry her deceased husband's heir. So that this marriage is not necessary to safeguard the interests of the widow. Perhaps, this custom of marrying the widow of the deceased father may be traced to an idea of property in women. The women are regarded as movable properties and the sons being the natural heirs, inherit the widows of their deceased father.

Whatever be the reason, either the desire to inherit the property of the deceased husband, or the widow's anxiety to take care of her children by the deceased, a Sema marries his father's widow but not his real mother. He may also marry his mother's own sister, his father's sister's daughter, mother's brother's daughter. As Dr Hutton puts it, "A Sema may not marry his wife's mother but can marry practically any female relation of his own mother on her father's side. For although some Semas are said to forbid marriage with mother's sister by the same mother even though the father be different, the vast majority hold that a man may marry his mother's sister by the same father and mother without any suggestion of impropriety". His marriage code explains the use of the same term for a number of distinct relations in other societies.

The identity of relationship existing between 1. mother, 2. father's brother's wife and 3. mother's sister which are all denoted by *aza* can be explained on the ground that a Sema may marry his 'mother' (widow of his deceased father, other than his real mother), his father's brother's wife and his mother's sister. So *aza* denotes all three relationships named above (a Sema is also entitled to marry his father's brother's widow).

The Sema as well as the Angami will not utter his or her name or that of the husband or wife. He can take any name save and except that of himself and his wife and a woman that of her husband. Hutton writes, "The Angami has exactly the same delicacy about mentioning his or her name and of wife or husband, as the case may be, though with the Angami too, the feeling is rapidly weakening". It is a curious fact that the excuse given by the Angami for his reluctance to mention his own name is that he would be like an owl which is always repeating its own name (*buthee*). This notion, we are told, is exactly paralleled by the same notion found in the Philippine Islands, though there the bird, the example of which is shunned, is a raven instead of an owl (Golden Bough, 3rd Edition, Vol. III, page 329. Hutton, Sema Nagas, page 143, foot note 2). The hesitation of a Sema to utter his name and that of his wife as well as that of a wife to utter her husband's name may admit of different explanation. The rule of residence, matrilocal or patrilocal has aligned kinship differently in different societies and may have sanctioned many taboos in primitive society. The taboo relating to the use of personal names, among the Polias and Rajbansis of north Bengal is probably designed to protect persons from magical use of their names. So also the age of a man is difficult to ascertain in primitive society partly no doubt, to ignorance and partly to the general fear of disclosing identity of persons.

Among the Hos, father's sister's children have no special terms in Ho terminology, they are called *hatom hon* and *hatom undi*, i.e., father's sister's children. The mother's brother's son is classed with the father's sister's child, wife's brother's child, wife's brother's daughter's son, daughter's daughter, they are all denoted by the term *gain*, but when addressing these relatives the personal name of the addressee is preferred. The use of one term for persons of two generations is significant when it means husband's sister's child, wife's brother's child, how can it be applied to the daughter's sons or the daughter's daughter which are one generation below the former? The Hos are very fond of cross-cousin marriage. Formerly this form of marriage was compulsory. In case a man for any reason



cannot marry his cousin he has to give presents to the mother's brother and without this no marriage is regarded as valid. In the same way, the mother's brother also has to satisfy his nephew, before he can marry his daughter to a chosen bridegroom. Marriage with the mother's sister is also common amongst the Hos. So to account for the use of the term *gain* these two social functions are to be taken into consideration.

Thus, social functions often explain the use of terms but the use of terms can also determine social relations. Often, old servants are addressed as 'uncle' or 'brother', wife's brother is also addressed as brother, wife's father as father. The use of the term brother and sister for persons not related by blood or by marriage even, have tabooed marriage between them. It is inconceivable to think of marriage between a god-father and a god-daughter, though there may not be any social or religious bar to marriage. In this case marriage ban or social function follows the adoption of terms. All terms of relationship therefore do not result from social functions antecedent to their use.

The vocabulary of a people generally expresses the cultural stage of the society. A poor vocabulary results from low culture; wants being limited, the needs of the language are small. In such societies, the terms of relationship also must be limited and that is how the same term is used to denote persons of two sexes, which cannot be explained either by assuming a psychological similarity between the persons concerned or by antecedent social functions. We may therefore conclude that the origin of a particular term of kinship may be an accident, but once it is introduced it fulfils certainly some important function in the society, it identifies persons, recognizes kinship, explains social functions, such as marriage, taboo social intercourse, even affiliates strangers to one another. The social function may be the cause as well as the effect of the use of terms of relationship, the latter may be independent of social functions, they may be simple terms of address 'arbitrary' and unexplainable as Prof. Kroeber claims.

"When a kinship term does not reflect the current kinship usage", writes Dr Irawati Karve "the very disharmony between the word and the usage becomes significant social fact, useful for the construction of the cultural history of a people".<sup>1</sup> In her interesting survey of the kinship terminology and usages of the Marhatta country, Mrs Irawati Karve has found an intimate relation between matriarchy and cross-cousin marriage.

<sup>1</sup> Irawati Karve: Kinship Terminology and Kinship Usages of the Maratha Country. Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute. Vol. I No. 2-4 March 1940.

From the distribution of cross-cousin marriage in the whole of peninsular India with the exception of the southwest, i.e., Malabar and Travancore, and the colonization myths that are current, Mrs Karve thinks that wherever the northern Vedic people have colonized, the patriarchy has superseded the matriarchy. No specific colonization myth exists for the coast of Malabar except that for the infiltration of the Nambudiri Brahmins. It is this corner which has remained predominantly matriarchal while the rest of the peninsula is patriarchal. 'The importance of the maternal uncle,' writes Mrs Karve, 'and the very frequent association in stories and adventures of the maternal uncle and nephew, do suggest that at some very remote times the tract was matriarchal' (Bull. Deccan Collage Res. Inst., Vol. III No.1-2., p.32). Cross-cousin marriage is an institution found both among the primitive tribes and advanced people like the Marhattas. Cross-cousin marriage may result from the contract between two families, one which offers a bride for the other has the right to demand one from the latter. Totemic tribes practise cross-cousin marriage and as we have shown among the Hos (A Tribe in Transition) while exogamy makes it obligatory for a sept or clan to marry out, in practice the choice of a mate is normally restricted to 3 to 4 clans, so that cross-cousin marriage cannot be ruled out. Where bride price is excessive as among the tribal people of Chota Nagpur, cross-cousin marriage being a preferential form of mating, obviates the necessity of paying bride-price. Where dual organization exists as among the Gonds, the Kukis and many other tribes, cross-cousin marriage is probably the most convenient form of marriage and its incidence is so high that it may be regarded as more or less obligatory. How far cross-cousin marriage has been forced upon the society for preserving the racial purity of the various social groups whose marriage field has been artificially restricted by the *Pratiloma* custom has to be investigated. The marriage of parallel cousins under tripartite division of a matriarchal society has legal sanction and we should think that the preference for marriage with parallel cousins under Islamic law is only a corroboration of the fundamental law of contacts that the invading group finds it necessary to limit marriages within close relations to prevent further dilution of blood among them. The importance of the mother's brother or what is usually described as avuncular authority may result from the cross-cousin marriage in which case the mother's brother combines the dual role of mother's brother and father of the wife. Also it may be traced to matriarchal social life which offers the maternal uncle a position of authority in

the household. In Bengal during the days of Kulinism, on account of hypergamous custom polygyny became so frequent among a section of the people, that it was physically impossible for a man to maintain his plural wives and they usually lived with their parents, father or brother and their children grew up under the roof of the maternal uncle. In Bengal, cross-cousin marriage is not favourably countenanced, the rules regarding the degrees of prohibition are too rigidly observed and it is viewed with horror as much as incest, yet the maternal uncle has an undisputed authority over the nephew. When a child is weaned to solid food, the first morsel of it, which is rice, must be given to the child by the maternal uncle. Theoretical considerations have a tendency to carry facts out of context and often such discussions have landed the investigator in deep waters. How far Mrs Karve's statement that, 'the degree to which different communities conform to the marriage pattern and to the system of kinship terminology may give interesting clues as to the relative antiquity of colonization or culture contact with the south when taken in conjunction with other cultural characteristics' will depend upon the amount of factual evidence that could be collected and from the Indian anthropology point of view is certainly worth investigation. In his article on 'The Dual System and Motherright in India,' O. R. Baron von Ehrenfels discusses the three strata of matriarchal culture which Prof. Koppers finds widely distributed in the world. These are the U group including the malide jungle tribes such as Irula, Kader and others of S. W. India, the 'Pul' and 'Par' group representing the Pulayan and Parayan and most of the depressed or exterior castes of Holeya, Madiga and Vellala types and the 'Nay' group including the Nayars, although little affinity exists between the Nayars whom Ehrenfels describes as a 'unit of noble feudal knights or officers and an essential part of India's leading intelligentsia' and the 'Par-Pul' group. Ehrenfels finds culture-historic affinity of the Pul-Par group with the N. E. Indian matriarchal peasant tribes (Khasi and Garo) and comes to the striking conclusion that a 'migration of matriarchal village peoples must have taken place, from the N. E. towards S. W. of the country and that this migration must have taken place before the totemistic culture had arrived in the vast central-Indian plateau, stretching between these two groups,' Ehrenfels writes again, 'this hypothesis seems further strengthened by the culture-historic position of megalithism, the round-axe-culture in India and by the fact that not one totemistic tribe without agricultural civilization, and very few without matriarchal survivals' (The Dual System and Motherright in India, *Anthropos*, Tome

XXXV/VI., 1940 to 41, p. 664). Ehrenfels must prove the hypothesis of matriarchal organization among the Munda tribes before he can get support from it for the other hypothesis. The Mongoloid Khasis or the Garos have no ethnic relationship with the Pul-Par group though Ehrenfels finds an affinity of the Pul-Par group to the N. E. Indian matriarchal group with whom, he thinks, the former must have been interrelated (Ibid, p. 664).

