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THE AFFAIRS OF A TRIBE

A STUDY IN TRIBAL DYNAMICS

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PREFACE

The 'Affairs of A Tribe' has grown out of 'A Tribe in Transition' published in 1937 by Messrs. Longmans Green and Co., Ltd., London. Twelve years are a long period for a tribe in transition and much has happened in the mean time. The impacts of the mines, factories and of the war economy have made tremendous inroads into the sanctity of tribal life and the detailed account of the tribe gathered first-hand by constant contacts with the people and through the tribal dialect, are expected to throw light on problems affecting the life and living of the millions of primitive tribes in India. The book has been completely documented as far as is possible under field conditions. It is illustrated by personal anecdotes, characteristic narrations and intimate photographs. In order to verify the statements and details of tribal life, batches of students of anthropology of the post-graduate classes at Lucknow were taken to the tribal area for three consecutive years and these students collected evidences independently and corrected any mistake that crept in inadvertently. To my satisfaction, however, the students found the material presented in the body of the book fully substantiated by their inquiries. I am grateful to my M.A. final students of anthropology of 1947, 1948 and 1949 who had cooperated with me in this common endeavour at documentation.

To my tribal friends of Kolhan, to the *Mankis* and *Mundas*, to the *Deuris* and the *Deonras* among the Hos, who have given ungrudging assistance, to the students of the Chaibassa High School and to their teacher, Mr. Ghanashyam Purty, B.A., whose informed interest in the work helped me to collect all the intimate ethnographic data, I owe a deep debt of gratitude. Mr. Ghanashyam Purty had gone through my statements, critically examined them and corrected the texts of songs and folktales. I am also thankful to the Bihar Ministry, and to the administration of Singhbhum, who had placed all facilities at my disposal whenever I needed them and to my numerous acquaintances there over many years, whose practical knowledge of Kolhan and its people proved in some cases corrective and in others provided the

control necessary for field work. To my pupils, Shri Shankar Sahai Srivastava and Mrs Esther Tewari who have drawn the sketches and the map respectively and to my research students Miss Anima Mukherjee and Mr. K. S. Mathur who have helped me in the preparation of the index and to my assistant, S. Bahadur, for general help, I am richly indebted.

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D. N. M.

INTRODUCTION

Anthropology from the beginning has been concerned with the range of complexity in human behaviour and therefore has developed a 'relativist' attitude, but even if it has an authority to generalise on human relations and to evaluate objectively the core and flakes of a culture or cultures, there has not been much serious attempt by anthropologists to apply the results of his study in the demain of modern social problems. The various sciences have treated anthropological data as 'luxury' articles which touch the few and not the many, and therefore do not carry weight in the context of cultural problems. This diffidence or shyness on the part of anthropologists, 'needed to be conquered' and during the last few decades of the present century, a lot of spade work has been done to bring the results of anthropology in line with those of the other sciences. This levelling up has produced a feverish attempt to review the odds and ends of information about human behaviour in the context of major issues, both of the savage and the civilised.

Anthropology has developed into an useful discipline and the many facets of the anthropological science, have been found to be of practical importance, even to our day-to-day life, so that administration, social reform, trade, commerce and human relations, are all receiving assistance from anthropology. We need not detail all that has been written or done, but suffice it to say that the approaches developed in anthropology have been informed, competent and in the genuine spirit. Probably anthropology has not yet been fully integrated to human relations and needs, but the recent efforts by Radicliffe-Browne, Malinowski, Firth, Boas, Benedict, Kroeber, Mead, Chapel and Coon, Herskovits, Linton, Radin, Opler and Mandelbaum, Cora Du Bois and others indicate in a broad way the interests and sweep of anthropological thought and contents and the possibility of an anthropological approach to problems in the field of economics, political science, philosophy and jurisprudence.

The original division of anthropologists was between two valid schools of thought, evolutional and historical which had between them

monopolised anthropological thought for a century and a half till functionalism entered the field as a spell of cool breeze in a stuffy room. To-day, anthropology is shaping other methodological tools and techniques on a broader perspective particularly of functional dependence without consideration of success or failure. This scientific attitude must be regarded as a commendable one, for science can only be established on claims which are based on objective data, documented and verified and not on sentimental evaluations, biases or maybe preconceptions. If anthropology can help in relating functions to each other, indicate their interdependence, show how to increase our human adjustment without in any way impeding progress either of the basic needs and their derivatives and technological efficiency, it will have served the purpose of science and justify itself as a discipline.

From the point of view of methodology and efficient technique of field anthropology, the functional school has played the most significant role in anthropological research. Anthropology to-day in the words of Prof, B. Malinowski, 'does not look at the details o culture in order to appraise them as details, but examines them to see how and why they work, how they fit into the whole pattern, what is the motive behind them and then finally to reveal how these can be coordinated in a working and living system'. Malinowski's study of the *Kula* system and economic magic, crime and custom among the Melanesians of the Trobriand Island, primitive agriculture, sex and repression, Raymond Firth's analysis of kinship and primitive economics o the Maoris, Audrey Richard's imformative account of the role o food in primitive social life, Lucy Mair's study of the changing African culture, Fortune's description of witchcraft and sorcery among the Dobuans, Hogben's analysis of law and order in Polynesia and similar other functional studies present savage society as an integral system of culture rather than an abstract scheme of social relationship. Social institutions, they have shown, need be studied as they actually function in a concrete environment and in relation to the fundamental cultural needs they satisfy. Culture has been defined by Prof. Malinowski as a system of 'derived needs' and as an 'organised system of purposeful activities'. He has traced institutions to certain principles of integration thus indicating that certain general types of organisation are to be found in every culture. Function according to Prof.

Malinowski is 'always the satisfaction of a need from the simplest act of eating to the sacramental performance in which the taking of the communion is related to a whole system of beliefs determined by a cultural necessity to be at one with the living god'. The functional theory is thus claimed to be capable of a concrete analysis of culture into institutions and their aspects. It is possible to isolate as well as relate the phenomena observed to the organic or 'derived needs', and as such it equips the field worker with a clear perspective and full instructions regarding what to observe and how to record. This organic view of culture, this definition of cultural phenomena in function as well as in form, limits the field worker to the enquiry into inter-relations within a given cultural milieu, to a preliminary analysis of fundamental validity ; and probably it does not expose the field worker to the temptation of working out 'fanatistic evolutionary schemes' or of 'gleaning fictitious and unreal similarity between cultures,' and mapping out the distribution of culture traits. The emphasis of functional study has been on 'a culture' rather than on 'cultures'. From this point of view the functional approach is surely significant. We have also been told that the functional approach is not anti-historical or anti-distributional, i,e., neither it is hostile to the study of distribution nor to the reconstruction of the past in terms of evolution, history or diffusion, a charge which was levelled against functionalism by Lowie in America. The integral approach of functionalism, therefore, puts the field anthropologist on an unimpeachable base, for he gets illumination on the totality of a culture and in the context of its linkages that must be understood before the traits are viewed in isolation. Besides, the methodology developed by the functional school, in respect of the study of primitive culture, helps in appraising the role of traits in a total cultural situation. One of the most vital and objective gestures of the functional school has been its insistence on documentation through the dialect of the people studied, an approach which has raised unseemly controversy regarding the equipments of field research, particularly in India. In India, except a few competent studies by Roy and his pupils, probably by some of the Assam civilians, much of anthropological work has been carried out through interpreters and even to-day field workers have not become alive to this indispensable requisite for field research.

The handicap of a field worker who has to work through the medium of an alien or foreign language, without being able to speak the dialect or understand it, is indeed insurmountable, and his responsiblity increases tremendously when he has to collect intimate data about sex, marriage and family life through selected interpreters. The selection of the latter is a source of error, and naturally his statements are not always reliable. If the field worker needs to grasp the point of view of the savage or of the people whom he wants to study and record, he must be able to view the life of the people in the context of the imponderables of their life and their own vision of the world which can hardly be gathered through a foreign language or through interpreters however reliable they may appear to be.

The avenues through which the tribal cultures must be approached, in the words of Malinowski are: (1) the organisation of the tribe and the anatomy of its culture must be recorded in firm and clear outline through concrete statistical documentation which may be tested by future investigators (2) a careful knowledge of the language or its dialect must be regarded as a *sine qua non* of field research for it is through the language or its dialects that the imponderability of actual life and type of behaviour should be gathered together to fill the gaps in the framework of culture and (3) documents of native mentality through ethnographic statements, characteristic narrations, typical utterences should form a *corpus-inscriptionum*. Thus it is that the functiona approach has its appeal not merely in the results of its analysis, in its 'life and blood' pictures of savage life, but also in its field technique which fulfils the requirements of objective delineation of cultures and scientific appraisal of the springs of human conduct, and its organic basis.

In the latest phase of functionalism, emphasis has shifted to the criteria of 'cultural identification', to the functional analysis o the relation between biological, psychological and cultural deter minism, to the linking up of the various types of cultural response with the system of needs, biological, derived and integrative. Even functional explanation of art, recreation and public ceremonie 'might have to refer to directly physical reactions of the organism to rhythm, sound, colour, line and form and to their combination' In other words culture is organic, direct or indirect. Although Malin owski admitted the non-organic or remotely organic character c

traits and institutions and said that the latter have formed the subject matter of the greatest theoretical interest, he hinted at the emotional background of such traits so that ultimately these have a biological base, and hence are organic in a sense.

The point should be stressed at this stage. If we take a particular culture as that of a more or less closed group the functional approach, as amended by the latest specialists of that school, appears to yield rich dividend. In a closed group, the study of interrelation of traits, of the various cultural responses such as economic, legal, educational, scientific, magical, ritualistic, may be real and practical and lend itself to functional treatment. But under the stress of dynamic changes, when cultures impinge, one on another, dominate or disintegrate, the functions may accrete, attenuate or lose their significance in the context of change.

There is an implicit recognition in the writings of Euroamerican anthropologists, of the fact of Euroamerican influence on primitive life everywhere. In fact the Euroamerican writers have always exaggerated the role of western civilisation on the so-called 'native' customs and practices. For example, Westermann writing about Africa referred to European influence and came to the conclusion that Africa could be only what Europe wanted it to be. Prof. Herskovits thinks that most of the innovation among non-literate people was made possible by means of contact with Europeans that introduced new technological devices, and that permitted a concentration of wealth and a standard of living not attempted in earlier times. He quotes Barbeau to support him. 'The growth of native technique', writes Barbeau, 'hinged upon European tools, the steel axe, the adze, and the carved knife which were traded off in large numbers to the natives from the days of the early circumnavigators that is after 1778. The lack of suitable tools, of wealth and leisure in the prehistoric period precluded the elaboration of ambitious structures and displays. The benefits accruing from the fur trade at once stimulated local ambitions, they stirred up jealousies and rivalries and incredible efforts for higher prestige and leadership. The totem pole came into fashion after 1830 through the rise of these contacts. The size of the pole and the beauty of its figures published abroad the fame of those it represented.

Even Prof. Malinowski holds that the problems of African culture contact, is the problem of contact of a higher, active culture upon

a simpler more passive one. He takes culture change as the impact of western civilisation and the reaction thereto of the indigenous culture. But he seems to ignore a vital strand, the strand on which we lay great emphasis from the point of view of theory and practice, viz., the contingency of inter-tribal influences of one African culture on another, or the elasticity of a culture with regard to the basic factors of the environment, such as resources, area, and the degree of cooperation within the society. In our view, a more comprehensive and scientific approach consists in the study of such dynamic changes, in both intra—and inter-tribal settings, apart from the influence of contacts with alien cultures. A division of tribal cultures into 3 columns based on Euroamerican contacts ignores some of the most important two-way sources of culture-change inside the patterns studied.

Ortiz, the Cuban scholar introduced the term transculturation which he said, better expressed the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another, because it is not the one way traffic as acculturation is. Although Prof. Herskovits thinks that acculturation in no way implies a qualitative distinction, so that the culture that acculturates looks upon the culture to which it does so, as higher, in reality, however, the levels of the two cultures are always different and the acculturating culture receives the contents of another culture because of the ease with which they flow from a higher level. In India, due to the nature of immigration, the traffic of culture contents has been bothways, and transculturation has been the method of distribution of traits. Throughout Indian history and culture, until the advent of the British, a process of transculturation was at work preventing demoralisation of Indian social groups, castes and communities. Even in the earlier phase of European contacts in India, transculturation was possible and many were the contents of Indian culture that found ready bed in the cultural life of the early trading communities. It was during the early days of Euroindian contact that race mixture took place, and the 'half-castes' could be formed. With the consolidation of British power in India, and consequent decline of other European powers and their influence in the country, contacts became acculturative and demoralising to the groups made to acculturate. Though both acculturation and transculturation are proceeding for centuries in some cases, it is indeed a fact that not

all the traits of an impinging culture have equal chances of acceptance. It is often found that superficial elements find ready acceptance while the basic values and institutions are not integrated into the pattern of a culture even if these are organically significant in the cultures they function. In some cases new traits have been re-interpreted in terms of traditional patterns, and in other cases they have been resisted. Thus a selective process is always at work regulating the relations between the donor and recipient societies.

This selective process which may be either psychological or structural, or both, produces diversity of cultures. But the selective process contains agents, one more active than another. This is why, one culture may appear to be distinct from another even if both are found to share the same environment enjoying the same levels of progress. The diversity of cultures as shown by Benedict, results from the fact that every culture does not capitalise all possible interests 'provided either by the human age-cycle or by the environment or by means of various activities'. The identity of a culture depends upon the selection of interests, not all the interests. Cultural institutions are selected for the emphasis a particular culture puts on some aspect or other of the range of potentialities of human behaviour. Thus economics is exaggerated in some culture, in another magic, a third builds up on natality or mortality, a fourth may develop a mechanical civilisation, a fifth may refuse technology and its vital role. It is also a fact as mentioned before, that a tribe often accepts the inconsequential elements of another culture, and resists the vital aspects, and the fringe of a culture has always a greater appeal than the contents. Also it is seen that at one period of a tribe's history, there is an emphasis on security, so that food absorbs most of its interests, at another on aesthetics; at another, there is a conscious and deliberate effort to accept standards and values of other people. Some times, ambitions figure in the shape of people's political compulsives.

Let us take the case of tribal groups in India. There are many tribes who have gradually and insensibly merged into castes. We may refer to them as 'assimilated'. Many are the tribes that are already assimilated or in the process of such transition. The latter may be called adaptive, and they are either commensalic, symbiotic or acculturative. Some tribes are living side by side with Hindu castes and they have adapted themselves to Hindu culture by participating in

common economic pursuits, cooperating with Hindu castes, and adopting the material culture of their neighbours, though the core of their tribal beliefs and practices may still remain healthy. These tribes, we may call 'commensalic' to distinguish them from others who have developed a permanent or 'symbiotic' association with castes high or low, usually with the latter. In the latter case, the association is often so intimate that the existence of these tribes depends upon the cooperation of the various groups of the symbiotic order, in other words, they cluster round a constellation of castes, in which divorce from the cluster may threaten their very existence. The third group of tribes viz., the acculturative, have adapted or are adapting to changed cultural situation by 'selective adoption' of traits of culture from their more advanced neighbours. This process of acceptance on a selective basis, has been in a sense an one way traffic, so that the 'acculturated' groups have developed to-day an intolerance and an antagonism, which appears to be a process of reversal, or of contra-acculturation. This contra-acculturation has produced a tension which is already manifest in the political movement in which the *Adibasis* are grouping under a new flag and are vocal in their demand for an exclusive *Adibasi* State and preferential treatment for the *Adibasis*. Acculturation among certain cultural groups has not been an unmixed good and probably does not succeed where the races are very dissimilar, and the creeds clearly hostile. The *Adibasis* have acculturated in many parts of India to caste culture, which is Hindu, or to Christianity through missionary influence, but everywhere in tribal India there is a feeling of frustration and helplessness, which seeks to find a dynamic solution in political fusion and demands for rights and privileges and provision for special treatment for the tribal people. It is not only that acculturation has failed, but isolative groups have also suffered by isolation, their discomforts have mounted with the result that to-day many of the latter groups are becoming extinct or are in the process of such extinction. Neither has assimilation of tribes solved the problem of the tribes so assimilated, for they have a degraded social status in the hierarchical set up of the caste structure. The basis of cooperation between social groups, is the consciousness of a homegeneity either in race, or in culture, or in religion. The main thing is a likeness, a recognition of similarity, a consciousness of kind. We would not say that a type of homogeneity

cannot be forged between groups with diverse racial origins, or between people professing different faiths, or ways of life. The tribal and Christian families, the latter originally tribal, have to-day sunk their differences and are trying to form a political group for a united front against apathy, neglect, *laissez faire* and exploitation. But ordinarily, the interests of common race and common religion have proved stronger bonds of cooperation and consolidation. A genuine or supposed race relationship, is a potent cementing force and the failure of acculturation in tribal areas is primarily due to a recognition of race relationship, a racial consciousness, which views social distance between tribes and castes, with sinister misgivings. Here comes the urgency of assessing the worth of diferent cultures and institutions. A critical approach may help to develop respect in a culture for another culture however different or remote. A sense of racial pride by itself is not all to the bad; it may be fruitful and may engender progress. A race consciousness that is developing among the *Adibasis* of Chota Nagpur, is a useful channel through which tribal culture may be canalised towards progress and stability. The consciousness among the Hos may thus be considered as a means to raise the prestige of the Hos. Local leaders among the Hos are held in great esteem and every student in the local school at Chaibassa knows what the leaders are speaking and doing. If a tribal leader's picture is found in all tribal homes in place of one of Mahatma Gandhi or that of the Prime Minister, we need not be concerned over it, for that is where one finds the heart of the people to-day. Picture of a tribal leader, even if he be a mediocrity, or has a doubtful past, helps to foster racial pride in those who need it most, builds this confidence, and keeps them from losing themselves in the stream of alien influences. On the other hand full and comprehensive acculturation in theory and practice is an avowal of tribal incompetence, more so if the culture that acculturates owns an inferior racial status or belongs to a low level of achievement in material or social spheres. The Negro race consciousness is probably helping the cultural progress of the Negroes, and the Negro child is fully aware of the role their leaders have played in the emancipation and social progress of the Negroes.

The methods of adjustment between human organism and changes in the external environment have been analysed, and also how the organism consequentially maintains itself in a constant physio-

logical state, that is, a state of equilibrium. The external environment is divided into two categories, (1) human beings and (2) external forces and objects. There are interactions between organism and the external forces and objects. The environment stands for the surface of the earth, divided into land and water, the landscape is the land surface of the earth, the *fundament* being the landscape without alteration. Different kinds of opportunities are provided by different types of landscapes. In certain climates, the opportunities for domestication of plants and animals are abundant, in some temperature the techniques of bodily covering and shelter must be simple, in others are bound to be complex. Some features of landscape bar technological development and the spatial position of human occupation of the earth's surface is determined in a large manner, by environent, at present in terms of technology.

The relation between needs and responses, the organism and imperatives, which produce institutions, cannot be divorced from the terrestrial factors and these supply the basic postulates of a culture or cultures. These are made up of several elements which are themselves variable. The elements are, Area, Resources, Man and Cooperation. The Area is terrestrial, Resources are made up of animals and plants, soil, minerals, technology, Man is organism with basic needs, Cooperation is 'C' producing 'derived needs' which is human culture.*

The Area inhabited by a tribe or social group may appear to be a permanent one, but like the shifting of a river bed or its course, a tribal Area undergoes change; either it shrinks qualitatively or quantitatively or increases in proportion to needs and requirements; or as among the nomadic groups, the Area once inhabited may be deserted for another; those who live by shifting agriculture must move away from their moorings every couple of years or more as the land which they clear for agriculture by felling trees and burning them, does not retain its fertility more than a limited period, usually two to three years. The resources of the Area both are animate and inanimate. These are subject to change both qualitatively and quantitatively. To an ethnocentric animal species like man, the Area (A) and Resources (R) are intimately connected with him, so that Man is the dominant factor in an ecological set up. Mere size is not enough for survival

* Cooperation including conflict

in health and progress, unless there is a high degree, or should we say, optimum cooperation between the units of the social group for exploiting the Resources available. Thus the four factors that determine the base of a culture, A, R, M, C, are all variable and we can arrange the factors as MARC if we only put the factors in order of importance to the base, Man being the principal factor.

MARC is an interdependent functional unit and provides the base of a culture. MARC is necessarily an elastic concept to a point, for any change in one of the factors effects a corresponding change as determined by the direction of the resultant. The base of a culture is a function of MARC. We can put this relation as :

$$B = K = fMARC$$

where B is the base, K is the resultant, M, A, R, C stand for Man, Area, Resources and Cooperation.

It may not be possible to apply rigorous statistical inquiry into the variability of the factors that constitute the MARC, so that K remains indefinite. As in the field of economics and other social sciences measurements are made and can be made and even if the results are not mathematically accurate, they would throw light on the interplay of the factors, their mobility in time and space, and their trends. The results, however, will vary in accuracy and will be less convincing as we pass from the tangible to intangible items, from material culture to family, religion, norms and standards. If we know the base, both qualitatively and quantitatively, we can measure the depth and height of a culture, for the range of a culture will depend upon the base and a normal distribution would not allow peaks at odd corners. If the base or K is not definite the question is, how is it possible to know the form of the curve of achievement of a people ? This is possible in a sense. As the constructional engineer need not place brick upon brick to assess the strength of a foundation, it is not necessary to have an absolute measure of K, in order to indicate the possible range of a culture.

The attitudes that determine achievement or define the limits of a culture in the context of MARC result from what may be called the 'density' of culture. As in the drosophila experiment, at a certain low density, population does not increase fast, at a higher density there is a rapid increase of population till it reaches the asymptotic

level, so also in the density of culture. At a low density, ideas and attitudes do not find ready acceptance, so that they are not important; as the density of a culture increases through interpenetration of ideas within the culture, due to the increase of cooperation between members of the group and the borrowings that are initiated by personality reactions, the attitudes take shape rapidly till all the possible ones are formed to make the configuration asymptotic with regard to the attitudes. At this point we reach the concept of *Gestalt* or configuration. Thus MARC is the base on which culture is built up in its final form; a culture is limited by attitudes and the various parts of the culture become linked and interlinked as the density of a culture rises to a saturation point. In this sense, no culture is superorganic, no culture is mere organic, but interpenetrative and linked but limited by the base or MARC.

When the base changes, as it must, i.e. the resultant direction of MARC varies from a previous position, there is a greater activity in the shape of tool making and institution making, till the original institutional set up realigns itself to the new base. But after a new density arises, the forces i.e. MARC may change its direction, either converging to the original base, in which case there is a cultural revivalism, or diverging towards disintegration of cultures. When the institutions work in unison, aim at integration and succeed in effecting the same, whether in response to the old base or the new, a stagnation results, for every factor of MARC has a functional limit, as for example, in the fulfilment of desires, or satiation of hopes and ambitions.

The base cannot be equated with a region for it is the resultant of factors and neither is it determined by the sum total of the factors, M, A, R, C. In the concept of the Region, we overvalue the canvas of a culture, in the Optimum concept we tend to emphasise maximum production, in the MARC we merely regard the factors as forces, which cooperate to produce a resultant direction or the base of a culture. The maximum satisfaction can be had when the forces cooperate optimally as it does in a closed but integrated culture, without being affected by contacts. Life in such a setting can be equated with mutuality, reciprocity and a chain of life-long duties and obligations, all developing a homogeneity and consciousness of kind.

A cultural group, a tribe or a clan is not merely a kinship group. Superficially, the principles that determine aggregation are blood,

propinquity and an emotional bond between the units of a group arising in the context of the cultural base. The factors that determine association vary in tempo and intensity, both in point of space and time. At one point blood becomes more important, at another contiguity. In the early type of groupings among savages and preliterate peoples, blood has been the most important cement of solidarity and a large group which failed to affiliate the members on the known principles of blood or consanguinity had to recognise mysterious ties. The totemic and eponymous ties were developed to bring together people who owned no blood bond but were pegged on to a particular Area. Contiguity is an important principle of aggregation or association and the tribal or clan Area is the one with which every member is actively or derivatively identified. The elements that normally constitute contiguous relationship, are the common ownership of forests, meadows, rivers, tanks, of material objects and structures like the dormitory house, and gods and spirits they worship or propitiate respectively, the climate they own and the sky they live under.

A hunting tribe which ekes out its precarious subsistence with crude tools and equipments, fasts and feasts alternately due to scarcity of game or abundance of it, aware of the possibilities of the habitat, intimate with the climate, has a small base to itself. The tribe moves on as soon as its territorial integrity is challenged or is threatened with food shortage, so that in the new domicile it may find a more hospitable environment. The base is so small that the saturation density with regard to the size of the population and the possible cooperation that would minimise discomforts and maximise satisfaction, in regard to resources and the area inhabited, is easily reached. When this happens, the superfluous number is reduced by infanticide, exposure of the sick and the misfits, and if necessary even by killing those who are useless to the group. Any group with such a lean prospect must withdraw from contacts, live in isolation, for it is not possible for the group to adjust itself to contacts or to conditions brought about by an increase in its size or a diminution of the resources available or restriction of the Area.

A tribe or a clan which suddenly discovers a new process of manufacture, a new means of economic security such as the domestication of animals or of plants, may respond to such a contingency by pegging itself to a site, and may start to produce or extract the necessary

materials available in an organised manner, for example, through a clan organisation, with clan chief or a clan council. It may thus work out a new solidarity, replacing the blood tie by the tie of contiguity or of common residence, though consanguinity may still remain the core of economic cooperation. For example, the *Khuntkatti* system is still the nucleus of the village organisation of the Munda tribes, though the village is not a kinship group to-day even in the sense that a totemic group is. The size of a group responds to the productive technique and possibilities and to security provided, say by agriculture, and the complexity or density of a culture may increase in proportion to the degree of cooperation between the factors, we have described as MARC. As MARC is a dynamic concept with maximum possibilities in an optimum setting, as soon as the saturation density is reached it brings about a clash of ideas and interests, throws out misfits which are either constructive or destructive both of which are personalities in relation to the culture concerned; the constructive elements are responsible for invention of patterns, or for canalising elements of other cultures into their own by assuring a reception which would not be possible in a closed and crudely cooperating culture, the destructive ones are weeded out. When the base of a culture widens, security, comfort and leisure increase, and accomodates new ideas and interests. Personality development aids incorporation and initiation of changes, in the context of a changing culture. An increase of the base of a culture ultimately levels up cultures till assimilation becomes possible. But so long as assimilation is not effected there may still be responsiveness in cultures which makes cultures adaptive. An adaptive culture as mentioned before, may be mere commensalic. The two extreme processes are 'isolation' and 'assimilation' and in between we meet with cultures that develop a symbiotic relationship or acculturate. In an isolative culture, the base remains narrow and limited and therefore incapable of adjusting to new situation either by changing or mutating. In the adaptive culture the base expands slowly, there is an ease with which the basic needs are met, there is more leisure, and therefore scope for learning and for trial of new ideas and beliefs. No change of attitudes is necessary, yet cultures respond and become hospitable. At first such hospitability refers to superficial or inconsequential elements of other cultures, but in course of time the accommodation provided to such traits increases the overall capacity of the

culture and makes it possible for the culture to accept and assimilate complex and vital traits of other cultures.

An adaptive culture does not necessarily merge into another culture from which it incorporates elements, insignificant or vital, though an increase of density of a culture, which is possible due to incorporation of traits without any large increase of the base may result in interpenetration of traits within a culture: in other words, the linkage of traits becomes multiple and hence 'dense'. When a culture reaches saturation density with regard to traits, indigenous and borrowed, and the base still remains narrow, it may show signs of intolerance, become isolative, or the base may show cracks or fissures, resulting in a cultural *malaise*. In such cases, detribalisation, disintegration of beliefs and practices and economic maladjustment, tear up the existing base, and put the culture out of gear. Such a situation has arisen among some of the primitive tribes, for example, among the Todas of the Nilgiri hills, the Korwas of Mirzapur, U.P. the Birhors of Bihar and the Garos of Assam. A 'dense' culture with a limited base may find it necessary to depend upon neighbouring cultures for its survival and a symbiotic or a commensalic relation may solve its problem for the time being, but such an arrangement has ultimately made the 'dense' cultures, parasitic and even subordinate to the cultures to which it has linked its fate, and many of these cultures have lost their moorings, and disintegrated and have ended as 'scheduled' castes, like the Rawats and the Kurukhs of Bastar, the Panikas of Bihar and the Bhoksas of the Tarai region in U.P. or the Koltas of the cis-Himalayas. When on the other hand, the tribal groups have been fortunate in discovering new resources, mines and minerals within the tribal areas, or outlets of expansion, such as are being provided by the needs for labour in factories and plantations, the base has widened and the enlarged economic possibilities and comforts have encouraged an increase of population and a criss-cross cultural relationship between different cultures originally not in contact but made to come together in response to the prospects of exploitation of new resources made available.

