The Origin of Man and His Culture
Second revised edition 1983
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Preface to the Second Edition

This book has been long out of print, due to the untimely demise of the publisher. The enterprise of another publisher, however, has made this second edition possible. Meanwhile Anthropology has made further progress, therefore, some revisions of the text and—as I hope—improvements, too, have been made. The second half of chapter second, and practically the whole third and fourth chapters have been rewritten. A new chapter has been added: Messianic Movements, for such movements give a good insight into the concrete working of culture change in primitive societies.

Many reviewers of the first edition have been kind in their evaluation of this book. They have especially welcomed the inclusion of frequent examples and illustrations from Indian tribal societies. A few reviewers were disappointed that this book brought so few shocking and scandalous titbits in its description of the many exotic races and cultures of the world.

Wherever valid criticism had been raised against certain statements in the first edition of this book, the author has made the necessary corrections. Some critics have complained that the book contains many undue generalisations. But such generalisations are unavoidable in a book of such limited size. A more detailed description of the development of human culture would require many volumes. But the average student of anthropology is generally content with a broad outline of the findings of the science of man; if he wants more information on a particular point he can always get it from other books recommended in the bibliography.

May this second edition be equally well received as the first one and lead the readers to a better understanding of man's nature and the varieties of human culture. For such an understanding will lead to greater tolerance and sympathy with our fellowmen.

Bombay
5 May 1983

Stephen Fuchs
Preface to the First Edition

This book is intended as a general textbook of anthropology, both physical and cultural, for students in India. There is a definite need for such a book, as most textbooks of anthropology now in use in India draw their examples almost exclusively from the American and African fields, and ignore the abundance of anthropological data available in India. The use of these foreign handbooks has the obvious result that Indian students of anthropology become more familiar with the peoples and cultures of America, Africa and the Pacific, while they remain ignorant of the races and cultures in their own country.

In order to bring therelevant Indian data into stronger relief, they are presented in this book in special chapters which are inserted after the general treatment of each section of the subject-matter. If these chapters are often rather brief, they are unavoidably so, because the limited space available does not permit a more generous treatment of the vast and complicated material.

This book admittedly differs from other textbooks in the presentation of its subject-matter. It is based on the supposition that (cultural) anthropology is a historical discipline and must be treated as such. While the functional, sociological and psychological methods of dealing with the vast amount of anthropological data are not ignored or rejected in this book, the emphasis is laid on the historical sequence of the cultural (and racial) phenomena as far as this sequence can be traced. This insistence on the historical aspect in the development of the human races and cultures brings order and system into the confusing abundance of anthropological data. It allows the division of the primitive cultures into four historically subsequent human strata: the mere foodgatherers and primitive hunters, the advanced hunters, the primitive cultivators and the nomadic animal-breeders. This division of primitive mankind into four distinct cultures is justified by the prehistorically observed fact that each of these human groups came into existence owing to a specific epochal invention or cultural revolution. These prehistoric inventions were
equally important for the progress of human culture as, for instance, the invention of printing, of the steam engine and of the atom bomb in later historical times.

This book also endeavours, especially in the concluding chapters, to explore the original sources of Hindu culture and to venture, in this exploration, beyond the self-imposed limits of the Indologists.

Another chapter, rarely found in textbooks of anthropology, deals with the origin of human art, not only with painting and sculpture, but also with poetry, dramatic art, dancing and music.

In this book, footnotes and references are kept at a minimum. Students of anthropology can easily find them in the books mentioned in the bibliography, while the general reader will find them superfluous. This book contains no new and unproved theories though it tries to be up-to-date. Where controversial opinions had to be given, they are clearly indicated as such.

The author is indebted to Dr. K. Klostermaier (Vrindaban) for valuable suggestions, for the correction of the final proofs and for the compilation of the index.

May this book be able to serve the earnest students of anthropology in their studies, and at the same time help also those who seek ready and reliable information about anthropological problems, but have no time to read bulky volumes full of bewildering controversies and confusing theories.

Vienna, December 1962

Stephen Fuchs
CHAPTER I

Anthropology, its Definition and Scope

1. Definition

Anthropology is the science of man, of his works and behaviour. It deals with the physical and cultural development of mankind; with man's origin and earliest appearance, with the differentiation of the human forms and races, with the origin and development of the cultural achievements of man.

2. Division

Anthropology is divided into physical and cultural anthropology. In North America (USA) prehistory, archaeology, linguistics and folklore are considered as sub-sections of anthropology. In Europe these latter sciences are regarded as independent sciences though auxiliary to (cultural) anthropology.

Physical anthropology, as the word implies, studies man in so far as he is a physical and biological being. Physical anthropology is sub-divided into several sections. One of these is somatology. It studies the physical structure of man and investigates the human types and races with the aim of discovering how they came into existence. The procedure is to observe the living material, to measure the human body and skeleton.

The science of measuring the human body is called anthropometry. The techniques of all such observations and measurements have been largely standardised, some textbooks recording over 5000 of them. Such measurements and observations involve the hair, the eye, the skin, the very important head measurements, also the height of the body, its proportions to the limbs, the forms of hand and foot and certain peculiarities. The proportionate distribution of the blood-groups, and of the tasters and non-tasters of phenil-thio-carbonide is also important.

In addition, physical anthropology includes human genetics, and studies the problems associated with physical changes, hereditary

\(^{1}\text{A.L. Kroeber.}\)
mechanisms, the effects of food, environment and mode of life on racial and physical characteristics. Finally, it also considers the racial history of man, and all the various phenomena of race mixtures.

Another important section is palaeoanthropology. It is the study of fossil hominids. But in a broad sense it begins with the threshold between man and the animals. It ends with the evolution of most, if not all, of the early types of man right up to Homo sapiens.

Physical anthropology may also have useful practical applications, as, for instance, the application of human biology to problems of forensic classification in paternity diagnosis, the genetic improvement of man—eugenics, and the use of body measurements in design and engineering.

Cultural anthropology considers man as the creator and carrier of culture. In Europe cultural anthropology is often called ethnology or ethnography. The latter term is now usually applied to a purely descriptive study of human culture. The term anthropology is in Europe restricted to physical anthropology. In the Anglo-Saxon countries the term ethnology is used for a comparative study of certain cultures. In England the term social anthropology is used for the study of a particular human society in all its phases.

Linguistics is the study of human speech and languages and their connections. Prehistory deals with the cultures of extinct peoples and the past phases of living peoples by materials obtained through excavations. It differs from archaeology because it is concerned with pre-literate peoples and cultures while archaeology concentrates on cultures which have left inscriptions of some kind. Folklore is the study of archaic beliefs and practices among civilised peoples. Applied anthropology gives advice of a practical nature to social workers, administrators and politicians, etc., who have to deal with alien population groups within a state or nation.

3. THE NATURE OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Most European anthropologists consider physical anthropology a section of the natural sciences because it concerns itself with the physical and biological side of man. In his physical and biological aspects, man is part of the animal kingdom and is thus subject to the laws and mechanisms that control animals, in particular the mammals and among them the primates.

Cultural anthropology, on the other hand, is for them a part of the humanities, more precisely, a historical science, because it studies the
origin and history of human culture, as it was created by man since the beginning of his existence.

The subject-matter of cultural anthropology is *culture*, that is, the cultural forms produced by pre-literate man, or, more exactly, by social groups still in the pre-literate stage of culture. But the problem is how to define *culture*, for there is no uniformity of opinions about the meanings of the term *culture* among the anthropologists. A.L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, two American anthropologists, have listed about 250 different definitions of *culture* in a book on this subject.

It appears that here the particular world-outlook of the individual anthropologist comes into play. For even the greatest scientists have their pre-conceived ideas which guide them in the selection and evaluation of their objects of study. No scientist is free of prejudice.

The Marxists among the western anthropologists are in favour of *cultural determinism*, that is, they deny man’s free will and maintain that all human activities are ultimately determined by his environment and the inner laws of his organism. Dialectical materialism in particular denies any essential difference between man and the animal, even inorganic matter. But many American and European anthropologists, among them A.L. Kroeber, for instance, also hold the same opinion. According to them, man’s culture must be considered “as something entirely part of nature, wholly an evolutionary development within nature” (Kroeber). Man’s culture, consequently, is “to be investigated by the methods of fundamental natural science.” M. Pyke, of the Oxford Institute of Experimental Psychology, declared that “the behaviour of animals and man can ultimately be explained in terms of the chemistry of the nervous system.”

Other scholars admit at least that the factors which control human behaviour are (as yet) not amenable to the laws of physics and chemistry; for the time being, they have to rely on the less precise, but by no means less important, principles derived from the world of living organisms. Some of them even grant the significance of the historical dimension, but they prefer to stress the limits of choice and alternatives open against randomness or the freedom of the human will.

In opposition to the spokesmen of *cultural determinism* we must define culture as the totality of the acts of man and the products of these acts in as much as they are produced intelligently and freely. These *acts of man* are deliberate and spontaneous activities not

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1M. Pyke, 1962; 1742.
necessarily determined by his nature (An example of the latter would be breathing).

The production of culture is, consequently, at least partly dependent on man’s free will and creativeness, and not exclusively on man’s animal nature and his environment. This implies that man is as much the creator of culture as its product and carrier. Man, whenever he created a cultural form, reacted in a certain manner; but he need not have reacted in that manner. Man is admittedly, on the one hand, the child of a particular age, society, convention; of what we may call in one word a tradition. But he may also be, on the other hand, a rebel against this tradition. This possibility refutes cultural determinism.

Though it must be granted that man is to a large extent subject to his environment, he is not completely so, and has evolved capabilities which make him master of his environment. It is now widely accepted by biologists that the direction which evolution has taken since man became human is diametrically opposed to that of the animal. Animal evolution is governed by a principle which more and more perfectly adapts a particular animal body to its environment by, for instance, developing defensive or aggressive weapons. The animal thus adapts itself to changing ecological conditions by changing itself—autoplastically; while man manipulates and adapts his environment to his bodily needs and capabilities—an autoplastic process. By the invention and use of his tools he breaks away from the animal scheme and instead developing his body’s capabilities further, perfects his artificial means of mastering his environment. The evolution of man is thus no more so much in his body, as outside his body. Moreover, through his extensive migrations all over the world and his practice of frequent racial intermarriages he prevents the development of stronger racial differences. This results in a partial desintegration of the human body’s original adaptive outfit leading to its present state of “nakedness.” This body-liberation is one of the fundamental principles which separates man from the animal.

Since cultural anthropology analyses and studies the cultural forms which man produced deliberately and by his ingenuity, it must be considered a historical science. For this human ingenuity and creativeness prevent the natural scientist from forming exact laws and principles by which he could foresee and even regulate the course of cultural development. Cultural anthropology can do no more than
study and record the human actions and reactions, human works and their consequences in so far as they have created and stimulated the growth of human culture in the past and still do so in present time.

Cultural anthropology is mainly concerned with the external manifestations and products of man’s cultural activity. It studies first the means and methods by which man reacts to his natural environment; it deals with his means of acquiring food (through collecting, hunting, cultivation and husbandry), the means of transportation, weapons, implements and tools, clothing and ornaments, shelters and dwelling places.

Cultural anthropology further studies man’s reactions to his social group, his social institutions, like the family, the kinship group, sibs and clans, political institutions; the customs of birth, mating, death and funeral; property rights and inheritance, and in general, all laws and customs of private and social life. It also studies man’s creative and artistic activities and their products, his ornaments, sculptures and paintings, carvings, masks, music and dancing, his story-telling, his myths and legends, poems, songs and riddles.

It finally studies man’s beliefs about a transcendent world, his beliefs in the existence of superhuman powers: the Supreme Being, the lower deities, ghosts and spirits, demons and goblins, the soul, life after death, and related matters; further, the ceremonies and customs resulting from these beliefs, the rites of worship, magical practices, funeral rites, his moral concepts, his general world outlook and philosophy.

Anthropology provides, at least to some extent, an insight into the history of mankind before the age of writing and archaeological evidence. Prehistorians claim that man came into existence several million years ago, while history covers scarcely more than 6,000 years. Prehistory provides information about the physical development of the human races, and of man’s material culture; but its findings can be interpreted and complemented by cultural anthropology in the light of the living primitive peoples who have preserved ancient customs and ways of living. Conclusions from the social life and religious beliefs of the primitive races of today are legitimate for a cautious reconstruction of the social life and religious beliefs of similarly conditioned peoples in earlier ages of mankind.

Anthropology also helps men to know and treat with tolerance and respect the very often different beliefs, customs and habits of
their fellowmen in other parts of the world.

4. Culture

So far culture has been considered solely as the sum-total of the products of man's cultural activity, or the external manifestations of his culture. But there is also another aspect of culture, which is immanent in man. We use the term *culture* in this sense when we speak of "a cultured man", or "a man of culture". W. Schmidt therefore defines *culture* as "the inner formation of the human mind formed by the traditions peculiar to a specific social or racial group." These traditions are handed on to the individual members of the same group from the older generation which, again, learned them from their ancestors. C. Kluckhohn expresses this in other words: "Culture is a way of thinking, feeling, believing. It is the group's knowledge stored up (in memories of men; in books and objects) for future use."

This division of culture into *immanent* and *external* is very important. Its implications can easily be seen: man as an individual or social group can be said either to possess culture, or to produce it. In the latter sense, these products are the external manifestations of his inner culture, of the peculiar formation of his mind. This formation of his mind allows man to travel all over the world and to produce the same cultural forms there as well as in his original home-country. So did the Greeks when they emigrated from Greece or Asia Minor to Sicily and South Italy; the South Indians who sailed to Cambodia and Bali; the Europeans who emigrated to North and South America and to Australia. Modern American and Australian culture is an occidental culture, though it may have its local peculiarities.

5. Culture Constancy and Culture Change

Since culture is based on the tradition of a social or racial group, this group is usually unwilling to change the traditions inherited from their forefathers. Any deviation is abhorrent to the group. Changes in material culture are more readily accepted, but changes in mental culture, in religion, ethics, behaviour patterns, are usually strongly opposed. Culture constancy is everywhere the rule.

Yet culture changes do take place, often imperceptibly in long

1C. Kluckhohn, 1963, 28.
Anthropology, its Definition and Scope

periods of time. Prehistory proves how slowly cultures change. Only in modern times cultures have changed more rapidly.

If changes take place, they are brought about either through a new invention, or through diffusion, through migration, or by strong external influences (conquest, colonisation, persuasion through propaganda and advertisement, fashion, the creation of certain artificial needs and their satisfaction, such as alcohol, drugs, clothes, etc.) and through modern trends like urbanisation and industrialisation. Especially the latter factors might lead to a partial or total loss of the original culture and the adoption of a new culture.

A. Invention

Invention is a change or adjustment in objects or practices so that a new kind emerges. Every change in human activity which is deliberate and designed is an invention. Invention differs from discovery because in discovery the purpose is absent.

Prehistory shows that man is not very inventive. For millions of years there was hardly any change in the culture of man. The reasons for this slow development of culture are many: early man had probably a less developed intelligence. Then, man acquires knowledge and skills through learning; in the beginning there was nobody to teach him. Further, early man rarely lived to a higher age; he died before he could accumulate much knowledge and acquire skills. He led a nomadic life and had to limit his possessions to a minimum as he had to carry his goods on his back from place to place. Early man probably rejected the higher material culture because it could be acquired only with a loss of personal freedom and independence which he highly valued. He also lacked inspiration and stimulation from outside as he lived in numerically very restricted social groups and in great isolation. At that time the earth was very under-populated.

Still, some very important inventions were made in these million years, such as the use of fire, and later, various methods of producing fire; roasting or cooking food; the invention of the spear, of the bow and arrow; of basketry, pottery-making; the weaving loom; much later the domestication of the dog, then of other animals, the invention of various forms of cultivation, the invention of the plough, of the wheel, of riding, of smelting metals, and so on. The great importance of these basic inventions is often ignored by modern man; he takes them for granted.
Connected with the concept of 'invention' is that of *discovery*. It is the perception of the existence of something which had been in existence before but had not been previously observed. R.B. Dixon has drawn a distinction between discovery and invention by indicating the absence of purpose in a discovery as opposed to its presence in invention. He has, however, recognised the close relation between the two. The conditions stated by Dixon to be necessary for pure discovery are opportunity, observation, and a combination of the ability to appreciate, and imagination. Curiosity and need, he feels, are also necessary, while need is a factor in both discovery and invention.

*Cultural Parallelism* cannot be entirely ruled out in a consideration of invention and discovery. It is the development of similar culture traits in areas that are not in contact. Parallelism also denotes the belief that all human societies have developed in approximately the same way.

B. Diffusion

Far more common than change by innovation from within a society is the diffusion of cultural forms. In fact, most culture changes are traceable to borrowing. As history clearly testifies, cultures tend to develop in proportion to their exposure to cross-fertilisation, while isolation stifles cultural growth.

Diffusion can take place without direct contact between the borrowing culture and the culture of origin, for the object itself migrates; pearl shell money in New Guinea, the potato in Europe, for instance.

Various forms of diffusion are possible: the diffusion of a stimulus, of an idea; or the borrowing of the foreign element itself, such as steel implements, certain articles as; money, clothing, etc.

Diffusion may take place in regard to form, usage, meaning or function; and its object may be a single trait, a complex, an institution or even a complex of institutions.

A special form of culture change in which diffusion plays a major role is *acculturation*. It is "the process by which culture is transmitted through continuous first-hand contact of groups with different cultures, one often having a more highly developed civilisation. The process may be unilateral or bilateral."  

It can be antagonistic, as when a culture trait is adopted by a

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1C. Winick, 1961, 3.
society as a means of resisting more effectively the encroachments of
the society from which it is borrowed (as the borrowing of the rifle
by the Plains Indians in North America). It is marginal, if the cul-
tural interchange between the two areas is largely confined to the border
region.

Sometimes neither invention nor diffusion seem likely to be respon-
sible for the origin of a culture trait. The alternative then is cultural
convergence. It is the process by which distinctive culture traits from
different areas become similar or merge.

C. Migration

Migration is a large movement of people seeking a permanent
change of residence. Natural catastrophes, societal changes, and
economic necessity have been responsible for most migrations. Glaci-
ation, floods, droughts, volcanic eruptions, progressive desiccation
(in Inner Asia and North Africa, North-West India) were important
factors for some early migrations. Wars too caused many migra-
tions. Migrations could also be caused by the nomadic habits of social
groups, by wanderings of the animals hunted, by pressure from other
peoples due to overpopulation, by the expectation of better and more
favourable living sites, by epidemics and climatic changes.

Prehistory shows that early man migrated continuously over wide
areas. Fossils of Homo erectus (perhaps the first true man, 500,000 to
150,000 BC) have been found in North Africa, Europe, China, and
in Java. The change of the geographical environment naturally invol-
ved a change of culture as well.

America and Oceania had important migrations. The earliest
evidence of man in North America is variously dated at between
26,000 and 13,000 BC. Once arrived, the new-comers spread rapidly,
reaching the southernmost tip of South America around 9,000 BC.

Africa also had its migrations, as in the case of the Hamitic people
who moved into the Nile valley and then towards the west, north of
the Sahara, while the Bantus spread widely over central and southern
Africa. In earlier times the range of the Bushman habitats extended
as far as North Africa. There they were probably exterminated or
assimilated by more powerful immigrant peoples.

The early historical period saw many migrations of animal breed-
ing tribes, notably from Central Asia, as well as such movements on
the part of maritime peoples. Intermarriage with the earlier residents
in the area has made it difficult to trace the effects of migrations,
and the major migrations of early man are not known with any certainty.

Migrations took place in India: the Aryans and probably also the Dravidians came from the north and wandered through the whole of India; the Munda tribes came from the east, after them the Ahoms and other tribes immigrated from Burma; Tibetan tribes came over the Himalayas and settled in north-eastern India; later the Greeks, Central Asian nomads and finally the Moghuls invaded India and drove the older settlers away from their homelands.

Urbanisation and industrialisation are the causes of large-scale migrations in modern times. They lead either to the migration of whole communities, or of a certain part of a community, only the males, for instance; sometimes there is only a temporary migration, for weeks, months or whole seasons. In the Pacific and in India thousands of labourers migrate to the large estates, palm and rubber plantations, tea and coffee gardens for work. Many thousands of Indian workers in present times migrate to the oil-fields of Arabia. In Africa and India, factory labourers, mine workers, domestic servants work for longer or shorter periods of time away from their homes; the same is true in modern times of the so-called guest-workers in Europe and the croppers in North America.

D. Conquest and Colonisation

The history of Africa, Asia and the Pacific shows clearly how deeply conquest and colonisation can influence the culture of a people. The conqueror, and especially the coloniser, has not only the chance, but also the power to change the culture of the people under his domination. And often he considers it his duty and god-given vocation to impose his own culture on the subject people. He sincerely believes that his own culture is superior to that of the subject people—how else could he have prevailed over the other people! But he also hopes that by the imposition of his own culture he will be able to keep the other people permanently and more completely under control. While political colonisation may have been abandoned in modern times, except in communist countries, economic and cultural colonisation has, by no means, been given up by certain nations.

The colonised peoples are generally so dispirited by their defeat that they are ready to accept the domination of the conquerors; at least a certain portion of the conquered people are always ready to
make friends with the conquerors and to gain by it. They are the first ones to adapt themselves to the new situation and to accept the culture of the conquerors.

India has survived several such conquests; first the Aryan conquest which has been very successful in imposing the Aryan culture on the early population over a vast area. The greater part of the Indian population have even adopted the language of the Aryans, as also their religion and world outlook, though with considerable modifications and adaptations. Another conquest was that of the Moghuls who also influenced the Indian population deeply and widely though a large part of the Indian people always opposed them. But it is certain that the Moghuls introduced many changes at least in the administration of the land and also converted large numbers to Islam. This change of religion, whether voluntary or forced, had its effect on the whole culture of a large part of the Indian population. Finally, the British colonial domination introduced new changes some of which were quite radical. In administration, education, industrialisation, and in many other ways the British changed the culture of India and introduced new trends and developments which are still taking their course. Even the most ardent Indian nationalists cannot do without them.

It should not be forgotten that India, too, has been a strong colonising power at one time. From the first century AD onwards Indians have founded empires in Cambodia and Annam (Champa), later in Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Bali, and their political influence extended as far as the Philippine Islands. It remained effective for many centuries. The island Bali has remained Hindu until the present day.

E. Degeneration of Culture

Culture change is not uniformly progressive; there may be a decay of culture. Whole societies are known you have reverted to a lower standard of culture. Thus the Seminole Indians of Florida, formerly agriculturists, were reduced to the state of mere food-gathering, after they had been deprived of their land by white settlers and forced to settle in the infertile regions of Florida. The same fate overtook the Caribou hunters who now lead a very unsteady life of low culture while their close relatives, the Navahos and Apaches, have managed to retain their old culture at least to some extent.

The Red Indians of Middle America and of Peru possessed in pre-Spanish times a high civilisation. Today most of them live in abject
poverty and have suffered a nearly total loss of their high cultural achievements.

Even the Australian aborigines must at one time have had a higher standard of culture, for their social structure and their religion are too complicated for mere food-gatherers. At one time they must have been advanced hunters, but the ecological conditions of their Australian habitats forced them to follow an economic mode of food-gathering while their social structure and their spiritual culture remained that of advanced hunters.

The Kazakhs of Central Asia are another example of cultural degeneration. It is well known that they had been at one time, under Genghis Khan and his immediate descendants, won over to the civilised life of the peoples whom they had conquered. But after the decline of Mongol leadership they reverted to their former mode of life as nomadic pastoralists with a rather simple culture. This return of the Kazakhs to a simpler culture was probably of their own choice because the ordinary Kazakhs, apart from their leaders, had never felt comfortable in the sophisticated atmosphere of a high civilisation.

The Kurumbas of South India, now very poor hunters and collectors of jungle produce, claim to have been the rulers of South India in ancient times. But in the eighth century AD they were defeated by the Cholas and those who refused to be dominated by the Cholas went into the jungles of the Nilgiris. As former rulers they refuse to do manual work and thus they can earn their livelihood only by hunting and collecting jungle produce.

Human culture, subject to the free will of man, may thus for various reasons have suffered stagnation or even degeneration. It would be unjustifiable optimism to assume that culture which has progressed at all times and everywhere without any backsliding or aberration.
CHAPTER II

The Evolution of Man

1. EVOLUTION IN GENERAL

In his famous work *Systema Naturae* (1735) the Swedish naturalist C. Linnaeus had codified and standardised all plants and animals, including man, on the basis of morphological homologues. But it was left to Charles Darwin to discover in evolution the cause of the existence of these morphological conformities. Plants, as also animals, have a similar morphological structure because they have evolved from one another. Thus the concept of evolution provides the existential foundation for the general classification and systematisation of all plants and animals.

Organic evolution, which alone concerns us here, entails in its purest form “the belief that all organisms living and dead are ultimately descended from and traceable back to an extremely simple primitive type of living thing which in itself sprang from or arose out of inanimate matter.”

Thus in the domain of natural science organic evolution could be defined as the genetic inner development of a form of being stimulated by external agencies. In the theory of evolution it is essential that the forms evolving from one another retain something in common.

This concept of evolution postulates unity of structure and of functioning, whether it be on a microcosmic or macrocosmic scale, that is, whether the beings in question are made up of identical components or built on an identical plan.¹

Even where morphology is unable to reveal any trace of parenthood, embryology—the science of the process of development from the ovum to the adult animal—often shows undeniable links of

¹By the development on the microcosmic scale we mean the development of each individual body from the embryo to the full-grown adult form.

It was formerly believed that each individual had to pass in its growth through all the various stages of evolution of the whole species, that is, on the macrocosmic scale. This is no more held.
parenthood that disappear in the adult. Besides identity of development, embryology reveals also a unity of organisation.

But the most spectacular argument for evolution is provided by Palaeontology, the science of the fossil forms of plants, animals and man.

As is well known, the theory of evolution in this sense was first worked out by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace. Darwin’s *Origin of Species* was published in 1859. It gave rise to fierce controversies. If Darwin’s theory could have been confined to brute creation, it might have proved acceptable; but the equating of man and the ape as the descendants of a common stock proved revolting to mid-Victorian England. Nevertheless, by the time of Darwin’s death in 1882, most of the scientists had been won over, and at the turn of the century the biologists were teaching it as an infallible doctrine.

In the course of time, the term ‘evolution’ has acquired several divergent meanings and it is no more restricted to ‘organic evolution.’ Many scientists now hold that cosmic, biological and human evolution can be regarded as phases in a continuous natural process; to pass from a primeval nebula to modern man without any sudden break in continuity of thought gives them a feeling of intellectual tidiness.

In the opinion of others, who go even further, ‘evolution’ means that all things, God and the material universe, spirit and matter, are made of the same stuff and consequently everything is equally material and equally divine. In this extreme form the theory of evolution is monistic and pantheistic. It implies that evolution explains ‘the origin of all things’, that is, that life, plants, animals and men, intellect, free will, individual responsibility and self-awareness, religion, morality, truth, beauty, etc. are all ultimately explainable in terms of evolution alone. Such a theory would deny the stability and permanence of everything, would hold that universal ideals, moral standards and obligations, are all constantly changing. This theory ultimately leads to absolute relativism. Naturally, the theory of evolution in this wide sense is a philosophical problem, a matter of one’s world outlook or *Weltanschauung*, as the Germans put it.

We are here concerned only with evolution in the domain of the natural sciences, with organic evolution in particular.

The number of instances where an evolutionary step in plant or animal life can be considered as definitely proven is limited. It is only within the closely related groups known as ‘families’, ‘genera’
(wolf—dog) and 'species' that the palaeontological evidence is, in specific cases (that of the horse, for instance) so great as to be justifiably called scientific proof. Even here the descent of one organic form from another has not been actually observed, but it is legitimately inferred, as are most of the reliable data of history. Within the next bigger divisions ('classes', like fish—amphibia) and 'orders'—like primates) wherein resemblances are no more so close, the existence of real proof for evolution is problematical. Some scientists would claim sufficient evidence for evolution even within the next higher group, the 'phylum' of the vertebrata, but the controversies among scientists themselves show plainly that this claim is still disputed. As regards the highest groups (types), the fact of evolution from one type to another is purely hypothetical, for all-factual evidence is absent.

With regard to the mechanisms of evolution the majority of the scientists are divided into two main schools: the Neo-Darwinian and the Neo-Lamarckian.

1. The *Neo-Darwinian School* attempts to explain all evolutionary changes by 'natural selection.' Every organism possesses a number of different measurable qualities. Of these an average 66 per cent are normal, 17 per cent super-normal and 17 per cent sub-normal. In the struggle for existence, the possessors of the most advantageous qualities in a given environment survive. This is the doctrine of the 'survival of the fittest.'

2. The *Neo-Lamarckian School* explains evolutionary changes by external factors, such as the parents' adaptation to the environment which is then inherited genetically—'The function creates the organ.'

Both theories have their weaknesses.

Various objections can be raised against the view that natural selection is the principal cause of evolution. 'For example, there is the difficulty of ascribing selective value to characters in an early stage of evolution before they become fully functional (what are called incipient characters); there is the point that the competition on which by definition, selection must depend, is competition between individuals and not between species, and is therefore something of a quite different potential from anything required for the origin of

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1In one period of palaeontology, the Saurians, giant reptiles, increased rapidly in numbers. But later their extreme growth of bulk made them unfit for survival and they died out.

2This, they claim, explains the long neck of the giraffe.
species; there is the lack of any good evidence for the widespread elimination of the less fit that the hypothesis requires. Above all there is the very reasonable and—dare I say?—self-evident statement that no amount of selection alone can initiate novelty; and it is the origin of novelty, in the sense of the periodic appearance of conditions which have never before occurred, that must have been the fundamental theme of the evolutionary story. Such objections as these have never been met, though they have been blanketed in varying degrees of circumstances."

Against the Lamarckian hypothesis is the fact that the inheritance of acquired characters has been observed only within very narrow limits. On the other hand, certain differentiations—in animal forms and even in human races—cannot well be explained except by the assumption of the inheritance of acquired characters and adaptation to the environment. Thus we see in the human species that the Eskimo is well adapted to a cold climate, while the Negro with his dark skin and his long limbs is better adapted to a tropical climate. It is not as if the Eskimo moved into the arctic because he could stand the cold better, and the Negro moved into the tropical countries because he fitted better into a hot climate. The adaptation took place almost certainly in their respective habitats, either through the acquisition of new inheritable characters or as a result of natural selection. Another instance of such an acquisition of a new inheritable character is perhaps the spread of the sickling gene as a defence against malaria, in equatorial Africa and on the western coast of India.

On the other hand, it is almost impossible to direct deliberately the acquisition of such inheritable characters. White people, for instance, are still born white even after living several generations in tropical countries. In the Karenni States of Burma along the Thailand border live the Padaungs, a curious people whose women are famous for their "brass-necks." They wear coils of shining brass spirals which stretch their necks until they resemble champagne bottles. Though this practice is many generations old, all Padaung girls are born with normal necks.

The inherited transformation of certain organs is said to take place by mutation. Mutation is the abrupt modification of the inheritable patrimony; it is, therefore an internal factor leading to the appear-

1R. Good, 1959, 797-9.
ance of new characters. In experiments of 50,000 generations of the fly Drosophila about 800 mutations have been observed, most of them bearing on one limited character only. The chain of factors that leads from the genetic mutation to the changes in the phenotype is complex and completely known only in very few cases.

Those who hold the theory of natural selection agree that most bodily characteristics, such as height in man, are not controlled by mutation in a single gene, but by a large number of genes of the genotype. Each of these genes is inherited according to the laws laid down by Mendel, and the effect of each is all-or-one, but this aspect of their effects is obscured since they all act on the same character and their effects overlap. In other words, selection is exerted on the organism’s body, not directly on the hereditary material, the genotype; it is the characters as expressed in the body that come directly under the influence of selection, and in discussing selection we must consider its effect on them. It should also be noted that by far most mutations lead to defects in the hereditary mechanism, and not to improvement of the genotype.

Nor must the fact be ignored that evolution has made many mistakes. Julian Huxley compared it to a maze with an enormous number of blind alleys leading to stagnation or extinction. As A. Koestler states, “for every existing species hundreds have perished in the past; the fossil record is a waste-basket of the Chief Designer’s discarded models.”¹

Certainly, evolution was not in a straight line but was disharmonious, crude and modern traits occurred, in what remains for scientists an inexplicable tangle.

Early in the evolutionistic era biologists maintained that transformation was ruled by what they called orthogenesis; it is some mysterious inner urge or purposive ‘life-force’, an élan vital (Bergson), an entelechy (H. Driesch), which leads “the evolution of organisms systematically in definite directions and not accidentally in many directions.” It is thus not haphazard, but it is in some way directed. The Greek philosophers, though ignorant of evolution, were the first to assert a hierarchical order of all living beings, man topping them all. This theory was generally accepted in the West and, when the theory of evolution became dominant, it was interpreted in an orthogenetic sense. But already M. de Montaigne, the famous French

sceptic, pointed out the fact that man has a "deficient organism." In fact, modern biologists and anthropologists agree with him and hold that man can only survive in the hard struggle for life through his superior intelligence and by his use of artificial means of mastering his environment. He can make his environment for himself so that he can live in hot, cold, wet, and dry regions of the world at will.

But owing to the rapid advances in biochemistry, the extreme evolutionists who believed in a straight progressive advance in the evolution of living beings culminating in man have come into discredit; generally biologists now hold that the process of evolution of all living organisms has occurred by the action of natural selection working upon the results of random mutations in the genes, and that the inheritance of characters acquired during the lifetime of an individual does not take place. Recent work on genetic assimilation, however, has thrown some doubt on the assumption that the environment can never produce in an individual inheritable characters. But it has in no way superseded the basic idea that random mutations in the genes produce the main basis for evolution to take place.

Only recently, in 1944, E. Schrödinger's revolutionary concept of negentropy, has reintroduced vitalism through the back-door, as it were. And it is indeed difficult to imagine how such an extremely complex structure as the human eye, for instance, could be the result of random mutations in the human genes. Thus P. Grassé, with Gallic wit, asks in a recent book: "Where is the gambler, however obsessed with his passion, who would be crazy enough to bet on the roulette of random evolution? The creation, by grains of dust carried by the wind, of Dürer's Melancholia has a probability less infinitesimal than the construction of an eye through the mishaps which might befall the DNA molecule—mishaps which have no connection whatsoever with the future functions of the eye."

Day-dreaming is permissible, but science should not succumb to it.

Even the inveterate evolutionist Julian Huxley is forced to admit: "If man were wiped out, it is in the highest degree improbable that the step to conceptual thought would be taken again."

A. Koestler states that the evolution of man by random mutations is equally absurd as the hope that a house could be raised simply by sufficiently often shuffling around a heap of bricks and other build-

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1E. Schrödinger, 1944, 72.
ing materials. Yet he, too, like so many other scientists, fights shy of admitting the possibility of a direction of evolution by a "Chief Designer", a transcendental Creator. The famous palaeontologist Arthur Keith is honest/Enough to state in his preface to the 1928 edition of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*: "Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it because the only alternative is special creation which is unthinkable."

Biologists speak of an "integrative tendency", innate in living organisms, which causes plants and animals, and ultimately man, to evolve. But they leave the decisive question unanswered who implanted this spontaneous integrative tendency into all the living organisms.

Thus the theory of evolution is beset with many problems. Yet, it is no doubt a valid working hypothesis, even in its purest form, provided the scientists remain in the field of science and do not venture into the realm of philosophy.

Certainly the hypothesis of evolution does work. It has brought order, consistency and a reasonable explanation to a whole host of scientific facts from biological classification, comparative anatomy, embryology, geographic distribution, palaeontology, comparative biochemistry, and parasitology. The hypothesis of evolution does everything that a good working hypothesis should do and continues to explain and to agree with new facts as they are discovered. Julian Huxley calls evolution the "cornerstone of the biological building."

Yet this would not prevent the scientists to unhesitatingly agree that if a fact or body of facts entirely irreconcilable with the theory of evolution were to be discovered or proved, the theory would have to be abandoned or at least modified, as has so frequently happened to other scientific hypotheses in the past.

The strength of the case for the general theory of evolution rests, then, upon the convergence of the various lines of indirect evidence. For the descent of one form from the other has been observed only in rare cases, in almost all other cases it is inferred from the similarity or likeness of the forms. Each of the several arguments in favour of evolution can be given another explanation—it may even be a plausible one. But what has to be explained is the existence of the convergence of the different lines of evidence. Consequently, when these arguments are taken all together it is more reasonable to posit one cause which explains all the facts rather than a series of separate and independent causes for each line of evidence. Evolution thus
has a strong appeal to the human mind, which seeks unity and simplicity, and so long as a man considers the laws of nature to be rational, consistent and universal in their operations he will continue to seek a single operative secondary cause as the origin and the reason for the diversity of organic forms. So long as the intervention of divine power is conceded where sound philosophy demands such an intervention there is no reason why we cannot go along with the theory of evolution.

Even some theological reasons for evolution could be brought forward which might appeal to some persons. As the Orthogeneticists assert, it appears that God created the various forms of life in an ever-ascending series of evolution, each form coming closer to man in outward form. The creatures created and allowed to die are like broken moulds of the sculptor, made and then cast aside. But there is apparently an ultimate purpose, a finality in creating these many forms: man. The whole long pre-human history makes sense only in man.¹

2. EVOLUTION OF MAN

If finally we consider the evolution of man’s body in a purely scientific manner, just what do we find today? Biologically, man is classified under the same order as the apes, i.e., as primates. Both morphologically and physiologically, man’s body shows a strict continuity with lower forms of life. It has a substantially similar circulatory, respiratory and digestive system, similar bones, muscles, teeth, similar blood groups, blood chemistry, parasites, sex life, etc. These observable facts lead one to suspect that between the human organism and that of the anthropoid apes there exists an indirect physical and genetic bond. In other words, the convergent lines of evidence once again seem to lead to an evolutionistic explanation.

Modern zoologists, therefore, agree on the following grouping: The superfamilly Hominoidea includes all the forms generally known as the great apes, fossil and modern, as well as modern man and his relatives. This category is subdivided into three families: Pari- thecidae, which contains the extinct genus Parapithecus; Pongidae, which includes the chimpanzee, gorilla, orang, gibbon, siamang and all their fossil relatives; Hominidae, which includes modern and fossil man and also fossil relatives.

¹Orthogenesis is strongly opposed by J. Monod in his famous book Chance and Necessity.
A recent author, J.T. Robinson, subdivides the last mentioned family, the *Hominidae*, into "two sub-families: *Euhominidae* and *Australopithecinae.* The former contains true men, that is, erect hominids with a brain of sufficient size to allow the human type of mental and social activity; in short, tool-making man. The *Australopithecinae* include hominids which are fully bipedal but have relatively small brains and are without definite culture."

Other zoologists, like G.G. Simpson, regard the Australopithecines as a sub-family of the *Pongidae.*

Yet practically all biologists and zoologists today admit that man is vastly different from the animals. This is clearly shown by the studies of the Swiss zoologist A. Portmann, and others. They emphasize the great differences between man and all the animals in many physiological characters, in the functioning of the various organs, in the rhythm of growth, and so on. In Palaeontology it is difficult, if not impossible, to decide where the animal ends and man begins. Fossils do not show it. Definite proofs of man's distinct existence, the manufacture of tools and the use of fire, date back to a period of almost 500,000 years. It is also still a mystery whether hominisation took place once only at one place and in one group of hominids, or whether man had a polygenetic origin. It is more likely that the human race, as it exists today, had a monogenetic origin. For it is not only anatomically and physiologically, but also psychologically and physically one. All living human races are capable of interbreeding. On the other hand, infertility exists exclusively among the living human races of the world; experiments of interbreeding humans with chimpanzees and other primates have so far not given any positive results.

Moreover, man is unique in having will-power and the capacity for conceptual thought. The evolution of man's mental faculties and spiritual life is a problem apart. The theory that man's moral behaviour has evolved from animal behaviour fails to account for essential aspects of moral experience and individual responsibility; nor has science accounted for truth, justice, beauty, honour, charity; man is probably unique in being the one living creature who is aware of his own existence with its limitations, having a beginning and an end.

Thus it is still open to argument whether man has evolved wholly by natural means. This question cannot be decided by natural sciences; it belongs to the realm of philosophy and theology.
According to Julian Huxley, animal evolution has come to an end. His first reason for this startling statement is that evolutionary advance from the reptiles to the mammals has filled an evolutionary vacuum and it is not likely to be repeated. Even such late dominant types like birds and ants have been stabilised and have since tens of millions of years not shown any major improvement. And if any other animal were to show signs of rivalling man, he would certainly note the fact and take steps to deal with the menace. His second reason is that man, by the improvement of his brain and mind has passed from the stage of natural selection to that of psychosocial selection. That is to say, what now evolves is not (or only to a limited extent) gene systems and bodily organisations, but human cultures—social institutions, laws, arts, sciences, educational systems, techniques, codes of morals. And this evolution is no more wholly unconscious, but more or less conscious, the pressure of ideas and feelings, desires and purposes.¹

The theory of evolution is thus full of unsolved questions. We do well, therefore, to refrain from further theoretical discussions and to concentrate on the facts as they present themselves through palaeontology, prehistory, and other allied sciences.

¹J. Huxley, 1959, 17-20.
CHAPTER III

The Human Race in its Development from the Earliest Times

INTRODUCTION

Man belongs to the Order of Primates, and with monkeys and apes to the Sub-order of the Anthropoidae. With the gorillas, orang-utans, gibbons, chimpanzees, and with the Australopithecines he belongs to the Superfamily of the Hominoidae. He belongs to the Family of the Hominidae, together with Ramapithecus and the Australopithecines. With the Pithecanthropines and Neanderthal man he belongs to the Genus Homo, and probably with Neanderthal man to the Species Homo sapiens.

1. EARLIEST FOSSIL ANCESTORS

In order to trace our earliest ancestor philogenetically, palaeo-anthropologists agree that we have to go back to a primate form Dryopithecus, which lived in the Miocene period, that is, about twenty million years ago. The first find of this fossil ape was made in France, but more recently remains of this ape were found in many parts of the world, in Egypt, Europe (Spain, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Macedonia), in the Near East, in Pakistan, India, east China and elsewhere. Dryopithecus thus must have been a great wanderer.

This earliest ancestor of man gave rise—about 15 million years ago to three different branches of descendants. One branch evolved into the Pongidae, the ancestors of the present-day great apes, man’s closest living cousins. The second branch which evolved from Dryopithecus was Gigantopithecus, a huge ape with an exceptionally large lower jaw and a well-developed simian shelf, but small teeth, morphologically similar to those of man. Gigantopithecus remains have been found in eastern China, India and East Africa. It belongs to the Pliocene period and became extinct during the Pleistocene. But both these branches, the Pongidae as well as Gigantopithecus, can be eliminated as ancestors of man. They are dead-end deviations as far as the evolution of man is concerned. But the hominid line was conti-
continued in *Ramapithecus*, the third form which evolved from *Dryopithecus*.

It was probably a change of climate resulting in a changing food supply which forced some of the forest-dwelling apes into the savanna or grassland, in search of food such as roots, fruits, seeds, and finally the meat of other animals. The creature that adjusted itself best to the changed ecology was *Ramapithecus*. He lived 14 million years ago in India, Pakistan (near Islamabad), but also near the Turkana lake in East Africa (Koobi Fora). *Ramapithecus* was about the size of a gibbon, a smaller animal than most of the *Dryopithecinae*. The palate and dentition of *Ramapithecus* resemble that of man. The arch of the dental arcade is more like man’s, the canine tooth is small and spatulate, like man’s. The anterior teeth (incisors and canines) are small relative to the cheek teeth (premolars and molars). *Ramapithecus* was probably an erect biped. Thus the forelimbs were, no longer, a major part of the animal’s locomotor system, the hands could now be used for grasping and tearing vegetation.

Though for the next five to eight million years no fossils in the line of human ancestry have so far been found, the hitherto oldest fossils were found in 1981 by an international team at Afar on the Awash river in North Ethiopia. The fossils—the upper part of a left femur and portions of a skull—were not found at one place, but about half a mile apart. It is doubtful if they belong to one individual. J. Desmond Clark claims that the fossils are about four million years old and belong to a hominid who was biped, not more than 1.25 m. tall and had a brain capacity of only 400 cc. It is to be hoped that more fossils of this old hominid will be found on a future expedition.

The next eldest hominid fossil was found in 1972 by a member of the R.E. Leakey team at Koobi Fora, east of the Turkana lake in North Kenya. The age of this fossil, consisting of fragments of a skull, is much debated. While R.E. Leakey claims that the fossils are 3.6 million years old, other palaeontologists are inclined to reduce their age considerably. When the fragments of the skull, called ER 1470, were joined for reconstruction, it was found that in spite of its high age it had a comparatively great brain volume (800 cc). Its face has *Homo sapiens* traits and lacks heavy brow ridges. The leg bones are almost indistinguishable from those of *Homo sapiens*. From the evidence so far accumulated emerges a creature which was large-brained, upright-walking and meat-eating, and which hunted
along the shore of the Turkana lake.

Very significant is that together with the bone remains stone implements were also found. They are very crude pebble tools, but remarkably homogeneous. Some of the implements were found on the living floors together with the broken bones of various types of animals.

Much younger, but from 1.6 to 1.9 million years old, is *Homo habilis*, so-called by L.S.B. Leakey who has found this creature. The age also of this fossil is disputed by other palaeontologists. Homo habilis was about 1.20 to 1.25 m. tall and weighed 40 to 50 kg. Its brain volume is higher than expected—500 to 700 cc. The accompanying fauna suggests that it lived in open steppe country. According to its dentition it was omnivorous. The teeth are similar in size to those of present-day man. Homo habilis had a foot very human-like, as it possessed a double vault of the sole, and the big toe was more in line with the other toes. Foot-marks of Homo habilis were left in the hardened ash after a volcanic eruption and were preserved by a layer of sand. The foot-marks were discovered by Mrs. Leakey. The structure of the hand of Homo habilis was not quite the same as in man: its thumb was shorter. L.S.B. Leakey believed that Homo habilis was a direct ancestor of man.

Leakey called this hominid Homo habilis because stone tools were found along with the skeletal remains. They are very primitive, but according to Leakey, unmistakably deliberately manufactured for throwing and striking. There is, however, no improvement and progressive refinement in the shaping of these very crude stone tools for the next ten centuries.

Next in time sequence but found earlier are the Australopithecines. They are called thus because they were found first in South Africa. With the help of geologists, R.A. Dart, of Johannesburg University, discovered first in 1924 in a limestone quarry near Taung, together with other fossils, an almost perfect endocranial cast of a skull which seemed superior to an ape. The remains consisted of a complete facial skeleton including the frontal bone, the right cheekbone, one part of the temporal bone, a large part of the lower jaw, and all the teeth. These were 20 milk teeth and the first definite molars. The brain case was missing, but the endocast was there, thus the skull could be reconstructed. It was obviously the skull of a child. Its brain volume was 520 cc. (in a corresponding adult it would be 600 cc. in a female and 700 cc. in a male). The teeth are typically
human, the upper jaw teeth having three cusps, while the anthropoids have only two. Dart named the fossil *Australopithecus africanus*.

Dart was convinced that the fragments were of a form which was the original ancestor of man. But his opinion was not shared by other palaeontologists. They still held that the skull belonged to an ape, especially because it was the skull of a child. But the curator of the Transvaal Museum in Pretoria, R. Broom, agreed with Dart and began to search for more evidence. In 1936 he was successful: The manager of a lime quarry near Sterkfontein gave him the cast of a brain-case of another Australopithecus. Broom subsequently found more casts and also fragments which allowed a reconstruction of the whole skull. This time it was the skull of an adult. Broom called the new skull *Australopithecus transvaalensis*.

Two years later Broom acquired at Kromdraai fragments of a new skull which he called *Paranthropus robustus*. It had been found by a schoolboy who had damaged it badly. The skull is about 300,000 years old, one of the youngest. Later Broom found on the same spot also some teeth and several other fragments: the greater portion of a mandible, and a few fragments of the skeleton. In 1941 the mandible of a young individual was discovered. The brain volume of the skull found in 1938 is between 600 and 700 cc.

Though there is a surprising conformity between the Australopithecine and the human forms, the palaeontologists are now generally agreed that the Australopithecines belong to a line which deviated from the hominid stem and came to a dead end. They died out around 300,000 years ago. It is generally assumed that the Australopithecines split into two segments, one a gracile form—*Australopithecus africanus*, the other a robust form—*Paranthropus*.

*Australopithecus africanus* was slender in build, about 1.20 m. tall, weighing about 40 kg. The dentition suggests that he was omnivorous, with a predominant meat diet. He spent most of his time hunting, or scavenging, eating the remains of kills made by the larger predators.

*Paranthropus* was robust, between 1.50 and 1.55 m. high and his weight was about 70 kg. He was a vegetarian. His was a highly specialised adaptation to his surroundings at the edges of forests. This genus existed for nearly three million years, without any further development.

R. A. Dart, the discoverer of the South-African Australopithecines, also found that these hominids had begun to use primitive tools. At
Makapansgat, Dart found many broken animal bones which, in his opinion, had been broken deliberately and for a purpose. These bones could well have been used as weapons, and the jaws with the teeth as scrapers. L. S. B. Leakey, who found a Paranthropus in the Olduvei Gorge, discovered on the same site where he found his Zinjanthropus, chopping tools, mostly pebbles which had been sharpened to a point with a few blows. Other tools were probably used to break bones or cut meat. The proof that these tools were manufactured deliberately is found in the recurring types and shapes of the tools.

Inventory of the Australopithecine Finds:
1. Australopithecus Africanus:
   At Sterkfontein: four skulls, skull fragments, teeth, parts of long-bones, pelvic bones, ribs, vertebrae and a shoulder-blade.
   Implements too were discovered at Sterkfontein; they are chipped pebbles and stone flakes. But it is unknown who made them, the Australopithecines themselves or their hunters.
   At Makapansgat: parts of skulls, teeth, parts of long-bones, pelvic bones, vertebrae.
   At Garusi near Lake Eyasi: fragments of an upper jaw with teeth.
   Skull fragments were found between 1935 and 1938 which were dated by Prof. Weinert as 250,000 years old and named by him *Africanthropus njarasensis*. It is probably a more recent individual and only 40,000 years old (Howells, 1967).
   At Omo in Ethiopia: a lower jaw and teeth.
   At Lothagam, Kenya: the fragment of a mandible.
   At Kanapoi, Kenya: the fragment of a humerus.
2. Paranthropus:
   *Paranthropus* is divided into three different sub-sections: *Paranthropus robustus* (Broom, 1938):
   found at Kromdraai, South Africa: parts of skulls, teeth, talus.
   At Taung, South Africa: a juvenile skull. Found by Dart and named Australopithecus africanus. It has been re-named by P.V. Tobias in 1973 *Paranthropus robustus*.
   At Swartkrans, South Africa: a skull, parts of skulls, teeth, fragments of long-bones and of the pelvis, vertebrae, the bone of a hand.

*Paranthropus boisei* (Leakey, 1959) is the name for the following finds: found at Olduvei Gorge: a skull with teeth. Named by L.S.B. Leakey Zinjanthropus boisei. This skull became famous
because of its high age—1,750,000 years. Zinjanthropus had a heavy skull housing a comparatively tiny brain and immense teeth suggesting a vegetarian diet. It has been classified in the Paranthropus group.

At Peninj, Tanzania: a lower jaw with teeth.
At Turkana lake (or lake Rudolf): fragments of skulls with teeth.
At Chesowanja, Kenya: a partial skull with teeth.

Both these sections of the Australopithecine hominids died out around 300,000 BC. The reasons for their gradual decline and final extinction are unknown. On the other hand, the line of Homo habilis seems to have survived and evolved into the next category of man, *Homo erectus*. So far no evidence for a gradual evolution from Homo habilis to Homo erectus has been found; the evolution could have taken place through a sudden mutation.

Nor is it known at what stage and when real hominisation occurred, that is, when exactly the hominids became truly human, not only in the somatic and morphological, but also in the psychic and intellectual sphere. It is generally agreed that anatomical changes cannot reveal the exact moment of hominisation; this event is revealed only by the manifestation of man’s cultural activity, however crude and primitive it may have been at the beginning.

2. Homo Erectus

A further stage in the development which finally led to *Homo sapiens* is the renowned Pithecanthropus form, which is now commonly called *Homo erectus*. He is generally accepted to be a full-fledged human being. His fossil remains were first found in Java, then in China, and later in Germany and in Africa.

J. Jelinek given an outline of the Pithecanthropus discoveries in chronological order:1

1890—Dubois, Kedung Brubus, Djetis layer: part of a lower jaw (known as Pithecanthropus A).
1891—Dubois, Trinil, Trinil deposits: skull cap and right upper molar (known as Pithecanthropus I).
1892—Dubois, Trinil, Trinil deposits: left thigh bone; which together with the discovery from 1891 laid the basis for the description known as Pithecanthropus erectus (Dubois, 1894).
1936—von Koenigswald, Modjokerto, Djefis layer: infant calvaria, originally known as *Homo modjokertensis*, later as Pithecan-

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1J. Jelinek, 1976, 75.
*thropus modjokertensis* (von Koenigswald, 1936).

1937—von Koenigswald, Sangiran, Djetis deposits: fragment of a lower jaw (known as Pithecanthropus B).

1937—von Koenigswald, Sangiran, Trinil deposits: skull cap (known as Pithecanthropus II).

1938—von Koenigswald, Sangiran, Trinil deposits: incomplete calvaria (known as Pithecanthropus III).

1939—von Koenigswald, Sangiran, Djetis layer: upper jaw, back of a calvaria (known as Pithecanthropus IV) and belonging to the species of Pithecanthropus modjokertensis (von Koenigswald, 1936), later re-named Pithecanthropus robustus (Weidenreich, 1945). This name cannot be accepted since it does not correspond with modern scientific nomenclature.

Further discoveries were made by Indonesian scientists in the years between 1952 and 1974. At Sangiran in Java first a lower jaw was discovered in the Trinil deposits, in 1952. In 1963 followed the discovery of a sizeable fragment of a skull cap and a part of a facial skeleton, and in 1965 more extensive fragments of skulls were found. Other important finds followed: 1966—cranial base fragments; 1968-9—calvaria and other fragments; 1971—temporal and parietal fragments. But these discoveries have, as yet, not been fully evaluated.¹

The lengthy research into all Pithecanthropus discoveries led to the conclusion that they were undoubtedly man-like skeletons which belonged to one genus *Homo* and they were described as *Homo erectus* (Dubois, 1894). This ‘early man’ was about 1.65 to 1.75 m. tall. The structure of his thigh bone is exactly the same as that of modern man and proves that he had an erect posture when walking. The skull is robust when compared to that of the Australopithecines. *Pithecanthropus* has pronounced supra-orbital ridges, a flattened forehead and a protruding mouth. The teeth are human-like. The brain capacity is between 775 and 900 cc.; it is lowest in the Djetis finds.

The fossils belong to the Middle Pleistocene, their age is about 700,000 years. The Djetis deposits might be even older.

Fossils of the same type of man, though considerably younger, were found as far away as Chou-ku-tien, 40 km south-west of Peking. The remains of *Homo erectus pekinensis* are between 400,000 and 500,000 years old. They were found in a cave. Until 1937 many

¹J. Jelinek, 1976, 75.
fossils, mainly teeth, of over 30 males, females and children were found. Unfortunately, the whole of the *Sinanthropus* collection has been lost in the Japanese war. But excellent casts had been made before they disappeared. After the war some new finds were made; these are teeth and skull fragments, and there is hope that the loss will at least partly be made good.

Compared with the so-called Java man, *Homo erectus pekinensis* was a little smaller, between 1.55 and 1.60 m. tall. He possessed a strong skull with a thick brow ridge, but the occipital bone was weaker. Peking man could not have been as strong as Java man. The brain volume of *Sinanthropus* is higher, on an average 1055 cc. which is 172 cc. more than that of Java man.

Later, fossil deposits of Sinanthropus were found in two other places in China, at Chen-chia-wo (Shensi) where a lower jaw was found in 1963, and near King-wang-ling where a year later a cranium of the same type was discovered. The specimens are about a million years old, consequently older by five or six centuries than the finds at Chou-kou-tien. They resemble more the Java fossils of the Djetis layer.

Early men in Java and China led very similar ways of life. Both were omnivorous as evidenced from the remains of animal bones and fruits on their living sites.

Peking man used stone tools, very crudely made, in order to split objects, to chop and to scrape. As some of the skulls of Peking man appear to have been deliberately broken, it is concluded that he was a cannibal. However, other interpretations of the fact of broken skulls are also possible. Peking man knew the use of fire, but probably did not know how to make it. This is concluded from the fact that the ash layer is six metres thick; the fire was probably never allowed to go out.

Peking man lived in groups of about thirty individuals who probably could already communicate by speech. Thus he had a language though it must have been rather imperfect.

Java and Chou-kou-tien were the first sites at which *Homo erectus* was found. Later trials led to Africa and Europe. The first European discovery came from the Mauer sand-pit near Heidelberg. In 1907 a fossil jaw was found which dated back to the Middle Pleistocene, though its exact age is unknown. The characteristics of the mandible lead to the conclusion that Heidelberg man was similar to the Djetis type of Java man both in the structure of his body and
in his appearance. The way he lived must have been similar too. The stone tools found in the same layers of the Mauer sand-pit were even more primitive than those of Chou-kou-tien. They belonged to the most primitive Abbevillian culture.

Another European discovery was made in 1965 at Vertesszöllös near Budapest in Hungary. Several isolated molars and an occipital bone were found. Its age is about 600,000 years. Its owner is probably on the same level as *Sinanthropus* of Chou-kou-tien. It has been named *Homo erectus palaeohungaricus*.

During the last few years other discoveries of *Homo erectus* were made at a site in Prezletice near Prague. In 1968 a fragment of a molar was found, together with tools. The fauna discovered at the site shows that it dates back to the lower Pleistocene, thus it is older than the mandible found at Mauer. Further discoveries at the site are eagerly awaited.

Another promising site is Stranska skala near Brno where excavations are now taking place.

Discoveries which confirm the existence of *Homo erectus* in Africa, come from the northern parts of this continent. In 1954 and 1955 at a site south-east of Oran near Ternifine, three lower jaws and a parietal bone were found. This Ternifine find is dated from the Middle Pleistocene. The mandibles resemble those of Java man from the Trinil layers. This species is called *Homo erectus mauritianus*.

Another discovery comes from Swartkrans in South Africa. Its date is about a million years old and is thus a contemporary of the man of the Djetis layers. The finds consist of an almost complete lower jaw, with five molars, and fragments of the upper jaw. The lower jaw is as powerful as the jaw of Djetis and Heidelberg man. R. Broom and J. T. Robinson described the specimens in 1949. The scientific name is *Homo erectus capensis*.

The remains of *Homo erectus* were also found in the Olduvai Gorge by the Leakeys.

Another discovery belonged, until recently, to the group of *Homo erectus*: the skull fragments in Lake Eyasi in Tanzania (from 1935 to 1938). It carried the name *Africanthropus njarasensis*. Modern experts, however, believe that it is not 250,000 years old, but only 40,000!

The emergence of the *Homo erectus* group is undoubtedly one of the most important developments in the evolution of early man. At first glance the various finds seem to differ considerably from a morphological point of view. But the conformity is clearly discernible, and
the differences can be explained by the fact that the finds come from all parts of the world and from different geological horizons.

_Homo erectus_ can be classified as an early ancestor of _Homo sapiens_. There are several sub-species of _Homo sapiens_, some leading directly to _Homo sapiens sapiens_, others differing more and more from him and then dying out.

Remains of a type leading directly to _Homo sapiens sapiens_ though very old, but, of course, much younger than _Homo erectus_, were found at Steinheim, Swanscombe and Montmaurin. The first and nearly complete (female) skull was found in 1933 at Steinheim in Germany. The second, also female, was put together from parietal and occipital bones found in 1935, 1936 and 1955 in Swanscombe in Kent. Both skulls belong to the second interglacial period and their age is about 250,000 to 300,000 years. Unfortunately, no lower jaws could be found for either skull. A lower jaw of this type was, however, discovered at Montmaurin in France in 1949. This material made it possible to reconstruct this early type and determine the characteristics of early _Homo sapiens_.

The brain-case is quite small but vaulted. The forehead is far more arched than that of _Homo erectus_. But Steinheim man has the same prominent brow-ridge as Peking man. The lower jaw, as found at Montmaurin, is similar to the lower jaw of _Homo erectus heidelbergensis_ (Mauer). The brain volume is only little more than that of Peking man: 1150 cc. in the Steinheim skull and 1250 to 1300 cc. in the Swanscombe skull.

The sites also yielded tools which belong to the Acheulean culture.

3. _Homo Sapiens Neanderthalensis_

From more recent research it has become increasingly obvious that there are two lines of development; one may be called the 'early Neanderthal' or 'Preneanderthal' and the other 'extreme' or 'classic Neanderthal.'

The early Neanderthal type comes from the warm Riss-Würm interglacial phase and lived about 150,000 years ago. The most important discoveries of this phase come from Ehringsdorf near Weimar in Germany and from Saccopastore near Rome. Gibraltar yielded the oldest skull.

Skulls have a flattened facial skeleton with an occiput similar to those of the Steinheim skull. The brow-ridge is moderate, the forehead is slightly more arched, and the dentitions show less primitive
features. The capacity of the Ehringsdorf skull is between 1400 and 1450 cc., as in modern man. The female skull of Saccopastore was only about 1200 cc., almost as much as the Steinheim skull.

The discoveries of ‘classic’ Neanderthals come from the last glacial period—the so-called Würm Glaciation. This type must have appeared about 80,000 years ago and remained for a long time, because traces can still be found 35,000 years ago. The very first Neanderthal man discovered belongs to this ‘classic’ group. Other discoveries were made at La Chapelle aux Saints, Le Moustier, La Ferrassie, La Quina, and Arcy-sur-Cure, on the Island of Jersey, at Spy sur l’Orneau and La Naulette in Belgium, at Bañolés in Spain and the Guattari Cave on Monte Circeo near Rome in Italy.

If we compare early Neanderthal man with the ‘classic’ type it is clearly seen that the latter has a prominent brow-ridge, a low forehead, broad nose and powerful molars with large pulp cavities. The back of the head has a bun-like swelling with a bony ridge running across it. The chin is either missing or only weakly developed. The capacity of the skull is between 1350 and 1700 cc., with an average of about 1400 to 1450 cc.

Fragments of other bones that were found give evidence that the ‘classic’ Neanderthal man was strong and well-built, but fairly short in stature, only from 1.55 to 1.65 m. tall. In comparison to modern man his lower limbs were shorter, and the thigh bones slightly arched.

Skeletal finds of ‘classic’ Neanderthal man were often accompanied by tools showing a rich Mousterian culture.

Sites where ‘classic’ Neanderthal man was found in Europe show that he lived during the Würm glaciation. Unlike the earlier Neanderthal man this ‘classic’ type existed in a rough and cold climate.

We are left with two important questions. First, what are the genetic connections between these two types of Neanderthal man? And second, at what stage do they appear in man’s ancestral family tree? The experts have not been able to reach any definite conclusions and these questions cannot be answered fully.