## CHAPTER XV

### PRIMITIVE RELIGION

However defective may be the primitive man's knowledge about how things happen and why they happen, his religious conceptions exercise a strong, if not a determining, influence on his activities, particularly in the sphere of economic life. While modern man aims at investigations into the inner connections of natural phenomena and of human history, by impartial logical method and normally on the basis of observed facts, his primitive counterpart, is tied to dogmas based on beliefs which are emotionally determined. That is how the solutions of primitive man's problems are mysterious or occult, while the scientific approach to our problems make an objective evaluation within our competence.

The religious life of any people is expressed in manifestations in outward form, in beliefs and in rites. Durkheim, therefore, defined religion as composed of 'beliefs' and 'rites', beliefs about sacred things and rites addressed to them. Mere beliefs do not constitute religion, it is rites which make religion a living force. Durkheim's approach is now understood to be a social theory of religious life, for religious life according to this definition, is 'the social life at those points at which it is felt most intensely'. Max Schmidt divided religion into its component parts, into 'cultus' and 'rites'. By cultus, Max Schmidt means 'all those acts by which men believe themselves to be brought into touch with the powers that are the objects of their religious faith'. These powers may be of various kinds and there may be many purposes for which these may be approached or even manipulated or propitiated. That is why 'cultus' may take different forms. If art is 'representation of ideas that afford an outlet for human emotion', as Schmidt defines it, all representations of religious ideas come under art and the representation of cultus or worship is through art. That is how dancing, singing, music, temple decoration and architecture form indispensable associates of worship.

Primitive religion is characterized by a belief in an impersonal 'power', a struggle with this power for mastery of life and all that it stands for; this conception of power varies from group to group. The power or powers that are supposed to influence human life and happiness act favourably or unfavourably and those which are good, are worshipped and those which are malevolent are propitiated and thus a dichotomous attitude characterizes all primitive mind. The Korwa of the Sarguja forests believe that man can transform himself into animals that

the ancestors whom they propitiate today are lodged in stones, rivers and trees, that plants and animals can speak with man and even rocks and ploughshares pulsate with life. The Polia of Eastern Pakistan in spite of his contacts for centuries with the advanced social groups, the so-called *Bhadralog* class of Bengal, will not allow a photograph to be taken, and believes that an effigy or a photograph of a person conceals the real self of the person and must be taboo to others. The Tharu still thinks that success in agriculture or fishing depend on what their women do at home in their absence, and the Ho offers tooth-brush and water to their deceased relatives fearing lest they may not feel aggrieved at neglect or remissness.

Levy Bruhl, Durkheim and others of the French school of Sociology, have characterized primitive mind as 'pre-logical', 'alogical', irrational and 'averse to abstract thinking and logical analysis of the scientific sort.' The ideas and beliefs possessed by modern man are believed to be scientific and logical. 'Reality to modern man is the tangible world of natural cause and effect and all our thinking is governed by the assumption of uniformity in natural causation, and a sufficiency of natural causes to produce whatever occurs.' Such an analysis may be true of individuals but it cannot be taken as general for all groups, however differentiated they may be. The British anthropologists on the other hand assume a generic similarity between mental powers and processes everywhere. They admit, 'the delusion and the illusion', 'the crudeness of primitive ideas', but these do not prove that primitive mind is 'prelogical'. Wrong assumptions lead to wrong conclusions. Erroneous conception of reality by primitive man has clouded his vision and the superficial association of things in primitive mind causes errors of action, as in the case of children. Experience and knowledge have equipped modern man today, and he arrives at valid conclusions about the nature of things and persons, but children are likely to misapprehend reality and do so and the conclusions they arrive at are not always what they should be. The primitive man also misapprehends the nature of reality from the very first and comes to wrong conclusions. This difference between modern man and his primitive compatriot is not organic but circumstantial and should be understood clearly before they are put into distinct categories.

It is no wonder therefore that the primitive man views and reaches the mystery of nature and life differently from the modern man. The large element of chance in human affairs does upset his calculations and he believes that the processes of nature are governed by capricious forces and he wants to control them,

In one year there may be plenty of rains, 'the sky gives in', says the unsophisticated Korwa, in another the sun is so hot and blazing that even the urine of cow dries up before it reaches the ground. Primitive man approaches the 'seers' or dreamers of his clan and is instructed in magical action to fight the elements. The Munda go to the top of hills and throw down stones of all sizes and descriptions, so that the rumbling sound of stones falling would resemble the rumbling of thunder and they believe that rains would follow. The Ho would burn faggots of fuel to raise a canopy of smoke which would overhang the village and believe that rains would come as surely as it does from the clouds. Yet rains do come occasionally and thus restore the confidence of the people in the efficacy of their magical rites and practices. Failures of magic are corrected by further magic and thus a vicious circle develops which has prejudiced the primitive mind from the earliest times. In course of time magic must be reinforced by supplicatory rites, for the essence of magic is coercion and when it fails, approach to the higher powers can only be effected through prayers and prescriptions which define the role of gods and deities or superior powers, in life and in the prosperity of the people. When spell is transformed into prayer, magic yields to religion. Much of magic is on par with religion; both are based on similar intellectual attitude, as both 'want to unravel the mystery of the world'. While magic explains 'the ways in which things happen in terms of hidden force', religion does it in terms of deities, spirits and powers. The magician's art and religious ritual are both meant to 'create an atmosphere of suggestibility' and the technique employed by both is similar. The performance of both is governed by traditional order and form conformity to which is essential for success. In the Hindu temples, for example, an atmosphere of suggestibility is created by the character of religious architecture, dim and diffuse lighting, burning of incense, the queer dress of the priest and his peculiar habits which are known to the public, also by the use of an ancient or classical language, 'mysterious formula and sing song monologue' etc. The difference between magic and religion therefore lies in the manner in which the mystery of the world is viewed. Magic represents an exaggerated notion of human potency while religion admits man's discomfiture in the presence of nature, his helplessness and his resignation to his destiny. Both magic and religion are 'tools of adaptation'. Man has tried to adjust himself to his surroundings, to his habitat both by magic and religion and will ever continue to do so though science may correct magic, for knowledge must triumph over

pseudoknowledge, and natural causes must supersede occult ones. Yet magic plays its role in society and in its extremely differentiated form it hinges on beliefs in a mystical impersonal force called, *mana*, *wakua* or *bonga*.

Magic also assumes a uniformity of nature and that brings magic in line with science. As Frazer says, 'the magician does not doubt that the same causes will always produce the same effects, that the performance of the proper ceremony, accompanied by the appropriate spell, will inevitably be attended by the desired results, unless indeed his incantations should chance to be thwarted and foiled by the more potent charms of another sorcerer'. (The Making of man, Edited by V. F. Calverton, 1931, p. 639). The magician pins his faith into his art, in what he conceives to be the laws of nature. He does not neglect these laws, he follows them meticulously and through his art he attains a sovereignty over the world, but this sovereignty is 'rigorously limited in its scope and exercised in exact conformity with ancient usage'. Both the magician and the scientist assume succession of events in an orderly manner, determined, as they think, by immutable laws which both believe that they can foresee and calculate precisely. The fatal mistake that the magician makes, as Frazer says, is not in its general assumption of a succession of events determined by law but in its total misconception of the nature of the particular laws that control that succession. The mistake is caused by the erroneous application of the laws of thought, the association of ideas by similarity and that by contiguity in space or time. Like produces like and things that are once in contact are always in contact even if they are dissociated in space or time, these are two ways of regarding the laws of association of ideas and produce what we know as sympathetic magic. From the very early times, man has consistently and laboriously sought for laws or general rules by which he can turn the unknown nature to his immediate advantage, and the true rules which he has discovered have given us science, the false ones have produced magic. Magic therefore assumes occult causes, while science is interested in matter of fact causes. That is why, Frazer holds, that all magic is barren and false for, were it otherwise, it would no longer remain magic but would be science. While magic explains the ways in which things happen in terms of hidden and capricious force, religion interprets in terms of spirits, gods etc.

The intimate relationship between magic and religion, while it makes the priority of either difficult to prove, puts a premium on human efforts and initiative. Magic and religion serve the same purpose viz., that of restoring confidence in times of



danger or crises. When magic fails, religion helps and both may partially contribute towards tiding over social or economic crises. In the normal day-to-day life of primitive man there may not be any mystery but in his sleep and in times of impending danger, mystery is associated with his experiences, so that he combines his fear and hope with the concept of supernaturalism. This means, as Marett has categorically stated that 'the recognition of the supernatural does not involve a conception of 'nature', the knowledge of which has been acquired late in the career of the human race, and even today its configuration has not been definitely delimited.'

Tylor has defined religion as the belief in spiritual beings and finds in all personification of inanimate objects the assumption of a spirit, being modelled on the human soul. This soul or the concept of it has been worked up by primitive man from the experiences of dreams, shadows, echoes, hallucinations and clairvoyance, which have struck terror or excited deep curiosity in primitive mind and it is the concept of the 'double' or the soul of man which has laid the foundation of all animistic beliefs and practices. The change of soul into spirit is the greatest event in human cultural history and it is at death that such transformation or metamorphosis could take place. The soul is believed to wander in space while the body is lying in sleep, and it must return to animate the body soon to enable the body to work or wake up. The soul is loathe to leave its mortal frame, viz., the body, it hovers round the burial ground and becomes antisocial so that the survivors have to devise means to control the disengaged soul and to take the bier out of the house in a zig-zag way, or place thorns on the way to see that the disengaged soul does not return to the house and chastize those left behind. The soul becomes the spirit at death and it is the spirit of the dead ancestor that evoked religious rites or propitiation and that is why ancestors have become so important to primitive thought and the first temple has been the tomb. The uncertainty of the soul, whether it will leave the body temporarily as in sleep or in dream, or permanently as at death, has made primitive man recognize two funerals, one is the 'green', the other 'dry', the first takes place immediately after death, the second is observed after a long interval, when all hopes of the return of the soul are lost, and the second is always the more important ceremony among the Toda of the Nilgiris or among the Ho of Singbhum in Bihar. The Ho call it the *jangtopa*, when drums beat, *topam, topam, jangtopam*, to celebrate the union of the spirit with the impersonal force which they know as *bonga*, similar to *mana, wakua, orenda* or *aren* of the