In most of the Chota Nagpur region in Bihar a large increase of population among the Munda tribes has been possible by the opening up of the country by a network of roads and railways, by the location of mills and factories which depend upon the ores and resources available at site, with the result that the tribal base has increased in proportion,

adjusted to a wider base, which made it possible for them to adapt and acculturate. The outlets provided for transfer of population to industrial centres and liminal towns, produced tremendous changes in their cultural life which found ready acceptance with some section of the tribal people, yet the bases of Munda cultures have not kept pace with needs, with the result that the acculturative process that was at work is not functioning as it did, and to-day the tribes are showing an intolerance towards adoption of traits from the advanced neighbours. This intolerance is expressed in suspicion, hatred and a conscious effort at consolidation of the tribal cultures. In reality the political consciousness of the *Adibasis*, which stands for a revivalism and integration, is a direct result of contra-acculturation or intolerance against adoption of foreign traits, tools and techniques, though these have stood them in good stead in the early decades of the present century and before. The Ho culture to-day has become 'dense', fully intergrated with regard to its base, and with the indigenous traits and those it has borrowed from others, it has developed a pattern . But this pattern is not what Benedict has described with regard to the three cultures she analysed, or the Japanese culture, viz., 'a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action' with 'characteristic purposes that stabilise behaviour and consolidate experience'. The Hos have acculturated to Hindu culture represented by the lower castes in their neighbourhood, have reacted to it, but the reaction is informed rather than hostile.

Thus, every culture is to be studied in the context of change or cultural dynamics, whether the cultures have been affected by Euro-american civilisation or its technological complements. The roots of culture change are to be traced in the factors or forces that create the base or K of a culture. This fact has often been ignored by Euroamerican scholars due to a kind of ethnocentrism. In one sense, however, the change in Indian tribal cultures as it occurred in the earlier times can be qualitatively differentiated from the change that occurs to-day. In earlier days the base did not change suddenly, for the forces that make for such change did not gather sufficient momentum due to low density of culture or absence of speed or alarming tempo. Technological advance has helped to widen the base and transport and communications have made transfer or dispersal of population easy, so that no longer do the tribal people to-day need be

confined to their settlements. Technological advance is retarded if the area diminishes, the size of population grows small, the degree of co-operation between the people is levelled down, or the resources become scarce or shy. But there is no inherent defect in the people, however low the levels of achievement they possess, that would militate against the absorption process that is essential for ushering in a technological civilisation. All that is needed is a change or expansion of the base of a culture by proper planning. Many primitive tribes are facing technological advance with disquiet, due to inadequacy of their cultural base and that is how their discomforts are on the increase. The incompetence of the Hos or for the matter of that of any other tribe, to absorb or assimilate technological advance is not an inherent weakness of tribal cultures, but rests fairly and squarely on the inadequacy of the base.

To sum up : Evolutionism failed because of the doubts that grew regarding the validity of the theory of progress as an evolutionary process. Later on it was dragged on to politics and supplied the key to Marxian ideologies. The diffusionist point of view received an impetus in the analysis of cultures into their components but the extreme view held by the diffusionists and above all their lack of discrimination, led to fantastic and unreal schemes of cultural spread and progress. The functional approach elucidated the need for fully recognising the unities of cultures as well as their disparate elements. The configuration approach is not one by which one can get clues of whole cultures or of large segments of cultures. The configuration approach is psychological and aims at the evaluation of the processes of integration of cultures. The significance of the selected details of behaviour in the evaluation of culture processes is to be found against the background of motives, and emotions and values that are institutionalised in a culture. In modern scientific methodology, the importance of the study of configuration against the minute and continuous analysis of its parts is stressed. In *Gestalt* psychology, it is found that, 'in the simplest sense perception no analysis of the separate precepts can account for the total experience'. Fragmental consideration of perceptions does not give all the information we need. 'Wholeness' properties and 'wholish' tendencies must be studied in addition to the simple association mechanisms with which psychology has been satisfied since the time of Locke. (Patterns of Culture, p.52). Wilhelm

Dilthey, Spengler, Toynbee and others have shown the importance of integration and configuration of culture. Benedict has emphasised the genius of the culture or the attitudes as controlling individual and group behaviour and this genius is the configuration. Her approach consists in the discovery of fundamental attitudes, as Boas puts it, and not functional relations of every cultural item.

The configurational attack on culture studies or what we know as the Boas-Benedict approach and in a sense that of Margaret Mead, shifts the emphasis from function to the role of individual in culture, in other words it is an admission of a kind of socialisation of personality traits which helps to develop psychological biases in different cultures. Earlier, Edward Sapir indicated the 'invidious dissociation between cultural studies by the anthropologist and studies of individual behaviour by the psychologist, and pleaded for bringing together both the approaches.* Mead's study of personality types of men and women in New Guinea societies, helped her to develop a modified approach. She found that culture moulded patterns of dominance and submission between the sexes and the latter were not biologically determined. The social conditioning of the individual among the Manus was related by her to the 'sharp breaks between childhood and adult patterns of behaviour' and she described the tensions induced by the need to adjust to such sharply differing situations. Both Benedict and Mead, however, emphasised the role of the individual in culture.

Even on the ground of socialised personality, a culture is not made up of introverts or of extraverts alone. Particular situations have to be studied to find out the reaction of the individual and of groups. An ordinarily extravert people become introvert when a change of 'Area' is effected. Divorce from the 'Area', of Rajput warriors, which forced them in some cases to change their profession or religion, entirely transformed their attitudes to their motherland and to women whom they had so long defended by blood. A gay people become secretive, introvert and even criminal like the Bhils of Gujarat who have moved away from their moorings and have settled in urban centres or in industrial surroundings. The gay Munda, an incorrigible optimist and extravert

* For an informed appraisal of this, please refer to David G. Mandelbaum's article on 'Social Trends and Personal Pressures'. The Growth of a Culture Pattern, (Language, Cullure and Personality pp 219-238, Menasha, Wisconsin)

becomes an introvert in the mines where he transfers his allegiance due to necessity and a young Ho maiden in her thirties with no prospect of a settled life due to heavy brideprice ends as an anti-social witch which is not an unusual experience even in the sophisticated societies. Fortune's reference to the tribe studied by Mead, the Arapesh, where he suggested a modification in the conception of Mead that 'there is little aggression either by males or females' for there were ample material to indicate that the Arapesh had well established patterns of warfare, also points to the selfsame limitation. A pattern is only culturally valid if it has compulsive value for most or all individuals of the particular society. Although the basic personality structure appears to have directional change in a configuration, as explored by the Kardiner-Linton approach, the overall connection of personalities is to be found within the framework, which is a function of Man-Area-Resources- Cooperation. Culture is a total mode of expression, and personality only expresses a part of a culture and not all the segments of it. The basic personality structure itself arises from the institutional setting and these are derived from conditions which the individual cannot control. But it is the base that controls the broad sweep of culture and it is the most significant fact in the development and integration of a culture.

Prof. Herskovits thinks that in discussing the problem of cultural integration we must consider both structural and psychological aspects. Writes Herskovits, 'It is necessary first to see how elements of a culture seemingly quite unconnected are in fact integrally related, we shall then follow through by considering whether this integration of culture forms is to be thought of as manifestations of certain deeper psychological drives that give ultimate significance to the final elements of cultural structures and thus permit a way of life to achieve its final unity'. (Man and His Works. p. 216), Opler has disapproved the borrowing of terms of psychological concepts or terms of philosophy for descriptive offerings of the social scientist and has introduced the word 'themes' or dynamic affinities which can be identified in every culture and the 'key to the character, structure and direction of the specific culture is to be sought in the nature, expression and relationship of these themes'. Opler's themes are postulates or positions declared or implied which control behaviour and situmlate activity, 'tacitly approved and promoted by a society'.

This is a valid point but there is a danger that the themal approach in the hands of theoretically inclined or biased workers may end as the diffusionist approach has, by creating postulates that may not exist; besides, even if themes are properly evaluated, the culture under this scheme must be viewed in segments. In all the psychological approaches there is a tacit recognition of cultural unity or integration and both functional and configurational approaches whether they observe 'a culture' or 'cultures', look at cultures as 'whole' in their totality but they raise the question of structure or form and a base is the most important part of a structure.

The structure of a society is a basic postulate in the context of MARC and attitudes only shape in a dense culture reaching the saturation or asymptotic level in a logistic sense. If we find structural, configurational and themal approaches fully satisfied in a concept of the base and the superstructure resting on it, anthropologists must evaluate culture with regard to the K or the base and thus present his findings as dynamic facts in an everchanging milieu. The base is changing continuously and discontinuously. Variation of cultures result from continuous change far more than it does from the discontinuous change, the scope of which is limited. What is known as culture-heredity or continuity can be understood only with reference to the base or of MARC and personality and attitudes are functions of this base. It is in the context of the discussion above that the Ho culture receives illumination and appraisal.

THE AFFAIRS OF A TRIBE

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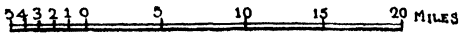
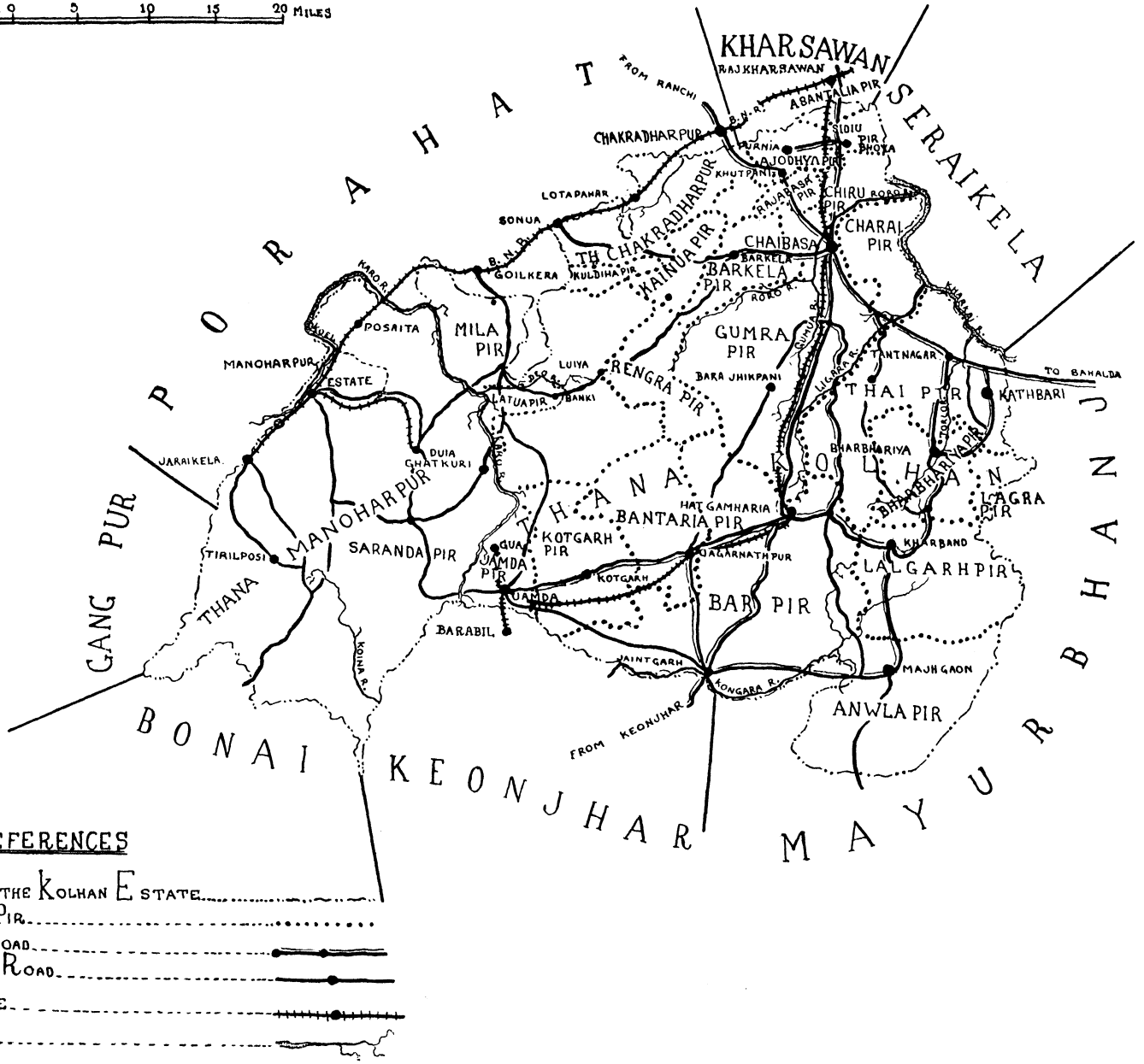
KOLHAN GOVERNMENT ESTATE

DISTRICT SINGBHUM

SCALE 1 INCH = 8 MILES





REFERENCES

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CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY OF THE HOS

1

The Hos are concentrated in the Kolhan which is a Government Estate in the district of Singhbhum though they are found scattered outside the district. The district which lies between 22° and 23° of north latitude and 86° 53′ and 85° 2′ of east longitude, forms an important part of the lower plateau of Chota Nagpur. The total number of Hos as recorded in the Census of 1931 is 5,23,158 and shows a steady increase during the last fifty years. Of this number nearly half is found in the Kolhan. The total area of the Estate including the reserved forests and the Manoharpur tenure is 1919 square miles or 12,28,217 acres. It is bounded on the north by the Seraikela and Kharswan Feudatory States, (now forming a new subdivision of Singhbhum), on the south by Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Bonai and Gangpur (all now incorporated in the Orissa Province) which are inhabited by Mundari speaking people, on the east by the Kharkai river and the Bengali speaking Parganah of Dhalbhum, and on the west by Gangpur State and the Zemindaries of Anandpur and Porhat. Lohardaga, the home of the Mundas and other cognate branches of the Austric group, lies to the north-east of the Kolhan.

To the north and south-east, the country is for the most part open and greatly undulating and contains numerous prosperous and well-cultivated villages with hardly any forest. The southern is flat and open country, almost devoid of hills, thickly populated and well cultivated. The western and south-western parts of the Estate are mountainous and thickly covered with jungles and are sparsely inhabited. Most of the ranges of hills in the Kolhan are covered with scrub jungle composed chiefly of the *Polas* and *Assun* on which *Tusser* worms are bred. In those areas which are low, cane is found in abundance while the mango tree is interspersed all over the country. *Cheretta*,

arrowroot and many varieties of plants, shrubs, fungi, ferns and creeper abound mostly in the jungly areas. At Chaibassa and those villages where the Hindus have settled, groves of date and palm trees are found but they are usually absent in ordinary Ho villages.

The rivers in the Kolhan are really hill streams fordable throughout the year except during the rains. The Koel, Karo, Koena, Bhagirathi, Gumra, Roro, Marang Gara and Sanjay are the important rivers which divide and diversify the whole of the Kolhan. In spite of so many rivers and numerous rivulets the water supply becomes precarious and irrigation from them is hardly possible. It is during the months of July, August, and a part of September that most of these rivers become flowing streams and are not possible to ford, though fishing becomes a profitable and an entertaining occupation for the Hos. The little irrigation that is done by the Hos is from the *Bandhs* or tanks, some of which have been constructed by the local administration and these also are mainly by percolation as the Hos do not know how to irrigate by means of earthenware pipes at the base of the embankment as is done, for example, in Palamau. The forest areas which are mostly in the west and south-west have a good rainfall and are not liable to famine as the north and the south. Besides, forests provide many roots and fruits which supplement the meagre produce from the fields.

The animals that are more abundant in the Kolhan are the deer, spotted deer (*C. axis*), barking deer (*C. muntjac*), four-horned deer, wild buffaloes, the saumar (*C. rusa*), neelgye (*Dalmatis picta*), tigers, leopards, bears (*Ursus labiatus*), hyenas, jackals, particularly corsac (*C. insectivorus*). Comparatively rare are the ratel or badger (*H. melivorus*), porcupine, squirrels, the wild dog (*Canis primevus*), the hare, and two varieties of monkey (sara and gye). Wild hogs are plentiful. The varieties of snakes that are frequently found in the Kolhan often crossing the village alleys, unmindful of pedestrians, make a formidable list. Many are the cases of unnatural death from snake bite reported in Kolhan. Every Ho wears a talisman or a herb tied to the arm or the neck as a protection against snake bite and many are the spells and incantations that are learnt and rendered by specialists in snake venom. Besides snakes, the Kolhan contains a variety of insects, poisonous and otherwise. There are ants, bees, wasps, scorpions and centipedes. White ants are most abundant.

The queen ants serve as a delicacy with the Hos for they are caught, put in a leaf cup and roasted in fire for immediate consumption. They are also eaten raw by the Hos. Fish are abundant in the larger rivers. In the rainy season they are found in all the rivers but during the dry season they retire to the deep pools inside the rivers known as *Ikirs*.

The existence of minerals in and around the Estate has encouraged streams of immigrants who have invaded the isolation of the Hos. The district of Singhbhum contains very large mineral deposits of iron, manganese ore and copper, while chromite, phosphoretic rock, phosphate of lime, yellow and red ochre, china clay, lime and limestone also occur and there are minor deposits of asbestos, mica, lead ore, soapstone and slate which attract labour and capital and help in the opening up of the district. The discovery of iron ore deposits owned by the Bengal Iron and Steel Co., at Pansira Buru and Buda Buru in the Saranda forests and at Gua and Noamundi owned by the Tata Iron and Steel Co. has revolutionised the economic life of the district and vastly improved the prospects of the metallurgical industries in India. The iron ore at places rises to a height of 2,000 to 3,000 ft. above sea level and runs continuously for 40 miles in a s.s.w. direction from near Pansira Buru through Saranda into the Keonjhar and Bonai States of Orissa. The Pansira Buru contains a mass of high grade hematite (limonitised at the surface) about 400 ft. deep down where the deposit has been exposed by quarrying operations. The ore plunges to an unknown depth and contains as much as 64% of iron. In the opinion of expert geologists, India may be regarded as provided with reserves of high grade iron ore commensurate with as large an expansion of her iron and steel industries as may be justified by the requirements not only of India but of surrounding eastern markets. On account of this and the fact that much of Singhbhum's resources are still untouched and unknown, it seems probable if not certain, that future further developments in iron smelting in India and manufacture of steel products will be concentrated in or near Singhbhum. There is a cement factory at Jhinkpani about twelve miles away from the Chaibassa town which is producing large quantities of cement and employs a big labour force. These facts bring into the forefront the need of a proper adjustment of the life of the people of the district who are for the most part backward and aboriginal, to

the new economic environment created by the change. The cultural change that is inevitable and has already been evident is, and will be, largely determined by the manner in which the inhabitants of the area avail themselves of the opportunities existing at present and those that will be created in the near future. The possibilities of the mining centres have led to the construction of the Amda-Jamda branch line of the Bengal Nagpur Railway in 1923-24 which has facilitated the opening up of the country and encouraged the growth of little colonies of traders and others round the railway stations which are exercising tremendous influence on the social and economic life of the backward communities in Singhbhum in general and in the Kolhan in particular. A network of roadways carry a heavy traffic between the urban centres and the mining areas, and the Hos have got so used to the bus that most of their journeys are now done by it. There is an *Adibasi* bus service in Singhbhum which is competing successfully with more organised companies, as the demands for quicker travel are increasing and are likely to continue in the near future. Hundreds of girls move on trucks provided by the contractors who need their labour and the thrill that the girls get from these rides, makes them giggle and laugh out their discomforts, at the same time luring them into a life of easy virtue, a fact which is evident from the number of cases of defamation before the tribal Panchayats and in the courts of law, where pregnant women have claimed protecton against ostracism or maltreatment at the hands of their own kith and kin.

2

The Hos do not have any tradition of being the earliest settlers in Kolhan. Their affiliation to the Mundas, in language and culture, may mean that they branched off only a few centuries ago. Many of the villages in Kolhan were originally reclaimed by other castes, and in their southward expansion, the Hos appear to have eliminated the original *Khuntkattidars*. The Settlement Report of Kolhan (1919), viz., the Final Report on the Resettlement of the Kolhan Government Estate, (pp. 17-18) says, "the Hos certainly came into the Kolhan from the north or northwest and the whole of North Kolhan, including the northern forest *Pirs*, is pure Ho country, except for a fringe along the eastern boundary particularly in Thai, Bharbhariya and Lagra *Pirs* which appear to be newer than the *Pirs* to the north and contain

an admixture of Santals, Bhumij, Gonds, Bhuiyas and Gowalas. The north of Lalgarh *Pir*, the east and centre and northwest of Bar *Pir* and the east of Bantara *Pir* were founded by the Hos, but Anwla *Pir*, and a strip adjoining it in Lalgarh *Pir*, the south of Bar *Pir*, Kotgarh and Jamda *Pirs* and the west of Bantara *Pir* were formerly *Diku* country though now the Hos predominate there also." The geneological trees of the principal Ho families do not carry the date of their occupation very early and the traditional origin of their *Killis* has a family likeness with similar traditions among the Mundas. Most of the *Baha* songs sung by the Hos, are known among the Mundas, and the Ho youngmen, particularly those of them who have received some schooling, take pride in the fact of this cultural link with the Mundas. But the expansion of the Hos in Kolhan, has been marked by change in their cultural life as well. The system of land tenure of the Mundas differ from that of the Hos. While there was a real distinction in the Munda land system between the *Khuntkattidars* and the *Parjas* who came to the village later, the *Khuntkattidars* paying the village rent by fixed subscription (*chandas*) and the *Parjas* holding land under the joint brotherhood of the *Khuntkattidars* and paying rent for their lands to them, there is no such system in Kolhan and the assessment of rent is based on the number of ploughs. That is how Col. Tickell enumerated the number of Hos on the basis of the plough tax. The dormitory institution of the Hos can still be found in areas where the Hos are intimately in contact with the Mundas, but as we pass from the Munda zone the sanctity of the dormitory also is lost till it disappears altogether, or remains a name or a memory.

The names of the *Pirs* or Parganahs in the Kolhan and those of the rivers flowing through it, as well as many of the *Talaos* or tanks that are either dried up or contain a scanty supply of water, show that these were known long before the Hos settled in it. The names of many villages indicate the presence of people other than the Hos. In the village of Konslaposi adjacent to the Hindu village of of Jagannathpur which stands on the left bank of the river Deo, alleged to be named after the Kansal or Kausalya dynasty, there are two *Talaos* which are silted up and dry, one known as Sumitra *Talao*, the other Arjun *Talao*. The *Deuri* of Konslaposi is a Bhuiya, which shows that the Bhuiyas probably were in occupation before the Hos came, i.e. were earlier settlers of the village and recognised as such by the

Hos. They were regarded as better versed in the spirit-lore of the land and hence a Bhuiya was appointed as the priest of the village.

That the Hos occupied the hills and woods when they arrived in the Kolhan is perhaps correct. The names of hills in the Kolhan are mostly of Munda origin ; thus Chara-Buru (treeless hill), Kula-Dum-Buru (*Kula*—tiger, *Dum*—dozing) which is a reference to a popular story about a tiger which, while dozing on the peak of a hill was attacked by a Danrachu bird causing the animal to fall headlong over the side of the peak and kill itself, Diri-Buru, meaning rocky hill, Bicha-Buru a hill containing iron ore, Boda-Buru (*Boda*—a goat), Kulpu-Buru (*Kulpu*—interlocked), Dinda-Buru (*Dinda*—unmarried), Matkom-Buru (*Matkom*—mohua), Jiling-Buru (*Jiling*—long), Kula-Buru (tiger), Barai-Buru (*Barai*, rope made of *sawai* grass). Singaso-Buru and Angabira Buru are two famous hills which are connected by a popular anecdote, in which one hill was supposed to send fire to the other, the latter replying by sending snakes which, however, were killed at a place called Bingtopan (*Bing*—snake, *Topan*—to kill) before they could reach their destination. This reference may be to the existence of a volcano, now extinct, in one of these hills, but all names show that the inaccessible regions of the hills were peopled by the Hos—and the names given to these are themselves of Munda origin.

The process by which the Hos and other tribes were brought into contact with the outside world, how they came under the control of the British Government and how the mineral resources of Chota Nagpur are being exploited by foreign capital and aboriginal labour, how the land laws have changed, how forests were brought under protective form of administration, supply, as it were, the historical background for the understanding of the problems that face the primitive people of the area.

The British connection with the Hos, however, resulted from the trouble between the Hos and the Feudatory chiefs which made the latter seek the assistance of the then paramount power. The Hos nominally acknowledged themselves to be subjects of the British Government in 1821. In 1831, they joined the rebellion of the Mundas of Chota Nagpur. They took a leading part in it ; even today their assistance to the Mundas and their resourcefulness in their encounters with the enemy are memorized in immortal verses. S. C. Roy describes in his monograph of the pride of the latter when on one

occasion the Hos succeeded in exterminating a whole company of British soldiers and forcing the captain to return to Calcutta alone. The memory of this struggle is still commemorated by the Hos in many popular songs. For example, one popular song sung by the Hos refer to the fight the Hos waged in support of their brethren of Bundu and Tamar —

noko kore go ko thupuing tana
bundu ko topo do rara ruru
chenai kore go ko mapa tana
sare kapi do jilab jolob
bundu pirire ko thupuing tana
bundu ko topo do rara ruru
tamara badi reko mapa tana,
sare kapi do jilab jolob.

Where do people shoot one another?
The guns and cannons roaring?
Where do people strike one another?
The arrows and axes so glittering?
People shoot one another in the Bundu field,
And there roar the guns and cannons thunder.
People are striking one another in the Tamar field,
There the arrows and axes glitter.

The Kolhan came directly under the management of the Government in 1836. There are 26 *Pirs* or divisions in Kolhan. Some of these *Pirs* are larger than others and many of these are divided into a number of sub-divisions, each presided over by a *Manki*. Some of the major *Pirs* are (1) Saranda with 78 villages under 4 separate *Mankis*, (2) Bara *Pir* with a total of 131 villages under as many as 13 *Mankis*, (3) Thai *Pir* with 94 villages under 9 *Mankis*, (4) Aola *Pir* with 73 villages under 6 *Mankis*. When the Kolhan came under the Government there were 620 villages and during the first settlement of the Kolhan Estate in 1837, there were 622 villages. This has increased today to 917 villages. Evidently many of the additional villages were made by clearing the forest land for which rigid forest rules had to be introduced as also by fission of larger units.

A preliminary settlement was made with the Hos at the time when they came under control of the East India Company. This was on the basis of the number of ploughs and the rate was fixed at -/8/- as per plough. For resident tenants a pair of bullocks constituted a plough, while for non-residents a plough of land was held to be that amount in which five maunds of seeds had been sown. Col. Tickell's Census of the population of Kolhan and the proportion of Hos in it was calculated on the basis of the annual rack-rent or *Malguzari* of 1838-39 which amounted to Rs. 6,500/-. By 1854, this revenue

demand increased to Rs. 8.523/-. Captain Davies' settlement was made in 1854 and was for 12 years. The number of villages settled increased to 786 and the gross rental to Rs. 23,266/- at the rate of Re. 1/- per plough. In 1867 Dr. Hayes introduced a regular measurement and assessment of lands and for the first time a definite meaning was given to plough assessment. 5 *bighas*, each of 2,500 sq. yds., were taken as one plough and rent was raised to Rs. 2/- a plough or 6½. *as.* per *bigha*. The number of villages settled were 847. This assessment was only made for rice lands. The four jungly *pirs* were not measured. The gross rental after this assessment came to Rs. 64,824/10/-.