The early type of Neanderthal man, found at Ehringsdorf and Saccopastore, seems to be connected to *Homo sapiens steinheimensis*, whom we believe was found at Steinheim, Swanscombe, Montmaurin and Arago Cave. The genetic connection between early Neanderthal man and the Steinheim skull can be suggested by an examination of the structure of the skulls Preneanderthal man
shows several sapiens-like characteristics which suggest that there is
a continuous line of evolution to the later types, which belong to
the basic structure of modern man. The remains of early Neander-
thal man skeletons also point to genetic connections with the ‘classic’
form. Therefore, it is possible to assume that early Neanderthal man
might be the ancestor of both modern man, Homo sapiens, as well as
of ‘classic’ Neanderthals. ‘Classic’ Neanderthal man reached his
acme during the last Würm Glaciation, and modern research shows
that he had adapted to the climatic conditions of the Ice Age. It is,
of course, not impossible with regard to the lines of development of
early Neanderthal man, that one line led to ‘classic’ Neanderthal
man and another to modern man. This theory is strengthened by the
fact that certain blade-like tools, characteristic of later cultures of
Homo sapiens sapiens, have been found in parts of central Europe
and the Near East, together with the usual stone tools of ‘classic’
Neanderthal man. In addition, some bones show intermediate
characteristics which present the experts with difficulties when trying
to classify these bones according to this or that type.

Discoveries of Neanderthal man in southern Europe, as well as some
outside Europe, are of interest, particularly the discovery made in
1899 in the so-called ‘cannibal cave’ at a little town called Krapina
near Zagreb in Yugoslavia. Some of these remains seem to be more
like early Neanderthal man, although they also show characteristics
belonging to classical prehistoric man. The Neanderthal man of
Krapina lived around the turn of the last interglacial phase and the
last Glaciation; he could have been at the source of the development
leading to ‘classic’ Neanderthal man.

Other interesting discoveries have been made in Morocco. One
site at Temara near Rabat was discovered in 1958, another at Djebel
Irhoud was discovered in 1962, and a third at Haua Fteah in the
Cyrenaica was discovered between 1952 and 1954. All the remains
found on these sites have been dated within the period of ‘classic’
Neanderthal man. There are also some morphological traces which
would confirm this.

Particularly important are the remains found at Mugharet et-
Tabun and Mugharet es-Skhul near Mount Carmel in Israel. From
these and other sites in Israel have come a number of skeletons since
1931, which show positive characteristics of both Homo sapiens
sapiens and Neanderthal man. These are thought to have lived
during the time of the Würm Glaciation. If the oldest Neanderthal
man can be seen as being the first part in the chain of development leading to classic prehistoric man, the discoveries from Israel can be thought of as being basically progressive Neanderthal man and provide a genetic link between early Neanderthal man and modern man. Many skeletal remains from the sites in Israel show clearly developed characteristics similar to those of modern man. The thigh bones are straight, quite long, and can easily be distinguished from the short, slightly bent thigh bones of ‘classic’ Neanderthal man. The brow-ridge is still fairly prominent, but there are already signs indicating that this species is changing and starting to take on characteristics of modern man. The brow-ridge of Homo erectus was very prominent and stretched across in one continuous line. A slight change is already often noticeable in Neanderthal man where the brow-ridge, though still prominent, is slightly indented above the nose and seems to connect the two brow-ridges on either side of the root of the nose. Modern man has two independent ridges above the brows, much less protruding and divided above the root of the nose. The vault of the skull of some of the Israel Neanderthal men is high, the occipital region is full and rounded, and the lower jaw shows signs of developing a chin. This type was slightly taller than ‘classic’ Neanderthal man. The volume of the best preserved skull from Mugharet es-Skhul is about 1500 cc.

The remains discovered in the years from 1933 to 1974 in Djebel-Kafzeh near Nazareth belong to a similar type of man. A particularly well-preserved skull has a volume of 1560 cc. and new discoveries proved strong similarity to Homo sapiens sapiens.

Another remarkable site outside Europe is the Shanidar cave which lies in the mountains of north Iraq. The site dates back to the middle Würm period and the remains found there, unlike the ones found in Israel, are more similar to ‘classic’ Neanderthal man.

More discoveries were made in the Soviet Republic. The first one was a skeleton of a boy found in a cave at Teshik-Tash. Another discovery was made in the Kiik Koba cave on the Krim peninsula. Here a shin-bone (tibia) and fibula as well as the skeleton of a foot all belonging to a Neanderthal man were found.

Other important discoveries of Neanderthal man come from Hungary. A skeleton of an infant and a lower jaw of an adult were found in a cave at Subalyuk. Other discoveries were made in Moravia in Czechoslovakia. The sites in Moravia contained fragments of skulls showing transitional changes which make it difficult to class
these as either early or ‘classic’ Neanderthal man. The same applies to discoveries made at Sala, Slovakia. They prove, however, that the sites in Hungary and Czechoslovakia were also occupied by Neanderthal man during the interglacial phase and the following Glaciation.

In 1958 a single skull was found in a cave near Mapa in the Chinese province of Kwang-tung, but it has not been possible to classify this skull. It has features of Neanderthal man but we do not know whether he was closer to the equivalent of European early or to ‘classic’ Neanderthal man. This find seems to suggest, however, that in eastern Asia, too, early man, Homo erectus, was replaced by a type which was similar to Neanderthal man, a sub-species which could be placed in the early stage of development of Homo sapiens.

Interesting discoveries of parts of skulls belonging to various types of ancestors of modern man have been made in Java. A large number of skulls have been found at Ngandong by the river Solo. The way in which these remains were found seems to suggest that they had been victims of cannibals. It is difficult to classify Solo man, because he is not only different from the European and Near East type of Neanderthal man, but also from the Chinese discovery at Mapa. Reconstruction shows Solo man to be well-built, with powerful brow-ridges, and characteristics very similar to Homo erectus. The age which dates back to approximately the first phase of the last European Glaciation is, however, considerably less than all other discoveries connected with Homo erectus. It seems that Solo man belonged to a type which in south-east Asia immediately followed the advanced type of Java man Homo erectus erectus, but is not very different from Peking man, although the latter is much older. Solo man’s development might have been delayed in isolation.

Similar questions are posed by two discoveries from Africa. The first is the famous skull from Broken Hill in Zambia, the second was found near Saldhana Bay, north of Capetown. These two skulls are Middle Pleistocene in age. They bear strong resemblances to Homo erectus and could be descendants of either Homo erectus capensis or Homo erectus leakeyi. The capacity of the Broken Hill skull is about 1300 cc., well below the average of early Neanderthal man. Together with Solo man the African representatives of Neanderthal man obviously belong to a branch of development running parallel to the Near East and European Neanderthal man. Von Koenigswald viewed all these types as ‘tropical Neanderthal man.’
4. Homo Sapiens Sapiens

This type of man appeared in its earliest form at the end of the first Würm Glaciation about 30,000 to 40,000 years ago. It either developed out of Neanderthal man, or Neanderthal man mixed with him and was absorbed by him. This early type of man shows no marked differences in the skeleton, including the structure of the skull, from modern man. Even the brain capacity had reached the same level as that of modern man. The only noticeable morphological difference is a more robust body structure.

The most famous sites of this man are: Cro-Magnon, and Combe Capelle in France, Oberkassel in Germany, Predmosti, Mladec and Dolni Vestonice in Moravia, as well as a number of other sites.

The exact homeland of the Cro-Magnon people is unknown. But they can be traced as coming from the east, up the valley of the Danube and along the northern shores of the Mediterranean as they made their way into Europe.

The Cro-Magnon man is fairly well known as seventy-two skeletons of this race were discovered in western Europe alone, apart from those in Moravia and still more eastward. Cro-Magnon man was tall, with long arms and legs; he walked erect. His head was long, narrow, with a high vault. The forehead was dome-shaped; he had wide cheekbones, a long narrow nose and a strong chin.

He was still a primitive hunter. He had no domestic animals, not even the dog. He had not yet learned the use of the bow and arrow; and no pots had yet been invented in which to cook his food.

But he had invented new and better weapons: the spear thrower and the harpoon. In addition he used a great variety of stone and bone tools such as blades and scrapers, daggers manufactured from the leg bones of lions and bears, clubs, ladles, necklaces from the teeth of bears and other animals. Bone knives and skewers were common, also bone needles and buttons which suggest the use of “tailored” garments. Cro-Magnon man obviously made music, for bone whistles and flutes were also found. And he used stone lamps at night.

Cro-Magnon man was dominant in Europe for at least five thousand years. After that, some racial changes took place and other races appeared, slighter in build, perhaps Negroid.

CONCLUSION

It becomes clear from this very condensed survey of the hominoid
and hominid fossil remains that the hominisation of the human body proceeded very slowly. The evolutionary process can best be illustrated by the picture of a tree: There is one straight line of development—the stem of the tree, but there are many branches that grow away from the tree and die off or are exterminated. Some, like the Pongidae, have survived into our time, it is true, but they too will soon disappear wherever they still exist in liberty. Even the ‘classic’ Neanderthal man, though a *Homo sapiens*, as he is now classified by the scientists, has either died out, been exterminated or absorbed by the subsequent *Homo sapiens* races.

Parallel to this slow evolution of the human body to its present form goes his mental evolution. The brain capacity increases ever so slowly, and from the tools which the hominids used and perhaps even shaped, we can observe how slowly man’s intellectual abilities evolved and increased. There is no observable sudden transition from the animal stage to the human stage, in fact, it cannot be stated with any degree of certainty which fossil remains belong to *Homo* and which still to an animal. Even the use of tools is no clear demarcation between the animal and man, because it has been proved that certain animals, as the Australopithecines for instance, or even the great apes, the chimpanzees in particular, but even birds, are capable of using certain suitable objects as tools.

Another pertinent observation is that the pace of evolution was at the beginning very slow. But gradually its speed increased and the transitional stages were shortened. While the early stages remained constant for millions of years, the *Homo erectus* species lived on for several hundred thousands of years, the Neanderthal man lasted for scarcely a hundred thousand years, and was replaced by *Homo sapiens sapiens* just over forty thousand years ago.

It also appears that the evolution of the human body has slowed down or stopped entirely. Man has now no need for any physical adaptation to his environment, he can now regulate his adaptation by cultural means. Though his body’s adaptation to his environment may be deficient, and he may justly be called ‘the naked ape’ (Desmond Morris), he can make up this deficiency to such an extent and with such success that his number is increasing at a frightening speed, and he is gradually exterminating all other living beings around him. His very victory over his environment seems to lead him towards the complete devastation of the earth and her resources. This may lead to man’s ruin and final extermination.
CHAPTER IV

Contemporary Human Races

1. THE PHYSICAL CRITERIA OF RACE

Scientists do not agree on a uniform definition of the term ‘race’. This is so because the basis of classification of races has not always been clear or consistent. In the present discussion, classifications based on national, political, linguistic or religious terms are eschewed in favour of physical and inherited criteria. For only so much can safely be agreed upon that the human races are distinguished mainly by physical characteristics which are inheritable. Yet even within a certain racial group the individual variability of the racial traits is so great that the contours appear always to be fluid. It is the average which usually gives the significant difference. Thus H. S. Jennings defines a race as “a set of individuals having many genes in common — in spite of many differences in genes among the component individuals—and differing in these genes from other sets of individuals, other races.”1 These common genes produce certain conformities in, for instance, pigmentation of the skin, facial angle, hair texture, nasal index, blood type, biochemical differences, endocrine dominance, constitutional differences, and so on. But neither single nor multiple criteria have produced definite segregations; in all classifications there is overlap, and only in respect of gross differences have segregations been satisfactory. Therefore a large number of individuals in a given group have to be observed and measured before the characteristic racial traits of that particular group can be established.

An important element in distinguishing present-day human races is complexion; the various hues of skin colour are most conspicuous, though, naturally, a broad margin exists in every race due to the environment. In a general way three racial groups are distinguished as to their skin colour: white, black, and yellow.

Another element distinguishing the various races is the eye: its colour, the form of the eye-lid, etc. The Mongolian race, for instance,

1H. S. Jennings, 1930.
has the epicanthic fold on the upper eye-lid.

The form of the face and of its parts differs also in the various races: the proportion of the facial parts, the form of the nose (long, short, narrow, flat, funnel-shaped, button-shaped, root of the nose low or high), of the lips (thin, thick, everted, mucous), the form of the chin, whether receding or forward jutting (prognathous), the shape of the forehead (low, sloping, high), the brow-ridges, etc.

Also the hair varies in the different races, not only its colour, but also its thickness, form, frequency and cross-section (oval or round).

The skull proportions (ratio of breadth to length of the brain case, absolute size of the head, height of the cranial vault, and other characters) also differentiate the races of man.

As to stature, the average man is about 165 cm. tall. But certain races are much shorter, like the Pygmies (below 150 cm.), also the Malay and Philippine Negritos, the Bushmen and Hottentots, the Ainus, Lapps, Eskimos, and a few Central American tribes. Some races, on the other hand, are much taller than the average, up to 180 cm., like the Nilotic tribes in Central and South-east Africa, the tribes in eastern North America and in South America (Patagonians), some races in North-West Europe and in the Balkan. Of importance are also the proportions of the trunk to the limbs, the forms of hand and foot, the lines on the palm and fingertips, the muscles, and certain peculiarities, like the steatopygy of the Bushmen and Andamanese women, or the Mongolian spot on children of—mainly—Mongolian or related racial origin.

The various human races have a different average proportion of blood groups (O, A, B, AB; M, N, MN; Rh types; the presence or absence of sickle cells).

Interesting differences have also been found in the various human races in the proportion of tasters to non-tasters of PTC (Phenylthio-carbamide).

2. **Contemporary Human Races**

The present-day human races can be divided broadly into four ethnic groups, with a number of sub-divisions: the Australoid, the Europoid (or Caucasoid), the Negroid and the Mongoloid groups.

A. **The Australoid Race**

The most archaic-looking members of the human race seem to belong to this race, with prominent brow-ridges, receding foreheads,
concave temples, dark-brown, deep-set eyes, large, fleshy noses, projecting jaws and large teeth. Their hair-form ranges from tightly curled or "Negroid" to straight, but usually it is wavy. It is generally dark-brown. The skin colour ranges from a sooty near-black to a medium or even light brown.

The Australoids have many traits in common with the Caucasoids and it is assumed by some anthropologists that they are the archaic survivors of a stock from which the Caucasoids also evolved. The Australoids resemble the Caucasoids in particular in body build, although arms and legs might be thinner and longer. Beard and body hair is distributed as in Caucasoids, and like them the Australoids tend to grow bald and to turn gray early in adult life. Though the hair is usually black, in women and children of the central Australian desert tribes it is often blond.

This Proto-Australoid type may have survived not only in Australia but also among the Veddas of Sri Lanka, the aborigines of southern and central India, and the Ainus of Japan. This archaic type is generally dolichocephalic, with a dark complexion, a flat nose and heavy brow-ridges. The hair is often wavy. Some Australian aboriginal tribes and the Ainus are known for their heavy growth of hair.

Hooton divides the Australians into several sub-groups:

1. The Murrayian sub-group: It is found in its purest form in south-eastern Australia, and in a modified type in the southern and eastern coastal areas. The hair of this type is wavy, its quantity abundant, but baldness is common. The skull is extremely large, the face form massive, the nose long, the body heavy. The skin colour is light red brown to chocolate brown.

2. The Carpentarian sub-group: It is found in northern Australia, around the Gulf of Carpentaria, in Arnhem Land. The stature of this type is tall, the body narrow, with a short trunk and long legs. The skin colour is dark, the hair sparse. Prognathism is pronounced.

3. The Tasmanoid sub-group: It is found in the dense rain forest areas in Queensland. Its stature is short, the head dimensions smaller than in the other sub-groups. The skin colour is darker than in Murrayians, lighter than in Carpentarians. The hair is either curly or even frizzy; its quantity sparse.

4. The Negritos: To the Australoid race belong most probably also the so-called Negritos, dwarfed ethnic groups which are found in the Philippines, on the Malay Peninsula, on the Andamans, and perhaps they once lived in South India and in north-eastern India.
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(Nagaland). In the past they may also have populated the Sunda Islands and New Guinea. They all have a small stature, black to brown skins, very curly, often frizzly hair, broad noses, and thick, puffy lips. The Andamanese women (Onges) are often steatopagous (like the Bushmen).

The Tasmanians were probably Negritos with an Australoid admixture. They became extinct in 1879. They lived in Tasmania and earlier probably all over Australia. Their skin colour was dark brown or black. Their hair form was woolly to frizzly, sometimes pepper-corn. The hair was black. The quantity of beard and body hair was medium to abundant. The nose was short and very broad; the nasal tip excessively thick. The skull dolichocephalic, with a low forehead, prominent parietal bosses, and strong brow-ridges. The face form was euryprosopic, the jaw prognathous, the height medium, the body muscular, the buttocks prominent and the limbs slender.

B. *The Caucasoid or Europoid Race*

From the Proto-Australoid level little advance was needed to attain a bruneette, wavy-haired, dolichocephalic type which probably was ancestral to the rest of humanity. This ethnic group is often called the white race though it has a number of dark sub-groups.

1. *The Mediterranean Race:* One such sub-group is the Mediterranean race. It is found in its classical form in the whole Mediterranean basin, and sporadically in eastern, central and north-western Europe. There is also a hook-nosed type, particularly in Arabia and the Near East among Arabs and Jews. Another type is the Iranian; found mostly in Iraq and Iran, also called Indo-Afghan, or Irano-Afghan.

This type is dolichocephalic, with wavy hair, brown to light complexion and a narrow nose. The face is usually long.

To this race also belong the Indo-Dravidians in South India, but also some groups in northern India, especially in the Punjab. Another sub-group is formed by the Ainus, of Hokkaido (northern Japan), of Sakhalin and Yezo. The Ainus are hirsute, long-headed, mesorrhine and of brown complexion. The stature is short.

2. *The Celtic Race:* It is concentrated in Ireland; common in the Scottish Highlands and Wales, sporadic in England, Brittany and elsewhere in Europe. It is a light-eyed, dark or red-haired, dolichocephalic race, with a pale-white skin colour, often freckled. The stature is usually tall.
3. *The Nordic Race*: It is concentrated in Scandinavia, common around the Baltic and in the British Isles, important in the United States, and was so in Hitler’s Germany.

The hair is blond, the eye blue or gray, the head form mesocephalic, the face long, the stature tall and slender, with long limbs.

4. *The Alpine Race*: It is concentrated in central Europe from France to the Ural, and is also found in Denmark, northern Italy, in the Balkan.

The head form is round, with a wide forehead. The nose is often mezorrhine, often straight or slightly concave, with an elevated tip. The stature is medium to short, the body thickset. The complexion is white or olive.

5. *The East Baltic Race*: It is concentrated in Finland, Russia, in the Baltic States, Poland and northern Germany.

The hair colour is often ash-blond, the eye gray or light blue, the nose often mezorrhine, with snubbed tip. The face is square, with high cheek-bones, the body thickset, the stature medium to short.

6. *The Armenoid Race*: It is concentrated in Turkey, Syria, Palestine; common in Iraq, Iran, and in the Balkan countries.

The hair and eye colour is brown, often dark brown. The skin colour is olive, often swarthy. The cephalic index is over 80. High, pointed heads with flat backs are frequent, and high, sloping foreheads. The face is long and narrow, the chin small and receding. The hair quantity is abundant, eyebrows often concurrent and thick; but baldness is common. Hooked noses are common.

It is a composite race, with Mediterranean, Alpine and Iranian admixtures.

7. *The Dinaric Race*: It is found in concentration in the Dinaric Alps region of Yugoslavia, in Austrian Tyrol and sporadically in central Europe.

The hair and eye colour is light to medium brown, the pigmentation is light, the face long, with a long, hooked nose, with abundant beard and body hair.

This race is also a mixed one, and there are many more mixed races in Europe.

8. *The Polynesian Race*: It is probably predominantly white, but with Mongoloid and Papuan-Melanesian admixtures. It is found on the Polynesian Islands, from Hawaii to New Zealand and Easter Island.

The hair is black, wavy, rarely curly. The complexion is light
brown. The cephalic index is usually over 80, the brow-ridges are well developed. The forehead is high and sloping, the face wide, long, and heavy, the nose long, broad, with a depressed root. Their lips are fairly full. Beard and body hair is sparse, the stature tall, the body broad and muscular and with a tendency to corpulence.

It is still impossible to connect genetically the prehistoric races of Europe and Asia with the present-day Caucasoid forms. Nothing is known about the origin of the brachycephalics, especially the Alpines. But the origin of the Nordic race too is still a puzzle.

C. The Negroid Race

The transition from late fossil types to contemporary races is one of the obscurest points in Physical Anthropology. Few data are available in particular for the origin of the Negroid race. It can only be stated with certainty that it must be an early, though highly specialised branch of the primitive stem of Homo sapiens.

1. The African Negro Group: Though the various African Negro races differ considerably, they are all, as a rule, dolichocephalic, with woolly hair, a dark skin colour, and a flat nose. Prognathism is pronounced. There are various large sub-divisions of the Negroid race:

(a) The Forest Negro: The Sudanese and Bantus in western and central Africa, and in South Africa, belong to this type. The Forest Negro shares the general criterion of the Negroid race with the other Negroes with regard to hair form and colour, complexion, nose form and eye colour, but he is short-legged, long-armed and barrel-chested. His stature varies considerably: in the rain forest he is not so tall, but in open parkland and savannah areas he is quite tall. Like most Negroes he is dolichocephalic, has a flat nose and thick lips.

(b) The Nilotic Negro: Typical Nilotics are the Dinkas, Shilluks, Nuers, Langos, Acholis and Baris. They live mainly along the upper courses of the Blue and White Nile. There is a Shari sub-type, residing in the Shari basin of central Sudan. The best known tribe of this type is that of the Saras, with average statures of between 176.8 and 181.7 cm., and a high cephalic index.

The Nilotic Negro is tall and slender, very dark, dolichocephalic, with less prognathism, narrower noses and less thick lips. His hair is curly or woolly. The trunk is short, but the legs are very long, probably due to an infusion of Mediterranean blood.

The Abyssinians are more clearly Caucasian in type, and are
believed to have come from across the Red Sea; but there is no reliable record of their migration.

(c) The West African Negro: He may well be called "the true Negro", because he displays all the physical characters attributed to the Negroid race. The West African type extends from Senegal through the Guinea Coast and Southern Nigeria to South Africa.

He has a black skin, woolly hair, broad and flat nose, and thick lips. He is dolichocephalic and has strong prognathism. But in the damp regions of the West Coast and the Congo where the temperature is seldom extreme, Negroes tend to be short, stocky, even obese. Among them mesocephalic heads can be found.

2. The African Pygmy Group: The African Pygmies live mainly in the equatorial forests of central Africa. They are highly specialised in their racial form; they probably evolved from yet undifferentiated Negroids due to their life in the primeval forest and in strict isolation. There is no evidence of a genetic relation with the Asiatic Negritos.

They are of hereditary small stature (less than 150 cm.), with a short trunk and short legs, but long arms. The complexion is dark, often with a reddish yellow hue. The face is short, rather broad and generally prognathous. The nose is very flat and broad, with flaring nostrils, with little or no bridge. The hair is woolly. Beard and body hair is sparse though the whole body is often covered with a light downy hair.

Anthropologists distinguish between an infantile and an adult-form type of Pygmies. Both types are found in the Congo forest. Since the scattered Pygmy groups are surrounded by full-sized Negro groups, hybridisation is fairly frequent, especially because Pygmy women have the reputation of great fertility.

3. The Bushman-Hottentot Group: The Bushmen live mainly in the Kalahari and Namib deserts; they are probably a mixture of Negritos with the Palaeolithic Boskop race.

They are of short stature, with slender, well-shaped limbs and small hands and feet; their average height is 144 cm. They are mesocephalic, with an euryprosopic face, with pointed chin and flat ears. Their skin colour is yellow or yellowish brown. It is much wrinkled in old age. The hair of the head is so tightly spiralled that it forms tufts or pepper-corns. They have very broad noses; the nasal index is over 85. The eyes are slit-like, slanting, often with internal epicanthus. Body hair or beard are sparse or absent. The Bushmen have certain odd peculiarities: Marked steatopygia is
found in Bushman females and they display naturally or artificially elongated *labia minora*, while Bushmen have a penis permanently in erection. Another peculiarity is ‘monorchy’ in Bushmen—the descent of only one testicle in the scrotum.

The Hottentots are a mixture of Bushmen with Mediterranean Hamites and Bantus. In the past they were more widely distributed over western South Africa. But their numbers have much dwindled through incessant losing fights with immigrants and through large-scale absorption by racial mixture with Europeans and Indians. This has constituted the basis of the present ‘Cape Coloured’, ‘Griqua’ and ‘Rehoboth’ half-breeds.

The pure Hottentots are taller in stature than the Bushmen, often taller than 150 cm. They are less dolichocephalic than the Bushmen, with a more elongated and more prognathous face. Their skin colour is lighter, yellower than that of the Bushmen. Steatopygia in Hottentot women is more pronounced, perhaps because they are better nourished.

4. *The Oceanic Negroid*: The full-sized Negroids of Oceania appear in obviously mixed forms as substrata of the populations on the islands between New Guinea on the east and Java and Celebes on the west. They are found on New Guinea, and many islands of Melanesia. Thus they may be divided into Papuan and Melanesian sub-groups.

(a) Papuans: Their hair form is often frizzly, its colour dark-brown or reddish brown, less often black. The skin colour is from medium to dark-brown. The skull is dolichocephalic, the face with heavy, often continuous brow-ridges; the forehead is narrow, high, rounded and sloping. The nose is high-bridged, usually long and bulbous at the tip. Their stature declines the higher they reside in the mountains.

(b) Melanesians: They inhabit the islands of the South Pacific eastward from New Guinea to Fiji.

Their hair form is usually frizzled into a mop. The skull is oftener mesocephalic or brachycephalic than in Papuans, the forehead is wider and lower, brow-ridges are less developed. The root of the nose is often deeply depressed, the nose is frequently funnel-shaped, the nasal index higher than in Papuans. The complexion is dark.

The question of the relations between African and Oceanic Negroids is yet to be solved as also the significance of their geographic distribution. The fossil evidence on the migrations of these races is
missing, obviously due to the wet climate which does not allow bones to form themselves into fossils.

D. The Mongoloid Race

The origin of the Mongoloid race is shrouded in mystery; as it is brachycephalic, it must be a recent racial form. There is no fossil evidence available for the origin of the Mongoloid race; even the skeletons of the Holocene, found in Asia, show rather Europoid than Mongoloid features.

As a racial group the Mongoloids center around the Pacific Ocean. The characteristic features are sparse body hair, straight brown to dark-brown head hair of a coarse texture, a skin colour ranging from yellow to red-brown, a medium broad to very broad face, high cheek-bones, brown eyes, a short nose with a low to medium bridge. The stature is from medium short to medium tall. The eye has a total internal epicanthic fold. The B type usually predominates in the blood composition.

The following sub-sections belong to the Mongoloid Race:

1. The Classic Mongoloid Race: It is found in Siberia, the Amur river District, in northern China, Mongolia and Tibet. Typical peoples of this type are the Goldis, Gilyaks, Buriats and some Mongol tribes. They have all the characteristics as mentioned above.

2. The Arctic Mongoloid (Eskimoid) Race: It is found mainly in north-eastern Asia and on the arctic fringe of North America. It includes the Eskimos, Chukchees, Kamtchadals, and probably the Tungus and other Palaeo-Asiatics.

Its cephalic index is less than 80, the nasal index (leptorrhine) less than 70, the face form is very broad, and very long. The stature is short, less than 160 cm. The complete Mongolian fold is usually not found in adult males.

3. The Indonesian Mongoloid Race (Indonesian-Malay): Its skin colour is a dark yellow brown. The nose is mesorrhine or chamaerrhine, low-bridged, with flaring nostrils. The hair is straight and black. The lips thick, the face has prognathism; beard and body hair is sparse, the stature slightly higher than in Arctic Mongoloids.

This type is found in Indo-China, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Japan.

4. The American Indian Race: Its skin colour is yellow brown or red brown. The hair colour is black. The eye colour dark brown to black. The hair form is straight, and coarse. The nose is mesorrhine, long,
usually high-bridged and convex. The chin is prominent; there is medium prognathism. The brow-ridges are strongly developed, the forehead sloping. Beard and body hair is sparse. The complete Mongolian fold is lacking, but the external fold is common.

There are two morphological types among the Americans; a brachycephalic one and a dolichocephalic one. Each group can be divided into a hawk-nosed type and a snub-nosed type. The commonest type in North America is the hawk-nosed brachycephalic type, while the snub-nosed brachycephalics are more common in South America.

CONCLUSION

The contemporaneous human races are all very much mixed, and the transition from one type to another is never abrupt, except in the case of the Andamanese who are perhaps purest to type. Their long isolation has prevented miscegenation. The variability of racial traits within a certain group is also very high. All modern human races belong to the same species *Homo sapiens sapiens* because they can all interbreed.
CHAPTER V

Prehistoric and Primitive Races in India

Arranging the population of India in its chronological sequence of appearance on this sub-continent and in its racial order is an almost impossible task for the Indian prehistorian and anthropologist. For though stone artefacts of prehistoric man have been found in abundance dating back to the lower Palaeolithic period, no skeletal finds have so far been made of the same period. And the human fossils of later periods are too few and too insignificant to allow any certain conclusions as to the racial prehistory of India. Still, some provisional opinions may be proposed on the basis of the finds made so far.

1. The Prehistoric Races

The earliest indication of tool-making man in Pleistocene India must be dated in the last phase of the second glaciation or at the beginning of the second interglacial period (about 470,000 BC). In deposits of this geological age large rough stone flake tools¹ have been found in North India, in the Potwar (Rawalpindi region), and perhaps in Central India, in the upper Narbada Valley (near Hoshangabad and Jabalpur). They are supposed to belong to the very end of the Lower Pleistocene phase. This is called the pre-Soan Culture. Unfortunately no human fossils go along with these finds. But from other parts of Asia we know that this type of artefacts is connected with Homo erectus (of Peking).

In the early Soan Culture a pebble technique is introduced and also a core technique with thick heavy flakes. The Soan industry developed slowly—between 400,000 and 200,000 years ago—into a technique of preparing the core before chipping off the flakes. But the pebble element is still retained.

A core-tool industry is found with its centre in south-eastern India near Madras. It also belongs to the Lower Palaeolithic period.

¹Flakes are chipped from a larger stone; the large stone from which parts are chipped off to give it an edge is called a 'core'.
Similar stone implements have been found in Orissa (Mayurbhanj), in Central India (Hoshangabad, Jabalpur) and in a place 30 miles from Allahabad. Sporadic finds of the same industry have been made even south of Madras in the rivers Cauvery and Vaigai, near Bombay (Khandivli), and north of the Nerbudda, in the upper reaches of the Son, a tributary of the Ganges. But its centre is Madras, and, therefore, it is called the Madras Industry. The tools are pear-shaped or oval, flaked on both faces in such a way as to produce a continuous zig-zag cutting edge. This Madras Industry is contemporaneous to the pre-Soan and Soan Cultures. There is even a constant interaction between the two, the core-tool element being strongest in the south, while the chopper types dominate in the north. Both meet halfway around Kurnool. In the site near Allahabad both types are found, but the Madras Industry dominates.

The South Indian Palaeolithic cultures belong to a vast Eurafri
can form which is called 'Chelles-Acheul.' It includes Europe, South England, South Africa and Arabia. If the evidence from Swanscombe in England is acceptable as representative of the whole province, the core-tools of Madras could be attributed to a racial form akin to that of Swanscombe man, a pre-\textit{Homo sapiens} form.

It is not known what kind of life these early Palaeolithic men led in India. They must have been nomadic hunters in the dense pluvial forests of the glacial and interglacial periods. Obviously they also used other tools, more perishable so that no trace of them survived. It is not even known what use the Soan choppers and the Madras hand axes were put to. The most striking feature of these Lower Palaeolithic industries is their immense duration; from about 400,000 BC to the end of the last glaciation, perhaps 10,000 years ago, the stone tools had hardly changed at all.

It has been claimed that in the final phases of the Palaeolithic period in India another type of tools appears in the Deccan (from Kurnool in a line to Bombay): it is a slender blade detached from its core. Such industries are characteristic of the final phases of the Palaeolithic in Europe and in certain parts of West Africa. They could possibly be connected with Neanderthal man.

If these conjectures are correct we would have three types of Palaeolithic man in India: \textit{Homo erectus} of the pre-Soan and Soan Cultures, pre-\textit{Homo sapiens} of the Madras Industry and Neanderthal man of the Blade Culture in the Deccan. But so far no fossil finds of any of the three types have been made in any site of India.
Immediately after the Glacial period, we find in Europe, North and East Africa, and in Palestine various regional industries or cultures with the tendency to reduce the stone blades manufactured in the earlier period to often absurdly small dimensions. It can be presumed that the stone blades were merely the armament of composite tools, made largely of wood or bone. In a large number of regions in South and Central India, south of the line joining the upper Ganges to the Rann of Cutch, and sporadically elsewhere (in Sind and in northwestern Punjab) such stone industries occur.

The traditional opinion is that such microlithic cultures have no connections with the latest phases of Palaeolithic culture in India. It is possible that these microlithic sites in India owe their origin to immigrants from Europe or Africa. In Gujarat skeletons have been found in the same beds, it is alleged, which show Hamito-Negroid characteristics. This would suggest that in the microlithic period a Negroid immigration took place from North Africa. This was 10,000 to 8,000 BC.

It is certain that these Neolithic industries survived in certain regions at least down to early historical times. But it has not been possible to connect the microlithic cultures with any living primitive tribal group. Nor is it known if the makers of the microliths were mere foodgatherers and hunters or already primitive cultivators. Neolithic large stone axes have been found all over India, but they are surface finds and consequently cannot be dated because their stratification is unknown.

At a somewhat later date a brachycephalic race of Alpino-Dinaric type with a round and broad face and a long prominent nose is supposed to have immigrated into West India. Its origin can possibly be traced back to South Arabia. From the Pamirs it descended through Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Sind, and spread along the West coast in Gujarat and Kanara; one branch crossed over to Bengal, and in a more southern route over the Deccan to the Tamil country. It left out the Malabar coast.

About the same time or even earlier an agrarian population grew up and began to flourish in Baluchistan and in the Indus valley. It developed in the course of time into the well-known Mohenjo-daro and Harappa civilisation. If this population was of a uniform race in the beginning of this phase, it did not remain so, for the skeletons found in the cemeteries of the Indus Valley cities show a mixed racial constitution. These races may have come from Asia Minor or
Mesopotamia, and may also have mixed with the earlier inhabitants of the Indus Valley regions in which they developed their great civilisation. As cremation was practised by these people, few skeletons have been found, and these few are not yet completely analysed. It is moreover doubtful if they could give us a representative picture of the racial composition of the Indus Valley population.

B.S. Guha and E. von Eickstedt, however, think that they can distinguish two different types in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa: the older one a large-brained coarse type of people with heavy brow ridges and an enormous growth of the post-auricular parts of the skull. The younger type is more delicately moulded, with sharp, well-cut features and a fine, narrow nose, slender bodies and smooth eye-brow ridges. Its affinities with the Mediterranean race of Europe are close. This race, according to Guha, is responsible for the higher stages of the Indus Valley civilisation. According to him, the race must have entered largely in the composition of the upper classes of the North-West Indian population. Guha believes that the Nayar of Malabar also belong to this race.

All over South India, south of the river Krishna, we find large megalithic tombs. Megaliths have been found also in North-West India and in north-eastern Central India. But these megaliths are different and not primarily connected with tombs. They cannot belong to the culture of the megalithic tombs in South India. Who the people were who built these megaliths is still unknown. But they were an agricultural race with a considerably high culture; they had even learnt the use of iron.

The racial invasion which in the last phase of prehistoric times caused the most profound change in shaping the culture and history of India was the one associated with the advent of the Vedic Aryans somewhere in the second millennium BC. Their migrations can be traced to some extent through finds of Gray Ware pottery, now associated with the Aryans. But we have no skeletal remains from ancient India which can be attributed to them, except the remains of monks whose monastery in Taxila was sacked in the 5th century AD by the White Huns. The same racial type appears as the dominant element in the various Pathan tribes of the North-West Frontier, in the Kaffir tribes, and in the higher classes of the Punjab, of Rajasthan and Upper India.

Some archaeologists believe that, besides the gradual desiccation of the soil, the Aryan invasion was responsible for the destruction
and disappearance of the Indus Valley civilisation. Its traces remained hidden till it was rediscovered some fifty years ago. It is absurd to assume that the Aryans, if they were at all responsible for the ultimate downfall of this civilisation, were able to exterminate the entire Indus Valley population. It is more likely that it survives largely in the population of northern India. C. von Fürer-Haimendorf is of the opinion that untouchability was the product of a city culture. The untouchable castes which, in fact, reveal a comparatively high standard of culture—many of them are skilled textile and leather workers—would thus be the racial and cultural descendants of the lower strata of the Indus Valley population. And the higher agricultural and artisan castes of northern India would appear as the descendants of the higher strata of this civilisation. For the Aryanisation did not reach very far racially, though it was much more effective culturally.

B.S. Guha, with the German anthropologist E. Fischer, distinguishes also an oriental type in North-West India, which is dominant in North Afghanistan and from there spread from Dir to Kyber, and from Chitral to West Nepal. It is now found all along the sub-Himalayan regions. This race has a fair skin colour, but black eyes and hair, contrary to the older Aryan type, and the nose is markedly long and aquiline. The Moslems of Upper India often represent this type, at least in their higher strata.

It is well known that, after the Aryans, came the Sakas, the Pahlavas of Persia, the Asiatic Greeks, the Kushans and the Hunas, peoples belonging to various races. They left their imprint on the population of North India though they were not strong enough to change its racial composition perceptibly.

Similar racial immigrations took place on the southern West coast of India, in Malabar. It is sufficient to mention the Arabs, Jews and Syrians.

2. PRESENT-DAY PRIMITIVE RACES

The available evidence about the racial composition and history of the living primitive races of India is as scanty as the pre-historic evidence. Much research must still be done before a competent and reliable racial history of India can be written. Very little is known regarding the nature and route of migration into India and inside India even after the arrival of the Aryans. Therefore, all attempts of a reconstruction of the racial history of India have to be based
on mere conjectures.

In the following we adopt the classification which B.S. Guha gave in the Census of India 1931. Wherever his classification appears to be deficient we shall make the necessary revisions.

A. The Negritos

Guha considers the Negritos as the earliest racial element in India. He believes that the Kadar, Irulas and Panyans of South India have a Negrito strain even though he admits that they are not pure Negritos. The German anthropologist E. von Eickstedt agrees with Guha and states that a Negritic component exists in the Malid sub-group of the South Indian Veddids. But D.N. Majumdar and S.S. Sarkar deny the existence of any Negrito strain among the South Indian aborigines. The small stature of these types, their dark skin colour, their occasionally frizzy hair with short spirals—admittedly Negrito elements—are found also in other races. But it is decisive, they say, that these tribes are not brachycephalic like the Andamanese, and their bloodgroups show a different proportion. The Indian tribes have a small B incidence whereas it is high among the Negritos.

Guha has to admit that as yet no bone remains of a definitely Negrito race from any prehistoric sites have been discovered. If Negritos ever entered India, as he claims, if they lived here and again disappeared, nothing is known about their original home, the time of their arrival and the reason for their disappearance, whether they died out, were exterminated or assimilated by other races.

Eickstedt calls these Negritos of Guha Proto-Negritos. It is possible that these same Negritos whom Guha postulates are the end-product of the carriers of the Madras Culture. Since they remained for many thousand years separated from the other Negritos of southern Asia (of the Andamans, of Malaya and the Philippines), they may have developed into a different race by dropping the high proportion of B in their blood, their brachycephaly, etc. It has been found that the stone implements of the Madras Culture have been produced continuously until late in the neolithic period. It would be strange if the carriers of this culture had not survived into the present time, at least in small groups, after they had lived so many thousand years in southern India.

The representatives of Homo erectus of the Soan Culture, however, must have died out, as they did in China and on Java. They certainly left no trace of their racial characteristics in the tribes living at the
present time in the areas where their stone implements have been found.

The producers of the mesolithic Blade Culture of the Deccan and elsewhere may, or may not have been Neanderthalers. So far no fossil finds of the Neanderthal type have ever been made anywhere in India. But it is not unlikely that they could be identified with the Proto-Australoids whom Guha designates as the second-oldest race in India. After all, the Tasmanians, of a similar racial type, had stone implements of the Mousterian type (which has been associated with the Neanderthalers). Similar late-Palaeolithic finds on Ceylon have been ascribed to the ancestors of the Veddas, the Australoid aboriginal race of the island, now called Sri Lanka. Today this almost extinct race uses iron in place of stone implements.

B. The Proto-Australoids

The second-oldest racial group, according to Guha, is that of the Proto-Australoids. A somatic study of the aboriginal population of India suggests that all these tribes show no marked differences in the shape of the head, the form of the nose, the projection of the face, skin colour and structure of hair. But in Central India and in the South there are many of this racial type who have well-developed supra-orbital ridges along with a sunken nasal root. If we compare these tribes with the Veddas of Sri Lanka and the aborigines of Australia, we find that all three groups are essentially alike, though the Australians are taller and have more marked brow ridges. It would appear that the Indian tribes retained the more basic characters of this race, while the Veddas and the Australians developed some of the features in a more marked manner. All three groups could perhaps be comprised under one heading as Proto-Australoids.

It seems that a large portion of the Central and South Indian tribes belong to this type, though they may speak different languages. The same can be said of the tribes in western India and of the partially Hinduised groups in the Gangetic valleys. The Bhils, Kols, Baigas and Nahals, living in the central Indian forest areas, and the Chenchus, Kurumbas, Yeruvas and Badagas of South India may be regarded as members of this race. They vary according to the racial mixture which they have experienced with other racial stocks living in the neighbourhood.
Eickstedt, however, does not agree with this classification of Guha's. He groups the Proto-Australoids differently: He has a Veddid race which he sub-divides into a South Indian Malid race (from *mala*, meaning mountain) and a Central Indian Gondid race. Then he distinguishes a Melanid race of EUROPEO-Negroid character and origin. Its only difference from the Europoid race of this type is a dark skin colour. He finds this race in the Carnatic type of the highly civilised South Dravidas (in Tamilnad) and in the Mundas, Hos and Santals of Chota Nagpur (the Kolid type of the primitive Austro-Asiatics). It is, however, difficult to understand how the Austro-Asiatic Mundas could be grouped with the Tamil Melanids. Guha's theory seems on sounder ground, grouping as he does, all the aboriginal tribes in South and Central India under the Proto-Australoids. But Guha might be wrong in his inclusion of the Mundas, Hos and Santals in the Proto-Australoid race. By somatic constitution and language they seem to belong to a different race.

All these tribes are numerically strongest in north-eastern Central India, in Bihar, eastern Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. It is significant that linguistically they are divided into three sections: those speaking an Aryan dialect (Bhils, Bhilalas, Meos and Minas in the west; the Baigas, Ahirs, Banjars, Pankas, Ojhas, Pardhans, Bhois or Dhimars, Bharias, Baigas, Agarias, Binjhwars in the centre; the Dhanwars, Bhunijias, Bhainias, Bhuiyas, Kisan-Nagarias, Kamars, Kawars, Dhobas and Halbas in the east); then those speaking a Munda language (Austro-Asiatic language), and finally those speaking a Dravidian dialect. The tribes speaking an Aryan dialect invariably claim to be the oldest inhabitants of the region. Generally they are also more primitive and less advanced in their material culture. They are more addicted to hunting and to the collection of jungle produce than the two other groups who are primitive cultivators.

The Munda-speaking tribes seem to have immigrated next into the same region. It is still unknown from where they came. If the claim of the Aryan-speaking tribes is correct that they are the older inhabitants of the region, the Mundas must have immigrated considerably later than 2000 BC. For we must give some time for the earlier tribes to have adopted the Aryan language. S.S. Sarkar is also of the opinion that the Mundas who, in his own words, "do not show any close affinity with the Dravidians," appear to be recent immigrants in this country. They may have entered India without women because they have formed many hybrid communities, like the
Khangar Mundas, Kharia Mundas, Konkpat Mundas, Karanga Mundas, Mahili Mundas, Nagabansi Mundas, Oraon Mundas, even Chamar and Bhuiya Mundas.

Much controversy exists about the origin of the Munda languages. W. Schmidt (1907) described the Munda languages as a group including the Mon and Khmer language of Further India. He named this group of languages the Austro-Asiatic Language Group. W. Hevesy tried to connect the Munda languages with Finno-Ugrian. His theory was never accepted. In 1928 R. Heine-Geldern suggested that the Mundas were a Mongoloid people who entered India from the North-East and brought with them a neolithic culture.

Hutton has still another theory: he ascribes the Austric speech to a Kolarian group which entered India "round the west of the Himalayas" and to the Mon-Khmer group which came from the east of the Himalayas. It is not necessary to assume that all present-day Munda-speaking tribes also belong racially to the Munda group. Some small tribes may have adopted a Munda language through close contact with a Munda tribe.

The third group which we find in the same area of Chota Nagpur and the surrounding districts is that of the Dravida-speaking tribes. They have the tradition that in former times they lived in the south of India. In fact, the Oraon language shows affinity to Canarese. The Oraons arrived as the latest group in this area. This can be proved from the fact that one group of the Mundas was split off by them from the main Munda stock and is today separated from it by hundreds of miles. These are the Korkus of Madhya Pradesh, some 260,000 of them. The Dravida-speaking tribes in Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh (Oraons, Khonds, Gonds and Malers), several million strong, must have been expelled from their southern habitats by a superior race (perhaps the Dravidas?) and were thus forced to invade their present-day habitats. Racially they may belong to the Proto-Australoids, as Guha claims, like the tribes speaking an Aryan dialect and even some tribes now speaking a Munda language.

Down in the South of India the tribal people all speak some form or other of the Dravidian languages, Tamil, Telugu, Tullu, Malayalam or Canarese. What languages these tribes spoke before the Dravidas entered South India is not known. The local dialects have not been studied sufficiently to decide whether they contain traces of an older language. Was this a Munda language? Here and there we find some local language, still spoken by an isolated small tribe. But these
languages have never been studied and compared with larger linguistic groups (Nahali, for instance).

C. The Tibetan Group

In the sub-Himalayan region, in north-eastern India, in the regions adjoining the eastern frontiers and Burma we find Mongoloid races. In the plateaus south-east of the Karakorum ranges adjoining Tibet we have the Chiang-pa who are of pure Tibetan origin. The more north-western Ladakhis also show distinct Mongoloid features (high cheekbones, oblique eye-slits), but also the racial strains of the Oriental race. From the Chiang-pa to the Bhutan Hills north of Assam, the Tibetan strain appears as the dominant element among the Lahoulis, the Limbus, the Lepchas and the Rongpas. The chief characteristics are medium to tall stature, round broad head and face, high cheekbones and long flat nose, little hair on body and face, and a light brown skin. In Nepal we find the same type in the east and north, but the basic type is non-Mongoloid. The Gurungs, Murmis and the Gurkha tribes represent the Mongoloid element.

The racial history of Assam took the following course:

1. The first inhabitants appear to be the Khasis and the Syntengs belonging to the Mon-Khmer language group.
2. Then came the invasion of the Bodo¹ group (Garos, Kacharis, Tipperas, Lalungs, Rabhas, Mechs, head-hunters like the Nagas), from the western mountains.
3. The Nagas came afterwards; they were also natives of north-eastern Tibet, but seem to have reached Assam by the south, driven back by the Kuki-Lushai-Chin populations who followed them (and this movement follows its course even to this day).

To explain this curious circuit, we must assume that first a migration from north to south took place, which was followed by the better evidenced and still continuing migration from south to north. These tribes represent a separate type with a sub-medium height, mesocephalic head-form, flat face, mesorrhine nose, cheekbones as high, slit-eyes as oblique, and hair as scanty as in the Mongoloid races. Their skin colour is of a brownish-yellow. They appear to belong to that great race which entered from south-west China and whose main body moved through Burma and Malaya to the Indonesian Islands. It left, however, a side-stream in the hills of north-eastern India, such as that represented by the Miri, Bodo and Naga

¹Bodo means Tibet.
tribes. It underlies also the population of the Brahmaputra valley in general, except its higher strata.

4. In the beginning of the Christian era, small groups of Bengalis moved into the plains of Assam in several thrusts and spread there.

There is also a theory that the "pre-Vedic Aryans" had crossed the north of India and Assam and sent out a swarm to western China and to the Indo-Chinese Peninsula.

5. Lastly, at the beginning of the twelfth century AD, a Thai or Shan tribe, the Ahoms, invaded Assam coming from Burma. They became the rulers of the whole country and gave their name to the State (Ahom—Assam).

North-eastern India also provides a home to a number of tribes and peoples who do not enter into the account given of the racial history of India. Their racial position is not well defined. We distinguish among them:

(a) The Assamese of the plains, who form a mixed population of Bengalis and Shans.

(b) The mountain tribes, whose racial study is too fragmentary to allow a reconstruction. Perhaps a brachycephalic Mongoloid type can be distinguished: the Chakmas of the Tipperah, and the Mog tribes of the Arakan-Yoma Hills. They are short and rather dark as a race, and came probably also from Burma.

This survey does not take any account of such tribes as, for instance, the Todas of the Nilgiri Hills, who cannot be fitted into any of the aforementioned racial types. Recent research, carried out by Prince Peter of Greece, suggests that they have cultural connections with Sumeria.
CHAPTER VI

Prehistoric Man, a Full-fledged Human Being

In the third chapter we have followed the gradual development of the hominid forms from the Miocene and Pliocene to the present time. Naturally, many gaps are still left, and many problems still remain unsolved. Nor must we forget that for comparison of the various hominid forms of these early times we have only the skeletal remains to go on. We know nothing about the other and more important parts of the human body. The mere fact that the skeletal structure of the early prehistoric races is similar to that of the primates is in itself no full proof that these human forms were also in other points of their physical and mental life similar to the primates. So far we have very little evidence as to the constitution of the soft parts of the body, the physical organs, the sensory apparatus, the nerves, brain, etc. And we are almost completely ignorant whether their organism functioned in the same manner as it does in modern man, or in the primates as we find them today.

And what is more, of many prehistoric races we do not even have a full skeleton, in some cases we have only the fragment of a skull, or a jaw-bone, a few teeth. Many theories of the last fifty and even ten years had to be revised because new finds had disproved them partly or wholly.

It is, therefore, necessary to proceed with great caution in the reconstruction of the anatomy of prehistoric man. The same caution must be observed in the reconstruction of the origins of human culture. While studying the prehistoric evidence accessible to us we must first of all emphasise that it is not the skeletal structure that makes man a rational being, but the possession and use of his mental faculties. Nor is the size of his brain decisive, but the perfection of its internal composition. The problem now is which activities of the man-like creatures whose skeletal remains we have found can prove that they were human beings as we are? In any way, the earliest man must have had sufficient brain substance to be and act as a full-fledged human being. It is possible that he lacked experience and
tradition and, therefore, remained without much culture for a long time. But the capabilities and potentialities for cultural progress slumbered in him and when he received a sufficiently strong stimulation he began to develop a typically human culture.

Man is distinguished from the animals by four specific abilities: the ability for abstract thinking, the ability to make and use tools, the making and using of fire, and the gift of speech.

1. ABILITY FOR ABSTRACT THINKING

That prehistoric man possessed the ability for abstract thinking tools, cannot be proved by direct observation, but it can be inferred from a study of the prehistoric finds:

(a) L.S.B. Leakey found in the Olduvai Gorge in East Africa the remains of a Stone Age dwelling, a circle of stones, obviously the basis for a wind screen. This find must be nearly 1.8 million years old, as it was found in a site belonging to the Lower Pleistocene. If it definitely constituted a dwelling, as Leakey claims, most likely the work of Homo habilis, it would prove that this early human form was capable of rational thinking. The erection of a windscreen for shelter certainly presumes the ability of reasoning.

The oldest remains of a hut were found much later, in the period of the Acheulean Culture. They were found by H. de Lumley at a site near Nice on the French Riviera. This former hut even had an entrance. There must have been an inner partition. In one room of the hut there were two fire-places. Many tools and bones were found there. The only access to the ‘living room’ was through the kitchen. The details of the arrangement of the hut clearly prove that the hut was inhabited by human beings capable of rational thinking:

(b) Already from the Lower Palaeolithic period we have evidence of the performance of sacrifices: the caverns of Wildkirchli and Drachenloch in Switzerland and the Petershoehle near Nuremberg in Germany contain heaps of skulls and long-bones of cave-bears arranged in an order. These bones were systematically stored along the walls of the caves protected by low stone walls parallel to the cave walls. Such bones were also found inside rectangular stone chests of undressed stone. Obviously the bears were sacrificed by decapitation and their skulls preserved. Similar sacrifices and disposals of skulls and long-bones are known among the Samoyeds and Koryaks of Siberia.

(c) In later periods, especially in the Mousterian period, we find
evidence of a cult of skulls at many prehistoric sites. In Saccopastore near Rome, on Monte Circeo, in Gibraltar and La Quina, in Ngandong on Java, Shukbah and Athlit in Palestine, in the main skulls were found without the other parts of the skeleton. The skulls on Monte Circeo show that their owners were killed by blows on the same spot as the victims of more recent head-hunters in Borneo and Melanesia. The holes at the base of the skulls were enlarged in a similar manner as is done by these head-hunters who at the same time practise a ritual cannibalism and devour the brains of their victims.

But even at the ancient site of Chou-kou-tien skulls and jaw-bones predominate. In such ancient sites this is not necessarily due to the cannibalistic habits of these Palaeolithic men; for little or no cannibalism is found among living tribes belonging to a similar level of culture. This preference for skulls and jaw-bones may be due to religious or magical use of them.

(d) Strong evidence is available that at least in later prehistoric periods magical rites were performed. We find, for instance, paintings in caves so dark that they cannot be seen. Consequently these paintings must have had another purpose than the decoration of the cave walls and roofs. We also find pictures of masked dancers, sometimes in animal disguise, on the walls. Or we see pictures of animals pierced in the back or belly by spears or arrows. These paintings obviously had a magical purpose. We also find statues of women with accentuated breasts and hips. These were probably used for fertility cults. They most likely represented the mother goddess, like the famous ‘Venus of Willendorf’ in Austria. If prehistoric man had religion and magic, he must have been able to think abstractly.

(e) Primitive tribes in many parts of the world use the so-called bull-roarer in their initiation ceremonies for the youth of the tribe. Such bull-roarers were recently found in Magdalenian sites in France. It is possible that these Magdalenian tribes used the bull-roarer for a similar purpose. This would again suggest that they possessed the art of abstract thinking.

(f) Prehistoric man must have possessed the ability of abstract thinking because he was an artist of rare talent: Already Acheulean stone implements show a perfection of fine and regular shape. Body decoration was common in the Mousterian period, for earth dyes and the plates for grinding them have been found in this period. But the finest specimens of prehistoric art are found in the cave paintings of the
Later Palaeolithic period in Europe and North Africa (Magdalenian). In over ninety caves we find paintings and drawings of high artistic value, also sculptures and reliefs. The caves of Altamira, Trois Freres and Lascaux are famous in this connection.

2. The Making and Use of Tools

Although man possesses very valuable instruments in his bare hands using his legs and feet exclusively for the purpose of locomotion, he extended this great natural ability for working with his hands by inventing and cultivating artificial instruments. The invention and use of artificial tools was until recent times always considered to be an exclusive prerogative and achievement of man, in contrast to the animals. Animals may use instruments for some purpose, it was maintained; they use objects naturally fitted for a specific use, but they do not adapt or improve tools for further use. However, recent experiments with certain animals, and especially with chimpanzees, have thrown doubt on these assumptions. Animals do manufacture and use tools, under certain conditions, at least to a limited extent.

R. Dart was the first to maintain, in 1949, that the Australopithecines, admittedly pre-humans, manufactured and used tools made from animal bones and teeth. He called this the osteodontokeratic culture (bone-tooth-antler culture) and backed his assertion with a study of split bones and teeth from sites of the Australopithecines in South Africa. His findings were at first regarded with great suspicion, but today it seems, after further discoveries and their evaluation, that Dart’s assumption is basically correct.

A. The Pre-lithic Implements of Man

If we can believe the Leakeys, the oldest implements of pre-historic man and his ancestors were made of stone. They are at least 1.8 million years old. According to L. Leakey the oldest stone tools found in the Olduvai Gorge were standardised tools, which would indicate that the beings who made them possessed a tradition already. They had learned to manufacture these tools in the same manner and shape from their forefathers. And the material for these stone implements were collected at some distant spot for they were not locally available. These tools are extremely crude and do not change until the beginning of the Abbevillian period. To many palaeoanthropologists the Leakeys, both father and son, are too eager to make the beings whose fragmentary fossils they have found
into true men while they might still have been Australopithecines. And the assumption that these fossils were more than three million years old is likewise very doubtful.

But whoever made these first stone tools and of whatever age they are, there is no proof that they are the oldest tools. Earliest men and their immediate ancestors may have preferred to use other materials than stone for their tools, such as bone, tooth and horn. Such implements, not of equally durable material, may rarely have been preserved. In some sites, certainly, finds have been made which suggest that at least some primitive men preferred long-bones and jaw-bones of animals to stone tools.

Not only in South Africa and Chou-kou-tien (near Peking), but also in the Drachenloch ob Vaettis in the Tamina valley in Switzerland, at Krummau in Silesia and in the Petershöehle near Velden-Nuremberg in Germany have similar finds been made. The complete lack of stone implements at the sites of *Homo erectus* in Java also suggests that he too used only wood and bone implements which in the wet climate have quickly decayed and could therefore not be found. Excavations made in Germany suggest that *Homo Heidelbergensis* also knew only bone artefacts. Such a pre-lithic culture can be found even today among the African Pygmies of the Congo and the Negritos of Malaya whose tools are exclusively of wood or bamboo. They work these with shells or other sharp instruments which nature itself provides.

B. *Lithic Implements in Prehistoric Times*

The first stone implements, as has been said before, were made in East Africa and are at least 1.8 million years old. L. Leakey maintains that they are much older. They are pebble tools and crude hand axes of the Abbevillian and Clactonian type. It was not known before that this type of stone implements goes back to such an early time. Only about 400,000 years ago flake tools began to be manufactured: chips knocked off a core.

From the Middle Palaeolithic period onwards (75,000 years ago) there is a greater variety of stone implements, such as tools for scraping and chopping, and also spearheads.

In the Upper Palaeolithic period (from 20,000 BC onwards) stone tools become well adapted to a great number of special uses.

The first section of the Upper Palaeolithic period is called Aurignacian. It lasted from *18,500* to *13,500* BC. Its typical stone tool is the
blade. Bone implements (including awls) are also found, as do objects of personal decoration, such as perforated shells, teeth and pendants. Painting, etching and carving make their first appearance in this period.

The Aurignacian period is followed by the Solutrian—from 13,500 BC onwards. The distinctive technique of this period is the removal of delicate scales by pressure applied to both sides of the flint blade. These stone implements were then probably attached to bone or wood handles.

The last period of the Upper Palaeolithic, from 12,500 BC onwards, is called Magdalenian. In it flint blades cease to be of importance, while work in bone and antler is greatly perfected. We find bone javelins, spear-heads with pointed, bevelled and grooved bases. Also hammers of stone naturally; chisels and wedges, as also perforators make their appearance. Bone needles with an eye in them are a speciality of this period. The harpoon is the typical weapon of the Magdalenian period.

3. The Making and Use of Fire

Man alone knows how to generate, control and use fire. Animals do not produce or use fire; they fear it and flee from it. But already in early Palaeolithic times man used fire though most likely he did not know at first how to generate it. We have definite proof that Homo erectus pekinensis of Chou-kou-tien (between 500,000 and 400,000 BC), and Swanscombe man (ca. 300,000 BC) used fire. In the subsequent periods the proofs of the use of fire by prehistoric man become more and more abundant.

No living races, however primitive, are ignorant of the use of fire, though at least two primitive tribes are known to be ignorant of the art of making fire; they are the Andamanese and the Bakongo Pygmies of the Ituri in Central Africa.

Primitives employ various methods of fire making: the fire whirl, the fire plough, the fire saw, percussion of pyrites and flint, or a piston. Prehistoric man could have acquired fire when a tree was struck by lightning, when a volcano erupted, when a forest tree was set on fire by spontaneous combustion; or fire making could have been invented by mere coincidence. But most primitives express in their myths the conviction that they received the art of generating and using fire from the Supreme God or from their tribal ancestor.
4. **The Gift of Speech**

Whether prehistoric man had the gift of speech, cannot be proved. But we can at least assert positively that the skeletal remains of prehistoric man, as far as they can be analysed, do not exclude the possibility that man was physically capable of speaking. More cannot be said at present. In the Upper Palaeolithic time, however, big game hunting on such a scale could hardly have been carried out successfully without communication between the hunters through speech.

**A. Language and Speech**

Speech is the general ability of man to make himself understood to his fellow men by means of acoustic symbols. An essential feature of speech is that particular sounds are associated with given situations. Speech requires a meaningful use of an established form of sounds. The meaning of the symbols must be recognised by more than one individual, else speech remains a monologue.

Until recent time it was generally assumed that not even the most alert and sagacious of the anthropoid apes could ever be trained to interpret any kind of sign-symbol, however promptly and intelligently they might have been trained to obey the elaborate sign-symbols of their keepers. It was the faculty of understanding and using symbols that made man unique and marked a clear distinction between man and animal.

But recently experiments have been made with some chimpanzees and the experimenters claim that the animals could learn to understand and interpret speech symbols; they themselves could speak! Their vocabulary of course was very limited.\(^1\) Though a lively controversy sprang up among experts whether these claims were justified, so much seems certain that some gifted animals, under ideal conditions, can be made capable of interpreting and using symbols.

In 1861, Fr. Broca found that the ability of speech is located in the left hemisphere of the brain. The act of speaking is a mechanised habit, but it is purposeful (though not yet in the child). At first an act of will is required; but there is an urge behind it. Cases are known of

\(^1\)Experiments with chimpanzee Washoe were carried out during five years by R.A. and B. Gardner under ideal conditions. Washoe learned to express herself in Ameslan, the American language for deafmutes. It is doubtful if this can be called "speaking".

D. Premack, another experimenter, trained chimpanzee Sarah to express herself by means of arbitrarily shaped and coloured plastic tokens. cf. E. Linden, 1976.
children who, growing up in isolation, invented a language of their own.

However, words are not, as it is commonly assumed, a function of our speech-organs; they are artificial, independent things, that is, 'tools', and as such need not even be spoken but may as well be written or printed in which case they have no connection at all with the speech-organs. Also the fact that hundreds of different languages exist among men in spite of identical speech-organs shows that the words, although they are built up on the natural sounds of the speech-organs, are not 'functions.'

Language, on the other hand, is the expression of a psychic process through symbols of any nature perceptible by the senses. The decisive point is that the expression is deliberate, not only by instinct. The first sounds uttered by the child are, of course, not yet speech. They are not purposeful, but just a reflexive action. In the course of time, however, the child learns to use these cries for words. Language begins when the sound uttered is transformed from a purposeful expression into a deliberate means of communication, when it becomes significant. Language presupposes the ability of forming abstract speech.