Naga. Many tribes believe in two souls, one outer and the other inner, and distinguish them in their daily conduct or recognize their distinct spheres of activities. This theory of religion which is also known as the English theory as distinguished from the German theory of Naturism, is not easy to reconcile with ethnographic data available in different parts of the world, for ancestor worship is not a primitive cult and most primitive people do not believe in ancestral spirits. The belief in re-incarnation among many primitive tribes cuts across this cult of ancestor worship, for the grandfather after death does not remain disincarnate forever but comes back in the role of the grandchild and elaborate are the rites and rituals that decipher the reincarnation of deceased ancestors, through dreams, weird seances and the like. Inanimate objects do not all represent spirits, for some are regarded as *fetish* and are not endowed with any soul or affected by any spirit, while plants and trees are worshipped as life giving substances in the most matter of fact way. The beneficent or maleficent character of charms, amulets, feathers and stones is acquired by the object or the emblem, as colour is possessed by birds, flowers and foliage of trees and therefore the luck-giving property of things and objects is inherent in themselves. The storm may destroy the house, kill the people, and men and women may yell and weep in agony, but it is not the spirit that dwells in storm that gives the power of mischief but the inherent strength in the winds that blow fiercely and destroy goods and effects and kill men and animals. The outward events that affect life have been explained and accounted for by primitive people on the basis of knowledge gained by them through experience and the fortunes and frowns they have received have shaped the categories into which the various powers, gods and spiritual beings have been distributed. The dead constitute a category of power propitiated and worshipped as the needs determine, and a cult of ancestors or manism finds favour with many primitive groups. The animals are credited with power which they use against persons or things and various beliefs and rites exist in savage society regarding the effectiveness or otherwise of their mediation in human affairs, making animal worship obligatory in primitive society. The lion is worshipped in Africa, and the tiger, snake, cow and monkey are objects of cults and of veneration in India. The cult of trees is a very old one, they are regarded as 'symbols of productivity' or 'emblematic of divinity'.

The inanimate objects are believed to pulsate with life, the natural powers are conceived as conscious beings, and the fate of man is believed to be in the keeping of such powers. Even

stones, feathers, amulets, bones and beads, possess mystic powers ; they are imbued with life, for stones are seen to grow, mountains rise and beliefs about the efficacy of amulets and charms are widespread. The stones are believed to climb up from below, and work up their way at their own volition. The stones are often taken as children of mother earth. These are worshipped, cared for, cajoled and propitiated to bring happiness to society. There are also invisible powers to whom some degree of personality is attributed but mostly it is a vague conception, having no objective existence.

Primitive man establishes relationship between himself and his fellow men, also he recognizes similar relationship between the various kinds of powers, some remote and some immediate, some high, others low and a hierarchy of powers characterize the religious life of many primitive communities. It is the process of anthropomorphism that has brought the gods down to the level of man, the sacred powers have been made profane and the force of religion has been weakened in human society.

The tribal religions in India have so long been described as 'animism'. Animism is that exceedingly crude form of religion in which magic is the predominant element. It conceives of man as passing through a life surrounded by ghostly company of powers, elements, mostly impersonal in their character, 'shapeless phantasm of which no image can be made' and no definite idea can be formed. Some of these are taken to preside over particular departments of life or spheres of influence. Thus we have a spirit presiding over cholera, one over small-pox, spirits dwelling in rocks and mountains, haunting trees, or associated with rivers, waterfalls, etc. These are diligently propitiated to ward off the dangers associated with their influence. Among the Korwas of Mirzapur there is a spirit presiding over crops, one over rainfall, one over cattle and number of spirits which dictate the attitude of the Korwas to their neighbours, to the tribal priest, to the headman and the affairs of the tribe. Thus 'animism' carries with it the belief in malevolent spirits and powers, which influence the destiny of man.

It is not true that primitive man only caters to a constellation of malevolent spirits ; he worships stones, feathers and symbols, he worships plants, trees, also natural objects, like the sun, moon and stars. The 'high gods of low races' reveal the anxiety of primitive man to know the world of 'supernatural', the powers and spirits that shape his destiny. These are worshipped or propitiated according as he conceives them as benevolent

or malevolent. Some are unworshipped gods to him, distant also and as such do not meddle with his affairs. The great sun-god or Singbonga of the Mundas is seldom worshipped as he is benign and does no wrong. Every primitive tribe has a creator, a god who undertakes to place every earthly possession worth caring for before man, and this benevolent divinity does not live on human ministrations as do the host of evil spirits moving on land, water and air, and very much prone to take offence for the slightest inattention.

Thus 'tribal religions' have replaced 'animism' and are expected to come in line with popular Hinduism in the near future. Dr Hutton has recently remarked that "tribal religions represent, as it were, surplus material not yet built into the temple of Hinduism". Elwin has pointed out in an illuminating booklet on the effects of contacts with civilization on the aboriginal tribes in India (*Loss of Nerves*) that distinction between tribal religions and Hinduism or 'the previous classification into animism and Hinduism is meaningless'. "The tribal people always are willing to worship a few more gods, if by doing so, they can gain some material or social advantage", on the other hand the Hindu has no objection to include in his multi-god pantheon a few tribal gods. Judged from this angle the tribal religions represent today 'marginal religions' a no-man's land between magic and religion, between pseudo-science and science.

The aboriginal tribes coming in contact with Hinduism or Christianity, with urban people to whom they look up for their economic existence, may not learn much about true Hinduism or Christianity, but all the same they know which of their rites and rituals are repugnant to the former, develop an aversion to their indigenous religious code and even become ashamed of their time-old practices. The result has proved to be disastrous, a decay of religion has set in.

The Gonds of the Central Provinces, possess a richly furnished system of worship, a meticulous code of ministration to their gods, beautiful little shrines where they sacrifice animals and offer prayers, 'a priesthood comparable to that found among the lower strata of the Hindu society', and periodical pilgrimage to known and reputed places where some of their high gods are believed to dwell. Their religious life can hardly be distinguished from that obtained among the lower castes.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIETY

#### I

Fifteen years ago, the Right Hon'ble Earl of Onslow in his Presidential Address to the International Congress of Anthropological Sciences (1934) spoke about the importance of anthropology to administration. He was the chairman of a Parliamentary Committee which inquired into and reported on the state of affairs in the various British Colonies and Mandated Territories in East Africa. This Committee we were told by the Right Hon'ble Earl of Onslow, unanimously recommended that the study of anthropology among colonial administrators should be encouraged.

The inclusion of anthropology as a subject for the civil service examinations both in England and India had been the logical consequence of our increased knowledge of human society. In recent years, Lord Hailey's African Survey has added further argument for a scientific evaluation of primitive and of aboriginal cultures. The peoples of Africa who formed the subject of his able survey, are passing through an unprecedented economic and cultural crisis, engendered by their contacts with the European races. In their report, Lord Hailey and his collaborators have made repeated plea for a large and more thoroughgoing study of African institutions and an intensive research on the African way of life and living.

Investigations into economic conditions, diet and nutrition, problems of health and welfare, law, customs, land tenure, should be encouraged, as without such knowledge it is not possible to help primitive groups or to bring out, all that is best in their cultures. Lord Hailey has pleaded for a scientific study of African life as a preliminary to 'further action'. His suggestions for permanently providing for such scientific inquiries are (1) the creation of an African Bureau which would act as a clearing-house for all information concerning Africa and (2) the foundation of an official body directly under the aegis of the British Government, disposing of adequate research funds and working largely through existing institutions for social and scientific research.

With the widening of the scope of the African administration as a result of allied war efforts, the importance of such recommendations must be recognized still more and any efforts to translate these suggestions to practical purposes would be welcomed by the social scientists in general and anthropologists in particular. That anthropology can be of much use to those

engaged in diplomacy and administration has long been recognized ; that it can fulfil a very definite function in the solution of many problems of culture, has been ably emphasized by Lord Hailey.

The first phase of occupation of Africa, the whole of it, is more or less over. "Today and for a long time to come", candidly wrote Prof. Westermann, "the fate of Africa is indissolubly linked with that of the white race. Africa will become what Europe and America make of it. Under the complicated condition of modern life Africans are not in a position to take their future into their own hands nor is Europe disposed to surrender its control over Africa. The great riches of raw material, both vegetable and mineral as well as the capacity of Africa for consuming European goods surpass even the hopes entertained at the time of the beginning of the colonial era, but the enterprise and capital of Europe and America are indispensable both for the exploitation of these riches and for setting up the regular exchange of goods between the two continents." Ignorance of customs and practices and institutions of the native people would not help the purpose for which such contacts have been established ; on the other hand, a sympathetic understanding of the African point of view, of African psychology, would help develop reciprocity of social relationships and mutual trust without which durable relations between the rulers and the ruled are difficult to evolve.

In a paper read before the first Universal Races Congress held in 1911 at the University of London, the late Sir Brajendra Nath Seal put the anthropological point of view in the following paragraph : "A scientific study of the constituent elements and the composition of races and peoples, of their origin and development, and of the forces that govern these, will alone point the way to a settlement of inter-racial claims and conflicts on a sound progressive basis, the solution of many an administrative problem in the composite United States and the heterogeneous British Empire and even the scope and methods of social legislation in every modern state." Since then, racial problems have become more acute and perhaps delicate, the problems of administration more complex and apparently insoluble and conflict of nationalities and races has assumed serious proportions.

An international outlook or an 'Universal Humanity' which has remained the ideal of social thinkers can develop on the basis of a scientific evaluation of races and cultures, their *ethos* and aspirations and not by a conflict of nationalities and races. Many countries of the world, Germany included, today 'are inhabited by multiple racial types, each of which has its peculiar

traits, temperament and aptitudes, which act as handicap or afford advantages, hindering or helping their adjustment to the forces of their environment both social and physical. A knowledge of the biological, psychological and sociological conditions and causes which mould, shape and determine the rise, progress and even decadence of races and cultures can alone enable us to guide and control the future evolution of humanity by conscious selection and intelligent adaptation to the system and procedure of nature.'