Mr. Craven's settlement was made in 1897. The same rate for rice-lands was maintained but upland or *Gora* land was assessed for the first time. Another distinction concerning rent to be collected from the Hos and *Dikus* (people other than the Hos), was introduced at the time of Mr. Craven's settlement. The latter could get land at double the rate charged from the former. The gross rental increased to Rs. 1,77,300/1/3 and from this the usual commissions to *Mundas*, *Mankis* and *Tehsildars* were allowed. This settlement was made for 20 years. Mr. Tuckey's settlement was the last of these successive operations and was completed in 1917-18. The new demand was practically double of that arrived at by Mr. Craven, viz., Rs. 2,52,351/- which brought the net rental payable to Government to Rs. 1,77,579/-. This settlement was also for 20 years. This rental has increased to about three lakhs. Ten percent of this rental was formerly spent on improvements and on repairs account, but from the last two years, the percentage allowed to be spent has been raised to twentyfive, though considering the cost of repairs and needs of the people, this sum barely meets the demands for welfare work and rehabilitation.

The fishery and ferry rights in the rivers within the Kolhan Government Estate, belong to the Government but have been transferred to the District Board of Singhbhum. The demand for the fishery rights for the last four years has been as follows :—

1945-46	...	Rs. 8567	8	0
1946-47	...	Rs. 9067	8	0
1947-48	...	Rs. 9067	8	0
1948-49	...	Rs. 9147	8	0

The history of forest administration in the Kolhan dates back to the year 1892 prior to which all forests were village forests, con-

trolled by the headmen for the benefit of the villagers. They were at perfect liberty to take forest produce, graze cattle and extend cultivation subject to such control. The Hos were a hunting tribe and derived a considerable portion of their subsistence from the forest. Agriculture was still a crude occupation with them, for they had not yet learnt permanent cultivation and oftener than not they resorted to *jhuming* and mixed showing which are even today practised by some branches of the Munda speaking group.

Primitive people have always been reckless in their husbandry of forests. The advent of the railways produced a demand for fuel and timber and unauthorised sales from the unreserved forests of Porhat and the Kolhan began to take place. The purpose for which the unreserved forest areas in the Kolhan were constituted was to prevent the villagers from abusing their privileges by the wanton destruction and unlawful sale of valuable timber, since the consequent denudation had disastrous effects on the climatic conditions of the country. It may be pointed out in this connection that the forests of Kolhan were declared protected under section 28 of the Indian Forest Act without an enquiry being made as required by that section into the nature and extent of the rights of groups and private persons in and over the land in question.

In 1909 the Government decided to hold an enquiry into and record the nature and extent of rights of groups and of private persons over the forest waste lands declared to be protected forests, but the legal difficulties that arose were so complicated that no action was taken on the basis of these records of rights. The rights which the tenants enjoyed before the waste lands were brought under protected forests are detailed below :—

(1) The tenants of all villages in a *Manki's Pir* had equal rights to trees and other forest produce in the forests of that *Pir*, but the tenants of the villages adjacent to the protected forest blocks only have the said right. The right of the tenants of all the other villages has been extinguished under the forest rules.

(2) Tenants have always sold handles of domestic and agricultural implements constructed with timber taken from the forests. They used also to sell flowers and fruits collected by them in excess of their requirements. This is not allowed by the protected forest rules.

(3) The tenants had the right to sell *sawai* grass and myrobalans to others in small quantities. They possess no such rights under the protected forest rules.

(4) Tenants could take stone, gravels, limestone, iron ore, soap stone, etc., from the village forests for their own use and for the construction of demestic implements. The protected forest rules do not permit such rights.

(5) Villagers have all along exercised the right of hunting and shooting in the forests, which they cannot do under the protected forest rules.

These rights could not be conceded and the Government ignored them altogether in the interest of the preservation of the forests. The procedure followed by the Government in demarcating the protected blocks of forests was as follows. It was directed that to every 100 acres and up to 200 acres of waste land, if the latter did not contain any valuable timber, so that the balance of waste lands should be formed into protected forests. At the same time it was recommended that the operation should be subject to the general undertaking that unless these blocks could be made of at least 300 acres or at least half a square mile, it was not worth while to make them. The settlement officer, Mr. Craven could only give effect to these instructions in 202 out of 911 villages under the settlement. The rest of the villages needed all available land and the small areas of excess were useless when separated. Even this demarcation was not properly carried out as will appear from the letter of the then Deputy Commissioner, Mr. W. B. Thomson addressed to the Commissioner of Chota Nagpur. It pointed out that some villages had been given more waste lands than were needed while others more in need of waste lands for grazing and fuel supply had got less than what was needed or none at all. This fact and the abrogation of the customary rights of the Hos in respect of the forests and waste lands and the restrictions of the large areas of forest over which they were wont to roam and the resulting diminution in the supply of foods that the forests can yield, and finally the phenomenal increase in their number have ushered into existence problems the solution of which is indeed difficult.

Besides the Hos, the original settlers in Kolhan include Oriyas, Bhuiyas and Gowalas. Kumhars and Kamars have established themselves in some villages from very early times. The Bhuiyas settled

in Kolhan long before the British rule, but most of them were driven out by the Hos when the latter occupied Kolhan. After 1837, according to the agreement made by the Hos, the Bhuiyas were allowed to resettle in Kolhan.

The Bhuiyas are now mostly found in Jhinkpani, Jaintgarh, Jagannathpur and in southern Kolhan where the Oriyas also are found. The Gowalas are comparatively recent immigrants and they are scattered all over Kolhan. The Tantis and Ghasis are also new comers, and are undesirable elements of the population in Kolhan, as we shall see in connection with hide trade.

There are two classes of tenants in Kolhan, one the privileged class, the other mostly *Dikus*, who are foreigners. The first class is composed of those tenants who were recorded at Dr. Hayes' settlement in 1867. Foreigners recorded in the settlement of 1897, are permitted to remain subject to rules of good conduct and to certain definite restrictions.

The general principle of tenure of land for cultivation by village communities in the Kolhan is that the land is at the disposal of the community subject to the control of the hereditary headman. No individual can alienate his land, and the headman must not bring in outside tenants, except with the permission of the Deputy Commissioner which will only be given when it is clearly desirable to have more cultivators than there are in the village. Tenants cannot have undertenants, and are not entitled to hold more land than they can cultivate themselves.

There are in and around Chaibassa, and some of the trading centres in the Kolhan, a number of *Dikus*, Oraons and Oriyas, who live as labourers, and have recently taken land from the *Raiyats* on the contract system. Kolhan has grown into an important centre for the export of rice, *Tusser*, *Lac*, *Sawai* grass, oilseeds and also for the impor tation of salt, tobacco and cheap manufactured goods. All this trade is in the hands of *Dikus* or foreigners, so that any development of the trade and general economic condition of Kolhan barely touches the fringe of communal life in the villages. On the other hand, if the *Dikus* were not allowed to settle and tap the resources of the Estate it is indeed doubtful whether the Hos would ever have realised the possibilities of the land they live in. Yet it must be admitted that without a judicious control of the settlement and exploitation of the

Kolhan by unscrupulous traders and aggressive land-grabbers, it would have long been a hot-bed of discontent and disaffection, as any evil, economic or social, which they suffer from, they are apt to trace to the magic of other people and we have seen how desperate and plucky the Hos are when occasion arises.

Before 1907, no special steps were taken to control the hide trade in Kolhan. The hide dealers were mostly from Gaya and they made advances to the Ghasis and Kumhars for the collection of hides. The latter are by birth and profession thieves. If they cannot obtain the hide by honest means, they do not hesitate to kill, or poison the cattle to serve their ends. Even the Hos learnt this bad example from the Ghasis, so that cattle stealing and cattle poisoning became very common. The system of issuing permits to bonafide dealers in hide was introduced, and in 1908-9, there were 9 dealers who received *Pattas* and the *Pirs* were divided between them. Even this measure did not prove successful and cattle poisoning continued as usual. Besides, the price paid for hide in Kolhan was ridiculously low, as the Hos received only 1/- and 2/- rupees for an average sized cow and buffalo hide respectively. While the poor Hos were being paid such low prices for their hides, the hide dealers were doing a roaring trade. Security for good behaviour was demanded of these dealers, and huge sums varying from 2,000 to 7,500 were offered by dealers, from outside as well as inside Kolhan. In 1917-18, Kolhan was divided into circles and the fee payable for the monopoly in each circle was fixed. The total fees payable to the Government from the eight circles came to about Rs 6,000/-. In 1919, the monopoly of hide trade in Kolhan was put up to auction and was settled with one party for Rs. 13,500/-. There is no record available in the Kolhan office about the demand for hide or hide license, at least the Kolhan office could not give any information regarding this item but said that the control exercised by the district administration has minimised malpractices, and no special licensing is required now.

3

The Kolhan administration has its unique features not found in similar Government Estates or sub-divisions of districts. The civil procedure code is not in force and civil cases are instituted by petitions and are admitted as 'miscellaneous cases' without further for-

malities. In special cases or in those of a complicated nature, the Kolhan Superintendent who is the officer in charge of the Kolhan may permit a lawyer to appear and contest the cases of civil suits. The administration is characterised by direct touch with the tenants, *Mundas* and *Mankis*, whose cases are decided on the spot as far as possible. The centralisation of administration, civil, revenue and criminal in the hands of one officer, viz, the Kolhan Superintendent, functioned very successfully when the officer concerned had plenty of initiative and was in the confidence of the authorities finally responsible for administration of the area but it fails when the intitative is lacking or when changes in administration take place too rapidly to put them into practice, A go-slow administration fulfils the needs of a sedentary and unprogressive people but when political consciousness develops in the same people, the administration needs re-orientation. The objects of the administration was to keep the Kolhan for the Hos and to govern the latter through their communal system. These two were possible by the control of the *Mankis* and the *Mundas* by the Deputy Commissioner who had also to see that the land did not pass into the hands of *Dikus* or the latter did not settle in the Kolhan without the knowledge of the Deputy Commissioner. The Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act was extended to the Kolhan for the purpose of giving a legal status to the directives of the Deputy Commissioner in the fulfilment of his responsibilities. The need for legalising the control of the Kolhan by executive orders, had been voiced by successive administrators.

Regarding the position of the tribal *Mankis*, the Kolhan Resettlement Report of 1919, has the following:

"In the Kolhan it appears that before the British occupation of the country there were headmen only in those parts which were under some control from the neighbouring chiefs and which paid rent or taxes for each village."

Lieutenant Tickell, Assistant Political Agent, Singbhum, in a letter dated the 1st February, 1842, to the Governor General's Agent on the subject of assessing the Kolhan, writes as follows:—

"These border tracts had their chiefs or Mankis who were elected on paying a *salami* for the distinction by the zamindars and who used to present the amount of tax required. But in the interior, the Kolhan from the first presented, and indeed does in measure still present, the anomaly of a people living together without an acknowledged head or ruler of any kind whatever."

"Each subdivision consisting of villages has been placed under the superintendence of a Manki, who has been chosen chiefly owing to the influence that he is

supposed to possess and with the general consent of the inhabitants of those villages over which he is placed."

The following is the translation[1] of a *Patta* given to Jamadar *Manki* of Asura by the Assistant Agent in 1828, and it will be seen how much emphasis is laid on the *Manki's* duties and how far removed was his position from that of a tenure-holder:—

To Jamadar *Manki* of Asura—

"Be it known to you that you have been appointed Manki of Gumra *Pir*. This *Sanad* is presented to you according to the sanction of the Agent to the Governor-General dated the 10th December of the present year. In accordance with your promise before the Agent you will be held responsible for all matters concerning the villages under you, such as theft, murder, robbery, etc. If the revenue of your *Ilaka* is not paid in proper time you will be held responsible for it and it will be realized from you. You will work with heart and soul and render help. You will arrest guilty persons and produce them before me. You should not knowingly let off guilty persons by taking bribes or on the consideration that they are your relatives. If you try to conceal guilty persons or show any partiality you will be taken to task for it. You will at once inform me when a theft, murder, or dacoity is committed in your *Ilaka*. You are empowered to decide or compromise minor cases, such as insult and assault, which you think should not come before me, and you should inform me of your decisions. You will always readily obey any orders given to you by me or my successors.

"In every village of your *Ilaka* there will be a Munda who will be subordinate to you. The Munda will promise before you and before the Agent that he will render every help to you and inform you or your Naib of any important matter occurring in his village. He will promise that he will give a substitute in case of his illness or absence from the village on private business. If I or my successor orders you to arrest any guilty person you will at once arrest him and produce him before me. If he absconds from your *Ilaka* and takes refuge in other *Ilakas* you will arrest him there also. You will try your best to arrest guilty persons. If you go to some other place on private business you will give charge of your duties to your Naib who has been appointed by Government, and if your absence is to be for a long time you will inform me. If any order comes to you from any Raja, Babu or Bhaiya you should not, according to your promise, carry it out but will produce before me the man who comes with such orders from them. You will carry out all orders. You will receive a separate *Patta* that you will get *one-tenth* of the total revenue of your *Ilaka*. If you show negligence in the discharge of your duties this *Sanad* will be taken away from you and given to another man. You will always work according to this *Sanad*." (p. 13, Final Report on Resettlement of Kolhan).[1]

Later on, it was pointed out by J. F. Crawford in 1851 that the office of the *Manki* was neither purely elective nor strictly hereditary, and it was recommended by him that the man with the greatest local influence should be appointed as *Manki*, though in the case of his successor, preference should be given to his heir or a member of his family if he has left no heir so that 'the Coles should continue to feel that

[1] The original is in Oriya.

the authorities have unrestricted control in such matters', (*Ibid* p. 13). The Settlement Report accepted the position with reserve, for it says, "it appears, then, that the position of the *Manki* and *Munda* is neither in origin nor at present that of a tenure holder, but that of an official representative of the village. This position has been to some extent created and always carefully fostered by Government, according to the ideas and in the interests of the Hos." (*Ibid* p. 14) Thus it appears that the *Manki* system is not entirely a creation of the British administration, but the fetters put on the *Manki* as contain in the *Sanad* of Jamadar *Manki* were designed for political expediency, and the freedom so long enjoyed by the *Manki*—for example when he paid *salami* to the zamindar, and had his rights safeguarded, was ruthlessly suppressed. The political power was surrendered by the *Mankis* —under duress, and since has not been regained, till today even their social effectiveness is being threatened by the gradual weeding out of hereditary village headmen and divisional chiefs, and the substitution of the *Thana* system, we shall have occasion to discuss later on. The position of the tribal chiefs among the Hos are therefore different from other areas in Chota Nagpur which was brought out by the Settlement Report already referred to. While in other parts of aboriginal Chota Nagpur the tribal chiefs represent *Khuntkatti* families and are elected or are hereditary functionaries, the Ho *Mankis* and *Mundas*, headmen of *Pirs* and villages respectively, are claimed to be officials, chosen from the people and to some extent by the people, responsible not only for the collection of the revenue, but also for the police work of the country, for looking after the jungles, trees, roads and irrigation works, within their jurisdiction, in fact for all the work that is done elsewhere by the subordinate staff of Government and of local bodies. According to the Settlement Report, the officials are remunerated by a commission on the rent collections which they obtain from the *Raiyats* in two *kists* or instalments, six annas in Kartik and ten annas in Magh, and they hold land as cultivators, without any concession in rent, so that when they are removed from office their lands remain with them. The *Mundas* and *Mankis* are subject to discipline of the district control officials and are removed from office or punished for failure of their duties or if they fail to deposit rent *kist* by *kist*. While the *Mundas* and *Mankis* have their duties and obligations, they have

also rights which are conceded by the administration for efficient indirect rule.

The *Munda* or the village headman keeps a stock of land and he can settle an abandoned holding with another tenant, but he has to keep the *Manki* informed. In case a non-Ho, resident or non-resident, is available or offer himself to settle the land, he may with the permission of the district Magistrate bring the land under his cultivation; he has no right to settle the land abandoned by a tenant with a non-Ho or a *Diku*, neither he has any right to enhance the rent of the land in time of a resettlement. The *Munda* may settle uncultivated land with tenants by informing the *Manki*. The Settlement Report further recognises, the right of the *Mundas* to a share of the rent on land settled with a tenant who after three years of rent free tenure, is subject to paying a fair rent. But he has no right to receive a *salami*. The *Munda* does not get a remission of his dues because of failure of crops, absconding of the *Raiyat* or for any untoward cause, but he has a right to hold the village during the term of the settlement without his rent being revised; he has of course the right to receive commission on the collections of *lac* and *tusser* rent which amounts for 12 percent of the rental. The latest amendment to the system of land tenure in Kolhan has been to ban the sale of *Adibasi* land even to *Adibasis* without the approval of the Deputy Commissioner. This was necessitated by a crop of *Benami* transactions that took place, when the servants of *Dikus* applied for land and when they obtained the same, cultivated it for their masters, all the time land being shown in possession of the servants who are *Adibasis*. This was one of the problems that was agitating the minds of the Hos and the amendment came as a welcome change but its effect on the status of the tribal officers has been restrictive. The jurisdiction of the *Mankis* in civil and criminal cases is being gradually delimited and in matters of revenue transactions the amendment referred to interferes with the privileges the tribal officers had been exercising so long ; the social influence the latter had with the people is being transferred to educated and detribalised men and women, so that the *Mankis* and even the *Mundas* find their job gone, a situation which reverses the tradition of centuries of indirect rule. One is tempted here to ask if this was at all necessary and is not the remedy for malpractices of the tribal officials is more drastic than the disease itself ? The impression

I got from my casual discussion with some of the leaders of the *Adibasi* movement is not a healthy reaction whatever may be the temporary merit of the case so far as welfare work is considered. The resources of the administration are limited, and the demand for aid without bounds, so that mischiefs could easily be created, for the tribal officers cannot then be made scape-goats for inaction of the administration. Besides, if indirect rule has succeeded in other parts of the world among savage and preliterate people, why should it not succeed in Kolhan and the Hos are such a compact people. More knowledge of the customary life of the Hos, and of Kolhan is necessary to remove the causes of friction immediate or remote. Political expediency today has necessitated concessions in the form of tribal welfare activities, but a change of heart is called for, and the anomalies of the *laissez faire* policy with regard to tribal life and culture must be removed, whatever be the consequences. This, I am afraid, cannot be done by viewing the problems from above, the perspective must change.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE

1

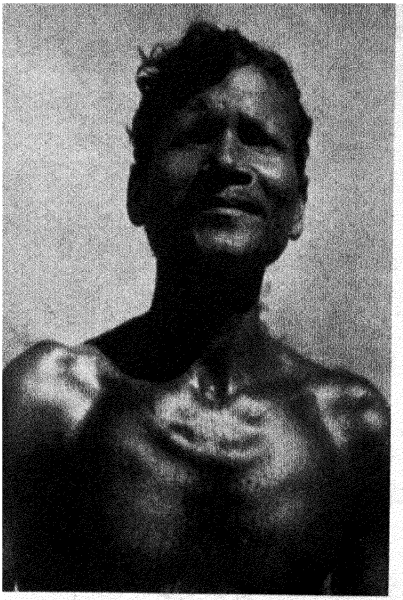
If there be any word that the Hos dislike most, it is the popular epithet *Kol* by which they are known to the outside world. Whether the word is derived from Sanskrit *Kola* meaning a pig, as Dalton has suggested, or from the word '*Horo*' which in course of time has assumed different forms, viz., '*Koro*', '*Kolo*', '*Kol*', it is difficult to decide, but it is certain that the word has an unhappy connotation, and is, in popular use, a contemptuous term which designates 'all those savages that cumber the ground.' A Ho loathes to be addressed as *Kol*, and when this happens he will shrug his shoulders and mutter indignantly in protest. Similarly a Ho woman resents being addressed as *Kui*. Yet the words have come to stay. The land they live in is Kolhan which apparently is a variant of *Kol-sthan* (Land of the *Kols*) so that there is very little chance of the word being dropped from the popular vocabulary. The educated Hos have begun to think themselves as inhabitants not of the Kolhan, but of Singhbhum, 'the land of lions', and when a Ho sings the following song he only voices the sentiments of his enlightend compatriots.

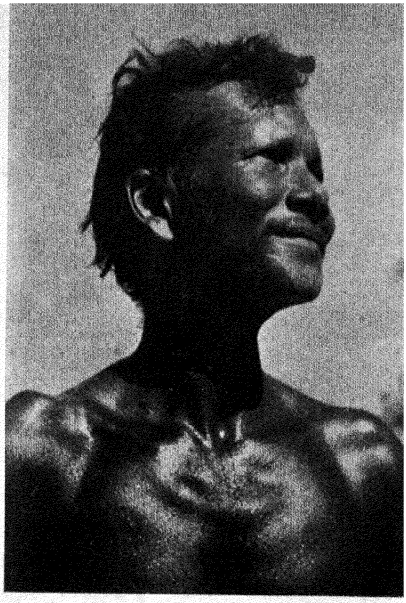
Sinhabhumi hasa rebu Janmelena
Sinhalekan paitibu rikaygeya
Janam nenga disum nelaga
Kili milibu seba singareya.

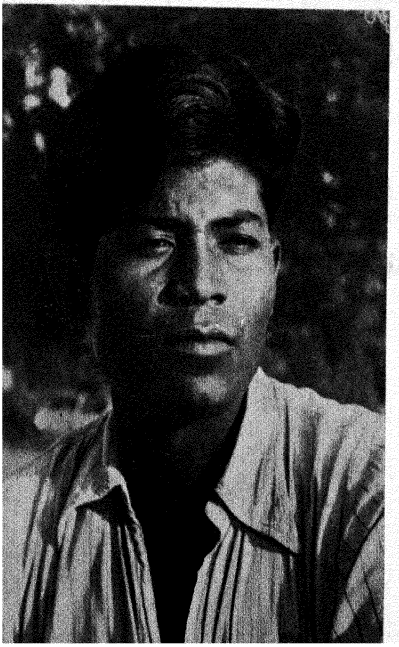
Born we are on the soil of Lion-land (Singhbhum),
We must act like the mighty lions;
Come, come, for the service of Lion-land
To adore and adorn her with all that is good.

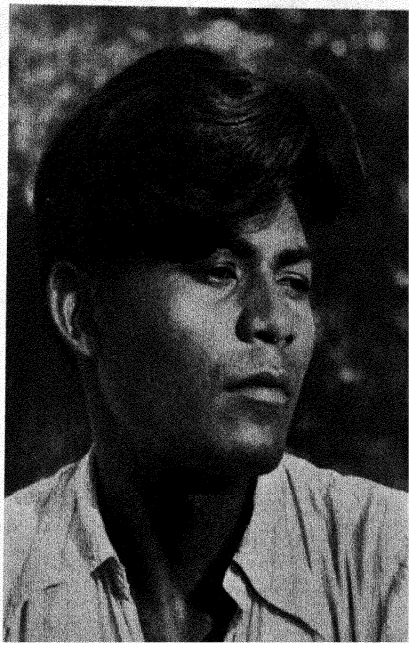
The Hos do not present a very powerful appearance. They do not possess deep chests, broad shoulders, and strong muscles, nor any very sturdy physical features. They are usually of short stature, dark complexion with a short, broad and flat nose. The eyes are small and dark, and the hair wavy to curly; beards and moustaches are practically absent, while the chin is narrow, and the lips are of medium size. Their ears are small and finely developed. They possess very powerful white teeth and seldom suffer from caries. In some cases, a slight prognathism is noticeable, but slanting eyes are rare.

When Col. Tickell described the Hos in 1840, he was struck by



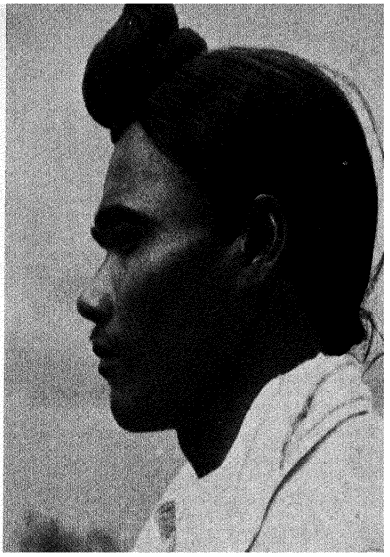


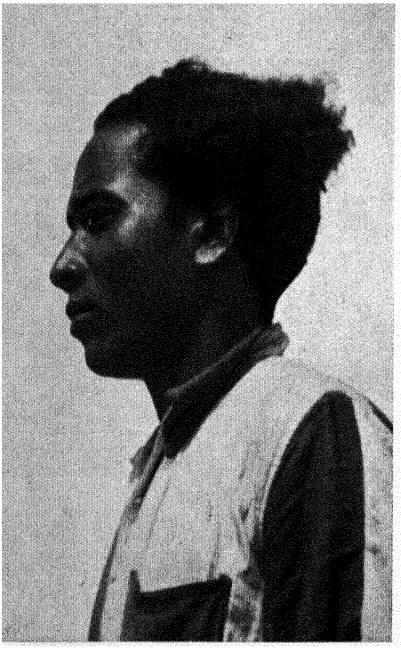


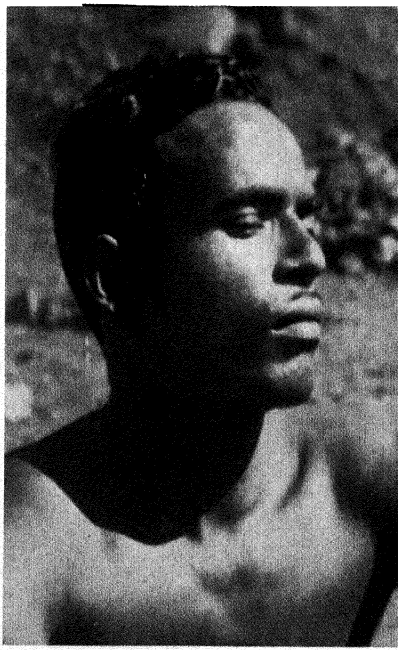


1 and 2, An elderly Ho who has seen life elsewhere (front and profile)
3 and 4, An educated Ho (front and profile)

Plate No. 1

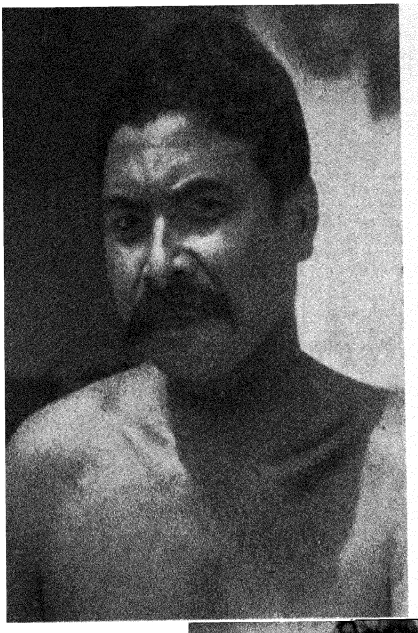


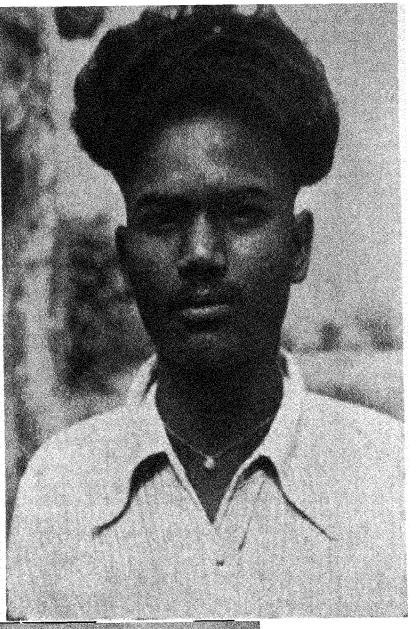




5 and 6, a young Ho aspiring for tribal leadership (front and profile)
7, Son of a Ho Manki, a sportsman and musician
8, A Ho cultivator