B. Origin of Human Speech

The emergence of language—man's ways of expressing and transmitting meaning—was probably more important for further human development than would have been the purposeful manufacture and use of tools.

It would be folly to speculate about the birth-date of language. The problem of the origin of human speech cannot be solved by historical investigation. Nor will we ever know whether at any time man was speechless. This problem has been discussed since Plato. The answers given depend on the world-outlook of the speaker. Evolutionists who accept the evolution of man from lower forms of life, as a happy coincidence after many misadventures, maintain with Fr. Kainz, that the hand created the brain of man and that the control of fire stimulated the brain to think. But it could as well be the other way round.

Man has in himself the ability to develop language; he has the urge to communicate with others, and he has something to tell. He wants to hand on the fruits of his acquired learning from one generation to the other.
It must have been a wonderful discovery when primeval man found that he could utter different sounds by changing the position of his jaws and thus produce different vowels and when he found that through certain manipulations with his tongue, lips, teeth and palate he could produce all the various consonants.

The evolution of speech may have taken place in the following order: At first, perception was not immediately associated with a sound complex, but perception of any kind prompted sounds. These sounds were at first pre-reflexive, agrammatical, natural sounds, simply exclamations with gestures. Even today, gesturing is still an important part of conversation, especially with some peoples.

But their repetition caused a sensory-motoric connection between certain perceptions and certain sounds. This became a conscious repetition. This caused an awareness of the existence of symbols. The urge for communication caused the speaker to share his experience with a listener. Thus first speech was a pure expression of emotion; later it developed into the communication of perception.

In fact, language does not begin with words, but with sentences. The child expresses natural sounds which are interpreted by the adults around him as words. But this is not yet a form of language, only an expression of emotions, of pain or pleasure, as in animals. At the age of three or four months the child begins to babble, and in the following months it develops this babbling into a monologue. From this babbling meaningful speech may ultimately have evolved in the beginning of mankind. Now the baby, at the age of nine or ten months, begins to imitate the speech of its mother, forming words first defectively, then more correctly. These words stand for sentences and express the child’s inner feelings.

C. The Languages of the Primitives

Social life in the primitive stage of culture is not restricted to working, eating, dwelling and sleeping together. Its very soul is the mutual communication of the group’s thoughts, feelings and desires. This communication of spiritual values is possible only through human speech. Language is thus a necessary and indispensable instrument for social communication. Without the gift of speech human society could not exist.

All human groups, tribes and peoples, in present time and, as far as is known, also in the past have and had at their command fully developed human speech. This cannot, of course, be proved for the
prehistoric peoples, but it can be inferred as even the most primitive tribes ever encountered possess a language and make use of it.

Some scientists, especially in the past, like Speiser of Basle, denied this statement in its generality. They pointed out that, for instance, the Pygmies could not have had a language of their own because they had so completely and eagerly adopted the language of their neighbouring Negro tribes. But several factors disprove this theory: first, the Andamanese, also a Negrito group, possess a language of their own which so far cannot be linked with any other language group. Secondly, the Semangs, Negritos of Malaya, though they now speak an old Austro-Asiatic language, still use in their speech an alien prefix formation and many strange words which are probably relics of their old original language. Thirdly, the African Pygmies who now speak Bantu dialects had formerly a language of their own, as P. Schebesta and van Bulck have proved convincingly. Fourthly, the Philippine Negritos chant songs in their nightly celebrations in a language which they themselves do not understand any more and which is not connected with any existing language group.

Also other primitive tribes, like the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, the North-Central Californians, the Algonkins, the Salish, the South-East Australians (Kurnais, Kulins) and the Tasmanians possessed and possess languages of their own. So far it cannot be proved that any connection exists between the languages of these isolated food-gathering tribes. But these languages have not yet been studied sufficiently.

Languages are commonly divided into three groups: monosyllabic, agglutinative and flexional. A fourth group is added by some linguists: the polysynthetic.

(a) The monosyllabic languages (Chinese, for instance) have neither gender nor plural; they express numbers by adverbs; verbs are formed in the simplest way conceivable by placing together a personal pronoun and a noun adjective.

(b) The agglutinative languages (Finnish-Ugrian, Turkish and Mongolian) form their words by affixing the formative elements without change of the root.

(c) The flexional languages have an inflexion at the end of the verb in the form of a pronominal suffix.

(d) The polysynthetic languages join a number of ideas in one long word which is virtually a sentence. The languages of the North-American Montagnais belong to this group.
All the languages of the primitive tribes that are original\(^1\) show certain characteristics which suggest their high age. For instance, these primitives have not completely exhausted all possibilities for the formation of meaningful sounds. Thus they are deficient in the modified vowels õ and ū while they already have the normal vowels a, e, i, o and u. They also lack the fricative sounds s (z), f (w), and x (y). Nor do they distinguish between b and p, d and t, g and k, so that these consonants heard by inexperienced investigators are understood once as voiced and at other times as voiceless.

Their words have no composition of consonants, except in the case of a consonant followed by r or l before a vowel (\textit{muta cum liquida}). The final sound need not always be a vowel, except in the Tasmanian languages where this is the rule, but in all other languages the words may end in a vowel or in a consonant, as in the South-East Australian languages, in which we even have words ending in a \textit{lk}, \textit{nk}, \textit{nt} and so on.

But with this somewhat limited means of speech at their disposal the primitives are able to express all they want to say: their languages include words that connote general ideas; they can form sentences to express a statement on the subjects they deal with, and they can group such sentences to reach a conclusion, and to follow this up so as to set forth in orderly manner some further groups of sentences.

Even the most primitive races are able to use their language for the invention of literary products full of deep meaning in their myths, legends and folktales, songs and riddles.

The simplicity of their language forms guarantees also their greater facility and clarity in use. They do not yet add special affixes to their substantives to class them into various groups or genders (animate or inanimate, masculine or feminine, personal or impersonal, etc.). They also do not yet feel the necessity for concordance of adjectives, verbs, numerals, etc. with substantives, which, after all, make the syntax of a language difficult and make fluent and familiar talk difficult. This is probably the reason why such complications have later become more and more obsolete in such highly developed

\(^{1}\)The languages of primitive tribes are as logically and systematically constructed as are the languages of culturally higher developed peoples. We find in them grammatical processes worked out just as regularly and just as logically as we find in any civilised tongue.
languages as, for instance, in English.

These primitives have often a dual system in personal pronouns, based on the pair of eyes, ears and limbs, and the pair in a monogamous marriage. However, the numerals rarely go beyond the words for ‘one’ and ‘two’. They have as yet no large number of things to enumerate. ‘Three’ and the following numbers are usually formed by combination of ‘one’ and ‘two’; numbers above ‘five’ and ‘six’ are already ‘much.’ In more developed languages the names of fingers, toes, wrist, elbow, shoulder, chin, ear, etc., are taken to connote numbers, usually beginning to count with the little finger of the left hand.

**CONCLUSION**

We hope that we have now proved satisfactorily by inference that prehistoric man possessed the faculty of abstract thinking, that he made tools and used them intelligently, that he knew how to make fire and how to use it, and—probably—that he had the gift of speech. All these activities are already manifestations of true human culture. In fact, as soon as we meet human beings, we also find them possessing and developing culture, at least in a rudimentary form.

We are, therefore, fully justified in rejecting the ape-like features of early man’s anatomy as a possible proof of his brutish mental stage but must stress the importance of the products of his cultural activity. We must also bear in mind that by far the greatest portion of his cultural products are irretrievably lost, because they were of perishable material.

If we now compare the tools and implements of early prehistoric man with those of some living primitive races, we may say that he compares favourably with them. For the latter are partly even now in the pre-lithic stage of culture, while palaeolithic man fashioned stone implements, however crude, much earlier. And yet these pre-lithic living primitives are full-fledged men with an original and well-developed culture. Thus it seems justified to attribute the same range of mental faculties to early palaeolithic man. The mere fact that he left no traces of his mental culture and spiritual outlook is no criterion that he did not possess them.
CHAPTER VII

Prehistoric Man and Living Primitive Races

The information which can be gleaned from the scanty relics of prehistoric man, though incomplete and full of gaps, provides at least some insight into early man’s social institutions and religion. But we ask ourselves if there is no other access to a fuller knowledge of prehistoric man’s mind and mentality.

Such an access is indeed open to us. Prehistory has proved that, for hundred-thousands of years in the Palaeolithic period, the material culture of man has changed very little. This constancy of prehistoric economic life justifies the assumption that the mind of prehistoric man remained much the same and also his mental outlook did not change much during this period. And we are the more justified in this assumption because we know from the study of many primitive and even civilised peoples that constancy in social and religious beliefs and usages is even greater than that in the material and economic spheres of life.

We find a number of tribes, or at least tribal groups, living in so-called remote (or marginal) areas. They have refused to yield to outside influence exerted by superior cultures, to a change of environment or climate and, instead of changing their culture, they have clung to their traditional mode of life and preferred to retreat into more inaccessible parts of the continents. Thus they have been able to retain their old ways of living and thinking, which, in the case of the foodgatherers at least, may go back to that of the Palaeolithic peoples, while other communities have been arrested in their cultural growth in stages resembling more closely those of the mesolithic hunters, the neolithic agriculturists or the early nomadic animal breeders.

And just as the mentality and culture of the prehistoric foodgatherers continue to live in the mentality and culture of living foodgatherers, so also is it with the mesolithic hunters, neolithic cultivators and early shepherd races. They have developed a peculiar mentality and religious and social culture which obviously has survived in certain societies in many parts of the world where modern civilisation
has as yet been unable to destroy and obliterate all traces of these four basic culture stages of prehistoric mankind.

What exactly makes the foodgatherers, hunters, primitive cultivators and nomadic animal breeders refuse to change their culture, is in many cases still an unsolved puzzle. Nor is it certain that all these societies will forever remain in their retarded stage. Indeed, the revolutionary changes which in present times take place in many primitive cultures prove that many of them are capable of cultural advance if they are mentally prepared for it.

Among some foodgathering tribes their arrested cultural growth may have been due to adverse environmental and geographical conditions, to bad climate, or to unfavourable psychological reasons, excessive love of freedom, conservatism, nomadic habits, but also to a lack of leaders, to their small numbers, and to frequent illness and lack of proper nourishment. On the other hand, it is well known that many nomadic herdsmen consider their way of living superior to all others, and they look down with contempt and pity on agriculturists. And tillers of the soil often treat artisans and traders as inferiors. Such classes of people are not prepared to change their way of living, even if it would mean cultural progress or greater comfort.

This does not, of course, exclude a certain inevitable extent of change in culture. Even the few foodgathering societies left on the globe, though least accessible to cultural change, have yet in the course of time adopted some elements of superior cultures or have themselves created new forms of culture. Many have exchanged their original language, to quote an instance, for the language of their culturally more advanced neighbours.

It is the task of anthropology, as a historical science, to study the complete history of each tribe and to discover all the phases of its cultural development down to its prehistoric past. This study can be done, today, from two directions: the anthropologist may start from the culture of the living primitive race and follow its evolution back into its remotest prehistoric past, while prehistorians may start with a prehistoric culture and follow its gradual development and growth up to the present time.

While the founders of the Culture-historical School of Anthropology believed that the present primitive tribes could be classified according to a neat scheme of intercontinental compact culture-circles, this idea had to be largely abandoned by their followers. It is now admitted that each tribe and culture has followed its own in-
dependent development which cannot be pressed into a too rigid and comprehensive scheme. However, the intensive research now carried out in all continents on so many newly discovered prehistoric sites on the one hand, and among almost all living primitive peoples on the other, should enable us to connect and coordinate in ever increasing number, the prehistoric races and their living primitive counterparts.

This may permit us, with at least some degree of certainty, to draw definite and reliable conclusions from non-material forms of culture of the living primitives to corresponding forms of culture of the prehistoric races though we possess evidence of their material culture only. This cooperation between prehistory and anthropology may produce a consistent and comprehensive picture of the whole development of human culture from its earliest accessible time till the present day. Generalisations about cultural traits may certainly have their limitations and, in fact, the extreme variety of details may often obscure basic conformities. Nevertheless, conformities do exist and thus limited generalisations are permissible. It is largely a matter of method whether we emphasise the conformities more, or lay greater stress on differences and individual peculiarities. For the sake of a comprehensive, all-round picture we prefer to emphasise the conformities.

1. **THE FOODGATHERERS**

If we now ask what living tribes resemble in their cultural life most closely the oldest prehistoric peoples, we find the answer in the so-called foodgatherers and hunters of small game. These foodgatherers treat the resources of nature as a mere reservoir. They have not yet learned, or rejected deliberately, tilling the soil or raising animals, except the dog. They are now everywhere in retreat before the more advanced cultures and are scattered here and there over the habitable globe, isolated from the currents of wider cultural intercourse, hidden away in remote jungles, deserts, mountain fastnesses or dense forests, or clinging to the tips of archipelagos and continental land masses. They are often spoken of as the "marginal peoples", on account of both their cultural and their geographical condition.

However, we must study these tribes closely before we accept them as genuine foodgatherers. For some tribes are now mere food collectors and primitive hunters though in former times they possessed, as can be proved, a higher form of culture and reverted to this most
primitive stage of economy for various reasons. Such a tribe is, for example, that of the Seminoles in Florida (North America). They were originally an agrarian tribe, but deprived of their land, they are now living as mere food collectors. Many Australian tribes seem to have been well accomplished hunters in the past, but the present climatic conditions of their habitats have reduced them to the profession of primitive foodgatherers and hunters of small game. Such people cannot be classified as foodgatherers, because they already possess a form of mental culture which corresponds to a more developed economic stage.

But even the foodgatherers in the proper sense of the word have in the course of so many millenia changed, not only due to a change of environment or climate, but also through cultural influence from more advanced neighbours or through their own cultural creativeness. But on the whole these changes are only slight and they have preserved their original culture remarkably intact. Since they live in small groups, men with extraordinary talents and capable of pushing cultural advance have little scope for development; further, their nomadic life discourages economic progress and an accumulation of goods; and their preoccupation with mere food collection and hunting leaves them little time and leisure for new inventions and improvements. Moreover, these tribes value their liberty and independence so highly that they refuse to accept the most elementary restrictions necessary for the procurement of greater comforts and the improvement of living conditions.

A list of the living nomadic foodgathering tribes would include:

In Africa: the Pygmies (the West Pygmies in the former French Congo; the Gabun and Cameroon Pygmies; the East Pygmies of Kinshasa; the Bambutis on the Ituri); the Pygmoid tribes: the Bacwas along the Equator, the Batwas east of the Kivu lake; some Bushmen tribes in Angola and South Africa. The latter, however, have preserved only certain traits of this culture, not the whole Pygmy culture. Even the pure Pygmy tribes have cultural elements, as, for instance, the belief in the existence of a spiritual and impersonal force, and group totemism, which proves that they have already advanced beyond the cultural level of mere foodgatherers. To the culture of mere foodgatherers belong also the Kindigas, Ndorobbo, and Sandawes of East Africa, and the Mountain Damas of South-West Africa.

In Asia we find foodgathering tribes widely scattered over India,
Malaya and the adjoining islands. In India foodgathering tribes are found mainly in the south: the Kadar, Malapantarams, Paliyans, Irulas, Panyans, Yanadis and Kurumbas are such tribes; in the Deccan we have the Chenchus; in Maharashtra the Katkaris; and in central and northern India the Birhors, Korwas and others. But there are also numerous nomadic castes (about 25 million individuals) which have to some extent adjusted to civilised life and earn their livelihood as petty traders, entertainers and occasional labourers.

East of India we have the Asiatic Pygmies or Negritos: the Andamanese, the Semangs in the interior of the Malayan Peninsula, the Negritos or Aetas on Luzon, Negros, Panay and Mindanao of the Philippines. Then there are other Asiatic groups conforming to this stage of culture: the almost extinct Veddas on Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the Senois of Malakka, the Punnans on Borneo, the Kubus on Sumatra and Toalas on the Celebes, who are all a mixture of Veddoid and Palaeo-Mongoloid racial traits. We may add to this culture also the Slebs of Arabia who are pure hunters and are held in contempt by the camel-breeding Bedouins; the Mangyans on Mindoro (Philippines) and the Ainus of Japan and Sakhaline. The latter have now largely abandoned the culture of the foodgatherers.

In Australia the south-eastern tribes, such as the Kurnais and Kulins, the now extinct Tasmanians belonged to this culture, as also the Wiradyuri-Kamilarois and the Yuin-Kulins.

In South America the Yamanas or Yagans, the Halakwulups or Halakaluhs, the Selknams or Onas, are or were foodgatherers.

In North America foodgathering tribes can be found in North-Central California (the Yukis and Maidu); the Algonkin tribes of the north-eastern and central parts of their habitats belong more or less to this cultural level, as also the Inland Salish on the Rocky Mountains and in British Colombia. Some arctic tribes may be included in the foodgathering stage of culture though in some other aspects they must be considered to have reached the stage of advanced hunters: These are the Samoyeds, Koryaks, Gilyaks, Ostyaks, Woguls of Siberia and the Caribou Eskimos.

About their material culture and economic life not much need be said. We must again emphasise that the extreme primitivity and simplicity of the material culture of the foodgatherers cannot be regarded as proof of their mental backwardness. This would be a false assumption. Moreover, our judgments about the cultural values of primitive man are often coloured by the biased views formed on the
basis of our own traditions. The foodgatherers often reject the higher material culture if it can only be acquired with the loss of personal freedom and independence which they value most.

The economy of the foodgatherers is almost completely self-sufficient. Utensils, tools and weapons are so simple and unadorned that every individual can manufacture them. The necessary utensils are manufactured only to serve man’s immediate or proximate needs. When the need arises the foodgatherers produce such articles as, for instance, a fire-saw or a digging stick. They produce clothing apparel when they are in need of it. Ornaments they consider a luxury and possess only a few. They consist mainly of ornamental shells, animal teeth, feathers, etc. They fashion tools and weapons like spearheads, arrowheads, bows, fishhooks, etc. whenever they are in need of them. Nowadays they may use iron arrowheads, spearheads and fishhooks.

Being economically quite independent and with few demands for goods they cannot manufacture themselves, trade and barter are only weakly developed.

In the oldest primitive culture we find predominantly long-range weapons such as the bow and arrow, the throwing stick and the boomerang, while short-range weapons like clubs, parrying sticks, spears are rarer. Weapons are used mainly for hunting, rarely for fighting. The tools and weapons are usually made of wood and bone, and sometimes of stone. In fact, some of the Pygmy tribes and Pygmoids belong to a pre-lithic culture of which we have only faint traces in prehistory. Tasmanians, and peoples of the boomerang culture, used stone implements resembling those of the Mousterian period.

Many of these tribes are proficient in basket weaving. They use the spiral coil technique, at least the North-Central Californians do so, and the Yamanas, less frequently the African Pygmies. The nomadic foodgathering tribes and castes of India are usually accomplished basket and mat weavers. The African Pygmies preferably use skins for various purposes, for clothing, quivers, pouches, and water containers. The skins are not tanned. Pottery is unknown, except among the Batwas of Central Africa, the Veddas, the Andamanese and the Bushmen. They may have learned the art from their more advanced neighbours.

Their dwellings consist of windbreaks or beehive huts. But the Andamanese, again, build more solid and larger huts. Caves are
used as dwellings by very few foodgathering tribes, the Veddas and the Toalas of the Celebes.

Transportation on water is done by raft or boat, which is usually of bamboo or boughs. Thus in California reed boats of balsa are in use, in Tierra del Fuego rafts and bark canoes, in the Lake area of North America birch-bark canoes. Only the Andamanese use canoes hewn of tree trunks. In the arctic area the snow-shoe and the sledge are in use.

The economic life of the nomadic foodgatherers proves their truly human intelligence and ingenuity and reveals the difference between man and the animal in procuring food. Man in procuring food fulfils a cultural function, while the animal only satisfies its instinctive craving for nourishment. Man acts as an intelligent and social being; he uses tools and weapons. And he has to. Physically often ill-adapted to his environment (in the arctic zone, or in the desert, in particular), primitive man would not be able to survive if he lived like the animals and followed only his instincts.

The economic life of the foodgatherers is simple but rational. Nature is not everywhere bountiful; therefore the foodgatherers live in small groups dispersed over large areas, which provide sufficient game and vegetable food for their subsistence. The way they procure their food, though simple, is not haphazard or without plan. There is on the other hand no need for complicated methods, or of timesaving devices or more efficient tools. In fact, the foodgatherers have ample time and energy.

The economic life of the foodgatherers necessitates a continuous change of residence, though within a well-defined and ample living space. This change of habitation is, however, not aimless, nor is the choice of food indiscriminate, though there is as yet no food production.

Economic foresight is not well-developed. Because the foodgatherers are often on the move, they cannot store food, except in small quantities and in a very elementary manner; thus the Andamanese roast meat and fish and store them in bins of bamboo; the Veddas dry meat in the open air or preserve it in honey; the North Central Californians store acorns in silos; the Sakais store honey in bamboo containers. But usually surplus food is disposed of by sharing it with others, creating thereby a moral claim for surplus food collected in the future by the receiving party. The absence of food storage results in the impossibility of any larger accumulation of wealth.
The extremely elementary economy of the foodgatherers has, of course, its disadvantages: it makes cultural progress institutionally impossible. But, on the other hand, it gives a feeling of independence of time, place, of material things and of fellow men. The foodgatherers seem to have a keen longing for utter freedom which they do not want to exchange for greater economic security and comfort.

This is, in short, the economic life and material culture of the few mere foodgathering and hunting tribes still living on this earth. It is reasonable to assume that the economic life and material culture of prehistoric man in the Palaeolithic period conformed to a great extent to this pattern. It was for several million years the uniform mode of life for prehistoric man. Today a few small tribes still follow this kind of life. In a few decades they too will have died out or have been forced to adopt a ‘superior’ form of culture.

2. THE FOOD PRODUCERS

A. Advanced Hunting Cultures

While the foodgathering stage of culture in its simple and primitive form prevailed throughout the Lower Palaeolithic period, a clear advance in human economy set in during the Upper Palaeolithic period, around 30,000 BC, when at least in Europe prehistoric man invented superior hunting methods and manufactured more effective weapons. Stone tools began to be more skilfully made, and now also traps and nets were used for hunting, and hooks and lines for fishing. The construction of canoes, skis and sledges also harks back to this period.

This progress of culture set in with the beginning of the Würm Glaciation. Large parts of the earth were covered with ice; it moved down from the north, and also from the high mountains down to the valleys. Thus the ice-free areas in northern Europe and Asia shrank considerably, with the result that men and animals became more concentrated on a smaller living space. Not only did the herds of animals become larger, human beings too began to live in larger groups, and while vegetable food became gradually scarcer, the supply of animal food became larger and richer. During this time man began to display not only a greater variety of technical skill, he also showed progress in hunting methods. Characteristic for the form of economy in this era is the common hunt in which a group of men joined. Thus not only more animals could be caught and killed, but
also bigger ones. Now animals like the rhinoceros and mammoth, the reindeer and aurox, the nasicorn and cave bear, were hunted. For lone hunters and most primitive weapons it was obviously impossible to kill any of these animal giants; it could only be done in collective hunting and with more effective weapons. Collective hunting must have resulted in the organisation of wider social groups, probably the clans.

Many living primitive tribes all over the world have still retained this same way of living. They specialise in an intensive hunting activity and use highly specialised hunting methods; they possess primitive but sufficiently effective weapons and generally concentrate on certain types of game. Other such tribes have now adopted agriculture as an additional occupation, but basically their culture is still that of advanced hunters.

In these cultures, prehistoric or present-day, the hunting methods are more varied than in the simple stalking of game by lone food-gatherers. Now the game is stealthily approached, often in animal disguise. So do certain North American tribes when hunting deer and the Bushmen of South Africa when hunting ostriches. Paintings in Palaeolithic caves prove that the hunters in those times used identical methods. In the arctic zone, which resembles the Ice Age, wild reindeer are hunted by beaters and the game is driven into funnels of land necks. Then the reindeer are killed from the rivers or the sea by the hunters approaching in boats. In other parts of the world, in aboriginal Australia, for instance, game is chased till the animal surrenders through exhaustion. All these tribes also use a great variety of traps. Some poison their weapons (spear and arrowheads), others poison the waterplace frequented by game, while some stick arrows with the tips, that may be poisoned, upwards into the ground in places over which game is used to walk.

In all these living tribes hunting is the task of the males, except in beats when also women may be employed. During the hunt women have usually to observe certain taboos. Otherwise their life resembles greatly that of women in the foodgathering stage of culture; much of their time is spent in the collection of vegetable foodstuff or in primitive cultivation.

Life among the tribes which earn their livelihood mainly by hunting is still nomadic. The wandering animals (especially the reindeer in the North) force man to a nomadic life. But prehistoric Eurasia seems to have been so abundant in game that it allowed
greater stability to the hunters.

The whole economic life of these advanced hunters, their food, clothing, habitation and mode of life, is based on the hunt. The Plain Indians of North America are a good example. They lived on the buffalo. It was food, shelter and clothing for them. They used its hide for robes, bedding, moccasins, leggings, lodge covering and round bull boats. The tough skin of the neck was made into war shields and the ribs were used as runners for dog sleds. Hoofs made glue, the stomach lining made water buckets, the horns were carved into spoons and sometimes bows.

Technical progress in the manufacture of the hunting weapons is marked in this culture. Long range weapons prevail, such as the bow and arrow, the harpoon, spears with teeth, spear throwers, and tomahawks. These weapons and tools were often artistically decorated.

The clothing of these tribes depends much on the climate of their habitats. The African and Australian hunters go usually completely naked; in the cold north the hunters wear trousers and jackets with long sleeves and shoes (moccasins). For material they use the skins of the animals slain in the hunt.

The habitation of the hunting tribes in Eurafrika is, and was in the past, the beehive hut or the domed hut. In more stable hunting and fishing cultures round houses with conical roofs predominate; in the unstable north, tents are in vogue; they are of a similar shape; and often they are covered with skins. The Eskimos build their igloos of snow even today, in the form of a beehive hut or domed hut; they are half subterranean dwellings. Similar dwellings existed in the Mousterian period, but were more frequent in the Magdalenian era.

The people of these hunting cultures have a flair for decoration and ornaments. Of these they have a great variety; some of them are undoubtedly of high artistic value. For personal decoration they wear chains, armlets, anklets, bands, belts and ear-rings. Disks worn on the chest—symbols of the sun—which have magic or cultic significance are characteristic. Red body dyes are also popular, symbolising the morning sun. We find them among the Red Indians, the Australians and the hunting tribes of ancient Europe. Some wear elaborate coiffures which require a neckrest for the night.

Their means of transportation are much the same as those of the tribes in the foodgathering stage of culture, namely, sledges and
snow shoes for the North; skin-boats and birch-bark boats for the water. But the sledges, snow shoes and boats are now of better quality.

The demand for greater perfection of weapons and implements in this type of culture resulted in a greater professional specialisation. This led to intensive barter and trade. Even markets were held where various goods could change hands.

B. The Primitive Agrarian Cultures

The stage of material culture characterised by advanced methods and means of hunting and more effective weapons and tools continued more or less unchanged for another ten to twelve thousand years. But towards the end of the Palaeolithic period, about 10,000 BC, as excavations show, the hunters began to supplement their meat diet increasingly by plant foods of wild berries, seeds and wild fruits. Flint sickles found at Mount Carmel suggest that cereals were harvested and eaten by Mesolithic cave dwellers probably before 6000 BC.

As yet no deliberate food cultivation was inaugurated. It was the period of harvesting without sowing. It is not known how long this transitional period lasted. Such harvesting tribes, after all, are still found on all five continents. Their food supply is mainly derived from the harvesting of one or a few wild-growing plants which provide their chief sustenance for the entire year. In East, South and North Australia we find several such tribes. In New Guinea many tribes live off the wild sago palm while in Polynesia the wild breadfruit tree is the main food provider for quite a number of tribes. They lead a comparatively sedentary life and stay together in large communities. While such tribes are now rare in Africa, old reports suggest that in the past harvesting played an important part also in the economy of certain African tribes.

Only tribes which harvested without sowing, but harvested in exactly the same manner as the agrarian tribes do now, can have invented agriculture. The mere hunters and foodgatherers are averse to a sedentary life and to cultivation of the soil. This has been proved repeatedly by futile attempts to "settle" such tribes. Attempts of missionaries to settle the wild Indian tribes in Paraguay, in Africa and on the Philippines, by the Brazilian government to win over the Bororos to agriculture, by social workers and reformers in India, have all failed. In India a number of such tribes (such as the Chen-
chus in Andhra, Pardhis in Central India, the Katkaris in Mahara-
shtra and the Sansis in Uttar Pradesh) turned into “criminal castes”
when they could not make their livelihood through mere foodga-
thering, but they would not take to cultivation. They were not psycho-
logically prepared for such a change of life.

The place where mere harvesters changed into cultivators and
horticulturists cannot be determined today, although many indica-
tions suggest that it happened in the southern or central regions of
Asia. This change could have taken place in several regions of Asia
and even in different continents where conditions were favourable.
Our knowledge of extinct cultures is still too imperfect; more exca-
vations in the Near East, in Africa and America may solve this
problem.

Nor can it be stated with any degree of certainty when exactly
this revolutionary step from mere foodgathering and harvesting to
foodgrowing and food-producing took place. Most probably it
occurred at much the same time in several places when prehistoric
man was ripe for it.

It seems that agriculture started in three different forms: as horti-
culture (cultivation of trees like the sago palm, the bread-fruit tree,
etc. and of tubers like yam, tapioca, taro and others), as slash-and-
burn cultivation (also called shifting cultivation, because of the
growing of various grains and vegetables in ever changing plots of
land) and as plough cultivation (combined with animal breeding).

The plantation and cultivation of trees and tubers was most likely
invented in regions where these trees and tubers once grew wild,
that is, in the tropical and subtropical regions. It is yet impossible to
point out the exact spot where this happened and when.

The peculiar form of cultivation which is called slash-and-burn or
shifting cultivation, prevailed till present time in the jungles of
southern Asia and India, where rainfall is heavy. A field is prepared
by burning the forest and sowing in the fertile ashes. No plough is
required in this type of cultivation; therefore no domesticated cattle
were needed for ploughing. These primitive cultivators were and still
are half-nomadic. They supplement their grown food largely by hunt-
ing (male occupation) and by the collection of wild-growing vegetable
food (female occupation). Thus life remains on a more or less similar
pattern as in the foodgathering stage of culture. Only with the intro-
duction of the plough is the transformation of a culture into an
agrarian one completed.
A slash-and-burn cultivation is of course impossible without an effective axe for cutting down the trees and bushes. Before the invention of metal implements this posed a problem. R. Heine-Geldern claims that a suitable stone implement originated about 5,000 BC in southern Central Asia, probably China, and spread from there all over southern Asia and India. He calls it a cylindrical hoe, with a sharpened blade at one end and a round or conical back at the other. The culture which produced this axe or hoe is the oldest Neolithic basis of productive agrarian economy.

An early centre of plough cultivation was undoubtedly the subtropical zone which includes North Africa, Syria, Iran and Turkey. Excavations at Jarmo in Iraq, for instance, prove the existence of a well-established, permanently housed group of farmers and animal breeders in about 4,500 BC. They were growing two varieties of wheat and a legume and had domesticated sheep, goats, pigs, cattle and an equid. Remains of similar peasant cultures have been excavated also elsewhere in Mesopotamia, in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and southern Europe.

New excavations by R. S. MacNeish in Tamaulipas (north-eastern Mexico, USA), seem to prove the independent origin of an agrarian culture in this part of America; it also grew from mere harvesting of wild-growing beans and pumpkins into a deliberate cultivation of these plants. This development took place between 4,000 and 2,300 BC. Meanwhile new sites have been discovered which place the invention of agriculture in America at an even earlier date.

Wilhelm G. Solheim found peas, beans, cucumbers and Chinese water chestnuts grown by early man (about 9,500 BC) in Thailand. This is perhaps the earliest date of deliberate cultivation.

The material culture and the technical equipment of the present primitive cultivators vary considerably. This can easily be explained; for some of the agrarian cultures developed out of the foodgathering stage of culture while others took to farming after they had already reached the stage of advanced and specialised hunting. The latter were much more skilled in the manufacture of their weapons and implements, while the foodgathering tribes who later took to farming remained on a lower level of material culture. The highest level of material culture was of course achieved by those cultivators who combined cultivation with animal breeding and soon invented plough cultivation.

Naturally, once change and progress had set in, the momentum was carried further and progress continued in many tribal communi-
ties. Peoples of various cultures mixed, or adopted at least certain traits from each other. Specific cultural elements were adopted widely by a great number of tribes and travelled over wide distances in prehistoric times. So is the blow-gun known in South America as well as in Malaya where it is more recent; megaliths have found an even larger expansion over the world; the cult of the mother-goddess has been readily adopted by many tribes, even though they did not practise agriculture.

While the horticulturists and shifting cultivators may here and there have retained the digging stick of the foodgatherers, their typical farm implement is the hoe which consists of a stone, shell or horn (in modern times iron) blade, at right angles to a wooden handle. That is why these cultures are often called 'hoe cultures.' Even in present times vast regions of the earth are covered by these cultures, especially in tropical Africa, America, India, Indonesia and Oceania.

The typical weapons of these primitive cultivators are the spear, the spear thrower, the club and the broad shield. Other characteristic inventions are the friction drum, the pan pipe, the musical bow and the xylophone. For ritual purposes they also manufacture plastic animal masks and wear towering coiffures for decoration; sickle-shaped ornaments which are symbols of the moon are typical of them. The women are generally experts in wickerwork; they use the spiral-coil technique. It is probable that the invention of pottery was made in the more advanced cultures of this type. A congenital connection between basketry and pottery is likely.

In regions where pottery is yet unknown, the primitive cultivators still use the earth-oven. The use of the fire-saw for fire-making is typical of them. They use mainly bamboo utensils and a hafted axe, the blade wedged into the handle.

For transportation on water they use plank boats; outriggers are not yet known. These boats are less used for fishing, but are important in river valleys for the transport of passengers and for freight service.

The plough cultivators, who were at the same time also the first tamers and breeders of various animals, had already in prehistoric times a considerable variety of implements, utensils and weapons. A permanent dwelling, bed, chair and table as furniture, and pottery are some of their first achievements. Combined with skill in handicrafts and a tendency to work with new forms and materials, they laid the foundations for a rapid advance in material culture which
culminated in the creation of the world's first great civilisations. We find them in Mesopotamia as well as in Central America. Naturally, this progress also stimulated the development of social life and of more advanced and complicated social structures. It also resulted in the growth of new religious cults and created a new spirituality and world outlook, and brought about a new flourishing of the arts.

C. The Animal Breeding Cultures

Nomadic pastoralism must be distinguished from animal domestication combined with farming. Agrarian communities began first to domesticate animals between 8000 and 6500 BC, probably in the Middle East and Palestine. Nomadic pastoralism is a later development and resulted in the formation of a peculiar mental outlook as well.

The domestication and breeding of animals began almost certainly in various phases and in different regions. The first animal that could be tamed was the dog. Since most foodgathering tribes have dogs, this domestication must have taken place very early. Many millenia ago reindeer were also tamed in the forests of Siberia. But this did not lead to the development of a typical reindeer herding culture at that time. The old reindeer hunters were content with keeping a herd of wild animals in wide enclosures to ensure a steady food supply. Gradually the animals grew tamer and became used to the nearness of human beings. Some tribes in Siberia still practise this form of herding. But reindeer domestication and breeding, in the full sense of the word, developed much later (among the Samoyeds of Sajan), perhaps only in the first or second century AD and was stimulated by an earlier horse breeding culture of Turk tribes in the neighbourhood.

The domestication and breeding of animals as a special and new economy occurred probably in western Asia in the sixth millennium BC. The first animal breeders were Mesolithic and early Neolithic hunters and food collectors whose women practised at the same time the harvesting or even cultivation, of grains like wheat and barley. Their first domesticated animals were, besides the dog, sheep, pig, goat, and fowl. Remains of such peasant cultures have been excavated in Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and southern Europe. Only in the higher stages of agriculture is there evidence of the domestication of cattle, the donkey, camel and yak.

Specialised pure animal breeding cultures must have developed from these more advanced agrarian cultures. Even now there are many shepherd communities which own fields which they prepare in spring
and harvest in winter when they return to their winter quarters. Other communities send only the younger generation out to tend the herds while the elders remain at home and cultivate the fields and gardens. But there is ample prehistoric evidence that pure hunting communities too turned to breeding and tending animal herds as their exclusive occupation. Among the latter communities we observe less attachment to a permanent home residence and to the soil.

Though the nomadic animal breeding cultures developed primarily from agrarian cultures comparatively recently, they developed very distinct and specified cultural traits which made them deviate from the agrarian cultures in many spheres of culture, not only in economic pursuits and ways of living, but also in socio-political structure, in art, religion, mythology, etc. Their whole mentality changed radically, as it appears.

So far the first pure animal breeding culture was discovered in Inner Asia (Afanasjevo) in the Minussinsk-Altai region (with cattle, sheep and horse breeding) and most probably must be attributed to immigrants from southern Russia. From the Altai region domestication (of sheep, horse and cattle) spread after about 2000 BC among the hunting tribes of Mongolia (at Lake Baikal), in Kazakstan and in Siberia. In western Asia, too, there arose pure nomadic animal breeders who, from 1900 to 1700 BC under Indo-European leadership, specialised in horse-breeding, because they required these animals for their war chariots. The Kassites, Hittites and Mitannis were such tribes. The use of the horse for the chariot spread over Europe, North Africa, Central Asia as far as East Asia where it brought the Shang Dynasty to power in China.

Horse riding developed later, about 1500 BC, in the mountains south of Siberia. Riding horse-breeder and warrior tribes consolidated their cultures between 1200 and 800 BC in Central Europe and the Balkans on the one hand, and in Transcaucasia on the other. From 900 to 700 BC, such riding horse-breeders fought either in the service of, or against, the West Asiatic high civilisations (Assyria, etc.). With their ultimate retreat into the steppes of Eurasia they took along with them the cultural achievements (like the use of metals, a hierarchical social order, etc.) of these high civilisations. In the subsequent centuries new nomadic horse-breeding peoples came into existence in Inner Asia, in North China and Mongolia. In the Transcaucasian steppe the animal breeders have
survived to the present day. In Kazakstan (USSR) alone live about six million pure animal breeders.

While camel breeding began in a sporadic and primitive form about 1500 BC in Arabia, it was intensified in the 13th century BC and resulted in the evolution of the typical Bedouin culture. Later this culture expanded to Iran and North Africa (Sahara). Camel breeders survived until today mainly in the arid steppe of Iran and the Arabian desert; their present strength is about 750,000. In the Sahara live about a million animal breeders, and nearly 750,000 in Somalia (East Africa). Their habitats are mainly arid lands unsuited for cultivation. Camel breeding is often combined with sheep and goat breeding, less with horse rearing. These desert nomads rely on the camel not only for their food—milk and milk products—but also use it for carrying merchandise. They earn their livelihood also as protectors of caravans and as suppliers of pack animals.

The domestication of the Asiatic camel and of the yak took place probably in connection with sheep, cattle and horse domestication in Inner Asia. It had no independent origin.

The camel breeders of North and East Africa are certainly an offshoot of the Bedouin camel breeders. But the East and South African cattle breeders may have developed their cultures independently as earlier pure hunters or agriculturists.

Animal breeding cultures are thus far from uniform. Nearest to the foodgathering stage of culture are the pastoral nomads of northeastern and northern Asia, though they too are somewhat influenced by agrarian cultures and still more by elements of totemistic hunting cultures. The advanced animal breeders of Central Asia have, or at least had in the past, a very complex and mixed culture, because they had adopted many traits of West-Asiatic city cultures (with agrarian culture elements). But it can still be maintained that basically they share many common traits with the more primitive pastoral nomads.

In Asia exclusive pastoralism necessitates seasonal wanderings with the herds from summer to winter camps, sometimes also to spring and fall pastures which are owned by groups of families. In Africa (the Nuers of the Sudan, for instance) there may be a change from dry season to rainy season camps. In India, the Kanadis, a shepherd caste in the Nasik District of the Deccan, have different grazing grounds in the dry season and during the monsoon.

In Central and North Asia we find a flat steppe nomadism (in the Mongolian, Turkestan and Volga steppes) and a mountain and
upland nomadism (on the Altai, the Tienshan and the Pamir). Not only do they raise and breed different animals, but also their methods of domestication and herding are different.

The technology of the pastoral tribes is characterised by a limited stock of ergological objects. This is due to the difficulty of transport, but also due to the fact that the animal breeders who generally have easy access to products manufactured by other cultures, can acquire these easily enough through trade or, on their raids, by force.

The dwellings of the pastoral nomads are tents with erect cylindrical sides and a conical or dome-shaped roof; they are spacious, and easily erected, dismantled and transported. These tents have most likely evolved from the round form of the huts in the foodgathering stage of culture. It is the woman’s task to make the tent, to erect it and to take it down.

Of utensils the nomadic animal breeders have merely what is connected with animal raising: plates, buckets, milking gourds, a milking stool; then bags, sacks, pouches of skin, saddles, etc. The vessels—a characteristic is their roundness—are made of wood or wickerwork, while other articles are mainly of skin or fur.

The men and women wear trousers or leather leggings with the fur turned in. They are a speciality of this culture. In Africa, however, cattle breeders wear little clothing or none at all. An exception are the Tuaregs who cover even their faces.

They feed mainly on milk, dairy products (cheese, butter, etc.), blood and meat. They eat vegetables as side dishes or condiments. The preparation of the food is the task of the women. But women are generally excluded from dairying.

The weapons of the pastoral nomads show their specialisation for animal raising and warfare, for while shepherds drive the flocks and herds, warriors have to guard them. The lasso with the loose noose, the snare, lance, spear, battle-axe, sword, sabre, bow and arrows (a composite reflexion bow) are significant. They use no shields in battle, but a cuirass.

For transportation they have riding and draught animals; they use sledges and the travois. They probably invented the wagon which evolved from the cylinder or barrel. Wheels were already in use in the Upper Neolithic period and evolved probably from a rolling tree trunk. The oldest form of the wheel is a solid round wooden slab of one piece, connected with the body through a pin. The axle is a later invention. The carts of the nomadic iron smiths of north-
western India still have their wheels attached by a pin, not by an axle.

The economic life of the animal breeders varies from country to country and from tribe to tribe. In Central Asia pastoralism generally consists of sheep, horse and cattle raising, and secondarily, of camel (supplementary to the horse) and goat (supplementary to sheep) breeding. The most important herd animal in Arabia and North Africa, less so in North India, but again in desert Asia (from the Caspian Sea over Takla Makan and Gobi to Manchuria) is the camel. The raising of the yak (in Tibet, Sinkiang, Mongolia and on the Pamir) and the donkey (in South-West Asia) is of limited distribution. Cattle is the main herd animal of the African pastoralists. The reindeer is bred only in Siberia and in the arctic zone.

The basic economic unit in most pastoral communities is the extended joint family; for an individual family would be unable to tend the large herds. The extended joint family is also the basic productive unit, but it is more a union of producers than of consumers. The work of women is of great importance in these communities; therefore they occupy a comparatively high social position, at least in the home. However, pastoralism is mainly a man’s affair, for tending the animals is no woman’s work, even the milking is done by men. Since the main source of the food supply is from herds, the collection of vegetable food by the women is of minor importance. It is the task of the women to prepare and to cook the food, and to do all the other household work. Since the number of persons in a family is considerable, household work is no easy task for the women. The women also erect and dismantle the tents. The work of the men is intermittent and periodical; they seek pastures, lead the herds there and protect them, take care of their breeding, tend and milk the animals. Still much time is left for leisure which is often used for raids and warfare. Much of the routine work is carried out by slaves and serfs.

It is typical of this form of culture that the pastoralists have a pronounced aversion to killing their herd animals except in sacrifice. Whenever possible they live on dairy products or the flesh of old animals. Thus the Masais of Kenya and Tanganyika (Africa) live mainly on milk and milk products, on blood (which they extract from the necks of their cattle), and game. The cattle-breeding Watussis of the Congo are strict vegetarians. This characteristic aversion to killing their cattle is perhaps responsible for the Hindu
aversion to eating beef. Here it has a religious sanction. Meat supply in these cultures is often supplemented by hunting and fishing.¹

Dairying is almost certainly an invention of the pastoral nomads. For it is well known that many primitive agriculturists scorn a milk diet. This is found in India, for instance, and also in China and Indonesia. The pastoral nomads, on the other hand, live mainly on milk and milk products. They use not only the milk of cattle, but also that of goats, sheep, reindeer, yaks, asses, water buffaloes and even of the horse.

Besides dairying, the animal breeders were often also daring robbers. Such raids were favoured by the possession of swift riding animals which made surprise attacks and safe escape easy. Moreover, their peculiar way of living allowed them much leisure which they used for planning and execution of such raids. The lack of handicrafts and contempt for manual work in these pastoral communities also created a peremptory need for necessary or useful articles manufactured by the artisans of other cultures.

The study of primitive races, be they foodgatherers or food-producers, indicates that they have been arrested in various stages of cultural evolution and thus present a comparatively faithful and objective picture of prehistoric cultures in corresponding stages of their development.

It is easy to ascertain from prehistory that their economic life has changed little: foodgatherers hunt small game and collect edible plants and fruits as they did aeons ago. But even advanced hunters, hunting in teams with more perfected weapons, still use methods which were in common use in prehistoric times. At least they did so until a few decades ago; now their numbers are dwindling rapidly with the disappearance of game.

Critics of the validity of such a link-up of primitive cultures with prehistoric cultures point out that a fairly close conformity of primitive with prehistoric peoples may be conceded, yet there is little evidence that this conformity extends also to social and religious traditions and practices. But it is a well-established fact that people are even more reluctant to change their social customs and religious traditions and principles than their economic life. In fact, people often retain social structures and religious beliefs and practices even

¹The Dinkas of South Sudan fish once a year in the river Lol. In their passion for fishing they leave their cattle unguarded. Many are then killed by wild animals.
though these may disagree with their newly changed economies. Thus a study of primitive peoples easily shows whether a primitive agrarian community has evolved from the stage of primitive foodgathers or from that of advanced hunters, for their social structures and their religious and ideological outlook differ considerably. Siberian tribes, for instance, though at present they may be owners of large herds, have still retained the habits of primitive hunters and food-collectors and differ from the traditions and habits of the nomadic animal breeders as found in Central Asia. And the Tuaregs, originally a matriarchal agrarian society, have retained their mother-right though now they are nomadic camel breeders.

This gives us the justification, though opposition may still be strong, to assert that valid conclusions can be made from the present-day life and culture of the primitives to that of early man in various stages of his development. We are thus able to make out certain trends in the cultural evolution of man from prehistoric times to the present day. Though in this historic study documentary evidence may be lacking, prehistory and cultural anthropology provide valuable new insights into the origin and growth of human culture as they actually took place.

In the following chapters we shall, therefore, study first the various social systems of the primitives and also their property concepts and religion. In this manner we hope to achieve a fairly exact reconstruction of the historical development of the material and mental culture of man from the earliest periods of human existence.
CHAPTER VIII

The Primitive Family

All sociologists recognise the family as the pivot and core of social life. The fellowship of the family draws its structure and character from the facts of birth, marriage and death. It is a fellowship of young and old. It is the centre in which the individual receives his first care and protection, and also his basic training in human values and behaviour. In fact, human parents not only provide their children with genes which together, from father and mother, make up their hereditary endowment; they also provide them with a home—perhaps the most important part of the environment in which these children will grow up. And it is not only the physical environment, the food, shelter, and care that the parents provide, but also in a very substantial way their children’s intellectual climate, with a sense of thought for others, respect for the law, love—or contempt—of learning. In the shelter of the family very elementary urges in man are satisfied: the sexual urge, the urge for love and affectionate companionship, the urge for security.

It has been recognised that what is learned early in life, in the family, tends to be retained tenaciously, while items learned in adulthood can be modified or rejected more easily. Of course, the entire basis of Freudian psychology rests on the assumption that early childhood experience has a profound and lasting effect on later behaviour.

Furthermore, our human physiology tends to support the hypothesis that this is a biological property of man. Human infants are born with incomplete and immature neural structures. Thus humans are born with a largely uncoded behavioural potential, the capacity to learn. Man is, behaviourally, the most flexible of all animals. The infant, because it is an incomplete and helpless creature, prematurely born, so to say, must be brought up in a social context, ideally in a family. This in turn ensures that a good part of its learning will be patterned according to the tradition of its social group.

It also appears that as the neural structures mature some of the
inherent flexibility is lost. The partial attrition of this flexibility would tend to support cultural norms and hence reinforce the continuity of the cultural system.

This is the reason why the family system is so important.¹

1. **Traditional Theories about the Origin of the Family**

Before sociology was recognised as a special science, it was philosophy which concerned itself with the study of the human family. Plato and Aristotle were perhaps the first to write about the family scientifically. However, they knew only the patriarchal family system and did not imagine that other family systems could exist which were at variance with it. J. J. Rousseau, G. Herder and A. Comte in the 18th and 19th centuries were of the same opinion. It was J. Bachofen who in 1861 stated, for the first time, in his celebrated work Das Mutterrecht, that mother-right was the older institution. J. McLennan and L. H. Morgan, unilateral evolutionists, maintained that the family had developed in several stages from unrestricted promiscuity through polyandry and polygyny to monogamy. They left us wondering what would be the next step in this evolutionary progress!

The evolutionary theory proved very popular, because it conformed with the general theory of evolution as thought out by Charles Darwin. But it can hardly be correct: for one reason—it is too simple; human institutions do not evolve in one single line; also, it is biologically unsound, which, of course, these early sociologists could not know.

If promiscuity had been practised at the beginning of mankind, man would probably have died out long before the stages of polygyny, and much before monogamy could have been reached, for promiscuity leads to sterility of woman. It has been noted by several anthropologists (V. Elwin, for instance) that in tribal India girls rarely conceive as long as they are promiscuous. To prevent early pregnancy the inmates of a youth dormitory where such sex relations are permitted, generally discourage girls from going steady with one and the same boy, and insist on promiscuity. South Indian tribes which live in practical promiscuity, like the Todas, Vishavans and Mala Pulayas, have been reduced to very small numbers and are in danger of extinction.

E. Westermarck, in his famous book on the history of marriage,

objected to the evolutionary view for another reason: he had found that most primitives lived in monogamy, and that the other marriage forms were exceptions and moreover strictly regulated.

Modern sociologists generally admit that the early evolutionary theory is untenable; the behaviour of a horde of higher mammals is irrelevant to social behaviour in a human group, even the most primitive one. But they also point out that Westermarck was wrong. He failed to distinguish between actual and compulsory marriage. If the primitives in their majority are monogamous, they are mainly so for economic reasons. Few tribes hold polygamous marriages morally wrong, though tribes which hold this view are found precisely among the most primitive ones. Polyandry, however, is now generally ruled out as an intermediary stage between mother-right and patriarchy, for it is found only sporadically and is probably the outcome of certain peculiar economic and social factors.

It must be noted, in this connection, that modern sociologists in dealing with primitive societies generally lack a system of classification and do not sufficiently distinguish between the earlier and later historical stages of primitive culture. For a correct assessment of the whole situation it is, however, imperative that a distinction be made at least between foodgatherers and foodproducers, and among the foodproducers between tribes which earn their livelihood mainly by hunting, or by the cultivation of the soil, or by a concentration on animal breeding. For it has been shown that the social organisation of a tribe is strongly influenced by the economic life it leads and also by the natural environment in which it lives.

2. FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG THE FOODGATHERERS

At the outset we must emphasise that, without any exception, no tribe is without a family system. Nor is there any human society that does not impose some restraint on the sex urge of its members. It also brings effective pressure to bear upon the individuals to observe its mores and it places religious sanctions on proper sexual behaviour.

A most remarkable restraint on sexual freedom found in all primitive communities is exogamy. It was J. McLennan who discovered this social phenomenon; it implies marriage outside a certain social group (kin, clan, territory, etc.). Exogamy separates man from the animal in which it is absent. Incest taboos are especially strong in the society of the foodgatherers; in more advanced com-
munities some exceptions or modifications are occasionally on evidence.

The origin of exogamy is still obscure; some ascribe it to an instinctive aversion to in-breeding or to a belief in totems, to the prevalence of female infanticide in some primitive cultures, to a lack of sexual attraction due to familiarity in growing up together, and to magical religious or superstitious motives. The very number of explanations offered is a proof that none by itself is really satisfactory.

The foodgatherers have, as a rule, only kinship exogamy, that is, they forbid marriage within a person's own family group. This family group consists usually of a few families which are related to each other by kinship and at the same time form an economic unit, that is, they live and work together.

Among the foodgatherers a high degree of freedom in the choice of marriage partners is the rule, though, wherever possible, it is often combined with an exchange of girls between the two groups. Among the African Pygmies it is the custom that the bride goes into hiding. If she does not want to marry her partner, she takes care not to be found. Among the Bushmen a boy asks his sister to plead for him with the girl of his choice. Among the Birhors in Bihar (India) the bride runs away and the bridegroom has to chase her. If she wants to marry him, she allows herself to be caught. Among the Andamanese the boy asks his father or uncle to arrange the marriage, but he is free in the choice of his bride. Among the South-East Australians and the Kareyas of Brazil the parents arrange the marriage of their children, but the latter are free to refuse. Among the Veddas of Sri Lanka and the Senois of Malaya no bride-price is demanded; a Vedda boy chooses his bride himself and disappears with her for a few days in the jungle. So it is the custom among the Aetas of the Philippines. Among the Batwa and Akka Pygmies of Central Africa, however, the choice of partners is restricted and a bride-price is demanded.

Pre-marital sex relations are permitted by most foodgathering tribes, at least as long as there is no danger of conception. When a girl becomes pregnant, she is quickly married off. It appears, therefore, that such sexual freedom is a relaxation of former stricter laws and indeed pre-marital sex relations are still forbidden in a number of foodgathering tribes: among the Ituri and Gabun Pygmies, the Batwa Pygmoids, the Semangs and Senois of Malaya, the Negritos of
the Philippines, the Koryaks of the arctic circle, the Yukis and Maidus of North-Central California, the western Algonkins, the Arapahos and the Cheyenne Indians, the Salish tribes, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, some South-east Australian tribes, and a few Gez and Kareya tribes of Brazil. Among the Kindigas of East Africa, and many other tribes (the Andamanese, for example) a girl must get married when she becomes pregnant. The Cape York Australians permit free pre-marital sex relations, but if a child is borne by an unmarried mother, she and the child are killed. Such cases, however, happen rarely as an escape from punishment is possible by procuring an abortion.

Practical monogamy is the general rule. But among the majority of the foodgathering tribes monogamy is not compulsory. It is compulsory only among the Kadar of South India (as long as a marriage lasts), the Andamanese tribes, one Semang tribe, the Veddas, the Toalas of Celebes, a few South-East Australian tribes (some Kurnai and Kulin groups, as the Wotjabaluks), the tribes of Tierra del Fuego and the Bagielli Pygmies of the Cameroons.

Though not compulsory, monogamy is the rule among most Bushmen tribes, among the Batwa Pygmoids, the Reindeer Koryaks, the Negritos of the Philippines, the Kindigas, the Gez of Brazil and others. The statement that "polygyny increases with cultural progress" (i.e., economic progress) has been confirmed by further research\(^1\). Only some Bushman tribes and in recent time some Kulin and Yuin groups of South-East Australia practise polygyny on a somewhat larger scale. The much propagated Pirauru marriage (exchange of wives in certain groups) is in vogue only in Central Australia among advanced hunting tribes and subject to strict regulations.

Marriages are fairly stable among the foodgatherers. Among the African Pygmies, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego and the Kareyas of Brazil divorce is exceptional after the birth of a child; it is rare among the Andamanese and Veddas, and was practically unknown in past times. It is more frequent among the Semangs and Senois, the Philippine Negritos and the Bushmen, especially among the young couples. Among the South-East Australians marriages, as a rule, last for life or at least for a long time. Among the Kindigas of East Africa only sterility is a valid reason for divorce.

\(^1\)Hobhouse, Wheeler and Ginsberg, 1930.
Extra-marital sex relations are generally forbidden; they are strictly forbidden among the African Pygmies (Bambuti), the West Algonkins (Arapahos) and the Salish; they were forbidden among the Kadar of South India till the influx of wifeless forest labourers broke up their marriages. A temporary wife-exchange is permitted among the Eskimos, but subject to definite rules. Adultery is severely punished by the Kindigas, the Veddas, the Semangs and Senois and the Philippine Negritos. The latter kill adulterers by order of the Supreme Being. The Bushmen also forbid sex relations outside marriage, except for the rare case when two friends wish to give each other access to their wives.

Generally husband and wife enjoy equal social status among the foodgatherers; it is so among the Andamanese, the Veddas and the South-East Australians. The Philippine Negritos assign a slightly inferior social position to their women; but wife-beating is forbidden. In Bambuti society (Congo) women have a full and important role to play. There is relatively little specialisation according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts, or to wash and clean a baby. Women are free to take part in the discussions of men.¹

One characteristic of the economic life of the foodgatherers is that the individual family is the basic working unit, and the centre of production as well as of consumption. Though food may generally be collected and game hunted in teams, the consumption after division of the spoils usually takes place in the circle of the individual family.

The foodgatherers also practise a characteristic division of labour between the sexes: the male supplies the flesh food by hunting, fishing, gathering eggs, etc. He also collects honey, for this is often difficult and sometimes dangerous. The Veddas of Sri Lanka, for instance, often risk their lives in climbing inaccessible cliffs and high trees to get at the hives of wild bees. The woman supplies the vegetable food, by picking fruit, digging tubers, roots, collecting mushrooms, berries, plants, etc. She also prepares the food, cooks and roasts it (in earthen stoves). Among the Mountain Damas of South-West Africa the distribution of labour goes so far that a man, who desires a dish of vegetables, collected and prepared by his wife, must buy it from her or exchange it for a dish of meat, prepared by

himself.

The range of male activity is wider than that of woman's who stays at home or moves near the home. Women also erect the beehive hut or the windbreak, carry water and collect firewood, manufacture some utensils like pouches, baskets, mats, dishes and clothes. On their food forage expeditions the women use the digging stick, an implement typical of this culture.

The men manufacture bows and arrows, quivers, clubs, spears, boomerangs, axes, knives, blow-guns, harpoons, canoes and the peculiar fire-making apparatus which the tribe uses.

In the family system of the foodgatherers children are much desired for economic, religious and emotional reasons; they are a guarantee for a stable marriage. Children are generally well looked after, though infant mortality is very high in the primitive conditions which prevail in this kind of life. Explorers mention how much affection the foodgatherers show for their children. This is true of the Kadar, Andamanese, Veddas, Senois, Negritos, South-East Australians and African Pygmies. The Philippine Negritos never beat their children, yet they are well-behaved. Infanticide is uncommon, except for one tribe of Central African Pygmies, the Bushmen, the Kulins (in times of want), and the Eskimos.

The children receive their education in play and through the imitation of the elders in an informal way. In certain tribes parents, grandparents or elders give them a sort of formal education. The South East Australians, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, the North-Central Californians and the Andamanese have special initiation ceremonies. These are particularly well organised in Australia and endowed with esoteric rites. The Ituri Pygmies, and the Bushmen too, have initiation, but it is probably strongly influenced by Negro magical beliefs. The ceremonies are performed by a male association, the so-called Tore.

The initiation period is usually a time of great trial and fortitude; it includes fasting for long periods, a rigid exclusion from the social life of the tribe, painful tattooing and other scarifications, tooth extraction or filing, and many other ordeals. The ethical rules and the secrets of the tribe are revealed to the initiands in impressive ceremonies.

If the family system of the foodgathering tribes really resembles that of early human society, then the family mores at the beginning of mankind were not so different from those that prevail in modern
civilised society: inbreeding was prevented by exogamy; there was freedom of choice of marriage partners; though pre-marital sex relations were tolerated, they were probably frowned upon; practical monogamy was the rule; divorce was rare; extra-marital sex relations were forbidden and punished; husband and wife were of equal status; children were much wanted and well cared for. Initiation ceremonies were not absent in prehistoric times as the presence of bull-roarers in the Magdalenian period proves. The bull-roarers must have had the same function in those times which they have today in primitive Africa or Australia.

3. FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AMONG THE FOODPRODUCERS

A. The Advanced Hunters

The progress from mere foodgathering to foodproducing, wherever it took place, was certainly not a sudden one. This gradual, but nevertheless revolutionary and extremely important economic change had also its repercussions on the social life of primitive man.

We have already seen that certain arctic tribes held the belief that the animal killed in the hunt could be revived and hunted again provided its skull and long-bones were preserved intact. On this assumption arose the conviction of the existence of a bush or game god who sends the animals to the hunter for the kill. This god assumed in some tribes the role of a guardian spirit who was first associated with particular individuals and later with whole families and their direct descendants. This spirit was often even identified with the ancestor of the sib or clan (group of families whose heads descended from a common ancestor). While the belief in a special guardian spirit who usually took the form and shape of a certain animal was called 'individual totemism' the belief in a spirit in animal form as the ancestor, or as standing in a certain mysterious (protective or benevolent) relation with the whole sib, is called 'clan totemism.' Thus among the tribes which specialised in advanced hunting methods and concentrated on gaining their livelihood mainly from the wild animals in forest and steppe, the hunted animals received a mysterious and magical significance.

Many varieties of totemism are in existence. The totems are not

1The word 'totem' is derived from the Algonkin 'nindctem' (one's close relation) or from the Chippewa 'ototeman', which means: relation by kinship.
always animals, but also plants and even inanimate objects. The extreme forms of totemism seem to have developed in hunting cultures in which cultivation at the same time was practised at not too low a level. No evidence can be found that totemism developed at one place and then spread over the whole world. It is found among primitives of all the continents, but nowhere in compact areas. We may consequently assume that clan totemism is the product of various religious and social factors through the combination of which this phenomenon arose independently in different parts of the world and, therefore, also varies considerably.

We now find in cultures with individual totemism that the family system resembles much that of the foodgathering tribes. Many features of the system are preserved though a gradual change of some others is noticeable. Thus among the Montagnais Indians of North America the women are treated like slaves. Pre-marital sex relations are tolerated, but with rare exceptions; husband and wife are faithful to each other.

In cultures with clan totemism, however, the change of the family system is more marked. First of all, the exogamy of the family group living in a certain area, as practised by the foodgatherers, is now extended to the whole clan. The incest rules become stricter and more extensive than in the foodgathering stage. Exogamy is linked to the totemic beliefs; incest is considered an affront to the totem. Transgression of this rule, to which frequently a magical significance is attached, is consequently often more severely punished.

In most totemistic cultures we find a pronounced emphasis on the male sex. In the choice of marriage partners only the boys are free, while girls enjoy no such liberty of choosing their partners.

With regard to family life we notice a gradual emancipation of the male from his family ties. He is attached to the company of the other males in his clan or tribe. The result is a corresponding weakening of the woman’s influence in the family circle, while in tribal society her influence is practically eliminated. The boys are removed from the family at initiation and return after a long time as adult members of the tribe. After initiation they are often granted sexual liberties with the girls, which in certain tribes leads to a form of prostitution.

Husband and wife enjoy no equal status; nor is there a proper family life. Male predominance is very marked in social life.