Von Luschan once referred to an order issued by a European governor in Africa which stated what Negroes, Arabs, Hindus, Portuguese, Greeks and other coloured people had to do on meeting a white man. The Greeks and other coloured people were not civilized according to this European plenipotentiary though the civilization of the Greeks was a model in earlier days, the Arabs contributed substantially to human cultural achievement, the Portuguese opened up possibilities of international trade and commerce and in the words of Sister Nivedita (Miss Margaret Noble) India was the 'head water of Asiatic thought and idealism.'

## 2

In every country of the world we find small or large amount of hybridization and the results have not been uniformly good. While some biologists believe that race mixture of all kinds is fundamentally harmful to the parent stocks, there are many others who consider race-crossing biologically advantageous. Two facts have prejudiced our attitude to hybridization. Firstly, hybrids are not given a good social status in the society, and secondly the evil effects of hybridization are more visible as the 'observed unions' usually are confined to 'sexual delinquents, wine addicts and women of easy virtue'.

Even if the biological principles involved are found justifiable, strong social antagonism against mixed marriages would 'prejudice a fair trial over long periods'. In historic times, pure types are difficult to meet; all have mixed though in varying proportions. Yet a mixed group does not countenance mixed marriages, and restrict marriage by endogamy. The example of America may conveniently be cited in this connection. America is a hotch-potch of races. It is a melting-pot of racial strains. Although Madison Grant traces 70 p.c. of the Nordic stock, the contribution of the various races including the Negroes are considerable, although emigrants readily change their names and become aggressively American in less than a decade of residence. A majority of the embryonic (American) race as

proved by Cedric Dover, is of Mediterranean, Eurasiatic and Negro origin. Many old Americans are really Eurasians in a wide sense, many are Euro-Africans and Euro-Afro-Asians both among the white and coloured groups. Mentally the Americans have been more mongrelized; they have inherited in the words of Cedric Dover, 'Teutonic seriousness, Irish spontaneity and wilfulness and Catholic democracy'. Yet, thirty states in America today forbid intercourse between whites and any coloured and in six a constitutional enactment prohibits the legislatures from ever passing law that legalizes marriages between Whites and Negroids. "In Georgia, marriage between a White and African, West Indian, Asiatic Indian or Mongolian is forbidden while in Virginia a drop of Negroid dilution, if it is known, puts an otherwise White man outside his own class." Even the blood transfusion service in America, during the last war had assumed a racial significance, as the whites refused Negro blood for fear of mongrelization!

Crossing of widely unrelated races are believed to be harmful, as a considerable amount of social dereliction and general inefficiency are found among hybrid groups resulting from such crossings. We are told also that mixture of races destroys "the natural racial aristocracy with its instincts and capacity of rulership, giving rise to a mongrel population with the low tastes of human-herd." We have yet to prove that a conquering race represents pure racial type or that it possesses such desirable qualities transmissible by heredity.

Superior parents will produce superior children and 'race mixtures cannot create new traits which are not found in the parent stocks.' A racial or cultural group containing 'cacogenic' or defective strains will produce defective children whether they inbreed or outbreed. If a particular racial type is susceptible to tuberculosis or pulmonary diseases, and if it inbreeds, the entire group will be threatened with extinction. In any cultural or national group, if the capable elements refuse to shoulder the responsibility of married life the better strains will become gradually eliminated, and social standards may decline. A dying group like the Korwas of the U. P. may be able to reorient their attitude to life by mixture with a powerful and vital tribe, or by assimilating desirable traits through miscegenation. The Kayasthas of the U. P. are divided into a number of endogamous sections and inbreeding has been practised by them through centuries of survival. In Bengal, their colleagues have 'broken all regional and cultural barriers and are welding into one big community constantly recruiting members from other castes'. This fact has made the Kayasthas of Bengal a 'national caste' as it were,



while the U. P. Kayasthas have segregated into closed inbred groups. How far such inbreeding has been racially beneficial has not yet been investigated, but that it has not resulted in an increase of fertility or in a widening of the range of variations is apparent even to the casual observer. Poor physique and diseased constitutions have formed part of family heritage and inbreeding is likely to perpetuate such incompetence. Wide marriage field available in Bengal has led to accession of vigour to the Kayasthas and in some areas, they have absorbed and assimilated other castes as well.

If race-crossing is selective, as, for example, the superior elements of one race cross with the superior elements of the other, there is every likelihood of race improvement, as part of the hybrid population will become intermediate in type, part will resemble one parent, part the other. The vitality and strength of the Punjabi, the industry and stamina of the Madras Brahmin, the spontaneity and resourcefulness of the Bengali, if inherited, will certainly produce a desirable blend ably fitted to hold its own against any amount of odds. The average results of heredity in the case of crossings of the inferior elements of two races will not be eugenic as is illustrated by many hybrid stocks we meet today. All that can be said against hybridization is that when racial differences are too wide and cultural environments dissimilar, hybridization, voluntary or otherwise, may not produce stocks of desirable quality. Statistical data corroborate the view of Havelock Ellis that 'the areas of greatest racial mixture in England were the birth-places of an unusual number of superior men'. Family statistics in India compiled at random corroborate this statement no doubt, but how far 'dying out of better strains' in other areas through celibacy, late marriage and small families has lowered the incidence of superior men, needs to be studied before we can accept such hypothesis. In any case, our prejudices are largely born of ignorance and the fear of the strange and the unfamiliar, of the prospect of cultural maladjustment, and not of scientific knowledge. Even where the people speak the same language there exist local variations in dialect and food practices and such differences have often circumscribed the field of marital choice.

## 3

In the field of cultural life, much that was unknown or imperfectly known, changes that could not have been anticipated even a decade ago, discomforts that have resulted from contacts, have raised problems, the solution of which is indeed difficult. Loss of interest in life among many primitive groups in India

and elsewhere, has resulted from momentous changes in the environment, changes over which they had no control. Many primitive tribes have declined or are showing a tendency towards it. The Khonds of the Ganjam Agency tracts, the Asura tribe of Chota Nagpur, the Korwas in the U. P. and Bihar, the Todas in the Nilgiri hills are only a few of the many tribal groups that hold their life on slender terms.

Increasing denudation of forests, the consequent rigours of the forest regulations, the difficulty of maintaining a constant source of food supply in tribal areas, which is partly due to scarcity and partly due to their 'ineptitude and inefficiency' the introduction of diseases and vices, also of distillery liquor, ignorance of the administrative staff of their customs and institutions and the dual allegiance of the tribal population to the tribal leaders on the one hand and to the state officials on the other, all these and other causes are hastening the exit of tribal groups.

In Africa a system of indirect rule is being tried and a watchful committee on applied anthropology has been functioning for some time whose avowed object is to help the tribal groups in their struggle for adaptation. The problems of native life are being discussed by the committee with first-hand knowledge and solutions are suggested which help the administration in its efforts to subserve the ideals of native development. The following problems connected with South African native life suggested by Sir Alan Pim, K.C.I.E. as calling for anthropological study also could be discussed with respect to the tribal life in India. (1) In what way can Indirect Rule best be made to subserve the ideal of native development set before them by modern government? (2) How can the generally accepted body of native law be brought into line with the rapid changes in native custom, that are taking place with present-day economic developments? (3) Is there any way in which the principle of Indirect Rule can be applied to the mixed populations which are growing up in the industrial areas? (4) Could a system of land tenure be devised, suitable to areas which might be added to native reserves, subject to provisions that the occupants must adopt efficient methods of cultivation?

With thirty millions of primitive population and double that number belonging to the exterior castes, the problem of administration cannot be solved by increased franchise or reservation of posts on a population basis. A scheme of positive, negative and preventive measures must be worked out to solve the problems of primitive life and institutions. The positive measures may include education on rational lines with a view

to help the tribal people to adjust themselves to changes which are slowly but surely coming on them, utilization of the natural resources in tribal areas with the help of aboriginal labour and tribal supervision if possible, inculcation of ideas about the sanctity of marriage, family life and tribal solidarity, new prescriptions for their old maladies and their old pharmacopoeia revitalized by selective adoption of new medicines and dietetic adjustments, also by new provision of maternity clinics and welfare centres. The negative measures should include provisions against exploitation by alien landlords, middlemen and itinerant traders and unscrupulous tribal officials or local revenue and police staff, also measures of protection against the spread and diffusion of ideas which may sweep them off their feet or detribalize them permanently. The preventive measures are no less important as 'racial poisons' are spreading with increasing rapidity in tribal areas and already some tribal groups have been seriously affected by infectious diseases which are passed on to them through indiscriminate mating with diseased elements among the floating population in tribal areas.

How far racial poisons have affected tribal groups can be illustrated by the example of the Khonds of the Ganjam Agency tracts in Orissa. The incidence of syphilis among the Khonds is so high that it is known as 'the Khond disease' in this part of the country. In the three villages we investigated 15% of the Khonds, men, women and even children showed syphilitic affections, congenital or acquired. The social laws and usages of the Khonds make it possible for an indiscriminate mixing of the sexes before marriage. When the man and wife with immature children go to the hill-tops for *Podu* cultivation (*Jhum*), young men and women are left behind in the village. The bachelors of the village sleep in one dormitory and the maidens share another. As marriage within the *Gochi* or village is prohibited by tribal custom, the bachelors of one village migrate to the neighbouring village and share the dormitory with maidens of that village. Thus there is a shifting of scenes from village to village till each man finds his sweetheart. Thus any acquired disease can be passed on through such indiscriminate mixing and it is no wonder that the Khond disease has reached such serious proportions today. How the Khonds acquired this disease is a question on which unanimity is not possible for obvious reasons.

## 4

Life in primitive society has been complicated by various causes. The attitude of the higher social groups to primitive institutions has been responsible for much of the loss of interest of

primitive people in indigenous customs and practices. To take one example, dances are usually popular with aboriginal tribes in India. Animated dances to the tune of drums and flutes, cymbals and sing-song monologues have so long been indispensable to primitive social life. Dances have provided recreation to the youths of both sexes in primitive society, they have helped in the selection of mates, in translating joys and sorrows and in the manifestation of social and clan solidarity. Hunting, herding and agricultural activities have been similarly mimicked in dances which helped to create interest in these economic pursuits and were also believed to augment the yield from the fields and the gains from the chase. The pastoral Khasas of the *cis*-Himalayan region have their masked dances which take the shape of pantomimes and the dancers are found to parade the village masked in cattle masks with the avowed object of warding off the evil eye, pests and diseases and also to increase the strength of their herds.