Plate No. 2





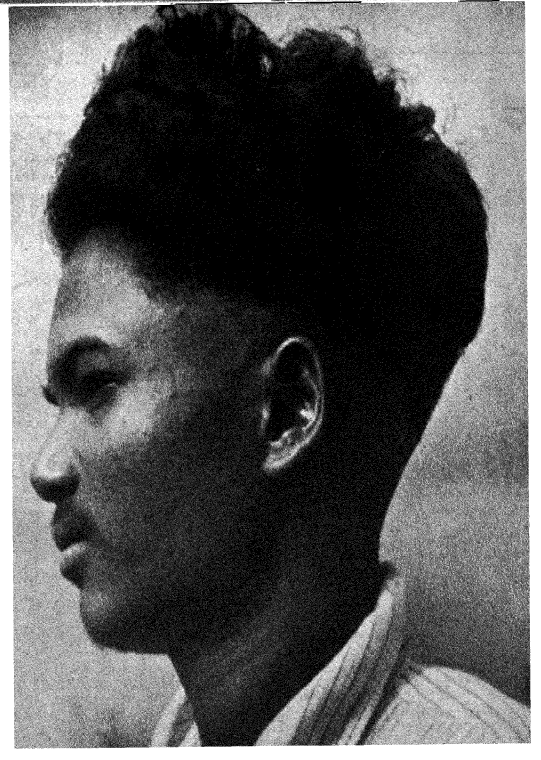
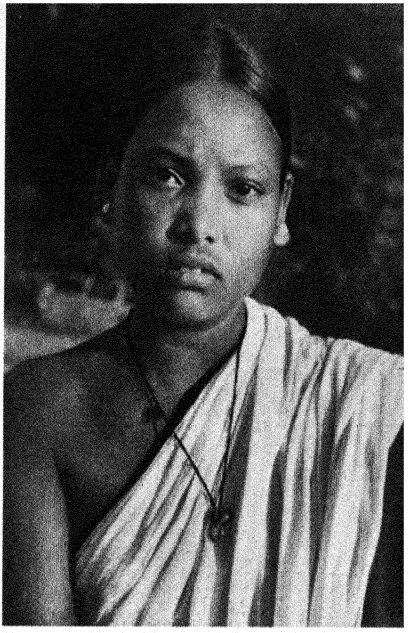


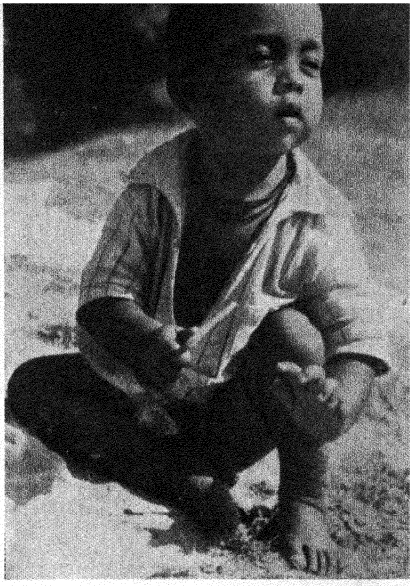
Plate No. 3

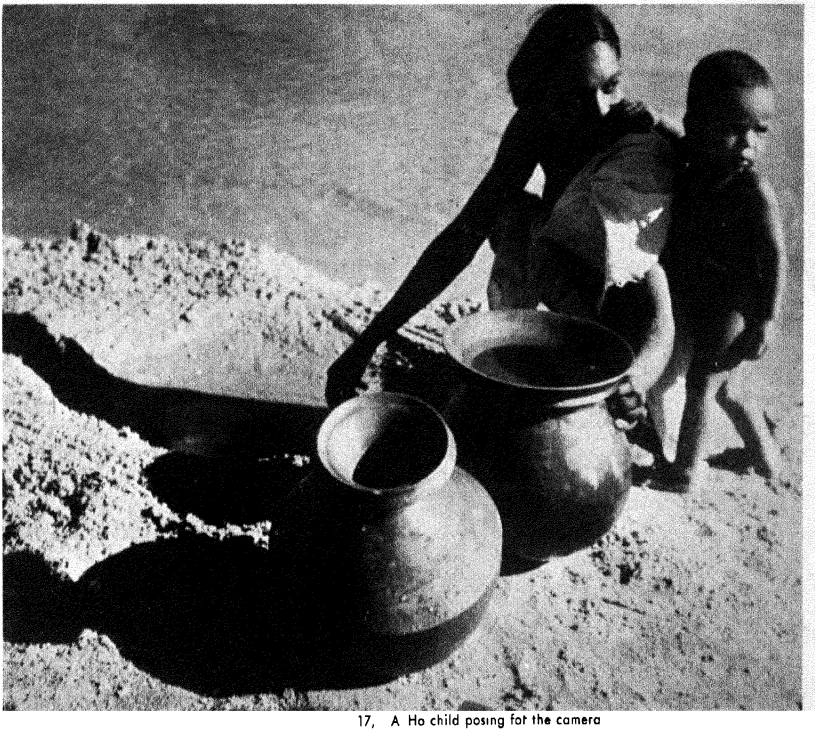
9 A Ho Deuri, 10 and 11, a Ho Student (front and profile)



12 to 15, Ho maidens, who frequent the urban centre at Chaibassa, to whom life is lonely otherwise.

Plate No. 4





17, A Ho child posing fot the camera

18, A Ho mother collecting water from sand bed

Plate No. 5

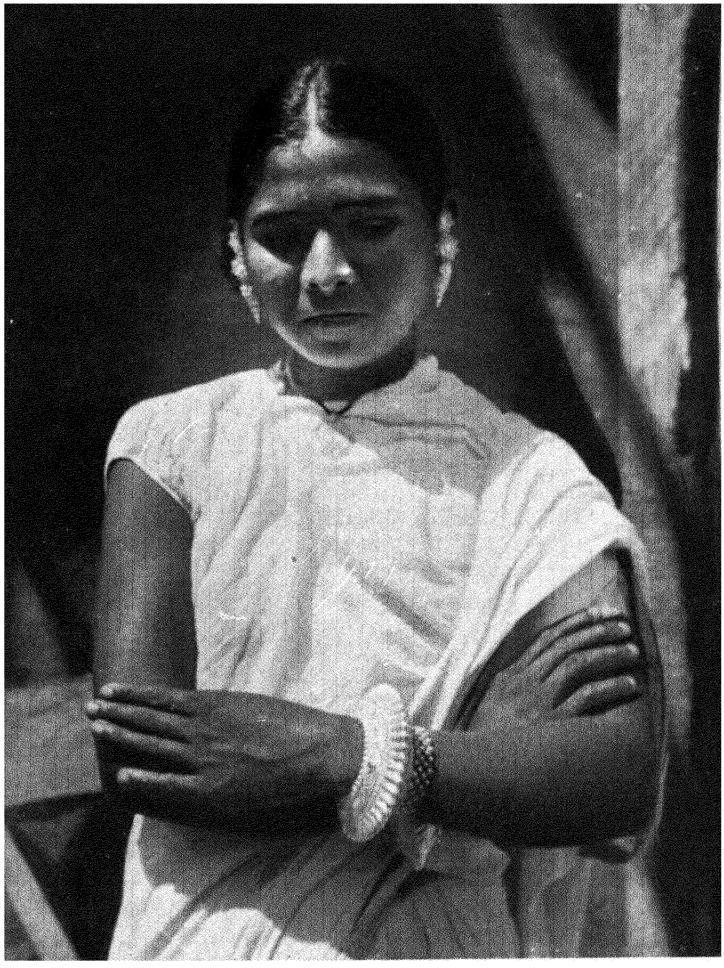
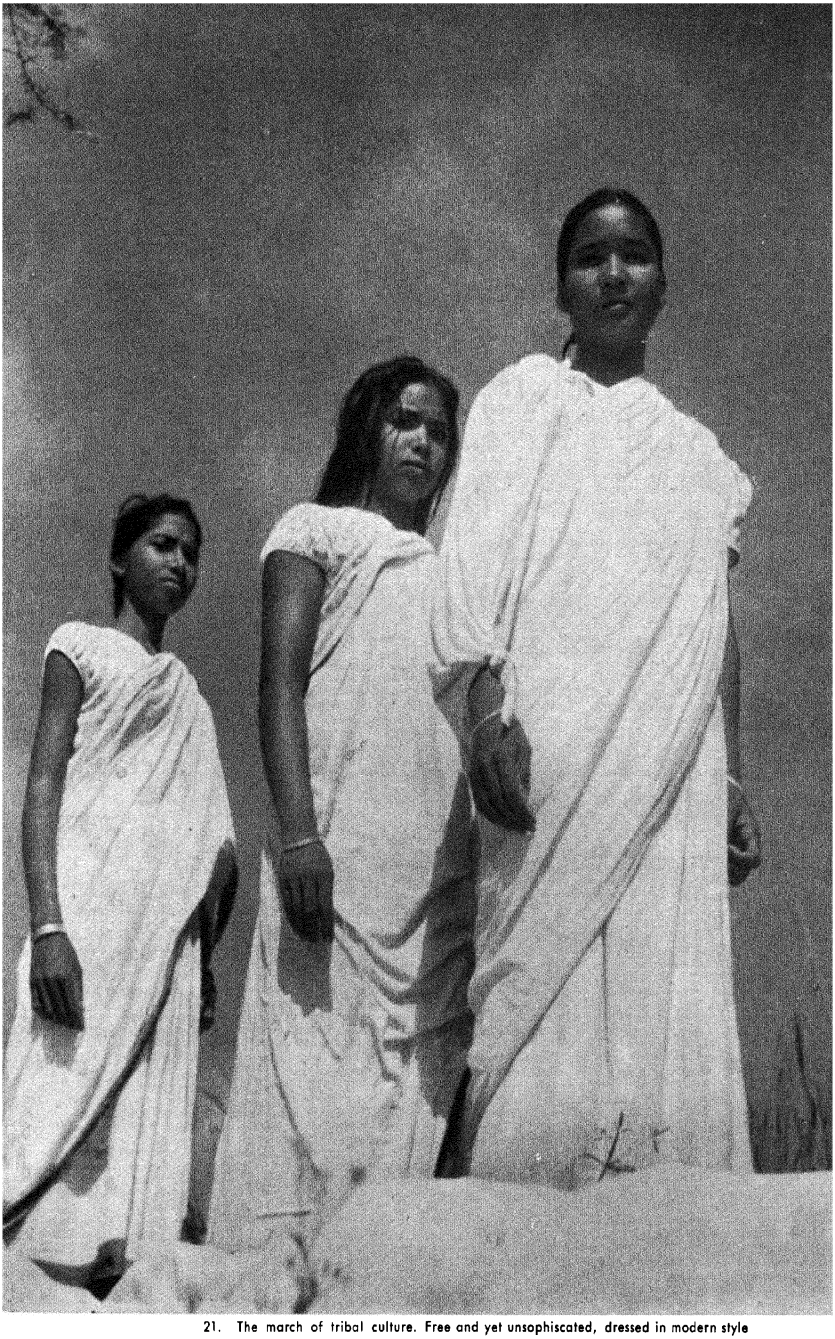


Plate No. 6

19. A Ho beauty, modernised in outlook



21. The march of tribal culture. Free and yet unsophiscated, dressed in modern style

Plate No. 8

20 A Manki's daughter, married to an educated Ho

Plate No. 7

22 Dusserah dance in Sarangbil, Kolhan

Plate No. 9

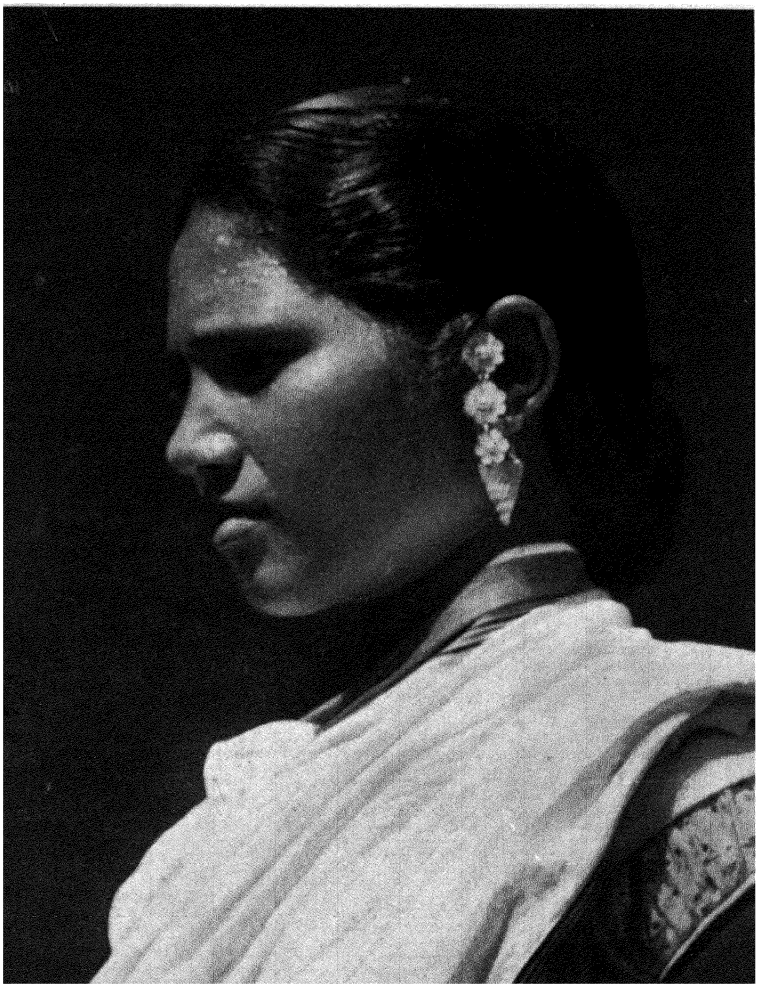


Plate No. 10

23. Close-up of a young dancer noted for her graceful dance

their manly bearing, and their handsome physique, made sturdy by the practice of the bow and their hunting among the hills.* "The early use of the bow" wrote Col. Tickell, "expands the chest, and sets the muscles, while yet mere boys, and their passion for the chase, which they pursue over their rugged hills, brings their lower limbs into a state of training which the best *Palwans* (wrestlers) of the plains of India might envy." Today, such descriptions of the Hos would be nothing short of exaggeration, for the average Ho is normally a small man. It is only in the interior of Kolhan, in the jungly *Pirs* where the influence of cultural contact with the *Dikus* has been very meagre, that we find one or two individuals with the powerful bearing described by Col. Tickell.

Today the Hos generally do not use the bow and arrow as they did in earlier times. The constitution of the forests into protected areas has no doubt restricted their activity in this direction, and in addition, excessive drinking of liquor may have told on their health. A comparison of the Hos with the Korwas of Mirzapur, who have for all intents and purposes fallen on evil days, and whose days are virtually numbered, will explain the difference between the Hos and the Korwas. The latter are a set of strong men, thick-set, with deep chests and broad shoulders. At a glance they give the idea of great power and manliness, although they have the same environment as the Hos, and appear to have sprung from the same ethnic stock. The excessive drinking of rice-beer by the Hos explains nothing by itself, as rice-beer has been their main food and drink from the earliest known times, and according to a legend, the drinking of rice-beer dates back to the time of their creation. Besides, rice-beer is a mild drink which even when taken in excess probably does not affect the constitution as much as is made out. The replacement of this home-made beer by the country liquor has become a serious problem with the Hos. We shall have occasion to mention it in another connection.

Whether through excessive drinking or by the limitation of their activities after the introduction of stringent forest rules, or through sheer laziness or a sudden change in their system of nutrition, the average Ho is not the same man now as he was found by the earlier administrative officers. Today, they appear to be a degenerate race of men, with weak constitution, and a lower expectation of life, in spite

* J. A. S. B., 1839-40, Memoirs on Hodesum.

of the fact that they are multiplying faster than their ancestors. Old people are few in number, and many people die in their teens as well as between the ages of 30 and 40. Most of the Ho students who had accompanied me on my tours into the Kolhan about twenty-five years ago all died young. It is not the writer's experience alone, for the Headmaster of the local High School at Chaibassa stated a few years ago that many of the Ho boys had died within two to three years of leaving school. It is difficult to meet very many old men in the Kolhan and the Hos themselves declare that they do not live to old age. This is also one of the reasons why the Hos retain a strong belief in witchcraft, and also a great fear of it. Premature death they trace to the mischief of those witches who command a number of familiar spirits, and with the help of the latter carry out their nefarious designs. The local Hindu doctors of Jagannathpur and of the Sadar Hospital in Chaibassa, cited a number of cases of premature death which were mostly caused by ordinary fever and acute dysentery. Moreover, when they come for medical aid, they are always at their last stage, so that accurate diagnosis if possible treatment is not.

If the Ho men are weak, degenerate and short lived, the Ho woman possesses a fine physique, charming gait and an admirable disposition. Tickell writes, "Their open happy countenances, snowy white teeth and robust, upright figures, remind one of Swiss peasant girls." The girls are full of life, becoming and decorous in their manners and pleasing in their looks. The women in Kolhan are indeed a fine species and the graceful way they move, and the attractive looks they usually possess have endeared them to all travellers and writers. Most of the writers of the last century, with the exception of Col. Ricketts, have unanimously commended the beauty and attractiveness of Ho girls. Many interesting descriptions of Ho girls have appeared in vernacular books on travel in Bengal and Bihar, whilst the innumerable cases of scandals one hears in Singhbhum, of *liaison* between *Diku* men and Ho girls, only adds strength to the contention. Though women perform most of the arduous tasks in the fields, and work as drudges in the house, they have succeeded in maintaining their fine figure and sweetness of temper. Perhaps this drudgery, which has been the lot of women in the Kolhan, has proved a blessing in disguise, and it would be a bad day for the Hos if the whole of the Kolhan conforms to the new cry of social reform which promises

to restrict the free movements of the women. The zeal for reform is greater in the urban area and in those villages which fringe the town of Chaibassa. A comparison of the health of the women in these areas, with that of their sisters in the interior and the jungly *Pirs*, will make it clear how suicidal it is to pursue this aspect of the campaign. To day women of the higher classes (i.e., of the families of Mankis and Mundas) who can indulge in the luxury of servants, and whose out-door activities have been much circumscribed in recent years, show a comparative deterioration in health. Many of the diseases which were unknown among the Hos, and were only confined to the *Dikus*, claim victims among the leisured class in Kolhan. Weekly markets are the most popular venues of social life in Kolhan, but the number of people that attend these markets does not represent in any sense buyers and sellers. There are many girls and youngmen who come from distant corners of Kolhan, not to buy or sell any of their produce, but for the mere fun of attending it, and incidentally, to meet friends, and if possible, prospective mates in life. It is a common experience to find girls from villages 15 to 20 miles distant attending these markets in batches of five to ten, whose only object in attending it, is to meet people and enjoy the fun of watching the crowd. These girls usually come from the interior, for seldom do we find women living in the urban areas repairing to markets five to ten miles away. It is not that the latter are not attracted by distant markets, (although they get all their needs supplied by the local daily or weekly markets), but because they have become lazy and do not want to exert themselves and also because of the new class-consciousness we have mentioned above.

Before the Hos came under the present administration, they possessed certain qualities of head and heart, which endeared them to all alike. Major Roughsedge in 1821 was so pleased with their independent bearing that he said that the Hos were as much superior to their brethren of Chota Nagpur as 'wild buffaloes to the village herd.' Col. Tickell was so much impressed with their love for truth, their honesty, their obliging willingness and their happy ingenuous disposition, that he would rather see them remain lawless than be brought under British courts of justice which might end in destroying their virtues. It was Col. Ricketts who saw little virtue among the Hos, and he wrote in 1854, "so long as the *Kols* continue to be what

the *Kols* are now, any plan which has the effect of preventing an increase in their number is not without advantage. I cannot consider it desirable that there should be more *Kols*." Yet he admitted that when he first met the *Kols* they had one virtue, i.e., they invariably spoke the truth. This virtue, according to Col. Ricketts, completely disappeared within a few years after the introduction of courts of justice, for he complained that, "all those whom we meet now in Kolhan, lie like other people." If we accept this statement of Col. Ricketts, (afterwards Sir Henry Ricketts), it is clear that such a fatal change in their outlook had come about within a short span of about 15 years, and the responsibility for this unwelcome change must therefore be thrown upon the then administration, as well as upon the people among whom they lived or with whom they associated. Col. Dalton, who wrote much later than Sir Henry, did not corroborate him, and even today such sweeping generalisations about their nature and characteristics would be extremely overdrawn.

The system of indirect rule, as is prevalent in Kolhan, has many drawbacks which have engendered among the Hos certain vices. Later, the cultural contact of the Hos with inferior castes, who have found shelter in Kolhan, and with others who exploit them, has taught them undesirable and dishonest expedients; nevertheless, the vices that Sir Henry reiterates as being general among the *Kols*, are seldom practised by the peaceful cultivators of the interior, and may find their votaries among a few litigants and touts that frequent the law courts, and among those who have constant dealings with the *Dikus* in Kolhan. But it is a generally accepted fact that the moral deterioration of the Hos has kept pace with their physical degeneration. so that many would like to see the Hos in their former state of 'lawlessness', when they derived subsistence from the chase and the produce of the forest, supplemented by pillage or plunder.

2

The relation between race and language has remained a puzzle to anthropologists. Some have identified groups speaking the same or allied languages as forming one ethnic type, others have denied any significance to language as a criterion of racial distinction. Sir Herbert Risley undertook a systematic inquiry to find out, if people speaking the same language or dialects of the same language belong

o the same race, and his conclusions have been recorded in his People of India'. He finds, however, that no hypothesis on race origins can be safely based on linguistic evidence and all anthropologists will agree with him.

According to the 1931 Census, there were 5,342,704 Austric speaking people in India. The Austro-Asiatic which includes the Munda-speaking tribes was spoken by 5,333,166, while the Austro-Nesian by 6,542 persons only. The different branches of the Munda-speaking people are the Munda, Ho, Santhal, Bhumij, Tamaria, Juang and many other tribes like the Bhil and the Korwa who have lost their language but retain much of their traditional culture pattern. They are most widely known primitive people in Northern India as they have been from very early times migrating far and wide. They supply labour to plantations, mills and factories in Bengal, Bihar, U.P. and Assam. The Santhals have migrated to the fertile plains of Northern Bengal, where they are found to compete with the semi-Mongoloid Rajbanshis and cognate groups. The Hos are working in the coal and iron mines in Bengal and Bihar and are also seen working in the jute mills of Bengal. The Hos and the Mundas go for work to distant districts of Eastern Bengal and are also recruited for the tea gardens in Assam.

The distribution of the Austric-speaking groups in India today, suggests that at some remote prehistoric period, the whole of Northern India was occupied by the ancestors of these tribal groups and that the advent of later strains perhaps led to a dispersal of the original hordes who took shelter in inaccessible hills and fastnesses all over Northern and Central India. As Sir Edward Gait pointed out in his introduction to the 'Mundas and their Country' by S. C. Roy, "there are indications that Munda languages were formerly spoken in the Gangetic Valley. The 'Pronominalised Himalayan Group' of Tibeto-Burman languages bear traces of having originally belonged to that family. There are striking points of agreement between the Munda languages and Kanauri which is spoken in the neighbourhood of Simla."

Most of the important Austric-speaking groups are found in the Chota Nagpur Plateau in the Province of Bihar. It is a well-wooded and undulating country, divided and diversified by ranges of hills and traversed by fertilising streams. Here and there one meets with

vast semi-globular masses of granite which look like 'sunken domes of gigantic temples'. The Hos are concentrated in the Kolhan Government Estate which is a series of fair and fertile plains, often broken, divided and surrounded by hills. The Birhors live in the hills and jungles that fringe the Chota Nagpur Plateau on the east and the north-east. The Tamarias are found in the Ranchi District as well as in Singhbhum. The Mundas have their home mainly in the Ranchi district.

The racial history of the Austric-speaking people has not yet been rescued from the mist of traditional antiquity. They have been described as Pre-Dravidians, Kolarians, Dravidians, Australoids, Kolide and Nishadic. Their racial affinity with the tribal groups of the South has very often been misunderstood and we are yet uncertain as to the racial composition of the different Austric-speaking groups. The Oraons of the Chota Nagpur Plateau, a Dravidian speaking group, living in the same area and possessing a culture different in some respects from that of their neighbours, the Mundas and the Birhors, have complicated the issue as opinions are still far from unanimous about their relationship with the latter. Recent researches among the Gonds of the C.P. and the Mal Paharias of Bengal, show how hordes of Dravidian speaking people migrated to Northern and Eastern India in comparatively recent times. The institution of social segregation, viz., the village dormitory, found in its pristine form among the Oraon and many tribes of the South and also among the Mongoloid tribes in Assam, has perhaps its own tale to tell, as it is likely that the Austric-speaking groups probably borrowed this institution from the Oraons. Although the *Dhumkuria* (dormitory) is a living institution among the Oraons and forms as it were the pivot of their social organisation it is not commonly met with among the Mundas, the Hos and the Santhals. Traces of it are found no doubt among the Mundas who live in the same area as the Oraons, but less so among the Hos and practically absent among the Santhals. The Mundas therefore represent a marginal group, so far as this institution is concerned. The Saoras of the Ganjam Agency tracts who are known to anthropologists as of the same race as the Oraons, possess all the characteristic features of dormitory organisation and its importance in the life of the Saoras has been recorded by most ethnographers who have written on them.

Regarding the racial origins of the Austric-speaking groups, Dr. A. C. Haddon writes,[1]

"From the racial point of view the Kolarians can only be placed in the Pre-Dravidian group. They have a dark-brown, almost black skin, coarse black hair inclined to be curly and scanty beard, low medium stature, usually 1.577-1.611 M (but the Hos are tall 1.680 M and the Juangs are short 1.570 M) and sturdy limbs. They are dolichocephalic, C.I. (74.5-76) with a low narrow forehead, irregular features, thick lips, eyes often bright and full and not oblique, and the nose broad and flat (N.I., Korwa, 92.5; Munda 89.9; Kharwar, 89.7; Santhal, 88.8; Bhumij, 86.5), thus all are platyrrhine. In spite of the foregoing there is something in the facial appearance of many Kolarians which enables an observer to pick out a typical inhabitant of Chota Nagpur from a crowd of southern Dravidian and among some (Munda, etc.,) there is often a reminiscence of Mongoloid traits. The Oraons who call themselves Kurukh of Chota Nagpur are physically Pre-Dravidian; they speak a Dravidian language closely allied to Canarese and according to their traditions they came from the Karnatic. The Mal-Paharias of the Rajmahal Hills are closely allied to the Oraon."

From the foregoing, it appears that Dr. Haddon takes the Dravidian speaking Oraons as belonging to the same stock as the Kolarians, though he admits that there is a remarkable difference noticeable which makes it possible to distinguish the Mundas from the Dravidian speaking tribes from the south. Dr. Haddon explains this by referring to the Asura tradition of the Mundas. The Asuras were believed to be a primitive leucoderm people who spoke an early form of Sanskrit or allied language and who probably absorbed an indigenous Melanoderm race (the Nishada of ancient Sanskrit literature) and developed a civilization of their own. The Aryans conquered the Asuras and a section of the latter retreated to Chota Nagpur and were finally overpowered and absorbed by intrusive short-statured Pre-Dravidian hordes coming from the south.

Col. Dalton has referred to greater physical beauty of the Hos and the Mundas and ascribed this to a considerable admixture of Aryan blood. About the Hos of Singbhum, Col. Dalton wrote,[2]

"The Hos of Singhbhum and the Mundaris of the southern Pergannah of Lohardaga district are physically a much finer people than the Bhumij, the Santhals or any other of the Kolarians.....the males average five feet five or six inches in height, the women five feet two .... Many have high noses and oval faces and young girls are sometimes met with who have delicate and regular features, finely chiselled straight noses, and perfectly formed mouths and chins. The eyes however are seldom so large, so bright and gazelle-like as those of pure Hindu maidens, but I have met strongly marked Mongolian features and some are dark and coarse as the Santhals."

[1] Races of Man', by A. C. Haddon.
M = metre, mm = millimetre, N. I = Nasal Index, C. I = Cephalic Index.

[2] 'Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal', by Col. Dalton.

Thus, the following relevant questions regarding the Austric-speaking tribes suggest themselves: (1) Whether the Austric-speaking tribes in India or more particularly the Munda-speaking groups represent the same racial type ? (2) Is there any racial difference between the Munda and the Dravidian speaking groups ? (3) Are the Mundas and Hos more mixed than the Santhals and the Bhumij ? These questions I would attempt to answer from an analysis of the two new series of anthropometric measurements of the Hos and the Saoras and by a comparison of the statistical constants with those of other series available.

The technique used in obtaining the measurements of the Hos and the Saoras, was that of the International Agreement of Monaco and therefore comparable to other series available. The following characters were taken : (1) Stature, (2) Maximum Head Length, (3) Maximum Head Breadth, (4) Nasal Height (or Length), (5) Nasal Width, (6) Maximum Bizygomatic Breadth, (7) Bigonial Breadth. The difficulty of locating nasion on the living head cannot but influence the nasal measurements and when considering these data, this point should not be forgotten. Risley's technique except for the nasal measurements may be supposed to be the same and Mr. Chatterjee has, I am told, used the Monaco technique and similar instruments. Although the characters for comparison are not many and conclusions based on them may not be very accurate, yet it will certainly indicate the possibility of making accurate comparisons of data gathered by different workers working on the same or very similar techniques and using the same kind of instruments.