While the mother’s influence prevails with the girls and with the
boys not yet initiated, those boys who have been initiated are markedly released from the family bond; they join the age groups with their various activities and live largely away from their home. Hottentots and Kaffirs of South Africa, for instance, even advise their circumcised youths not to obey their mothers.

Marriage is usually at a late age, the natural consequence of which is that pre-marital sex relations are the more frequent. Girls and women grant their sexual favours freely, and from early youth a strong emphasis is placed on sexual prowess. To this pattern conform, for instance, the Masais of Africa who marry when they are about forty; so do the Bororos of South America. Both tribes were originally advanced hunters. Premarital sex relations are freely permitted among them.

The marriage bond is loose and divorce easy and frequent; extramarital sex relations are only restricted by the jealousy and possessiveness of the husbands.

Naturally, many exceptions are found to this general rule; some hunting tribes still follow the pattern of behaviour practised by the foodgatherers to a remarkable degree while others deviate from it much more and have developed in the above indicated direction. The magical outlook peculiar to these tribes had indeed its marked repercussions on their social organisation and introduced important changes in the family system which they had inherited from their foodgathering ancestors.

B. The Primitive Cultivators

The family system of the primitive cultivators is not uniform; it varies with the origin of the cultivators either immediately from the foodgathering stage of culture or from that of advanced hunting. In agrarian communities which developed immediately from the foodgathering stage the family remains the economic unit. The man does the heavy work of preparing the field, while the woman does the sowing, weeding and harvesting. But for mutual protection against raiders and wild animals and for the protection of their stores, the single families often live in compact settlements. There they have permanent homes with solid houses and store rooms. But seasonally the single families may live on their fields. Often all the land is owned

1Though today these tribes are no longer exclusive hunters, but farmers and cattle breeders, their social organisation is still that of advanced hunters.
by the village community, though the usufruct of the cultivated plot goes to the family actually cultivating it.

In this group of primitive cultivators marriage partners must be chosen not only outside the kinship group (or clan, where clans exist), but generally also outside the village community. Considerable freedom of choice is granted to the marriage partners. And in this stage of culture the girls are not only free to choose, but often take the initiative in arranging their marriage. They often elope with the man of their choice or allow themselves to be kidnapped by him.

However, ordinarily the village community wants to have a say in arranging the marriage and it also takes part in its celebration. A marriage is celebrated usually with a rich ceremonial. A bride-price is demanded as a compensation for the labour lost by the girl’s transfer to another home and village. If a boy is too poor to pay it, he may acquire his bride through service. The result is often that the marriage becomes matrilocal (uxorilocal). Such service marriages are common among the aboriginal tribes of Central India.

Monogamy is the rule, though it is not compulsory. A wealthy man who can afford to pay the price for several brides and for their upkeep may marry several wives. Polygyny is, therefore, a sign of wealth. It is particularly common among the chiefs. The Kankanais of the Philippines, however, still practise compulsory monogamy, but allow divorce though only in rare cases. In certain cultivating communities fraternal polyandry is practised, perhaps to prevent division of the land. It is quite common among the Himalayan tribes and in Tibet.

Pre-marital sex relations are generally permitted or at least tolerated as long as they do not result in pregnancy. In New Guinea (the Tikas and Yamagas) and in Indonesia, however, some agrarian tribes do not allow their girls pre-marital sex relations. In any case, pregnant girls are quickly married off to give the coming child a legal father. Among a number of tribes (Bontocs in the Philippines, Mois in Indo-China, Nicobarese, Kiwai Papuans in New Guinea and others) such sex relations are accepted as a form of wooing. In some tribes a girl is only married after she has proved that she is not sterile. This is common practice among the Mois of Indo-China and the Bohindus of Zaire (former Belgian Congo). The Kikuyus of Kenya and the Shilluks of South Africa, formerly hunters, now cultivators, practise a form of imperfect coitus without breaking the hymen. Unmarried youths who beget a child are severely punished.
Divorce is freely permitted, provided the bride-price is returned. A divorce may be demanded by the husband as well as by the wife. Or women change their husbands simply by eloping with other men. Such illicit unions are subsequently legalised by the elders of the village community. The Gonds and Bhils of Central India often lose their wives by such elopements.

The social position of the husband is stronger in patrilocal marriages while in uxorilocal (or matrilocal) marriages that of the wife is better. This may be partly responsible for the evolution of a social system called matriarchy.

Extra-marital sex relations are usually forbidden; where they are practised they are subject to certain regulations. Adultery is usually severely punished by tribes which formerly were mere foodgatherers, like the Philippine Bontocs who allow a husband to kill his adulterous wife and her lover. Among the Mois of Indo-China a husband may kill both his wife and her paramour. The Tikas and Yamagas of New Guinea punish infidelity of a wife severely. Other tribes, especially those which had already been advanced hunters before taking to cultivation are more tolerant; they may even lend their wives to guests, or exchange them on occasions of a social gathering. Thus the Kiwais often exchange their wives after a battle as a peace contract. But even among them a man risks his life when he attempts to commit adultery.

Inheritance is in the male line; but if there is no male issue, it may also be in the female line.

Children are highly welcome; in fact, they are a guarantee for a stable marriage, and a security for the parents in old age. Girls are particularly wanted because they fetch a good bride-price, but boys are welcome because they will later take care of their old parents.

In agrarian cultures evolved from advanced hunting cultures the independence of the individual families is often weakened. Not only are the fields often tilled and planted communally, but also the crops are owned in common. Sometimes the harvested crops are distributed among the individual families for consumption, as among the Iroquois of North America. In some of these communities work on the fields is left entirely to the women. Periodical markets are often inter-tribal and inter-cultural; their purpose is the exchange of goods. The traders are women. This may also have contributed to the origin of a peculiar social organisation called mother right.

In these cultures the initiation of boys and girls on reaching
the age of puberty is common. The initiation of the boys takes place not for their admission into the tribe, as in the foodgathering stage of culture, but for their admission into associations and secret societies. The initiation usually culminates in circumcision, but tattooing, scarification, teeth filing and other ceremonies take place. Among the Mois of Indo-China, for instance, the boys are circumcised and their teeth filed. During their initiation they live in specially reserved dwellings. The initiation ceremonies of the girls are often connected with their first menstruation. Various taboos have to be observed by them. Thus among the Kais of New Guinea and on the Loango Coast in West Africa the menstruating girls are fully covered; among the Kais they must also walk on coconut shells; in Yap Island they must sit on them; in the Solomon Islands they must sit on wood, or sleep on heaps of leaves (Kai) so as not to come in contact with the ground. The Suahelis of Africa, the Yap Islanders, the inhabitants of the New Hebrides and of the Marshall Islands have special puberty huts for their girls during their first menstruation. This is so also in South India. The Kiwai Papuans perform elaborate purification ceremonies with tattooing and scarification. In Africa (Suahelis, Kondes in East Africa, Kroboos on the Gold Coast, in Liberia, on the Loango Coast in West Africa, in Mechuanaland, on the Wanyamwesi) old women give these girls instruction in their marital duties during the initiation. The Basutos give also cosmological and moral instructions.

For various reasons, of an economic and social nature, certain agrarian cultures developed a peculiar form of social organisation which is called matriarchy or mother-right. Matriarchal societies are widely distributed all over the world, but it seems that they are only found with tribes connected with agriculture. Where in rare cases mere foodgatherers or animal breeders have adopted the matriarchal system, borrowing can be proved.

The distribution of mother-right is world-wide, though sporadic. In Asia it is found in India, in two centres, one being Malabar (among the Nayar, and other tribes and castes, the Moplahs, some tribes and castes in Kanara, as for instance the Navayats), the other in north-eastern India, among the Khasis, Garos and Syntengs. Mother-right is also found in Indo-China, in China and Indonesia (in Sumatra among the Minangkabaus and Negri Sembilans). In Africa we have four centres of mother-right: one is the region extending from the lower Congo to the lower Sambesi, with former extensive
states, and some Bantus; another centre is the Gold Coast in West Africa (the Ashantis in Upper Guinea); a third centre is the Sudan, but there mother-right is restricted to the families of the chiefs. A fourth centre is North Africa, sporadically (due to Muslim influence) from Kordofan and North Abyssinia (Barea-Kunamas) to Benja; also the Berbers and Tuaregs are matriarchal tribes though the latter are animal breeders and nomads. In North America, in the East, we have the Iroquois, in the South-West the Pueblo Indians (Hopis, Tewas); in Middle America matriarchal tribes are found in Mexico, like the Chibchas (in the leading families only), the Tarascos, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, Mixes and Zoques. South America has matriarchal tribes in Venezuela (Yruros) and in Brazil (Aruaks, Kechuas, Aymaras, the Gez tribes in eastern Brazil and the Bororos in Central Brazil). Micronesia has matriarchal tribes on Malau and on the Central Carolines. In ancient Europe matriarchal communities were found in Greece and around the Mediterranean Sea.

As the actual transition of a society into matriarchy has nowhere been observed in modern time, the reasons for the origin of this peculiar social organisation can only be surmised. According to W. Schmidt it was woman who invented agriculture. This gave her an economic and social superiority over the male which resulted in mother-right. This deduction is however doubtful. One reason for the origin of mother-right may be the long absence of the men from home, during wars, on hunting expeditions, or on sea-faring voyages, which gave the women the opportunity to assume economic and social control at home. Among the former 'Criminal Tribes' of India it was the custom for a woman to take over the leadership of the group when the men were taken to jail by the police. In fact, the women have a high social status in these castes though we cannot yet speak of 'mother-right.' But another reason might be that the men lost economic and social predominance in some communities when they could, no longer, provide the livelihood through hunting, but refused to change to cultivation which they considered women's work. The women as the main providers thus assumed the lead in such communities.

In a matriarchal family all the legal powers relating to the ordering and governing of the family—power over the house, over marriage, over property and inheritance—are vested in women rather than in men. The actual exercise of these powers is, however, often handed over to male deputies, usually the brother of the
leading woman. Thus the male element reasserts itself.

A man, in consequence, inherits his name, his land and his position from his mother's brother, through his mother. Some matriarchal societies allow women actually to own house and land and to pass them from mother to daughter. Husband-fathers have little authority in such communities though they may live under their mother-in-law's roof. The Hopi and Tewa Pueblo Indians in New Mexico, for instance, consider the women as important members of the family. They own the land and the houses and dispense the food. All important decisions are taken by the women. The men's prerogative is the performance of the religious rites. They also exercise disciplinary powers and teach the children how to make a living, but otherwise they have little authority in the home. Residence and family allegiance is strictly to the mother. While a husband must reside at the home of his wife, he considers his own mother's house his real home and pays frequent visits to his mother.

In matriarchal societies we have matrilineal exogamous clans. Sometimes these clans are totemistic, as among the agrarian Bantu tribes. Marriages are usually arranged by the women. Service marriage becomes even more common and uxorial local marriage is now the rule. In some tribes the husband might not even live with his wife, but only visit her at conventional times. So did the ancient Arabs, and the Minangkabaus of Sumatra, the Moplahs and Nayar of Malabar and the Syntengs of Meghalaya still do so. This system is called visit-marriage. The bride-price is now an indispensable institution, though it may be considered formally as a gift (as among the agrarian Bantu). The preferential marriage form is between cross-cousins; this is the custom in Madagascar, South India, among the Dayaks of Borneo, and others.

Marriage is still practically monogamous, as polygyny does not work well in a matriarchal society, except among the nobles and wealthy classes of Madagascar, of South-East Africa, South India, etc. But a matriarchal social organisation seems to favour polyandry, though this marriage system is also found in patriarchal societies, as for instance among the Khasas of the cis-Himalayan hills. Polyandry is frequent among tribes where visit-marriage is the established custom.

Pre-marital and even extra-marital sex relations are common though usually subject to certain regulations. Where rules are no longer strictly enforced, this freedom may easily degenerate into
promiscuity, as among the Todas, and other South Indian tribes and low castes. In matrilocal communities a man is scarcely able to punish his wife for adultery. Divorce is easy and frequent. It is now often the woman who divorces her husband, though divorce is as easy for him. He may simply disappear or cease visiting.

In extreme mother-right cultures the father has scarcely any authority over his wife and children. It is the mother, or her brother, who dominates the family.

Inheritance is in the female line and property rights are vested in the mother or wife. Often it is the youngest daughter who inherits all the property of the family.

Initiation ceremonies are performed for the girls at their first menstruation or soon afterwards, while generally no initiation is held for the boys, except among the agrarian Bantu tribes of Africa. But these boys may be initiated into secret societies. Menstrual blood is much feared; therefore menstruating women are considered unclean and are strictly segregated during their monthly periods. Also the hymenal blood is often feared, wherefore some tribes have introduced the custom of defloration of the bride before the marriage is consummated. Defloration is either artificial, or done by the father-in-law, by a stranger, or in the temple. For the same reason women in child-birth are also treated as unclean and their touch must be avoided. Widows often fetch a higher bride-price.

C. The Nomadic Animal Breeders

The races which concentrated on the rearing and breeding of herds developed a peculiar family form of their own; at least it is so in Asia, while the cattle-breeding tribes of Africa follow more closely the family pattern of their hunting or cultivating ancestors. Among the Asiatic animal-breeding tribes the extended joint family system is typical; it developed from the natural family of the food-gatherers into the extended patriarchal family, into a closely knit community consisting of parents, sons, their wives and children, and other dependents. The daughters remain in the family only until marriage. Only the Berbers and Tuaregs of North Africa are an exception; they have mother-right, which they probably adopted from older occupants of their present habitats.

Members of the joint-family live in a common household; they have no private property except such as conceded by the patriarch or by tribal custom. Cooperation is expected from all members in
the tending of the herds, for mutual protection and for occasional raids. This cooperation often ceases when the patriarch dies, and the joint family may then break up.

The patrilineal family is exogamous, i.e., sons obtain their wives from outside families. It is less a local exogamy, for the living area is not well defined and not always exclusive. It is rather a blood-kindred exogamy. For this reason the classificatory system never gained a foothold in these societies.¹

The pastoral nomads—except the Berbers and Tuaregs—reckon descent in the paternal line only, but in all other respects their family system is similar to that of the foodgathers from which their own pattern has been evolved.

In advanced patriarchal societies marriage is generally arranged by the patriarch and the marriage partners are not given any freedom of choice. This freedom is particularly denied to the bride. This is very markedly so among the Bedouins of Petraea. The Bedouins of Moab and Sinai, however, admit some freedom of choice. This restriction of freedom in the choice of marriage partners is somewhat counter-balanced by another legal form of marriage, namely, by bride-capture, usually after a previous arrangement. This form of marriage is common among the Irtish Ostyaks, the Turco-Tatars, and it was popular among the ancient Teutons and the Semites.

The bride has to be purchased, and the bride-price varies according to the wealth of a community. Thus the Yakuts pay 16 reindeer for a bride, the Tungus one to twenty, the Samoyeds 10 to 150 reindeer. The Kirghiz pay 40 to 120 sheep, and in addition 7 to 57 heads of cattle; wealthy people pay 500 to 1000 sheep, and in addition give cattle, gifts and slaves. The Kazakhs also demand a bride-price. The Arabs of Petraea pay 5 to 20 camels for a bride, while the Hamitic Gallas of East Africa give 10 to 150 milch cows, 10 to 15 horses and 200 to 500 sheep.

The bride's father has to pay a dowry, but it is considerably less than the bride-price. Among the Tungus it is a quarter of the bride-price, among the Yakuts it is half of it. The dowry is received by the head of the groom’s joint family.

Though even among some of the more advanced animal breeders,

¹We speak of a ‘classificatory kinship’ system when common terms of address are used both for lineal relatives and certain categories of collateral relatives. Thus, persons may address their uncles by the term of ‘father’ or aunts by the term of ‘mother’, etc.
but certainly among the primitive pastoralists, monogamy is the rule, it is nowhere compulsory. Monogamy is common among the Tungus, Samoyeds, Ostyaks, Mongols, Tatars, Kalmucks, Mordvins, Kirghiz, and was so among the Indo-Europeans. It is also predominant among certain Hamitic pastoralists, like the Beni-Amers, Takues, Gallas, but not the Masais. The Tuaregs are also monogamous; so were the ancient Egyptians (except their rulers). Polygyny, however, was prevalent among the ancient Assyro-Babylonians, the Hebrews and other Semitic tribes. It is a firmly established institution among the Kazakhs, and especially among the pastoral tribes of East Africa, especially the Bantu tribes and also the Masais; the more wives a man has, the greater is his social prestige.

While among primitive pastoralists a woman may divorce her husband, in the advanced stage of pastoralism divorce is permitted only to men. The Masais alone do not divorce their wives.

The primitive pastoralists regard pre-marital sex relations with equal indulgence as the foodgatherers. But in advanced pastoralism we encounter a double morality: while men may have such sex relations, they are denied to women. The reason for this double standard is to preserve the purity of the race. The virginity of the bride is strongly insisted upon; the bride's brother is installed as her guardian. So it was among the Vedic Aryans, the ancient Germans and Slavs; the custom still survives among the Altai tribes, the Semites, Hamites, the Bedouins of Petraea, the Arabs of Moab, the Western Tuaregs, the Mareas, Beni Amers, Bogos of West Africa, the Gallas and Shilluks. The latter allowed imperfect sex relations without violation of the hymen.

The ancient Chinese even had virginity tests, and so did the Vedic Aryans and the White Russians. Such tests are still in vogue among the Kirghiz, Arabs, Gallas and several tribes in West Sudan. The Masais, however, are an exception, as extreme sexual freedom is the custom among men and women. But they, too, enforce the marriage of a girl who becomes pregnant.

The primitive pastoralists in Mongolia do not regard extramarital sex relations as a crime, but the advanced animal breeders generally punish adulterers with death.

In primitive pastoralism, which conforms closely to the food-gathering stage of culture out of which it evolved, the joint family tends to remain small. But in advanced pastoralism it may grow to a large group especially if the family's head has many wives and con-
sequently many sons. In these communities, the extended joint family is also the basic economic unit. It is a union of producers as well as of consumers. Pastoralism is mainly a man’s affair, for tending the herds is no woman’s work; even milking is done by men. Since the main source of the food supply is from the herds, the collection of vegetable food by the women is of minor importance. Thus at least in advanced pastoralism the social position of the women is inferior. The sphere of female influence is limited to the house. It is the task of the women to prepare and to cook the food, and to do all the other household chores. Where the number of persons in a family is considerable, household work is no easy task for the women. The women also erect and dismantle the tents. The work of the men is intermittent and periodical; they seek pastures, lead the herds there and protect them, take care of their grazing, breeding, tend and milk the animals. The wealthier cattle breeders have slaves or servants to do the work. Thus much time is left for leisure which is often used for raids and warfare.

In primitive pastoralism the status of women is scarcely inferior to that of men. Among the Altai tribes, but also among the East African Somalis, Danakils and Gallas, women enjoy a good social position. Among the Arabs the woman rules the house or tent. But in advanced pastoral societies the woman’s position is inferior and she is relegated to the house. It is so, for instance, among the Kazakhs. In a polygynous family the first wife has a preferential status. So it is also among the Hamites and Bantus of East Africa.

In all advanced animal breeding societies children, especially sons, are welcome. But they always remain under the authority of the patriarch, even after reaching maturity and marriage. They eat and work with the family. This patriarchal family system prevailed among the Vedic Indians, the old Armenians, Slavs, and Albanians; it was less pronounced among the Romans, Greeks and Germans. It is still the rule among the Desert Arabs, and the Hamitic and Hamitoid tribes of eastern Africa. The authority of the head of the family extended at least in the past even over the life or death of the newborn children. This right was recognised and occasionally led to infanticide among the ancient Arabs, Romans, Greeks and the Teutonic tribes.

Primogeniture is the universal rule among these pastoralists. Thus among the Hamitic Gallas the first-born son inherits two-thirds of the family property while the other sons share the rest among them-
selves. A preferential treatment of the first-born son is also found among the polygynous Arabs. It was the rule also among the Semites.

Children in this stage of culture receive no formal education, nor are any initiation ceremonies performed.

We recognise thus in the pastoral societies a family system in which the natural family of the foodgatherers has developed into an extended joint family with a patriarch as undisputed and authoritarian head. This family system, on the other hand, has retained many of the traits prevalent in the family system of the foodgatherers.
CHAPTER IX

Kinship Institutions

The basis and core of all elementary human societies is the natural family, consisting of husband and wife, and their children. This natural family grows into a wider social group, which is still based on reproduction, the kinship group. It includes the blood relatives of the spouses (affinal kinship), and also the generations above and below, parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren (consanguineous kinship).

Kinship can be biological, if it is based on actual blood relationship, or social, if based on adoption or convention (in polyandry, for instance).

According to the degree of kinship we distinguish between primary and secondary kin. The primary kin (consanguineous) extends to a person's parents and children, while any kin—consanguineous or affinal—related to a person through primary kin to him, a person's father's brother, for instance, or his step-mother, etc. is secondary kin. Descent is reckoned either unilaterally or bilaterally. In bilateral descent, kinship is recognised with both the parents' families (in many food-gathering communities), while in unilateral grouping, one of the two lines of descent is ignored. Consequently, descent is reckoned either only in the male line (the descendants of a common male ancestor are called agnates or patrilineal kin), or it is reckoned only in the female line (the descendants of a common ancestress are called uterine kin or matrilineal kin). The Moplahs of South India, for instance, have a bilateral kinship; the family property is inherited in the female line, while self-acquired property is inherited in the male line.

But the terminology varies in different countries and also with different authors. The term 'kin' was adopted by Andrew Lang and J. G. Frazer. R. H. Lowie uses the terms 'sib', 'clan' and 'gens.' According to his terminology, a 'sib' is a unilateral kinship group which traces descent through one parent only, either father or mother, never both. 'Clan' is a mother-sib, the child adopting the
mother's sib name, while 'gens' is a father-sib, the child taking the
father's sib name. However, the term 'clan' is now generally accept-
ed to denote groups with either patrilineal or matrilineal descent. It
is doubtful whether Lowie's terminology will be universally accepted.

The term 'tribe' usually refers to a relatively small group of fami-
lies and clans, running at the most into a few thousands, who are
at a low level of material culture, and owe allegiance to one chief.
In superior cultures, tribes may grow into very large communities;
thus the Yorubas of West Africa number five millions in Nigeria
alone and occupy a territory almost as large as Britain. Over this
area there rules not one chief, but many.

In all primitive societies certain kinship usages have been establi-
shed which are more or less rigorously enforced. One set of rules
imposes certain restraints on social relations between members of a
kinship group. Such rules of avoidance govern the behaviour of par-
ents and their sons—and daughter-in-law. They are in force among
the Philippine Negritos, the Winnepagos and Dakotas of North
America, the tribes of Central India, the Battas of Sumatra, the
Dayaks of Borneo, the Man Cocs and Man Pa Thongs in Indo-China
and others. The Bovandiks of South Australia, for instance, have a
special language for conversation between a man and his wife's
mother or a woman and her husband's father. Among the Victorian
tribes of Australia it was the custom for a mother-in-law to stay at
least fifty yards away from her son-in-law. The Kurnai mother-in-law
had to cover her head with a possum rug when she talked with her
son-in-law. In Uganda a son-in-law may not look at his mother-in-
law and not even speak to her, except through a partition or care-
fully locked door. These rules exist also among the Mapuches in
Araucania (South America) where a man may not speak with his
mother-in-law, except with her back turned to him, or with a fence
intervening between them.

Rules of this kind appear necessary between kin relatives who
cannot marry each other. M. Kovalevsky writes about life in the
large joint families in old Russia: "In the Russian patriarchal com-
munities the head of the house strongly abused his position with the
younger women, particularly with his daughter-in-law. Often he
converted them into a harem, as eloquently expressed in many
Russian folk songs."\(^1\) No doubt, similar abuses were common in

\(^1\)M. Kovalevsky, 1890, 60.
other societies as well.

On the other hand, such restraints are absent and even replaced by a certain degree of intimacy between relatives who stand in a potential sex relationship. This is commonly called a ‘joking relationship.’ It is the reverse of avoidance relationship. ‘Joking’ may amount to an exchange of abuse and banter, obscene or vulgar references to sex, damage to each other’s property, ridicule, etc. It exists between social equals and is, therefore, mutual. Such ‘joking relationship’ often exists between a man and his wife’s younger sister, or a woman and her husband’s younger brother, between grandparents and grandchildren.

Sexual relationship is often hidden in address: it may be for reasons of modesty. Thus a man avoids calling his wife or his in-laws by their real names; he addresses his wife as the mother of his son or daughter, while a woman addresses her husband, if at all, as the father of her child. This custom is called teknonymy. In some tribes a person has to make up a new name for his in-laws, when speaking of them (Cape York Australian aborigines, inhabitants of Prince of Wales Island). Children may call their father ‘uncle’, and their mother ‘aunt’. This custom of avoiding the proper terms of relationship is wide-spread.

Special powers and rights are usually conceded to either the paternal or maternal uncles, a feature which is known by the name of ‘avunculate’. Thus among the matrilineal Ashantis of Ghana (West Africa), the maternal uncle has all the rights of a father in a paternal society elsewhere. Other tribes in the neighbourhood, north of the Ashantis, are now patrilineal, but the maternal uncle is still influential. He pays the bride-price, and exacts work from nephews and nieces. In certain tribes, especially in such with a matrilineal social organisation, newly married couples often have to stay not with the parents of either the bride or the bridegroom, but with an uncle. If such a privileged position is granted to a father’s sister, we speak of ‘amitate.’

A very peculiar custom is found in certain primitive communities but sporadically all over the world, when a woman becomes pregnant or delivers a child. Her husband has to observe certain taboos during her pregnancy and often also to refrain from active life for some time after his wife’s delivery. He goes on sick diet, stays in bed or is at least confined to the house, and often behaves as if he had given birth to the baby! B. Malinowski found the explanation
for this custom in the father's desire to express his paternal affection; Lord Raglan called it an irrational belief; E. Ross calls it imitative magic; but some modern psychologists maintain that the couvade, as this custom is called, expresses the conviction that a part of the father's life-substance is transferred to the new-born child.

The couvade was common in ancient Europe among the Iberians, Basques and Corsicans. It is still found in Japan among the Ainus, in South China among the Miaotses, in Indo-China among the Miris, among the Yerukulas, Uralis, Malapantarams, Todas and other tribes of South India, and among the Khasis of north-eastern India (Meghalaya). Primitive tribes in Malaya, the Philippines, in Borneo, Nias, Buru, the Arapesh in New Guinea, and the Caribs of the West Indies, the Arowaks, etc. also practise the couvade.

In the foodgathering stage of culture, the kinship system is based on the natural individual family. Usually several such families united by ties of kinship form a local group. This local group owns a well-defined area of land and all that grows on it. They have its usufruct, and live as hunters and collectors of vegetable food within its limits. The members of a local group associate and live, hunt and gather in a group. They have obligations towards each other, for protection, support in sickness and old age; they also have social obligations.

The local group is exogamous, since it consists generally of kinsmen. The sole exception are the South-East Australians.

While the local group system is general among the primitive foodgathering tribes, a few significant exceptions to this rule should be mentioned. Thus the Eskimos have no room for a joint family; each individual family fends for itself. Like the Eskimos, the Shoshones of North-West America, who live in a desert area, live also in single families. The Algonkins, on the other hand, while they still possess family hunting grounds, have already an initial form of totemism. Among the Californian foodgatherers, the local groups are almost sedentary. They have meeting houses which are centres of social life. Most African Pygmies have totems with taboos and a clan system in which local exogamy has no place. These tribes have probably advanced in their social organisation beyond the stage of mere local groups under the influence of their Negro neighbours. The South-East Australians have a peculiar kinship system; they have sex totemism; they are divided into two exogamous groups (a dual system), and they have a strong belief in an ancestral pair.
Social life, however, is not entirely restricted to the local group wherever it exists. One local group stands in a certain relation to other local groups of the same tribe for the purpose of marriage, periodic social gatherings (feasts, dances, dinners, etc.) and the performance of the initiation ceremonies where such ceremonies are held.

These kinship usages of the most primitive tribes, the food-gatherers, refute the theories of J.J. Rousseau, who stated that prim-eval man was utterly independent and carefree; of J. Locke, who maintained that he was completely free but desirous of civil power; and of T. Hobbes, who thought primeval man was wholly anti-social, and lived in continuous conflict with his fellow-men. Such hypothetical statements, which are, however, still repeated with tiresome regularity, should be finally discarded as unscientific.

It must have been in primitive hunting cultures that the family and kinship system of the mere foodgathers developed into the clan system. The clan system is in most—but by far not in all—hunting cultures intimately connected with totemism. Earliest totemism is individual totemism. The belief in a totem derives probably from the belief in a bush or forest spirit (mountain spirit) who sends the game to the hunter.

Tribes with individual totemism believe that every human being has a genius or spiritual double associated with him either from the moment of his conception (tribes in Africa believe so), inherited from the father (that is believed by other African tribes), or acquired through special ceremonies. The Red Indians of North America widely believe that a totem spirit is acquired through severe penance, fasting and meditation of the individual. At such times, it is believed, the power of the totem makes itself felt and reveals itself to the individual aspirant as an animal, plant or any other inanimate object. This particular animal, plant or object is then adopted as the totem. A person’s abilities, faults, good or bad fortune are mysteriously linked to this totem. It is often believed that a person will die if his double is injured or killed.

After death, a person’s vital power returns to the totem: the whole body, or a part of it (the blood) turns into the totem and leaves the grave. Sometimes it can be seen escaping from the grave.

This mysterious life power is equally present in the totem and in every individual who belongs to the same totem. In a later stage the totem is inherited. Then a whole group shares the totem. It is in a
larger degree in the elders and especially in the head (chief) of the social group.

The totem has its important functions as the protector, helper (in the hunt) and companion of the client, but also as the bringer of misfortune.

Certain rules and taboos have to be observed in connection with the totem: the totem animal may not be killed or eaten; often a clan member is not even permitted to touch it. When found dead, it is buried with funeral ceremonies and mourning. Only on rare occasions and by a few tribes is the totem animal killed and eaten in sacrifice. Offences against the taboo rules are severely punished by the totem spirit who causes serious illness or death.

In tribes with individual totemism the basic unit of the nuclear family is, as a rule, retained from the food-gathering stage of culture. Thus the Montagnais of North Canada live in bands consisting of families either akin or on friendly terms. All these families group themselves about a chief, whose authority is accepted by all. He is not always the most intelligent of the group; but, what is important, he is the best hunter.

In tribes in which the totem of the individual is inherited by his sons and thus becomes the totem of a whole group of kinsmen—of a clan, a new principle comes into play. This stronger solidarity favours living and hunting in a larger social group. The final stage of this social evolution is the formation of a clan. With the emphasis on hunting, the male element becomes dominant and thus destroys the equality of the sexes found among the food-gatherers. The clan of the totemistic hunters is unilateral and patrilineal.

Clan totemism is the practice of a social group, without regard to sex or age, of entertaining a mysterious relationship as a group to a class of animals, plants or other material objects (W. Schmidt).

The idea is that all members of the group are either descended from the totem animal or plant, or that their first ancestors owe it some substantial favour. Thus North American Indian members of the bear clan maintain that they descended from a bear and a woman, and members of the dog clan believe that a dog and a woman were their ancestors. The Kamars in Central India believe that the members of their goat clan descended from a he-goat and a girl.

The Gonds of Central India, on the other hand, have a goat clan whose members regard the goat as their totem because a goat which
had been stolen by their ancestors for sacrifice turned into a pig when the theft was discovered and thus saved the thieves from punishment. The Korkus of Central India have tree totems; in a battle their ancestors hid under various trees to save themselves from their enemies. The Balahis of Central India have snake and owl totems; these animals saved and protected the ancestors of these clans when by accident they had been left behind in the field as helpless babies.

Clans may split when they become too large; a kinship group acquires a new totem, which becomes more important, usually through some striking event. It also happens that a clan splits into part totems; for instance, a tiger clan may split into sections which regard the head, tail, claws, teeth, etc., of the tiger as their totems. This gives rise to the concept of a phratry, group of brother clans.

Clans may also fuse, as when two clans adopt each other’s totem and taboos. The effect of this totem belief is a strong feeling of relationship between the members of the same group; they consider each other as kinsmen or clan fellows. Clan ties often tend to replace family ties. The men especially are drawn into the company of the other members of their clan so much that their family life suffers. The members of a clan are often keenly aware that they have duties and rights with regard to their fellow clansmen. These duties and rights are usually taken over by certain associations and age groups which are typical of totemistic cultures. They are directed and governed by the chiefs and elders whose authority is widely based on the belief that they are invested with a stronger totem force.

The functions of a totem clan are often quite extensive. But the most important of the functions is clan exogamy. It implies the prohibition of marriage inside the totem group. Clan exogamy supercedes the local exogamy; persons of the same village now may marry provided they are of different clans.

Clan totemism is wide-spread over the world; it is found in North and South America, in Africa, Australia and Melanesia. Individual totemism, on the other hand, is found mainly among the Red Indians of North America, in northern Asia and sporadically in India and Africa.

In India we find a centre of clan totemism in the South and another in Central India; the Central Indian tribes, however, seem to have adopted totemism as a secondary social system, because most of them have also the territorial group system (the Gonds, Baigas, Mudas, etc.).
Kinship is conceived in a different manner among the various agrarian cultures. In the primitive agrarian culture we notice that the loose joint family of the food-gatherers is often retained, nor is its bilateral character always discarded. Since members of one group now settle in more or less compact villages, the local group develops into a village community. Descendants of one ancestral village regard each other as relatives. There is village exogamy. A breach of the exogamy laws (incest) is regarded with horror and often severely punished. The Ashantis of West Africa had, in former times, both parties of such an offence killed. So do occasionally the primitive agrarian Korkus of Central India (they are totemists, but have plant totems). The same custom is observed among the tribes of northern Borneo. Incest is regarded as a national calamity and its dreaded consequences can only be averted through the death of the offending parties.

Frequently the common bond which unites persons hailing from the same ancestral village has a religious significance. The funeral ceremonies must be performed in their ancestral village. This custom is found in central and north-eastern central India, where the Bhils, Mundas, Gonds and Korkus perform such ceremonies and erect memorial pillars or posts of stone or wood in the ancestral village.

The reason for this close link with the ancestral village is that at the foundation of the village the first settlers were indeed kinsmen. Later this order got disturbed and members of the clan left the village and settled elsewhere. However, after death the spirits of the persons who had emigrated want to return, so the tribals believe, to their ancestral village and be set to rest there.

In actual life the solidarity of the permanent settlers in a village may grow so strong that even late settlers who do not belong to the original clan are finally accepted into the village community and allowed to take part in all village activities as full members. Thus finally the village community replaces the clan and takes over all clan functions.

The village community arranges, witnesses and supervises wedding and funeral feasts. It settles marriage disputes and declares a divorce. It discusses village affairs, settles quarrels and chastises offenders of the tribal law; it excommunicates, punishes and fines offenders. This is perhaps the origin of the panchayat system so famous in India.
Social organisation is often different, however, in tribes which have developed a matrilineal social structure. There the clan solidarity is generally stronger. A village is usually occupied by a single clan, with matrilineal descent, and a female clan head, generally the head of the eldest or highest family. The management of the clan need not always be exercised by a woman; often it is her brother who acts in her name. Thus the male element reasserts itself. Many of these tribes have totems, particularly plant and animal totems.

It is in these matriarchal cultures that we find the custom of 'visit marriage'. The kinship ties may be so strong that neither husband nor wife are prepared to separate from their kinship group. Consequently, a man does not live with his wife, but visits her only at times fixed by convention. This custom was found in the past among the Naga tribes of Manipur, among the Nayars of South India and is still in practice among the Syntengs of north-eastern India. It is also in vogue among tribes of central and eastern Africa, and in America among the Iroquois from whom some Algonkin tribes and the Assiniboins may have borrowed the custom. Visit marriage is also found among the Pueblo Indians (till the first child is born), among the Caribs of the West Indies, in Brazil (Bororos), in New Guinea, Borneo and Fiji. It was found in ancient Sparta. But animal breeders too, like the Yakuts, Kurils and Samoyeds of Siberia, practise it. It is likely, however, that they adopted this custom from matriarchal societies.

The custom of exchanging girls in marriage prevalent in food-gathering cultures develops in these agrarian societies into the firm institution of the preferential cross-cousin marriage. It is particularly common in central and southern India. In certain regions this institution develops into a dual division of the whole tribe or of a village. An endogamous tribal group is divided for the purpose of marriage into two exogamous parts (moieties) which in the course of time adopted often other distinctive features and peculiarities. If a dualistic community lives in a communal house, a partition may be erected between the two moieties; if they live in the same village, they are often separated by a river (like the Sakyas and Kolis on the river Rohana in northern India, the houses of the king and queen in Uganda, the tribes of Fiji). The dual system developed in certain regions into a three-class system and some tribes complicated it further till it ended in a ten-class system, class A marrying only into class B, class B into class C, and so on. In such a complicated
arrangement a boy finds it often difficult to get married at all, as he has little choice among the girls in the neighbourhood and even in the whole tribe.

Kinship is conceived in a different manner by the nomadic animal breeders of Asia. Here the smallest unit of the kinship group is the extended joint family, i.e., the adult sons with their wives and children living in a common household with their parents and subject to their father, the patriarch. But even within a joint-family the members of it are not of equal rank. The principle of primogeniture gives a higher social status to the eldest son and his family. This is so at least in advanced pastoral societies. Moreover, the children of concubines and slave girls are graded lower in rank than the offspring of legitimately wedded wives. Should a member of a lower social rank be ancestor to a new kinship group, all the members of that group and their descendants would be of inferior social rank. Only by increasing their wealth or by displaying extraordinary skill or bravery in warfare could they hope to rise in rank.

The extended joint-family which is really a kinship group, with dependents, is of course exogamous, and marriage within this group is strictly prohibited.

Usually several extended joint-families group themselves into a local group, the heads of these families being kin relatives. A number of such local groups then form a so-called lineage, and a group of lineages may form a clan, still tracing descent from a common ancestor. These clans may form a clan federation; but a society of that extent would be better called a political group, the ties of consanguinity being of necessity loose and distant. Moreover, such federations are generally unstable and likely to break apart, due to competition, jealousy, warfare and migration of the individual smaller units.

Instances of such an extensive and complicated kinship organisation are found among the Buriats, Kazakhs, the Khalkha Mongols and the Kalmuck tribes, but not among the Altai Turcs, the Telengets and Teleuts, who are still in a rather primitive stage of pastoralism.

In theory the fiction is often maintained that all members of a tribe, however numerous and extended over an area, descend from one common ancestor. The supposition is that all fellow tribesmen are related at least by agnatic consanguinity.

In practically all these tribes descent is patrilineal.

These various forms of kinship unions are strengthened by com-
munal feasts and sacrifices. The rites are performed by kinship groups of various sizes, from the local group to the whole clan, depending on the importance of the feast and its occasion. These kinship unions are further strengthened by the belief in the existence of special guardian spirits watching over them. The priests functioning in these rites are usually not professionals (shamans), but the heads of the celebrating groups.

On marriage, a woman enters the clan of her husband, but she is not always fully adopted into the clan. Thus the Buriats, for instance, do not allow women to take part in their husband's sacrifices. But, on the other hand, they are also barred, once they are married, from attending the clan sacrifices of their natal kin.

We thus see that in the Asiatic animal breeding tribes no new principle has been introduced for a larger social grouping, as in the totemistic and agrarian societies. Still, the animal breeding tribes have formed societies larger than the extended joint family, based on the kinship system. Hence the development of their social structure has not disturbed the basic unit, the family, as in the totemistic and agrarian cultures. The strong solidarity of the larger kinship groups in the animal breeding cultures has perhaps in the past been responsible for the greater force and irresistible drive with which these tribes engaged in conquest and built up great empires.

Because the African cattle breeders evolved probably from advanced hunting cultures or from agrarian communities, their kinship organisation manifests a somewhat different development. Many have clans, even totemistic patrilineal clans, like the Shilluks, while other tribes, like the Berbers and Tuaregs, are organised in matrilineal clans. This proves once more that social structures have more resistance against cultural change than elements of material culture. These tribes changed their economy completely and adopted that of animal breeders, but retained their original social structure though it does not fit well into the nomadic life of animal breeders.
CHAPTER X

Family and Kinship Systems in India

The family and kinship systems in India follow the pattern outlined in the preceding chapter. They naturally differ at various cultural levels. For a clearer exposition of the whole matter we divide the Indian population into that of the aboriginal cultures, of matriarchal India and Hindu India. The aboriginal cultures we divide again into those of South India and of Central India.

1. AMONG THE ABORIGINES OF SOUTH INDIA

A. Marriage and Family

No uniform family pattern can be discovered among the primitive tribes of southern India, for most of these tribes have, though themselves food-gatherers or primitive cultivators, been strongly influenced by their neighbours who are more advanced in culture. Thus the Kadar, Paliyans, Mala Pulayas, and Hill-Pantarams are patrilineal, while many other tribes are fully or at least partly matrilineal. The Vishavans, for instance, make the sister’s son the heir, never a woman; among the Cheenganni Vedans the sons inherit two-thirds of the property; among the Cheru Vedans the sons inherit half, the sister’s sons the other half of the property. The same is true of the Kanikar and Ulladans, while the Muduvans and Thanta Pulayans make the sister’s sons heirs of all the property. This shows that in certain tribes a compromise between the patrilineal and the matrilineal systems was reached.

In the manner of acquiring mates the South Indian tribes follow various methods; among some tribes the marriage is arranged by the parents or other relatives; so it is among the Kadar, Kanikar, Mala-Pantarams, Ulladans, Vishavans, Uralis and Thanta Pulayans. Probationary marriage or marriage by trial is not found among these tribes. But marriage by capture is common among the Mannans and Bada-gas, and frequent among the Muduvans. Marriage by elopement is common among the Kadar, Mannans, Uralis and Sholagas. In the
latter tribe, the eloped couples return usually after three days, when they are considered as married. Marriage by intrusion is found among the Chenchus. It is sufficient if a man keeps a girl who has entered his hut for a single day to consider them a pair. The most common form of marriage among these tribes is, however, marriage by exchange. The Uralis, for instance, practise the exchange of sisters; a boy who cannot give a sister in exchange has little chance of finding a wife, while on the other hand a boy with several sisters can marry as many wives as he has sisters. Such an exchange of sisters is common also among the Vishavans, Mala-Vedans and Mala-Pantarams. Only a few tribes demand a bride-price; so do the Karavali Pulayas, while the Kurumba Pulayas demand no bride-price. The Mala-Kuruvans are satisfied with a few rupees. The Kadar demand a dowry, not so again the Palyans.

Pre-marital sex relations are generally permitted, or at least tolerated, by almost all the tribes and are in fact quite frequent. But they usually end with the pregnancy of the girl. It is so among the Vishavans; for instance, among whom pre-marital chastity is rare. An exception are, however, the Muduvans, who strictly forbid pre-marital sex relations and impose a severe punishment on offenders of this law. They have a bachelor hall for the unmarried boys and a sleeping house for the girls where they are kept under supervision. The Uralis merely fine a boy when they discover him with a girl and make him marry her.

No uniformity exists with regard to the numerical pattern of marriage; some tribes, like the Kadar and Nayadis, practise compulsory monogamy, at least, as long as a marriage lasts. Other tribes permit polygyny, or polyandry, or both. Polygynous marriages are permitted by the Thanta Pulayas for economic reasons; they are also permitted by the Muduvans, among whom the first wife is considered superior. Polygyny is in practice among the Mala Kuruvans and Mala Pulayas, and prevalent among the Ulladans and Mala Vedans. On the other hand, the Muduvans of the Cardamon Hills are purely monogamous, while the Kanikar allow at least some exceptions; if a man has more than one wife, the second wife is usually the sister of the first one. As said before, an Urali boy may marry as many wives as he has sisters for exchange. The Mala Arayans, Palyans and Mannans permit polygyny if the first wife proves sterile; the Palyans permit in such a case marriage with a sister of the first wife.

Polyandry is permitted among the Muduvans of the plateau, but
they forbid fraternal polyandry. Among the Ulladans fraternal polyandry is rare, though not forbidden; in its other form polyandry is common. This degenerates into a veritable promiscuity among the Vishavans and Mala Pulayas. Polyandry is rare among the Uralis and Mannans. The Palyans practise fraternal polyandry, the younger brother sharing the wife of the elder one. The Mala Arayans practise fraternal polyandry, but rarely.

In choosing their mates many tribes have a preference for their cross-cousins; this is the established rule among the Mala-Pantarams (marriage between the children of a brother and sister), Nayadis and Muduvans. It is also found among the Veddas of Sri Lanka (Ceylon). Cross-cousin marriage is preferred among the Ulladans (with the daughter of a boy’s maternal uncle), the Mala Asiyar who allow also marriages with the daughters of a father’s sister, the Mala Vedans, Mala Pulayas, Palyans, Mannans and Kadar.

Some of these tribes also practise the levirate; so do the Veddas, Ulladans, Kanikar, Mannans, and Mala Pulayas. Among the latter tribe, the elder brother may even marry the widow of his younger brother, while a Palyan may marry the widow of his elder or younger brother. The levirate is not permitted among the Muduvans and Mala Vedans.

The sororate is common among the Kanikar; in a polygynous marriage the second wife is usually the sister of the first one. It is also practised among the Mala Kuruvans, the Mala Pulayas and Uralis. Among the Palyans a man who wants to take a second wife can only marry the sister of his first wife. The Mala Vedans, on the other hand, prohibit the sororate.

All these tribes permit divorce for husband and wife; the Nayadis permit divorce only when the wife has committed adultery.

B. Kinship Groups

Most of the South Indian tribes practise tribal endogamy. An exception is made by the Kadar who allow their women to have sex relations with the estate labourers coming from the plains. But it ultimately amounts to prostitution! It is not marriage. But in general tribes of a lower social status allow marriages of their women with men of a higher caste or tribe.

Among these tribes a kind of territorial endogamy is also quite common; only groups within a certain area intermarry. Among the Mala Pulayas, for instance, we find three endogamous local groups.
The laws of exogamy are not uniform; only kinship exogamy is
general among most tribes, though the principles which constitute
a kinship group may vary.

Some tribes have a peculiar form of clan exogamy. Thus the Mala-
Pantarams have two groups of three or four families each in one
locality; these groups are exogamous though they bear no special
names. The Kanikar have two clans in one locality, four in another;
inter-marriage is permitted between two only; the two socially higher
clans intermarry among themselves, and so do the two inferior clans.
But a member of a higher clan cannot marry a member of the infe-
rior clan. The Mala Vedans also have four clans, two superior and
two inferior similar to the Kanikar. The Veddas of Sri Lanka have
matrineal clan exogamy.

2. AMONG THE ABORIGINES OF CENTRAL INDIA

A. Family and Marriage

Various are the ways of acquiring mates among the aboriginal
tribes of Central India. Most common is the arrangement of a
marriage by the parents of the marrying parties. Marriage by capture
is now rare but it must have been frequent in the past. The Savaras
still practise this form of marriage, and so do the Kois. The Baigas,
Gonds and Khonds perform a mock-fight during the wedding cere-
monies. Marriage by trial was an established form among the Bhils;
in recognition of courage or bravery a Bhil could select his wife
without paying a bride-price for her. Among the Bondos and
Gadabas a girl tested her suitor by burning him with a faggot.

But marriage by purchase is still the most common form. Another
popular way of acquiring a mate is by service. The bridegroom has
to serve his prospective parents-in-law for a certain number of years.
The wedding takes place when the service is over; the wedding ex-
enses are paid by the bride’s father. Marriage by exchange—two
families exchanging daughters—is also frequent. Marriage by mutual
consent and subsequent elopement is the usual form of marriage
among the Bhilalas and Gadabas, while marriage by intrusion—a
girl entering the house of her lover and disclosing her intention of
living with him—is also practised though not frequently.

In the choice of mates the preference for cross-cousins is very
marked among the Gonds and Baigas. The levirate, a man marrying
the widow of his deceased elder brother, and the sororate, a man
marrying his wife's younger sisters, are practised by a few tribes only in Central India.

Pre-marital sex relations are openly tolerated by the tribes which possess youth dormitories; but other tribes frown upon such liberty though they also may be very lenient in punishing such relations. Among all these tribes pre-marital sex relations end with the pregnancy of the girl who in such a case is quickly married off, not always to her lover.

Though most of the tribal marriages in Central India are monogamous, polygyny is prohibited by no tribe. On the contrary, it is regarded as a sign of wealth and increases a man's social prestige. Polyandry is found only among the tribes living on the fringes of Central India, on the southern slopes of the Himalayas and in northeastern India (former Assam). It is usually in the form of fraternal polyandry. Among the Central Indian tribes sex relations of a woman with her husband's younger brothers are not punished, though they are not publicly permitted.

No tribe in Central India permits or even tolerates extra-marital sex relations, except those of a woman with her husband's younger brothers.

Divorce is permitted by all tribes for the husband; the wife may, however, force a divorce on her husband by eloping with another man. A compensation must be paid by her new husband, while no compensation is granted to the husband who divorces his wife. Widow marriage is generally permitted, except in Hinduised tribes aspiring to a higher rank in the caste hierarchy.

The family system is with few exceptions patriarchal and patrilineal. Most families live in joint groups, that is, the married sons stay together with their father in a common household.

No marriage is stable without children. A woman without children must expect a divorce or a co-wife. Children are generally well treated though they receive little formal education. No initiation ceremonies are performed by any tribe. Adoption is widely practised by childless couples.

B. Kinship Organisation

Tribal endogamy is the rule among almost all tribes; exceptions in the past were the Gonds and Baigas, and the Ahirs. But even now tribes of an inferior social status accept partners from the superior tribes and Hindu castes. A kind of territorial endogamy also exists;
daughters are rarely given in marriage to men living at a great
distance.

Many tribes are split into endogamous groups and sections which
do not intermarry. The reason for this prohibition is generally the
varying degree of Hinduisation (or Sanskritisation). The more
Hinduised tribal sections consider themselves superior and refuse
intermarriage with the less Hinduised lower sections. Such grades
exist among the Gonds (Rajgonds and ordinary Gonds), Bhils (Ujale
and Male Bhils), Bhilalas (Bara Bhilalas and Barelas), Korkus
(Muasi and Patharia Korkus), and Mudas, etc.

Most tribes practise kinship exogamy in various degrees of rela-
tionship. The more Hinduised a tribe is, the larger is his exogamous
kinship group. Besides clan and kinship exogamy, a kind of village
or territorial exogamy is widespread, but it is not always strictly
enforced.

3. AMONG THE PATRILINEAL TRIBES OF NORTH-EASTERN INDIA

The aboriginal tribes of north-eastern India (former Assam) are
generally organised in patrilineal clans. They observe clan and kin-
ship exogamy. Offenders against the exogamy laws are punished;
usually they receive a severe beating. These tribes generally observe
tribal and often even village endogamy. Some of the tribes, like the
Tangsa or Yoglis, have a dual system, that is, one section of the
tribe marrying into the other.

Boys and girls are free in the choice of their marriage partners,
though in most cases the approval of the parents must be obtained.
This is the custom among the Abors and Tangsas. Among the Dafias
the marriage is arranged by the father. A bride-price has to be paid
which consists in animals and agricultural products. The bride-price
is paid in the form of gifts. To avoid its payment, sisters may be
exchanged by the marrying boys. But this can only take place if the
sisters agree to such marriages.

Pre-marital sex relations are freely permitted, either in the dormi-
tories wherever such exist or in the houses of the girls. Such sex
relations are considered a manner of courting. When a girl becomes
pregnant, these sex relations cease and she is married off, not always
to the father of her child.

Polygyny is permitted but rare. A man may take a second wife if
his first one proves barren. But most marriages remain monogamous.
This is true of such tribes as the Abors and Tangsas. The Dafias,
however, are polygynous, a wealthy man having often as many as eight wives. Patrilineal tribes have no polyandry.

Extra-marital sex relations are a reason for divorce; a man caught in adultery may be beaten severely and fined while the woman is only scolded.

Most hill tribes of north-eastern India live in joint families which break up only due to quarrels or to scarcity of field plots. Each unclear family however has a separate room in the paternal house.

Family life is often postponed till after the birth of several children; until then visit marriage is practised. A wife enjoys an almost equal social position in the family; she is only excluded from the sacrifice of a mithun (half-wild cattle). Economically women are equally important; they do most of the agricultural work, in addition to their home-work.

Children are much wanted. But they receive no formal education. They are gradually and informally instructed and introduced into work and tribal custom and usage.

4. In Matriarchal India

A. Marriage and Family

India has two matriarchal centres, one on the Malabar coast, and the other in north-eastern India, formerly Assam.

In Malabar the Nayar, Tiyar and Mukkuvans, as also the Mohammedan Moplahs and the inhabitants of the outlying Laccadive and Amindivi Islands follow the matriarchal system. These groups have matriarchal joint families with matrilineal descent. They include all descendants of a common female ancestress and live in community houses (taravad). These joint families form economic units and are headed by a matron. Particularly among the Nayar the women enjoy a high social status; they are known for their energy, intelligence and beauty.

The eldest daughter of the oldest woman (matron) in the taravad enjoys a privileged position; she acts as the second-in-command to the matron. The latter is, however, actually only the nominal head of the taravad; its real head is her eldest brother (karanavan). He acts as the agent of the female head of the joint family; and is legal guardian of every member of it. He is supposed to support them all; on the other hand he has full and absolute control of the family property. All his efforts are directed towards an increase of his taravad's
wealth, the rise of its social rank and the promotion of its prosperity. His own children have no share in it, as they belong to the taravad of their mother. He cares only for his nephews and nieces, for whom he often also selects the marriage partners.

The origin of the South-Indian matriarchal system is still obscure; it is probably connected with the Indus Valley culture or with matriarchal societies in East Africa or Arabia. Many low Hindu castes and hill tribes of Malabar have fully or at least partly adopted the matriarchal system from their influential overlords, the Nayar.

The marriage system of these matriarchal castes is complicated. A girl was first married by the so-called talikettu kalayanam, a ceremony something between an initiation and marriage. At this marriage, the bride formerly underwent defloration either by the bridegroom, or a substitute (father-in-law, a Nambudiri Brahmin or a foreigner). This marriage was then dissolved and the girl could contract the so-called sambandham marriage, preferably with a son of her maternal uncle (cross-cousin marriage), though she could also marry an outsider, even a member of a different caste of equal or higher social rank (Nambudiri Brahmin).

At present monogamy is the rule; but in former times sororal polygyny as well as polyandry were common among all these castes. A woman could, however, only consort with men of equal or higher social status. Thus Nayar women frequently married Nambudiri Brahmans, among whom only the eldest brother could marry a woman of his own caste, while the younger brothers married Nayar women. Tiyan women often lived with Europeans, and Mukkuvan women associated with Arabs. The children of such unions remained with their mothers.

Where this ancient tradition is still observed, marriage is matri-local (uxorilocal), that is, the women remains in her mother's house, making herself thus financially and socially completely independent of her husband. He either joined her or visited her only at night. If a woman had several husbands, she was visited by them in turns regulated by custom. A woman rarely ever visited the house of her husband; not even his children did so, especially if they belonged to a different caste.

Divorce was easy; a woman could dismiss her husband, or husbands, at will. But also the husband could easily divorce his wife. He simply stayed away. Children remained with the mother.

In modern time the matriarchal family system with visit marriage
in Malabar is rapidly changing into a patriarchal system, which is more in accord with the generally accepted mores of the Indian people. Closer contact with the rest of India, modern education and the pressure of public opinion force a different way of mating and living on the matriarchal societies in Malabar. Especially the Nayar have begun to feel ashamed of their different marriage customs, of polyandry, visit marriage, and frequent divorce. Moreover, over-population has forced many men to seek employment away from their ancestral homes, outside of Malabar and often outside of India. They want to take their wives with them to their new homes. Strict adherence to the matriarchal system would be difficult in their new surroundings. Economic conditions in the whole of India favour a break down of the joint family system. Malabar is also affected by these new trends. Thus the Marumakkatayam Acts of Madras and the Nair Act of Travancore, promulgated not so long ago, permitted partition of the taravad properties. Now the new Hindu Succession Act of 1956 has dealt a further hard blow to the matriarchal joint family tradition of Malabar. Its disappearance is only a question of time.

The change from the matriarchal to the patriarchal family system is already in full swing among the Nayar, especially in the urban areas and outside Malabar. Among the rural population and the lower castes, like the Ezhavas, the old system still prevails more or less in its old strength and may linger on for a considerable time.

A second centre of matriarchy in India exists in north-eastern India among the Khasis, Syntengs and Garos. The origin of this matriarchal system is also obscure. Since the Khasis speak an Austro-Asiatic language like matriarchal tribes in Indo-China, it is possible that they brought this peculiar social system from their original habitats. It would then be of considerable age, for the Khasis and Syntengs (or Pnars) are of all the tribes in the area the oldest ones. But it is also possible that they adopted matriarchy after their migration to India from immigrants from the west, who originally belonged to the Mohenjo daro culture. These immigrants may later have adopted the patriarchal system when they were Aryanised, while the Khasis and Syntengs retained their matriarchal system. The existence of a matriarchal people in the valleys south of the Himalayas in pre-Vedic times is not improbable. Elements of a matriarchal social system are not only found in the tribes now living in the Himalayas, but also among the low Hindu castes of North India who
may be survivals of the Indus Valley culture. Even the sacred scriptures of Hinduism speak of polyandry among some of the ancient tribes (Kunti and her sons; the Pandava brothers and their common wife Draupadi; etc.). Several tribes in the Himalayan valleys still practise polyandry, like the Khasas, though their social organisation is now patrilineal.

The Khasis, Garos and Syntengs live in a matriarchal joint family, with matrilineal descent, uniting in it the direct descendants of a grandmother or great-grandmother. This family of brothers and sisters, the great-grandchildren of the female ancestress, inhabit one house with three rooms. Marriage is matrilocal; the husband lives in the house of his wife. The Syntengs (Pnars), however, practise visit-marriage. Among the Khasis a man may found a separate home after the birth of one or two children, but the house is built in the compound of his wife's mother. Economically he is, however, independent.

Among the three tribes monogamy is the rule, polygyny rare and polyandry absent. However, a man may keep a mistress.

In the joint family the maternal uncle enjoys a privileged position though his influence is not as great as in the matriarchal societies of Malabar. A man has some authority over his wife and children.

Inheritance is in the female line; the youngest daughter is the main heir. In the matrilocal family all earnings, of males as well as of females, are pooled together and entrusted to the management of the head woman. According to traditional law, men have no right to individual property, whether they are husbands or sons. But in modern times all that a man earns through his own effort remains his private property.

Among the Khasis, Garos and Syntengs a woman enjoys high social status and exercises considerable power; the men have less authority. Agriculture is mainly carried out by the men, while the weaving is done by women. Both sexes earn money as porters. Nowadays a Khasi woman addresses her husband as 'lord'. Thus here also we notice a change towards the patriarchal family system.

The family is also the religious unit; but its centre is the youngest daughter. In the absence of a daughter another girl may be adopted for this function. The Khasis and Syntengs worship household goddesses and female ancestor spirits. Sacrifices are performed by the women.

Divorce is permitted for several reasons and for both sexes; some
of the valid reasons for divorce are: marital infidelity, sterility, incompatibility of the marriage partners. A divorce is always made public; and a compensation must be paid by the new husband. The children remain with the mother.

B. Kinship

In South-Indian matriarchal communities the kinship group consists of the taravad, the matrilineal joint family. Within this joint family exogamy is observed; persons descended in the female line from a common ancestress cannot marry each other.\(^1\)

Inheritance is also in the female line; it is called Marumakkathayam system. It is somewhat modified in Moplah society. Among the Moplahs (Mappilas) only the family property is inherited in the female line, while acquired property is handed on to the heirs according to the rules of Muslim law, which is patrilineal.

In north-eastern India we find matrilineal, strictly exogamous clans and sub clans, with a mythical ancestress. The clans are of unequal social status; they have royal, priestly and ordinary clans.

5. In Vedic India

A. Marriage and Family

In Vedic times marriage was indispensable for male and female. A man had to get married to go through the second stage of his ashram (stages of life)—the grihastha. He could not find peace after death unless a son performed his funeral rites.

The essential ceremonies in the Vedic marriage ritual were: firstly, the gift of the daughter by the father to the bridegroom (kanyadan); secondly, the kindling of the wedding fire (Agni) as the divine witness and sanctifier of the ceremony; thirdly, the holding of the bride's hands by the bridegroom; fourthly, the walking of the bridegroom and bride over seven steps, the bridegroom leading. The last rite was the carrying off of the bride by the bridegroom (vivaha—carrying away).

\(^1\) Stray elements of the matriarchal system are found among many lower castes of South India, especially among the Parayans and Pulayans, but also among the Malayalis of the Shevararooy Hills, the Vellalas and Goundans of Coimbatore District, the Reddis of Tinnevelly, the Tottiys (Telugu) and the Kappiliyans (of Kanara). Some of these castes and tribes have a peculiar marriage system; small boys marry adult girls, while the latter cohabit with the boy-husbands' fathers.
The ways of choosing a mate were many in Vedic India: One way was called brahma, if the father gave his daughter to a learned man of good character; daiva, if the daughter was given to a priest; arsha, if the bridegroom paid a bull and a cow for the bride. The marriage was called asura, if other gifts were made and it was a marriage by purchase; this was considered unlawful. Gandharva was a union based on mutual love, even when it was contracted without any rites. In parjapatya a father gave away his daughter to a man of his choice; in rakshasa the bride was abducted by force—a lawful form of marriage. Paisacha was the seduction of a sleeping, intoxicated or demented girl. This latter form of marriage was unlawful.

A widower was free to marry, but not a widow whom not even death could detach from her husband. In extreme cases it even resulted in sati—widow burning.

Divorce seems to have been practised in early Vedic times, but later it was declared unlawful.

The Vedic family was a joint family, sons living with their parents even after marriage, while daughters moved to the home of their in-laws. The head of the family was the patriarch who ruled with absolute authority as head and priest of the family. Residence was patrilocal, and descent was reckoned in the male line only. The social status of women was inferior.

Polygyny was freely permitted. In certain parts of Vedic India even polyandry was practised; examples are Kunti and Draupadi. Proof of the existence of polyandry among the Uttara Kurus in Pandu's time is found in the Mahabharata. Guest prostitution was also practised; an example is Satyakama Jabala, the mother of Svetaketu. The sororate and levirate were quite common among the Vedic Aryans.

B. Kinship Groups

Marriage could take place only within one's class (varna) and caste (jati). Kinship exogamy extended beyond seven degrees on the father's side (beyond gotra and pravara) and beyond five degrees on the mother's (beyond sapinda).

They also practised the system of hypergamy; a girl could marry only within her own group or into a higher one, never into a lower group.
6. IN HINDU INDIA

A. Marriage and Family

Marriage is necessary for all Hindus for the same reasons as in Vedic India. The ceremonies of the wedding are essentially the same. But only one form of marriage is permitted to high caste Hindus: the one arranged by parents and performed with the traditional ritual. In the past a girl had to be married before she reached puberty. Only in modern times has this rule largely been abolished. The bride joins the family of her husband immediately after marriage, though the marriage is consummated only after the first menstruation of the bride.