Urban contacts have everywhere disorganized primitive social life, so that dances have lost their significance and communal dances are no longer considered indispensable to group solidarity. In religious worship and in temples, as among the Khasas, we find spontaneous participation in dances by men and women of the village though the usual practice is for the *Badinis* (female dancers) or professional dancing girls, to dance traditional patterns before admiring crowds. In the Chota Nagpur plateau, the Mundas and the Hos are abandoning their dances, and village politics, rivalry and social disputes are replacing their time-old recreation. The effects of this transfer of interests have already been evident in the high incidence of imported diseases, poor physique, inferiority complex and a bitter antagonism against advanced groups in the neighbourhood.

The Bhils in the interior of the Panchmahal district, under the initiative of the Bhil Seva Mandal, appear to have survived the effects of disintegration and detribalization for the time being at least. Songs and dances still form important recreation among them and are not looked down upon by even the sophisticated among them. In schools maintained by the Seva Mandal, regular courses in dancing are included and the teachers and the taught take part in dances, which has helped to maintain the institution among the rural people. In social ceremonies, marriage and festivals, young men, instructed or not, join in dances and new techniques are being introduced by the boys and girls who receive special training at school. Although traditional dances are being discarded, and spectacular

demonstrations of ritual dances are rarely noticed, the recognition of dances as a legitimate activity of the Bhils has proved of immense social and survival value.

The artistic and rhythmic value of primitive dances have already been recognized, and though these have been filmed for their fun value by enterprising producers, students of art have long realized their social as well as aesthetic importance and have incorporated them in their repertoire or have assimilated the technique and skill of primitive performances. The Santhal dance is now known all over the world, the Manipuri dance has long been popular with a section of artists and Bhil dances have influenced the style of some famous dancers in northern India in recent times. The Kathakali and other folk dances have long been famous and there is hope for the adoption of many more styles that are danced and forgotten in the wildernesses. Indian culture of the last few centuries has been more urban than rural and the dances that were recognized by Indian Courts, Muslim and Hindu, were meant more to appeal to sex than to other emotional needs. The growing popularity of folk dances today shows a new orientation of our attitude to such fundamental aspects of our aesthetic life.

Folk tales, myths and legends, songs and tribal art and architecture all depict the intellectual efforts of primitive people to understand and interpret the relations existing between man and the forces of the environment, and also express the emotional background of savage life or as Roy put it, 'their innermost feelings, ideas and aspirations and their sense of the beautiful.' One of the problems of administration of primitive and backward peoples, or scheduled areas as they are now constituted, is to see that such manifestation of 'emotions of the soul, the rhythmic movements of the feet expressing supreme facts of life' should not be allowed to be suppressed in the name of reform. The dances and songs are even now believed, by the less sophisticated sections of primitive people, to stimulate the beneficent forces of nature so as to induce plenty in crops and game. "As we watch the dancers in their various dances", writes Sarat Chandra Roy, "in some with alternate forward and backward steps, in some with light and in others wheeling round and round in circles and again spreading out in a straight line, in some arranged in parallel lines, in some stooping low and swaying their hands to and fro and in others dancing in an erect posture and at intervals stamping their feet on the ground and at the termination of a song bursting forth in chorus in a deafening exclamation of 'Hir-r-r' or 'Hur-r-r', we may imagine the various movements and postures and exclamations to be pantomimic representations

intended to exert a beneficial magical influence on different agricultural operations and other seasonal activities of the tribe."

## 5

Economists, statesmen and those who are interested in the vital statistics of the country believe that the social crisis in India has been precipitated by over-population and consequent under-nutrition and malnutrition. The rate of population increase has already assumed alarming proportions, and remedies must be thought out to reduce the pressure of population on the resources of the country. In India people breed like fleas and die like moths. India is overful by every conceivable test. While it cannot be denied that the misery, destitution, and the phenomenal poverty of the country are largely due to the excessive number, there exists also considerable disparity in the distribution of population from province to province, between the various economic regions.

The density of population in undivided India varies from one per square mile in Chagai in Baluchistan to nearly 3,228 per sq. mile in the Lohaganj thana of the Dacca district. This district has a mean density of 935 persons per sq. mile, the provincial mean being 646 persons per square mile. The Chittagong hill tracts have a density of 43 per sq. mile and are inhabited by a large number of small or big tribes. The mean density in Bihar and Orissa ranges from 969 persons per sq. mile in the Muzzafarpur district of Bihar to 43 in the Feudatory state of Rairakhel. Assam has a more varied density. In the Surma Valley the density is 438 per square mile, in the Brahmaputra valleys it is 171, and in the hill divisions in Assam inhabited by scattered communities, the mean density is only 39, the provincial mean being 137 per sq. mile. The mean density in the Madras Presidency ranges from 89 in the Agency tracts much of which now form part of the Orissa province, 154 in the Deccan excluding states and 471 in the west coast.\*

Thus we find that the hill division of Assam, the Lushai hills, parts of Chota Nagpur, parts of Central Provinces, the agency tracts in Orissa, the Nilgiri hills and the Travancore forests all have a low mean density, sometimes less than twenty as in the Lushai hills or 30 to 34 in parts of the Chota Nagpur plateau. Most of these areas are inhabited by primitive and aboriginal tribes, whose culture pattern sets the limit to the size of the local groups. Many of the tribes in India are living a nomadic life. They move in batches of five to ten families, build improvised shelters in the interior of forests with leaves and bamboo poles,

\* According to 1931 Census.

or make mud hovels with low doorways through which they can just crawl in and out. When death occurs in the group, the entire settlement moves up to some new site where they build in like fashion. Even where a large number of families live in the same locality, they do not build compact villages but prefer to scatter themselves over the field, so that each family has its hut on the land it tills for subsistence. Hunting tribes are found to build at distances from one another not because they do not require one another's cooperation but they fear lest the misfortune of one family, the wrath of the gods they own, may not be transferred by contacts. The pastoral Khasas of the *cis-Himalayan* region build compact villages to protect themselves from organized theft and vendetta and also for economic living, but when they suspect divine wrath or vengeance, they leave their village and build on new sites. Even the artistic and pretentious houses they have built up at considerable expense, are left behind so that the angry gods may not have any cause for further chastisement in their new settlement.

The size of social groups in primitive society therefore depends upon the pattern of cultural life of the society and the amount of food which is at the disposal of man at the worst and most sterile time of the year, especially if that season lasted too long. The meagre food supply and the uncertain yield from the forests or fields have caused man in the early stages of his career to roam about in groups composed of a small number of persons and to live separated from each other by considerable distances. Density has grown with the abundance of food, with the increase of knowledge of the economic possibilities of the environment, and of the methods developed to secure subsistence from the natural surroundings. At a low density there is not much increase of population, but when a certain density is reached population increases rapidly and the means of economic cooperation develop accordingly, but when population really reaches a very high density, a saturation point is reached beyond which any population finds it hard to move up. The Kharias and the Birhors still live in groups of five to ten families and they do not show any high rate of increase. Precarious subsistence, crude material equipment and lack of effective organization prevent the formation of stable communities among them, but the same is not the case with the Mundas and the Hos who are living today in villages with an effective tribal organization and possess a knowledge of agriculture, also of the possibilities of their economic environment. A time may come when they may have exhausted all scope of economic cooperation, the per capita income may go down and they will have overstepped the

limits of adjustable density unless of course new forces, tools and implements make their appearance and they can succeed in effecting a new economic rehabilitation.

Estimates of the size of primitive social groups must vary greatly due to the obvious difficulty of ascertaining correct figures. Even careful investigators have found it difficult at times to record the number of tribal population of a village or of a locality as at any time all the people are not within bounds. The author had planned a number of village surveys in tribal areas and in spite of his very careful planning and record, the figures had to be changed every time the enumeration was attempted. Even at night, part of the population stay out and the inmates of a house either cannot express their strength in numbers or are reluctant to declare it for fear of imaginary consequences.

According to the 1931 census, there are in India 25 millions of primitive people ; of this number 20 millions are in British India and 5 millions are to be found in the states. These are classified into 3 groups by Dr J. H. Hutton, (1) Primitive tribes collecting forest produce (but generally speaking not, at any rate until recently, practising agriculture, (2) Primitive tribes, pastoral, (3) Tribes practising agriculture, hunting, fishing and industries (without effective differentiation of occupation) and nearly derived castes. The latter are subdivided into as many as eleven groups.

The numerical strength of a tribe ranges from a few hundreds to more than 2 millions as, for example, among the Santhals (2,524,472) and the Bhils (2,454,144). Some of the tribes have increased in number while others have declined considerably and hold their lives on slender terms. The following table will indicate the trend of tribal demography in India :



TABLE I

<i>Name of the Tribe</i>	<i>Where found</i>	<i>Total Strength</i>	<i>Increase or decrease since 1921</i>
Chenchu	..	10,342	-2,060
Kota	..	1,121	-83
Toda	..	597	-43
Nayadi	..	296	-5
Mavillar	..	1,341	-396
Gadaba	..	48,154	-5,616
Malpaharis	..	37,437	-1,535
Bhoksa	..	7,618	-8
Badaga	..	43,075	-2,746
Naga Tribes	..	1,39,965	-7,297
Angami Naga	..	49,239	-2,491
Lhota Naga	..	18,238	-161
Andamanese	..	460	-326

In the Second Table, will be found a number of larger tribal groups who have shown considerable increase in numerical strength and also those who have shown increase but such increase has not been progressive.