The selection of the different series for comparison mentioned already, viz., (1) 165 Hos of Mr. A. N. Chatterjee, (2) 100 Mundas and (3) 100 Bhumij of Risley, (4) 50 Brahmins, (5) 100 Kayasthas, (6) 81 Khasis of Dr. Guha, has been deliberately made, as my purpose is to show (a) if my measurements of the Hos agree with those of Mr. Chatterjee, (b) if the Hos represent the same population designated as Mundas and Bhumij, (c) how far they differ from the Mongoloid tribe, viz., the Khasis of Assam, (d) how the Brahmins and the Kayasthas of Bengal who are also their neighbours in and arround their settlements differ from them and, lastly (e) to show the relationship between the Hos and the Saoras, and the Saoras and other groups mentioned in this connection.

I may however add, that I have taken caution not to select my subjects and the Hos and the Saoras I have measured, represent all ages from 20 to 48 and all parts of the country where they live. The Hos mostly belong to the Kolhan Government Estate and the Saoras live in the jungles of Udaygiri in the Ganjam Agency tracts, Madras Presidency. The latter mostly live by crude cultivation known as *Podu* which is the same as the *Jhum* cultivation of Assam and the *Dahiya* of Northern India. A plot of forest land is cleared of trees, the stumps are set fire to and all kinds of seeds are simultaneously thrown in on the ashes. They dance their native dances, sacrifice fowls or pigs and pray to the gods presiding over crops and rains which ensure a bumper crop, sometimes two-fold, sometimes four-fold but sometimes none at all.

I have calculated the means and standard deviations and coefficient of variations for Risley's series as far as was available for characters I recorded for purposes of comparison. Guha gives these constants for his series and his values are quoted.*

As regards the reliability of my series, it will be useful first of all to compare my data on the Hos with similar data collected by another investigator Mr. A. N. Chatterjee.** The latter has published the results of his analysis of the measurements of 208 Hos (two groups of 165 and 43) based on four measurements and three indices. I can only compare my data with those for his three absolute measurements and two indices. He has given nasal index but not the nasal height and width and as there is a confusion in anthropological literature about these measurements, I do not know whether his value for nasal index will be of any great use for our purpose, but at any rate it will give us some idea about the nature of the material we are dealing with.

The means and standard deviations of these series are given in Tables I and II respectively along with those of the other series. In comparing the constants, Table III, a difference greater than 3.5 times its probable error will be considered significant. Between the two series A and B comparison of the means of five absolute measurements and indices shows a significant difference only in the case of

* Census Report, Part 3, Vol. I, 1931 (1935).

** 'The Hos of Seraikella', by A. N. Chatterjee and T. C. Das, Calcutta University Press, 1927, pp. 65-75.

nasal index (4.2). The mean nasal index for B is 82.9±.50 and for A, 79.7±.54. The cephalic index, head length, head breadth and stature show no significant differences. As we have already said that the difference in the nasal measurement is likely to occur owing to the difficulty of applying the Monaco definition of the nasal length and the question of pressure. Hence it would be quite unsafe to assume that the small difference between the mean nasal indices observed, though statistically significant, really indicates that the samples do not represent the same population.

A comparison of the standard deviations reveals no significant differences between these two series. For four of the five characters, the standard deviations for the B series exceed those for A ; but no importance can be attached to this relation as all the differences are quite insignificant. However, the Hos of Seraikhela whom Mr. Chatterjee has measured are known to be a mixed group. They have lost their language and are more Hinduised than their brethren of the Kolhan. Hence a higher variability for them, if demonstrated, would not be unexpected. Although the number of characters on which this comparison is made is small and that any conclusion based on such evidence cannot be accepted as final, it may however be provisionally concluded that the two samples A and B do not show any marked divergence which cannot be attributed to a chance selection; in other words, they appear to represent the same population as far as can be told, if we suppose, that no importance should be attached to the difference between the means of the nasal indices recorded by the two observers.

The Bhumij and the Mundas are two neighbouring groups occupying the same part of the country and believed to be of the same racial stock. The social divisions within these groups and also among the Hos are based on totemic principle and the same clan names are even today traceable though the Bhumij have been Hinduised to a much greater extent than either the Mundas or the Hos. As a matter of fact, the Bhumij are taken as an example of a tribe that has transformed itself into a caste which illustrates that there has been a transition from the tribal stage to that of the caste with Hinduisation. All these tribes speak the same language and share more or less the same culture pattern.

A comparison of the means of the measurements of these three

groups shows that quite marked differences do exist and we have to account for these differences if we are to accept the data as fairly reliable. The Hos differ from the Mundas in stature (3.8); N.L. or N.H. (13.0); N.B. (6.1); N. Index (14.3), in mean measurements. The mean stature for the Hos (in millimeters) is 1609.7 ± 3.9 and for the Mundas 1589.0 ± 3.8. The Hos differ from the Bhumij in N. L. or N.H. (5.4), N.B. (6.5), N.I. (9.6). Thus if we exclude the nasal measurements, the only significant difference between the Hos and the Mundas is in stature, while between the Hos and the Bhumij there is no evidence of differentiation. But this difference in stature is very small and only just significant, while all the differences between the nasal measurements are markedly significant. It may be noted too, that the Munda mean is not significantly different from Chatterjee's Ho series. Besides, a difference of 1 cm. in the mean stature may possibly be due to a difference in the way the measurements are taken. Ignoring stature, our Ho series is only distinguished from the other two by its nasal measurements, and this difference was to be expected.

A comparison of the standard deviations for the three series reveals fewer significant differences. The value for the cephalic index for my Ho series is significantly greater than those for the Munda and Bhumij, and Chatterjee's Ho series differ still more significantly from them in the same respect. It may be noted that for seven of the eight characters the Ho (Majumdar) variability is slightly greater than that of the Munda, but the absolute differences between the corresponding constants are small indeed, except in the case of the cephalic index. All the series exhibit approximately the same order of variability, as is usually found in such comparisons.

It is the nasal measurements of Risley which are of doubtful value and yet all the hypotheses of racial origins of the Indian people are largely based on the nasal index. Risley's definitions of the nasal measurements differ from those of the International Agreement and some of the significant differences found may be due entirely to this fact. It may be noticed, however, that both the Munda and Bhumij series are Risley's, and their means differ significantly in the case of the nasal length (? height) and nasal index. There is still a further possibility that this result may be misleading, since the nasal length from the most depressed point on the nasal bridge is such a vaguely defined measurement that two observers taking it on the same series are

quite likely to obtain appreciably different means. We do not know whether the Munda and Bhumij series were measured by the same person or by two of Risley's assistants.

Thus, as we have found in the case of the two Ho series, there does not appear any clearly significant differences between the three types, viz., the Hos, the Bhumij and the Mundas, except for the nasal measurements, and I shall not be wrong to assume that the groups represent populations having the same or very similar origins. Further, this shows that measurements taken on different samples of the same or different populations, are comparable for the usual characters, if the techniques of measurement are uniform. It appears that comparison of Risley's data for several of the characters given by him can profitably be employed to check the measurements of other workers though allowance must be made for the selection of his material.

Before I proceed to the next comparison, it would be interesting to note that Dr. A. C. Haddon gives in his 'Races of Man' (already quoted) the stature of the Hos as 1680.0 mm. This makes the short statured Hos resemble the Brahmins of Bengal whose mean stature is given as 1680.30 ± 5.14. Mr. Chatterjee's value for stature of the Hos is 1600.0 ± 2.9 and the corresponding value in my series is 1609.7 ± 3.9. Col. Dalton gives the stature of the Hos at 5 ft. 5 to 6 inches, which expressed in mm. is 1651.0 to 1676.4. This also is significantly different from the values obtained by Risley, Chatterjee and myself. Difference in technique in stature should not make such a large difference possible. Nor is it likely that this difference of 8 cm. in mean stature can be attributed to a decrease in stature among the Hos during the last 3 to 4 decades. Risley's mean stature for cognate tribes are Mundas 1589.0 ± 3.8, Bhumij 1592.1 ± 3.9. It appears that Dr. Haddon has taken his figures from Col. Dalton (1676.4 mm.) which he put down as 168 cm. after calculating to the nearest decimal place.

The three series treated so far, the Ho, Munda and Bhumij are believed from historical and cultural evidence to have had the same or very similar origins and the close similarity observed between their physical types accords well with this hypothesis. They are believed to belong to an entirely different stock from that represented by the Saoras and it will be seen that the measurements available point to this fact. In the case of the Hos and the Saoras comparisons can be

made for 12 characters and the question of differences in the technique of measurements does not arise as I measured both the series. The means are found to differ significantly in 7 of the 12 comparisons and with very marked significance in the case of the nasal length and bizygomatic breadth (see Table III). Comparisons of the Saoras with Risley's two series can only be made for 8 characters, and it has been shown that it is fairly safe to assume that for 5 of these the influence of personal equation can be neglected, but that for the other three (viz., the three nasal measurements) it must be taken into account. The means for the Saoras and Mundas show three significant differences ; two of these are for nasal measurements, and the third which indicates marked significance is for the bizyogmatic breadth. The means for the Saoras and Bhumij show five of the eight differences significant ; two of these are for nasal measurements and the most markedly significant difference is for the bizygomatic breadth. It may be noted that of the eight characters for which comparison between Risley's measurements and mine is possible, four show singificant differences between my Saora and Ho series. It is clear that the Saora is markedly distinguished from the other three which resemble one another closely. He has a slightly smaller stature and a markedly narrower face. It is probable, also, that he has a markedly higher nasal index, remembering that Risley's nasal measurements are likely to give considerable higher values of the index than those obtained in accordance with the definitions of the International Agreement. There is a distinct suggestion that the Munda type diverges slightly from those of the Ho and the Bhumij in the direction of the Saora type since it has a lesser stature and bizygomatic breadth and apparently a higher nasal index than those two. But no importance should be attached to this point unless it can be confirmed by the comparison of longer series and a larger number of characters. The only conclusion which it is safe to draw now is that the Ho, Bhumij and Munda populations are closely allied and that the Saora type differs a little from the group to which the others belong. It is of interest to note that the cephalic indices for all four types are almost identical, and it is clear that in India the lack of distinction between the means of series for this character is not sufficient evidence of affinity, a considerable number of characters must be available before there can be any hope of reaching reliable conclusions, and it

must be admitted that the largest number which it is possible to use in comparisons in this chapter (viz., 12 for my series) is probably inadequate for the purpose in view.

The measures of variability show far fewer significant differences. None whatever are found for the Saora series, on the one hand, and the Munda and the Bhumij, on the other, and there is only one for the Ho and the Saora, the latter having the significantly greater standard deviation for the bizygomatic breadth. The variabilities of all four series are so close that there can be no justification for attempting to interpret differences between them in this respect. Such a conclusion does not accord with expectation, as it has been suspected that the Hos and Bhumij have been mixed with other peoples (cf. Haddon and Dalton).

A glance at Tables I, II, and III will explain the racial distance of the Hos and the Saoras from both the high caste groups, viz., Brahmins and Kayasthas and from the tribal group represented by the Khasis. Of the 10 characters, absolute and indical, compared, significant differences exist between the Hos, the Saoras and the caste groups. The Hos differ from the Brahmins in stature (10.9), N.I. (14.7), H.B. (15.1), N.L. or N.H. (13.2), N.B. (6.0), Bg. (6.1), and C.I. (4.0), from the Kayasthas, in stature (11.1), H.B. (24.1), N.I. (17.6,) Bz. (6.6), Bg. (8.4), N.L. (18.4), N.B. (6.1) and C.I. (16.2). The high value of these differences must be interpreted to mean a racial difference between the Hos and the caste groups. Similarly the Saoras differ significantly from the Brahmins and the Kayasthas in 8 characters out of 10, showing a clear divergence in racial composition. Between the Hos and the Khasis significant differences exist in stature, head-length, facial length, bigonial breadth, bizygomatic breadth and cephalic index. The Saoras differ from the Khasis substantially in most of the characters. The Hos and the Saoras on the basis of this comparison must be taken to belong to different stocks than that of the Khasis which is a Mongoloid tribe of Assam. Thus, it is probable that the Mongolian element had little to do with the racial make-up of the Hos, although here and there certain Mongoloid traits have been discovered by Col. Dalton and later on mentioned by Dr. A. C. Haddon. The general physical appearance of the tribes of Chota Nagpur do not suggest any Mongolian infusion either. A few stray cases may be explained by frequent alliances of tribal women with men who live in

TABLE I

MEANS FOR A NUMBER OF LIVING SERIES

	Hos 100 ♂ (Majumdar)	Hos 165 ♂ (Chatterjee)	Mundas 100 ♂ (Risely)	Bhumij 100 ♂ (Risely)	Saoras 100 ♂ (Majumdar)	Kayasthas 100 ♂ (Guha)	Brahmins 50 ♂ (Guha)	Khasis 81 ♂ (Guha)	Remarks
Stature ..	1609.7±3.9	1600.0±2.9	1589.0±3.8	1592.1±3.9	1572.8±3.7	1670.7±3.9	1680.3±5.1	1569.1±4.7	
Head Length ..	184.4± .41	185.0± .35	185.9± .40	185.8± .38	184.7± .38	185.3± .43	186.4± .58	186.9± .42	
Head Breadth ..	138.5± .28	138.5± .24	138.6± .26	139.6± .31	137.5± .33	149.6± .37	147.0± .49	144.5± .40	Calculated to the nearest decimal place
Nasal Height ..	48.7± .24	..	44.7± .20	46.7± .28	45.0± .24	54.6± .21	54.2± .34	49.1± .29	
Nasal Width ..	38.7± .20	..	40.7± .27	40.4± .16	38.2± .17	37.1± .17	36.6± .29	37.9± .20	
Facial Length ..	121.2± .47	..	..	..	120.0± .50	120.1± .37	121.7± .57	113. ± .44	
Bizygomatic Breadth ..	131.6± .29	..	130.7± .29	131.4± .31	125.9± .39	134.7± .37	132.8± .48	133.8± .41	
Bigonial ..	97.2± .33	..	..	..	95.1± .36	101.6± .40	101.2± .56	106.1± .64	
C.I. ..	75.1± .23	75.0± .19	74.5± .16	75.1± .18	74.5± .28	80.8± .26	78.9± .33	77.3± .20	
N.I. ..	79.7± .54	82.9± .50	90.6± .53	86.6± .46	85.2± .47	68.1± .38	67.7± .62	77.4± .52	
F.I. ..	92.1± .28	..	..	..	95.3± .40	89.3± .36	91.7± .48	84.5± .34	
Bz-Bg-I. ..	73.9± .26	..	..	..	75.6± .24	..	..	..	

Abbreviations :—

C.I. = Cephalic Index.
N.I. = Nasal Index.
F.I. = Facial Index.
Bz.-Bg-I. = Bizygomatic Bigonial Index.

TABLE II

STANDARD DEVIATION

	Hos 100 (Majumdar)	Hos 165 (Chatterji)	Mundas 100 (Risley)	Bhumij 100 (Risley)	Saoras 100 (Majumdar)	Kayasthas 100 (Guha)	Brahmins 50 (Guha)	Khasis 81 (Guha)
Stature	57.3 ±2.7	56.0±2.1	56. 7±2.7	57.9 ±2.8	55.2 ±2. 6	57.0 ±2. 7	53.9 ±3. 6	62.3 ±3. 3
H.L.	6.20± .30	6.58± .24	6.01± .29	5.63± .27	5.66± .27	6.32± .30	6.04± .41	5.57± .30
H.B.	4.23± .20	4.65± .13	3.90± .19	4.63± .22	4.92± .23	5.43± .26	5.16± .35	5.26± .28
N.L.	3.63± .17	..	3.02± .14	2.65± .13	3.61± .17	3.05± .15	3.52± .24	3.89± .21
N.B.	2.99± .14	..	2.41± .11	2.42± .11	2.52± .12	2.46± .12	3.05± .21	2.74± .14
F.L.	6.99± .33	..	..	..	7.43± .35	5.48± .26	6.00± .40	5.81± .31
Bz.	4.25± .20	..	4.38± .21	4.54± .22	5.88± .28	5.52± .26	5.03± .34	5.53± .29
Bg.	4.95± .24	..	..	..	5.27± .25	5.89± .28	5.91± .40	8.62± .46
C.I.	3.49± .17	3.71± .14	2.44± .12	2.61± .12	2.77± .13	3.89± .19	3.42± .23	2.70± .14
N.I.	8.08± .38	9.50± .35	7.86± .37	6.87± .33	7.04± .34	5.70± .27	6.48± .44	6.94± .37
F.I.	4.29± .20	..	..	..	59.8 ± .28	5.39± .26	5.02± .34	4.49± .24
Bz-Bg-I ..	3.92± .19	..	..	..	3.68± .17	..	..	..

Abbreviations :—

H.L.—Head Length.
H.B.—Head Breadth.
N.L.—Nasal Height or Length.
N.B.—Nasal Breadth.
F.L.—Facial Length.
B.Z.—Bizygomatic Breadth.
B.G.—Bigonial Breadth.
Measurements are in Millimeters.

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF DIFFERENCES OF MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS IN TERMS OF THEIR PROBABLE ERRORS. VALUES ABOVE 3.5 ARE GIVEN

	Number of characters compared	Characters and their Means	Characters and their standard deviations
Hos (Majumdar) & Hos (Chatterjee)	5	N.I. 4.2	
Hos (Majumdar) & Mundas (Risley)	8	Stature 3.8, N.L. 13.0, N.B. 6.1, N.I. 14 3	C.I. 5.0
Hos (Majumdar) & Bhumij (Risley)	8	N.L. 5.4, N.B. 6.5, N.I. 9.6	C.I. 4.2
Hos (Majumdar) & Saoras (Majumdar)	12	Stature 7.4, N.L. 11.0, Bz. 11.6, N.I. 7.6, Bg 4.3, F.I. 6.7, Bz-Bg-I. 4.8	Bz. 4.8
Bhumij (Risley) & Saoras (Majumdar)	8	Stature 3.6, H.B. 4.7, N.L 4.6, N.B. 9.1, Bz. 11.0	
Mundas (Risley) & Saoras (Majumdar)	8	N.B. 7.8, Bz. 10.0, N.I.7.6	
Brahmins (Guha) & Kayasthas (Guha)	10	H.B.4.3, C.I. 4.5	
Brahmins (Guha) & Hos (Majumdar)	10	Stature 10.9, N.I. 14.7, H.B. 15. 1, N.L. 13.2, Bg. 6.1, N.B 6.0, C.I. 4.0	F.L. 3.6, H.B. 3.7
Hos (Majumdar) & Khasis (Guha)	10	Stature 6.7, H.L. 4.3, Bg. 12.3, F.L. 12.6, Bz.4.4, C.I. 7.3	Bg. 7.1, C.I. 36
Saoras (Majumdar) & Khasis (Guha)	10	F.L.10.3, H.L. 3.9, H.B.17.1 N.I.11.1, Bz. 14.0, Bg. 15.0 N.L. 10.9, C.I.8.4	
Brahmins (Guha) & Saoras (Majumdar)	10	Stature 17.0, N.I.18.6, H.B. 16.0 Bz.11.1, Bg.9.2, N.L.22.1, N.B. 4.7, C.I. 10.4	
Brahmins (Guha) & Khasis (Guha)	10	Stature 16.0, F.L. 11.9, H.B 3.9, N.I. 12.0, Bg. 5.8, N.L. 11.4, N.B. 3.7, C.I. 4.2	Bg. 4.5
Kayasthas (Guha) & Hos (Majumdar)	10	Stature 11.1, H.B. 24.1, N.I.17.6, Bz. 6.6, Bg. 8.4, N.L. 18.4, N.B. 6.1, C.I. 15.2	N.I. 5.1
Kayasthas (Guha) & Khasis (Guha)	10	Stature 16.8, F.L. 12.3, H.B. 9.4, N.I. 14.5, Bg,6.0, N.L.15.3, C.I. 10.7	Bg. 5.3, C.I. 5.0
Kayasthas (Guha) & Saoras (Majumdar)	10	Stature 18.3, N.I. 28.5, H.B. 24.7, Bz. 16.3, Bg. 12.0, N.L 30.0, N.B. 4.6, C.I. 16.8	

the vicinity of tribal villages, in markets and fairs all over the area among whom there are people of Mongoloid extraction but to ascribe these cases to a general miscegenation with Mongoloid stock is hard to maintain.

The total material dealt with is not large, and that small series are being used to represent very large populations. It is also less valuable than it should be owing to differences in methods of measurement, and some uncertainty as to whether data collected by different observers are truely comparable even in cases where they followed the same technique. It seems to be safe to assume that certain of Risley's measurements can still be used with profit, and that his means are not affected very markedly owing to the fact that the subjects were selected. Above all the number of characters used is not sufficient to give reliable estimates of affinity or divergence. Recognising these limitations it appears to be adequately demonstrated that four distinct ethnic groups are represented by the series considered, viz.,

(a) Saoras (possibly allied to Oraons and others)
(b) Hos, Mundas and Bhumij (Austric-speaking)
(c) Kayasthas and Brahmins of Bengal
(d) Khasis.

These four appear to be statistically distinct, but it is extemely probable that there are transitional types between pairs of them, and data for these will be required in order to reveal their ethnic relationship. Probably, when we have more data about the range of variation among the various elements of the Austric speaking group, we may be in a better position to say how far such statistically significant differences can be interpreted as racial divergences.

3

Agglutinogen tests were done by the open slide method (Wiener) with test sera of groups A and B supplied by the King George's Medical College, Pathology Department, which were standardised with test sera supplied to me by the Haffkine Institute, Bombay. The blood groups result is detailed below along with the data available on the other tribes of the Munda group.

Tribe	Total no.	Percentage				Gene Probabilites		
		O	A	B	AB	p	q	r
Mundas (Macfarlane)	120	33.33	30.0	29.17	7.50	.210	.205	.584
Bhils (Rajpipla) (Majumdar)	156	38.4	24.3	28.8	8.5	.179	.207	.613
Bhils (Panchmahal) (Majumdar)	369	37.0	27.5	26.5	9.0	.202	.196	.602
Bhils (Khandesh) (Majumdar)	150	40.0	29.0	24.0	7.0	.199	.169	.631
Hos (Kolhan) (Majumdar)	186	34.9	31.7	28.0	5.4	.208	.185	.605
Birhors (Majumdar)	102	31.4	35.3	23.5	9.8	.258	.183	.558
Korwas (Majumdar)	147	31.7	35.6	20.4	12.3	.275	.177	.547

Malone and Lahiri found 36.8 p.c. B among the Santhals, Mundas and Oraons, Macfarlane found 29.17 p.c. B among the Mundas, and the Hos have 28.0 p.c. and the Birhors have 23.5 p.c. B. In other words, the B percentage among the Mundas, Hos and Birhors, is less than what has been found among the Bengal depressed castes by Macfarlane (42.7 p.c.), the Chamars of the United Provinces 38.3 (Majumdar), Mahishyas of Bengal 39.40 (Macfarlane), Bagdies of Bengal 35.54 (Macfarlane). On the basis of the blood groups, the Munda tribes of Chota Nagpur appear distinct from the lower castes of Bengal and Bihar, or of the U.P. The Birhors have 35.3 p.c. A and the Korwas 35.6 which probably indicate inbreeding or purity or both. The maximum percentage of A has been discovered among the Paniyans by Dr. Aiyappan, though no other tribe of the south has corroborated the Paniyan percentage.

The serological values of A-B estimate are given below.

Caste or tribe	A—B
The Mundas (Macfarlane)	0.83
The Bhils of Rajpipla (Majumdar)	−4.5
The Bhils of Panchmahal (Majumdar)	1.0
The Bhils of Khandesh (Majumdar)	5.0
The Hos (Majumdar)	3.7
The Korwas (Majumdar)	15.2
The Birhors	11.8

An examination of the skin colour of the Hos as it is found on the forehead, chest and the inner side of the left upper arm with Von

Luschan's Hautfarbentafal revealed a more or less similar pigmentation, the scales varied from 27 to 29, though in the case of a few families in the Chaibassa town, we got 23 and 24 scales. Of the 187 persons examined, 120 were identified with 27 and 36 with 28, the rest approximated half to 29 and the other half to 23 and 25 in equal proportion, The Hos are therefore of dark-brown complexion. Budhu's son in Barajamda has a very fair complexion so also Juria's young brother, the latter possesses blue eyes and white complexion. When I asked Juria's brother to pose for the camera, a subdued whisper was heard from my audience and I learned then that there were already stories current about his mother's affairs.

No epicanthic fold was noticed among the 187 people we examined and the colour of the iris is also dark brown in most of the cases. The face is normally oval and the forehead is a little retreating. Very tall stature is rarely found but one man in Jamda was about 6 ft in height and he married only last year at the ripe age of 48. We were told that he was very poor and therefore could not marry by paying the brideprice, but twice he fetched two girls by capture, but both escaped after a night's stay. He was not ugly; it was probably his poverty that stood in the way of his obtaining a wife. Height is not a sign of eligibility, though fatness is.

4

An anthropometric study of 104 Ho boys between the ages, 7 to 15 years reveals interesting facts. The data may not be of any racial significance; but they show how the boys of the Ho community behave in the early years of their childhood with respect to their physical development.

The total number of Ho boys we measured was 104 and we selected the odd numbers of a group of 208 individuals within the age period indicated above. This we did to avoid bias as far as practicable, though we admit that this is not a very safe way of randomisation, but it agrees with the technique we have followed in the various racial and serological surveys we have conducted during the past five years or so.*

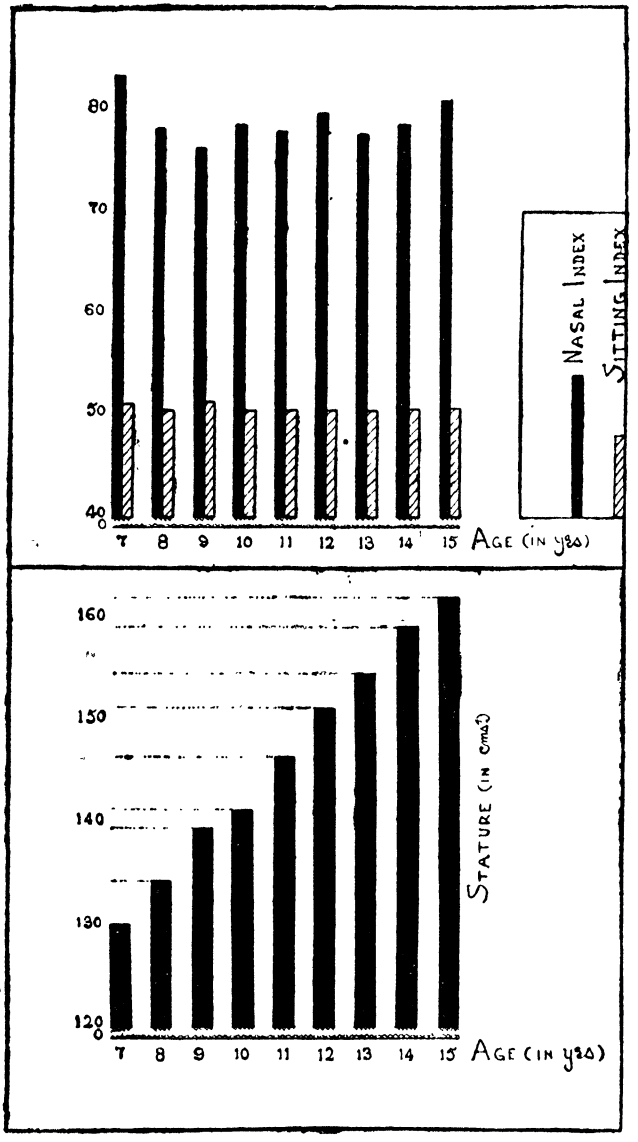
* Racial Survey of the U. P. (1941 Census), by P. C. Mahalanobis, D. N. Majumdar and C. R. Rao in Sankhya, Vol 9, pts 2-3 (1949).