The Hindu family is a sacred institution deriving sanction from religious and ancient social traditions, of a pseudo-historical, mythical and legendary character. The ideal for every Hindu woman is Sita, the wife of Rama. The Hindu family is a joint family. It is composed entirely of agnatic relations, that is, relations through males, adopted persons, their wives and unmarried daughters. The joint family is the poor man's main and often sole form of security in sickness and old age. It assures the education of the children. It is a strictly patriarchal family. Its head rules as a despot, exercising absolute power over his family. He is also the family priest; his right and duty is to offer the funeral oblations to the ancestors. In the absence of a son another boy can be adopted to take his place.

Residence is patrilocal. Even a child-widow has to reside with her in-laws. Descent is reckoned in the male line only. Property and name pass from father to son. Ancestral property can be alienated only on grounds of strict legal necessity. At the death of the head of the family, the joint family may break apart; if it continues united, the eldest son takes over, but not always.

The position of women is inferior. A wife must be maintained by her husband, but traditionally she has no right to his property. According to ancient tradition a woman cannot divorce her husband, though a man can dismiss his wife. In higher castes a widow cannot remarry, even if the marriage was never consummated. In a Hindu family a woman is always subject: either to her father before marriage, or to her husband while married, and in widowhood to her eldest son. However, some women have a strong influence on the male members of their families; their position depends much on their character and personality. The influence of the mother on her sons
and their wives is proverbially strong. The relations between a
woman and her daughters-in-law are often strained.

Polygyny is permitted; it is often practised in case the first wife is
barren.

Male issue is much desired for religious, social and economic
reasons: daughters are not wanted, but when born, are not ill-treated.
A son is a necessity for the spiritual welfare of his father after death.
He performs the funeral oblation and the sraddha ceremony. The
souls of the departed are constantly dependent on the pindas, balls
of food, which the surviving relatives offer. A daughter is only a
temporary member of the family into which she is born. All she can
claim is maintenance as long as she is unmarried, and the wedding
expenses when she gets married. A widow is not allowed to return
to her parents; she remains in the family of her deceased husband.

This is the traditional pattern of Hindu marriage and family. Of
course, there exist many local and ethnic variations. The lower Hindu
castes often permit widow marriage, and are less strict in observing
the laws of exogamy. But the higher the caste, the closer is the con-
formity to the ideal pattern of the Hindu marriage and family.

7. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN MODERN TIMES

It was long felt that the laws laid down in the ancient Dharma-
shastras required modification in the light of modern conditions of
living and thinking. There was a special need for relaxing the gotra
exogamy, for members of a gotra are now often very numerous, so
that frequently members of the same gotra are no longer kinsmen at
all.

A new Hindu Marriage Act was promulgated in 1955. It was
much discussed. Its main purpose was the removal of the endoga-
mous restrictions of caste and the exogamous restrictions of the
gotra, the permission of divorce, the registration of marriage in
harmony with ritual ceremonial, and the inheritance of property
with equal rights for daughters. From now on marriage between
persons related beyond five generations on the father’s side and
three on the mother’s side is no longer forbidden, even where it has
not been a local custom.

Hindu marriage customs have undergone certain changes in
modern time. Child marriage, at least in the towns, is gradually dis-
appearing; many high-caste Hindus are now reluctant to give their
daughters away in marriage before their education is completed. But
in the rural areas child marriages are still very common. Educated men whose marriage had been arranged by their parents in childhood, often feel handicapped by an uneducated wife when they reach a high position. Frequently they help themselves by leaving the illiterate wife in their parents' home in the village, while they marry another educated girl with whom they live in the city.

Any other form of polygyny is discouraged and in fact polygamy is prohibited by the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. Cases of widow remarriage are on the increase even in high castes. Though widow remarriage was legally permitted in 1856, the caste councils strongly disapproved of it and punished offenders with expulsion from the community. At present even inter-caste and inter-religious marriages are tolerated.

A yet unsolved problem is the demand for a high dowry which is often the custom in high Hindu caste marriages. If dowry is not paid fully or if it had been fixed too low, the young woman later has frequently to suffer ill-treatment by her in-laws.

Under the new Hindu Succession Act of 1956 daughters have the same rights of inheritance as sons. Women can own property in their own right whether they have acquired or inherited it or it was gifted to them. Ornaments alone do not necessarily become a woman's absolute property; it depends on the intention of the donor. If the ornaments are gifted to the family, the women of the house are allowed to make use of them on special occasions, but they cannot sell them or otherwise dispose of them.

Everywhere joint families are breaking up. While in former times when a man had a windfall it became at once a joyful family occasion, today that man intends to enjoy it alone or with his own family. A growing individualism and independence are opposed to the survival of the joint family system. Young wives, more particularly if educated, are now less prepared to submit to the rule of their in-laws. The control of the young men over their own earnings gives them greater opportunity for independence.

Still, public opinion based on ancient caste tradition expects a man of some means to support his parents, to assist needy relatives, to pay for the education of the younger members in his family, to help out in any emergency, and to contribute goods and services at numerous family feasts.
CHAPTER XI
Associations and Classes

In the previous chapters the basic social structures of primitive man have been described; in fact, they are basic for man all over the world and in all times. Human beings cannot exist without a family system which naturally grows into a kinship system. The basic kinship system quite naturally further develops through the introduction of new factors: thus the clan and the village community are necessary consequences of the modification and expansion of the basic social structures.

A further, but less elementary expansion of primitive social life will be described in the following pages: the formation of classes, of associations and of rank.

A class is a rank or order of persons within a society; while an association is a union of persons joined together to promote some common object following rules for common action.

The existence of classes in a given society is the result of social inequality. Such personal inequality may be based on natural factors and is, therefore, found even in the most primitive stage of culture, among the food-gatherers. Thus already in the most primitive society a dichotomy of human beings exists based on sex. The sexes are naturally divided in their occupations and duties, in social life and entertainment, in religion and ritual. But this dichotomy is not strictly and rigidly observed; it is still in a basic and fluid stage. Consequently, among the food-gatherers men may help women in collecting vegetable food while the women occasionally join in the hunt. The men may do the household chores whenever the women are prevented from doing the work customarily assigned to them. In religion and ritual too the dichotomy is not always strictly adhered to though a tendency for it is unmistakable.

Also a rudimentary formation of age classes can be observed: the members of a tribe are divided into those who have not yet been initiated, those who are being initiated and those who have completed their initiation. Among some tribes boys and girls must observe
certain fasts and taboos during initiation and are segregated; thus they are set apart from the rest of the tribal community.

In North-Central California the Yukis and Maidus distinguish quite clearly between the initiated and initiands during the initiation ceremonies which last from autumn till spring; that is, for half a year. Also in South-East Australia the distinction between the initiated and those not yet initiated is of great social import. This division is the more important because initiation is spread over a number of years. The initiands acquire also secret knowledge, the "secret of the bull-roarer." Among the Andamanese, who are also in other aspects in a transitional stage from mere food-gatherers into one of a higher and more complex culture, age grades are already well developed. The young people have to observe certain food taboos which are progressively removed with the years.

Another dichotomy observed in the earliest stage of society is the division of the people into married and yet unmarried persons. The matrimonial state changes the social status of men and women. There is segregation, and different rules of conduct apply to each group.

Permanent associations, however, for the pursuance of certain special aims and purposes, are rare in this stage of culture. The economic life of the food-gatherers is still too self-contained and uncomplicated for that. Still the Selknams and Yamanas of Tierra del Fuego have associations which come into play during initiation and assume the leadership in the ritual. The Kina rites of the Yamanas and the Ciexaus of the Selknams are clearly rudimentary beginnings of associations. The Pygmies of the Congo have a society (Tore) which also performs the initiation ceremonies of the boys. But the Pygmies may have adopted this association from the neighbouring Negro tribes.

It is only in the food-producing stage of culture that the progress and the expansion of cultural activities afford a sharp stimulus for the formation and development of classes and associations.

Only the animal-breeding tribes of Asia are an exception. No such associations are found among them. The joint family with its extensions into lineages, clans and clan federations is a complete substitute for all associational tendencies, all persons belong primarily and exclusively to the joint family. Thus no associations nor even age classes could develop. The rigid family discipline would not tolerate such extra-familial activities.
In the advanced stages of pastoralism, however, class differences have developed: on the principle of wealth the members of a tribe may be divided into the rich and the poor; while on the principle of genealogy they may be divided into aristocrats, commoners and serfs or slaves. Families that have amassed wealth and have been able to hold it for several generations tend to marry among themselves and even become endogamous as, for instance, the “White Bones” and the “Black Bones” among the Mongols. This tendency, however, is only found among the culturally more advanced horse and sheep breeders (Kazakhs, Kalmucks, and Kirghiz); not among the more primitive reindeer breeders (Tungus, etc.) who prevent such class distinctions by dividing their herds periodically and sharing them with the poor. The nobility among the horse and sheep breeders boasts of special insignia, a code of honour and a funeral ritual with bloody sacrifices. All grades are most anxious to maintain the purity of their line. The ancient Jews, too, jealously guarded their ancestral registers in which a family’s genealogy was recorded. And if a man married beneath his station, his children were treated as inferiors and could not find spouses among the people of their father’s ranks.

Also among the African cattle breeders (Bantus, for instance) cattle wealth results in social elevation.

The division of the Asiatic animal breeders into rich and poor, nobles and commoners, is a class division, not a division into new associations. For these classes do not pursue specific aims and purposes. If any social group of the animal-breeding tribes could be called an association, it is the “horde”. But the horde is more a political federation than a tribal association; in it the young men of several sections of a tribe, and often several tribes, band themselves together for the purpose of attack and defence in war. Among the Kazakhs, for instance, such hordes were known as the “Great Horde”, the “Middle Horde” and the “Small Horde”.

1. Age Grades and Functional Associations

Associations and age grades are found in great number and variety among the other food-producing societies, especially among the tribes which combine hunting with primitive cultivation. In tribes in which totemistic beliefs are strong, age classes and functional associations seem to predominate, while in tribes with an emphasis on agrarian pursuits, the institutions of the so-called youth dormitories and club houses prevail.
Age grades are well developed among the North-American tribes. Nearly all Siouan tribes (Omahas, Cheyennes, Blackfeet, Gros-Ventres) and the Arapahos (West Algonkins) have such age grades. The Arapahos, for instance, have eight age classes. Each class has its special insignia, special regular ceremonies and initiation into its lower grades. The purpose of these age classes is the performance of special duties for the community. In the higher grades religious and magic rites are performed for the welfare of the tribe. Age classes are also found among the Gallas and Masais of East Africa, in East Brazil, in ancient Europe (in Sweden until 1890), in ancient Japan and in Africa (South Nigeria). In India (among the Oraons, Gonds, etc.) age classes are combined with the youth dormitory system.

In totemistic hunting cultures the male members of the tribe are usually divided into the following age grades: children (before initiation); warriors and hunters (after initiation); married men and elders. The initiation is the turning point in a boy’s life. Before initiation he belongs to the women; as far as the clan or tribe is concerned, he does not exist. But after initiation he is a full-fledged member of the clan or tribe; he associates with his mates in a club house. Only after marriage does he leave the club house and start a family. As an elder he takes part in the administration of the clan or tribe.

The initiation usually has a rich ritual, the climax of which is often circumcision. Circumcision is found in Central and South Africa, in East Africa (among the Kikuyus for boys and girls), in Central Australia (incision), in Indonesia, Indo-China (among the Mois, for instance), in the Philippines, in Polynesia, Brazil (especially on the upper Amazonas and Orinocco), in Central America and in northern North America. One seventh of mankind is circumcised.

This initiation is commonly performed when a boy attains maturity. The candidates for the initiation are compared or identified with the strong and youthful morning sun. They have to undergo tests of manliness in which they are beaten or tortured. The initiation ceremonies are often accompanied by fertility rites in which blood must be spilled or drunk, and sometimes sexual debauchery is practised.

The initiated are sub-divided into recruits, experienced and veterans. Another division is that of the engaged, married and elders. Each class and grade has usually its specific customs, dress, ornaments and occupations.

The social activities of the age groups often impair and restrict the social importance of the family, sib and clan organisation.
In North America various functional associations were in the past active among the hunting and war-faring Red Indians. Thus the Kiowas had an elaborate military organisation, consisting of six orders, each having its own dances, songs, insignia and duties. The Crows of Montana have tobacco societies with special religious functions, and military societies with peculiar military tasks. They have, however, no age grades. The Ojibwas had the Midewiwin Society which performed a ritual to insure the welfare of its members after death. Admission into the society was secured through payment of a fee. The Teton Sioux had a Strong Heart Society which played a part in the initiatory ceremonies of the Sun Dance. The Hidatsas of North Dakota had a Black Mouth Society which exercised police functions. The Assiniboins of Canada had an association of men aged between 25 and 45 years. They served as soldiers and policemen (especially during the tribal hunts) and were entrusted with the execution of the decisions of the tribal council.

2. Youth Dormitories

In communities of greater stability and pronounced agrarian character we find so-called youth dormitories. They are often connected with club houses for men. These youth dormitories are places where the bachelors of the village meet and sleep. Sometimes the girls of the village have similar meeting places. As a rule, married members of the community and elderly widowers are not welcome, though some tribes allow them to frequent the youth dormitories.

Such youth dormitories are found throughout Indo-China (Mois), Indonesia, Mikronesia, in ancient China, in Japan (with masked processions), in ancient Europe (Sparta), in East Africa (among the cattle-breeding Masais), and in tropical South America.

In India youth dormitories are found in north-eastern India among the Konyak Nagas (morung), Tangsas, Memis and Abors; these tribes have separate dormitories for boys and girls. Among the Abors the boys' dormitory is also the council hall. Youth dormitories are also found among the Ao Nagas (arihu) and Angami Nagas (kichuki). The same institution is in existence in Himachal Pradesh among the Bhotias (rangbang). In north-eastern Central India the Mundas, Hos and Birhors have the gitiora, the Oraons the dhunkuria, the Muria Gonds the gotul and the Bhuiyas the dhangerbhassa. In South India youth dormitories are found among the Muduvans, Mannans, Paliyans and Kanikar. In western India traces of such a youth dormitory
system are found among the Warlis, north of Bombay.

The origin of this social institution is usually ascribed to the desire of parents to have some privacy in their hut for the sexual act, and to prevent incest. But the main reason probably is the wish of the young people to be among themselves and to form clubs for their own entertainment. In general, the youth dormitories carry out various functions important for the whole village community. The whole youth of the village is kept together and can thus easily be employed as a group for joint economic pursuits like hunting, agricultural work and warfare; head-hunting and raiding are popular pastimes for quite a few of these tribes. Another purpose of the youth dormitory is to serve as a residence for the guardians of the village against hostile raiders and wild animals. To keep them awake throughout the night various kinds of entertainment are provided: singing, dancing, story-telling, games. And often youth dormitories are the places where boys and girls are able to meet for petting and other sexual intimacies.

On the other hand, however, men may frequent the youth dormitory for the express purpose of keeping celibate in times of sexual taboo, in certain agricultural seasons, during the menstrual period of their wives, after the birth of a child, before hunting or on certain feasts and sacrifices.

The youth dormitory often provides accommodation for guests and frequently it is the centre for the performance of magico-religious ceremonies to ensure success in hunting and to augment the procreative powers of the young men in the village.

It is claimed that the youth dormitory also provides training in social and sexual behaviour. If this is so the youth dormitories seem singularly ineffective in providing such training, for the divorce rate is unusually high in tribes which have this social institution.

Attendance in the youth dormitory is obligatory on reaching the age of puberty, or after passing the *rites de passage*. In some tribes, as among the Gonds of Bastar, the young people have their own leaders and officials who see that discipline is kept, the functions of the dormitory properly fulfilled and all rules and regulations of the tribe faithfully carried out.

3. **Club Houses**

Similar to the youth dormitory system is that of the club house which is found among the lower cultivators of Indochina, Indonesia,
New Guinea (Marind-ansims, Monumbos, Kais, Tanis, Kiwais, and others), partly in Melanesia and sporadically in Polynesia. This institution is absent in Africa and India, in spite of favourable conditions for such club houses in both these continents. It is however found sporadically in the tropical regions of South America, especially in the Chako region, and among the hunting tribes of eastern Brazil. It is again found among the hunting cultures of California and among the Alaskan Eskimos; both groups use it as a sweating house (sauina or kiva). Traces of this institution are found in ancient China; it is believed that the ancestor halls of the Chinese are such relics (Quistorp). It is again found in ancient Greece (Sparta). And in Australia the club house is a meeting place, but without a building.

The club house is intended primarily as a meeting place for men. It is not always a house; often it is just a plot of land, a meeting place without a roof. In the Chako region of South America it is a round place in the village, protected either by a roof or by a tree. But it is always a permanent institution.

The purpose of these meetings is manifold; it may be an economic one (working room); it may have a political purpose, intended for council meetings; it may also have a social purpose and be used as a dormitory, or for guests, dances and feasts. Religious ceremonies are also frequently performed in it. The Chakopo Indians, for instance, use it as a working room and for the accommodation of guests. In eastern Bolivia, too, the club house is intended as a meeting room for the men of the village and for guests. In South Brazil the club house is used for work, for sleeping and for the discussion of tribal affairs. Among the Bororos it is used as a cult house and for sexual purposes. The initiation of boys and the funeral rites are also performed in the club house. On the Solomon Islands it is a work house and a social centre, where also council meetings are held.

Sometimes other uses are found for the club house: it may be turned into a sacred place which occasionally houses the ancestor spirits, as on the Solomon Islands and in New Guinea; and it may be used as a store-room for masks and heads. Some tribes regard it as a megalithic meeting place where the ancestors are represented by huge stone slabs and where they are supposed to take part in the meetings.

As a rule, women are excluded from these club houses, though some tribes allow them entrance occasionally to clean them, on feast days or for sexual intercourse. On the Solomon Islands the old
women are permitted to frequent the club house of the men.

Admission into the club house is gained by certain initiatory rites which are performed when the boys reach puberty. The initiation is often combined with veritable mystery plays in which the boys are supposed to be swallowed by a demon, and then rejected by him. Or they are supposed to die during the ceremonies and to be reborn. These rites are often occasions for cannibalism, sexual debauchery and masked dances. Tests of manliness are demanded from the initiands.

A club house includes, as a rule, all men of a settlement; while it disturbs family life, it strengthens the solidarity of the village community and leads to greater social integration. It depends on the leaders of the community whether it stimulates cultural progress, or it becomes the centre of conservatism and cultural stagnation.

Club houses could only exist in tribes with a certain standard of material culture (agriculture) and some degree of stability. They are practically non-existent among lower hunters, but, on the other hand, also rare among more advanced cultivators. They are a rarity among pastoralists. Most probably they are the product of a mixture between primitive cultivators with advanced hunting tribes.

4. SECRET SOCIETIES

Among more advanced cultivators the club house institution could never gain ground because in these cultures another institution flourishes which has assumed great importance and exercised a strong influence. It is the institution of secret societies.

A secret society is a voluntary association whose members, by virtue of their membership, possess knowledge which is withheld from others. In general, the society bears a distinct name or title and possesses a ritual by which the members are distinguished from the rest of the society to which they belong.

Such secret societies generally aspire to a double purpose, an ostensible and obvious one, and a secret purpose. The ostensible purpose may form a necessary and integral unit in the structure of the community (for instance, the cult of the ancestors, or spiritual help for the souls of the deceased members of the community); it may also be a revolutionary and progressive purpose approved by the whole tribe, aiming, for instance, at political independence (so the Mau Mau society of the Kikuyus in East Africa) or at the promotion of economic welfare. These aims they intend to attain by means
and methods which they openly profess to non-members. But all secret societies have a hidden purpose the nature of which may vary: foremost in the mind of the members is the desire to attain a special status in the community and certain social and economic advantages; less explicit is usually the wish to counteract the fixed and rigid laws and rules of the natural societies, as the family, the clan and tribe, and to form larger units which may reach even beyond the tribal community; other aims are to relieve the monotony and routine of everyday life by feasts with dances and masquerades, etc.

The origin of secret societies in primitive cultures has been explained by various theories; this is a sure indication that no single explanation is quite satisfactory. H. Schurtz, for instance, thinks that the secret society is a club where a man can find social diversion outside his family; a response to the urge for associating with his own kind. But this does not explain the element of secrecy in these societies. W.H.R. Rivers holds that at least in Melanesia the secret societies are survivals of the religious cults of the later immigrants who wanted to exclude the earlier indigenous population from these cults. H. Webster\(^1\) claims that totemism led to the formation of secret societies, while J. Bachofen, J. Lippert, R. Briffault and W. Schmidt maintain that a secret society is the male reaction to social dominance by women in matriarchal societies. E.M. Loeb, however, claims to have proved that the institution of secret societies does not depend on any specific social organisation.

Such secret societies are widespread in certain areas of all the continents of the earth, but especially in Africa. Liberia and the adjoining countries of West Africa are the classical centres of secret societies. They are of great importance for the tribes of this area as it is in these societies that the religious life of the tribesmen centres, is fostered and developed and given opportunity for fullest expression.

In West Africa these societies are of two major types: those that admit all men and women of the community, though strictly divided according to sex, and those which invite or admit only selected individuals. Thus in Sierra Leone, for instance, the Poro society is for males, and the Sande (or Bundu in Mende) for females. The Poro is a warlike and political society. But its main function is to train and educate boys and to initiate them into full and active tribal member-

\(^{1}\)H. Webster, 1908.
ship, and Sande does the same for girls. The candidates have to undergo severe tests. The Poro often interferes in tribal wars and inter-tribal quarrels. It is supposed to uphold law and execute justice. It has thus many functions. In modern times, however, the Government has taken over law and order, and the Poro will now probably develop as a true secret society with an emphasis on religion, magic and the arts. Though its hold on the people is still strong, the Poro is at present on the decline as it must make concessions to modern conditions.

Apart from Poro and Sande, there are a considerable number of other similar societies, such as the well-known and ill-famed Leopard Society, the Water Leopard and Crocodile Societies, the Horn Association, the Sanke Society, the Bush Hog Society, the Weaver Bird Association, and others. Secret societies are very active among the Mandingos (Mama-Dhiombo), Yorubas (Eyungun and Ogboni), in the Cameroons (Meli), in Calabar (Egbo and Mungi), on the river Ozowe and in Loango (Juju and Belli), in Nigeria (Ndembo), on the Ituri (Babali), and in the Sudan (Aniota in the Aruwimi area, Semale of the Bandus, Nebele of the Mangbetus, etc.). The Mau Mau Society of the Kikuyus in Kenya earned much notoriety during the Kikuyu freedom movement. Some of these societies are obviously totemistic in their origin, but they all possess certain objects filled with magic powers which are believed to be imparted to the members of the society. The members of the Leopard Society aspire to rejuvenation and the imparting of the Beopard's strength and cunning. Its medicine passes all others for strength, and can kill any other medicine with witch-poison. In some societies membership is limited to experts in medicine; in one society, for instance, the members are supposed to be able to control lightning. Others catch the spirits of men asleep and make them wander about and pester and kill people. The Dualas in the Cameroons have a secret cult society whose chief aim is the acquisition of power by which the forces of the invisible world can be dominated and hostile powers be averted by means of charms. In the rituals of these societies masked persons, representing demons, perform ecstatic dances which are supposed to produce power. The society, with the village chief at its head, has at the same time a political function. In its hands is the whole administration of the country, its executive power being carried out by a special section of the society.

Another important area for secret societies is the Pacific, Melanesia, Polynesia and New Guinea (Kani). In New Britain there are the
Dukduk and Ingiet societies, on the Bank Islands and New Hebrides the Suque, on Fiji the Nanga. The Nanga admit women too. The word Nanga also designates the stone enclosures within which the rites are held. On Tahiti was found the Arioi or Areoi Society. It consisted of a troupe of professional players who went from village to village giving dramatic and musical performances. The women of the troupe bestowed sexual favours freely but were forced to leave the troupe when they became pregnant. The semi-secret society of the Arioi was suppressed by missionary influence about 1820. It was pre-European and probably arose as a cult of the god Oro, its mythological founder. The society had the purpose of promoting the worship of this god. The Arioi Society through its dances, songs and pantomimes was the major carrier of the island’s mythology and tradition. By visiting many islands the society helped to maintain good relations and peace.

Secret societies were also in existence in ancient China, in Tibet (masked dancers), in Sri Lanka and India (demon dancers, cult of Shakti, Thugs), in Indonesia on Ceram (Wapulane) and in South Arabia among the Himyaritic tribes.

A peculiar form of secret societies was found on the North-West coast of North America, among the Iroquois, the Red Indians of the Pueblo area and of California. It may be called a shamanistic secret society which united men who were shamans or who had the same guardian spirit. Women were not excluded from these societies. Their purpose was to cure the sick. The members of these societies got frequently possessed by their spirits. Some of them used masks, others did not.

The Hopi Indians have secret societies that admit women only. They are called the Flute Society, the Snake Society, the Antelope Society. Every village has several such societies, each associated with a particular ritual. Prayers, dances, songs constitute the ceremonials. The cult of the Katcinas (supernatural beings identified with clouds and the spirits of the dead) was performed by a secret society.

Admission into a secret society is gained only after a period of probation and the passing of severe tests. Sometimes the killing of a near relative is demanded, as in some West African societies and among the now extinct Thugs of Central India. The ceremonies of admission often enact the belief that the initiands are swallowed by a demon and again ejected by him; thus among the Mandingo tribe in West Sudan, among the Gersses and Kirsses (with circumcision); or they are supposed to die and be revived, as among the Susus on the
Nunez river (between Senegambia and Liberia), in Liberia and on the Congo. In Africa and New Guinea these secret societies practised cannibalism occasionally in the past.

The ritual and the activities of the secret societies are jealously guarded from women and non-members; any member who reveals the secrets of the society or any outsider who by accident stumbles into a secret meeting is murdered.

A member passes from one grade to another higher one, generally after payment of a high fee in money or kind (pigs).

It is not all childish play acting and hocus-pocus in these secret societies and gatherings. They aim at economic advantages for their members; in the South Sea societies magic rites are performed to increase fertility. Others are stout defenders of the old tribal traditions against foreign influence, and still others teach their members how to propitiate the spirits and ancestors. The cult of the spirits is often a special feature of the meetings, and the participants wear masks representing the ancestors or certain spirits in animal form. Sometimes these masked dances are performed in the presence of the non-initiated in order to create fear and awe before the weird ghosts which the dancers embody. It appears that especially women and children firmly believe in the visible reality of these ghosts and spirits. They are ignorant of the fact that they are represented by men of their own community.
CHAPTER XII

The Indian Caste System

1. THE ORIGIN OF CASTE

Many theories have been thought out to explain the origin of the Indian caste system. But the very diversity of these explanations reveals the complexity of this institution.

It is generally maintained that the Indian caste system is unique and not found anywhere else in the same formation. Unique it certainly is in its full complexity though some, if not all, diverse elements of the Indian caste system are found all over the world; but only in India are these elements united to form a system. Thus in Polynesia we find very similar touch and food taboos as in India, and similar priestly and royal castes. In Ruanda-Urundi (East Africa) three castes are distinguished: the pastoral Tussis, the agricultural Hutus and the hunting Twas. Their class distinctions are based on food taboos, occupational prejudices and endogamy. Even outcastes are found in many primitive and modern societies: notably the blacksmiths among the Masais (East Africa) and various Arab tribes, the Hinins and Etas in Japan.

Diverse factors, no doubt, have contributed to the growth of the caste system as it is now found in India. But its roots can be traced back to the social organisation of the various Indian races before their immigration into the Indian peninsula.

The Aryan element in the Indian population is certainly very conspicuously responsible for the development of the caste system. When the Aryans reached India they were already a mixed race with a hybrid culture. Originally belonging to the animal-breeding culture, they had later adopted agriculture. In the animal-breeding societies now we find a hierarchical gradation of society quite common. Advanced pastoralists, as the Aryans were, have commonly a social order graded into nobles, commoners and slaves; additional grades are the priestly class (shamans) and certain artisan classes, as the smiths, who in spite of their usefulness are often much despised and treated as outcastes. The pastoralists have generally a strong aver-
sion to manual work and show contempt for all who perform it as an occupation. This would explain the low social status of the artisan castes in India.

In Iran where the Aryans lived previous to their invasion of India, society was divided into three classes—Aharvan, Hateshtar, and Vastiya, i.e. priests, warriors and cultivators. Later, a fourth order, that of the Huiti or artisans, was introduced. Only the sons of priests could become priests. This conforms quite closely to the four-varna system of the Vedic Indians.

Another factor which may have contributed to the evolution of the caste system and which the Aryans brought along as an old heritage from their animal-breeding past was their anxiety to retain the purity of their blood. The Aryans came to India as conquerors. They regarded the indigenous population as inferior. The Vedas revile them as nishadas (aboriginals), as ‘noseless’, ‘speechless’, ‘godless’ and ‘black-skinned.’ True to their ancient traditions, the Aryans only married women of their own race, though they kept women of the conquered races as concubines. The offspring of these were not recognised as equal in status.

This race-consciousness of the Vedic Aryans was kept alive by the ancient custom of exclusive family worship, the head of the family being the officiating priest and performing the sacrifice to the ancestors for the family. The sacrificial meal which followed, united only the members of the family; outsiders were strictly excluded.

All these factors together contributed towards a hierarchical gradation of Aryan society, with marriage and food taboos, and a religious sanction for all this. Still, if it were based solely on factors introduced by the Aryan immigrants, the caste system would not have been so rigidly enforced in South India also where the Aryan infiltration had not been so strong. But the evolution of the caste system was obviously also favoured by the social conceptions of the pre-Aryan population in India, especially in the Indus valley, where a high civilisation had sprung up around 2500 BC. We know almost nothing of the social organisation of this Indus Valley population. But without doubt, it must have resembled that of the Middle East civilisations with which this culture of India had many traits in common. Sumeria, Babylonia and Assyria now had a strictly hierarchical structure of society.

In the Middle East city communities the first class of society was formed by the king and the priests. The city-state was an absolute
theocracy, and the king was regarded as the god incorporating him or as god's substitute. The other priests were his assistants and intimates. The second class was formed by the numerous state officials and warriors. The third class consisted of much respected merchants who disposed of the offerings made to the temple and the king, and entertained a vigorous trade even with distant countries, and, as in Ur, managed cloth factories, breweries, bakeries, smithies, etc. A fourth class was formed by the artisans who were working for and around the temple. They were organised in guilds, admission to which was not easily obtained by outsiders. The various occupations and trades were considered as divinely instituted. The guilds had probably their trade and craft secrets which they divulged only to members. The acceptance and training of apprentices was strictly regulated by law and convention; trades and crafts were mostly inherited.

A fifth class was formed by the numerous slaves. The slave class was constantly refilled by prisoners of war, debtors who could not pay their dues, by criminals sold into slavery, and by the descendants of these. But slaves were not outcastes; they belonged to the family. They could marry and have a family; they could not be killed; and they could be released from slavery, even adopted into a family. Children of concubines and slave women remained slaves for life, but they could be adopted as legitimate children and thus released from slavery. On the other hand, a man could rent out his slaves for work, even pawn and sell them; he could sell his slave-girls to a bridegroom or consecrate them to a temple.

It is probable that a part of this slave class, or other outcastes of society, constituted a class of untouchables. For untouchability is a feature of a city culture. In village communities we find no impure occupations. But city cultures, as the Indus valley cities were, required such occupations: they had elaborate drainage and sanitation systems for which sweepers had to be employed. These were also needed for the removal of night-soil, of carcasses and corpses. Then there were occupations like tanning hides, etc. which were located outside the city because of their bad smell. These unclean occupations may also have roused ideas of ritual pollution and the necessity of purification. Large baths have been found in all the cities of this civilisation.

In later Vedic times a fusion took place between the indigenous population and the Aryan immigrants. This fusion was not only of a racial, but also of a cultural nature. An immediate and very striking
instance of the fusion of these social conceptions is perhaps the fact that in post-Vedic times hegemony was transferred from the warriors to the priests. In early Vedic times the warriors considered themselves superior to the priests.

Numerous other factors also contributed to the development of the Indian caste system in its traditional form. One is the geographical isolation of the Indian peninsula as a whole and of regional areas in it. In former times India was not so thickly populated, nor was it possible and safe to travel much from one region to the other and to surmount the often formidable mountain, river and desert barriers, cutting some regions off from the rest of the country.

Another most effective contributing factor was the doctrine of karma coupled with the belief in the transmigration of souls. It gave a religious sanction to the caste system and prevented effectively any attempt at an escape from the consequences of one's birth. Moreover, each class or caste had its own particular mores and rules of behaviour, taboos and prohibitions, often even dress, language and occupation to which every member of the caste became attached from earliest childhood and which he could not easily exchange for another set of mores.

Finally, the superior castes obtained in the course of time certain exclusive religious and social, even economic, privileges, which they had no intention of giving up or sharing with others. It was in their interest to make the caste system ever more rigid. Indian history has seen the days of mighty empires and powerful kings; but on the whole the smaller territorial population groups and politics could not be fully absorbed into larger administrative units. They retained to a large degree their economic, social and political independence. This also contributed to a free and practically unrestricted development of the Indian caste system.

2. Definition of Caste

The term 'caste' is derived from the Portuguese casta, meaning breed, race or kind. It was first applied to the Indian caste system by Garcia de Orta in 1563.

Various definitions of caste exist, but most of them are unsatisfactory. Caste is such a complicated and varied system that it is difficult to define it in a few words. Hutton defines caste as "an endogamous group, or collection of endogamous groups, bearing a common name, membership of which is hereditary; imposing on its
members certain restrictions in the matter of social intercourse; either following a common traditional occupation or claiming a common origin and generally regarded as forming a single homogeneous community." Lowie defines caste as "an hereditary endogamous class in a series of graded groups."

The Indian castes can be distinguished into two main groups: castes formed by common descent, and castes formed by common occupation. A caste formed by common descent is an aggregation of persons who are, or believe themselves to be, united by blood and descent, claiming a common ancestor. Subsidiary bonds of union in this type of caste are: common deities, common rites of worship, common taboos and rules of conduct, common economic pursuits and aspirations and common political interests. A caste formed by common occupation may consist of various ancestral groups with different traditions and heritage, but drawn together by the bond of a common occupation. This occupation is hereditary.

The traditional division of the Indian caste is into four varnas or colours; these four main groups are then sub-divided into innumerable smaller caste units. Highest in rank among the four varnas is the Brahmin (priest); next follows the Kshatriya (warrior), then the Vaishya (merchant and cultivator), while the Sudra (artisan) is lowest in rank. The first three varnas are sharply set off from the fourth; they constitute the 'twice-born' castes. An initiation ceremony is performed for the youth of these three varnas who then experience a spiritual rebirth. Its outward sign is the sacred thread (janew) with which they are invested.

While it was possible in early Vedic times to change from one varna into another, it is no more so in the present. Nowadays the four varnas constitute only the basis for the classification of the castes according to the order of their social rank. Each caste belongs to one of the four varnas. But even now this classification is not absolutely immutable. Not only are new castes formed through further segmentation; through migration, change of occupation, adoption or abandonment of certain social and religious practices (Sanskritisation)\(^1\) or

\(^1\)Sanskritisation is the process by which a "low" Hindu caste or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently "twice-born" caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to higher position in the caste hierarchy than traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community. The claim is usually made over a period of time; in fact, a generation or two before the arrival is conceded. (M.N. Srinivas, 1967, 6) Obviously, 'Sanskritisation' is just a more neutral word for 'Hinduisa-

\textit{tion}."
through increased prosperity, but also castes are known to have risen from one varna into a higher one; the Kayasths of Bengal are such an instance.

3. PRINCIPLES OF CASTE

Caste is always inherited. One is born into one’s caste and cannot change it. There is one exception: a member of a higher caste can change into a lower caste. But ordinarily one must marry within one’s own sub-section, for these sub-sections of the caste are endogamous. Each sub-section of a caste is again sub-divided into exogamous groups: intermarriage is usually not permitted between persons belonging to the same clan or territorial group claiming a common ancestor. In the gotra system, however, intermarriage is permitted between persons six generations removed through the father and four generations through the mother (sapinda rule) though having a common ancestor. Hypergamy often complicates the marriage rules further.

The exogamous group is made up of a number of joint-families. The joint-family is the basic unit of Hindu society, joint in food, worship and estate.

The caste imposes certain restrictions on its members; they are of seven types: commensal taboos (with whom to eat), cooking taboos (who should cook), eating taboos (how to eat), drinking taboos (from whom to accept water), food taboos (what to eat), smoking taboos (with whom and in whose company to smoke) and the vessels taboo (whose vessels to use for cooking, eating and drinking). Defilement by a non-observance of these rules follows automatically even though the breach of rules was unintentional.

Each caste has its authority which enforces the observance of the caste rules and punishes offenders. Among the twice-born castes it is no other authority than public opinion. But most other castes have a ruling body called panchayat or the biradari (brotherhood). It consists of five members under a hereditary headman (sarpanch). It is a permanent committee, acting as judge, while the caste community acts as the jury.

The caste council enforces observance of all principles of right conduct, as laid down by custom. These are commensal rules, customary rites of religion, caste traditions and usages. It also imposes sanctions for a breach of the rules and punishes offenders with fines, feasts to the caste fellows or to Brahmins, pilgrimages, various forms
of degradation and humiliation, such as; a course of begging, ridicule, loss of face, etc. and ultimately and in extreme cases, excommuni-
cation, either temporary or permanent.

4. Effects of the Caste System

The advantages of the caste system are considerable. In the course of Indian history the caste system has preserved unity in diversity and achieved a graded racial and cultural harmony in India.

The caste system has made Hindu India an organic whole in which all occupations work for the same end as different limbs of the same body. It gives every person and social group equilibrium in social and civic life and psychological security; it provides, in addition, a limited economic security and religious consolation.

These advantages are, however, balanced by serious disadvantages. The caste system leads to fatalism and impedes progress for the sake of stability. It restricts, for instance, change of occupation; thus the higher castes cannot follow a low, albeit lucrative occupation, nor can the lower castes follow a higher and more remunerative one. Agriculture is considered the most respectable of all occupations by all.

The commensal and food taboos often lead to economic wastefulness which India can really ill-afford. Interdining is restricted; many kinds of valuable food cannot be eaten; some animals (monkeys, cattle, etc.) cannot be killed.

The law of caste endogamy and, particularly, of hypergamy often leads to a lack of suitable marriage partners and results in marriage abuses (as in the past the excessive polygyny of the Kulin Brahmins of Bengal). Sanitation is often ignored.

The financial status of a family is ruined through expensive wedding, birth and funeral feasts, the joint family system, caste fines and caste contributions.

Worse are the social and political disadvantages: the caste system leads to contempt, exploitation and oppression of the inferior and socially and economically weaker sections of Indian society, to group egotism and communal tensions. It fosters a spirit of exclusiveness, jealousy, greed and fear, which endanger political unity and harmony within the Indian nation. Often it places the welfare of the caste community before the welfare of the whole nation.

The effect of caste on the untouchables is unbearably hard: they are despised, shunned, deprived of the society of the higher castes and of
the higher values of the Hindu religion since they are prohibited from the knowledge of the Hindu scriptures and from the practice of Hindu religion in the temples; they may not use public wells and are denied equal economic and educational facilities, etc. Conditions have improved in modern times, no doubt, but in the rural areas the ancient caste restrictions are still in force, though even they are no longer in their old rigidity.

5. Caste in Modern India

At present many forces are working towards a gradual disintegration of caste. A marked relaxation of many caste restrictions on the individual’s freedom of thought and action makes itself felt. Urban life, in particular, with its indiscriminate and overcrowded living quarters, eating in hotels and dining rooms, travel in railways, buses and trams, and increased social intercourse, breaks down many caste barriers. Co-education and mixed clubs favour inter-caste marriages. But endogamy is still prevalent by and large; the groups within which one can marry have enlarged, including at least the adjacent subcastes. However, an inter-marrying elite is emerging.

The large-scale increase of commerce and the industrialised manufacture of goods have occasioned greater freedom in the choice of occupation. In fact, the association of caste with occupation was the first to break down. Commensality and with it notions of ritual pollution and purity, are on the decline, however slowly and however limitedly.

Political awakening and the desire for strong national unity have also contributed to a gradual relaxation of caste rules, though the complete abolition of caste is still at a distance.

Reform movements like the Arya Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission preach a casteless society. They exert considerable influence.

Expulsion from the caste community for caste offences is no more such a dreaded punishment as in olden days.

The authority of the caste councils has declined markedly and widely; the government on the one hand is assuming many of the caste functions, while on the other hand the younger generation is getting increasingly more independent in outlook and behaviour.

However, some factors suggest that the caste system has only changed and is not really disintegrating. It has received a new lease of life through the establishment of social works on a caste basis of cooperative housing schemes, banks, low-interest loans, employment bureaus, schools and hostels, clubs, musical and dramatic societies. Caste has
grown important in political life. Not only is the caste politicised, but politics are dominated by caste groupings, all the way from the village to sometimes the state level. The numerical strength of a group is obviously important in a parliamentary democracy.

Caste discrimination has been abolished by the New Indian Code and made punishable; but the caste system as such has not been abolished.

Untouchability, too, acquired a new vitality. While in the past, before independence, the untouchables made strenuous attempts to establish their claim for respectability by trying to prove their descent from higher castes, after independence they often accepted their low status with alacrity, because as members of the “Scheduled Castes” they were allowed to enjoy the benefits of “protective discrimination”. Even castes which had not before been included in the category of untouchability now desire to belong to these castes in order to get a share in the economic benefits of backwardness.\(^1\)

\(^1\)O. M. Lynch, 1969.
CHAPTER XIII

Political Institutions

The traditional theories about the origin of the state are that it came into existence either through mutual consent, or was imposed by fear and force or arose through natural growth. In the following pages we shall see what anthropologists have to say about the origin of political institutions.

The theorist who held that the state owes its origin to a mutual contract of the people was Hubert Languet (1547). This theory was accepted by Althusius, Hugo Grotius and Baruch Spinoza. Thomas Hobbes (1642) was of the opinion that early man was wholly anti-social and in interminable conflict with his fellowmen. Later, however, men made a contract to end this state. J. Locke (1689) stated that early man was in a perfect state of liberty, but desirous of some civil power to protect his liberty. J. J. Rousseau proposed in his famous book *Social Contract* that early man was utterly carefree and independent. But he made a contract to live with others in society and consequently lost his freedom by the artificial restraints imposed on him by social life and organisation. Immanuel Kant followed Rousseau.

Others maintained that the state was a product of force and as such against nature. It was imposed on free and independent men by force, by the overpowering of one horde of men by others. Nic. Linguet (1767) was the first to teach that. Of the same opinion were J.G. Herder (1782) and especially L. Gumplowicz (1875), Fr. Ratzenhoffer and F. Oppenheimer (1926). However, their theories were not based on facts, but on preconceived speculations with a philosophical bias.

L.H. Morgan, on the other hand, held that the state was a natural human institution and believed that it was an outgrowth of the clan system. W. Schmidt and A. Knabenhaus shared his opinion, but they held that the state grew organically from the exogamous local group of the food-gatherers. It came into existence at an early period and was not introduced artificially by force or by mutual consent. Like the family, it is a natural and fundamental human institution, for it answers the fundamental human needs to gather into groups for
protection and for the promotion of social welfare. In fact, the good of man in his temporal achievement is the primary and immediate object of government. It is only in civic life that man can attain the full stature of his material and spiritual development, promote his rightful ambitions and adequately protect his rights and his liberty against the encroachment of others, while at the same time satisfying his innate propensity for group life. As no civic life is possible without a directive force, authority and submission to authority are essential for the existence of civic life.

Following W. Schmidt, we distinguish four essential elements of the state: a given population or community, a defined territory in which they live, freedom from foreign control and a government directing all subjects to the common good.

1. The State in the Food-gathering Stage of Culture

A. A Given Population or Community

If we assume that already the food-gatherers live in a state, they must fulfil the conditions just mentioned. And indeed, they do. The state of the food-gatherers has a given population; it is the local group. This is a cluster of individual families related by kinship. This local group owns the land on which it lives. It governs itself. It is exogamous, consequently it must entertain social relations with other groups for the purpose of marriage. The local group thus fulfils all conditions set to make it a political unit—a state.

The local group of the food-gatherers consists of a small number of individual families. Among the Yamanas, for instance, ten to fifteen families formed such a group, among the Congo Pygmies rarely more than six to twelve families, while the number of persons in the Andamanese local group was from twenty to fifty and in that of the South-East Australians from twenty to a hundred persons.

B. A Defined Territory

The local group is invariably the owner of a well defined territory on which it lives, hunts and collects vegetable food. The boundaries of the area claimed as property by each group are known and respected also by the neighbouring groups. They usually follow rivers, valleys, hill ridges, trees, rocks, or other natural markings. Only in exceptional cases do the food-gatherers require artificial landmarks. The territory of a local group cannot be sold, divided, or given away.
Such a territory, owned by the Andamanese local group, covers about sixteen square miles, while in the Australian desert the area owned by a local group may be much larger.

C. Freedom from Foreign Control

The violation of its territory is punished by the local group with the death of the trespasser. An exception is made only for messengers and pre-announced traders. Among the now extinct Tasmanians, a violation of the boundary was a cause for war. It is well known with what ferocity the Andamanese repel unwanted intruders. The Yamanas of Tierra del Fuego also defend their territory against outsiders. The Australian food-gatherers as well as the African Pygmies go to war to punish trespassers. But if, due to an increase of population, the territory of a local group becomes too small to support its members, the whole or a part of the area owned by a smaller group may be taken over either by force or by negotiation. But such cases are only reported from Australia.

Except in the case of murder or abduction of women, the local group of the food-gatherers resorts to war only when such violations of their territory occur. They believe that the territory occupied by them has been assigned to them by the Supreme Being, or by their ancestor or a culture hero. No one else has a right to take it from them. Primitive war, however, is not conducted till it results in the extermination of one local group. Often the issue is settled by negotiation after the first encounter in which just a few of the combatants are wounded or killed. Sometimes the dispute is settled by a duel. Contrary to the traditional theories, the food-gatherers are peace-loving; there is no war of all against all. Thus the Andamanese are generally peaceful; war ceases after one or two engagements. It is their women who make peace. The Semangs of Malaya and the Philippine Negritos never wage war, nor the Ituri and Gabun Pygmies, except against foreign intruders. The Pygmyoid Veddas and the South-East Australians have occasional fights and more often duels. In North America wars among the food-gatherers were in the past more frequent.

D. Its Own Government

The administration of a local group is organised on democratic lines. It is essentially a rule of the elders. Rivers called it a gerontocracy. In most cases of dispute the individual family or the kinsmen can restore the peace or punish the culprits without resort to the
council of the elders. But in serious cases the heads of the individual families are summoned to a council. This council then represents the territory of the local group. Its decisions are confined to that particular local group. The matters discussed in such meetings are usually murders and other grave transgressions, and disputes of an economic nature. But the judicial and executive functions of such a council come rarely into play because the code of the tribe is observed with remarkable fidelity. The council of the elders has no right to change or modify the tribal law determined by ancient custom and tradition; it can only apply it to a particular case.

In tribes which have no higher organisation than the local group the decision of the council of elders is final and no appeal to a higher authority is possible. Such tribes are the Caribou Eskimos, the Yamanas, Veddas, Andamanese and Semangs.

The council of the elders is in most food-gathering tribes headed by a chief. However, some food-gathering tribes do not have any chiefs, for instance, the Asiatic Negritos, the Kadar of South India, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego (except the Yamanas whose elders elected temporary chiefs for the initiation ceremonies), the Chukchees of Siberia, and others. Other tribes have chiefs, but their office is neither hereditary nor for life, as that of the Maidu and Yuki chiefs. In some tribes the chiefs hold their office for life, but it is not hereditary. The Kurnais and Kulins are such tribes. The latter grant to the heads of the family groups the right of voting for a new chief. Another system prevails among the Ituri Pygmies: there the oldest man of the local group is chief; on his death the next in seniority succeeds him. Only the Ainus have hereditary chiefs.

Among the food-gatherers no chief holds absolute authority and power. He is more a primus inter pares, the foremost of the elders. His authority rests chiefly on his personal qualities, his age, outstanding skill in hunting and fighting, generosity, experience, friendliness and fairness, eloquence and the like. All these qualities make him more easily acceptable in his community as an arbiter and peace-maker; but without the cooperation of the elders the chief is powerless.

The chief presides over the meetings of the elders in his group and sees to it that their resolutions are carried out. He also orders the change of camp, as among the Congo Pygmies; he supervises the distribution of the spoils, settles disputes and sanctions marriage arrangements. But usually he has no power to enforce obedience.

The members of a local group have various duties towards the
aged, sick or helpless; towards children and widows. Food is set apart for them. The sick and disabled are carried on their tribal wanderings; if they have to be abandoned in the end, this is not done without leaving them a store of food. The local group also enjoins the sparing use of the products of nature. It watches further over the observance of other rules with regard to social behaviour. The youths are instructed in special initiation rites.

One local group deals with other local groups of the tribe on a basis of social equality. There is no distinction of rank in most food-gathering societies; they recognise no nobility, nor do they know slavery. Social relations between the local groups are entertained through visits and gifts. Gift visits have a real social and economic value for the Andamanese, North Maidus and Wintus of North-Central California, the Coeur D’Alene of the Salish tribes, the Reindeer Eskimos and the Yamanas. Gift visits are unknown among the Congo Pygmies who live in a kind of symbiosis with the neighbouring Negro tribes.

Citizenship in this primitive state is acquired by going through the initiation ceremonies or puberty rites where such are customary. Otherwise it is acquired on reaching the age of maturity.

We thus see that in the food-gathering stage of culture the state organisation is at least in nucleo in existence. All the elements of a true state, though in rather rudimentary and elementary form, are present.

2. THE STATE AMONG THE PRIMITIVE FOOD-PRODUCERS

The primitive food-producers developed a much wider and richer conception of statecraft than the food-gatherers.

Already those tribes that have developed individual totemism are in a state of transition. The Montagnais of North America, for instance, have chiefs whose authority is accepted by all. Often they are the best hunters. Obedience is insisted upon, especially in the younger generation. The chiefs give the order to strike camp. They decide in which direction to migrate, and where to settle again. In each family, the father enjoys undisputed authority.

A. Among the Advanced Hunters

The tribes which engage mainly in hunting, while harvesting of wild fruits and agriculture are merely supplementary sources of livelihood for them, enlarged the basic political unit of the local group into a tribal unit with new and strong impulses for state-building activity
and political machinery, but also with definite checks and safeguards against too authoritarian an aristocracy.

The territory of a tribe is generally well defined and foreign intruders are fiercely repelled. But the boundaries of the areas owned by the individual clans and kinship groups are often less defined. At times two such groups may share a common hunting and harvesting ground. By mutual agreement several tribes may even create a so-called 'neutral territory' where they can meet for the purpose of trade, for social entertainment and cultural exchange.

The rule of the local group is now replaced by the government of the tribe or clan. Each tribe consists of a number of clans whose members are united by the feeling of blood relationship. This feeling of belonging together has been crystallised in a common name of the clan, the totem animal (or plant, or inanimate object). The local groups of the food-gatherers are nameless. Such is the feeling of solidarity among the totemistic tribes that members of the same clan or totem feel united even over wide areas. Among certain Sioux tribes the different clans are assigned different political functions: one may police the village, another provide the herald, a third may be employed to make peace, etc.

Another unifying element is the similarity of conduct for all clan members. The food-gatherers are individualists. But the members of a totemistic clan have common rules of conduct, common restrictions and taboos. They feel a mystical attachment to their totem. The various totem clans often wear distinctive totem marks and badges (paint or tattoo on the body), on houses, canoes, weapons and utensils. This is the custom of all totemistic tribes from the Torres Straits of Australia to Africa, and again on the West coast of North America. An exception are the totemistic Central Australians; but their totemism has degenerated.

A regularly recurring feature are magic dances, representing the totem animal or effecting its increase. They are led by the chief. This clan ceremonialism is another highly integrating principle.

Each clan has its chief, or at least a council of elders one of whom acts as its head. The authority of the council of elders and especially that of the chief rests on the conviction that they possess a greater share of the totem's magic power. Often the chief is also the magician.

But even though chieftainship may be hereditary, its power is still restricted. The elders retain much authority and the chief must take account of them. With them he discusses and decides affairs which
concern the tribe as a whole and transacts any business with outsiders.

Among the chief of the totem clans, the one possessing outstanding personal qualities or ruling the most numerous and powerful clan will be the tribal chief. Among the Algonkin and Salish tribes of North America this office is divided between two persons, one acting in peace-time, the other during a war. The same system is found in Alaska, widely in East Africa, on the Torres Straits and in New Guinea.

While the institution of the tribal council and tribal chieftainship is a great integrating force for the tribe, other factors also are active for greater tribal solidarity. One is clan exogamy. No clan member can marry within his clan. Men of one clan must choose their wives from other clans; thus the tribe is more united through ties of affinity.

Then there are in many totemistic tribes the institutions of age classes and youth dormitories. The younger male generation, and in some tribes also the young girls, are emancipated from their home and family and join associations which cut across family and clan. The different age classes and youth dormitories (male and female) have their own leaders, but ultimately they are governed by the tribal council and the chief, because they belong to the higher classes.

The activities of the youth dormitories and of the various age classes have an important part in political life and make all the members of these institutions conscious of their tribal unity. On the other hand, the clan idea keeps the impulse to autocracy within certain limits.

B. In Agrarian Cultures

The basic political unit in agrarian cultures is commonly the village community. In tribes which have advanced to primitive agriculture immediately from the food-gathering stage of culture, the village community is usually headed by a council of elders without a chief, or with a chief whose authority is purely nominal.

Such village communities are found, for instance, in Central India and New Guinea, but also on the Nicobar Islands. Among the Kar Nicobarese the headman of the village is a primus inter pares. He can command no strict obedience nor enforce the law. He works mainly through persuasion. The village is ruled by a council of elders, who are men of experience, age and wealth; they deliberate with the chief.
Among the Gahuka-Gamas of the Central Asaro valley in New Guinea on the other hand, each tribe comprises a number of named patrilineal clans. These clans are, in fact, mere local groups, in the sense, that most of the male members of a particular clan live in the same locality. Clan fellows believe that they have a common origin, though they cannot name their common ancestor. All members of a local group are of equal rank; they have no chiefs. Here again we find that the final arbiters of clan and tribe are the old men, individuals who have earned themselves "a name", either through prowess in warfare, or eloquence in public gatherings, or intelligence, affability, a sense of justice, and balance of mind. The same system prevails among the Kiwai Papuans.

In agrarian communities which formerly belonged to a totemistic hunting culture, the village community is generally formed by one or several totemistic clans with a hierarchically organised social system, a headman, enjoying considerable authority, a council of elders, and the rest of the people. Originally the village community consisted of families whose heads belonged to the same clan. Solidarity in such a group may be so strong that the individual families belonging to such a social group live in communal long-houses under a common roof like the Kelabits on Borneo, and the Hurons and Iroquois in North America.

The head of the village community is usually the head of the leading clan in the village. In communities with matrilineal organisation this may be a matron, but more often her brother acts as her deputy. The headman of the village is advised and supported by the council of elders. Among the matriarchal Iroquois of North America this council consisted of women. They administered the clan (village) property and distributed the field crops after the harvest among the individual families. The women also took charge of the prisoners that the men made. In other matriarchal tribes the council is manned by men, but the women have a strong influence in it.

In more advanced agrarian tribes several such village communities may be headed by a tribal chief. But his power is generally only nominal and of representative value. The village communities are largely independent, in the administration of the property as well as in matters of social and political import. They have also judicial and executive powers.

In these communities the secret societies are of particular political importance. They represent a new element in a primitive food-pro-
ducingsociety. They cut across clan and village associations, extend over tribal boundaries, and often have their own language, customs and rites. They represent the chief competition to tribal chieftainship.

C. Among the Nomadic Pastoralists

Among the tribes of Asia and Africa which specialise in pastoralism the patriarchal family is the basic political unit. The powerful patriarchal family controls and disposes of many matters which elsewhere are the affair of a larger and more complex body, of the state. Even blood vengeance is usually the task of the family.

The extended joint families remain practically independent; but many pastoralists form clans tracing descent to a common ancestor as for instance, the Buriats. The Bedouins have Sheikhs as clan heads; so also have the Hamitic Somalis in East Africa. The Gallas, Nandid and Masais have a tribal community consisting of families and clans. The whole tribe is divided into five sections (gada). The head of each gada in turn rules the whole tribe with self-appointed ministers for eight years.

The ancient Indo-Europeans, Israelites and Mongols had tribal sections of tens, hundreds and thousands.

The tasks of the tribal authority are first of all the settlement of property claims. The tribes have large herds, while pastures and watering places are often scarce. They also migrate seasonally from one pasture to another. Boundary marks on the land are absent. Thus there is plenty of provocation for land disputes, claims and transgressions, there are quarrels between neighbours, thefts, robberies and slayings. It is said of the cattle-breeders of southern Sudan, to give an example, that fierce fights costing many lives break out regularly between them, usually because of trespassing by one tribe on another's grazing area. The tribal authority must also see to the protection of its subjects against aggression. A weak tribe usually seeks the protection of a rich and powerful one. Then there is the subjugation of sedentary tribes (cultivators, artisans, etc.). All questions arising from the dealings with the subjects must be settled by the tribal authority.

Each tribe has its chief, but in primitive pastoralism he has personal authority only. His office is not hereditary; he enjoys more authority in war than in peace. In the advanced stages of pastoralism, however, the chiefs whose office is hereditary rule despotically. Often they claim divine honours; a heritage, no doubt, of their
former connection with the Middle East city states.

With regard to the vertical formation of animal-breeding communities, primitive and advanced pastoralists have different customs. This may be indicative of the trend of social evolution in these communities. The primitive pastoralists have no ranks and classes; the Altai Turcs, for instance, who belong to this part of animal-breeders have no nobility, and are without priestly and occupational classes.

But among the more advanced pastoralists we find a vertical division of the tribe into aristocrats, commoners and subjugated peoples, including slaves. The Buriats of Central Asia are an example of this. Aristocrats and commoners have the same ancestors; but the aristocrats claim to be the first-born descendants of the first-born son of the tribal ancestor, while the commoners are the junior descendants of the tribal ancestor. Apart from the tribal community, there exist two hereditary occupational classes—the shamans and the smiths.

A division into aristocrats, commoners and subjugated peoples was the rule also in East Africa and in the Congo. The rulers of the small kingdoms in this part of Africa belonged to the cattle breeding upper class. They were generally treated like gods and surrounded by an elaborate ceremonial. Thus in Uganda various tribes were united under a king; each tribe had a special duty to perform for the ruler. The number of officials at the court was enormous. In Buganda the kingdom was divided into ten districts, ruled by chiefs; two—the highest—stayed with the king. They met at irregular intervals at the king's pleasure. The king wielded more or less despotic power. Among the Shilluks the kingdom was divided into four major and two lesser provinces. The king received a share of all the spoils in the hunt. He was killed when he fell seriously ill, for sickness could not be reconciled with his divine nature.

Thus the rudimentary forms of the political organisation in the food-gathering stage of culture had an astonishingly varied and complex development already in the primitive stages of the food-producing culture. This suggests that man became politically minded early. Almost all basic political forms are in existence in primitive food-producing society. Modern civilisation did not invent many new forms, but only elaborated the rudimentary elements of political organisation among the primitive communities.
CHAPTER XIV

Law and Justice

The social and political organisation of a human group cannot be sustained unless it is supported by definite laws and rules which must be enforced with justice and firmness.

1. Definition

Law consists thus of a set of principles which permit the use of force to maintain the social and political organization of a definite society within a given territory. It is distinguished from usage and custom because in law an authority is charged, by either common approval or sanction, to deal with the violation of a norm.

A.E. Hoebel has described four main functions of the law: defining relationships, allocating the power of coercion, handling cases of trouble, and adapting social relations to changing conditions of life.

All primitive societies are ruled by law, either in an embryonic or a more developed form. The primitives are not at all "lawless savages." In no stage of primitive society is lawless license the rule. Nor are J.J. Rousseau and the eighteenth and nineteenth century romantics correct in maintaining that primitive man, being in a state of nature and unaffected by the corruptions of civilisation, demonstrated in his conduct the virtue and honour inherent in man. Primitive man was always aware of the fact that he needed laws as well as their sanctions, penalties involving force that may be imposed for the violation of a particular norm.

2. Origin of Law

The tradition is current in many primitive societies that the Supreme Being, or the Maker of the World, the first ancestor or a culture hero, instituted and promulgated the tribal law. The question of altering this law, consequently, does not arise; the tribal authority can merely apply it to particular cases.

All the African Pygmies, the Samoyeds of the North, the Ainus,
the Algonkin tribes and the North-Central Californian food-gatherers, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego and the South-East Australian tribes maintain that the Supreme Being is the author of the moral code. Moreover, he has ordered the performance of the initiation ceremonies in which these moral precepts of the tribe are taught to the younger generation. Such ceremonies are held regularly by the Ituri Pygmies, the aborigines of the Andaman Islands and of South-East Australia, the Algonkin and Sioux tribes, the food-gatherers of North-Central California and of Tierra del Fuego. During the initiation the adolescent boys and girls are instructed in the knowledge of God, in prayer and sacrifice. They are also taught to obey and respect their elders, to avoid unjustified homicide and injury to fellow men, honesty and helpfulness to others, and to observe the sex mores prevalent in the tribe. They are taught not to commit adultery, fornication, unnatural vices and, at least in some tribes, they are enjoined to observe prenuptial chastity.

In the primitive food-producing cultures, on the other hand, it is generally no more the Supreme Being—now often an otiose deity—who is the author of the moral code, but a culture hero, or the tribal ancestor. This is so among most totemistic tribes as also in many agrarian cultures. Only the nomadic pastoralists of Asia and Africa hold that the High-God is the giver of the tribal law. This conviction is very strong among the Mongol tribes and it is also found among the Gallas of southern Abyssinia. The Nuers of Sudan consider their High-God a jealous and all-righteous god who demands right conduct from his people.

3. LAW MAKING

Convinced that they received their moral law from a supernatural agency, the primitives do not usually claim the right to introduce new laws and to modify the existing ones. In fact, primitive society makes no conscious and deliberate attempt at promulgating any laws. The legal machinery for passing and enforcing such laws is lacking. The process by which customs and usages receive the status and sanction of law is slow and spontaneous.

For the primitives are keen on preserving their freedom to the utmost. Only the fact that a particular custom or usage is in force since the hoary past and is an indispensable necessity for the order of tribal society can induce public opinion to impose enforcement and to punish offenders against it, and thus make it a law. Conse-
quently primitive law is more or less identical with ethical norms and public opinion. The ethical norms and principles are handed on from generation to generation not only through the ritual of initiation, but also through an informal education by the elders in society.

4. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Evolutionists held that primitive society, "steeped in the throes of unbridled lawlessness, violence and disorder", had need of only criminal law. This is not correct. Primitive man knows the essentials of the moral code. He has a definite conception of right and wrong. It is not merely an instinct for the "useful" (Hobhouse). The conceptions of what is 'right' and 'wrong' may differ in the various stages of culture, but all tribes have a sense of morality. Even in the most primitive societies interpersonal relations are governed by fixed status and well-defined custom; this also applies to property and inheritance rights. Thus primitives know a civil as well as a criminal law.