TABLE II

<i>Name of the Tribe</i>	<i>Where found</i>	<i>Total Strength 1911</i>	<i>Total Strength 1921</i>	<i>Total Strength 1931</i>
Asur ..	Bihar and Orissa	3,716	2,245	2,024
Bhuiya ..	C. P., Bihar and Orissa	7,14,960	6,30,862	6,81,165
Bhumji ..	Bihar, Orissa	2,72,667	2,40,229	27,401
Birhor ..	"	2,299	1,510	2,350
Chero ..	"	1,66,002	..	17,906
Juang ..	"	12,823	10,454	15,024
Katkari ..	Bombay, West India States	91,841	81,202	88,336
Kharis ..	Bihar & Orissa	1,33,657	1,24,521	1,46,037
Khond ..	Madras, Bihar and Orissa	7,50,289	6,98,668	7,41,078
Korwa ..	C. P., C. I., B. & O., U. P. & Hyderabad	2,00,077	1,85,553	2,37,847
Munda ..	Bengal, Bihar and Orissa	5,58,200	5,59,662	6,58,450
Oraon ..	Bengal, Bihar and U. P.	8,35,994	8,42,906	1,021,355
Santhal ..	Bengal, Bihar and Orissa	20,78,035	21,89,511	25,08,789
Ho ..	Bihar and Orissa	4,20,179	4,41,424	5,23,158
Tharu ..	U. P., Bengal & Bihar	63,629	61,751	69,403

The figures in both the tables have been taken from the 1931 census (Imp. Tables, Vol. I. Pt. II). Correct estimates of hill and forest tribes are indeed difficult. But as the wild nomadic tribes are settling down, the estimate of their strength is becoming more and more accurate. So that the figures of 1931 census are on the whole more reliable than those arrived at previous enumeration. Even if the 1931 estimate is taken as reliable, it is difficult to get any accurate picture of net variation from decade to decade. The Bhils, for example, are recorded to have increased from 1,067,792 in 1911, to 1,859,661 in 1921, and to 2,025,753 in 1931, a phenomenal increase as the Bhils have doubled their strength in 30 years. The Tadvi Bhils, a section of the major Bhil tribe recorded 24 souls, in 1911, 14,156 in 1921 and 20,817 in 1931. The Bhilala, who must be grouped with the Bhils for obvious reasons recorded 1,563 in 1911, 196,457 in 1921 and in 1931, they numbered 232,230. These examples show that the variation in the figures of the Bhils is due to defective nomenclature and consequent errors in tabulation.

The Gonds offer a similar example. The net variation of the Gonds in Bihar and Orissa recorded 25,673 in 1911, 24,853 in 1921 and only 708 in 1931. The Hindu Gonds of C. P. and Berar recorded 367,257 in 1911, 454,792 in 1921 and 1,036,673 in 1931. The tribal figures are 1,966,636 in 1911, 1,654,791 in 1921 and 1,224,465 in 1931. Thus, it appears that the enumeration of the Gonds in the various censuses could not be done on the same basis and tribal Gonds have recorded as Hindus in one census and Hindu Gonds have enumerated themselves as tribal in the succeeding census. There is another fact which needs to be borne in mind. A tribe recorded in different provinces may not represent the same cultural stock, or the same tribe may be enumerated as two or more distinct tribes in different provinces. Even then we should think of the tribal demography today as characterized by the following trends :

1. A progressive decline of many tribal groups.
2. A slow increase among many tribes and a tendency to decline among others.
3. A rapid increase of tribes living in certain parts of the country.

Tribal groups have come into contacts with the Hindu castes in most areas. Contacts with civilization have undermined social solidarity, invaded tribal security, introduced discomforts, diseases and vices. (1) Many tribes have failed to maintain their tribal structures and have either been assimilated with more vital stock or have withdrawn themselves from contacts as a

defensive measure. The Andamanese, the Korwas, the Todas, the Chenchus are on evil days and are preparing themselves for exit. (2) Some tribes have left their tribal moorings, have settled in the neighbourhood of higher cultural groups whom they serve. Today they have developed some sort of interdependence or symbiosis. The Gond tribes of Bastar may be taken as an example of the latter process. (3) The nomadic tribes who secured their livelihood by catering to the periodical requirements of settled communities as, for example, the Marwaris or the Lakhota, supplying agricultural implements to the latter or repairing their indigenous tools and utensils, the Nats supplying crude nostrums for the restoration of lost manhood, the Kanjars providing amusement, acrobatics and dances for the village communities, find it difficult to continue their customary life and have enlisted themselves into the ranks of criminal tribes whose attention to the rural communities is a perpetual concern of the administration. (4) Lastly, we have a number of tribes who live in compact villages in large numbers, have taken to agriculture or other occupations and their transition from hunting to settled life has been effected without great hardship to them. Such are the Hos, the Mundas, the Oraons and the Santhals, who have shown considerable increase in number and have succeeded in adjusting themselves to changed economic environment. The Mundas and the cognate tribes had passed through much vicissitudes of fortune, but the timely help generous as it was, they received from the Christian missionaries and also from the administration, helped them through their crises and today they show signs of life pulsating with hopes and fears, indicating vitality and sound grip on their future.

## 6

A case of social symbiosis is afforded by the various tribes grouped under the Gonds, in the Bastar State. When different cultural groups, originally distinct and separate, migrate into an area and settle down together, they must react and adjust themselves to each other and eventually they evolve a *modus vivendi*. "There may exist between the separate groups and migrant strata the closest cooperation which is the fruit of a far-reaching adjustment". The social, economic and religious activities of these groups represent a reciprocity and interdependence linking section with section in the framework of a larger embracing social group unit, which fact is known as social symbiosis. In other words, it is evolution from many simple and isolated cultural groups of a complex cultural solution

or fusion. Such a fusion can be marked into stages as the different cultural groups come in contact, associate permanently for mutual benefit (though the groups remain distinct) until finally the distinctive characters of the different constituent cultural groups are lost.

The Dusserah festival in the Bastar State, which is held in honour of Dhanteswari, the family goddess of the ruling family, affords an example of symbiosis or cultural solution. The ceremony, however, continues for 15 days and each day there is a new programme of rites, rituals and customary observances. The peculiarity of these celebrations is that it has brought together the various cultural groups in Bastar State as sharers of a common heritage, for even the lowest of the castes has not been denied its rôle in the communal worship.

In the organization of temple worship all over the south, the various castes and tribes have been assigned their respective duties, so that economic participation of the diverse and heterogeneous social groups has become possible. The division of society in the south and the two groups now designated as exterior and interior castes have duties corresponding to their racial affiliations. Thus the exterior castes have belonged primarily to the Australoid or Pre-Dravidian substratum of population, are allowed to cooperate with the interior castes, which represent perhaps the superior race, the Mediterranean strain in the south, in duties which do not bring them together into close contact, while the performance of rites and rituals connected with the worship are done by members of the interior caste. In Bastar, however, the cooperation between the various cultural groups which do not appear to have maintained their ethnic identity is more real and the inferior cultural groups have not been denied an important rôle in the organization and performance of worship. In the south, economic partnership between primitive and backward groups has been regarded as essential, but no serious attempt has been made to bring together the different groups into a common religious fold. In Bastar, the fact of their cultural difference has been forgotten and there is one festival for all in which rites and customs of primitive and advanced cultures have blended together.

The Maharas, a Hinduized caste yet 'untouchable', weaver by profession also known as well versed in witch-craft and sorcery must be consulted by the ruling chief before the programme for the festival can be drawn up. A small girl, seven to eight years of age, is ceremonially married to the priest, which makes her eligible for the function. She comes out veiled along with her companions of her caste, moves round a swing seven times

and is armed with a stick and shield. A Teli, oilpresser by caste, similarly armed suddenly makes his appearance and offers to fight the girl, who defends herself against his skilful dash. While the duel progresses, the Mahara girl foams at the mouth, and ultimately falls into a swoon, and is gently laid on the swing on which a bed of thorns has already been fixed. Her eyes become fixed and her restlessness disappears; gentle swings do not upset her nor does the thorn bed on which she lies flat. She is calm and composed, victory is stamped on her little face and she must now be approached through the priest, prayed to for the successful performance of the traditional ceremony, which she usually grants. She is then garlanded by the ruling chief or his representative, after which the latter with his retinue returns to the palace and holds a Durbar the same evening.

An analysis of the customary division of labour obtained during the Dusserah festival will show how far the different tribes cooperate among themselves in social, economic and religious life. The construction of the chariot is left with the Saonras, the Lohars make the iron nails and bars required for the chariot. Dhakars supervise the construction, the Khatis are the special *Pujaris* of the chariot who perform the *Puja* both before and after the construction, the stool on which the sword is kept in front of the Halba *Jogi* who replaces the ruling chief during the *Nawaratri* (nine nights) for performing all the austerities required to be done in accordance with traditional practices, is made by the Sunris. The Gadabas supply the bearers for the Raja's palanquin. The Halbas supply the *Jogi*, and also protect the Raja with drawn swords when the latter camps in the Muria settlements after the ceremonial kidnapping by the latter. They also take part in the sacrifice, as a Halba is invariably engaged to kill animals for sacrifice. The Murias, Dhruvas and Dandami Marias pull the chariot while the Bhatras figure prominently on the occasion of the triumphant entry of the Raja to the capital after the kidnapping by the Murias. The Maharas supply the girl who determines the auspiciousness or otherwise of the festival. The respective importance of the various groups may be interpreted by the duties each is required to perform, so that there is a well-assessed division of labour based on the numerical strength and cultural stage of the group concerned. The Bhatras parade armed with arrows which are less effective than swords owned by the Halbas as the latter are supposed to be descendants of old garrisons or 'paik militia'. The Dhakars who are Rajputs and are the highest cultural group in Bastar, are not required to do any manual labour, their duty being supervision. But whatever be the

respective rôles of the various cultural groups, their participation in the festival is indispensable and all the year people wistfully watch for the return of the annual festival. Not only in this festival, in almost all economic spheres the existence of the various groups as independent units has become difficult and inter-communication between them and reciprocity in their economic undertakings have become more real than before. Thus a symbiosis has developed among the tribal and the higher cultural groups which has been of great help in the adaptation of the tribal elements in the state.

## 7

With the increase of contacts of the aboriginal tribes with the cultural groups in and around the tribal settlement, the dependence of these tribes on the dominant higher culture of their comparatively civilized neighbours has become real. The process of acculturation or inoculation of the tribal cultures, with elements of social value from advanced cultures, has assumed more than academic importance. Suitable adaptation of alien traits are necessary not only in the interest of the tribes concerned, but also of the country as a whole, for unity of culture and uniformity of beliefs and ideas are essential for national solidarity. The large number of primitive tribes and depressed or exterior castes in India must be brought in line with their comparatively more fortunate compatriots, and sooner it is done, the better for all concerned. But this transition must be effected in such a way that the tribal people may not get detribalized, for it is as much necessary to adopt new ideas and behaviour patterns as it is to conserve indigenous customs and institutions of social and survival value.