The age distribution was as follows: There were 5 boys of 7 years of age, 20 of eight years, 7 of nine years, 8 of 10 years, 15 of 11 years, 11 of 12 years, 13 of 13 years, 16 of 14 years and only 9 boys of 15 years. There may be difference of two to three years in the recorded age of some of the boys, and so far as the accuracy of the record is concerned, we do not claim any more for it than what the age record in the school register in India normally does or can. This, however, is not expected to vitiate our conclusions.

It is seen from the frequency distribution of the characters, that generally the range of the measurements is not extensive, there is a concentration of boys generally near about the mean values of a character except in the case of total facial length, head height and stature. This fact is supported by the low values of standard deviation (Table No. IV) which is a measure of dispersion, except in the above cases, where the values are a bit higher. This may be due to the fact that the Hos have maintained their homogeneity more than the cognate tribes of Chota Nagpur by refusing infusion of alien blood. In Table IV are given the mean values of various characters with their standard errors. In one column of the same Table are given the values of the standard deviations with standard errors. As we are considering here, the standard growth of Ho boys, it was thought useful to consider all the boys of one particular age together forming a sub-group of the main group. We have seen from the preliminary examination of the data, that it is not possible to measure the difference from age to age in all the characters as the dispersion of values is very small and difference between age groups is not quite significant except in the case of stature, sitting height, weight and cephalic and nasal indices, and so these three absolute and two indical characters will be considered in some detail below.

Actual study of growth is not possible with the data at our disposal, as we have not measured the same individuals at various stages of their growth; all that is attempted here is to find out the nature of the growth curve among the Ho boys from a single sample. It is interesting to note that there is a gradual increase in weight and stature in the early ages and this increase becomes quick and rapid as we move from 10 years of age onward, as will be evident from Table VI. The increasein weight and stature is simultaneous with growth; of course, this is a natural process unless there is something impeding

it as for example when fat accumulates without any increase in stature or a boy gets taller and taller, hence thinner and thinner with no



Variation in Nasal Index, Sitting Index and Stature in relation to Age of Ho boys of Kolhan in Singhbum (1949)

corresponding increase of flesh on the bones. The rapidity of growth after the 10 year age period may be explained in view of the

fact that a Ho child is normally well cared for and at this age, children, particularly boys, go along with their parents to fields and forests and help themselves with the produce of the forests or the game from the chase.

As is evident from Table V, the Ho boys seem to possess flat nose in childhood which improves with age. There are 23·07 p.c. of the boys with dolicho-cephalic head and platyrrhine nose, 12·49 p.c. with mesocephalic head and platyrrhine nose and 2·88 p.c. with brachycephalic head and platyrrhine nose. There is therefore 38·44 p.c. with flat nose. Quite a large percentage (94) of the boys have their cephalic index ranging upto 80 and a very small percentage (5·76) are with C.I. 80 and above, showing that the Ho boys are longheaded in the early age. The flatness of the nose among the Ho boys is very prominent. There are 4 cases with nasal index of 100 and quite a good many with a N.I. above 90, all being below 10.

When we classify the N.I. and sitting index with respect to age, we discover a gradual tendency though not very exaggerated towards mesorrhiny with the advance of age and so far as the sitting index is concerned, the average indical trend is more or less stationary. The range of variation of the sitting index is very slight, the minimum value of this being 48·1 with 53·7 as maximum, most of the values being above 50, showing in a general way, that the upper portion of the body does not change much with the rise of stature after it has reached a particular proportion.

TABLE IV

SHOWING THE MEAN VALUES & STANDARD DEVIATIONS WITH THEIR STANDARD ERRORS FOR PHYSICAL MEASUREMENTS OF HO CHILDREN

No.	Characters	n	Mean $\pm$ S.error	Standard deviation $\pm$ S. error
1	Max. Head Length	104	181.41 $\pm$ 0.63	6.41 $\pm$ 0.45
2	Max. Head Breadth	103	134.92 $\pm$ 0.46	4.68 $\pm$ 0.33
3	Min. Frontal Breadth	104	101.49 $\pm$ 0.43	4.43 $\pm$ 0.30
4	Max. Bizygomatic Breadth	104	124.26 $\pm$ 0.58	5.89 $\pm$ 0.41
5	Bigonial Breadth	104	94.47 $\pm$ 0.55	5.64 $\pm$ 0.39
6	Nasal Length	104	45.19 $\pm$ 0.41	4.16 $\pm$ 0.29
7	Nasal Breadth	104	35.48 $\pm$ 0.31	3.11 $\pm$ 0.22
8	Nasal Height	104	19.14 $\pm$ 0.25	2.45 $\pm$ 0.18
9	Total Facial Length	101	101.88 $\pm$ 0.63	6.37 $\pm$ 0.45
10	Upper Facial Length	104	54.11 $\pm$ 0.38	3.94 $\pm$ 0.27
11	Stature	104	147.52 $\pm$ 1.14	11.64 $\pm$ 0.81
12	Sitting Height	104	74.79 $\pm$ 0.58	5.94 $\pm$ 0.41
13	Head Height	104	12.41 $\pm$ 0.05	0.69 $\pm$ 0.03

TABLE V

SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF CEPHALIC AND NASAL INDICES AMONG HO CHILDREN

	%age
Dolichocephalic Leptorrhine	.. 22.11
Dolichocephalic Mesorrhine	.. 15.38
Dolichocephalic Platyrrhine	.. 23.07
Mesocephalic Leptorrhine	.. 12.49
Mesocephalic Mesorrhine	.. 8.65
Mesocephalic Platyrrhine	.. 12.49
Brachycephalic Leptorrhine	.. 1.92
Brachycephalic Mesorrhine	.. 0.96
Brachycephalic Platyrrhine	.. 2.88

TABLE VI

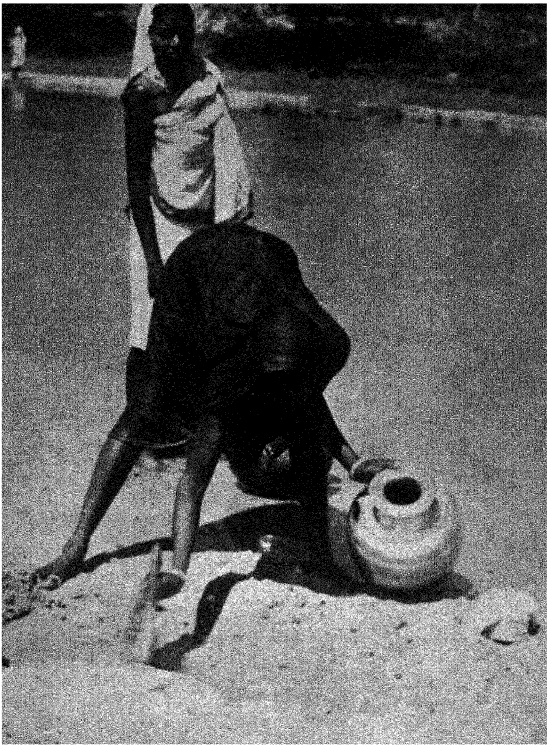
SHOWING MEAN VALUES OF WT. AND STATURE OF HO CHILDREN AT VARIOUS AGES

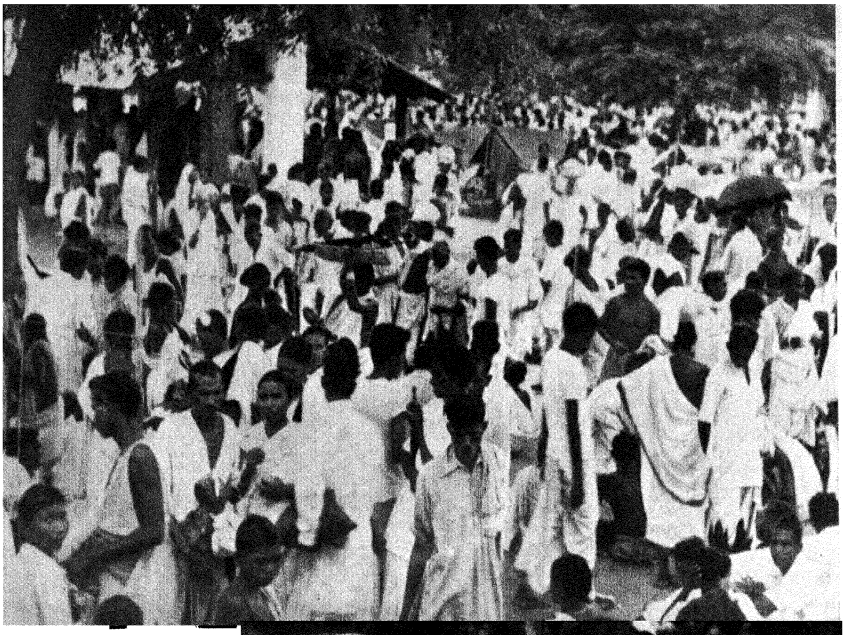
No.	Age	Wt.	Stature
1	7 years	52.0 lbs	130.2 cm.
2	8 years	56.5 lbs.	134.7 cm.
3	9 years	67.1 lbs.	139.7 cm.
4	10 years	66.7 lbs.	141.4 cm.
5	11 years	74.8 lbs.	146.7 cm.
6	12 years	83.4 lbs.	151.4 cm.
7	13 years	87.8 lbs.	154.8 cm.
8	14 years	99.0 lbs.	159.3 cm.
9	15 years	105.5 lbs.	162.1 cm.

Plate No. 11

24 Ho women collecting drinking water (above)

25 Washing of clothes is a regular routine for women (below)





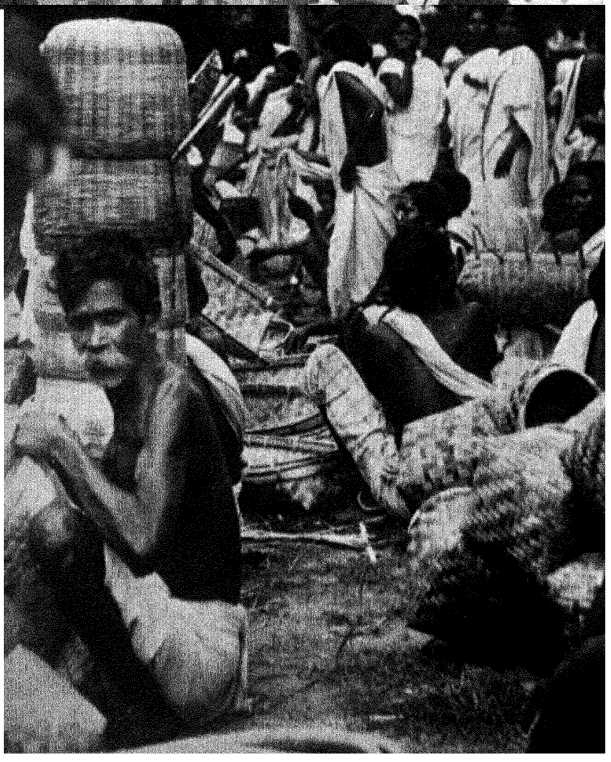
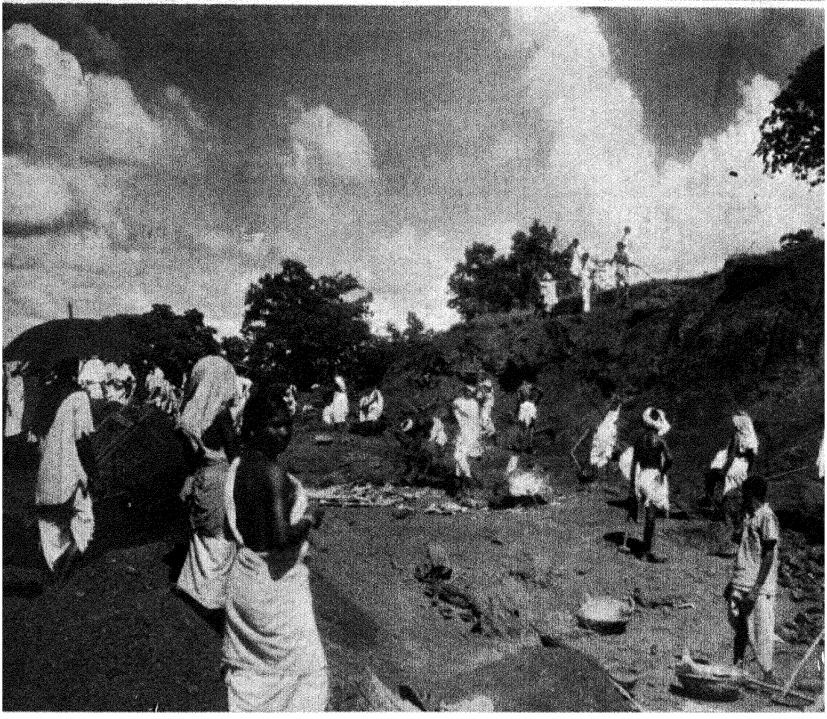


Plate No. 12

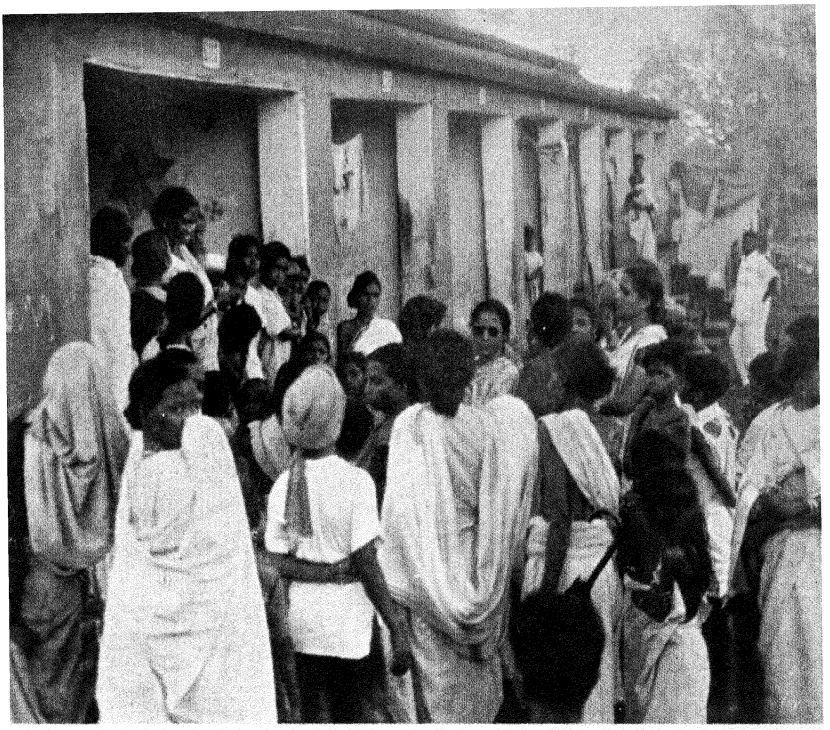
26 & 27 Market Scenes

28, Dance Scene, 29. The War dance of the Kumahrs of Sarangbil (below)

Plate No. 13



30. Makiag *Dal* in the *Kalthan* (above)
31. Ho labourers working at Noamundi



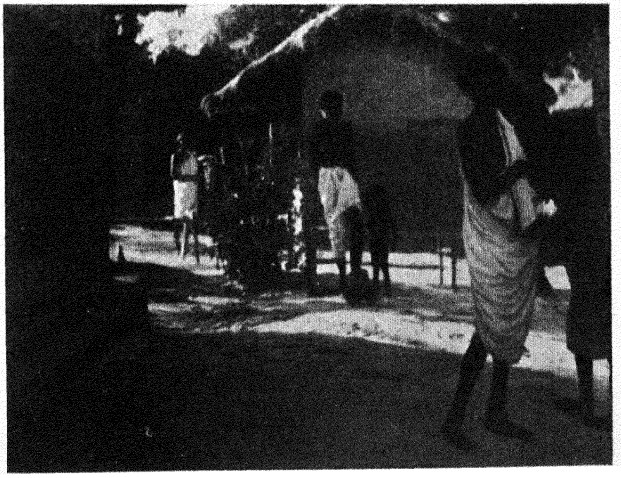
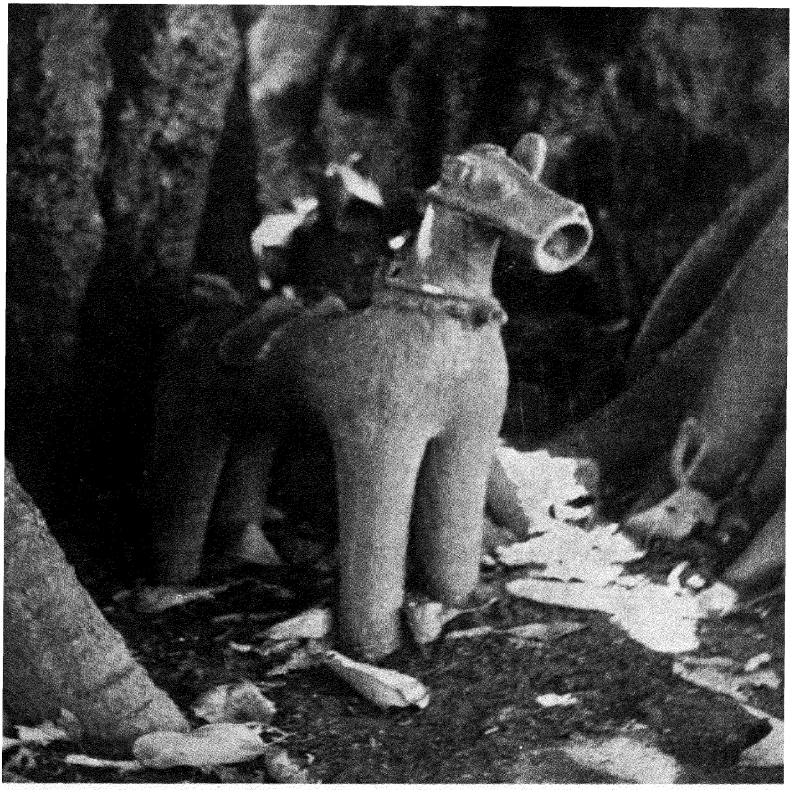


Plate No. 15

32. Girl students of the Lucknow University discussing problems of the miners (above)
33. A Village in Jamda *Pir*, Kolhan



34. The offering of clay horses has become a routine with the HOS in Bara Jamda ; the practice has been borrowed from the Kumahrs

35. Drinking national beer ; *Illi* (below)

Plate No. 16

36, The folk-art of Kolhan

Plate No. 17

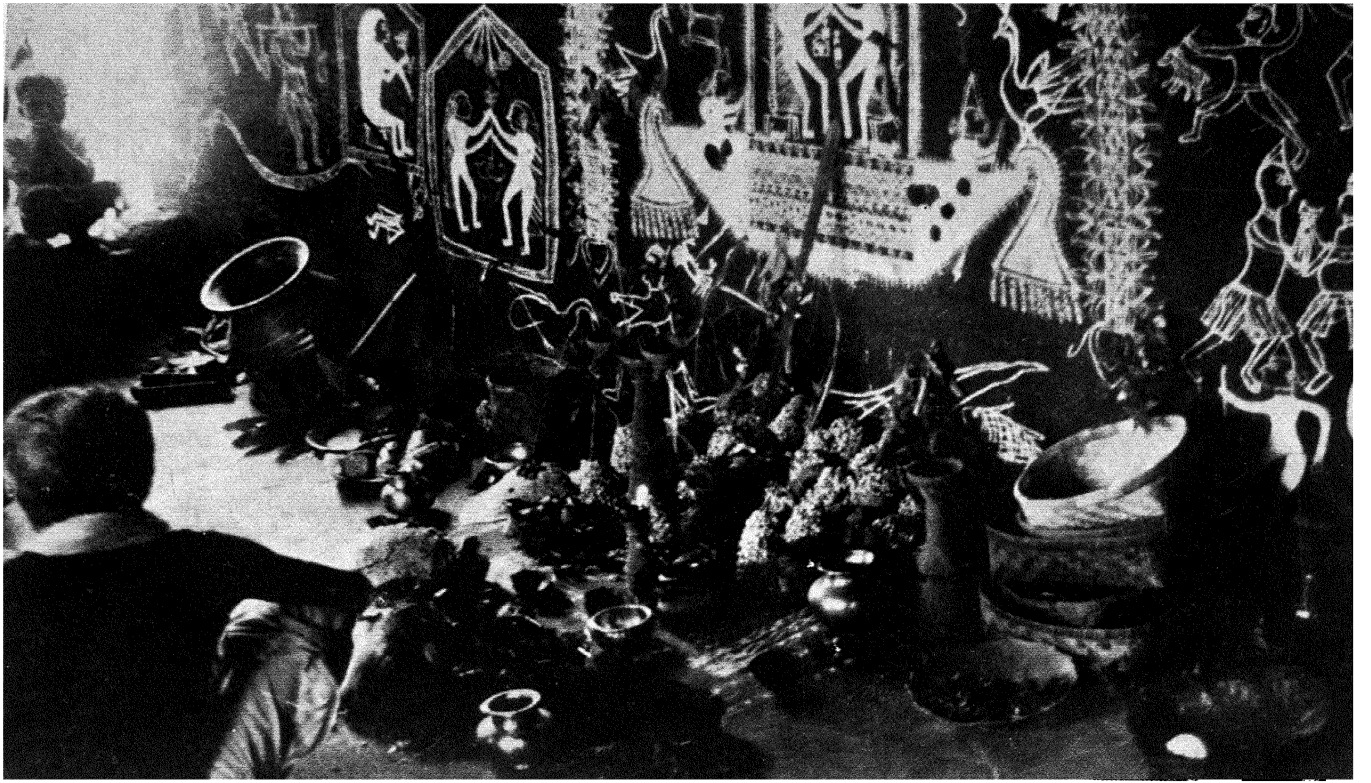
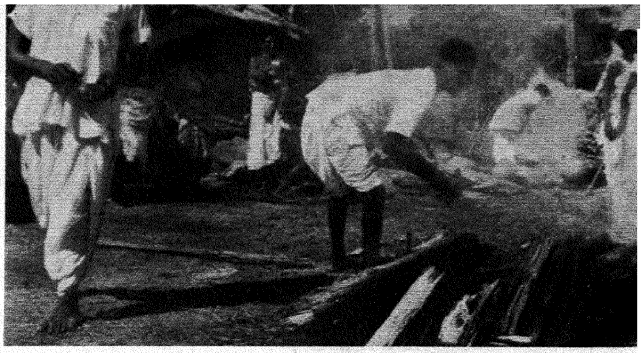


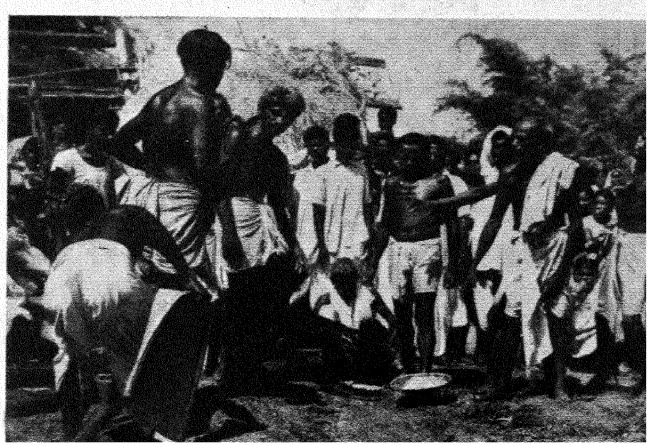
Plate No. 18

37 The Dusserah Puja of the Kumahrs of Kolhan

Plate No. 19

38. Folk-art of Kolhan





39. 40 41. 42 Scenes depicting the fire walking ceremony during the Dusserah, in 1949, in **Sarangbil**

Plate No. 20

CHAPTER III

MATERIAL CULTURE

1

The typical Ho village is built on high ground or ridge in the midst of an undulating surface. Many villages, indeed, stand on flat topped hills that are dotted all over the plateau. They are situated away from the principal thoroughfares, many of which have been constructed since the area has been opened up by the railways, and also from the arterial roads that have been built by the District Board, the Public Works Department, and by the Mining Agencies. Moreover, on all sides of these villages, there are huge canopying trees, and luxuriant scrub jungle which hide the houses from sight. More recent villages, however, are mostly built on the banks of rivers, by the sides of hill springs, and occasionally on the elevated river terraces.

At the boundary line of the village, stand in irregular formation a number of grey stone slabs firmly fixed in the ground, or a couple or more of large flat stones, the surfaces of which have been considerably worn out by the footsteps of pedestrians, and the constant use of them by children while playing. A few steps towards the village, and the visitor will find himself at the threshold of the village cemetery, the *Sasan* of the Hos, where the ancestors of the village, or of the clan or *Killi*, and their descendants have been laid to rest.

Most of the villages run from east to west, and the village *Sasan* may be situated on either extremity. In some villages which are inhabited by members of different *Killis*, *Sasans* are found on all sides and many families have their burial ground adjacent to their house. In those villages where there is one *Killi*, the *Sasan* is situated at the entrance, where the road to the village loses itself. As the houses get congested, the situation of the village burial ground at one extremity of the village allows for expansion, for the bigger the village, the larger is the burial ground and the larger the stones placed over the graves, the greater the space required for the *Sasan*. The custom of placing large stones over the graves, covering the remains of the dead,

makes it necessary for the villagers to cooperate with one another in fetching the stone from the neighbouring hills. Again the size of the stone is determined by the social position the deceased occupied in life. As tribal solidarity is being weakened, and as cooperation in such tasks has become a matter of choice rather than an obligation, the size of the *Sasan-diri* (stone slab) is gradually decreasing, and today, even a well-to-do family will feel satisfied if it can place a small stone over the remains of its dead member. No two dead bodies are interred under one slab but where slabs are difficult to procure, the oldest slabs are removed and placed as new *Sasan-diri*. This fact was challenged by one of my Ho friends, but when I questioned some people in an adjacent village, the *Munda* cited cases supporting me, but he did not think it was the normal practice. Thus even with a considerable increase in the population of the villages, the burial ground has not been considerably extended, though in many villages, the number of *Sasans* has increased and in villages like Chiru, Kokcho, Gundipoa, there are as many *Sasans* perhaps as there are families.

Whatever might have been the original attitude of the Hos to the *Sasan-diri*, today in the advanced villages, there is no superstitious regard for these funerary slabs, and no religious respect for the remains of the ancestors interred under them. In many villages, men and women sit together on these cold grey stones, eat their meals, tell stories and indulge in various other pastimes. Some of the stones are anointed with oil occasionally and vermilion marks may also be found on them. As a routine, however, fresh stones are periodically oiled and we saw in Bharbaria, women mourning while they were pouring oil on the *Sasan-diri* of a deceased relative of theirs, but such sights are rare in the Kolhan today, so the Hos will tell you. In some heavy slabs Ho women have bored sockets in which they pound rice with wooden pestles. On one occasion Jitu of Sikursai had to offer a black hen on the *Sasan-diri* of his deceased grandfather and pour a libation of its blood mixed with *Illi* (rice-beer) in the name of the *Dessauli*, presiding deity of the village. Jitu explained how his ancestor revealed himself in a dream and requested him to offer such a sacrifice. Cases like these are infrequent.

Every village in the Kolhan is made up of two or more *tolas*, and each *tola* is separated from the others by a small valley or a clean open space, or a small and narrow passage on either side of which lies a

Sasan with the graves of the respective *tolas*. In some villages the *Akhara* or the dancing arena of the village, stands in the centre, and on either side of it, east and west, lie the *tolas*. The *Manki* and the *Munda* with their relations, and the original families who made the village, live in one *tola*, and the tenants inhabit the other, and the village *Akhara* is always in the former *tola* or in the space adjoining it. The village *Akhara* is an elevated piece of land enclosed on all sides by huge shady trees, banian, *Pipal*, or tamarind. A number of large stone slabs at the root of these trees serve as seats for actors and spectators. The *Akhara* is also the usual venue for public meetings and also for regular sittings of the village council.