In India there exist, or existed in the past, the so-called 'Criminal Castes and Tribes', who were alleged to lead a life of crime. They are partly tribes of the food-gathering stage of culture who have been deprived of their hunting and collecting grounds, but do not recognise this and still carry on their old manner of foraging in jungle and field. The other criminal communities carry on their anti-social activities because they consider all outsiders their enemies as a result of some act of injustice done to them in the past. They do not steal or rob from each other, and they observe all the rules and regulations of their community faithfully.

If anywhere, a state of unbridled lawlessness, violence and disorder has prevailed for centuries among the nomadic peoples of the mountains in Pakistan and Afghanistan. There is continuous inter-tribal fighting—over waterplaces, grazing grounds, property and animals. Blood revenge is rampant and decimates families and clans. There is general mutual and deep distrust. Still, even these tribes have a few rudimentary laws which all observe faithfully: to give food and shelter to all who ask for it; to grant asylum to all in need of it; and to retaliate against any form of attack.

Among the Bedouins of Arabia raiding and warfare are common occurrences; life is cheap among them. Yet they consider taking a false oath, committing adultery, killing one's guest and robbing him among the things which doom the Bedouin to hell. Hospitality is
sacred and a guest is fed and entertained at least for three days; he
is given asylum, again for three days. If they are asked for a favour
they feel in honour bound to grant it.

Similar customs prevail among other shepherd races.

5. ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW

Primitive Law works differently from modern Law. The applica-
tion of the legal sanctions is a problem in primitive society. As the
number of persons in a social group is small and they are generally
related by blood, primitive law is largely conceived in terms of the
kinship bond. It is not applied impersonally and automatically. On
the whole, all political and social organisation is conceived in terms
of these personal bonds and enforced through an appeal to them.

Thus the food-gatherers, and usually also the tribes of a more
advanced culture, hold the kinship group responsible for the actions
of its individual member. If a member of the local group has failed
in his proper conduct, the group conscience is pricked as though it
were an organic whole. The kinship group bears the consequences
of a wrong action perpetrated by an individual member. If a com-
ensation must be paid or restitution made, the kinsmen help out.
But if such offences become frequent and a person becomes, as it
were, a habitual law-breaker, his kinsmen may expel him from their
community or even take his life. For he is a potential danger to the
survival of the whole group. Even mere expulsion from the kinship
or local group usually spells death for the culprit, since no single
food-gatherer can live by himself for long, the more so as he would
not be accepted by any other group.

Justice is often administered through the kinship group. An
offence or injury to one person is felt as an affront by the whole
group. Only among a few tribes, as, for instance, among the Anda-
manese, the South East Australians and others, is justice left to the
aggrieved party. A person who has been wronged may shoot an
arrow at his enemy or throws a spear or burning faggot at him. The
neighbours play their part by running away and hiding till the fight
is over. Adulterers are beaten or wounded by spear thrusts or arrow
shots, though rarely fatally.

The observance of primitive law and custom is enforced most
effectively by pressure of public opinion. It not only prevents the
breach of law, but when such offences occur, it also enjoins the
punishment of the culprit. Public opinion is compelling in a social
group in which the number of individuals is small. The offender usually feels the public censure or ridicule of his social group so keenly that he willingly undergoes any punishment meted out to him and not rarely even commits suicide. In some more advanced communities thieves, murderers and adulterers are forced by public opinion to commit suicide when their crime has been made public.

A further reason for the remarkably faithful observance of the tribal law is the feeling of interdependence and mutual obligation among the members of a social group. The primitives are generally well aware of the fact that the survival of the individual as well as of the whole social group depends on the strict observance of the tribal law.

An equally strong and compelling reason is the fear of supernatural vengeance for any breach of the moral code. Many food-gatherers believe that the Supreme God, or the tribal ancestor, is not only the law-giver, but that he also watches over the observance of the law and punishes the law-breakers. Among many totemistic tribes this fear is particularly strong with regard to the totem taboo.

The conviction that the Supreme God rewards a good action and punishes a bad one is very common among the food-gatherers. Some declare that the reward for doing good consists in a long life on earth, while the evil-doers die young. So say the Wiradjuris and Kulins of South-East Australia. The Semangs, Andamanese and Ainu also believe that the Supreme God punishes certain sins with death. Though some tribes like the Semangs and Batwas of Ruanda, maintain that all sins must be atoned for in this world and that there is no distinction between the good and wicked in the other world, many other tribes hold that the souls are judged after death by the Supreme God or his deputy and sent according to their merits to a place of happiness or to punishment. This is the conviction of the South Andamanese, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, the Wiradjuris and Yuins of South-East Australia, while the Kamaroys of the same region believe that the wicked souls are simply annihilated. The Batwas of Ruanda and Burundi, the Kalinga Negritos and the Semangs hold that the souls of wicked people lead a shadow life, separated from the good, in or under the earth. The Pte-Temiar Semangs believe that at the end of the world their Supreme God will plunge those guilty of offences like murder, theft, and other sins, into a cauldron of boiling water. God shows his anger by sending torrential rains and storms.
The same conviction governs ethical life among the nomadic animal breeders of Asia and Africa. The Tibeto-Mongolians believe in a lord of the nether-world who judges the souls of the dead and sends them, according to their merits either to one of the five heavens, to a place of temporary punishment or to one of the numerous hells. The Mongols have sixteen or eighteen of them, the Kalmucks eight large and four smaller hells. The souls are confined to punishment in hell for astronomically long periods. The Nuers of Sudan believe that God punishes deviation from right conduct by sickness, death or other misfortune if it is not speedily confessed and atoned for. Beyond a vague belief in a survival of the soul after death, they have no eschatology. The Fans of the Congo, on the other hand, hold that the souls of those guilty of transgression of the tribal law wander by night in the dark forest, chattering with cold and fear.

The totemistic hunting tribes, especially those of North America, do not generally hold that the Supreme Being punishes evil-doers and rewards the virtuous. For them the fate of the soul in the other world depends more on the correct and frequent performance of certain magical rites. This is, for instance, the belief of the Nascapi Indians of Labrador (North America). They hold that the soul survives the body and is reborn after death. An immoral life in this world has no bad effects on the next life; however, the soul is good by nature and abhors lying. The soul substance can be increased by magical rites (singing, dancing, sweating, smoking, eating meat, especially bear's meat, and by meditation). Several Red Indian tribes of North America have special associations which perform a complex ritual to insure the welfare of their members after death. The Midewiwin Society of the Ojibwas is one of them. Admission to it is gained by payment of a fee. The totemistic tribes of Africa and South-East Asia commonly believe that the souls of the dead return to their totem spirit and can only be reborn if their bodies are kept intact with skin and bones; but their good or bad actions in this life have no effect on their fate in a future life.

6. Motives for Moral Behaviour

The moral behaviour of the totemistic tribes, however, is much influenced by their fear of the totem spirit who punishes breaches of the taboo law with death, misfortune or sickness (especially skin diseases). Particularly abhorrent to them is the sin of incest.
For most agrarian tribes the connection between religion and ethical teaching has been sundered as for the totemistic tribes. The Supreme Being is generally held to be of little importance; life after death in the nether-world is not influenced by the good or bad actions of this life, but by the funeral rites which the surviving relatives perform. In India, however, most primitive agrarian tribes believe that the souls of those who lead a bad life have a difficult passage on their way to the nether-world. They are punished for some time, in a pond full of worms, but after that all reach the abode of God, to be reborn after some time in a new-born child of their tribe and family.

Just as the hunting tribes have their associations which in a special way take care of the welfare of their members after death, so many agrarian tribes have their secret societies to perform these last duties.

A strict observance of the tribal mores, which in primitive society is equivalent to a ‘good moral life’, is enjoined not so much by religious motives, but by the fear of offending the gods and spirits. Any breach of the tribal law is believed to lay man open to the influence of evil spirits always bent on harming human beings. But even otherwise benevolent gods may become revengeful if offended by a transgression of particular tribal laws. The only remedy is the speedy expiation of the sin and the propitiation of the slighted deity or spirit. Among the agrarian tribes of Central India as well as of Africa and elsewhere, many magicians and soothsayers are employed just for the purpose of discovering such sins and to indicate the deities that cause distress and the manner in which they can be appeased. For, a breach of the tribal law by an individual may become a danger to the whole community. The Karens of Burma for instance, believe that a secret sin might cause drought. The Khasis in northeastern India attribute a bad harvest to the sin of incest. Tribes in West Africa hold that sexual intercourse before initiation took place causes failure of the crops.

7. TRIAL AND PUNISHMENT

As a transgression of the tribal law may bring harm upon the whole community, primitive society considers itself well justified in punishing offenders. In the exercise of primitive justice the establishment of guilt is important. Guilt can be brought out in various ways, by a trial with witnesses and jury, by oath or by ordeal.

In the food-gathering stage of culture the establishment of guilt
is generally no serious problem, as every action of each member of the small local group is known to others. Forms of trial, oath or ordeal are therefore weakly developed among food gatherers. Thus the Andamanese have no oath or ordeal, nor any official trial of offenders. The Western Eskimos establish the guilt of a suspect through a boxing match in which the loser is considered the guilty party. The Australians fight duels for the same purpose. In Africa, and particularly in Madagascar, the ordeal by poison was very common. The cultivating tribes of Central India have various devices to discover the guilt of suspect persons by ordeal. They force them to dip their hands in hot oil and then grip a red-hot iron; or they tie them hand and foot and throw them into a pond or river; if they float, they are guilty; if they are drowning, they are innocent and speedily taken out of the water.

Oaths are another common practice in the jurisprudence of these tribes. The strong conviction in the efficacy of such oaths makes their abuse very rare. In Samoa, for instance, the chief may order all the suspects to pass in single file and to call upon themselves the curse of the village god if they are guilty.

In more advanced primitive societies trials with witnesses and a jury are an established form of primitive justice. Such trials with public hearings are common in Africa as well as in aboriginal India. Usually all male members of the community attend. A sense of justice and a knowledge of tribal law are thus acquired from youth. The headman of the community or the chief of the clan or tribe is the judge, while the elders and sometimes the whole assembly of males form the jury. In the formulation of his verdict the chief or headman cannot easily overrule the opinion of the jury. Guilt is established by witnesses and evidence, by oath, ordeal and not rarely even by torture.

Most primitive communities take the seriousness of the crime into account when they fix the amount of punishment. Among the food-gatherers there may sometimes be no fixed institution for the punishment of crimes. Justice is left to the aggrieved party, as among the Andamanese, or to the kinship group. Thus a relative may avenge the murder of a person, though he is not really obliged to do so. Generally any acts of violence are disapproved by public opinion and a homicide may have to absent himself from his own group till the excitement has subsided. This happens in all cases when no other punishment is possible.
In culturally more advanced societies punishment is meted out by the kinship group, the clan or tribal chiefs or the headmen of a village community. The various officials of certain age-groups often have executive powers; so it is, for instance, among the Red Indians of North America. Among the advanced hunting tribes the conviction of communal responsibility is so intense that the clan as a group will avenge any harm to a clan mate. It need not be that the offender is punished in person, but one of his clan fellows must: a clan mate for a clan mate. Among the animal-breeding tribes it is the patriarch who is the judge and often also the executor of the verdict.

Generally the extent of punishment is not influenced by the question whether an action was deliberate or not; nor is provoked an excuse. The result of the action is important, not the intention or the motive.

The amount of punishment is graded according to the seriousness of the crime. Even in more advanced societies a rough sense of justice often results in an attitude of ruthlessness and brutality. Punishment consists of various forms: the death penalty, mutilation, fines, and only rarely imprisonment. A common punishment is expulsion from the tribal society forever or for a certain period of time. Compensation to the aggrieved party is another common form of punishment.

Among the Ibos of Nigeria, for instance, a thieving servant would have his hands put between two huge stones and crushed. A stranger caught in the act of stealing would be cut to pieces and eaten. A murderer was expected to hang himself to expiate his crime. Many primitive tribes punish those who allegedly indulge in black magic and witchcraft with death. Among many totemistic and pastoral tribes blood revenge is a sacred institution. If the actual perpetrator of the crime is not available for punishment, a member of his kinship group or clan, however innocent, may suffer for him. This blood revenge is carried out by kinsmen of the wronged party. Among the Bedouins and Afghans blood revenge may thus be carried on between two families till the final extermination of one of them.

In these courts of justice not only are cases of criminal law judged and culprits sentenced, but also disputes of a civil nature, land claims, property and inheritance problems, debts, marriage arrangements and divorce, service contracts, and many other affairs of the community life are discussed and settled with an often brilliant display of oratory, mental acumen and a vast knowledge of tribal lore.
CHAPTER XV

Property Concepts

One of the most important society-building factors is property. For this reason the property concepts of the primitives must be discussed here and their evolution sketched from the food-gathering stage of culture to the various stages of food-producing culture.

The traditional theories about the origin of property concepts agree in one point, namely, that at the beginning of the human race property did not exist at all. So said the Positivists (A. Comte, 1839): at first there existed no property. When social life developed, some individuals and groups excluded others from the use of certain goods; the property concepts came into being. The Individualists also stated that at first there was no private property; it originated only in a later stage of progressive civilisation. The Socialists, too, maintained that in the pure state of nature man possessed no private property. They considered private property as a deterioration or antithesis of the ideal state of nature. Karl Marx took the proofs for his historical materialism from Morgan’s Ancient Society. F. Engels and A. Bebel did likewise. E. de Laveleye’s Primitive Property followed very much the same line. But later studies showed that the theory of primitive communism is correct only with regard to land.

We have now to consider under distinct headings the property concepts of the food-gatherers and those of the primitive food-producers.

1. Property Concepts of the Food-gatherers

We shall first consider the forms of property concerned with immovable goods, i.e., the land, and objects connected with the land. In the primitive culture of the food-gatherers land is not cultivated, but is merely used as nature determines, for gathering fruits and herbs, for hunting and fishing. In this stage of economy land is nowhere the exclusive property of individuals. The owner of the land is always a group of families that stand in close blood-relationship
to one another. This large interrelated group may be called a loose joint family because it includes in the union of a man and a woman also the families of their children and children's children. It differs from a joint family in the strict sense of the word because the married sons maintain, with their respective families, an independent household and are expected to give only a limited amount of economic assistance to their parents or parents-in-law. The primitive food gatherers thus do not live in joint families in which the head of the family is the sole and absolute owner of all the property including that of his children and grandchildren. This latter system is prevalent among the nomadic cattle breeders of Asia and Africa.

It is the family group which holds a tract of land in joint possession. For this reason it may also be called a territorial or local group. Land is owned by such a group among the Chenchus, a nomadic tribe of hunters and food-collectors in Andhra (India), among the Andamanese, and the Negritos of Luzon on the Philippine Islands. Among the latter the area occupied by a family group rarely extends beyond a radius of twenty miles. The North-American Cree, of Algonkin stock, live in small scattered groups, each group about thirty miles distant from the other. Though theoretically the territory belongs to the tribe in common, the individual groups keep within a certain area and rarely change their hunting grounds.

Among the Batwa Pygmies of Zaire also the land is owned by the local family groups, while among the Bambuti Pygmies of the Ituri it is a larger group that represents itself as the joint owner of the land. The same is true of the Semangs in Malaya of whom it is said that each Negrito group, though shifts of camp are frequent, has its own recognised beat or territory and does not, as a general rule, move outside this.

Only in rare cases, as among the North-East Algonkins, the Veddas, and some South-East Australian tribes is the land owned by individual families (in the strict sense of the word, i.e., consisting of husband and wife and their children only) This exception is probably due to influence from superior agrarian cultures around them. Of the Algonkins it is said that there is a strong indication that in former times the land was owned by the tribe of the family group, and not by individual families.

The ownership of landed property, vested in the loose joint family, is an imperfect one, in the sense that such property cannot be disposed of by any one, neither by the family group, nor by a
single family, least of all by a particular individual. Not even a chief possesses such power; as a matter of fact, many of these primitive tribes do not have real chiefs.

The idea of acquiring landed property by purchase or conquest is at this stage of culture entirely absent and even inconceivable; only one single instance of such a kind is known, in the border region of northern New South Wales. All Pygmy tribes, the North-Central Californians, the Salish, and the various tribes of Tierra del Fuego consider the Creator himself as the true owner of the land. They believe that he has distributed the land among the different races, tribes and family groups for their sustenance.

In this culture land is not a well-defined plot on which a family lives and thrives, but a wide living and hunting ground within the limits of which kindred groups of families move about in search of food which nature provides. The land serves more as a basis for procuring a livelihood. From the natural produce of the land the women collect fruits, vegetables, roots and tubers, while the men procure animal food by hunting and fishing. The sustenance of the family group and the security of existence are based on the inalienability of the land on which each family group lives. This ownership, however, is not maintained in an exclusive and selfish spirit; it is modified by the needs and requirements of their fellowmen. The owners permit any other family group to collect food and hunt on their land if for some reasons the other group is unable to live on the resources of their own land. It is understood that this permission is only granted for temporary use and that certain conditions must be fulfilled: the collected food must satisfy an immediate need and may not be stored for further use. Further, a certain portion of the yield must be handed over to the proprietors, or presents of corresponding value must be given. However, the tribes will only in cases of extreme necessity avail themselves of such permission; they much prefer to hunt and collect their food on their own land. On a journey a man may collect enough food for his immediate needs on any of the lands en route, but he is not allowed to carry any of the produce over the boundary.

The boundaries of the tracts of land owned by the local groups are always well defined though they are rarely marked by artificial signs or fences. Usually these boundaries follow natural landmarks, hill ridges, rivers, certain trees, rocks, etc. Only the Veddas of Sri Lanka, the Pomas and Maidus of California and the West Kulins of
Australia have artificial signs to mark the boundaries of their land; but these tribes have to some extent been in contact with agrarian tribes of the neighbourhood.

Neighbours with adjoining land know the boundaries and observe them strictly. Trespassing on other territories is extremely rare and would be considered a serious offence. It might lead to fierce quarrels and even bloodshed. The Bushmen observe among themselves the property rights to their hunting territory very strictly. It is well defined and clearly bounded. Trespassing into the territory of another group may lead to serious complications. If one is caught hunting or gathering on strange land he can be killed. Of the Chenchus in Andhra (India) it is said that a man may only hunt in those lands to which he has a right. Even today the boundaries of hunting and collecting grounds belonging to the various settlements are nominally respected, but in the old times the least infringement of the boundaries gave rise to inter-village quarrels which sometimes led to bloodshed.

While in these food-gathering cultures land is vested in the local family groups, certain immovable goods, connected with land, are owned by individual families. For these tribes consider that labour expended on any product creates a right entitling the labourer to unrestricted ownership, though that same product as long as it lies fallow is the communal property of the whole group on whose land it flourishes. Thus these objects become property in the strict sense of the word, because they are inheritable and transferable. This ownership does not apply to the land itself, but to certain objects on or in the land. For instance, certain particularly valuable trees are owned by individuals. Thus the Andamanese claim the ownership of certain fruit trees, or of trees the wood of which they require for the building of canoes. The Semangs of Malaya consider trees as individual property the fruits of which are edible or from which they extract the poison for their darts. The Bushmen consider the right of using a water-place as a heritage from their forefathers; it is held sacred as scarcely any other right. The water scarcity in South Africa easily explains why the Bushmen are so strict in the observance of property rights with regard to water places within their habitat.

Similar property concepts prevail among the Negritos of North Luzon, the Ituri Pygmies of Inner Africa, the tribes of North-Central California, the Algonkins, and the South-East Australians. Elsewhere certain plots of land are the exclusive property of families
where valuable plants for food or medicine grow or in which useful material is found. Thus the Ituri Pygmies consider as their individual property the giant ant-heaps which they raid for their eggs, the nests of caterpillars and trees with beehives. The Ojibwa Indians individually own certain fields of wild paddy. Among the North-American Crees the hunter who first discovers a beaver lodge becomes by that very fact the owner thereof. He marks the lodge by planting a stick or post, and his mark is respected by everybody. The Worunjeris of South-East Australia have their individually-owned quarries where they cut stones for their axe-heads. Elsewhere the nests of certain birds are individual property, or beehives, as among the Negritos of the Philippines, the Bushmen of the Kalahari, the Mountain Damas. The Inland Salish individually own the nests of eagles whose feathers they require for their arrows; the Kurnais of Australia own the nests of the black swan whose eggs they relish. The arctic tribes individually own natural fish-holes which by artificial improvement they have rendered more productive. The Katkaris of Maharashtra (India) often build river weirs for fishing. These weirs are frequently a joint concern of the whole group, but each vault accommodating ten to twelve fish traps is the property of one Katkari householder.

Almost everywhere the individual ownership is acquired by the *jus primi occupantis*, i.e., by the person who first finds and uses the object in question for his own personal benefit. However, the object though useful and valuable for the individual, must not be essential for the very existence of the whole group or the tribe; in such a case it could not be claimed as exclusive property by an individual. Thus the Chenchus who are more food-gatherers than hunters consider fruit-trees as an essential property of the whole group. Even the bananas which a Chenchu plants are the property of the whole community and the fruit is shared by all the members of a settlement.

Also, taking possession of an object must be marked by an artificial sign: among several tribes it is sufficient if the acquisition is expressed by word only, as among the Andamanese, else the acquired object is made recognisable as such by clearing the bush around it or by a heap of stones, the planting of a stick or post near the object, etc. Once an object is thus marked, its use by other members of the tribe or by outsiders would be considered theft and severely punished.
From the acquisition of immovable property in this manner we may be able to reconstruct the origin of matriarchy. When woman advanced from merely collecting herbs and plants to planting and cultivating them, she established a proprietary claim on the particular plot of land which she cultivated. The labour spent on the plot gave her a right to consider it her property as long as she had it under cultivation. Once this ownership was vested in individual women and became permanent, it gave rise to that peculiar cultural complex which we call mother-right.

The individualistic school of K. Bucher held that primitive man, just like the superior animals, hunted and collected food in solitude. The early Socialists, on the other hand, believed that at the dawn of mankind man could not exist as an individual, nor even as an individual family, but lived, hunted and collected vegetable food in loose disorderly hordes.

Both assumptions appear to be incorrect; the most primitive peoples of the world, the food-gatherers, live in small family groups, not singly or in disorderly hordes. Accordingly the food collected by them is also not the exclusive property of the one who collects it, nor the collective property of the whole horde to which he belongs. Actually, the vegetable food which a man or woman collects is transformed by labour from communal to individual property. Similarly animals killed in the chase become the property of the hunter through the effort he takes in chasing and killing them. In the latter case, however, there is usually a tacit understanding among men out hunting together that all spoils should be shared according to customary rules. In support of this general rule rather than in opposition to it, the author of a monograph on the Katkaris, a nomadic tribe of the Deccan, states that the Katkaris prefer to hunt alone, because they do not want too many sharers in the kill. If the animal is too big to be eaten by his family, the successful hunter sells a portion of the meat to the villagers.

When an individual has been successful in his search for food, he brings it home where it is prepared by a woman of the family for immediate consumption. At the meal all the members of the family—husband, wife and children—take part; in this they are conspicuously at variance with later superior cultures. The individual ownership of this food produce is, consequently, of short duration; it lasts only until it is prepared for consumption. Especially in the warm climates food is, due to lack of means of preservation, never kept in
store very long. Individual ownership of natural products, therefore, has scarcely developed beyond its initial stage.

Still, there is no doubt about the definite concepts of ownership which the primitives maintain concerning natural products of the land. These are indisputably private property and the rights to them are defended, despite the fact that they are sometimes shared with outsiders. Theft of food from the caches, or of animals caught in traps, is punished by beatings and sometimes death. The tribes of Tierra del Fuego punish a thief by destroying his whole property and breaking his canoe. The title on which such property is acquired rests undoubtedly on the labour and trouble which the individual spent in collecting this food. But since in the food-gathering stage of culture food is not really "produced", but only collected ready-made, the primitive is convinced that such food is ultimately the absolute property of the Creator. For it is he who, according to the belief of most primitives, has created food and made it ready for consumption by man. This supreme property right of the Creator is acknowledged by a great number of tribes by the performance of the so-called primitial sacrifice. They honour him as the 'Provider' of their food, as the 'Lord and Master' of the creation, by offering him the first fruits of the forest and the best portion of the animals caught. The primitial offering is performed by most of the Pygmy tribes, the Bushmen, the arctic tribes, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, the Algonkins and the Salish, and in India by the Katkars, the Kadar and the Chenchus. Other tribes like the North-Central Californians and South-East Australians, perform solemn ceremonies in remembrance of the creation of the world.

While the Creator, so the primitives believe, has granted them the usufruct of the earth and its products, he has at the same time imposed upon them as a double responsibility, first, the sparing and careful use of his goods, and, secondly, the altruistic share of the same with indigent fellow men. These obligations, since time immemorial sacred traditions among these tribes, are impressed upon the younger generation in solemn rites of initiation.

Among many tribes it is the custom to render all possible assistance to such persons who through age, sickness or a great number of children are unable to maintain themselves. They also take good care that food is not wasted. If the Eskimos, for instance, make a kill on one of their journeys and are unable to carry along all the meat, they prepare a cache and deposit the meat in a safe place.
Every traveller is permitted to take as much meat as he needs. There are many such caches in those regions. The Andamanese only store food for the use of friends who may chance to visit the encampment.

Such donations of foodstuff are not only made to people who are actually in need of food, but as an expression of affection and friendship also to others. M. Gusinde says of the tribes of Tierra del Fuego that it is their highest ambition to be considered generous and selfless. A successful hunter distributes his booty among his relatives and neighbours; guests and friends also get a share. Rasmussen says of the Eskimos that they are extremely helpful and generous to a fault. Of the Chenchus it is reported that a lone hunter leaves his kill and fetches the other men of the settlement so that together they skin the animal and divide up the meat.

Widespread among these primitive tribes is the custom of a mutual offering of presents in the form of foodstuff to relatives and friends. Such donations are frequently on a very generous scale, and are returned when occasion offers itself. There are ample proofs of this generosity, often expressed in a most attractive and touching form, among the African and Asiatic Pygmies, the Veddas of Sri Lanka, the North-Central Californians, the Salish and the South-East Australians. One of the reasons prompting immediate division of foodstuff, especially of meat, is the impossibility of preserving it for any length of time. But a more pressing motive is undoubtedly that the common consumption of the food is an occasion of great enjoyment and moreover enhances the reputation of the successful hunter or clever collector considerably. It is especially for these reasons that the exchange of presents is practised by the arctic tribes, who otherwise have no difficulty in storing ample meat supplies for times of need and are not forced by a warm climate to get rid of surplus food.

Though the primitives firmly assert their rights in regard to natural products they feel bound by certain obligations imposed by the Supreme Being relating to a selfless and sparing use of these products. More assertive, however, are their claims in regard to objects which they really produce by the work of their hands, such as their habitation, clothing, ornaments, household utensils, tools and weapons. The value of these articles, as a means of protection or decoration, as tools or weapons, has been created by human exertion and skill. Consequently the producer of these objects feels himself their owner in a higher degree, and also has more liberty in their dis-
posals. The rights of property are, therefore, more pronounced in the possession of such articles than in the use of foodstuffs or landed property. Thus the hut which is usually erected by the woman and is the centre of her activity is looked upon almost everywhere as her property in the strict sense of the word. Among the Ituri Pygmies a wife may even forbid her husband to enter the hut if he has not supplied the family with sufficient food. Her authority in this respect is even greater with regard to strangers. Of the Andamanese we hear that among them the rights of private property are so far recognised that no one would without permission appropriate or remove to a distance anything belonging to a friend or neighbour.

Complete and absolute individual property concepts are consequently not at all absent in the most primitive stage of culture; they are, indeed, rather more definite and pronounced here than in later and superior cultures. Indiscriminately all individuals may own property, men as well as women, and even children, and these property rights are respected rigorously by all more strictly than in later stages of culture. If it is true that every acquisition of property is an increase of self-assertion and an invigoration of one's personality, we come to the obvious conclusion that the primitives are not at all devoid of personality and self-assertion.

In spite of the pronounced character of ownership concerning real products of man, the generous attitude of the primitives in giving away their property also extends to such articles. Among the Andamanese, for instance, almost every object in their possession continuously changes hands, and of the Yamanas of Tierra del Fuego a keen observer says that apparently they manufacture and acquire such articles for the pleasure of giving them away. This generosity is particularly apparent on the occasion of visits. Whole families may go for a visit and stay for days or weeks with other families and even distant tribal groups. They bring with them many presents for their hosts, are themselves well entertained and generously treated, and return home loaded with presents. After some time the visits are returned and the former guests in turn entertain their hosts with, if possible, even greater display of generosity and affection. Such mutual visits are customary among the Andamanese, the Eskimos, the North-Central Californians, the Salish, the Algonkins, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, and the African Bushmen. Through such visits the small tribal groups, lost in the vast solitude of the lonely jungle or wilderness, and separated from other groups
by great distances, escape the stagnation and dullness which such isolation breeds and gain new zest in life and a strong feeling of solidarity with their fellow tribesmen.

The exchange of gifts on such visits is not so much prompted by economic as by social motives. They are an expression of mutual esteem and affection. It must, however, be admitted that economic considerations are not wholly absent. This exchange of gifts has indeed sometimes developed into a veritable trading of gifts. This has prompted some to see in this usage the real origin of trade. But at this stage of primitive economy a proper and extensive trade is still unknown, for the simple reason that the tribal groups are largely self-supporting and are not much in need of articles which they can produce themselves. Further, the social relations generally do not extend over sufficiently distant parts of the country as to allow an exchange of a great variety of goods which could be produced in one but not in the other part of the tribal area. Consequently only where conditions were particularly favourable could such trade develop, as in North-Central California and in South-East Australia, and even there only in the neighbourhood and under the influence of superior cultures. The Andamanese still prefer to call their transactions of this type 'presents', but in the hope of receiving in return something for which they have expressed a wish, it being tacitly understood that no 'present' would be accepted without an equivalent being rendered. Of the North-American Crees we are also told that such an exchange of presents is very common and takes the place of barter.

Where the food-gatherers are not prepared to part with their property, they often give it away on loan. No remuneration whatsoever is demanded by any primitive tribe for the loan of an article by which a real and pressing need is satisfied. Only the Bushmen make an exception to this rule, but they are no more a purely food-gathering tribe. If, however, a person borrows an article for personal use and benefit, or to acquire other property by its use, he is bound by custom to hand over to the owner about half of his gain.

Contrary to expectation, the notion of patents and copyrights is well developed in food-gathering cultures. Its prominence among these tribes reduces the assumption of a universal primitive communism to a manifest absurdity. Even in so humble an environment as that of the Andaman Islands, the rights of property in songs composed for the occasion of a tribal gathering are jealously guarded by
the composers. No one but they are at liberty to sing them again. All rights are reserved. The Koryaks of Siberia are inveterate believers in the efficacy of charms and incantations in all their vicissitudes of life. These incantations are the secret of elderly women who are paid by their clients for chanting them. The women may sell the right of reciting the incantations; after the sale they may not use them any more for their own purposes. The Algonkin-speaking Montagnais consider magic formulas, songs, dances and stories the exclusive property of those who invented them. They may not be used by any one else.

The problem of inheritance, perplexing and fraught with hostility in so many advanced cultures, is of no great importance among the food-gathering tribes. For in these cultures the amount of inheritable property is comparatively small. Landed property is not inheritable, except among the Veddas, nor generally is the dwelling hut of the family, which in any case is rather unstable and temporary. Negligible is also the amount of clothing and ornaments which a deceased member of the tribe could bequeath to his heirs. The amount of property is not only limited by their primitive requirements, but necessarily by the demands of high mobility and by inadequate transport facilities. But the most effective check on the development of a definite inheritance system is the strong fear of the dead so prevalent among these primitives. This fear prevents the surviving relatives from appropriating any articles that the deceased once possessed and used. They feel afraid of the jealousy of the deceased person’s spirit, were they to benefit by his former belongings.

Thus among many primitive tribes the entire property of a deceased member of the tribe is either destroyed or given away to strangers. Sometimes it is left with the corpse. This custom was formerly practised by the Algonkins, Arapahos, Plains Indians, and is still prevalent among the Eskimos, the North-Central Californians, Shoshones of East California, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego and the South-East Australians. The tribes of Tierra del Fuego give a further reason why they do not keep the property of a deceased relative. They say that they dislike to be reminded of their loss. If the possessions of the deceased remained before their eyes, they would always remember him and feel sad. But wherever property left by a deceased is retained, it remains in the possession of his nearest kinsmen. The tribe as such has scarcely anywhere a claim on such bequeathed property. Of the Andamanese it is said that they are not tied by any alws of
inheritance; more as a matter of sentiment than for any other reason, the nearest of kin takes possession of all the effects left by a deceased person, as often as not they distribute them among such friends as may be in need of the articles in question. Among the Chenchus, too, no hard and fast rules of inheritance can be detected. They seem to depend on their sense of a fair deal effecting an equal distribution of property among all the children. The same is true of the Katkaris and the Kadar.

All this shows that the institution of inheritance, and its very concept, has no strong roots in the economic and social life of the food-gatherers.

A comprehensive survey of all data and facts concerning the property forms of tribes and peoples in the food-gathering stage of economy leads to the conclusion that all essential forms of ownership are present at least in a nuclear form.

2. The Property Concepts of the Food-producers

A. The Advanced Hunters

The property concepts of the advanced hunters and harvesters of wild crops are generally similar to those of the mere food-gatherers. But there is a noticeable tendency of larger sub-sections of a tribe joining, at least temporarily, for a communal hunt or for the harvesting of a wild-growing crop. In tribes with clan totemism it is usually no more the local group that owns the land, but the clan. And even clans may, in a later development, come to share a common territory so that ultimately only the tribe as a whole is the owner of a well-defined area. Clans and family groups may only have a temporary control and usufruct of a certain area. Property of other immovable goods is acquired by individuals or individual families simply by taking possession of them when they are found unoccupied. Game hunted by Red Indians, however, was often pursued far beyond a group’s hunting ground.

In clans in which clan solidarity is particularly well developed the common good is considered superior to the interests of the individual. Consequently individuals may not appropriate goods which are necessary for the whole community. Thus all food must be shared with those who cannot support themselves. This sharing is strictly regulated by custom and not left to the discretion of the individual, as in the food-gathering stage of culture.
With regard to movable goods, we find that, as advanced hunters lead a more sedentary life, they also own more goods and possess a greater variety of household articles, clothes, ornaments, weapons and tools. The greater perfection of these articles necessitates a specialization of crafts. The goods manufactured are naturally owned by those who produced them, or by their buyers or recipients. Often a person's belongings are buried with him when he dies. Property concepts and rights are thus more pronounced in the culture of the advanced hunters.

In this stage of culture we come, for the first time, across money as a means of trade. In totemistic Australia articles like red ochre, spears, shields, etc. are used as money. Such articles are thus withdrawn from the primary purpose for which they were manufactured and are used solely as means of exchange and trade. Other forms of money are cowrie shells, metal rings, sticks of tobacco, etc.

Since a price must be paid for brides in marriage, women, too, are considered as property. Women, wives and daughters, are often regarded as the property of their husbands or fathers, to such an extent that illicit sex relations on their part are punished not so much for moral reasons, but for the infringement on their husbands' or fathers' exclusive property rights.

Slavery appears for the first time in this stage of culture. It is the legal ownership and control of one person and the denial of his freedom of action and movement. Slavery may have originated when debtors could not pay their debts and thus had to work them off. Or when it was considered more rewarding to use captives as forced workers than to kill them. Of course slaves could only be effectively used when techniques had developed to a point at which a worker could make a surplus beyond what he needed himself. Moreover, the society had to have developed facilities for the restriction of supervision of the slave workers.

While property rights are thus strongly developed even to the extent of owning human beings individually and communally, quite a few societies of this type have certain checks and restrictions against an extreme accumulation of goods in the hands of certain individuals. This is found to be the custom among some tribes of Siberia. Among the Indians of the Pacific North-West, a higher social status can be gained by a ceremonial giving away or destroying of property. The Kwakiutl, for instance, used to perform potlatch, as this ceremony was called. Potlaching is a series of public distri-
butions of property. It has an important place in the social and eco-
nomic life of the tribe. The occasion for a potlach was the ceremonial
acquisition of a title or name. Persons who aspired to a high status
in Kwakiutl society engaged occasionally in contests to see who could
give or destroy the most. Even slaves were killed on this occasion to
show their owners' disregard for property. Such slaves were killed
with a club-like implement.

In certain African tribes property could change hands without
payment when initiation candidates were permitted to appropriate
anything they desired. There were also other occasions when the
property rights were temporarily suspended.

In these cultures property rights extended also over intangible
goods. They were considered individual property which is negotiable.
Thus the Northern Plains Indians of America commonly acquired
songs and ceremonial privileges through visionary experiences. The
Blackfoot Indians were eager to buy, and to sell, their sacred bundles
(a collection of sacred objects, bringing the owner luck and prosper-
ity). Crow Indians sold revelations which qualified them to cure
certain ailments. The Eskimos own individually songs which they
had composed, and the Indians of North and South America like
the Bororos, for instance, claimed property rights in certain ceremo-
nies, songs, emblems and dances on which no infringement was
tolerated.

Inheritance is generally in the, male line, as women cannot inherit
any property. In fact, they do not own anything at all.

B. The Agrarian Cultures

Among the primitive cultivating tribes, however, property rights
conform more closely to those of the food-gathering stage of culture
than among the advanced hunters. Land is the property of the local
group, of the village or clan community. It is so, among the Hopis
(Pueblo Indians). But the plot under cultivation is temporarily owned
by the individual family which tills it. In shifting cultivation land is
frequently recovered from the forest and again left fallow. In some
tribes the distribution of the fields is periodically done by the village
community.

The ownership of movable goods is acquired by men and women
through personal effort and exertion. Typical of these tribes is that
women retain their property rights to some extent. Inheritance is
either in the male or in the female line. The mutual exchange of
goods and the sharing of goods is similar to that in the food-gathering stage of culture and controlled by tradition and custom. The marketing of surplus field-products is often in the hands of women, especially where they do most of the agrarian work.

Among the more advanced cultivators certain communities have developed mother-right. In these communities land is owned either communally or individually by the women. When the clan is the owner, the management is largely in the hands of women or their brothers. The field produce is often either distributed at harvest time among the individual families of the clan (or village) or owned by the individual cultivators.

Movable goods are at least nominally owned by the women of the family. Inheritance is in the female line, either the eldest or the youngest daughter getting the main share. Husbands are frequently without property rights, but they have the right of the management of their sisters' property. In some communities they are allowed to acquire individual property by their own exertion; this is so among the Khasi and the Moplahs of India.

In many matrilocai societies the maternal uncle is the real manager of the family property—which means a reassertion of the male element in the matriarchal society.

A. The Nomadic Animal Breeders

Among the nomadic pastoralists, however, land is in the hands of the extended joint family. For the grazing of the herds large lands are required, thus landed property is extensive. As individual joint-families often possess separate summer and winter pastures and as the boundaries of these are not marked, disputes about landed property are frequent.

Herds are also owned by the joint family, as well as their products. But all the property is managed by the patriarch who has alone charge over it.

In the advanced pastoral cultures we meet with a primitive type of capitalism. The more heads of cattle a man possesses, the richer he is and the higher is his social prestige. The quality of the cattle is of no account. No interest is, therefore, shown in improving the stock. The 'capital'—the word capital derives from caput, i.e., head of cattle—is considered the more profitable the more prolific it is. This results in the tendency of accumulating vast herds.

In Asia, for instance, herds of thousands of animals owned by
one family are no rarity. In India the number of useless animals is also exceedingly large. In Africa, in Kenya and Tanganyika, 100,000 Masais graze approximately a million animals, seriously overpopulating existing grasslands. The same is true of the Kikuyus. One million Dinkas in the Sudan own between themselves two million cattle, far too many for their limited pastures.

Among the Bedouins of Arabia the richness of an individual family or a tribe is measured mainly by the number of camels possessed; but it is never secure, for raiding may either impoverish or enrich a Bedouin overnight. But a Bedouin tribe is a commonwealth of brethren. If an individual member of the tribe is robbed of all his possessions, his kinsmen contribute according to their means as much as is needed in order to make up a new stock for him.

But generally the unequal increase of animal wealth in these cultures results in a differentiation of wealth; thus two classes evolve: the rich and the poor. The powerful rich exploit the powerless poor who have to submit to this exploitation for subsistence and protection. Thus serfdom and even slavery developed early in these communities. Such differentiation in wealth could not develop in mere food-gathering and hunting cultures, for they safeguarded themselves against it by periodically sharing all property. Besides, wild game could not be privately owned or accumulated.

Many animal breeding tribes increase their wealth by trade and by raiding. Thus the Bedouins, for instance, bring to the settled areas their extra camels, sheep, wool, butter, horses, etc. for sale and buy grain, clothing, and all kinds of household furniture made of wood, leather, copper and the like. Frequently peddlars go out from the settled places to the Bedouins and trade with them.

As the animal breeders treat manual work with contempt, handicrafts have developed only in connection with dairying. Many animal breeders treat smiths whose work is so valuable for them nevertheless as an inferior class.

Individual property rights are in evidence in primitive nomadic pastoralism, as for instance among the reindeer breeders. Their property concepts conform closely to that of the mere food-gatherers. Thus, among the Samoyeds, Tungus, Koryaks, and Chukchees even a woman may possess individual property.

This is not so among the advanced animal breeders where the joint family, headed by the patriarch, claims all property rights. Thus among the Turcs, the Altai tribes, Buriats, Mongols (except
the Kirghiz and Yakuts), the cattle raisers of East Africa, the Hamitic Gallas and Somalis, the Masais, Suk Turkanas and others, women cannot have any private property, nor even the adult sons living in the joint family.

When the patriarch dies, the rights and duties of property management are taken over by the eldest son. If the joint family breaks up, all sons get their share; but the eldest son gets the main share since he has also the duty to support his mother and unmarried sisters. Women do not inherit; often they themselves are inherited and become the wives of the main heir.

Hospitality is a sacred duty among many pastoral tribes. Generosity gives great social prestige. The Bedouin, for instance, regards hospitality as a religious act. For a guest is sent by Allah, and it is the host’s duty to feed him and to be generous to him. Once a guest is received he is entitled to stay three days at a home, after which time he is supposed to move to another place.

A Bedouin can even request the right of asylum for himself when he is in danger. This is a significant antidote to the constant bloodshed and murder in the desert. It is called dakhala. Asylum consists in seeking refuge in someone else’s “countenance” while in danger. Once this protection is granted the person in danger is safe; for to molest him means entailing the enmity of the person who gave him refuge and in certain cases even of the whole of his tribe. Dakhala lasts only for three days, at the end of which period the person in danger has to seek asylum with someone else. One can even save one’s life through one’s own enemy by the dakhala, if he goes to the tent of his enemy who intends to kill him and seeks the dikhala of a woman or child. Once this is granted he can no longer be molested.

Thus we see that the property concepts of the food-gatherers have been changed and modified in various ways by the more advanced cultures of the food-producers. The possibilities lying dormant in the property concepts of the food-gatherers have become realities and laid the basis for our modern complicated property rights and usages.

We also notice how strong the influence of the tribal society is on the development of the property concepts and usages of its members and how, in turn, also the property concepts of a particular social group influence and modify its social concepts and usages. Thus a mutual interrelation exists between property concepts and social institutions.
CHAPTER XVI

Art

Art is a part of culture; if primitive man has culture, he will also be an artist. This is indeed so.

Primitive art can mean something crude, something produced with insufficient means of expression, or with a certain lack of sophistication in inspiration and with great simplicity of vision. To many people it suggests an idea of rawness and incompetence, ignorant gropings rather than finished achievements. This primitivity can be deliberate and need not be the work of a primitive.

But here we take the term 'Primitive Art' in the sense of 'Art of the Primitives', and restrict the term 'primitive' to those peoples who are outside modern European civilisation as well as outside the great Oriental and Middle American civilisations.

1. Dramatic Art

It is perhaps in dramatic art that primitive man has first expressed himself artistically.

Mimic art generally comes into play whenever a person performs before an audience not with the intention of representing himself, but another person, and when he does this by means of mimicry (imitation). We distinguish optic mimicry (play of gestures and face expressions, disguise behind masks and complete costumes), and acoustic mimicry (acoustic imitation through mere noise, or words, dialogue, song and music). Dance becomes drama only when the dancer at the same time plays a role. The animal dances of the primitives are consequently without exceptions real dance dramas.

The play of children can also be mimicry, for it is an imitation of the world as experienced by children. But it is not drama because the children do not deliberately put up a play for an audience.

It is generally assumed that the origin of drama lies in the religious cult. But it need not be. It owes its origin more to the urge in man to appear in the role of another in front of an audience and to be accepted by this audience as such and to earn its applause. In
fact, the distinction between pure cult forms and profane acting is often not definite. One of the essential distinctions between the two forms of drama is the mental attitude of the actor himself. In the religious drama the actor gives up his own ego whose place is taken by the superhuman being whom he represents. This being, it is believed, uses the human carrier of its disguise as its object and medium. In profane acting the actor also represents another person, but he does not relinquish his own ego.

Dramatic art is the oldest art of mankind, which, as an all-comprehensive art, includes all other arts at least in nucleo and puts them into its own service. It thus inspires painting and sculpture which create new products mainly for the service of the mimic play. In primitive drama the lookers-on and listeners are not completely passive as later in the performances of the more civilised peoples. In primitive drama the audience plays the role of a choir, marks the rhythm by clapping with the hands or beating them on the thighs. Usually the listeners also accompany the action with melodies sung by them. Later primitive musical instruments make their appearance: sound sticks, xylophones, drums, and string instruments. Music and song are originally not independent arts, but integral acoustic parts of the theatre.

In the most primitive cultures, that of the food-gatherers, men as well as women have the right, when in the proper mood, to step from the accompanying choir into the action of the drama. In the dramatic performances of the more advanced cultures, the advanced hunters, the agrarian cultures and also the nomadic shepherd tribes, the men alone, or the women alone, display themselves as actors before an audience. It was the custom in Europe up to the time of Shakespeare that men also played the role of women.

The oldest form of the drama is thus the "opera" in which every word of the solo player was sung and accompanied by a singing choir. The simplest form is the play of a solo performer who invents all the roles and actions on the spur of the moment, mimics, dances and sings, while the audience sitting around him repeats the refrain.

This is common practice among the African Pygmies who are accomplished actors. A single narrator acts all the parts that occur in the story. The repertoire consists of stories about love and hunting. This curious one-man theatre stands and falls with the approval of the audience.

The oldest form of the ensemble play is the animal pantomime,
in which diverse members of the local group, each in his own manner, mimic a herd of game animals optically and acoustically. The audience mark time by clapping their hands and singing their songs—each animal has its own typical melody. Such group plays are common among the Tierra del Fuegians who thus depict the life and behaviour of the sea lions which they hunt.

Dramatic performances are held already in the culture of the food-gatherers. Fights between the animals, or the hunting of such animals, are the main themes presented. Thus the South Arantas of Australia perform a Kangaroo play, in which these animals fight each other in a realistic manner. Similar mimic plays are performed by the Katkaris of Maharashtra. The dialogue is not recited or sung exclusively by the actors on the stage, but also by the audience surrounding the actors. Such plays have survived even among civilised peoples, in the puppet theatre and in certain folk plays; for instance in the European St. Nicholas plays, or when Father Christmas enters the children’s room.

A purely acoustic play is another version of the primitive theatre. It seems equally old as the drama. It is found already among all food-gathering tribes. But it has developed less fully than the drama. It is the earliest form of the religious drama. The food-gatherers conceived God as an invisible spirit; consequently in their earliest plays they did not allow him to appear visibly on the stage. But they made God heard by imitating the sound of thunder. Early special noise instruments were invented to imitate the voice of God and of other superhuman beings, like the ancestors, the totem spirits, the totem animals, the spirits of the dead and of demons, etc. Examples of such instruments are the bull-roarers found in all five continents and in the Magdalenian period of prehistory, the wooden trumpet of the Pygmies of Africa and the Arantas of Australia, the pot instrument of the Ituri Pygmies. These sound instruments represent really acoustic masks, as they enable the staging of purely acoustic plays with faked voices and noise instruments.

In general, primitive music involves the use of all the vocal resources, including whispering, speaking, humming, singing and even yelling. In the same way, at some time or other, any implement capable of producing a rhythm becomes a musical instrument in the hands of a primitive.

But the optical mask is also as old as mankind. It does not only appear in the agrarian cultures, as it is commonly believed. The
earliest mask is the face distorted by mimicry (as among the Pygmies). Later the disguise is improved by artificial means, with material taken from nature though not yet artificially improved. This disguise consists of an attire made of feathers and twigs, bark strips and animal skulls. Equally old is face painting.

In a later period this disguise is perfected not only by masking the face, but by dressing up the whole body. Since the earliest actors represented animals, the animal skin with its head intact is probably the oldest form of a theatre costume. Already in the food-gathering stage of culture we come across the habit of painting the body and of representing various animals by diverse dyes (ochre, red, white and black). Sometimes the costumes are made of wickerwork, as among the Yamanas, or of grass or leaves, as in Australia.

Mimicry true to nature and rhythm are nicely balanced in the dramatic performances of the food-gatherers. Later, the magic art of the advanced hunters rises to naturalistic animal representation. Its prehistoric forebears were the hunters of the Magdalenian period. The agrarian cultures, however, symbolize their fertility conceptions to such an extent that the roles and actions often become obscure and cannot be understood any more without expert interpretation.

Masked dances, in connection with widespread secret societies of the agrarian cultures, play an important part in the Pacific area. The mask, endowed with a rare power, is manufactured by men in secret places which may not be entered by the uninitiated. The newly admitted youths are warned under severe tortures never to divulge any detail of the cult. Traitors and women who by accident stumble into a secret meeting or gain knowledge of the secrets are often killed in a most painful manner.

Certain masks, especially in the secret societies, possess sacral functions which may increase fertility, prosperity or secure the happiness of the deceased in the other world. But other masks, as in Liberia, for instance, exercise merely police and juridical functions. For such tasks the authority of the mask, which is worn by the men carrying out their duties, is naturally of great importance. The function of the other masks of the secret societies is similar. In some places the mask of the spirit of the dead, after the sacral part is over, begins to narrate and to enact profane folk-tales and legends in a falsetto voice.

The stage for such performances is in the food-gathering cultures a circular place cleaned of shrubs and bushes. The South-East Aus-
tralian Yuins build a veritable theatre by bending the tops of trees towards each other and thus forming a cupola over the stage. Theatre buildings in the proper sense of the word, ceremonial huts, which are indeed required either by the inclemency of the weather or the exigencies of the actors (their invisibility, for instance) are erected by the Tierra del Fuegians and the Semangs of Malaya. Light for a nightly performance is supplied by a burning pile of wood, by flickering torches or by moonlight. As theatre decorations we may also regard the floor paintings and the reliefs of the Australians and the Red Indians of North America.

Even dramatic schools are not absent in these most primitive cultures: it is one of the essential tasks of the tribal initiators to explain the traditions and customs of the tribe to the boy and girl initiands. This is achieved most impressively by staging dramatic plays performed either with or by the initiands.

Even critics are not lacking in such plays. First, the elders who supervise the correct performance of a play as demanded by tribal tradition are free with their criticism after the performance. And the actors themselves often discuss after the play the success or failure of their acting. Most important of course is the criticism of the audience which generously applauds or severely condemns a performance.

In primitive society the author of the drama is the artistic man who often at the same time acts as dramatist and composer, performer and director, teacher and critic. The leader of the play is often the tribal magician.

The drama performed by the food-gathering tribes may usually be for mere entertainment, making the people happy or inspiring them with awe; but often it is also a play with a purpose, either in the service of the social group, as, for instance, during the initiation of boys and girls, when the performance of mimic plays has the purpose of instruction in tribal lore. Such a mimic performance may have a magical purpose. Thus advanced hunters perform hunting plays in which animals painted or carved on rock walls provide the opponents in the play. Such hunting plays are performed to bring success in future hunting expeditions. Or the play is intended to increase the fertility of the game animals. Often mimic copulation is enacted by the players wearing masks and representing the animals. In agrarian cultures a similar "sacred copulation" is enacted on the ploughed field with the intention of fertilising the fields, animals
and men. The Eskimo shamans stage spirit dramas to placate the
divine mistress of the game animals or to exorcise evil spirits. The
Gabun Pygmies re-enact the whole life of a hunter in pantomime
lasting often for hours during the funeral ceremonies. This is really
a mimic necrologue.

The primitive agriculturists often expand the range of their dra-
matic themes by the cult of the ancestors. Fertility myths, too, are
enacted. On their right performance depends in their opinion the
future prosperity of the whole social group. But even historical
events, meetings with friends and enemies, may be dramatically re-
produced. Even the deity is brought on the stage; first, only to be
heard, later also in visible form.

The tribal theatre is the mimic tribal and world chronicle of the
primitive cultures and as such represents a rich source for the study
of the culture and life, philosophy and religion of a tribe.

The tradition of primitive mimic art survives, though up to now
scarcely recognised and often completely ignored, in folk dramas
and folk plays, through all stages of culture into the highest civilis-
sation. These folk plays are enacted seasonally, usually either in
mid-winter or mid-summer. A study of these folk dramas may be
very informative, for in them survive old beliefs and customs which
civilised man may have discarded long ago, but which live on in his
sub-conscious mind and may still influence his behaviour and think-
ing, without his being aware of it.

2. PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

The products of primitive art are far from uniform. Every tribe,
however primitive, has developed its specific style, giving preference
to certain objects and patterns. Fashion naturally plays an impor-
tant part, resulting in change of styles. Art styles are not static but
dynamic phenomena, bound up and changing with specific periods
of cultural development.

The materials of primitive art are the same as in modern art:
stone, bone, wood, clay, ivory, metal, even dyes and paints. The
means at the disposal of the primitive artist vary according to his
cultural level and to his environment. Primitive methods also vary
considerably. It is a curious fact that sometimes the same methods
and techniques are applied in altogether different areas. It is not
certain whether this is due to borrowing or to independent invention.

Primitive art is always utilitarian; there is a practical purpose in
primitive art. It is either to convey information, a pictographic art, the preliminary stage of writing; or to record historical events of importance to the tribe, historical art. One of the principal sources of artistic inspiration is religious emotion. Religious rites and mimic performances require symbols, the figures of gods and demons, masks, fetishes, or totem figures (totem poles of the Kwakiutl). Thus religion and magic inspire the primitive artist to produce works of art in paintings, carvings, tattooings and sculpture. Art for art's sake is almost unknown in primitive culture. A test case would be landscape painting; for this has no practical use. We find it only in paintings of the Torres Straits and of the Bushmen and even there it is extremely rare.

Since primitive art is produced for a practical purpose, it has its social implications. It furnishes the formal arrangement or design for a large number of social activities: religious rites, warfare, politics, work, sport, etc. This includes music, dancing, poetry and drama.

The products of primitive art have also economic value. The finished product is the property of the artist who may sell it, barter it or simply give it away. It may be made to order, or even for mass production. In more primitive communities artistic production is mainly occasional, but in culturally advanced communities we find also professional artists. A large proportion of decorative art is the monopoly of women. The women of the North American Plains Indians, for instance, prepare the hides, while the men paint them. Women also do most of the weaving and pottering, while sculpture is generally the monopoly of men. In Central India Gond and Baiga women paint and decorate the front walls of their houses with reliefs, and they also do the highly decorative tattooing.

In the higher stages the individualism of the artist is well recognised. It is so on the Ivory Coast of West Africa and in North-West America.

Some primitive art has attained the highest level of realistic portrayal, so in Africa the art of the Ife, on the Ivory Coast, in the Cameroons, on the Congo; in some South Sea Islands, in America (Mexico, Peru), and in New Zealand.

Not all primitive art lacks perspective or is deficient in vision. Palaeolithic and Bushman art, for instance, has produced remarkable attempts at foreshortening, overlapping colours, linear perspective and colour-shading.
Products of primitive art are sometimes not purely optical works, but of an "intellectual" nature. Thus we find the so-called X-ray drawings in Australia, Melanesia, British Columbia and Alaska. In North-West America we come across a rendering of ribs and vertebrae, in North-West America and in the Pacific a stylised representation of the joints; elsewhere an artistic accentuation of certain features (symbolism) or geometric forms in decorative drawings, in patterns of textiles and basketry. The colouring often depends on the material.

A. Primitive Art in Prehistoric Europe

There is no evidence whatever that Neanderthal man had any art. This does not, however, deny the possibility that he made designs on perishable materials but, if so, none have survived.

The first known attempts of representing any objects are found in the caves of Europe and North Africa after the arrival of Cro-Magnon man. There on the walls imprints of human hands can be found, sometimes dipped in pigment and pressed against the walls. But more frequently the palm was spread on the rock and then was outlined in charcoal.

The first animals to be shown are outline drawings. These are crude and have often one leg showing through the other. Nevertheless the figures are in good proportion and many indicate action. From this stage on development is steady. Animals standing alone or in groups are drawn and engraved on the walls of caves or are placed on objects of daily use.

In the early stages only outlines in one colour appear, but later shading was attempted and then a combination of colours. Oxides of iron were employed to produce red and yellow, while carbon, white clay and mineral pigments mixed with animal fat were added as desired.

A few figurines of human beings have been found. Most of these belong to the early stage of Cro-Magnon occupancy. These figures are of short fat women with huge hips. Strangely, the faces and feet are never finished. They are probably the figures of a fertility goddess.

Aside from these statuettes, nearly all the art is devoted to animals. Some of these are shown with darts or spear points piercing their bodies, and this suggests that the purpose of these paintings was to cause the animals to be plentiful and easily killed.
Most of these drawings and engravings are in recesses of dark caverns. Their purpose was scarcely to be contemplated and admired, but it is more probable that they were painted as a part of a magic ritual.

One French cave contains the sculptured figures of two clay bison. These were moulded in high relief against a rock. These figures are a proof of their makers' high artistic ability.

Towards the end of the Cro-Magnon period, a new type of art work, related to that of the Bushmen of today, appeared in Spain. But it penetrated only a short distance into Europe. So-called shadow pictures of men and women show bodies often as mere lines to which are added heads, arms and legs. Many of the men carry bows and arrows, a weapon unknown until the end of the Cro-Magnon period. The figures are often shown in lively action.

B. Primitive Art in Africa

Bushman Art: While Bushmen living today are no great artists and produce only crude geometric engravings on ostrich eggs, prehistoric Bushmen seem to have been far superior artists. Their art resembles Franco-Cantabrian art.

Their art products are found all over South Africa, Tanganyika and the Sahara.

They include naturalistic wall paintings, in various colours and with a remarkable observation of nature. The representation of the characteristic contours is especially typical of this art. There are even attempts at fore-shortening; at profiles—front views as well as back views, which latter are most difficult; at gradual shading of colours.

Negro Art: Negro art is predominantly plastic. There are several centres of Negro art in Africa: in the Sudan, from the Senegal eastwards to Lake Chad, and in Benue, joining the Niger; in the Congo, between the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes, with Angola as a southern extension; in East Africa among the Makones and Bantus. But their art is not comparable to West African Art.

In West Africa the classical art is wood sculpture, while Benin art is in bronze. Since the material was naturally of cylindrical shape (tree trunks, elephant tusks) this resulted in a lack of proportion which is typical in this art. We find also a great variety of masks; some are purely realistic, some highly stylised; they are often highly coloured.
The purpose of West African art is the production of figures with religious or magical significance (ancestors, fetishes), of toys, or of portraits for souvenirs.

The Benin art, which is several centuries old, produced bronzes of two kinds: figures, and reliefs of complete scenes (animals, human beings, mythological and magic symbols) in the cire-perdue technique. It produced also works in ivory; elephant tusks were carved in relief, goblets and tankards, armlets and other ornaments were carved. Even terra-cotta and quartz were occasionally used as material for this art.

Present-day Yoruba art is vastly different and consists chiefly in wooden figures and masks. These are polychrome, but are of low artistic value.

C. Primitive Art in Asia

In Prehistoric Times: No artistic products of Palaeolithic times have so far been found anywhere in Asia. Neolithic products of art have been found in Siberia and Central Asia. They are primitive fish idols and rock pictures (engravings, pecked drawings and paintings). Of the Bronze Age we have a large number of ornaments and utilitarian objects of bronze and gold, also animal and human figures. They are largely associated with Scythian art (from Hungary to southern Russia, and from Persia to North China). These art products display a primitive vision, but great technical perfection, a mixture of decorative stylisation and naturalism.

Primitive features can also be discovered in classical Chinese art: conventionalised animal patterns with two symmetrical profiles, usually entangled in complicated curved ornaments, scroll-work, etc. The figures are of a primitive type.

Prehistoric art in India may date back to the Upper Palaeolithic period, but its age is doubtful. We find rock paintings at many places (Mirzapur, Singhanpur near Raigarh, in Adamgarh and Pachmarhi). Much more recent and of high standard is the art of Harappa and Mohenjodaro. It is a highly developed art in clay, steatite and copper. We can distinguish three styles: a very primitive naturalistic style, a naturalistic style of great aesthetic quality, and a highly stylised and conventionalised type of art. It is not clear whether Hindu art has developed from Mohenjodaro art.

Products of art in the Middle East go back to the fourth millennium BC. In Syria (Tell Brak: 3100 to 1500 BC), we find primitive
alabaster heads and stiff stone figures of large dimensions, also primitive clay figures, which were painted. Similar art products are found in Tell Halaf (3400 to 2600 BC). In Mesopotamia, in Ur (end of 4th millennium BC) we find art products of high technical and artistic standard, in Luristan we come across an art which is related to Scythian art. It is an art of horse breeders and warriors.

Recent Primitive Art in Asia: In India it appears that Hindu civilisation has so strongly infiltrated aboriginal culture that the primitives offer little material for an original art of their own. But some such centres can be found in Orissa, in West Bihar (anthropomorphic pole sculptures) and in the Nilgiris. The Todas in the Nilgiris form artistic clay vessels and also the figures of animals and human beings. In the villages of India a peasant, or derivative primitive, art is found in their pictures, wood carvings and brass figures of village deities. To this art type belong also the marriage toys of the Kutiya Kondhs. In Ceylon and South India we find artistic devil masks. Many aboriginal tribes display paintings and clay reliefs on the walls of their houses. They are the products of women.

In Assam the Naga tribes carve in wood human heads in the round and in relief, also the heads of the mithan (cattle). These products are of considerable artistic value. The Angami Nagas are supreme in artistic achievement; they carve life-size figures over the tombs. Similar figures are found in Nias, though there they are smaller.

Indonesia is a melting pot of various races. Thus also primitive art in Indonesia displays great variety. We find different decorative and plastic arts among the primitive tribes of Sumatra (Batak), Nias, Borneo, the Philippines, etc. On Bali we come across grotesque Hindu statues and masks, in medieval Java a rich Buddhist sculpture.

The primitive tribes of northern Asia have their own typical art forms: the Chukchees and Ostyaks carve very simple idols of poles; their art style is, therefore, a typical pole sculpture. The Koryaks excel in walrus ivory and bone sculpture, similar to that of the Western Eskimos. The figures are very naturalistic. The Gilyaks produce coil and spiral patterns which resemble those of the Chinese. The Ainus carve funeral posts; they have been influenced by Japanese art. The Lapps of northern Europe manufacture dagger sheaths decorated with engravings (of reindeer); their work is similar to that of the Eskimos.
D. Primitive Art in Oceania

As we find three main races in Oceania—Polynesians, Micronesians and Melanesians, their art styles also can be distinguished as Polynesian, Micronesian and Melanesian.