In a memorandum for the study of acculturation (Man, XXXV, 162) Professor Melville J. Herskovits submitted an outline for the study of acculturation. He defines acculturation as comprehending those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. 'He distinguishes acculturation from 'culture change' of which it is but one aspect and from 'assimilation which is at times a phase of acculturation.' Of course acculturation is different from 'diffusion which may happen without first-hand contact. The results of acculturation are acceptance (A), adaptation (B) and reaction (C). A tribe or a cultural group may take over the greater portion of another culture and may lose most of the older cultural heritage. This has been the case with the Bhumij of Bihar, an

aboriginal tribe of Munda ethnic type, who is in the process of forming a caste or has already been a caste. This taking over of the elements of another culture may be with the acquiescence on the part of the members of the accepting group, in which case it is possible to assimilate the inner values of the culture which is being accepted.

Adaptation takes place where both original and foreign traits are combined so as to produce a smooth functioning cultural whole which is 'actually a historic mosaic'. The Rajbanshis of Bengal or the Koch provide an example of such adaptation. The Majhwars, the Cheros of Mirzapur, the Tharus of U. P. are further examples. A reaction may also set in where because of oppression or because of the unforeseen results of the 'acceptance of foreign traits' contra-acculturative movements arise, these maintaining their psychological (a) force as compensations for an imposed or assumed inferiority or (b) through the prestige which a 'return to older pre-acculturative conditions may bring to those participating in such a movement.' The Mundas and the Hos of Chota Nagpur have reacted against the oppression and exploitation of their neighbours, whose elements they have borrowed and assimilated from time to time. A sort of contra-acculturative movement has started in tribal areas in Chota Nagpur, but a return to older, pre-acculturative conditions is not possible; on the other hand a reorientation of their outlook is envisaged in their newly awakened tribal consciousness which makes them seek sanction for their borrowed elements of culture in prehistoric civilizations which they have been claiming as their heritage. The Indus Valley civilization is now being claimed by the intelligent section of the tribal people as evolved by their ancestors, but how far they would be able to get over their inferiority on this claim, has to be seen.

In any case, the process of acculturation is proceeding in tribal areas and tribes who have failed to acculturate are on evil days and their maladaptation will soon lead to their exit or incorporation by other more vital groups. A study of the process of acculturation in different regions will show how the tribal groups are fighting hard for survival, and any assistance that is needed should be a responsibility of those who boast of a higher civilization but fail to notice the view-points of others less fortunately placed.

Primitive society in India as elsewhere has maintained itself in spite of civilization, against all apathy and neglect, also exploitation and oppression. As S. C. Roy put it, "Have they not for centuries been ground down under the oppression



of the rich and the powerful and groaned under various economic and social evils, not the least of which is the cruel stigma of untouchability ?”

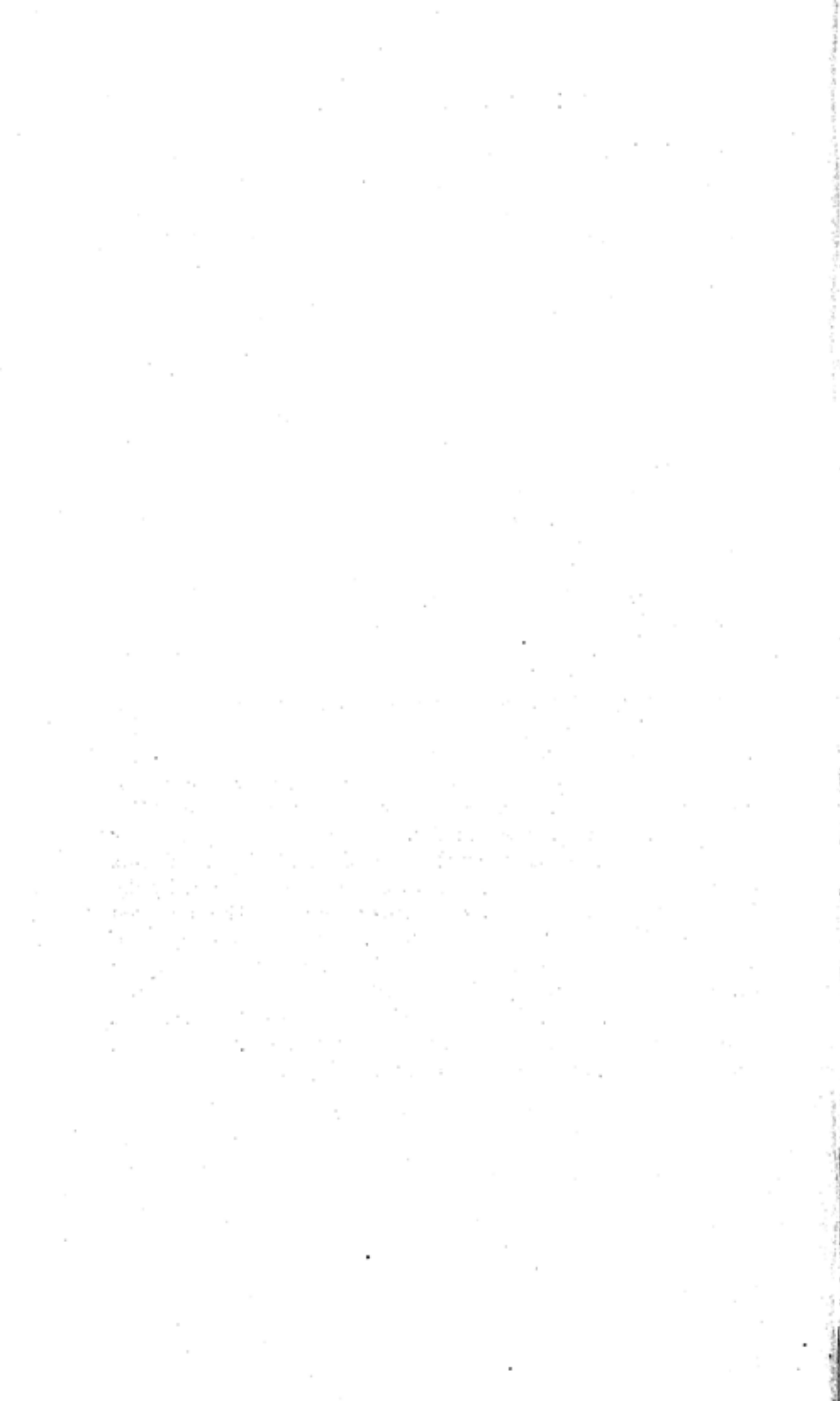
A backward group, slow to change and rigidly conservative, must face discomforts due to changed economic conditions. The struggle for existence is a selective process as it eliminates the weaker elements but the stronger succeed in adapting themselves and thus maintain continuity of cultural life. The large number of primitive and backward tribes and castes in India show that these have effected an adjustment to the forces of their environment and possess sufficient vitality to exist and perpetuate their kind. It is the duty of the advanced sections of people to assist in this struggle for survival and of the administration to watch their interests and protect them from undue interference by the foreign elements of population in tribal areas and also from over-zealous officers.

No apology is required to cite a few cases of misunderstanding that have prejudiced the administration in the eyes of the tribal population in the Chota Nagpur plateau, recorded by the late Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy whose interest in tribal life and culture is well known. Writing about the discomforts of tribal people Roy wrote, “Any one having had occasion to watch at close quarters the administration of justice in certain aboriginal areas of India will be struck by the amount of injustice done, in spite of the best intentions, by judges and magistrates and police officers of all grades owing to their ignorance of the customs and mentality of the aboriginal tribes they have to deal with.”

The aborigines of Chota Nagpur are organized on territorial basis which is known locally as the *Parha* system. A group of 5 to 20 villages constitutes a *Parha* presided over by a divisional headman who is variously designated as *Manki*, *Raja* and similar titles. On special occasions at least once a year, a meeting of the *Parha* council is held and the villages constituting the *Parha* and also neighbouring villages are informed about the place and date of the meeting. A police inspector in 1921 during the days of the non-cooperation movement, came across one of these *parwanas* or notice issued on behalf of the Munda Raja and he suspected a plot by the Raja to overthrow the government established by law, which required the loyal and devoted services of the police officer. He lost no time in reporting the matter to the Deputy Commissioner who necessarily had to act on the police information. The Deputy Commissioner consulted Roy who explained the situation. Roy and a few police constables and an officer in plain clothes were deputed to the meeting to find out what it actually meant. Not long after

Roy reached the place, three or four police sub-inspectors arrived on the scene, which so much frightened the Mundas that they decided to disperse without transacting any business. The presence and intervention of Roy saved what would otherwise have been an ugly situation, and a violent demonstration against the government. This meeting discussed their agrarian grievances, educational needs, etc., and had nothing to do with any subversive activities as interpreted by the police inspector.

Every Oraon village has a flag or flags which they carry in procession to their inter-tribal dancing meets known as *Yatra*. A contractor who was to construct a railway bridge was assisted by people of two villages in the vicinity, one a Hindu and the other Oraon. Superstitious beliefs were prevalent about the spirit supposed to dwell in the river over which the bridge was to be constructed, for on two previous occasions the bridge was washed away due to rains and flood. The contractor wanted to placate gods of both the villages, he repaired an old dilapidated Hindu temple, and presented a flag with a railway engine drawn on it, to the Oraons. The possession of the new flag, which indicated power was coveted by other Oraon villages and another village who wanted to increase its power made a very large flag with the railway train painted on it, and marched triumphantly in procession to the annual *Yatra*. The infringement of the patent right of the former village who claimed the flag as its exclusive right led to protests and a free fight which resulted fatally in two killed and others injured. The police confiscated the flag, prosecuted a large number of people for criminal breach of peace which resulted in conviction of some of the villagers. The next year precautions were taken by the District Magistrate against recurrence of trouble and he requested Roy to assist him. Roy constructed a flag with the emblem of an aeroplane and presented it to the village which carried the offending flag and explained to the village elders the superiority of the aeroplane which was readily understood by them. A happy solution it was, and the trouble was stopped at the root, thanks to the intervention of the anthropologist.