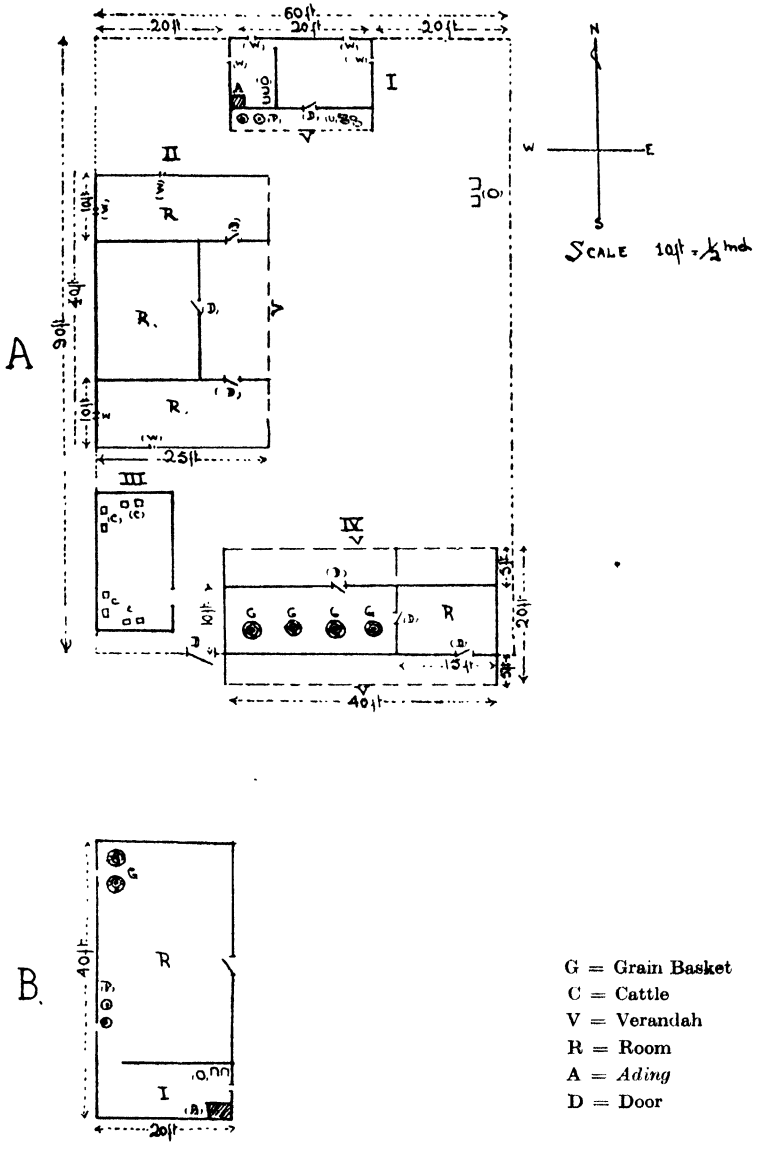
In many villages adjoining the Khunti subdivision, even today, one meets with a dormitory house or *Gitiora* overlooking the *Akhara*, and here the bachelors of the village sleep in the night and lounge during the day. Inside the house, one finds a big mat made by the maidens of the village and respectfully presented to the tribal manhood, a number of musical instruments, and all the offensive and defensive weapons of the inmates. There are a number of pegs on the inside walls of the house for hanging the bows and arrows of the inmates, and most of the requisites for fishing and hunting are also stored there. In some villages this house is absent, and in its place we find the outer house of residence of the village chief serving all the purposes of the dormitory. It is only the bachelors' house that opens out into the *Akhara*, but all other houses that may be adjacent to it have their back towards it. There is very little village planning in the Kolhan, and a stranger must seek the aid of a villager to find his way out of the circuitous and labyrinthine village alleys, which often end in courtyards of houses.

At one end of the village, a little distance from the cluster of houses, lies the village grove or *Jahira*, which is believed to be presided over by an old spirit with matted white hair who is often seen on crutch.

Diagram of a Ho House

The houses in Ho villages may be classified into three categories, (1) Substantial and commodious houses partitioned into two or more rooms; (2) Medium-sized houses which are not so spacious, yet partitioned into sleeping and eating apartments; (3) Small huts used either

for sleeping and eating, or for housing the cattle. The large houses usually have heavy wooden doors, consisting of two roughly hewn



planks, each revolving on a socket at one end of the door step. In some big houses, carvings are found on these doors. There are hardly

any windows in Ho houses. The sleeping room is usually larger than the dining room but the latter is more important, for it is the *Ading* of the house where the ancestors of the family are carefully sheltered. There is a raised *dais* at one corner of the *Ading*, which is kept at one end of the kitchen where daily offerings are made to the ancestral spirits. This room opens out into the sleeping room and there is no entrance to it from any other side, unless the house is a big one and is partitioned into three apartments. In that case the *Ading* is the central room and can be entered from the adjacent rooms.

The kitchen is sacred to the Hos, and as it forms a part of the *Ading*, Ho women jealously guard it against intruders, and none but members of the family and of the *Killi* are allowed to enter it. It is customary to offer every dish cooked to the *Oa Bongas* (ancestral spirits) before it is served to the members of the family, and the latter have to wash their hands and feet before they can approach the kitchen. On one side of the *Ading* is the sleeping room, on the other is the store where the little household effects and provisions are kept. Each family possesses two or more *Bandhis* (cylindrical baskets), into which paddy for future use is stored, which are kept in the store room. In many houses therefore the store room has no door except the one opening into it from the *Ading*.

The houses are built of mud, thatched with grass, or roofed with tiles, as means permit. The walls are painted, some black, some brown, some red, and afford an example of neat workmanship. They are also artistically decorated with drawings. Some of these drawings resemble simple sketches of children, some are crude drawings of animals and plants, and of men with bows and arrows pursuing game in the forest. Though the designs may be crude, attempts to represent every little detail of the animal or plant drawn are discernible in every picture, so that what we know as realistic art is found amply in these mural decorations. The Hos are clever in drawing geometrical figures, and most of these are accurate in details. The paints they use are neither expensive nor scarce. The black paint is prepared by burning faggots of straw, the ashes of which are mixed with cowdung. The red or yellow are obtained from red or yellow earth found on the sides of hills, and from vegetable colouring matter. In many houses, the walls are made of stout and well-joined stockading work, covered with mud, and neatly plastered over with cowdung,

or red or yellow clay. Every house has a verandah, small or large, according to the size of the house, supported on wooden posts or curved pillars plastered with mud. In the interior of Kolhan, mud walls are rare, and the sides of the houses are made of wicker or of *Sawai* grass fitted to bamboo frameworks. Mud walls and tiled roofs are found today in the interior of Kolhan, mostly in the possession of village chiefs, and *Mankis* of *Pirs*, and a few substantial cultivators who are the pride of the village.

As we proceed from the south-west to the north and north-east, from the rural to urban centres, we notice a change in the technique of house construction. Some families in Dumbisai and Sikursai possess houses which compare favourably with the bungalows one meets all over northern India. The rectangular houses are replaced by square ones with high roofs tiled all over, and doors and windows take the place of wicker substitutes. The crude *Charpoys* (beds) made of *Sal* saplings and ropes made of *Sawai* grass give place to stronger beds made of *Sesum* and *Sal*, and chairs made of cane or wood replace the indigenous *Gandu* (crude stools made of stick and rope).

Every family has a small wooden cage for housing pigeons, resting on tall bamboo posts and thus projecting high above the house. Poor families in Kolhan possess only a single hut which serves as a bed room, as well as store, while cooking is done in the open courtyard or in the small verandah adjoining the room. At the time of childbirth this room is used as a lying-in-room, and the children, if any, are removed from it, the room being left entirely for the accommodation of the husband and the wife. Prosperous families are not sparing in the construction of houses and a family often possesses more than three or four big houses.

2

We have seen how the rights of hunting in the forests have been circumscribed by stringent forest rules, how the land revenue demand from the Hos has increased, and how the population has grown, particularly during the last thirty years. The people now have to compete with the *Dikus* in order to widen the scope of their employment, by exploiting through new occupations the economic possibilities of their physical environment. With the gradual displacement of hunting, many of the customary rites and practices associated with it,

have disappeared; but the spirit of cooperative activity, and their ideas about joint ownership and joint efforts are still manifest in their daily economic undertakings and their periodical engagements of feasts and festivities. The uncertainty of the chase as a means of food supply necessitates a number of precautions calculated to secure its stability and involves a dependence on a number of factors over which the Hos have little control. These requirements and the idea of dependence on unforeseen factors remain as they were, and the same prescription which served to secure a control over their means of food production is adhered to in respect of their vital need, viz., agriculture. This is how the magical rites and beliefs, the worship of ancestral spitits, and the propitiation of the innumerable *Bongas* by regular prayers, chants and sacrifices, find adequate recognition in their socio-economic life.

To an agricultural people, land is the most important factor, and labour, capital and organisation are dependent on the amount of land available, and on the nature of the soil. The Hos are favourably situated so far as the first factor is concerened. They have not to struggle hard with inhospitable soil, as is the case with some less fortunate tribes in the neighbourhood. The lands are divided into different classes according to the degree of fertility and the kind of products raised in them. There are three classes of lands in Kolhan for agricultural purposes: (1) *Bera*, (2) *Badi*, and (3) *Gora*. The *Bera* is low land and is very fertile. The *Bera* paddy is sown in July and August, immediately after the rains, and is harvested in January. *Badi* paddy is sown in May and June and rarely in July and is harvested in October and November. *Gora* lands require a couple of months for each crop. The produce of the *Bera* land is the main concern of the Hos for that determines the economic condition of the people. The crops grown on *Badi* and *Gora* lands merely supplement the main yield from the *Bera* lands. A Ho usually paid -/10/- as. per bigha for *Bera*, -/7/- as. per bigha for *Badi*, and only -/4/- as. for *Gora* lands.

We have already referred to the land tenure of the Hos. Subject to the communal control exercised through the *Munda*, the land is passed on from father to son. A Ho cannot dispose of this land in any way he chooses. The land does not belong to him absolutely, (it has been amended by the Bihar Ministry), it is hereditary and inalienable, and must descend to his sons and grandsons. If a Ho has

no direct male issue, the land goes to his brother, or next of kin, and if there be no kin, to the village community represented by the Munda. If a man dies leaving a widow, or a daughter, she is entitled to maintenance from the next male relative who takes the land and receives the *Gonong* on the daughter's marriage. Sons are entitled to certain shares of the father's land, whether hereditary or acquired. No matter how small the holding may be (unless too small) each son has a right to claim a partition. The eldest son receives a larger share, the younger sons equal shares of the remainder. A father may divide his land among his sons during his life time, retaining for himself a portion, or giving up entirely and living with one of his sons. At the marriage of a son, the father may give him a portion of his lands to set him up, and unless this is a large share, it does not preclude his having an additional share on his father's death, to equalise his share with that of his brothers.

The custom of allowing the eldest son a larger share than his brother is not uniformly followed, for numerous instances have come to our notice in the course of our enquiries in which the property, movable as well as immovable has been equally divided between the sons. In a large number of cases daughters also have had a share in the father's property with the full approval of the village Panchayet. Considering the number of grown up unmarried women that are met with in every Ho village, it is but right that these women should have a share for their maintenance in their parents' property. When a Ho marries more than one wife, the children of the first wife are generally entitled to a larger share of the family property than those of the other wife.

The rules of succession among the Hos are incompatible with the provisions of the Indian Succession Act of 1865 (X of 1865), so the Hos have been exempted from the operation of the Act, retrospectively from the passing of the Act, "provided that the notification (No. 550, D, 25, 1913, Ind. Gov.) shall not be held to affect any person in regard to whose rights a decision contrary to its effects has already been given by a competent civil court." This exemption was made on the recommendation of the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the Government of India, Home Department (vide letter No. 2093A of 24th March, 1913). In order to give the benefit of exemption to those who have been converted to Christianity, and who still continue

to follow their tribal customs in the matter of succession and inheritance, the word 'animists' has been replaced by the word 'aborigines'.

A closer observation of these customs regarding succession among the Hos, would lead one to the conclusion that although they have not reached that standard of legal definiteness and progress which characterises the two main schools of Hindu Law, (viz. Mitakshara and Dayabhaga), they represent a nearer approach to the Mitakshara than to the other school. The reason may be traceable to the fact that the Dayabhaga school, is applicable exclusively in the Province of Bengal, whereas Mitakshara obtains in all other Provinces. As to the matter of similarity regarding the laws of succession existing between the Hos and the Mitakshara school, the following points are well worthy of notice. The sons are entitled to claim the partition of the property from their father, as obtains among the Hos, according to Mitakshara school, but only where the principle of joint ownership of the father along with the sons and heirs, is recognised. According to the Dayabhaga law, the father has absolute ownership of the property, so that the sons cannot claim any partition of it and he unlike a Ho father, is entitled to dispose of his property, both self-acquired as well as ancestral, in any way he likes. The contingency of the eldest son receiving a larger share than the others, does not find any place in either of the schools. With regard to females although they are not irrevocably barred from inheriting property, their right is circumscribed in many ways by these schools. Thus a Hindu woman is permitted by them to inherit the property of her husband, father or son etc., under certain conditions, but her interest in it is limited, inasmuch as after her death the property passses not to her heirs, but to the next heir of the person who bequeathed it to her. Further, a Hindu woman can succeed to the *Stridhan* (female property of which she is the sole owner) of another woman which she can alienate or dispose of in any way.

3

The economic basis of life among the Hos, is agriculture, though occasional hunting and fishing form important diversions from the monotony of an uneventful occupation. The year is divided into three seasons, and there are twelve months of the year with different activities distributed over them according to the needs of agriculture.

SEASONAL CALENDER

Seasons	Characteristics of the Seasons	The Broad Economic Activities of the Hos
Upunchandu-ria-rampai	(March, April, May, June). Summer Season. Absence of green leaves. People sleep under trees.	Ploughing. Repairing of embankments by the entire village. Construction of new houses and repairing of old ones. Collection of bamboos and wood for fuel and building purposes. Women collect fuel, and *Mohua*. Where pulses are grown they are harvested in this season. Thatching of houses done by men alone.
Upunchandu-Jirga-jargi	(July, August, September and October). Rainy season muddy roads, the rivers become flowing and people do not move out.	Ploughing, levelling, transplanting, and the bringing of new land under cultivation. Women transplant paddy plants, and do the weeding. People have to live on a spare diet. *Mulga Sag* and rice form the staple food. Fishing in the rivers.
Upunchandu-Usuturo (Utul Putul)	November, December, January and February). The people have to sleep inside their huts and cover themselves with straw, it makes a cracking sound (*i.e.* why the season is called 'Usuturo and 'Utulputul').	Threshing is done by men if bullocks are used. If by treading, it is done by women. Husking is a woman's job. Men make *Bandi* or grain baskets. Fishing, bird catching, making of mats, etc.

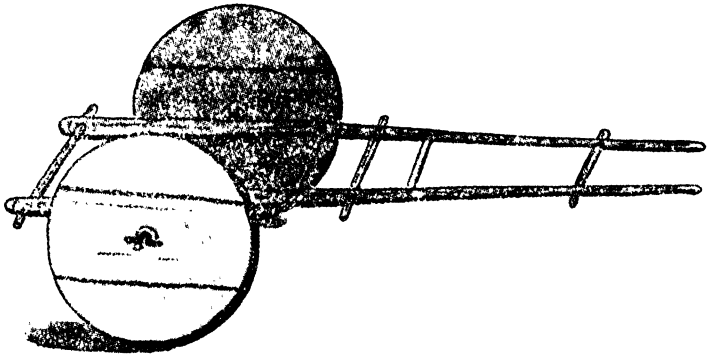
There are a number of fairs in different parts of Kolhan which the Hos visit during the slack season, and where they spend their time in dancing and drinking and in other pastimes. The fairs are distributed all over the country, and provide interesting diversions for the agriculturists of Kolhan. Some of the important fairs are at Jojohatu, 25 miles from Chaibassa, held for a week on the occasion of the Hindu festival *Chat* or *Ponai Parav*, the fair at Lagia, ten miles from Chaibassa, held for 3 days on the same occasion, and also others at Kamarbasa, Purnea, Dumuria, Chainpore, Bingtopan and Lota, which are the most popular centres for such periodical congregations. Besides these fairs there are important weekly markets, which attract the Hos from distant corners of Kolhan.

The chief attraction in these markets besides the buying and selling of agricultural produce and the petty needs of the rural people, is the liquor booths, which sell cheap intoxicants. Here men and women from different parts of the country meet one another and

drink and dance until they become intoxicated. They also serve as centres for matrimonial negotiations, and many of the *Oportipi* (marriage by capture) and *Rajikhusi* (marriage by mutual consent) matings are planned and effected at these markets and fairs. The educative interests of weekly markets and fairs are also immense, and the diffusion of culture traits, indigenous or borrowed, is much facilitated in these gatherings. Husbands come to find their runaway wives, and wives come to seek their husbands, widows come to catch their men, and youngmen find their partners. Old people come to meet their friends and acquaintances, and the village *Mundas* meet their tribal heads, and elders decide cases of social lapses. The local administration issues summonses or *Purwanas*, in these weekly markets, while social decisions and legal enactments, if there are any, are announced by the beat of drums. Even the village postman attends, and finds it convenient to dispose of his bag by sitting at a corner of the *Hat*. Messages can be sent through persons who represent practically every corner of Kolhan.

Despite the forces of disintegration in their economic and social life, cooperation in economic undertakings forms even to-day the salient feature of their daily life. It is certainly not a survival of their communistic mode of living, nor is it a reflex of their gregariousness. It is, on the other hand, a form of voluntary association, a type of co-partnership by which the economic possibilities are better realised, while at the same time, reducing the monotony and tedium of daily routine. In all their economic activities, sporadic or regular, there is the feeling of solidarity and cohesion, the idea of mutual obligations between the units forming a group, as well as between two, or more groups following the same occupation, or participating in the same economic undertaking. When a group of people is seen fishing together, collecting fuel, cutting bamboos, or felling trees, it is scarcely felt that they are unrelated, or do not possess the same interest, and a joint interest at that, or that each is working for himself instead of for a common pool, or a corporation. When they fell a tree, chop off its branches, and transport the wood, the labourers, though they may belong to different families as is commonly the case, behave as members of one joint family and the fruits of their labour are distributed among them without any fuss or hitch. When the Hos go to fetch bamboo from the forest, the whole route is lined with carts for transporting

it to the different villages, and these carts are loaded in the order of their position, whoever the owner may be. This makes joint labour possible, and the whole atmosphere breathes of friendliness and sympathy, which make work pleasant. This explains the gay disposition of Ho labourers, both in the fields and in the forests. Women labourers working in the fields or for a daily wage in construction works, are always in high spirits, and when they come to work in the morning or leave for their village after the days work is ended, they march



in groups, singing songs and keeping step. Thus the pleasure of working in company stimulates and relieves the monotony and tedium of protracted efforts. The rhythm of work is maintained by songs, as in the time of transplantation of paddy plants, or in the act of carrying loads. The songs and riddles, the discussions of topical news, of experiences in towns, in markets and fairs, of dreams and the decisions of the village *Punch* form what has been called the 'palliative concommitants.'

The Hos recognise the merit of specialisation in the arts and crafts, which are indigenous to them. They also know how to encourage such specialisation and seldom interfere with the occupation of specialists. Some women paint houses and draw artistic designs on the walls. They are engaged to do this work for others, but are not usually paid for their labour in kind or cash. Labour of this sort is paid only by labour in other directions. Sometimes, such specialists do work for others for their prestige and no exchange of goods or labour takes place. Certain families in the village have the reputation of being competent brewers, and in times of tribal feasts or marriage ceremonies,

they are approached to brew liquor for the function, but no consideration is made for their labour, the social recognition acting as a stimulus for participation in such skilled work. Basket making and rope making are not done by experts alone. Every Ho can do it, and in case of need, he does it. But if there are some landless families in a village who make their living by basket making, or by making rope, the Hos would rather barter it for grain than make the same themselves. A Ho knows that he can, if he wants to, make the things he requires, and he has ample leisure to do so, but he will refuse to undertake any work which he knows may displace somebody who makes his living out of it. The difficulty of introducing supplementary occupations, which are now done by a handful of people in Kolhan, and for which a market exists within and outside Kolhan, is based on this simple consideration, and it will take some time before the Hos can be taught to adopt other occupations which will add to their standard of comfort and raise their economic status.

The system of paying wages in cash is not indigenous to the Hos. The Hos work for reward in kind, and many of their joint activities and economic undertakings are based on ideas of mutuality of obligations. Thus the substitution of payments in cash for payments in kind has disorganised the working of the system of distribution, which was based mainly on transactions in the way of direct exchange of goods for goods. There is a disparity between payment in kind and payment in cash for labour within the local area. A Ho will gladly work for one *Paila* of rice, while money wage which may buy one and a half time the measure will not satisfy him. The employers therefore find it still economical to pay in kind, though the option is usually given to persons who may care for money payment. Money has still a limited role to play in Kolhan, and it is this fact that ensures the continuance of the system of payment in kind. The usual method of securing provisions is the system of barter with paddy or salt. The needs of an average agriculturist are limited. He has paddy, and other necessary grains in his 'store pit' ; he requires clothes, and occasionally ornaments, for which he must pay cash, besides the annual *Malgoozari* or land revenue which is payable in money. He exchanges paddy or rice for tobacco, lentils, salt, dried fish, and *Ranu* for making *Diang*. For vegetables, he has to pay either in rice or in salt, earthen utensils and pottery are bartered for paddy. He can get fishing hooks

and line for paddy too, so that most of his ordinary needs are satisfied by barter, and money enters but little into his affairs. The introduction of money economy in place of barter, due to a large extent to the opening of mines, factories and railways, and the propagation and collection of *Lac* and cocoon, has shaken the basis of their economic life. An improvident people like the Hos cannot be expected to wait and spend their money in any judicious manner. It used to be an usual sight in *Hats* and markets in Kolhan, in the Chaibassa town itself, on pay day to find the Hos spending their hard earned money on petty toys and trinkets, aerated waters, cheap cigarettes, soaps and scents. Even to-day a bottle of lemonade priced at an anna is sold for two or three annas to the Kuis, or Ho women, by adding some colouring matter, and there is a scramble near the shops for drinking such stuff. A family which possesses no land and pays a nominal house tax of five pice only, was found to possess a bottle of rose syrup costing -/12/- as. or more, which shows to what extent they can go if they possess money. The Adibasi movement has, however, combated such ignorance of the Hos, and the majority to-day are suspicious of the *Diku* traders. Large number of Adibasi shops deal in provisions, stationery and trinkets, and are making a capital out of their political consciousness, but these have not become as popular as one would have expected. Neither are they as honest as they claim to be.

The problem of the outstill system has focussed some local interest in recent years. As soon as the Ho labourers are given their wage in cash, they expend much of it in drink, which is sold very cheaply at important labour centres, and the outstill system has introduced a pernicious habit which is ruining the health and shattering their social life. The labourers, who receive money wage to-day, are lured by the cheap liquor, and are ruinously tempted to part with their earnings at the sacrifice of their food and clothes. Conditions in the mining centres are even more dreadful. The non-official members of the Bihar and Orissa Legislatve Council, in 1934, prayed for an enquiry into the effects of the outstill system in the coal areas, and other districts, but the Council decided otherwise. The then Hon. Minister in charge of Excise declared that the outstill system was giving both food and drink to the poor labourers, whose wages had gone down on account of the economic depression. But the Hon. Minister did not realise that the facts contradicted his statement, as was evident

from his own admission that the outstill system was yielding more revenue than before and that this increased revenue was being paid by the poor labourers from their reduced wages to the detriment of their food and clothes. During the last few years drunkenness has increased and the excise revenue has shot up, and the administration does not seem to be keen on prohibition, as the political situation as it has developed, does not probably warrant a frontal attack on drinks.

The effect of this policy on the domestic life of the labourers will be clear from the fact that while the working people used to drink only on Sunday or Monday before, they are now drinking almost every day, on account of the cheapness and availability of the liquor. The effect on the health of the labourers is no less alarming. The strong *Mohua* liquor which is sold to these people, is brewed and sold the same day, with the result that any excess in drinking affects their vitality, and impairs their physical health. This aspect of the outstill system in connection with the mines will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

Most of the occupations of the Hos, as has already been pointed out, are done on a cooperative system, and payment for services is made in kind, or by contributing to a common feast, which is partaken of by the employer and the employed. Thatching or repairing houses is done by a few people in the village who have the reputation for skilled workmanship, and a Ho can always secure their assistance by nominal payment in kind. Thatching is usually paid for by giving a few pots of *Diang* which may be requisitioned by the labourer according to his needs. When the work involves continuous labour for days on end, a *Boda*, or he-goat, may be offered. In case the labourer does not possess land of his own, and if thatching is his occupation, he is paid in kind (i.e. in grain), according to the means of the householder.

Whoever has seen the Hos ploughing, must have noticed how different the system is from that customary in other parts. A Ho will use a number of ploughs simultaneously to till or furrow the fields, and would seek the aid of his villagers, even if he can do it himself with one plough. This does not allow all the plots in the village to be prepared simultaneously, and a longer period is required for preparing the fields for the sowing of seeds. On the other hand, it makes it pos-

sible for every cultivator to ensure the best possible attention for his plot of land, and at the same time, keeps him busy over a longer period than would otherwise be the case. In the mattter of weeding, transplanting, and harvesting, the same procedure is followed, and work in the fields becomes interesting rather than irksome.

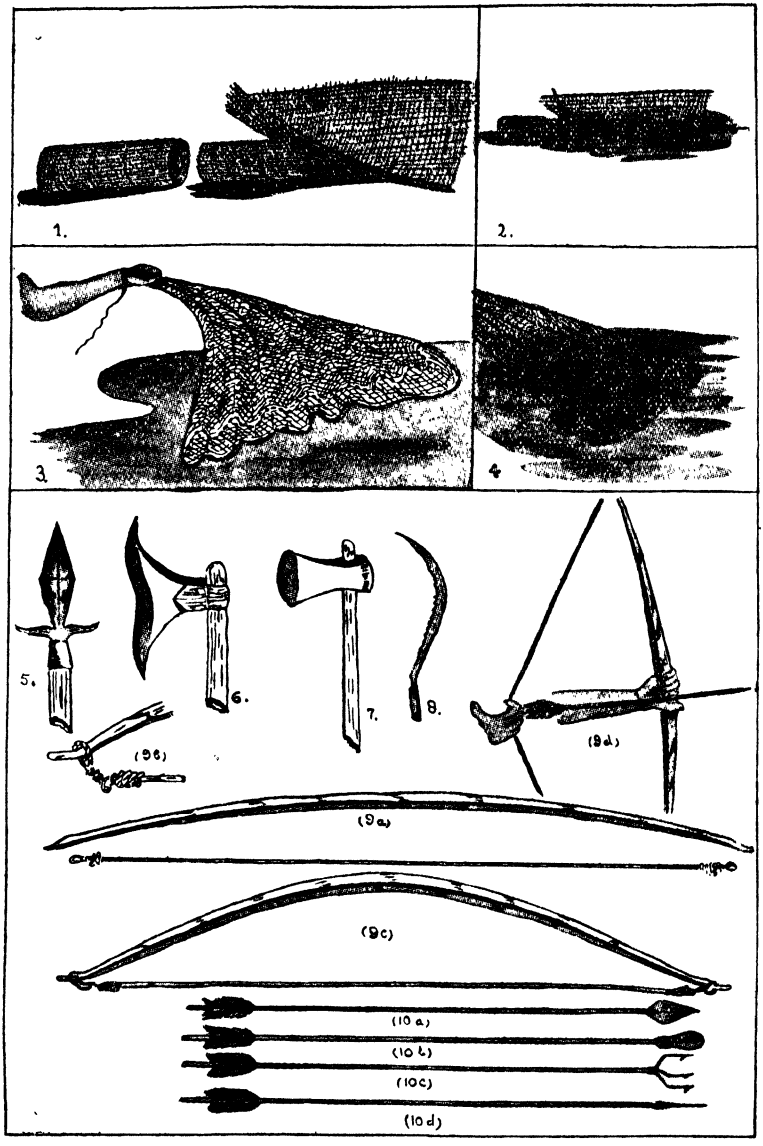
The Hos always make a distinction between those who work in the fields, and those who do not. If they work for somebody who does not assist them in their own fields, they always insist on some form of payment. Thus a cultivator who cannot, or does not plough his own fields, but requires the services of the villagers, has to 'lead a he-goat' to the field, in order that they may assist him in ploughing and prepairing the field. This is *Merom Eirkeda* without which the Hos refuse to assist such farmers. The actual price of a he-goat is only about 4/- rupees, and if one has to engage a number of workers and plough, one's expenses come to much more than the price of a he-goat; but this arrangement is still customary in the Kolhan, in spite of the introduction of money economy. The goat is killed and the meat distributed among the people who assist in the field work. The system of cooperation customary in Kolhan does not mean that all the villagers assist each other, or that it is compulsory for a Ho to participate in the economic activity of his neighbour. It is all arranged mutually, and participation is voluntary. However, it is not a fact to-day that the organisation of economic life is confined only to the *Killi* itself, for even members of a multi-*Killi* village form voluntary groups, and cooperation becomes spontaneous. It is not true of men alone. Women also form similar groups, and help each other in the work for their livelihood.