New Guinea is one of the three most prolific centres of primitive sculpture in Oceania. The common raw material is wood. New Guinea art is mainly the ornamentation of utilitarian objects. Its motifs are derived from mythology, religious beliefs, ancestor worship or magic. The principal art provinces in New Guinea are the Sepik and Ramu river valleys, the Purari Delta, the Massim area in South-East New Guinea, and former Dutch New Guinea which has been influenced by Indonesian art styles.

All art styles of New Guinea can ultimately be traced back to South-East Asia. This is at least the opinion of R. Heine-Geldern.

In Melanesia the Bismark Archipelago excels in the plastic arts. A notable centre is New Ireland. There we find very artistic sculptures: memorial statues of chalk, images of chiefs carved in wood and also wood carvings of animals.

It is worthy of notice that the artists are professional specialists. Rich patrons who pay them generously hire them to carve the sculptures. It may take them six months and longer to produce their masterpieces which in their conception can well be compared with works of modern art. A feast is celebrated after the completion of the sculptures. Then they are thrown away.

Micronesia has three principal art centres: Yap, where we find admirably naturalistic wood carvings of animals; Nuroro, with highly stylised wooden statuettes which are faceless; and Palau, with polychrome carvings of mythological and other scenes. There they manufacture wooden bowls of abstract or representational forms, dyed red, varnished and inlaid with shells.

The Polynesians display a marked sense of beauty in their geometrical designs on bark cloth (tapa). A sharp distinction can be noticed in the styles of central and of peripheral Polynesia. Central Polynesia has little sculpture, but excels in the perfection of their well shaped instruments, also in the noble curves of the kava bowls (on Samoa, Fiji, etc.). Sculpture is well represented in Tahiti, Hervey, Marquesas, Hawaii, New Zealand and Easter Island. There, too, Polynesian art is most refined, with a finely elaborated technique. On Easter Island we find huge stone figures with large heads and faces. They seem to be memorials of famous men; some are probably
connected with cults of the sea-bird god. Wooden statuettes depicting deceased men can also be found on Easter Island.

E. Primitive Art in Australia

Australian art is a true reflection of their peculiar culture. It is predominantly graphic. We find rock engravings and paintings in various parts of Australia, belonging to different periods. So far thirty-seven groups of these have been studied.

Australian tribes also make paintings on bark, to adorn huts and temporary shelters. They are of the X ray type. In Central Australia we find linear designs on the bull roarers (churinga). Sculpture in the round is found in North-East Australia and in extreme West Australia.

F. Primitive Art in America

On the American continent an overwhelming variety of art styles exists. Some tribes excel in sculpture, others specialise in graphic arts in coiled, twined or plaited basket work, in artistic weaving, in pottery plain or painted, or in metal work. We find all stages of art from the greatest primitivity to the highest perfection.

The Eskimos, in the arctic zone, though primitive in material culture, are highly artistic in their stone and bone carvings. On the long winter nights they used to carve little figures of men and animals. Their art style resembles that of ancient Chinese art a great deal.

Further south, the Red Indian tribes developed a primitive, but very imaginative art. The carved totem poles of the Kwakiutl on the northern West coast of North America are well-known. They tell in narrative symbolism the whole history of a clan. These tribes are also skilled in weaving and basketry, in drawings and paintings. Artistic decorations are found on bowls, jars, pipes and other utensils. Some of these tribes, like the so-called Basket Makers, had no pottery, but produced excellent baskets of the coiled type. The Iroquois and Algonkins have embroidery and wooden masks. The Mound Builders of prehistoric times had effigy mounds, plastics and pottery. The Plains Indians have a graphic art, while the Cliff Dwellers not only built very elaborate dwellings, but decorated them with stone work and sacred paintings. The Navahos raised blanket-making to a fine art, and developed the craft of silver-working.

In California, however, arts and crafts remained on a low level, except basketry, in which the original inhabitants excelled. The
Hupa, for instance, wove globular baskets and ceremonial robes of birds’ feathers.

Ancient Mexico and Central America, and the Andean highlands in South America are renowned for their high standard in architecture, sculpture and painting. But these were products of the high civilisations of Middle and South America. The various primitive tribes on this continent never produced any specific art styles as we know them from the Pacific or Africa.
CHAPTER XVII

Concept and Origin of Religion

I. Concept

It appears that early prehistoric man felt the need for an ideal world over and above the natural. And he peopled this ‘super-natural world’ with beings that fulfilled the ideals which he had formed and the wishes and desires which he nurtured in his heart. In the beginning his material culture was very simple and his social relations rudimentary. No wonder that his mental horizon was also very limited. Naturally, his concept of God must also have been quite simple and conceived within the narrow range of his mental development. The idea of God must have been cast in the image of a Father and Leader of the local group, projected into a higher scale, no doubt, sublime, perhaps somewhat distant, but a personal God, with all the good qualities and intentions of a father and protector.

Then, early man in recognising the existence of a superhuman being, or of beings, assumed a submissive attitude towards this being, or beings, and he felt that certain actions must be performed in recognition of his submission and dependence. This is religion.

But in this ‘supernatural’ world early man may also have imagined beings which were the products of his inner fears and misgivings, negations of all that he had conceived as good and healthy.

A study of the religions of the living food-gathering tribes seems to imply, however, that on the whole the religion of early prehistoric man dwelled more on the healthy and positive side of man’s mental world. The negative and evil elements in his religion developed more in the later periods of man’s history, when he had advanced in his hunting methods and, later, when he had become a cultivator or herdsman. During this later time, his submissive attitude may also have changed and been replaced by a desire to impose his will on these superhuman powers, by the practice of magic. Magic is a perversion of religion and shows a coercive and compulsive attitude towards the supernatural.

From the point of view of the subject, therefore, religion can be
defined as the recognition of one’s dependence upon a supernatural being, or beings for whom certain actions must be performed (W. Schmidt). From the point of view of the external expressions of (internal) religion it must be asserted that religion comprises all activities characterised by a persuasive or propitiatory attitude towards the supernatural world (J.M. Cooper). The word ‘religion’ is derived from the Latin religare, to bind (i.e., to bind man’s self to God).

Religion is often confused with magic. The word ‘magic’ is of Turanian-Iranian origin; it means ‘profound.’ Magic is the attempt to control the mysterious forces of nature by means inadequate to that end (W. Schmidt). Or, according to its external expressions, magic comprises all activities characterised by a coercive or compulsive attitude towards the supernatural (J.M. Cooper). The magician, therefore, is the fore-runner of the scientist, for his task is first to discover the causes of things and then to avoid their effects. Religion has it the other way round; it means using natural means to produce supernatural effects (sacraments). Magic means using supernatural means—or so they are regarded—to produce a natural effect.

Religion has three elements in common with magic: an intellectual one: it is a process of reasoning, recognising a causative force for the existence of all things. The content of faith is generally based on the traditions of the human group to which a person belongs. Then, there is a common emotional element in both, a certain awe, reverence, fear or affection, towards the ‘numinous’. There is also a volitional element in both religion and magic, a petitionary or propitiatory attitude towards the supernatural world in religion; if this attitude is coercive or compulsive, it is magic.

2. SOCIAL FUNCTION OF RELIGION

The society-building function of religion is also important. In primitive society, especially, but also in modern society, religion rouses and gives expression to the consciousness of the community in its members; and by so doing it stimulates and strengthens the intention to maintain the common life.

The way religion achieves this is remarkable and significant. It takes an element in the common life and invests it with a special significance. It may be singing or dancing or eating and drinking together—something that is already a normal part of the life of the community. But for this purpose the song becomes a sacred song, the dance a sacred dance, and the meal a sacred meal. They have a
special meaning attached to them which is not their everyday meaning: they are done, not for the normal purpose of merely living happily, but for a special purpose. They become ceremonies.

Of course, religion has other functions too. But here we want to stress its great importance in the development and sustenance of social life in human groups. Religion is a world-wide phenomenon; as such it must, therefore, be studied in primitive societies.

3. Objects of Religion

The objects of both religion and magic may be divided into four categories: ghosts, spirits, gods and the Supreme Being. A ghost is a being that once lived on earth as man (an outstanding warrior, hunter or chief, or in general just an ordinary man). A spirit, on the other hand, has never been a human being. It is one of the forces of nature living in things. Spirits and ghosts are not strictly incorporeal. A god is a spirit or ghost who enjoys a certain marked eminence among his fellow supernaturals. The Supreme Being stands alone as worthy of worship. But in some religions near-supreme beings exist who rank first among the lesser divine beings: a demiurge, a tutelary spirit or other intermediary beings.

According to the four types of objects we have four types of religion: Manism—the worship of ghosts; Animism—the worship of spirits; Polytheism—the worship of gods; and Monotheism—the worship of the Supreme Being.

Magic may be divided into many different types. It can be contagious or sympathetic, if it is the belief that once related objects retain some connection even though they are separated (for instance, the relation between a wounded man and the agent of his wound); it can also be imitative (homoeopathic) or symbolic, if it is the belief that, owing to a certain likeness between things, influence can be exerted from the one to the other without physical contact (images or effigies of enemies are injured or destroyed, etc.).

Magic can also be active or passive; active magic is concerned with the accomplishment of something, the attainment of an aim, while passive magic is the magic of omens, of signs which foretell what must be done or avoided; it is divination of any sort.

Magic can be positive or negative; it is positive if composed of positive precepts—charms and incantations, for instance; negative, if it comprises negative precepts—taboos or prohibitions. Magic can also be private or public; the former consists in practices carried
out by private individuals, while the latter consists in communal ceremonies, usually conducted by official medicine men. Magic is white or black; it is white if the practices performed are intended to bring about some favourable results even if they are achieved with the help of evil spirits; it is black if it is intended to cause some evil result by incantations, spells and other actions.
CHAPTER XVIII
Theories Concerning the Origin of Religion

No tribe or people in the world, however primitive or highly civilised, is without religion and without a belief in God. Such a universal phenomenon must be explained. The origin and universality of religion may be attributed to a revelation by God Himself, or else to causes which lie in man's peculiar nature. To the person who is a believer in God it is hardly conceivable that after God created man He left him without any instruction on how to discover him as best as he might. God must have spoken to him intimately in many ways, and man's thoughts must have turned to Him in love, gratitude, worship and petition.

For the person who does not believe in God, or denies the fact of a Divine revelation, however, it becomes incumbent to offer an alternative explanation for the universal distribution of religion among all human tribes and peoples.

Such explanations have indeed been thought out by various students of religious phenomena.

We can safely ignore the explanation of religious belief given by eighteenth-century philosophers such as Voltaire, Diderot, the Encyclopaedists, and their like. They declared that religion was the invention of astute personages greedy for money and authority. They formed a priestly caste and then exploited the credulity of those who had faith.

The opinion of modern students of religion is different. They do not believe that a human institution that is based solely on error or fraud can have lasted so long and possess such vitality to this very day. Religion surely corresponds to certain permanent needs of mankind, and every religion contains an element of truth. This element of truth is what interests the sociologist. He wants to discover what useful functions religion fulfils in society.

Thus in modern time the students of Religion are less interested in theories explaining the origin of religion than in the functions which religion fulfils. But in the last century the origin of religion
Theories Concerning the Origin of Religion

was heatedly discussed and all kinds of ingenious theories were thought out to explain the origin of religion. A few of these theories may be discussed here shortly. Whoever wants more detailed information on this problem, is referred to the author’s book *The Origin of Religion.*

1. Nature Mythology

One explanation of the origin of religion was proposed by some scholars in the 19th century: it was nature mythology. This explanation suggested that the imagination of primitive man was roused by natural phenomena, like the sun, the moon and the stars, by storm, rain, the sky, dawn, etc. These phenomena of nature were personified and deified by primitive man, who retold the happenings in the sky through myths.

A myth is thus a story the subject of which can be traced back to the ancient past, but the content of which is of importance for the religious belief of the present times. The telling of the myth not only satisfies the urge for knowledge, but this knowledge is in itself important for the life and behaviour of the listeners. Some scholars restrict the concept of myths to the life of the gods, but this restriction is not justified. Stories about the life and deeds of the ancestors, of demiurges and high gods (who are no more conceived as alive or actively interfering with present human life and the order of the universe) may still exert their influence on the behaviour of human social groups just through the mere retelling of the story (K.T.H. Preuss).

The events of a mythical story are often enacted in the religious ceremonies of a social group. Instances are the Kloketen ceremony of the Selknams or Onas (of Tierra del Fuego) during the initiation ceremonies, combined with the rites of a secret society; the Kuksu cult of the Wintuns and Pamos in California, the Sso cult of the moon, etc., of the Pangwes (hoe-cultivators) in the Cameroons (Africa).

A. Nature Mythology

The pioneer of the School of Nature Mythology was Ad. Kuhn, who wrote his most important books between 1859 and 1886. But a more renowned representative of this school is Max Müller.

Max Müller traced the origin of mythology to a disease of lan-
guage and claimed that the existence of many names for one object (polynymy) and of the same name for several objects (homonymy) produced a confusion of names, resulting in the combination of several gods into one, and the separation of one into many. His theory held the field for a long time and gained numerous adherents.

Max Müller explained his point in a ‘solar theory’ so called because the chief myths of the Vedic, Greek and Roman mythologies all refer to solar phenomena. We mention, for instance, the names of Usha, Dyaus Pitar, Zeus and Jupiter. The idea is that certain historical events found permanence in the sky, where they are repeated ever since. Personifications of the relations of the sun to other heavenly bodies and occurrences are said to be the main source of the rich creations of the Vedic and Greek-Roman mythological imagination. Thus the rosy dawn, which heralds the rise of the sun and of the new day, is interpreted, now as a messenger of the sun, now as a coy maiden fleeing before his ardent advances.

The oldest forms of Indo-European myths were found in the hymns of the *Rigveda*, whose origins are to be traced to some natural phenomena, in which the sun, moon, dawn, sky and clouds play a large part. Hence, myths are regarded as merely representations of celestial phenomena. Their names became obscure later on, and lost their original meaning; often they were personified. Thus Daphne, a nymph of Greek mythology, is a modified form of Sanskrit *dahana*, the dawn, designated as the “brilliantly shining one” (Sanskrit root *dah*, to glitter or shine).

Max Muller’s explanations, accepted by the other representatives of the Philological School (so-called because their chief reliance was on determining the source and kinship of mythical figures by etymological analysis) were successfully attacked by Andrew Lang.

Andrew Lang claimed that Max Muller’s interpretation, based on language, was too narrow, inasmuch as myths precisely similar and as irrational as those found in Vedic and Greek mythology, also existed among the Australians, South Sea Islanders and Eskimos, to mention a few. But the languages in which these latter relate their myths were entirely dissimilar to Sanskrit, Greek and Latin.

**B. Star Mythology**

A later modification of nature mythology was the star mythology developed by E. Siecke (*Drachenkampfe, 1907*). He maintained that the divine beings are personifications of natural phenomena, of the
stars. Primitive man was impressed by nature and the sky; awe and fear made him adore the heavenly bodies.

In evaluation of both these theories it must be stated that the nature and star mythologists take their data, first of all, from highly developed religions (Indo-European) and ignore the oldest religions which have much less mythology. Moreover, such personifications of nature phenomena require a necessary religious disposition which could as well have induced primitive man to develop the idea of God rationally. Finally, primitive man has social myths as well; in spite of these, marriage and family life cannot be held to be the result of star movements (sun and moon, moon and Venus, etc.). Star and nature myths are projections of human experiences into the sky, and not the other way round.

C. Archetypes

C. Jung, the psychoanalyst, has another explanation of mythological concepts and of religion as well. Jung claims that the human mind thinks in symbols. He calls them archetypes. Myths all over the world are similar because the human mind forms the same mythical symbolic complexes all over the world: the mother (earth-mother), the dwarf (soul, ego), the diving motive, the snake (phallic symbol), the fish, the trickster, the werewolf, the revival of dead bones. "The myths of the primitives are the dreams of civilised modern man." Such symbols are likewise expressed in poetry, in surrealistic paintings, in religion.

In evaluation of this theory we may point out the fact that mythology certainly plays an important part in the spiritual life of many primitive tribes, in particular of those in the stage of food producing culture. Mythology concerns itself in a striking manner with identical objects all over the world: cosmogony, eschatology, salvation of man from evil and sin, etc. But mythological thinking does not anywhere in the primitive world replace rational thinking. Both ways of thinking exist side by side; while rational thinking proceeds from cause to effect, and draws valid conclusions from given premises, mythological thinking uses predominantly symbols, analogies, and parallels from the macrocosmos (world, universe) to the microcosmos (man). There is no evidence that mythological thinking is an earlier form of thinking than rational thinking.

Moreover, the polytheistic religions which have such a large nature-mythological element in their content owe their origin to
Middle-East high-cultures. They are essentially the same in West Africa, Egypt, Mesopotamia and in Indo-European regions. Such polytheistic religions are not found outside of the high-cultures and polytheism has not even reached all of them. Thus the religions of East Asia and of the Andean South America have no polytheism; China and Japan received it only through Indian Buddhism.

All this proves that nature mythology cannot have been the origin of religion.

2. Pan-Babylonism

Soon after striking excavations had been made in Babylon, and its script had been deciphered, it was believed that all mythology had its origin in Babylon from where it spread over Asia Minor and then over the whole world. The centre of all mythology was believed to be the Moon (Pan-lunarism). Representatives of this theory were H. Winkler, A. Jeremias, E. Stucken and G. Huesing. W.J. Perry claimed that all mythology can be traced back to Egypt.

In evaluation of this theory it must be stated that the myths of the primitives cannot be products of Babylon since they are so much older. Moreover, Babylonian myths are very specialised speculations and could not very well have been thought out by primitives. They postulate an advanced standard of culture. Finally, it must be pointed out that religion and mythology are much older than Babylonian civilisation.

3. Manism

H. Spencer claimed that manism was responsible for the growth of religion. Manism means the cult of the dead, especially of dead chiefs and tribal ancestors. It is based on the belief of the survival of the soul after death. The souls of the heroic ancestors were later deified. Manism is found sporadically in all parts of the world.

Against this theory it must be said that Pygmies and Negritos certainly believe in survival after death, though they may not venerate their ancestors. Other tribes, too, simply leave dead bodies or expose them without rites. Moreover, ancestor worship is found also in tribes who have a strong belief in and worship of, a Supreme Being. Manism consequently cannot be at the root of religion.

4. Animism

The animistic theory was thought out by Edward Burnett Tylor
who wrote his important works between 1872 and 1882.

Tylor's theory is as follows: Primitive man forms his first idea of a soul from two biological problems: the phenomena of sleep, ecstasy, illness and death, and from the phenomena of dreams and visions. The next deduction is the existence of an incorporeal principle; from this the continued existence of the soul after death and the transmigra-tion of souls follow logically. The idea of retribution in another life is, according to Tylor, a still later deduction.

Man regarded other things to be as he was; in analogy, other objects also had to have a soul, not only animals and plants, but even inanimate objects.

Ancestor worship was a cult of dead men who had no longer an earthly body, and, therefore, were pure souls; hence arose the conception of pure spirits. These spirits could take possession of living bodies not their own; this gave rise to the conception of possession. Illness and death were regarded as the effects of such spirits. This explains the growth of fetishism, stock and stone worship and of idolatry in general.

The principle of separate and pure spirits was then applied to nature. From this resulted the worship of nature, and the beginning of a natural philosophy. The worship of water, of rivers and of the sea; of trees and forests; of animals, totems and serpents, followed out of this. It culminated in the deification of not an individual animal, but of a whole species.

The next step was the higher polytheism of the half-civilised and civilised races: the deification of the sky, the rain, thunder, wind, earth, water, fire, the sun and moon. A whole host of gods was created, gods of birth, of agriculture, of war and of death. They were all connected with the deified father of the race.

With regard to ethics Tylor believed that early man had originally only the conception of the good and helpful and, of the bad and harmful; it was a parallel to light and darkness.

The highest level of religion was reached in monotheism. It came about by raising one of the gods of polytheism to prominence, or by arranging the pantheon in the manner of a royal court, the king of the pantheon being the Supreme Being. At the same time existed the conviction that the universe was animated by one great, all-pervading and all-dominating divinity—the anima mundi or 'world soul.'

Confronted with the belief in a Supreme Being among very primitive tribes, Tylor countered the difficulty by tracing the existence of
such beliefs to the preaching of Christian missionaries.

Tylor's animism was at first widely accepted, for example, by Andrew Lang (who made use of this theory in his attack on nature mythology), by many German anthropologists, by Protestant bible scholars like J. Lippert, by German folklorists like W. Mannhardt, and by W. Wundt.

But it was soon necessary to assume a pre-animistic stage of religion. Andrew Lang maintained that pre-animism took two forms, that of magic and that of primitive monothelism.

In evaluation of Tylor's animistic theory it must be stated that animistic concepts are indeed widely prevalent among the primitives, but they often co-exist with the belief in a Supreme Being and with magic. Animism therefore cannot be the origin of religion.

5. Fetishism

Another explanation of the origin of religion was found in fetishism. A forerunner of this theory was Charles de Brosse (1760), but August Comte and J. Lubbock developed it more elaborately.

Scarcely any other phenomenon in the sphere of natural religion has been misunderstood as much as fetishism. The reason being that in its evaluation the scholars were guided by superficial observation, without penetrating to the heart of the primitive world outlook which is really at the basis of fetishism.

The word fetish, in Portuguese feitico, a manufactured object, expresses clearly this superficial idea about fetishism.

A deeper study of the religious world of the fetishists reveals clearly the baselessness of this evaluation. The fetishist has in fact a highly developed concept of God and the gods, of the ancestors and spirits, and fetishism is nothing else but a specialised form of the dynamic world-view, the centre of which is the belief in an impersonal power. Ultimately it is the life power which is conceived to be effective everywhere in the universe and which is accumulated in more concentrated form in certain objects, persons or places.

Fetishism is consequently nothing but the belief in the existence of a power which can produce good or evil effects and which is indispensable in life.

Fetishes are, therefore, never and nowhere idols or deities, deserving a cult, but amulets and talismans of a specific type. They are either tribal or village fetishes or individual fetishes; the first serve the community and the latter individuals.
Fetishism is thus no religion, but magic, and the incantations, blood and food offerings are to be considered magic rites.

6. **TOTEMISM**

Another group of scholars thought that totemism would aptly explain the origin of religion. Totemism was first made known by J.F. McLennan, then adopted by Lubbock, Tylor and H. Spencer. But the main exponents of the importance of totemism for the origin of religion were J.G. Frazer, E. Durkheim, S. Freud and W. Robertson Smith.

J.G. Frazer wrote a great work on totemism, but later he rejected the theory that totemism could explain the origin of religion.

W. Robertson Smith, who had made a special study of the sacrifice among the Semites (as recorded by St. Nilus), assumed totemism at the basis of all religion. He maintained that on a certain festival the totem animal, identified with the god and the members of the tribe, was sacrificed and a communal meal made of its flesh and blood; thus the intimate connection with the totemic god was renewed and his vital powers newly absorbed by this common feast, or communion. He claimed that all sacrifices were derived from this totemic communion sacrifice.

A true evaluation of this theory would indicate that such cases of sacrifice are extremely rare. Moreover, totemism is less connected with religion than with magic. Also there exist religions without a trace of totemism.

Sigmund Freud explained the origin of religion by totemism differently. According to him man lived in the past in hordes, consisting of one adult male, some females and immature individuals. The sons of the primal horde were driven off by their father when they grew up. They later banded together, slew their father, ate him, and appropriated the females. As a survival of those primordial times the psycho-analysts discovered a sub-conscious sexual love of the son for his mother, and of the daughter for her father. The totem, now, is a father-substitute. The primordial hatred of the son for the father is transferred to some beast to which the child feels himself related.

God is nothing more or less than the sublimated physical father of all human beings; hence in the totemic sacrifice it is God himself who is killed and sacrificed. This is mankind’s ancient original sin. This blood-guilt is atoned by the bloody death of Christ.

The opponents of these theories by W. Robertson Smith and
S. Freud are able to point out that totemism could not have been at the beginning of religion. The Indo-Europeans, Hamito-Semites, and Ural-Altaics had originally no totemism. The sacrifice and meal of the totem animal is rarely found among totemists. Moreover, the pre-totemic races are generally not cannibals. Patricide and cannibalism are exceptions in the oldest cultures. Finally, the pre-totemic family is no horde, practising promiscuity. Thus both theories rest on false premises.

E. Durkheim took the proofs of his thesis that totemism was the cause of the rise of religion from the religion of the Aruntas in Central Australia. But it is now an accepted fact that the Aruntas belong to the latest of the six strata or so into which the culture of aboriginal Australia can be divided.

Durkheim wrongly regarded the high gods of Australia as the logical results and highest forms of totemism. But it can be proved that the belief in a high-god is pre-totemic.

7. DYNAMISM AND MAGISM

Most common nowadays is the assumption that religion has developed out of magic. There is, however, among the scholars no demonstration of the manner in which the transition from magic to religion actually took place.

One group of scholars maintains that primitive man is rational; but extraordinary events cause such emotional and mental confusion that occasionally he reacts irrationally in order to avert them if they are dangerous and to invite them, if favourable. These emotional actions crystallise into magical ones through repetition. So do J. King, J. G. Frazer, A. Vierkandt and Th. Preuss believe.

Another group of scholars reasons in the following manner: Extraordinary events required, in the mind of primitive man, extraordinary and irrational measures, while ordinary needs and dangers could be met with by ordinary reactions. Magic was thus applied where no rational measures were effective. E. Durkheim and L. Lévy Brühl adopted this assumption.

A third group of scholars attributed the origin of magic to the spontaneous and reflexive motions of expressions caused by psychic emotions. A following consideration brings these expressions into causal relation with the psychic experience. Later it is believed that if the expressions are set they will cause the experiences. This is the theory of R. R. Marrett, E. S. Hartland, K. Beth, R. Otto and
others.

This magic then developed into religion. According to Frazer this happened in the following manner: Primitive man believes that all that happens happens by personal or by impersonal powers. Impersonal powers are prior. These could be dealt with by magic. But when magic was ineffective, man approached the personal powers with prayer and sacrifice. This then was religion.

According to E. Durkheim, magical power is believed to be contained in man, animals and in inanimate objects as well. Later this magical power was personified in things and endowed with reason and will-power. Thus it became an object of veneration.

Opponents of these theories point out justly that magism and animism, though certainly of high age and found in the earliest cultures, are always found alongside with religion, and never in the place of religion. Primitive man even believes that ultimately magical power and the life spirit also are from God. Thus religion cannot be derived from magism or animism. A study of the earliest religions suggests that the belief in a personal God was first; then a differentiation took place as a result of which the magical world outlook could overpower the personal and religious one.

Nor is magism a pre-rational and pre-logical stage of human thinking. The primitive, believing in the efficacy of magic and acting accordingly, is subject to the same logical process of reasoning as modern man, but he proceeds from different premises and a worldview and experience at variance with that of civilised man.

His reasoning is based on the conviction that an interior world sphere exists in which all exterior events have their inner equivalent; he believes in a mystic participation in which every thing and every action are inter-related to every other thing and every other action. The exterior sphere, distances, as also the measurable time, past, present and future, are of no importance. The inner sphere of the world is beyond space and time, and not dependent on their laws. Everything is synchronised. The medium of this mystic participation is a living, though impersonal, force which is called mana by many Pacific tribes, while the Red Indians of North America often call it orenda. This force at the back of all things, in which the vital essence of all things is concentrated, corresponds in a way to the prana of Indian philosophy; and even to the more ancient concept of brahma which oscillates between a purely spiritual essence and a magico-astral world-soul; similarly conceived is the concept of Tao, of the
ancient Chinese. In fact, magical concepts play a more important part in the circles of Taoist monks than among the Confucianists or Buddhists. In modern parlance we would speak, instead of *mana*, of 'cosmic pneuma', the 'astral' or 'ether', 'cosmic magnetism', the 'fluid', 'od'. Almost each author has invented his own name for the same thing. Magician or sorcerer, shaman or medicine man is the person who is able to influence this *mana* by mental concentration and corresponding ceremonies and practices. The magician is distinct from the priest, who is concerned with religion, not with magic.

*Mana* is able to penetrate all things, it is effective in all, and may 'possess' an inanimate object, a plant or animal, as well as man. It may be present in 'diluted' or in 'concentrated' force. Deities are often personifications of *mana* forces, visible in lightning, thunder, in vegetation, in the earth, fire, water, etc. From here a link may be forged between magic and mythology. But *mana* cannot be influenced in the ordinary manner by causal and mechanistic means; it reacts only to analogous magic, that is, by performing a symbolic action that attracts magical powers; by imitating a certain event so that the causative powers of this event may repeat it and cause the same effect.

Since domination and direction, propitiation and support extended to the magical powers is of such eminent importance for the welfare and prosperity of the individual as also of the social group, magical practice, based on magical belief, is well developed among many tribes and plays a central part in tribal life. This analysis, founded on considerable ethnological data and not on preconceived ideas of how things should have developed, may explain many actions and ceremonies of the primitives which would otherwise be incomprehensible to modern man.

**CONCLUSION**

In the light of much new research in recent times all these various theories which try to explain the origin of religion have proved inadequate and can easily be disproved. Moreover, they are based more on preconceived speculations than on actual facts. We have no access to the study of religion at its beginning. Even the study of 'primitive' religions, of social groups arrested in their cultural growth at an early stage of evolution, cannot give us an accurate picture of the earliest religion. We may only assume that the religions of the most primitive peoples conform closest to the original religion. It is,
therefore, useful to study the religions of the food-gatherers first, and then proceed to the study of the religions of the so-called food-producers, i.e., social groups at higher levels of cultural development, though still rather primitive and at a comparatively early stage of evolution.

In this way mere speculation is avoided and religions are studied which come nearest to the earliest religion of mankind. Then it has to be seen whether any valid conclusions can be drawn from the study of these religions which throw light on the origin of religion.
CHAPTER XIX

The Religion of the Primitives

In a discussion about the religion of the primitives it is well to distinguish between the mere food-gatherers and the more advanced food-producers. But it must not be forgotten that even the religion of the present surviving food-gatherers is millions of years distant from the religion of earliest mankind. Religion, too, has experienced development, however slow and slight it might have been. And no doubt the religion of the present-day food-gatherers has also been influenced and modified by the religion of the more advanced peoples surrounding them. It will be the task of the anthropologist and historian of religion to separate these later influences from the original religion. Yet we can be sure that the original religion of these food-gatherers is very ancient and has progressed very slowly, just as the whole culture of the food-collectors has progressed at a slow pace.

But as soon as food-gatherers have turned into food producers, it can be observed that their religion also changes and many new religious and magical beliefs and practices come into existence. It will be shown in this chapter how this has happened.

1. THE RELIGION OF THE FOOD-GATHERERS

Prominent in their religion is a strong belief in a personal High god. Such a belief is found among most Pygmy tribes, the Bushmen, the tribes of Tierra del Fuego, the tribes in the arctic zone (except the Koryaks), and well-nigh all primitives of North-America. The Kurnais, Kulins and Yuins of South-East Australia, too, entertain a clear idea of a Supreme Being.

It is of course not possible to ascertain how the earliest men came to conceive the idea of a High-God. It is pure speculation to try to make out how it could have happened. But it cannot be far wrong to state that the primitive must have taken the material for his conception of God from the highest that he knew and above all from his society and environment. The Supreme Being is the mightiest and worthiest of all beings. The primitive must have assumed that God
governs the world just in the same way as the leader of his local group rules in his own sphere and territory.

The leader of a local group of the food-gatherers is a father-figure, the best hunter and provider of food, protective, kind, a good and just judge. Thus the Supreme God must be similar to him, only more perfect and of superhuman dimensions. Thus it was easy for the simple food-gatherers to arrive at the conception of a benevolent, just and powerful god, a living person, not just an impersonal and invisible power, but man-like, yet with superhuman abilities and qualities, surpassing all human limitations and imperfections.

That the High-God is really a father-figure is revealed also by the fact that a common name of the High-God of the food-gatherers is ‘Father’ simply; or ‘my Father’, or ‘our Father’. Similar titles can be found even among food-producing tribes. Thus the hunting Santee Indians of North America used to address their buffalo god as ‘Grand-father; venerable man.’ A hunter of the Kekchi tribes of northern Middle America made the following moving appeal to his god on the ground of kinship: “Thou art my father; who is my mother, who is my father? Only thou, O God!” And the Karens of Burma, a primitive cultivating tribe, addressed the corn-mother as ‘Grandmother’, when they asked her for a plentiful crop of paddy.

The food-gatherers commonly believe that the Supreme Being is closely connected with mankind and at least in former times used to live on earth on intimate terms with men. He taught them all manner of good and instructed them in their social and moral duties. After God had left the earth, withdrawn from it due to some fault of man, he began to live in the sky. Lightning is his weapon; thunder and storm the expressions of his anger.

Since his present abode is in the sky, the name ‘sky’ is also used to address him. Or he is addressed as ‘He that is above’, ‘He that lives above’, or ‘He that is in the sky.’ Other significant names of the High-God are: ‘the Old one’, or ‘the Old one above’, ‘the primeval’, ‘the Master above’, ‘the Giver’, ‘the Upholder’ (of the universe). He is also called ‘the Great Spirit’, ‘the Creator’, but the latter name is less widely used because the creation of the world and of man is often relegated by these tribes to a subordinate deity, the First Father, a demiurge.

The Supreme God cannot be perceived by the senses; he cannot be grasped; he is like the sky—without shape. But some tribes believe that God resembles man; they conceive him as an old man, with a
long beard, white like cotton; he is white or shining white, like fire, surrounded by sun-rays or a blazing light. The tribes do not carve or paint any picture of God.

The attributes assigned to the Supreme Being are eternity (a sort of eternity, meaning that he existed before all beings and will never die), omniscience (often in the interests of morality, a function of his ethical character), beneficence (He is altogether good; all good, and nothing but good, comes from him); high morality (He is unalterably righteous, the giver of the moral code), omnipotence (He has boundless power. He is master over life and death), and creative power (He made the world, and he made man). The idea of a creation out of nothing is of course unknown. The connection of the High-God with fertile rain is not well known, as the food-gatherers are no cultivators.

Generally the connection of the Supreme Being with morality is well recognised; God is the giver of the moral code, he rewards the good and punishes evil-doers, and judges both the living and the dead.

The Supreme Being is worshipped by prayer (sometimes without external expressions, or only with gestures; often it is spontaneous, informal, petitionary prayer, or prayer of thanksgiving; in a few cases there is also propitiatory prayer) and sacrifice (absent in a few tribes, the dominant form is the offering of first fruits; rarely the sin offering of blood). The Supreme Being plays an important part in the initiation ceremonies and in certain seasonal feasts.

But the Supreme Being is never the sole god of the food-gatherers; Their pantheon also always contains minor deities as well. The factors leading to polytheism are mainly four: differentiation, plurality of superior beings, anthropomorphism, and the otiosity of the Supreme Being.

Differentiations occur when, as among the arctic tribes, a divine protector of beasts is split off from the Supreme Being or when one of his main functions is personified. Other differentiations occur when God is identified with the sky, with water, air, or the whole of nature. Or the High-God is identified with the sun or the moon. Sometimes it is the ‘First Father’ who obscures the Supreme God, takes over his functions and blends with him. Sometimes the problem of evil leads to pluralisation; there must be another god who causes all evil. Another factor making for pluralisation is the anthropomorphic view that God must have a wife and children.
We may still speak of monotheism in these tribes if they maintain that the minor deities are created and controlled by the Supreme Being.

Polytheism may also be caused by a personification of God’s main functions. First there is a plurality of superior deities whose functions (because they are very important) enhance also the importance of their personalities. Ultimately they may even overshadow the importance of the Supreme Being himself.

Polytheism is the natural result, if the Supreme Being becomes an otiose deity. The idea behind this otiosity is that God is the maker of the world and its benevolent ruler; but he is uninterested or only mildly interested in the social and moral obligations of man, provided that they fulfil their ritual observances. Some exaggerate the goodness or greatness of God: He is so great that mere men cannot dare to approach him with their veneration or petitions. In some cases the belief in a High-God remains almost entirely within the field of philosophical and speculative thinking, and is too little concerned with active, dynamic fervour in religion.

2. THE RELIGION OF THE FOOD-PRODUCERS

A. The Religion of the Advanced Hunters

The process of disintegration of the Supreme Being, begun already in the food-gathering cultures, into a plurality of divine forms is carried still further in the religions of the food-producers. In the tribes with a predominantly hunting economy the Supreme Being is often an otiose deity. He is generally dissolved into his attributes and main functions or obscured by or identified with, the tribal ancestor. The intensive preoccupation of these tribes with hunting brings another deity to the forefront: the ‘Lord of the Animals’ or the ‘Bush or Game Spirit.’ He is already venerated by such food-gathering tribes as the Bushmen and African Pygmies, and by the arctic hunting tribes like the Samoyeds, as also by the Algonkins. He is often conceived in animal form. For the concentration on hunting led to the belief in the essential uniformity between man and animal. Both can exchange their forms. Thus the ‘Bush or Game Spirit’ may also assume animal form. His function is manifold: he is the lord, often the ancestor, of the animals and of the hunters alike. He sends game and he withholds it. He assists the hunter, shows him the game and directs his arrow. He has other animal helpers. He is heard in the sound of the
bull-roarer. He possesses magical power and gives it to the hunter. He must be propitiated when an animal (or hunter) has been killed. At the initiation a youth is accepted into the tribal community after having killed his first animal. Special rites are required to protect him against the revenge of the spirits of the forest and of the animals. These are part of the initiation ceremonial.

Besides the Supreme Being and the ‘Bush and Game Spirit’, the hunters believe in animal spirits. Each individual man (among the North-American Prairie Indians, for instance) has his own protective animal spirit. He is acquired through penance, fasting and much meditation. His appearance and help is sought by the same means. The animal spirits appear in Africa mainly in the form of the Felidae, mostly as leopards; in the arctic zone they appear as bears or reindeer. It is firmly believed that these animal spirits, the individual totems, render effective help to the men who acquire them. There is a belief in the re-incarnation of all animals killed in hunting, provided certain customs are observed.

Some of these tribes perform a solemn sacrifice of these animals with propitiatory rites. The remains of the sacrificial victim are buried, the skull and long-bones are frequently exposed on a platform or on poles. The sacrifice is accompanied by dances and pantomimes in animal masks, often of an erotic character, to increase the fertility of wild game. Famous in this connection are the bear sacrifice of the Siberian tribes and the Ainu, and the buffalo dances of the North-American Red Indians.

The individual totemism of the hunting tribes develops into clan totemism in a number of tribes. The result is a further moving away from the relative monotheism of the food-gatherers and primitive hunters. Through the improvement of the hunting methods and the closer team work and better organised group hunting, the individualism of the earlier hunters is weakened. Thus clan totemism develops.

However, these tribes still retain a lingering memory of a High-God and a feeling of dependence on him or on his son, the sungod, but the High-God is an otiose deity, having no direct connections with man. Often he is represented in animal form (lion or wolf, eagle, hawk or falcon). These animals are at the same time frequently the

1 A Montagnais Indian of North America relates: “For some time a swan has been suddenly appearing to me and saying this: ‘If you promise never to shoot at me, I will promise to protect you wherever you go!’”
The Religion of the Primitives

totems of the chiefs.\(^1\)

The totem animals are as such rarely worshipped, though certain taboos are attached to them. Some totemists (in Africa) believe that after death man returns to his totem animal form.

The sun is the uncreated source of eternal life. In initiation the neophytes are painted red, their hair is plucked out to make them resemble the rayless morning sun. At burial the bodies are often drained of their fluids and later embalmed to keep them intact with skin and bones for their revival. Dead magicians receive a special treatment.

This solar dynamism frequently develops into a solar pantheism: all men, in particular, the males, have a share in the regenerative power of the sun. The chiefs possess a larger share of this life-spirit.

The regenerative power of the sun was passed on to the present generation through the ancestors. Therefore the present generation owes them veneration. But there is little true worship of the ancestors, religion being smothered by magic.

For magical rites assume, in these hunting cultures, special importance, rendering prayer and sacrifice unnecessary: if the gods can be forced by magic, why approach them as supplicants? Among the Eskimos, for instance, the shamans are supposed to help by their magic to provide food, animals and fish, and to cure the sick. They are expected to change the weather, prophesy the future, and counteract sorcery and black magic.

The magical powers are impersonal but immaterial, and attached to persons and things. They are called *mana* in Melanesia, *wakanda* by the Sioux, *orenda* by the Iroquois, and *manitowi* by the Algonkins. The Madagassians call them *hasina*. They are viewed as the embodiment of the elemental forces which, collectively, constitute the order of the universe.

In these cultures menstrual blood is much dreaded. Women in their monthly period are, therefore, excluded from the community and considered unclean. This is so throughout aboriginal North-America as well as South-America, Siberia, India, Australia, South and West Africa, wherever totemistic tribes are found. A menstruating woman

\(^1\)Cf. *Atharvaveda*, 38.1: “That Light which inhabits the lion, the tiger and the furious serpent as well as the fire, the Sun and the man versed in Scripture—that divine, beneficent Light bestowing prosperity—let that Light bring us power and dwell in us.”
must avoid all connection with men; she must not touch other people's food or cooking utensils; she must avoid water, especially running water.

B. The Religion of the Agrarian Cultures

The religion of the predominantly agrarian cultures, on the other hand, takes another course of evolution. In this culture the Supreme Being loses his importance to the earth-mother. The earth is at first associated with him as his wife, sister or daughter; in some cases the High-God himself assumes female sex. More often, however, he is degraded to the position of a son of the earth-mother. He assumes the features of the bright moon, while the earth-mother is conceived as the moon-woman.

The earth-mother, the fertile soil, now assumes the first place in the pantheon. First she is conceived as the ground used for cultivation; later as the earth in general. Mythology connects her with the moon. This is probably due to the moon's alleged influence on the growth of plants, and to the monthly periods of the women which are believed to coincide with the phases of the moon. Their importance for fertility was early observed.

Usually the moon-woman (or the earth-mother) has two sons: one is the bright moon (representative of all that is good and beautiful; therefore he is often a rival of the Supreme Being); the other is the dark moon (representative of all that is evil, ugly and stupid; the lord of the nether-world, of the dead. He is often the enemy and destroyer of the bright moon). The cycles of the moon are a symbol of the life and death of the first man; of the creation of the world and plant life, and the final extinction of them all.

Sacrifices to the earth-mother are often bloody; they consist in tearing out the heart, liver or lungs from the living bodies of both human and animal victims; in the presentation of the still quivering organs to the deity; in the cutting off of toes and fingers; in the piercing with arrows of the victims bound in prescribed positions to trees and scaffolds; in the torture and sacrifice of prisoners taken in war or on head-hunting raids. Such customs are found among the agrarian tribes of Indonesia, India (among the Khonds, Khasis, etc.), in Burma and Indo-China, Tibet (from where they spread to Central Asia), among the Great Lakes tribes of south-western North-America and among the ancient Aztecs of Mexico.

In these cultures animism is predominant, all living beings are
endowed with a spirit, and even material objects may possess it. But the living beings come to life, grow and reproduce only because the spirit in them makes them do so. In death the spirit leaves the body. A spirit released from its body becomes dangerous.

This belief results in fear of the spirits of the dead; hence rites are performed to prevent their return and to appease them. The souls of the sorcerers and shamans are particularly dreaded and all manners of rites are performed to appease them. So it is with the North-Asiatic and the North-American tribes, as also in Tibet. Also the souls of those who died a violent death (suicides, persons killed by wild beasts or dying from snake-bite, drowned or struck by lightning, women dying in childbirth and pregnancy, etc.) are dangerous to the survivors.

Rites are, therefore, performed to prevent their souls from returning and harming the survivors: hence, the breaking of the bones of the dead, driving nails through their heels; tying and bending the bodies into bundles, and weighing down the grave with heavy stones are common practices.

The dead often receive a double burial: a temporary one until the flesh is decomposed and the skeleton alone is left; and a final disinterring and preservation of the skull, alone or with other bones. The personal belongings of the deceased are usually buried with him, but in "ghostly condition", i.e., broken or turned the wrong way. Offerings of food and drink as well as bloody sacrifices are made to the spirits of the deceased for a long time. These are prompted by the belief that the way of the spirit to the nether-world is long, arduous and dangerous; therefore assistance from the survivors is necessary.

Life in the after-world is generally not believed to be influenced so much by the good and bad actions in this life, but by the correct performance of the burial rites; this is another proof that the magical world-outlook in these agrarian cultures has grown to the detriment of religion.

In these agrarian cultures the men frequently form secret societies, an important aim of which is the worship of individual ancestors. The rites include skull worship and masked dances.

With regard to magic we find that these cultures practise it on a large scale. The connection between menstrual blood and fertility is recognised. Therefore the life-spirit is sought in the blood. Fertility rites are performed which consist mainly in the spilling of blood: hence they indulge in animal sacrifices in a bloody manner, in head-
hunting, in the spilling of blood and burial of sacrificial flesh in the fields.

The agrarian cultures abound in passive magic; the magic of omens, especially of evil omens. Necromancy is common among them, and takes the form of divination or the getting of oracles from the dead, of sleeping on their graves, of performing certain rites with their bones (shoulder blades), and of offering sacrifices to them. Such rites of necromancy are found in Africa (among the Yorubas, Kikuyus, the tribes of South Africa), in Australia, Melanesia, Indonesia (Dayaks), in ancient Greece and Babylonia.

3. THE RELIGION OF THE PASTORAL NOMADS

The religion of the pastoral tribes who remained at a primitive stage of animal breeding retained much of the beliefs prevalent in the food-gathering stage of culture.

They nurture a strong awareness of their dependence on a High-God whose help they invoke for the herds: for sun and rain, for protection against epidemics, frosts and snow, for fertility.

Besides belief in a High-God, we find a strong animal cult with animal symbolism among them.

Among the more advanced pastoralists, however, a polytheistic religion is very common. It is possibly derived from the polytheism of the West-Asiatic high-civilisations with which these advanced pastoralists stood in long cultural contact. This polytheism has many common features.

All the advanced pastoral tribes believe in a High-God whose picture, however, may be blurred through a conceptual mixture with a deified king (probably originally the god-king of the Middle-East city states). Often the High-God of the advanced pastoralists is also confused with the sky, often with the material sky (Tengri), or with the sun. The universe is graded into heaven, earth and hell. Each section is again sub-divided into various departments. Heaven is the dwelling place for the souls of those who had led a good life while on earth, while the hells are reserved for the souls of the wicked. The Supreme God who has created the whole universe dwells in a region which is still beyond the highest heavens.

Lower deities also exist in great number. They are partly mythological personifications of the heavenly bodies, like the stars, storm, sun and moon, of the elements like water, fire, the four points of the compass, etc. Mountains and rivers, springs and trees are specially
sacred to them. They assume the most important functions of the Supreme Being who is then often relegated into the background and becomes an otiose deity. The lower deities are invoked to guard the herds and wild animals, and to provide them with food. One or the other of these deities may even turn into an adversary of the Supreme Being. But generally the supremacy of the High-God over all the others is still undisputed.

Other deities of the advanced pastoralists display very human passions and weaknesses; they are superhuman only in their powers and abilities. But they have a purely human life-history, with birth, marriage and death and differ from heroes only because a higher cult grows round them and they enjoy a more general veneration. The myths of the ancient Greek, Roman and Teutonic gods are good examples for this.

The animal breeders have a well-developed ancestor and hero cult. The ancestor of the tribe is often either merged in the Supreme God and then acquires the same cult (as among the Mongol and Turco-man tribes), or he turns into the adversary—the evil principle. In the latter case he is connected with sorcery. This is perhaps a heritage of the agrarian cultures with which the advanced pastoral tribes were in the past long connected. The memory of the departed heroes is kept alive through epic ballads; they are also worshipped.

The animal breeders bury their ordinary dead in barrows of earth while mounds and mortuary chapels are built over the bodies of the rich and distinguished leaders of the tribe. Their happiness in the other world is secured through the sacrifice of numerous human beings (wives, slaves and others), animals (especially the horse) and through rich gifts which are buried with them.

In the practice of religion we must again distinguish between primitive and advanced animal breeders. The ritual of the primitive animal breeders is simple and consists of prayer and sacrifice. Prayer is still mainly addressed to the High-God who is called ‘Father’, even ‘Father and Mother.’ Most of the prayers are prayers of petition.

The sacrifice of the first fruits of the food-gatherers has been widely retained and developed further. Often it is the main herd animal which is sacrificed with a rich and complex ritual.

Among the advanced pastoral tribes the ritual of prayer and sacrifice is much more elaborate. They have prayers of praise, of thanksgiving, petition, but scarcely any propitiatory prayers. The
sacrifice of the first fruits is also practised by the advanced African animal breeders. It is performed in recognition of the High-God’s supremacy and sovereignty. In accompanying prayers God is addressed as the maker and provider of food (animals). The sacrifice is performed for the individual family or family group in or in front of, the tent (yurt). On more festive occasions and for larger groups (clan or tribe) the sacrifice is performed on hills or mountain tops, and in birch groves.

For the individual family the officiating priest is its head; for the extented joint family the patriarch; for the tribe its chief, or a shaman as his substitute, the black shaman or sorcerer having no official position in these sacrifices.

The sacrificial victims are domesticated animals. Among the South-Altai tribes it is mainly the horse; secondarily it is cattle of both sexes, of whitish colour; in the central group (Abajan Tatars, Soyots, Karagass, Yugurs) the sacrificial victim is now a sheep, but formerly it was also a horse. The Yakuts sacrificed the horse until the beginning of the 18th century; now no animal sacrifice is performed. The reindeer breeders sacrifice a whitish reindeer. It is remarkable that in Inner Asia no camel sacrifice is performed. This seems to prove that the camel is a late arrival in Inner Asia.

Along with this sacrifice of the first fruits goes a libation of milk, sweet or sour, or alcoholised (kumyss). Thus the South Altai tribes offer cow milk; the Abajan Tatars mare’s milk.

The time when these sacrifices are performed varies. Simple family sacrifices are performed on various occasions, but the solemn sacrifices take place at certain seasons; in spring, in autumn, in the calving season.

The ritual is celebrated with a great display of solemnity and intensity of feeling. It is rich in songs, exhortations, dances, processions, cavalcades and sacrifices. The animals are often killed by suffocation, because it is believed that the life spirit is in the breath and not in the blood; the victim should remain intact, with all its blood. The first form is, therefore, the offering of the skull and the long bones; but in later times the customs and beliefs of the agrarian peoples seem to have been adopted by certain tribes, and consequently the heart, the lungs, the liver and the blood of the victims were also offered. In these sacrifices the animal is killed by opening the chest and removing its heart. This is offered to the evil spirits (in the earth) or in expiation. The sacrifice is followed by a common sacrificial meal.
A vague shamanism is widespread among these tribes, but often carried out by professional shamans, who are again divided into white and black shamans; the first are connected with the gods and benevolent spirits, the latter with the evil spirits; they practise black magic.

The religion of the East-African cattle breeders is not uniform. But all of them possess a strong belief in a High-God. The Gallas, in southern Abyssinia, for instance, believe in a Supreme God to whom black colour is sacred (it is a symbol of the cloudy sky; the rainbow is God's belt). God is omniscient, omnipotent and benign. He is the creator. He gave the Gallas their moral code. But besides this Supreme God the Gallas worship also many lower deities; nature spirits, a goddess of fertility and an evil spirit who is red.

Another cattle breeding tribe, the Masais, has also a pronounced belief in a High-God. The Masais are filled with the idea of a mission to perform. Their High-God is a sky-God; his hypostasis is the thunder-god. The evil spirit, made visible in lightning, is red. The Masais have practically no animism. But their family mores do not fit into the family system of the animal breeders in general; they resemble more those of the advanced hunting tribes. It is very likely that the Masais belonged originally to a hunting culture.

The monotheism of the Hereros is degenerating due to the strong influence of neighbouring agrarian Negroes. They believe in a Supreme Being, but do not worship him. Their religion is more concerned with the veneration of the tribal ancestors.

The Hottentots, probably a mixture of Hamites and Bushmen, also believed in a High-God in the past; for them he was a sky-god, who was, however, often confused with a tribal hero. He had an adversary, the embodiment of evil. Today all Hottentots are Christians.

The Nuers, a cattle-breeding tribe of the southern Sudan, are a highly religious people. They believe in an all-powerful spirit, and in lesser spirits of the air and the earth, reflections of the Great Spirit. They stand in special relationship with given individuals, lineages and clans. The Nuer High-God is all-righteous and demands right conduct from his people; he punishes evil-doers with sickness, death or other misfortunes.

The chief religious observances of the Nuers are prayer and the sacrifice of animals to avert or ward off imminent or present illness or other disasters. They offer animal sacrifice to repel divine punishment when it has struck, and have even the custom of confession of
sins. They have no ritual of thanksgiving. The health of the animals or their fertility is dealt with by low-grade and despised magicians who are probably recent imports from the neighbouring Dinkas. So is their totemism.

The study of the religious beliefs and practices of the food-gathering and food-producing cultures shows clearly that the evolutionistic scheme supported by so many scholars in the past is not correct. If evolution took place, it took a contrary course: from a comparatively pure monotheism to polytheism, and from a weak form of animism, ancestor worship and magism to a strong growth of animistic and magic beliefs and practices.
CHAPTER XX

Messianic Movements

A primitive society desires to regain its own national and cultural identity, lost through the oppressive influence of a vastly superior people, through religious means, in the strong belief in divine assistance for its rightful aspirations. Such a movement is called a messianic movement.

Messianic movements, quite frequent in modern times and rising all over the world, in North and South Africa, India, in Inner and South-East Asia, North and South America, but especially in New Guinea, Melanesia and Polynesia, constitute one of the most interesting and astonishing results of a cultural clash between populations in very different stages of cultural development. At the same time, while these populations of an inferior culture were deprived of political and often individual freedom and subjected to the strong influence of an alien culture, a religion of salvation was preached to them. The situation was aggravated by the fact that many of the missionaries who preached the religion of salvation belonged to the very people or culture of those who had deprived them of their political and individual freedom, and subjected them to economic exploitation.

This was particularly glaring in countries in which the colonisers and conquerors practised apartheid, as it happened in South Africa and in India.

1. GENERAL FEATURES

All these movements have in common certain features which reveal how strongly they were affected by the loss of freedom, the break-down of their traditional culture and by the preaching of a religion of salvation which, however, so often was not practised by those who pretended to be its followers. It should be emphasised here that messianic movements are not restricted to a clash between Christian cultures and indigenous cultures only; they are also found in countries in which Islam or Hinduism clashed with primitive
religions and cultures. This has been brought out by S. Fuchs in his book *Rebellious Prophets* (Bombay, 1965).

1. Messianic Movements are likely to rise in a society intensely dissatisfied with the social and economic conditions which it is forced to accept.

This is the result of a clash between two cultures, one vastly superior and the other retarded. The backward communities when confronted with the superior alien society become aware of their abject poverty and begin to feel the desire to alleviate it. The emotional reactions of the backward and oppressed communities are full of jealousy and hatred of their superiors who neither share the good things they possess as friends nor initiate them into the mysteries of their production or purchase.

Their intellectual problem is first to explain their superiors' success and secondly to find a way to achieve similar success. But the problem must be solved in terms of the experience of the backward societies, and they naturally often fail to solve it. They attribute the superiors' wealth to their religion, or magic, or their peculiar way of life; they rarely think that it could be due to hard work and an inventive mind. When, consequently, they adopt their superiors' religion, or ape their customs or way of life, the results are disastrous. They break loose from their own culture and lose their mental bearings, while at the same time they enter only very superficially into the mentality of the superiors' religion and culture. Moreover, they are not accepted by the superiors as equals. They thus lose their mental security and equilibrium, and become a prey to insecurity. This leads us to the second point.

2. In a society intensely dissatisfied with its social and economic conditions emotional unrest, with certain hysterical symptoms, may easily arise. This emotional unrest is caused by a confusion in spiritual and social values. This confusion is the consequence of the influx of a new and dominating culture, and of the rules and regulations enforced by this dominating power. These new ideas are not properly understood by the dominated subjects, and are often contrary to their old beliefs and practices. This clash places them in a dilemma and makes it difficult for them to choose between the old and the new values. Should they, for instance, give up growing food for their families and seek employment as servants or labourers of their superiors? Should they change their old methods of farming as the agricultural officials suggest? Or should they still continue to
increase fertility by magical or religious means? Should they get married according to tribal law, or should they follow the laws of the new religion which they have adopted? Should they in case of murder take blood-revenge or call in the police?

Intellectually bewildered and perplexed, their culture in which their ethical values are embedded partially disrupted by the impact of the alien superior culture, yet desirous of their superiors' wealth, the members of the subject-culture attempt, within the terms of their knowledge and based on their ancient traditions, to grasp the modern techniques of making wealth.

But their superiors share neither the technique nor the wealth with their subjects. The latter believe that this is deliberate; and with their traditional ideas of a cooperative social system they consider this withholding to be profoundly immoral. The dominating people, on the other hand, have different property concepts and regard the demands of the subject people as arrogant and unjust. Moreover, they are often incapable of teaching their subjects the essentials of their culture, because they do not understand their difficulties and their way of reasoning.

The same is true with regard to their ethical values. They are told that many of their ethical principles are wrong, immoral, repulsive and ridiculous. Sometimes they are severely punished for their obedience to their old ethical regulations. Blood-revenge, head-hunting, human sacrifice, bride-capture, duels, cannibalism, etc. fall under this heading.

Their tribal mythology—myths are primitive forms of theories for explaining the events of nature—which have so long satisfied their naive curiosity about the origin of the world, of man and human institutions are ridiculed and rejected as foolish, inadequate and wrong.

This mental confusion and despair, often aggravated by economic exploitation and social degradation, leads to mass hysterics which may express themselves in mental disturbance, acts of violence or suicides.

To increase the confusion, Christian missionaries, on the other hand, insist on equal rights for all, and condemn racial and social discrimination. The missionaries expose the privileged position which the superior people claim for themselves as unjustified usurpation, as criminal exploitation.

If in this perplexity and mental confusion a strong, authoritarian
leader arises who pretends to know all the answers and assumes the lead, a messianic movement is generated.

3. The leader of such a messianic movement is usually a member of the society in which the movement arises, rarely is he an outsider who in that case identifies himself completely with the aims of the people he is leading.

He has often a good knowledge of the society against which the movement is directed; he has either received his education from its members, or worked for them, or lived among them for some time.

His messianic vocation is either the result of an inner conversion or the result of a rejection or slight by the superiors. Leaders and followers need not always have the same motives and aspirations.

Most of the self-styled leaders are hardly educated, and often seriously mistaken about the extent of their powers and abilities and about the power of the society which they are opposing. Often they claim to be recipients of divine revelations regarding doctrines, ceremonies and policy of their movement. They possess a strong confidence in their mission and are unspeakable in their convictions and decisions.

Generally they have spent their youth in poverty and obscurity; sometimes they are sickly; often they suffer from nervous disturbances or disease. Some are epileptics.

Often they claim for themselves, and are granted by their followers a sort of divine veneration. In India, Hindu messiahs often claim to be incarnations of one or the other Hindu deity (Vishnu, Krishna, Durga, etc.). The Muslim messiahs claim to be Mahdis, Imams or great saints of the Sufi order. The African leaders claim to be God-Father, Christ, or Moses, etc. while the American messiahs usually are satisfied with the role of divinely inspired leaders and prophets.

Most messiahs claim magical power, or the power to work miracles; they can heal the sick, make people invulnerable, turn bullets into water, multiply food, foretell the future, and the like.

Convinced of divine inspiration, these leaders inspire hope and confidence in their followers. They pretend to know the root and cause of the evils which beset the community and also the way out of the trouble. If success fails to follow their ventures they have an excuse ready. Assurance is given that all obstacles will presently be removed and success is just around the corner.

4. In all messianic movements the leader demands implicit faith and obedience from his followers. This is an indispensable condition for admission into the brotherhood. Doubt and opposition are
regarded as blasphemy, since the leader is inspired and guided by God. When the movement is successful, the leader becomes authoritarian.

The recruitment of his followers is in most cases selective; at least at the beginning of the movement only such disciples are admitted who are easily led and gladly obey. Later on, when the movement gathers impetus, and grows, these early and most trusted followers advance into important positions for which they are grateful to the leader. They repay him by redoubled devotion and submission.

Naturally not all the disciples and intimates of the leader are sincere. Some seek their own interests by serving the leader. These people may be dangerous to the cause and to the leader, because they might flatter him and prevent him from judging the situation realistically. Even the most self-confident leaders have their hours of doubt and depression, especially after a disappointment or defeat, but the group of devoted followers usually is able to reassure him.

Though the leaders are anxious to gain many followers, they invariably demand heavy sacrifices as an indispensable condition for admission into the brotherhood. The higher the price the candidates have to pay, the greater the devotion to the cause and their utter submission to the leader. Especially after committing actions which bring them into collision with the established authority in the country, they see salvation only in a victory of the movement. A failure of their agitation would probably land them in jail or a worse fate might befall them. Hence their extreme devotion to the cause and to their leader on whom they transfer all responsibility for their own actions. He will, as they hope, take on himself all responsibility and blame if the movement ultimately fails.

5. The test of this unquestioned faith and obedience consists either in a radical change of life or a wholesale destruction of property.

The leader proposes methods by which his followers can achieve their revolutionary objectives. These methods are often radically different from their former ways of life.

For the inner circle of disciples the movement means a whole-time job. Since most of them had in the past some occupation, they are now forced to give this up and to take on the duties which the leader assigns to them.

But at a certain stage of the movement all followers are called to join the movement fully. A new era is being inaugurated in which everything will be changed. To carry on one's old occupation is a
sign that the follower does not really believe in the movement and doubts its success. The test, therefore, lies in giving up all independent resources and in relying completely and without reservations on the leader and the group in the movement.

If a certain messianic movement is connected with the belief in a coming Golden Age (Millenarism), no labour or physical exertion would be required in future, nor is there any need for preserving and storing food, clothing, etc. It is a declaration of faith in the leader to renounce one's property now and to expect a certain compensation when the Golden Age arrives.

The same attitude is required when the movement contains the element of eschatologism, i.e., if the followers expect a great catastrophe.

Sometimes the radical change of life, even the wholesale destruction of property, livestock, houses, etc., is the outcome of their complete restlessness and despair. By turning everything upside down they hope to regain their loss of balance and security, and to get a hold on reality.

This is often accompanied by an expression of intolerance against persons who refuse to join the movement and to carry out the same act of destruction of their property. For they attribute a magic value to such destruction, and any refusal to join in it weakens the magic effect, and is therefore strongly resented and severely punished.

6. A messianic movement usually turns into a rejection of the established authority and calls for rebellion against it.

Any established and properly functioning authority is against radical change, since it brings in its wake disorder and confusion. It opposes messianic movements. If this is done when the movement is still in the initial stage it can be completely suppressed. But once the movement has spread over a wide area and attracted many followers, even the removal of its leader is of little use. New leaders rise up in place of the old one, and these are often more violent and extreme, more efficient and more capable of leadership than their predecessor. Sometimes they are able to forge a new hierarchical system which cuts across old structures and boundaries and creates new loyalties.