## APPENDIX

### NOTES ON RACIAL TYPES

#### **Nordic :**

Long heads and high thin noses, thin membranous lips and median eye-folds, tall slender bodies and long faces with compressed malars and jaw-angles, straight wavy hair of a golden-ash colour and of a fine texture and sparse growth, these are outstanding features of the race of blonds called Nordic. These people are concentrated in the cool-temperate oceanic regions of Europe, Scandinavia, Baltic lands and British Isles, and sporadic in the United States and British Colonies. The long legs contribute towards the stately height, which for an adult male, averages 172 cm.

The race is dolichocephalic and narrow faced ; the cephalic index lies round about 75. The head is strikingly narrow about the temples ; the forehead is narrow ; well-developed cheekbones with a prominent chin give a bold expression to the face ; lips are thin, and the mouth rather small ; brow-ridges are weakly developed ; the walls of the nose are high and steep, and the depression of the nasal root moderate. One of the outstanding features of the Nordic race is the great distance between the borders of the lower teeth and the point of chin.

The skin is ruddy, of a pinkish, white colour ; the hair is wavy in the texture and golden-blond in colour ; the eye is blue or light-grey, a typical Nordic feature.

#### **Mediterranean :**

This great sub-race of basic, long-headed brunettes that constitute the largest number of whites is distributed over the whole Mediterranean basin, from Spain, across Morocco, and thence eastward to India. The Mediterranean race is short, gracefully slender, with an average height of about 166 cm. The shape of the head is the same as in the Nordic race, dolichocephalic, narrow forehead, its backward slope making a vault. The face is long and narrow with deep jaws, prominent malars and pointing chin, the nose is somewhat shorter, but straight and high, convex, with depressed tip and recurved alae. The mouth is broader, lips are thin and membranous, slightly puffed out. The pelvis is broad in both sexes, especially the Mediterranean women are characterized by big prominent buttocks and well developed hemispherical breasts.

The hair are wavy of a light brown colour. The pigmentation is light brown. The eyes are brown-black and

have a warm colour-tone. A very high percentage of the people belong to Blood-group A, with a moderate percentage of B among the Asiatic Mediterraneans.

### **Dinaric :**

Named after the Dinaric Alps of Europe, the Dinarics are distributed over Central Europe from France to Macedonia. They are considered to be the result of interbreeding of primary sub-races. High peaked head with sloping forehead and flattered occiput, broad head (with the cephalic index over 83), long narrow face, low orbits, extremely prominent and convex nose, projecting chin, prominent malar and thin lips are characteristic Dinaric features. The race is tall, with an average height of about 170 cm. ; body is well-built with heavy skeletal structure and long legs. The neck is somewhat thicker, the joints of the limbs not so small. The lips are broader than in the Nordic race. The skin-colour is light olive, usually brunette. Eyes are of a light brownish colour ; the hair are dark-brown with occasional occurrence of lighter shades, wavy, with thick on face growth and body.

### **Alpine :**

Concentrated in the heart of Europe, from France to the Urals, with a sprinkling in the Near East and North West Africa, the Alpine are a medium-statured people (average height being 165 cm.), Stocky, and square built. Broad shoulders, deep chest, short, squat legs, broad hands and short fingers, short broad feet, and thick short calves, distinguish them from the Mediterranean. The pelvis in the women is narrower than in the other European races.

The form of the head is broad, the cephalic index being much above 80. The head is of a globular shape, of moderate size, with a high forehead, broad face characteristically round, with prominent gonial angles. The nose is fleshy, short, rather flat, and a thick elevated tip, the nasal index over 63 ; it is set clumsily over the upper lip, the unprominent, broad, rounded chin.

The skin is a yellowish-brown with occasional shades of blond or brunette. The hair are of a light chestnut colour, thick, and grow abundantly on the face and body. The colour of the eyes is hazel-gray.

### **Australoid-Veddoid :**

The dolichocephalic Australoid-Veddoid, a short-statured, curly-haired, chocolate skinned people, with prominent brow-

ridges depressed nasal root, broad nose, slightly protruding maxilla, and thick seamy lips are distributed over Vindhya Pradesh and the southern India. The Bhils, and the Chenchus of the Farhabad hills represent this type of the Indo-Dravidian composite race, according to E. A. Hooton. The mean cephalic index among the Chenchus is 72.9, and their stature averages at 165 cm. The hair-colour is black, and their growth on the face and body very sparse. The eye colour is blackish-brown.

### **Negroid :**

The name Negroid is applied to the specialized division of mankind that is concentrated in the two widely separated areas of the old world, tropical Africa and Oceania. They are of average height, rather thickset and well-muscled, being long-armed but not long-legged ; forearm is relatively long and so is lower leg ; feet are flat, and the calf is poorly developed. The pelvis is narrow, the female buttocks are small and breasts conical.

The head is long and narrow, occiput projecting, forehead upright and narrow, and there is little in the way of brow-ridges. The nose is flat and broad lips thick and membranous with marked lip-seam, malars are prominent and the chin is receding, ears are small and usually lobeless and there is marked prognathism in subnasal region. Dark-brown complexion, black eyes, and black wooly hair of sparse growth on face and body are classic Negroid features. There is, among them, a high incidence of blood O, relatively less A, and very little B.

### **Negrito :**

This sub-race of pygmies can be distinguished from the Negroids by its very short stature (which averages at about 150 for adult males), brachycephalic, head index over 83), dirty yellowish skin colour, and black frizzly hair which grow in peppercorns or clumps. The Negritoes are distributed over the Congo forests, and islands of the Indian and Pacific Ocean, Andamans, Phillipines, New Guinea, and Melanisia. They have got high heads with vertical foreheads, little or no brow-ridges, and short broad faces. Lips are thick and everted, nose is wide with narrow root, low bridge, broad tip and flaring alae. Shoulders are narrow, trunk short, pelvis high, legs short, and arms long with relatively shorter forearms. The beard and body hair are sparse, but more abundant than in Negroes.

### **Mongoloid :**

The Mongoloid racial stock is yellow or brownish of skin,

straight, or very rarely slightly wavy of hair, broad and flat in the face with high cheek-bones, malars with strong frontal and lateral jut, and nose which is small and flat with low roots and bridges. The stature is short, averaging under 165 cm. the body-form differs from that of the whites in being short-legged, and having a long trunk with broad shoulders.

The head is broad, the cephalic index being over 80, forehead is upright, lips are ordinarily thick, and chin rounded. Eyes are of a dark-brown colour, and there is often an extra eyelid fold, and with it, the oblique eye-slit. The hair are black and lank, of a coarse texture, and their growth on the face and body is sparse or very little. The eye-brows are small and undeveloped. There is a very high incidence of blood group B among them, and being equal to '25 or sometimes even more.

#### RACIAL CLASSIFICATION OF H. H. RISLEY (FOR INDIA)

Risley divided the Indian people into seven physical types excluding the Negritoes of the Andaman Islands who, he said, had not much to do with the peopling of India. These seven distinctive types are described as below :

##### 1. The Turko-Iranian :

They inhabit the Baluchistan Agency and Frontier Province, which now form a part of Pakistan. They are quite tall having stature above the general mean, with a fair complexion. The eyes are generally dark, but grey eyes are not unknown. They have thick beard, with hair on the face in plenty. They are a brachycephalic lot, with nose moderately narrow, prominent and very long.

##### 2. The Indo-Aryan :

They occupy the Eastern part of the Punjab, Rajputana, and Kashmir ; the tall Khattris and Jats of these parts generally come under this type. Most of them have tall bodies, and long heads, with narrow and prominent nose. The complexion of this type is also quite fair, the eyes have a dark colour.

##### 3. The Scytho-Dravidian :

From the very name it is seen that this type is a result of intermixture of the two distinct racial strains. The Scythians, and the Dravidians. They generally inhabit the hilly tracts of M. P., Saurashtra and Coorg. The Scythian element is more prominent in the higher social groups of these regions, while

the Dravidian features are more prominent in the lower groups. They are a brachycephalic lot, with moderately fine nose which is rarely very long. They are medium statured and of fair complexion, with hair on the body quite scanty.

#### **4. The Aryo-Dravidian :**

U. P., Rajputana and Bihar are the places where this type is dominating in number. This type is a result of intermixture in varying proportions of the Indo-Aryans and the Dravidian types. The head is generally long with a tendency to medium. The complexion or the skin colour varies from place to place; generally it is from lightish brown to black. Mesorrhiny and in some cases platyrrhiny are generally prevailing amongst this type. The Indo-Aryans have finer nose than this type, the latter are shorter in stature than the Indo-Aryan type.

#### **5. The Mongolo-Dravidian :**

This type is found in Bengal and Orissa, with Bengali Brahmins, Bengali Kayasthas, and Bengali Muslims, forming the greatest percentage of this type. Risley thinks that this type has come into existence as a result of intermixture of the Mongolians with the Dravidians having some blood strains of Indo-Aryan type. They are black with plenty of hair on the face. They are round headed with medium nose which has a tendency to flatness in some cases. The stature is medium and sometimes short.

#### **6. The Mongoloid :**

They are distributed like a belt along the Himalayan region—Nepal, Assam and Burma. They are known as different social groups in different parts, but all having almost the same physical features. They have broad heads, with a fine nose, which in some cases is broad. They have a characteristic feature of flat face, with Mongoloid or epicanthic fold of the eye. The skin colour is dark with an yellowish tinge. Scanty hairs on the body are generally seen. The stature is short.

#### **7. The Dravidian :**

They inhabit the Southern part of India, specially Madras, Hyderabad, southern portion of M. P., and Chota Nagpur. All the features of this type are seen amongst the Paniyans of S. India and Santals of C. Nagpur. Amongst these groups, practically all people have dark complexion, the eyes are also dark, the stature is very short, hair plentiful with a tendency to curl. The head is long and nose is very broad, with a depression at the root.



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