In this manner messianic movements easily become political. The religious leader may then assume the political role forced upon him and thus abandon the religious aims for which he started the movement. It may also happen that the religious leader is abandoned by his followers and a new leader takes over who pursues his political aims
either in close cooperation with or in complete independence of the
original leader.

Where the dominating culture which is the cause for the confusion
and despair in the inferior community is at the same time the estab-
lished authority and government (often self-imposed), opposition to
it appears as rebellion. A messianic movement born out of the clash
of two vastly different cultures and supported by the inner rejection
and smouldering hatred of the subjects against their masters is essen-
tially a revolutionary movement and always turns into a political
revolution.

7. The opponents of, and traitors to, the movement have to face a
threat of severe punishment. For opponents offend a god, or a repren-
tative of God, and reject the inspirations of God. This is blasphemy
and sacrilege.

The conviction is strong that corporate action is required, and all
must fall in line. The movement must be backed up by the whole
community, as it is for the salvation and benefit of the whole society.
If members of the community keep aloof they weaken the cause,
endanger its success, bring on the disapproval and anger of the
divine agency that inspired the movement. They also impair the magic
effect of corporate action.

There is an innate intolerance in primitive society because it is
mainly ruled by public opinion which also enforces the sanctions. A
messianic movement which is accepted and approved by the whole
community enjoys all the privileges of tribal action in the vital interest
of the society.

8. The memory of a Golden Age is alive in the traditions of many
peoples of the world. It is described variously, according to the
cultural levels of the peoples. Almost always the emphasis is on
material and physical happiness. All myths relate its tragic end, either
through human guilt, the machinations of an evil spirit or some
unfortunate coincidence. But this loss of the Golden Age is not final.
It is this Golden Age which the leader of the messianic movement
tries to reinstate. Hatred against the superior culture is intensified by
attributing its loss to this culture, and by putting the blame on it for
their not having recovered it.

9. The religious, social and political aspirations of the messianic
leader and his followers find a strong emotional expression in their
meetings in which long speeches and exhortations, prayers, singing
and dancing, often semi-military exercises and games alternate.
When the intensity of feeling in the community rises, some members seem to get visions, others fall into a trance or ecstasy, or express themselves in hysterical weeping, glossolalia, etc. In these states of revivalism the usual decorum is frequently abandoned, and the excitement may even lead to sexual licence and debauchery.

10. The messianic leader not seldom attributes the present unhappy state of the community to its neglect of the traditional religion and culture. He preaches a return to it and promises the sure remedy of all ills through such a reform. At the same time there is a deliberate rejection of alien elements previously adopted from the superior alien culture.

The past is idealised; it leads to the conviction that a return to the old habits of thinking, believing and living will restore their lost paradise and wipe out the nightmare of present misery. However, the return to the traditional culture is only partial; certain innovations in the present way of life are retained. This leads to syncretism.

11. In spite of nativism the messianic leader and his followers do not discard all the adopted elements of the dominating culture. They attribute the economic and political superiority of their masters to their religion. It is believed that certain elements in their religion are responsible for their superiority, consequently they adopt them and graft them on to their old beliefs and practices.

Since messianic leaders, especially the uneducated ones, often fail to understand the true nature of the salient features in the alien superior culture and hit on very unessential, though perhaps superficially striking culture traits, their new cult doctrine is hopelessly illogical, contradictory and greatly over-simplified.

12. The leaders of messianic movements are often forced to admit that their resources for a campaign against their vastly superior masters are pitifully inadequate. Then they pretend to possess magic and supernatural means by which they might still be able to gain the upper hand. When these means fail to achieve their object—as they invariably do—the effect on the adherents of the movement is usually disastrous: it ends in complete demoralisation, passive resignation and despair.

13. This vitalism, described in the previous paragraph, often leads to eschatologism. It is the expectation of a world renewal and improvement after a world-wide catastrophic revolution and upheaval. It is based on the mystical belief that things can only improve after they have become really and extremely bad. The inner unrest and
insecurity of the mind is projected into nature, and a natural cataclysm is expected. Hidden in such an expectation is the hope that such a general upheaval and wholesale destruction will change the social and economic position of the whole world and that the superior society, too, will lose its dominating position, while the backward society will come out on top, without much personal effort.

14. Messianic movements are based on hope, the hope and expectation of a paradise on earth, lasting a thousand years or some long period. The emphasis is strongly on the material and physical aspects of a happy life. And it will have permanency, without any disturbance. This belief, which is quite common in messianic movements, is called Millenarism or Chiliasm.

These fourteen traits are found more or less strongly represented in most messianic movements all over the world. They are often strikingly similar down to small details. This is not due to diffusion and borrowing. It can be attributed to similar economic and social conditions to which the human mind reacts the world over in a similar manner. In fact, in a number of cases any mutual influence in such movements can be positively ruled out.

2. MESSIANIC MOVEMENTS IN THE WORLD

A. Messianic Movements in New Guinea and the Pacific Islands

Messianic movements of various types and aims have arisen in most continents of the world. They are most prominent in New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. In New Guinea they arose as early as 1825 and this first wave lasted until about 1895. A second wave of messianic movements arose in 1930 and continued to be active until the present time. It was strongest in the interval between the two world wars. Similar movements came into existence in Melanesia (Bismarck Archipelago, Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, New Caledonia, Fiji Islands), in Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaii, Society Islands, Samoa, Easter Islands) and in Melanesia (Gilbert Islands).

In this vast area the religion of the islanders displays a pronounced ancestor cult, a mythical belief in culture heroes and in the spirit possession of their priests. These traits certainly helped in the rise of such movements. But they were also prompted by the great discrepancies in material culture of the islanders on the one hand, and their masters and rulers on the other. The islanders, on the whole, are not living on a starvation level, but their level of material culture
is so low because their technical ability has remained undeveloped. The islands are so fertile and the climate is so favourable that very simple implements are required for the preparation and cultivation of their fields and gardens.

Thus when the western invaders came and took possession of the islands, these people of a stone-age culture were suddenly confronted with a highly developed technology and civilisation. The new masters interfered, however, not only with the material culture of the islanders, but also disturbed their social order and upset their religious and moral beliefs and practices. They recruited a large number of labourers for their vast new plantations and often sent them to distant places where they stayed for a number of years and were thus uprooted from their traditional culture and life habits. Western customs and principles were forced on them while their own ancient traditions and customs were either ridiculed or forbidden and punished. They were mercilessly exploited and socially degraded by many white settlers and traders and any opposition was ruthlessly beaten down.

First the overwhelming superiority of the white man created in the natives a feeling of inferiority and despair, but it soon turned into strong resentment and hatred. When their first revolts were brutally suppressed and the islanders realised that they had no chance to throw off the yoke of white domination by force, they began to change their tactics in the hope of fighting their oppressors with the assistance of superhuman agencies. Men and women, often renowned magicians, stood up and promised to achieve by their powerful magic what could not be done by natural means.

The leaders of such liberation movements generally mixed their old traditional beliefs with a strong dose of the new Christian ideas which Christian missionaries preached to them and which they understood only imperfectly. But they understood the teaching and promise of the arrival of a saviour as it was found also in their own religious mythology. This provided the ideological basis for their messianic movements.

In New Guinea, in particular, such movements assumed a peculiar character. They turned into so-called cargo cults. The Papuans held the strong conviction that their ancestors had manufactured for their descendants all the goods that arrived by steamer from afar, but that the whites always appropriated these goods for themselves. This belief created a deep feeling of injustice and frustration which occasionally
erupted into violence. The leaders and prophets of these movements also held out to their followers the promise of a future paradise on earth, freedom from foreign domination and a life of comfort without hard work and without sickness and suffering.

Although the colonial authorities always suppressed these movements and stamped them out wherever they found them, new movements arose in other places and excited new hopes and ambitions. At the beginning of the Second World War, when the Japanese invaded New Guinea and the Pacific Islands, they were eagerly welcomed by the islanders as liberators. But soon disillusion followed when they found the Japanese even more exacting masters than their former ones.

Meanwhile all these islands have achieved political independence and it is to be hoped that all messianic movements will now cease and the people will work out their own liberation from poverty and disease in their own way and by more realistic means.

B. Messianic Movements in America

In North America many messianic movements were started in the desperate struggle of the Red Indians against the powerful and overwhelmingly numerous white invaders. When they found that they were everywhere fighting a losing battle, the Red Indians too sought assistance from superhuman powers. In consequence messianic movements arose among the Algonkin tribes, the Iroquois, the Sioux, a number of South-East and North-West tribes.

All these tribes had in common a mystical relation to the forces of nature and the world in general. Their mysticism was animistic, naturalistic and pantheistic, with a strong belief in the existence of an impersonal magic power that was working in all things as also in animals and human beings. Spirit possession and shamanism are characteristic features in their religion, and states of trance used to be induced not seldom by artificial means (alcohol, drugs). The tribes also believed in a powerful ancestor spirit and in a culture hero and saviour of mankind.

The Red Indians were, since the arrival of the white invaders from across the sea, in an increasingly desperate situation. Their conquerors had not only dispossessed them of their hunting grounds and ruined their whole economy, they had also infected them with new diseases against which they had developed no resistance. Epidemics decimated the tribes, while many others lost their lives in a hope-
less defence of their lands against ever new waves of invaders.

Since natural means proved ineffective, the Red Indians took
refuge in supernatural means. They invented a ghost dance during
which their leaders dreamed of magic means by which they could
regain their old hunting grounds and their freedom. But nothing
helped.

Such movements were started as early as 1680 among the Pueblo
Indians. Between 1740 and 1760 a revivalistic movement arose among
the Delawares, and similar movements were started among other
tribes, such as the Winnebagos, Wintus, Yaroks, Yanas, and other
tribes of California and elsewhere.

General for these movements was the belief of the Red Indians
that through their ghost dance they could bring to life all the dead
Red Indians who would then unitedly be able to expel the pale-faced
foreigners. The ghost dance consisted in an endless walk or dance in
a circle which introduced an ecstatic state in which the dancers
dreamed of the restoration of their old way of life.

Middle and South America had their messianic movements at a
much earlier date. Such movements had already arisen in the middle
of the 16th century, and they were revived repeatedly in the subsequent
centuries in Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, Paraguay and Peru. In these
countries the natives were treated by the conquerors even more badly
than in North America, and some tribes became so desperate that
they committed suicide in great numbers. Their struggle for liberation
is still not over; they are much exploited economically, and
socially and politically deprived of their basic human rights.

C. Messianic Movements in Africa

Numerous messianic movements were started in Africa. A part of
them received their inspiration from Islam. Thus such movements
arose in North-West Africa already in the time of the Arab rule
(from 910 to 1228 AD). A second wave of such movements was triggered
off by the invasion and final conquest of their land by French and
Spanish colonisers. But all over northern Africa such movements
were started by men who claimed to be Mahdis. The most extensive
Mahdi revolt (from 1881 to 1885) was that of Mohammed Ahmed
which cost five million Sudanese their life. The Mahdi even sacked
Khartoum and killed the famous General Gordon who had been sent
by the British to save Khartoum. But the Mahdi himself died a few
months later of typhus. The revolt went on until it was suppressed by a
British army under Lord Kitchener.

Around 1900 there was the expectation of a new Mahdi in French Guinea, in 1906 and 1907 in Central Sudan, and also in North-East Africa and in Somaliland. In 1930 the Adara movement began in West Sudan. These later movements were initiated by Muslims who found it unbearable that "unbelievers" and foreigners should rule over them.

Tropical and southern Africa, too, experienced many messianic movements; they were mainly inspired by Christian preaching. The prophets and leaders of these movements had accepted the tenets of the Christian Faith, but modified and adapted them to their own traditional beliefs and practices. Thus these movements were strongly syncretistic in character.

Such movements arose especially on the West coast of Africa, in Guinea, South Nigeria, on the Gold coast and on the Ivory coast. In Central and East Africa the Watchtower Movement flourished from 1902 to 1907. Later movements arose in Uganda, Nyassaland, Kenya and North-Rhodesia. Powerful movements in the Congo were that of Simon Kimbangu (1921-1940), the Ngunza Khaki Movement (1937-49), so called because the followers of the movement wore khaki uniforms. While these movements started in the Congo, they spread also to Ruanda and Angola. The Simon Kimbangu Movement has at present several million adherents.

The apartheid policy of the South African Government obviously favoured the appearance of African prophets, and founders of new Churches which are a strange mixture of Christian structures and ideas with typically traditional beliefs and practices of various tribes and peoples of Africa. Such Churches came into existence among the Xosa tribes, the Hottentots and the Zulus. They contain strong elements of revivalism and nativism, millenarism and eschatologism. They strongly oppose colonialism and apartheid. It is alleged that in this way about 6000 independent African Churches have come into existence, with a more or less great number of adherents.

D. Messianic Movements in Asia

Messianic movements also arose in Asia, in the North (Siberia), in Tibet, China, Japan, in Indochina, Borneo and Celebes, on the Philippines, and in India.1 Unfortunately, the messianic movements

1 The author of this book has made a detailed study of messianic movements in India. Cf. his book Rebellious Prophets (Bombay, 1965).
in Asia have never been studied systematically, except for those of India, thus only a few prominent movements are well known, while others have escaped the attention of the anthropologists and students of comparative religion.

Spread over an immense area, the messianic movements of Asia are naturally of various types and characters. They arose in some places from the encounter of primitive races with western colonialism, or from the clash of economically exploited and socially degraded minorities with the superior dominant classes. Such movements are consequently often liberation movements; their leaders aspire at social equality, relief from exploitation or political freedom and independence. Nativistic tendencies and revivalistic practices accompany and support these aspirations. The ideological basis for the rise of a messiah or saviour is often found in the Asian high religions, in Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. Here and there also Christian converts began such movements.

A messianic movement, for instance, was started in 1904 among the Altai Turcs or White Kalmucks. The leader of the movement demanded freedom from Russian domination for his people. After his arrest the agitation slowly died down.

In Tibet the ideas of the Kesar legend were long kept alive by a people desiring liberation from oppression and want. But the occupation of Tibet by the Chinese Communists and their tactics of brainwashing the dissidents have effectively strangled all hope of liberation.

In China the T'ai P'ing rebellion was messianic in character and aim. Hung, the leader of the movement, was an intellectual who had, however, three times failed in the provincial examinations. Finally he fell ill and in his illness had a vision which inspired him to found a new religion. It contained many Christian elements which prompted some Protestant missionaries to support the rebellion. Hung soon gained many followers, though the Chinese Government put his movement under the Imperial ban. He declared himself “Heavenly King” and preached “Perfect Peace” (T'ai P'ing), but his agitation resulted in a wholesale destruction and devastation of the richest provinces of China. The rebellion lasted from 1851 to 1864 and aimed at the fall of the Manchu dynasty. But with strong foreign (British) assistance the Chinese Government was finally able to suppress the movement.

Japan, too, had several movements of a messianic character, not-
able among them being the "Dancing Religion" (Odoru-Shukyo), founded in 1945 by a woman who declared herself to be Christ and Buddha, and the messiah. Another messianic movement is the "Religion of Divine Wisdom" (Tenrikyo). It also contains many Christian elements, and is syncretistic and chiliastic in character. It gained many followers in Japan.

In South Borneo the Nulie Movement and in South Celebes the Daeng-Pabara Movement were also messianic in character, as also the movement of Sam Bram, a prophet and magician among the Jarais in Indochina.

In 1908 a messianic movement arose among the Manobos of Mindanao in the Philippines.

In Java the Ratu-Adel cult which was inspired not only by Buddhist, but also Mahdist concepts of messianism arose in 1825. It became a serious danger to the Dutch colonial power and was, therefore, suppressed. Its aim was the revival of Islamic power which, it was felt, was restricted and disturbed by foreign domination.

Many messianic movements of diverse types and aims have arisen since early times in India, among the tribal people, low castes and untouchables, Muslims and Hindus, who felt oppressed or exploited by the dominant classes and the higher castes. Many of the more recent movements came into conflict with the British colonial authorities which suppressed them with a heavy hand, allegedly in the interest of internal order and peace. The Freedom Movement of Mahatma Gandhi, the movement of the untouchable Mahars led by Dr. Ambedkar, the Pakistan agitation led by Jinnah and the Bhoo- dan Movement by Vinoba Bhave also displayed strong messianic traits.1

Many more messianic movements may have occurred in Asia, but this field has been little studied and scholars of the comparative history of religion have so far paid scant attention to them.

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1S. Fuchs, 1965.
CHAPTER XXI

The Religion of Tribal India

1. The Religion of the South Indian Tribes

The tribes of South India practise a religion which is more or less strongly influenced by Hinduism. The degree of Hinduisation is less noticeable among the mere food-gathering tribes, but has made some progress among the shifting cultivators and is much advanced among the superior agrarian tribes.

A. The Religion of the Food-gatherers

A few remnants of food-gathering tribes are still left in South India, such as the Malayans, Mala-Pantarams, Kadar and Chenchus.

They believe in a Supreme Being whom they call by a Hindu name. Such names are Parama Shiva, Parameshvar, Surya-Ilura, Malavay (hill-ruler), Ayappan or Ayanar, Sastha (Sastan) with consort. The latter is a silvan deity, but also identified with Shiva.

The Supreme God is mainly conceived as a mountain god, riding on a horse or elephant, and fighting with the spirits. He is a hunting god: whoever meets him in the jungle must die.

The Supreme God is represented by a crude stone slab. His worshippers sing his praises, and make offerings of rice boiled in milk, sugar, plantains and fruits. Frequently one of the singers gets possessed by the god; he is consulted in this state by the worshippers, who believe that the god speaks to them through him.

The food-gathering tribes also worship the ancestors. Sometimes the Supreme God (in the form of Ayappan or Ayanar) is even confused with the first ancestor. As such he is also a mountain or forest god.

The first ancestor is worshipped with bloody sacrifices of cocks, sheep and goats; or with liquor, opium and tobacco. The music of drums and pipes accompanies the sacrifices. During these ceremonies magicians frequently fall into a trance and prophesy.

Besides the ancestors, female deities are also worshipped like Kali and Bhadrakali (goddess with many arms), obviously Hindu impor-
tations. Bloody sacrifices are performed in honour of these goddesses.

B The Religion of the Primitive Cultivators

Shifting cultivators survived in South India until the recent past. The tribes practising shifting cultivation are as follows: Muduvans, Mannans, Uralis, Mala-Arayans, Kanikar, Paliyans, Mala-Pulayas and Ulladans.

Their Supreme God also bears a Hindu name: He is called either Bhagavan or Ishvaran, also Devan. Sometimes he is called Sastha (with an attendant Karuppaswami by name), or Shiva.

No temples exist for the worship of this god, who is represented by a stone under a tree and worshipped by bloody sacrifices of cocks, sheep and goats.

Besides this Supreme God, the primitive cultivators have hill gods whom they locate on the crests of hills. Thus the Mala-Arayans worship five hills which in their opinion possess superhuman powers. The Palyans preserve a portion of the primeval forest intact and dedicate it to the forest spirits, because they, too, consider the crests of hills as their gods and believe that these are haunted by spirits. The Uralis believe that evil spirits inhabit the crests of hills. The Mala-Kuruvar believe that the hills are inhabited by spirits. They perform sacrifices before clearing the jungle for cultivation and after sowing. The Muduvans venerate Kottamala Swami, Vadaganatha Swami and other gods and believe that they dwell on hill crests.

Besides these hill spirits, the primitive cultivators also worship their ancestors. Thus the Kanikar worship Agastya and the ancestors; the Vishavans offer libations to their ancestors before abandoning a plot of land cultivated only recently. The Uralis worship their ancestors whenever they perform a sacrifice to promote the fertility of their fields. So do also the Palyans and Mala-Arayans; among the latter the ancestors play a prominent part.

They also have forest deities. Thus the Mannans dedicate a portion of the primeval forest to the forest spirits, while the Ulladans annually make an offering to the forest spirits on a Friday. After this offering they are no longer afraid of wild animals.

Some of the tribes also worship the sun and the moon. The Kanikar, for instance, believe that the sun is the creator. The sun is a female, while the moon is a male (the mark of the moon is a hare). The sun is worshipped on Fridays.

The Thanta-Pulayas worship the sun and snakes. The Muduvans
worship the morning and evening sun. The Uralis believe that the sun is the creator of the universe and the father of all souls, while the moon is the mother. The Mala-Arayans believe that the sun and the moon are the children of one goddess.

All these tribes go in great fear of evil spirits, especially the Kanikar and Uralis. Among these two tribes the magician is an important person and he is believed to have the power of curing all diseases.

The tribes also worship Hindu deities like Subramania (worshipped by the Muduvans) and Karuppa (worshipped by the Palayans and Muduvans). Female deities worshipped by the tribes are Meenakshi Amma (worshipped by the Muduvans), Mariamma (venerated by the Muduvans, Mala-Pulayas and Paliyans). Kali is venerated by the Muduvans and Mala-Pulayas.

C. The Religion of the Advanced Cultivators

A good number of South Indian tribes are fairly advanced in cultivation; some of them are the Parayans, Pulayans, Vendans, Vettuvans, Panyans, Nayadis, and others.

Their Supreme God is given a Hindu name and addressed as Shiva, Ishvara, Devan or Bhagwan. He usually has a consort.

Like the primitive cultivators, they believe this god to be present in a stone under a tree, and offer animal sacrifices of cocks, sheep and goats to him.

Besides the Supreme God, they mainly worship mother goddesses. Prominent among these is the Hindu goddess Kali or Bhagavati. Often the Supreme God himself is conceived as a goddess; or they venerate an ancestress of their tribe. They also worship goddesses of disease like smallpox and cholera. Such goddesses are Mariamma (venerated all over South India) and the Seven Ammas (Seven Mothers). The divine patroness of the village, the gram devata, is also venerated by these tribes.

They have a rich mythology which, however, suggests strongly matriarchal religious conceptions. They probably borrowed them from superior matriarchal peoples like the Nayar.

The cult of these gods and goddesses is rich and complicated. Sacrificial victims are animals which are decapitated (cocks). Even buffaloes are sacrificed, after they have been raced. It appears that in the past these advanced cultivators used to sacrifice human beings osia. They have on the whole male priests, but priestesses are also
known to officiate in certain temples.

All these tribes practise ancestor worship. The Parayans, for instance, do it through exorcists and shamans who are also supposed to be proficient rain-makers.

The practice of magic is intensive and widespread. The Parayans are known for their Otis cult. The members of this secret society are believed to be able to turn themselves into animals (into bulls, dogs, cats, even elephants). Tests are demanded from those who want to join the cult. They are also believed to be rain-makers. These tribes bury their dead; cremation is not their custom.

Snake-worship is equally popular among them. The cult of the Nagaraja (Serpent King) is common among them. Every homestead has a thicket (kavi) set aside for snake-worship. In the south-west corner of the garden an oil lamp is lit every evening, while once a month milk is offered. Special priests perform propitiatory rites on the properties of those who have become victims of the reptiles’ wrath. Childless couples desiring offspring erect votive stones (nakaka) with snake emblems. At Mannarsala is a temple in honour of the snake-god. It has a priestess (valiamma), who is celibate, as she considers herself to be the bride of Nagaraja.

2. THE RELIGION OF THE CENTRAL INDIAN TRIBES

A. The High-God

The Supreme God of the Central Indian tribes is known by Hindu names: Thakur deo, Burha deo, Bara deo, Bhagwan, Dharmesh, Param Jiu, Narayan deo, Parmeshwar, Paramatma, etc. Only the Mundari-speaking tribes (Santals, Mundas, Hos, Bhumij, Birhor, Turis and Asurs) call him Sing Bonga (sing meaning sun, bonga, originally the moon, now, a spirit). The Kharias and Khonds call him Bero (sun). The High-God is thus often identified with the sun. Sing Bonga, however, is probably originally the bright moon, but under totemistic influence became the sun. The Mundas still have another name for him; they call him Haram, “the Old One.”

The High-God has no wife or brother; he does not require food, like the lesser deities and spirits.

He is saluted at sun-rise. During public sacrifices he is addressed first. The only sacrifice of homage which the Mundas perform is addressed to him. But also sacrifices of propitiation and petition are addressed to him. He accepts preferably white animals (cocks, goats,
bulls). The sacrificer faces the East when he officiates. In divination the High-God is invoked first, as also in thanksgiving ceremonies. In the funeral service he is mentioned as the master over life and death. He is reproached in misfortune, and called to witness in oath-taking. A periodic sacrifice is performed in his honour every third or fourth year, sometimes even later. The priest officiating in this sacrifice is the head of the celebrating family.

B. The Minor Deities

The minor deities of the Central Indian tribes are of various types. One category could be called mountain and vegetation gods. Thus the Santals, Mundas, Hos and Bhumij venerate Marang Buru (the Great Mountain); the Oraons and Kharias call the same god Barnda, the Savaras and Korkus call him Dongar deo (hill-god). This mountain god is mainly a vegetation and rain god (the dark moon?). He is inferior to the High-God and sungod.

Each village has its village god, represented in a stone slab put up in a grove or under a tree. This deity is worshipped mainly after the harvest through public exorcism, much feasting and excessive drinking; sexual licence is also occasionally practised on his feast.

These tribes also worship female deities; prominent among them is the Earth-mother. Among the Mundas, Hos and Bhumij she is called Chando Omol (the moon, the wife of the sungod). The Oraons venerate her under the name Chala Pachho, the Old Lady; she is a village goddess. The Gonds and Baigas call her Dharti mata or Prithvi mata, earth-mother.

Their pantheon includes also house and family gods. It is believed that the spirits of the deceased relatives take their abode in the house in which they formerly had lived (ading). They are occasionally venerated and offerings are addressed to them. Many of these tribes practise a double burial. The second burial takes place in the ancestral village. They erect stone or wooden monuments to their deceased relatives in the ancestral village. They also perform protective rites against the return of the spirits of the dead.

The sacrificial victims are mainly animals, cattle, goat, fowl and pig. Human sacrifices are said to take place occasionally. The Mundas call them ońdoka. The victim is killed in the jungle, only a finger and the blood are taken and buried with prayers in the ading. Human sacrifices are supposed to increase fertility in house, stable and field.
The Religion of Tribal India

The Central Indian tribes also make offerings of liquor, and of morsels of food to the ancestors. They burn refined butter and incense during offerings.

Many of these tribes have totemism. Their totems are animals and plants. Generally they do not venerate their totems, but they observe the totem taboos of not killing, not eating and not touching them. They also observe totem exogamy. Only the Oraons erect wooden totem posts and make occasional offerings in front of them. The Gond tiger clan worships the tiger, on the occasion of a wedding.

C. Magic and Animism

The Central Indian tribes believe that each person has several souls: the name, shade, life spirit (jīv) and breath (atma). They also believe in a rebirth of some of these souls, either in the same family or outside. Spirits not reborn or not laid to rest by appropriate rites become dangerous to the survivors. They cause sickness, misfortune and death.

The tribes also believe in the existence of many evil spirits who have never been human beings. They too must be appeased. To find them out and to discover the nature of offerings for their appeasement, is the task of diviners, soothsayers, exorcists and magicians who are very numerous in the tribal villages of Central India.

The aboriginals of Central India are also firm believers in the efficacy of magic and witchcraft. Black magic can only be counteracted by white magic. Witches are mostly women. When found out, they are often killed.

3. THE RELIGION OF THE TRIBES IN NORTH-EASTERN INDIA

A. The Supreme Being

Among the tribes of north-eastern India the Supreme Being is generally of little importance in cult and daily life. More in the forefront are the lower deities and spirits who are near and always demand sacrifices. But the Supreme God is distant and too benevolent to harm anybody. Still, the tribes entertain a strong belief in the existence of a Supreme God; his supremacy over the other gods and beings in the world is undeniable.

Thus the Ao Nagas call the Supreme God Lungkijingba (deity of the stone house) They believe that he lives high up in the sky; therefore they also call him “Spirit of the Air Room.” He sits on his
stone house as on a throne. He divides the fates of human beings in
the form of leaves. But he does little more. Only occasionally does
he command the other deities to punish some men or to leave others
in peace.

The Ao Nagas perform no official sacrifice in his honour, except
occasionally through a shaman. Sometimes he is also called 'Creator'
(tiaba), and considered responsible for the creation of man; but the
opinions about this function of God are vague.

Though Lungkijingba is now the High-God of the Ao Nagas, it is
probable that he is really a former High-God of the Konyak Nagas.
For the Ao Nagas have still another High-God who fits better into
their cultural life.

This other god is called Licha-ba—'Creator of the World' or, literally,
'He who walks over the earth'. The Ao Nagas believe that Licha-ba
created the earth and flattened the Brahmaputra valley. He is the
acknowledged lord of the world and master over rain and storm. He
prevents earthslides, and can command famines and epidemics. In
old times he visited the Ao villages; now he only appears to them in
dreams.

This High-God receives rich offerings which are presented by
village priests. Mostly the meat of pigs and of chickens is acceptable
to him. The sacrificial feasts take place at the time when the field
fruits ripen.

The Lhota Nagas seem to have no clear idea about the existence
of a High-God or creator.

The Sema Nagas, on the other hand, have a definite idea of a
High-God whom they call Alhou (creator). His attributes are omni-
science, omnipotence and omnipresence. His full name is Timilhour
(creator of men). But he interferes little with the affairs of the
mortals, though he distributes good and evil, wealth and poverty
among men.

Since he is benevolent and does not harm anybody, the Sema
Nagas care little about his worship.

Alhou's habitation is in the sky, or the whole space between heaven
and earth. He shares his abode with the heavenly spirits Kungumi.

The Rengma Nagas call their High-God Songinyu. His voice is the
thunder. He has power over the heavenly bodies.

The Angami Nagas call their Supreme God Kepenopfu (birth-
spirit). He is sometimes addressed as the creator, but more as the
creator of living things than as the creator of the universe. It is not
clear whether he is masculine or feminine; he appears at times as the first man and guardian of the kingdom of the dead; at other times as the primeval mother of men and as the wife of a being with moon-mythological features.

Kepenopusu dwells in heaven, to which place go also the good souls. He throws the thunderbolt—found on earth as stone axes from heaven.

This High-God is a strange combination of a sky-god and a mother-goddess. About the cult of this god little is known. He is probably an otiose deity. He has some moral significance, because only the souls of good men are allowed to stay in heaven with him.

The Naga of Manipur have a common belief that the world was created by a deity which also causes earthquakes. But beyond that little is known of their religion.

The Kabui Naga believe in a supreme, benevolent deity, the creator of all things. Man, on the other hand, was created by another deity, though on command of the Supreme Deity.

The Tangkhul Naga believe that the Supreme God is the judge of evil-doers. He is addressed in prayer in times of need and sickness. Man was created by his son.

All Lushai-Kuki tribes venerate a sky-god Pathian or Pathen, which means 'father.' He is the creator of all things, benevolent, all-powerful; he lives in heaven and has little contact with human beings. Karai Kasang recreates, perfects and beautifies a world created by a mother-goddess.

The Thados attribute to Pathen, their creator deity, the power of control over the evil spirits. Most of their sacrifices are addressed to him. Pathen is master over the rain; when angry with a man he kills him by lightning. He reminds the Thados of his existence by thunder.

The Lakhers or Maras call their Supreme God Khazangpa. He resides in heaven. He is the creator and master of the world and he has full power over men whom he treats according to their merits. Khazangpa means 'father of all things', i.e., of life. His second name is Pachhapa, 'the old man' or 'the source', i.e., of life. He possesses strong anthropomorphic features, for in their opinion he has a wife and children and takes nourishment.

The most important sacrifices of the Lakhers are addressed to him; in a song the officiating priest asks for health, wealth, rich crops and success in hunting.

Other Chin tribes, like the Hakas and southern Chins, believe in a
High-God living in heaven. They call him Kozin. The Siyins and all northern Chin tribes do not seem to believe in a Supreme God. But more investigations about their religious beliefs will be necessary to be sure of it.

The religious conceptions of the Kachin tribes reveal a strange incongruence: Karai Kasang, their Supreme God, appears late in the myth about the world’s origin and plays no important part in it. But nobody doubts that he is the maker and master of the world. His other names are ‘all-knowing’, ‘the one who is above the clouds’, ‘the one supreme.’ Karai Kasang cannot age or die, he has neither wife nor children. Without his permission no evil spirit can harm a human being. In case of misfortune individuals and whole villages address him in prayer when the spirits prove powerless.

But sacrifices in his honour are rare and never of a bloody nature. Offerings of rice, eggs and beer are made; occasionally chickens and buffaloes are let loose in his honour.

Karai Kasang is probably the god of the ruling class which immigrated from the North (Inner Asia) and subjugated an earlier people. Karai Kasang recreates, perfects and beautifies the world created by a mother-goddess.

All Bodo tribes believe in a creator god who is worshipped with a more or less elaborate cult. The Kacharis call their Supreme God Alow (probably the Alhou of the Sema Nagas). The Garos call their creator god Tatara-Rabuga; the Rabhas call him Ma-Bai. The Khasis have a Supreme God U Blei Nongthaw (creator). This deity is, however, often conceived in female form. Another informant called the Supreme God U Pyhat whose sword is lightning.

About the religion of the North-Eastern Frontier tribes (Arunachal Pradesh) little is known. It is only known that the Tangsas call their Supreme Being Sikia. From him emerged a man and a woman who populated the whole world. But Sikia is an otiose deity. No veneration is paid to him nor does he desire any. He never does harm to anybody.

The Dafias venerate a female Supreme Being, called Ane Duini, the Sun-Mother, the good, the benevolent. Nothing in this world can be obtained without her will. Duini makes the crops grow and fills the granaries. She gives children and keeps them healthy. She bestows animals and wealth on men and determines their fate. However, ordinarily no veneration is accorded to Duini, except that a mithun (bos frontalis) is sacrificed in her honour. But Duini’s name is
praised on all important occasions, such as weddings and funeral feasts.

B. The Minor Deities

In addition to the Supreme God the north-eastern Indian tribes believe in the existence of a host of minor deities, of demons and furies whom they fear greatly and whom they are anxious to appease by prayer and sacrifice.

Thus the Lhota Nagas believe in a great number of heavenly spirits (potso) who live in a world beyond this earth. But beyond the heavenly realm there is another, higher one, and beyond that still another, highest world. Only the potso of the second world have contact with the human beings, appear to them and permit shamans to hear them. They must be venerated by prayer and sacrifice.

The Sema Nagas believe also in heavenly spirits whom they call Kungumi. They are similar to the potso of the Lhota Nagas.

They also believe in spirits of the earth—teghami. The most prominent among these is Litsaba or Kichimiya, the spirit of fertility who is responsible for a good harvest. But he demands in return rich offerings, or else he comes as a whirl-wind and does much damage to the field fruits. He is probably identical with the Lichaba of the Ao Nagas.

The Rengma Nagas believe likewise in the existence of heavenly spirits.

The Tangsas believe in many malicious spirits who must be propitiated by offerings and sacrifices because they are quick to take offence and may cause illness or misfortune.

The Daflas have a large variety of spirits which must be given offerings lest they cause great harm to human beings.

C. Eschatology

The realm of the dead is generally located in the nether-world. But the belief is not absent among some tribes that at least some of the deceased human beings may reach heaven.

Thus the Ao Nagas believe that the dead go to heaven, though others say that their residence is in the nether-world; the entrance is through the Wokha mountain.

The Sema Nagas say that Wokha is the last station before they enter the nether-world. This nether-world is either in heaven or under the earth. Some Sema Nagas believe that good people go towards
the East, while evil people go towards the West (the setting sun).

The Rengma Nagas hold that the nether-world is divided into six equal sections, one on top of the other.

The Angami Nagas claim that only those who have celebrated certain merit feasts and after that have eaten no impure meat, go to the Supreme God in heaven, while the others go to the nether-world where they pass through seven existences; first as butterflies, then as other insects, after the seventh follows complete annihilation.

A belief in transformation into insects is found among almost all Naga tribes, the Lushais, Garos and Khasis too; but such beliefs are found also beyond Assam, in South-East and East Asia, in Oceania and even in ancient Europe.

The Tangkhuls place the realm of the dead in heaven, which is dominated by a god who judges the newly arriving souls according to their merits.

The Kabui Nagas believe that the dead dwell under the earth.

The Lusheis, Kukis and Lakhers believe in a land of the blessed and a land of the dead; the great majority of the dead go to the latter place.

The belief is general that the deceased have to overcome certain obstacles on their way to the other world. It is also believed that the surviving relatives and friends can help them to pass these obstacles successfully.

Thus the Ao Nagas place a spear in the grave. With it the dead must hit a tree in front of the house of the king of the dead; only honest people can pass the test. The king of the dead invites these into his house and later sends them to the village of the dead. Thieves miss the tree; they go by a side-path to the village of the dead. Life there is similar to life on earth, but without sexual intercourse. After a while, the deceased die a second time and go to a dim place where they slowly fade away.

The Lhota Nagas believe that a spirit guards the path to the realm of the dead; he tries to catch the newly arriving souls and to kill them.

The Angami Nagas claim that the path to the realm of the Supreme God is guarded by a spirit with whom the dead souls have to fight. If conquered they are forever excluded from heaven and must roam about between heaven and earth. This spirit is often identified with the ancestors of the human race and as the mythical husband of the supreme deity. He has lunar-mythological features—
a long beard; he hides during the day, etc.

The Lusheis state that the first man shoots at the dead who approach him. Whomsoever he hits cannot enter the resting place of the dead. But he is unable to hit those who have been successful in killing a man and in celebrating merit feasts; or those who have enjoyed seven virgins or raped seven women.

The Garos also believe that a demon guards the entrance to the realm of the dead. The dead souls anxious to gain entrance into the nether-world must bribe him with brass rings and have to pretend that they had been married to a thousand women (to prove their erotic prowess).

The Tangsas believe that after death a soul takes the shape of a kite and flies to a place somewhere in the western sky. Persons who die an unnatural death are turned into evil spirits.

In Dafla eschatology, the dead become beings of a higher order and live in a land of plenty. It lies below this world. Ormu, the nether-world, is much like the present world, but everything is on a larger scale. The way to the nether-world is difficult. A guardian of the nether-world judges all souls. Deeds of valour and enterprise find his approval, and a man who has killed many enemies, married many wives and acquired many slaves and cattle is received with honour, while the meek and humble men are dismissed curtly. The souls of the dead may die once more.
CHAPTER XXII

The Cultural Foundations of Hinduism

1. THE VEDIC ELEMENT IN HINDUISM

It is strange that most studies on Hinduism begin with the Vedic period. It appears that Indologists commonly assume that Vedic culture and religion had their cradle in India. But it is evident that when the Aryan-speaking tribes arrived in India as immigrants they had already long ago developed their own ethnic culture with definite social and religious values and customs. We only call them Vedic because they were transmitted to us in and through the four Vedas.

Who the tribes were who brought this culture into India is still unknown. They spoke an Aryan language; but this fact does not imply that they all belonged to the same race. As nomadic animal breeders, which they originally were, they very likely brought their menials and slaves along, and these might have belonged to different conquered races. During their wanderings in the Middle East, and presumably in Iran, prior to their invasion of India, the Vedic tribes had also adopted a number of cultural traits native to the (largely agrarian) city cultures of the Middle East.

Vedic religion, thus, bears a double aspect: there was a higher religion, that of the priest and warrior classes, and a lower religion, that of the common people. Our information about the higher forms of Vedic religion is fairly complete since there are in existence a prayer-book, the Rigveda, a song-book, the Samaveda, and a book of rituals, the Yajurveda. From the Atharvaveda, or the book of spells, we get information about the animistic and magic beliefs of the lower strata of the people.

The Vedic gods are mainly nature gods, strongly anthropomorphic, as in most religions of the nomadic animal breeders. Others are emanations of a more comprehensive divinity; and a host of demons are naturally not lacking. Among the nature gods are: Dyaus Pitar (Father Sky), Surya (Sun), Usha (Dawn), Prithvi (Earth), Parjanya (Rain), Indra (Storm), and Agni (Fire). Among these deities Indra
and Agni have a prominent position. The greatest number of hymns are addressed to these two gods in sacrifice. They must have been the favourite gods of the Vedic Aryans. Indra was the god of war, the demon killer, a heavy drinker. He was the regent of the sky, displayed his temper as the storm-god, hurling his thunderbolts at Vritra, the demon of drought, till the clouds burst and yielded the much needed monsoon-rain.

Agni was the god of fire. He burned the sacrificial gifts on the altars and wafted their smoke on to the gods. Thus he was the priest among the gods, the mediator between men and gods. Moreover, he lived in the never-extinguished household-fire and belonged to the family.

The pantheon of the Vedic Aryans also contained gods of the agriculturists and pastoralists, like the Ashvins or Nasayyas, the twin sons of Dyaus Pitar. They help ship-wrecked sailors, restore legs to the maimed, and provide husbands for maidens. Then there is Pusan, the god of plenty, the guardian of the roads, of herdsmen and stray cattle. Vishnu, probably a sun-god, who measures the universe in three steps (sun-rise, noon, sun-set), later becomes Shiva’s rival in popularity.

The Vedic Aryans have also lower deities and goddesses like Vach (Speech), Sarasvati (a river-goddess, the goddess of learning and poetry) and Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. They believe in nymphs (apsarasas), genii of clouds and water (gandharvas) and the divine artisans Ribhus, also in protective genii and others. Yama, with Yami the progenitor of the human race, is the god of death.

These gods of the Vedic Aryans generally make no ethical demands on their worshippers. On the contrary, the devas, as they are called, depend on human prayer and sacrifice which produce the brahman, the divine substance. They are worshipped through singing hymns and sacrificing animals; this and the oblation of the distilled juice of a plant soma, the divine liquor, give them divine powers. In return they bestow on their worshippers victory in war, wealth, cattle and progeny.

But the Vedic Aryans also brought to India another set of gods with an ethical significance. These are the Asuras. They are probably of Semitic origin and may have been adopted from the religions of the city-dwellers by whom many Aryan troops were employed as city-guardians and soldiers. The Asuras possess divine power, and are independent of prayer and sacrifice offered by man. The greatest
among them is Varuna, the guardian of the cosmic and moral order (*rita*). This concept, too, is typical of the pastoralists. Varuna is a moon or water god, mysterious and awe-inspiring. He watches over the observance of the universal law and punishes its transgression with dropsy and other evils. Mitra, a friendly antithesis to Varuna, is the god of light, a sungod. Both gods belong to the Adityas, the eight sons of Aditi,¹ a goddess.

The Vedic worshippers, traditionally unsteady wanderers without permanent homes, had no temples and idols. The offerings to the gods were spread on sacrificial straw placed in front of the house of the one who offered a sacrifice. The offerings consisted of the flesh of slaughtered animals and of *soma* juice. The gods were supposed to partake of the food and drink. Sacrificial fires were lit and milk, butter and rice cakes burned in sacrifice. Hymns to the gods were sung or recited by the priest and the worshippers.

It is significant that in the present time very few of the Vedic gods are still venerated by the Hindus: Agni perhaps, in particular during a wedding, Surya, the sun, Sarasvati, the goddess of learning, and Visvakarman, the maker of the world, who is specially venerated in South India by the smiths, carpenters and masons. Almost all the other Vedic gods have vanished from the Hindu pantheon or at least have changed their names.

The eschatology of the Vedic Aryans was strikingly vague and contradictory. The soul does not exist independently from the body; the deceased survives whole, or is transformed into the sun, the wind, into waters and plants. The abode of the dead is the dark domain of Yama; it is a joyless place. But other opinions were also held, for instance, that the deceased joined the assembly of the ancestors, where they enjoyed a life similar to that which they had abandoned on earth.

The dead are not judged for their good or bad actions in life. Ethical concepts such as *rita* (cosmic order), *shraddha* (faith), *vrata* (religious precept), *dharma* (divine law), etc., have more of a ritual significance. Virtue, in the eyes of the Vedic Aryans, consisted in the fulfilment of the ritualistic duties and in generosity to the priests (*dakshina*).

Vedic cosmology and cosmogony were also vague and contradictory. The universe was generally conceived as having three spheres:

¹The meaning of Aditi is ‘boundlessness.’
the earth, swimming in the ocean, an intermediary space (*antariksa*), and heaven, with a stony vault, separating the visible world from the invisible world of the gods and ancestors. Very vague mythologies recorded the creation of the world. Various gods were named as creators, or the creation was conceived as an emanation, a fixation or measuring (as by an artisan).

A solution of the problem could also be sought through philosophy. Vedic philosophy saw the beginning of the world either in a creator Visvakarman, Brihaspati or Brahmanspati (god of all priests), in a golden germ (*hiranyagarbha*), in time (*kala*) or in Purusha, the primeval man who, a victim in a sacrifice, is dismembered and out of his parts the world is formed.¹

As this was the religion of the higher classes among the Vedic Aryans, the lower forms of magic were of no great importance to them. But it is evident that not all classes of Aryan society were without magic practices. There is a whole collection of magic charms in the prescriptions of the *Atharvaveda*. Essential in magic was the *mantra* (invocation), but also fasts, dances and yoga exercises have magic significance. They produce inner force (*tapas*).

In a later phase, when the Aryan immigrants had to some extent mixed with the local population, Vedic religion turned indeed into a rather refined form of magism. In this period the exact observance of the sacrificial rites became of paramount importance. And only the priests (Brahmins) knew how to perform the complicated rites. The ritual became all-powerful; it could force the gods to grant whatever the priests asked for. Religion had thus turned into magic.

During this period a new god made his appearance: Prajapati, 'the Lord of the Creatures.' He is an androgynous creator, combining in himself male and female elements. The elements of a sacrifice (fire, implements, verses and melodies) are turned into independent magical substances. Objects of the sacrifice are plants, animals, especially the horse, and even human beings. Magic conceptions smother true religious relations with the deity.

All this led finally to a pantheistic conception of the universe: the *brahman* became the supreme principle which comprised everything, even the gods. The human individual (whose essence was contained

¹This particular form of creation is a typically agrarian form of cosmogony, widespread in south-eastern Asia and Indonesia among primitive cultivators. It may have been adopted from a primitive agrarian tribe in India.
in his breath—prana) was part of the supreme all-enclosing principle: brahma—atman.

This in turn led to the doctrine of magic equivalence. The ritual of the sacrifice had its correlation in the universe. This principle was also a further development of the analogous magic of the Atharvaveda.

The ethics of the Late Vedic period were equally determined by this magical outlook: “Good is who is ritually pure; bad is who neglects the sacrifice.”

The eschatological ideas of this period were still very vague. It was believed that man can die repeatedly if the effects of his ritual actions (karman) are exhausted. Rebirth on earth is possible for Brahmins only.

Also in other realms of Indian culture Aryan influence was strong. As shown above, aversion to killing their herd animals is a common characteristic of pastoralists. Though the slaughtering and eating of their herd animals, especially females (cows), were generally much restricted, they did not completely abstain from eating the flesh of their animals. Nor did the Vedic Aryans. It is recorded that they sacrificed cows and ate their flesh. But later they began to regard the cow as a goddess and “the giver of plenty” (M. Gandhi).

The body of a dead cow is, however, regarded as impure and polluting. Castes that skin dead cattle, eat its flesh and tan its skin or manufacture leather articles, are regarded as impure and treated as untouchables. But there is no doubt that this cow veneration was a further development of the traditional attitude of the cattle breeders to hold the life of their herd animals sacred and to kill them only in rare cases.

Another trait which the high-caste Hindus have inherited from their animal-breeding ancestors is their aversion to manual work. Even in present times in northern India, a Brahmin or Rajput who puts his hand to the plough and tills his own field, is degraded in the eyes of his caste fellows. Many Brahmins and Rajputs will rather starve than do manual work in their fields, nor will they allow their womenfolk to go out and do so.

This contempt for manual work, and for the workers who had to carry it out, no doubt also contributed to the development of the caste system as it has been in vogue in India even up to the present time. Against this statement the objection has been raised that the regulations of the caste system were at least in the past enforced with
greater rigour in South India where Aryan influence has been less felt than in the north. This fact has been used to absolve the Aryans of their responsibility for the development of the caste system. It was not so much the Aryan who must be held responsible for the caste system, but the traditional contempt for manual work of the animal breeders in general. The immigrants who gave to the peoples of South India the Dravidian form of speech were originally also animal breeders, since the Dravidian languages are related to the Altai language group, and the Altai region was the centre and home of the animal breeding culture.¹

Another heritage of the ancient animal breeders is the patriarchal extended joint family system which has practically spread all over India. Even in areas where it was originally unknown and among communities which had another system, the patriarchal system is slowly but surely gaining ground. So strong is the influence of the higher Hindu castes which still dominate the mind of the masses.

Another typically animal-breeding trait is the autocratic rule of the chiefs and patriarchs. In pre-independence days the Indian princes ruled their subjects autocratically. They were practically in possession of all the land in their state and could dispose of it as they liked. This domineering position of the princes has in post-independence days been largely assumed by the ministers and government officials. Though India is supposed to be a democratic country, the actual rulers are all-powerful and the subjects usually meekly submit to the not seldom domineering attitude of such office-bearers. The ancient relation between rulers and subjects is still deeply ingrained in the mind of the Indian population.

Thus in many different ways the culture of the patriarchal pastoralists and animal breeders has imposed itself on the various original cultures of India and it is still gaining increasing influence.

M. N. Srinivas has popularised the term ‘Sanskritisation’ for this process, others call it simply Hinduisation, Brahmanisation, or by some other names.² This process of Sanskritisation has been going on for many centuries, though not without an occasional strong opposition. And only in recent times have such counter-movements been more successful, such as the Communist movement, and the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and Dravida Mun-

netra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamilnadu.

2. The Influence of Hunting and Agrarian Cultures on Village Hinduism

While the religion of the higher Hindu castes is more influenced by Aryan culture traits, that is, by the culture traits of the nomadic animal breeders, the Hinduism of Village India shows a stronger dependence on the culture of the advanced hunters on the one hand, and that of the primitive cultivators on the other.

A. The Supreme God

In accordance with the pattern common in the higher hunting and agrarian cultures, most agrarian Hindu castes believe in a personal Supreme Being whom they address by various names, as Bhagwan, Parmeshwar, Ishwar, Parmatma, Khuda, etc. But this Supreme God is an otiose deity, that means, a deity that does not concern himself much with human affairs. No acts of worship are performed in his honour though his name is fairly frequently invoked in daily life.

But it is possible that this belief in a high-god is of more recent date, due to Sanskritisation, or due to various bhakti cults having arisen here and there in modern Hinduism, or, at least in northern India, due to Muslim influence. It may also be that the various incarnations (avatar) of Vishnu (Rama, Krishna, etc.) have merged in the concept of a Supreme God.

B. The Minor Deities

In Village Hinduism religious practice is more concentrated on the various Hindu gods, on Vishnu in his incarnations of Rama and Krishna, on Shiva (Mahadeo) and his consort Parvati, on Ganpati-Ganesh, on Lakshmi, Hanuman, and a host of local deities.

To another type of deities belong the Earth-mother (Dharti-mata, or Prithvi mata), and the goddesses of disease (the seven sisters), such as Kali (plague), Marai mata (cholera) and Sitala mata (smallpox). The Earth-mother has two opposite aspects: on the one hand she is the goddess of fertility giving growth and fecundity to plants, animals and human beings, on the other hand she is the goddess of disease, epidemics and death, since after having exhausted her fertility she must again recover her powers through a hecatomb of victims. Such beliefs are obviously widely found in agrarian cultures. The Indian agrarian castes are no exception.
The worship of the Hindu gods is performed according to a rich and varied ritual, either daily or only on certain seasonally recurring feast days. The sun-god Narayan may be worshipped daily at sunrise; Agni, the fire-god, at weddings; Ganesha at the beginning of any important enterprise; Hanuman on many occasions; Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, on Diwali, when also the ancestors are remembered and the animals and implements by which a man earns his livelihood are venerated; Nagpanchami is celebrated in honour of the snake-god; Janmashtami is the birthday of Krishna, a popular incarnation of Vishnu; Dasehra is celebrated in honour of Durga, the demon-slayer, Gana Gaur is a fertility feast in which Parvati, the wife of god Shiva, is invoked; and Nav Ratri is the feast of Kali, who is especially invoked by the magicians.

The sacrifices in honour of the Hindu gods are performed mainly by the head of the family if such a sacrifice is intended for the benefit of the family; by the official village priest (Brahmin, or a caste priest), if the sacrifice is for the benefit of the village community or caste group.

Sacrifices in honour of the Earth-mother and of other female deities are often performed by priests of low caste and by magicians and are invariably animal sacrifices with much spilling of blood.

C. Cosmology and Eschatology

While in the Vedic Age the world is made by a god out of existing matter, or it comes into existence by the dismembering of Purusha, in the later period of Hinduism the world exists eternally; it is periodically coming into existence or being destroyed again. The full duration of a universe lasts a Brahma-year (kalpa). Each kalpa is divided into thousand eras (mahayuga), and each mahayuga into four ages (yuga), a golden age in which happiness and righteousness predominate and human beings are immortal, a subsequent age in which human beings become mortal and have to bear suffering, a third age in which bad habits and many plagues arise, but the worst is the kaliyuga, the fourth and present age, which began with the death of Krishna. This kaliyuga will end when the present world is destroyed in a cosmic fire and a flood.

But the divine Prakriti still exists because it is eternal and through a union with Purusha it may begin a new period of creation.

Such a theory of the universe owing its existence to the union of Prakriti, the female creative principle, with Purusha (consciousness)
conceived as a male, is a very sophisticated version of more primitive cosmologies found in primitive agrarian cultures of Monsoon Asia. It is based on the belief in a parallelism between the cycle of the individual life and the cosmic events: As man is born, grows and ages, and finally dies, so does the whole cosmos come into existence, expand to full growth, finally decline and vanish, to be resuscitated after a time. The same parallelism exists between nature and the cosmos: every year in spring nature comes to life, grows and matures in summer, decays and dies in the fall and winter. In the same manner events take their course in the cosmic year, only on a much grander scale.

Some details in this cosmic theory may go back to Babylonian and Greek cosmogonic conceptions, but the idea of an eternal repetition of the cosmic processes seems to have grown on Indian soil. It is characteristic not only of Hinduism, but is also found in Buddhism and in the Jain religion.

As regards eschatology, the Indian thinkers had already in the later Vedic age, but more systematically in the time of the Upanishads developed the conception of an impersonal spirit-force, an Absolute Being, the *brahman*, of which the human soul *atman* is a tiny part, a spark. By some default this spark got itself separated from the Absolute, though it can find peace and happiness only by merging again with it. And this can be achieved only through a perfect disattachment from the material world. It takes more than one lifetime to be liberated from the body, in fact many rebirths are necessary to gain complete liberation (*moksha*).

According to the law of *karma*, the fate of the soul in one life is determined by the merits and demerits of the soul in the previous life. Only after many rebirths is the soul able to accumulate so much merit that it can merge in the Infinite Absolute.

There are, however, other ways, almost short-cuts, by which liberation from the endless cycle of births can be achieved. One way is that of *bhakti* (devotion); it appears to be a truly religious attitude towards a personal god. But there are two other ways which seem to have grown out of magic and animistic conceptions: one is Tantrism, the other Yoga. Tantrism is by definition the worship of Shakti, the creative and productive power in the godhead or, more concretely, the female side of Shiva. The technique of Tantric worship involves various phases, ranging from gross physical forms to very subtle mental modes. Every item of this technique has a deep sym-
bolic significance. Yoga, on the other hand, is a highly skilful and subtle training of mind and body to set the higher psychic powers in man free for the union with the Absolute.

But it is significant that the belief in the transmigration of souls, *samsara*, and connected with it, the belief in retribution for a person's actions in his after-lives, *karma*, are not yet found in the Vedas and turn up for the first time, and there only dimly, in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. These two basic beliefs, so profoundly ingrained in the psyche of the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, are not of Aryan origin. They seem to have been adopted from another culture complex, apparently only after the Vedic tribes had come into closer contact with the more autochthonous races in India.

D. *Animism and Magic*

Popular Hinduism is saturated with animism which is the belief in the existence of a potent spirit force inherent in all things. This spirit force may be impersonal, but there exist also personal spirits and deities who may help and harm human beings. These spirits are believed to dwell in inanimate objects such as stones, quartz crystals, water, rocks, hills and mountains; in trees and plants; in animals and human beings.

Most Hindus also believe in omens and divination, and protect themselves against bad omens and the evil eye by charms, or by changing their course of action.

They also believe that a person who has broken a law or rule of his caste, or offended the common moral code, either deliberately or unintentionally, exposes himself either to the revenge of a particular deity offended by his wrong action or, more generally, to the influence of evil spirits who harm human beings out of sheer malice. These superhuman spirits may cause any kind of misfortune, sickness or even an early death.

Village people usually employ soothsayers and shamans as middle-men between the spirit powers and themselves. These diviners and spiritistic media claim the ability to get into close contact with a deity or spirit who reveals to them the identity of the particular god or spirit who has caused a certain misfortune or illness, the nature of the fault committed by the patient, and the number and kind of offerings and sacrifices required to appease their wrath. Often the shamans or spiritistic mediums fall into a trance and it is generally assumed that in this state a god or spirit has taken possession of them
and is speaking through them.

Thus it is not by remorse and true repentance that a sin is forgiven, but by simply paying the price demanded by the offended deity or evil spirit. Similar beliefs are held in other regions and continents by advanced hunting cultures and by primitive cultivators. It is easy to assume that such conceptions in popular Hinduism go back to an era when the Indian villagers were in the stage of advanced hunters or primitive cultivators.

Misfortune, illness and even death may also be caused by black magic and witchcraft. The belief in the efficacy of black magic and witchcraft is wide-spread and quite strong in the villages of India and in the cities as well. Even highly educated persons cannot free themselves from such beliefs. No doubt, these conceptions go back to a time when the people were still in the hunting stage or had been primitive cultivators.

The religious ceremonies performed on the important crises of life, birth, marriage, in sickness and death, are much intermingled with magic rites.

Pregnancy and birth are particularly surrounded with magic practices to ensure fertility and to ward off the evil influence of malignant spirits. Magic is employed to secure a safe delivery and various magic rites are performed that the child may survive and grow well. A girl's first menstruation is celebrated with a certain degree of solemnity, especially in the south of India. She has to observe certain taboos and undergo purification ceremonies. Menstrual and puerperal blood are believed to be full of magical potency.

A wedding is celebrated with a rich and complex ritual full of symbolic meanings; with a few sacrifices to Agni, the god of the hearth fire, to the clan gods or house gods (only by a few castes). It is believed to be of great importance for a happy marriage that the horoscopes of the bride and the groom agree; omens, too, are observed before and during the wedding feast.

In sickness few religious ceremonies are performed, but magical rites are much in evidence. For, as stated above, illness may be caused by deities or spirits who have been offended by the patient or who make people sick out of pure malice. An expert diviner must be consulted. But illness may also be caused by witchcraft or black magic. In such a case counter-measures must be taken by an even greater wizard.

Also at death religion scarcely plays any part while magical rites
are considered indispensable. Various rites full of symbolic meaning are performed to speed the departing soul on its way to the other world; to prevent its return to its former home and to harm its surviving relatives. Prayers (to Ram or Hari) are recited only during the funeral procession.

Offerings are made during the subsequent funeral feasts when also the other ancestors are remembered. Ancestor worship is performed on various other occasions; whenever liquor is being consumed, a few drops are spilled on the ground for the ancestors; offerings to the ancestors are made at weddings, at funeral feasts and on Diwali.

All this proves that popular Hinduism grew out of the prehistoric cultures of the advanced hunters and primitive cultivators. It was enriched and inspired to develop more sublime forms of religion and magic by various foreign influences, especially by the Aryan immigration and perhaps also by the ancient Mohenjo-daro Culture. But the basic structures and features of the original culture complexes have remained more or less intact and are even now still clearly noticeable in present-day Hinduism.

Thus a study of early prehistoric and primitive religions gives a deep insight into the origin and gradual development of even such a complex religion as Hinduism. But it is sufficiently comprehensive to combine the crudest religious and magical conceptions and practices with the deepest and most sublime speculations and a wonderfully rich ceremonial full of symbolism and beauty.
Epilogue

The picture of early man which emerges from the previous chapters proves that even the food-gatherers, with their most elementary and crude material culture, are full-fledged men. They lack nothing of the mental faculties and abilities which modern civilised men possess. Though some of these faculties may still lie dormant and remain undeveloped, they are not absent. As a matter of fact, in their social organisation and mental outlook the primitive food-gatherers stand nearer to us than the men of more advanced early cultures. What appears so “exotic”, so entirely different and incomprehensible in the life and culture of the “primitives”, is not found so much in the food-gathering stage of culture, as in the early stages of the food-producing cultures.

If our culture were shorn off its superfluous complexities and reduced to its simple basic forms, it would not be very dissimilar from that of the food-gatherers. The latter live in the loose joint family, while the natural family is their basic social unit. Husband and wife have fairly equal status, both contributing to the subsistence of the family. Men and women are free in their choice of marriage partners; they live in practical monogamy; they love their children and look after them well; they disapprove of divorce, or pre-marital sex relations and strongly condemn extra-marital sex. They have communal and private property, even a kind of copyright. Their relations with other kinship groups are reasonably intimate; they are not subject to a rigid and authoritarian clan or tribal system. Their political organisation, though most elementary, is based on democratic principles, on strict law and order; and religion and morality are closely interrelated. They believe in a personal God, creator and lord of the universe, and if they have faith in deities and spirits, in magic and superstition, it is not so strong as to obscure their faith in, and love for, the Supreme God and Father.

The food-gatherers’ culture is simple and rudimentary, it is true; but on the other hand it is also free from the enormous extremes
and excesses of the more advanced food-prōducers. The social forms and traits of the mental culture of the latter have developed in various forms and at a rate which upset the sane balance and integral harmony of the food-gatherers' culture. We would, therefore, be wrong if we accepted their cultural traits as the basis on which our modern culture should be built up. They are too lop-sided and unbalanced and, as history clearly proves, they could not be preserved in modern culture.

The early anthropologists and sociologists often arrived at absurd and untenable conclusions because they mistook these later deviations and digressions as the earliest and basic forms of human culture. They had an incorrect measure by which they distinguished later growths from basic forms. Through the important distinction of primitive cultures into that of the mere food-gatherers and that of the primitive food-producers we obtain a definite criterion which, if we apply it correctly, allows us to recognise the basic forms of earliest human culture. We are enabled to do so by the enormous increase of knowledge of the prehistoric cultures and their comparison with living primitive cultures.

If we are permitted to identify the living primitives in the food-gathering stage of culture with the early prehistoric races and, to reconstruct, on the basis of the living primitives, the early and earliest prehistoric culture, our conclusion is that mankind at its very outset and earliest dawn of its existence did not essentially differ from modern man. Consequently, the "exotic" and extreme forms of human culture are nothing but intermediary and passing stages which later had to be discarded or at least corrected and reduced to their normal stature. They are not models and ideals to which modern culture must be adapted.

The study of the origin of man and his culture has, therefore, been profitable in providing the proof that present-day social institutions and moral standards are sound and healthy; that they are basically the same as those that prevailed when mankind was young and that they will stand the wear and tear of the centuries yet to come. Mankind and human culture are subject to change and evolution, it is true, but this change and evolution is restricted and limited to unessentials. Not all human values are relative and exchangeable; some are absolute values which cannot be touched and modified or else human society will suffer therefrom and be reduced to sterility and decay.
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