Fishing is always done in groups. Men, women and children join in fishing, and there is an interesting and well-recognised method of distributing the catch, which leaves nothing to be desired. The owner of a *Dab* (Ikir) or pond, issues a timely invitation to all the neighbouring villages through a crier, or by the beating of drums, that on a certain date he has decided to open the *Dab* for fishing, and that all interested are welcome. Groups of people from villages around, far and near, come with nets, and other fishing apparatus, and pitch their temporary leafy booths on the banks of the river, or on the sides of the pond, the night before. Next morning the owner of the *Dab*, or the lessee, propitiates the *Nage Bonga* or the river spirit. The village

Deuri offers a hen, a couple of eggs and a white hair-comb, to the *Nage Bonga*, after which, all the people assembled for fishing sprinkle water over them. Although people from several villages come for the same purpose, each village keeps together while fishing, so that the catch of each group remains separate, and is not pooled with the others. Women form their own groups, and the men combine their own nets and traps to catch fish. There is a spirit of rivalry between the different villages, and the whole affair becomes an entertainment, rather than an occupation. Men and women are constantly regaled with *Diang*.

The fishing may be continued for more than one day, in which case, the catch is daily distributed in accordance with the customary laws. The owner of the *Dab*, or pond, gets half share of the catch, whether he takes part in fishing or not. He, in his turn, may distribute some portion of his share to his villagers, and to any person who may have rendered some service to him in connection with the fishery. As every villager does not possess nets and traps, he may borrow from those who do, but the owners of the nets are entitled to a share of the borrower's catch. This is ungrudgingly admitted. After giving half the share of the catch to the owners of the *Dab*, the remaining catch is distributed among the members of the village, who have shared in the fishing. If there are four persons from one family, the family is entitled to four shares and thus the whole catch is distributed on a recognised fixed principle. The fact that several villages cooperate together in fishing does not produce any chaos, as each village keeps its catch separate and after giving half of it to the owner, the rest is brought to the respective villages, and distributed in accordance with the usual rules. Disputes in fishing arise on account of over-crowding, as well as the anxiety of each group to secure the best position in the *Dab*. The decision of the owner of the *Dab*, however, is seldom challenged, and the latter's sense of reponsibility leaves little to be desired. There is one other fact in connection with fishing, which requires mention. Wives accompanying husbands on these fishing excursions, and sisters accompanying brothers, do not as a rule assist one another alone, for the whole undertaking is jointly done, and the women help men, irrespective of their relationship, though assistance is confined to the village or the *Killi*. Where a woman assists her husband or some relation, and does not identify

herself with the group, she does not count for distribution, and both together receive one share only. At the time of distribution of the



1-4, Nets and receptacles for fishing. 5-10, Weapons.

catch, the conduct of each participant is recited by some leading member of the group, and due otice is taken n allotting individual shares.

Fishing provides great thrill, and the few weeks before the fishing excursion takes place, the villagers get busy with their nets and traps, repairing and reconditioning the old ones, and making new ones. They send messengers to the owners of *Dabs* and tanks, to enquire about the possible dates for fishing, and are always informed of the condition of a particular *Dab*, and the fishing prospects.

The division of labour in fishing, like that of agriculture, is based on certain conventions which are strictly adhered to. Women usually carry pots of *Diang*, and men carry the nets and traps. Children carry the receptacles for fish, and such indispensable requisites as rope, bamboo-chips, tobacco, *Borh-sengel* (kindled rope made of straw), and the like. Fishing in deep water is done by men, and women find it more convenient to use the *Jimri*, and often the *Muchu*, which are effective in slowly running water. Men use different kinds of nets, *Janid*, *Kumbad* and *Raba*. Bamboo traps, rectangular in design, are placed by men and women at the orifice or exit of the water in a dam, so that while water is allowed to pass out, the fish remain. Like nets, there are different kinds of receptacles for different kinds of fish. The Hos know and understand the nature and habits of the fish, and they are so skilful that they can tell from the bubbles in the water which kind of fish is making them. The damming of water by bamboos and logs of wood, and poisoning the water with poisonous wild fruits and roots, is the most convenient method of catching fish in the river, though this method is slowly being given up. When the water gets thus poisoned the fish are stupefied, and rise one after another to the surface, where they are received in the receptacles. It is not the effect of poisoning alone that renders the fish liable to be caught but men, women and children plunge into the water and make it so muddy that the fish move up desperately and are netted by the fishermen.

The preservation and storage of fish are done with great care in the Kolhan, and dried fish is a delicacy with the Hos. The dried fish not only serves as food at times when other fish is not available, it also provides a means of barter for other commodities. Fish is exchanged for paddy, salt, earthen utensils, baskets, and receptacles for fish, and so on. There are some fish which quickly decompose in the sun, so the Hos eat them immediately, either roasted or fried. Those that can withstand the sun and dry quickly, are preserved for

future use. The entrails are first removed, and the fish then cut into pieces, and hung in a chain or the fish are spread on *Jamtai*, and allowed to dry up either in the sun or on the oven in the yard until they are perfectly dry. Even after they are dried, and stored up in the *Ading*, occasional sunning is required to keep them from being attacked by worms. There are some fishes which the Hos keep alive for some time. These fishes are found in muddy water, and when they are caught, they are straightway transferred to big earthen pots containing muddy water, with grass, algae, and small fishes thrown in for them to live on. Dried, preserved fish, are also used as occasional gifts to relations and friends, and as a treat for guests.

The most important crop raised by the Hos, and which forms their staple food, is rice. Various qualities of rice are grown, each requiring different conditions. Rice is the crop most suited to the climate of the Kolhan, as there is abundant rainfall during certain parts of the year, viz., the monsoon period, when little irrigation and manuring are required for a bumper crop, particularly in the low lands. The soil is usually fertile, particularly in the *Bera* lands, and transplantation forms the most important method of cultivation in Kolhan. Both transplantation and broadcast sowing are known, the latter form is specially suited to *Gora* lands. The Hos realise the need of replenishing the soil by using manure, but they seldom use it except in *Gora* lands. Recently there has grown a great demand for artificial manure in Kolhan. In some fields they sow leguminous crops, which serve as natural fertilisers, while in others they use rotten straw, dead leaves, alluvial earth from tanks, and other waste matter. They also leave some land fallow, for a year or so, and allow the cattle to graze and fertilise the land with their excreta. The terraces the Hos have made which are sown with different varieties of rice, some early, others late, testify to their practical experience and while the harvesting starts in the upland, the low lands teem with green loads of paddy, a pleasant shading of colour and yield.

Ploughing is done jointly by a number of ploughs used simultaneously over a small plot of land. Before the advent of the rains, the land is occasionally ploughed to break up the earth, and also to keep down the weeds. Immediately after the first heavy showers, the land is finally ploughed for transplanting the rice plants that are grown in low and wet land. In the *Gora* lands, when the seeds take

root and send up small shoots, the plot is ploughed again to destroy some of the thickly grown plants and to ensure a vigorous growth for the others. The system of making ridges and terraces, where the land is not flat makes it necessary to restore any breaches in them, and the Hos take special care to keep the fields in a state of constant repair. If the ridges are not repaired in time, water may flow out of the fields, and this would make their own fields dry, and destroy neighbouring fields by an overflow. Water in the fields is regulated according to the needs of the crop grown, and when there is surplus water in the field, the Hos cut a channel through the ridges to allow some part of the water to run out, and replace the earth to cover the channel up.

Weeding is done as soon as the plants grow to a height of six inches or so, first by using the plough, and secondly, by plucking with the hand. Transplanting and weeding are traditionally the work of women, who work in groups, and move from plot to plot till all the field is weeded. While I was watching a transplantation in a village near Pendrasali, Jano, a young maiden entertained me with the songs, the purport of which is conveyed in the following free rendering of the songs.

O, for the paddy, O, for the rice,
O, for my sweet-heart, O for a mouthful of rice!
O, my sweet brother-in-law, O my sweet husband,
How I wish we were 'lone! Go, go, pine
For the sweet-heart, while the food I prepare on the spot.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Why do I work, O, brother!
Not for your grabbing hand;
Do not yield to temptation,
For the money will not do you any good.
Come, Come, let me go, to my sweet-heart,
While you eat the honey of the fields.

Watching the crops becomes necessary when they begin to ripen, and when they are harvested, and deposited in the *Kalyan* (kolom). Damage to crops is done by wild birds, squirrels, cattle, and certain agricultural pests. Scarecrows become a necessity, and improvised leafy sheds are also put up so that a watch can be kept on the fields at night. Villagers take turns in this, and as soon as any alarm is raised by the beating of a tin can, the rest of the villagers run to assist the watchers. Threshing is done by men, if bullocks are used; if it is done by treading (which is the usual practice among the poorer farmers), it is done by women. When bullocks are used,

the paddy stalks are placed on the *Kalyan* in bundles over which the bullocks are driven round and round. Winnowing is done by holding aloft the grains with the husks in a basket and letting the wind blow off the chaff as it drops, or by fanning the grains with a winnowing fan.

The paddy is taken in baskets to the courtyard of the house, where it is disposed according to certain customary rules and the urgent needs of the household. The first consideration is given to the ceremonial thanks-giving to the *Bongas*. A small portion of the produce is measured into a basket as an offering to the *Bongas*, which is kept in one corner of the *Ading*. The remainder is divided into two big heaps, one is stored in a *Bandi*, placed inside the store room from which a portion is ear-marked for seeds, the rest is kept handy for immediate requirements. Of this latter portion, a share is sold for cash to pay *Malgoozari* and it also serves for payment in kind for services rendered to the family by the villagers, and for the ordinary domestic needs of the family. Before the family partakes of this new crop, ceremonial offering of it must be made to *Singbonga*, and the *Dessauli* and to the ancestral spirits sheltered in the *Ading*. The services of the village artisans, the tribal priest, and the village *Deonwa* are paid in kind, but little uniformity exists in Kolhan about the proportion or shares of these recipients. The Kamar or blacksmith is paid according to the service received from him by individual families.

The following table will illustrate the division of labour in economic activities between the sexes. There is no rigid sexual divi-

DIVISION OF LABOUR

Men	Women	Children
Making of embankments, ridges and digging earth. Manufacturing of musical instruments, bows and arrows, weapons for fishing, nets, traps, etc.	Carrying loads. Carrying earth. Supplying stones, gravel, earth, etc., for repairing dams and making ridges.	Bird catching and fowling, tending of cattle. Fishing in shallow water and carrying receptacle for fish.
Manufacture of *Bandi* and baskets.	Plaiting of mats and baskets. Barter and sale of agricultural produce and marketing. Making of leaf-plates and leaf-cups for distributing food and *Diang*. Rope making.	Collecting *Mohua*. Helping father or mother in agriculture and domestic work.
Fresh-water fishing, hunting and bird snaring.	Fishing, drying and preserving fish.	

DIVISION OF LABOUR (continued)

Men	Women	Children
Cutting and felling of trees and bamboo. Driving carts or dragging *Sagar*. Thatching of houses, making of wicker hedges and wooden doors, carving, etc.	Making mud walls, plastering and painting them. Weeding, transplanting, harvesting, threshing, husking rice and oil pressing.	Collecting *Lac*.
Harvesting, threshing, husking rice and oil pressing. Ploughing, harrowing, winnowing, watching. Planting of trees. Fetching the *Sasandiris*. Propagation and collection of *Lac*, or cocoon. Curing leather for making musical instruments.	Fetching water, collecting fuel, cooking, collecting *Mohua*, drying and storing *Mohua* and *Kusum*, etc.	
Cock-fighting. Labour in mines and plantations. Sale of *Lac*. Collection of forest produce.	Needle work, decoration and mud walls. Labour in mines and roadway constructions. Women are now employed as masons and diggers as well.	

sion of labour in Kolhan, and excepting for the use of the plough and the bow and arrow, few other occupations are forbidden to women. Many of the men's occupation are done to-day by women, while the former sit as idle spectators.

ROUTINE OF MONTHLY ENGAGEMENTS

Name of Ho Months	English Calendar Months	Economic Activities	Festivals etc.
Maghe Chandu	Jan-Feb.	Harvesting of pulses cereals.	*Maghe* Festival and Marriage. (*Andi*).
Matkam ,,	Feb-Mar.	Tilling of the field, collection of *Mohua*.	Marriage.
Baha ,,	Mar-Apr.	Sowing of seeds in *Bera* land .	*Baha* Festival.
Baba Her ,,	Apr-May	Sowing of paddy in general for transplanting in low lands, and sowing in *Gora* lands.	Previously marriage was allowed in the early part of *Baba Her*, but due to Hindu influence, it is not favoured, as it corresponds with the Hindu month of *Chait* in which marriages are forbidden.
Hero ,,	May-June	Weeding in the *Gora* or uplands, making embankments.	*Hero* Festival. Sacrifice of *Boda* to the Village *Dessauli*.
Goma ,,	June-July	Transplantation of paddy. Weeding in some fields. Repairing of embankments.	*Bahatuli* Festival.

ROUTINE OF MONTHLY ENGAGEMENTS (continued)

Indi Chandu	July-Aug.	Sowing of *Kurti* (urd), *Saguja* and tilling of *Gora* lands.	*Jamnama* Festival.
Jamnama ,,	Aug.-Sept.	Cutting of *Gora*, paddy and *Gundli* (a kind of cereal).	The *Jamnama* Festival, i.e. partaking of the new crop.
Baba Irr ,,	Sept-Oct.	Harvesting of paddy. Threshing, collecting of paddy in the *Kalyan*, sowing of pulses, *Mussari* and *Gehu*.	*Kalam* Festival.
Sardi ,,	Oct-Nov.	Harvesting of paddy from the low lands, and the same occupations as detailed above.	
Kalam ,,	Nov-Dec.	Hay is brought home and stacked for use.	*Kalam* (Kalyan) Festival. The worship of *Dessauli*, *Singbonga*, and *Marang Bonga*.
Makara ,,	Dec-Jan.	Tilling of the *Gora* lands. Ploughing in the cold is called *Rabangnail* (cold plough).	

The list of occupations tabled above may give the impression that the men do as much work as the women do or more. In practice, the Ho men enjoy more leasure than women, and one is tempted to call them idlers. The women toil hard from morning to night, gather fuel, clean the house, collect *Mohua*, and other forest produce, go to the market or distant *Hat* for sale or barter, wash clothes, prepare *Illi*, carry loads, work for wages in the urban areas, and on return fulfil all the maternal and domestic obligations. The men have certain busy seasons in the year, when they have to work in the fields, take part in the collection of *Lac* and breeding of cocoons, in fishing and hunting. But there is no continuous programme of work for men, though there are plenty of diversions. Music, dancing, visiting friends in other villages, attending *Hats* and fairs, and lounging in the village headman's house form the main routine of Ho men. Cock-fighting is the most popular recreation of the Hos in Kolhan, and each householder has a number of cocks which he trains for this purpose. This keeps the Hos busy for some time during the day, and when the season for cock-fighting comes round, they forget all their duties and obligations in their craze for sport.

The principle of division of labour between the sexes in Kolhan is not clear, as the line of demarcation between different occupations

is not sharp enough. It is only in agriculture that such dovetailing of employment is found. Ordinarily, the energetic, exciting and often arduous tasks, are done by men, while those involving patience and monotony, are left to women. It is also found that in all the economic occupations we have enumerated above, men lead, women follow. The ploughing is done by men, the breaking up of the clods is done by women. Sowing is done by men, transplanting and weeding by women. When bullocks are used, they are driven by men over bundles of paddy in the *Kalyan* (threshing floor), after which women have to gather the paddy from the chaff and carry it home. The distribution of the produce, like its apportionment, is arranged by men, and women carry out the instructions. They take the produce for sale to the markets and fairs and bring back what they need in exchange. The men clear the forest, and women follow them for gathering fruits and roots. The hunter or the fisherman brings home his game, or his catch for the women to cook, dry or preserve. When the *Lac* is collected and brought home, the women take it to the market. The men plant fruit trees and vegetables, the women collect fruits and sell them in accordance with the needs of the family. When men do the rougher work, women supplement their labour.

It is difficult to compare the lot of women with that prevailing among other primitive areas in India. There are tribes like the Tharus, among whom woman's position in society is much better than in any known primitive society in India.* The men are really drudges, slaves to Tharu women. Women go to the markets, men carry the loads, women buy things, men carry them home, women fish, men carry the receptacles for the fish (Ugawa), women hunt and lead men to the forest. In the kitchen, Tharu women treat their menfolk as untouchables, they are not allowed even to enter the kitchen. The case is different in the Kolhan. Whatever rights and privileges the women of Kolhan possess, they are all earned by service, by hard work, and drudgery, and because they are indispensable to the household. Where women are not toilers and bread winners, they are ridiculed, regarded as anti-social, and even as witches. When work in the field is not remunerative, and when the Hos require money to meet

* The Fortunes of Primitive Tribes, Vol. I (1944) pp. 57-109.

urgent needs, they will often send their wives and sisters to work in the mines, themselves remaining in the village, ministering, as they will tell you, to the needs of their ancestral spirits in the *Ading*. So long as it is not indispensable for the Ho men to work, so long as they depend upon the labours of their women-folk, they prefer to remain idle and content with a hand-to-mouth existence. In spite of sufferings, and imminent starvation, the Hos will idle away their time and engage either in completely unproductive pursuits, or in petty and trivial occupations, which seldom bring them nearer to the solution of their food problem, yet with all this, they appear happy and contented.

There is no elaborate system of economic tabooes in Kolhan today, but the adoption of men's occupations by women or vice versa, is not viewed with favour while their association with the *Dikus* has taught them the customary practices of these people in respect of their main occupation, agriculture, and they attribute now, less importance than before, to their own traditional rules and supernatural pains and penalties. Yet there are certain taboos which are inviolable. Ploughing is a man's occupation, and a woman will not touch the plough; if she does, the plough is believed to lose its virtue. That is why ploughs are not taken inside the house, but are placed shoulder to shoulder under some big tree, near the village *Sasan*. Each plough bears the mark of the owner, and when the cultivators require them in the morning, they take their respective ploughs from the heap. Similar restrictions obtain for the use of the bow and arrows. Even a young boy will not allow his bow to be touched by his little sister, lest it loses its efficacy. When he has to touch his sister, or has to take her in his arm, he places his bow on the branch of a tree out of her reach. Nobody discusses this taboo. It is a tradition known to young and old. It is so obvious that questions on this subject appear to them superfluous, and even ridiculous. Less rigid are the restrictions on fishing nets and traps, and on the use of musical instruments. Yet, if girls try their hands on musical instruments, the men look at them reprovingly. One of the many reasons that were cited by the village *Munda* of Chiru why a certain girl was not married though her parents were well off, was that she could play on a *Mandol* and was fond of it. This was a thing regarded as unholy, and therefore

ominous to the family to which she might affiliate herself by marriage.

Women during their menstrual period will not take part in any productive enterprise—will not work in the field or prepare *Illi* in the house. But such is the arrangement among the women, and such a degree of good-will and cooperation exist among them that the work in the house, as well as outside, seldom suffers, and an outsider will seldom realise that there is any inactivity on the part of any individual woman. Observance of this taboo is insisted on by women, and they know when and how to insist on it. Among the occupations forbidden to women on supernatural grounds, the rearing of cocoons is perhaps the foremost. It is taboo to touch a woman while engaged in rearing cocoons. The men retire to a quite part of the forest, make their temporary sheds, and follow their profession unhampered by happenings outside. During the period, the men live on special diet, and practise strict sexual continence. Stories about the violation of this taboo, and how the entire crop was destroyed as a result thereof, are recited by the Hos to serve as warnings to the people.

The gradual disappearance of economic tabooes among the Hos, and the change of attitude of the men with regard to the household arrangements and the principal economic occupations, which has made women economically more important to the family, have no doubt encouraged women to encroach on the men's domain. The Ho does not believe in sharing the burden of supporting the family with his wife, but rather would he depend more and more on his wife's sinews for his welfare. He has tightened the reins so far as his relation to his wife is concerned. The economic independence of women in the Kolhan therefore has not been a great help to the cause of her social emancipation. She remains a drudge, a tool, and a "mere female," in spite of her contribution to the family livelihood.

4

Primitive social groups are aptly called food groups, for the size of the groups depends to a large extent on the mode of food supply. Each stage of culture has its peculiar solution of the problem of numbers in relation to food supply, the mode of subsistence determining the social organisation of the group. Any increase in numbers must

keep pace with improvements in the technique of food production, as otherwise, there is every chance of destroying the social stability which is the pivot of economic progress. There has been a tremendous change in the economic environment of primitive tribes in India. Hunting tribes have given up hunting. The semi-nomadic tribes who lived on fruits and roots and occasional *jhuming* of their forest-clad environment, have become permanent cultivators. Some have no land and are eking out their miserable existence as labourers in the village, and in the neighbouring industrial centres. Consequently many of the customs and practices, that were necessary at an earlier stage have become useless, and therefore meaningless to their cultural life. With the restriction of the large areas of forest, over which the Hos were used to roam, and the resulting diminution in the supply of food, a change in diet among the Hos was called for. But they have yet failed to respond to the needs of the hour, as we shall find below.

The gradual increase in number among the Hos without any corresponding increase in the food resources, or improvement in the technique of food production, has lowered the standard of comfort, and many of their present troubles are traceable to this deficiency. Their vitality, and the splendid cooperative organisation for exploiting the natural resources of their physical environment (to which competent authorities have given unstinted testimony) have suffered much, and the Hos are themselves to blame for what has happened.

If we ask a *Diku* about the food the Hos take, he will tell us that they take every kind of herb, insect, grub, animal, scorpion, toad, reptile, crow, vulture, adding that even carrion does not come amiss to them. The scarcity of certain species of birds and animals in Kolhan, and the absence of some are all traced to the dexterity of the Hos as archers and trackers. In one village where I spent a few nights, I was surprised not to hear the howl of jackals, which is a characteristic of Indian village life at dusk. A Hindu resident when asked for an explanation said that the Hos have eaten them up. The general dislike of the Hos by the caste Hindus in Kolhan is based to a large extent on such silly beliefs. Social difference between two groups in India is accentuated by differences in food and occupation. In many cases, the fact of common diet and common occupation has often reduced the barrier between

certain groups with different caste appellations, nay, in others it has led to a healthy social adjustment between them. It is difficult to say when beef was tabooed by religious prescriptions, but all castes to-day abjure beef, though eating pork is still a matter of choice with a number of the lower castes in India. The Hos rear pigs and eat pork, but they used to eat beef when available. Thus they stand outside the pale of Hinduism proper, though the families of *Mundas*, *Mankis* and other substantial cultivators, have given up pork and beef. The social reformers are loud in their denunciation of this 'offensive stuff,' and they have left no stone unturned to see that the people really abstain from pork and beef. Their efforts have undoubtedly succeeded to some extent, though the poorer classes still eat their customary food. Again, unlike most of the Hindu castes, they keep fowls, and offer these as sacrifices to the host of spirits presiding over land, air and water, as they are still doubtful about the wholesale expulsion of these spiritual entities. As the efficacy of the adopted rites and ceremonial practices of the Hindus has not been convincingly demonstrated, they prefer to follow their traditional practices along with their adherence to those of Hinduism. So, even to-day the higher classes in Kolhan rear fowls, though they may not eat them, and offer them as sacrifices even if they do not keep them. With this exception, they follow all the prescriptions that are obeyed by the Hindu castes. The result of this so-called cultural progress in Kolhan, is manifest in one important direction, viz,. in the restriction of their dietary, and the effect of this is perhaps more retrograde than is apprehended by the most conservative of reformers in the Kolhan.

Most of the primitive tribes who have taken to agriculture and a settled life, even to-day derive much of their subsistence from the produce of the forest and the spoils of the chase. The Hos, when they occupied the Kolhan, drew mostly on the latter resources, though they cultivated their land and gathered their harvests. Agriculture was not so vital to their existence then as it is to-day as they derived what they could from the fields to supplement their gleanings in the forest. Even now agriculture has not developed to any efficient degree, and little intensive farming, manuring or careful husbandary is noticed in Kolhan. There are a number of *Talaos* or *Bands* or tanks which are meant as reservoirs of water for watering

the crops, though they are not to be relied upon as famine preventive works as they depend upon rainfall. Even these the Hos do not make much use of. Many of the tanks that existed before they came into the Kolhan, have been neglected, or purposely drained off, to enable them to sow on the rich bottom of these partially dried tanks. Before the forests were brought under the protective system of administration, every Ho had the right to forage for food in the forest, and follow the trail of animals, and such was his dexterity in the art of tracking game that he would always come back with a heavy bag. The dietary was rich in flesh food. They took every kind of meat except the flesh of monkey, bear, snake and tiger. The animals they hunted and relished as food were wild buffaloes, pigs, *Sambur* (Indian elk) porcupine, red deer and barking deer, while peacocks, jungle fowl, and pigeons were trapped and domesticated to supply them with food during the rainy season. To-day, the Hos look wistfully to the woods; and when they get permission to hunt at certain periods of the year (though very rarely,) they avail themselves of the opportunity with commendable enterprise. Occasionally they slyly enter the protected forests, cross the fireline, and stealthily carry down the hills their much prized game, but more often than not, they are detected and punished. Thus the possibility of a rich variety of animal food has disappeared once for all, and unless the Hos take to rearing food animals and to poultry breeding on a large scale, or change their system of food supply by adopting new methods of preparation, and newer materials from the vegetable world, the deterioration of their health will continue.

We have seen how the supersession of their customary rights in the recently constituted forests and their desire to follow Hindu practices, which has meant an arbitrary restriction of their diet, have narrowed their choice of food, and we shall presently discuss their present system of dietary and the mode of preparation of their principal food dishes.

Food varies according to classes and groups. There are two classes of people among the Hos which we have mentioned already. The one, which we may term the higher class, consists of the *Mundas*, *Mankis* and their relations. There are also some substantial cultivators who, by merit and perseverance, have improved their economic status and are now respected by the people. These supply the village

elders and are very influential. They are also included in the first class. The other consists of all those *Parjas* or *Raiyats*, who do not belong to the original families or were ostracized and became their servants, or camp-followers. They form the bulk of the population. These two classes seldom intermarry or interdine, and there are many points of cultural difference between them. The political consciousness that the Adibasis have developed in recent years, has been functioning as a leveller among the Hos and the class differences and social distance arbitrarily imposed, are disappearing though slowly.

In the boarding houses of Middle Vernacular schools, the Ho boys prepare their own food, and one invariably finds them divided into food groups, four or five boys forming one batch. On enquiry, one finds that there is no arbitrary grouping among the boys, and that the groups are based on considerations of rank and affluence. The son of a *Manki* will form his own group with other *Mankis'* sons, and in the absence of the latter, with the sons of *Mundas*, and with those of substantial and well-to-do farmers whose position in the society is known to his parents. He will certainly refuse to dine with a boy of ordinary parentage, or sons of tenants of his own or other *Pirs*. How serious the class prejudices are and how ready the people are to perpetuate this class distinction, will be evident from the following instance cited by the Headmaster of one of these schools in Kolhan. There used to be nearly fifty Ho boys in the students' hostel. They were all housed in one dormitory and there were only two kitchens for them. As the boys had to prepare their food and then attend school, it was found that the preparation of their food took much of their spare time, and they could not take part in athletic activities on which the Headmaster was very keen. He found that there were eight different batches, preparing food simultaneously, and as the kitchens could not accommodate all of them, many of the batches cooked their food outside. This arrangement was of course possible during the months of the open season, but in the rainy season cooking must be done within the house. So it was that the four ovens inside the rooms were kept engaged for hours, and half the day would be spent in preparing food and eating it. One redeeming feature of this business was that the system of cooking was very simple, and the most that the boys cooked were a pot of rice and some lentil soup. On investigation, however, it was found that the sol diffie-

culty of grouping them in larger batches was their ignorance of each other's identity, or social position. The sons of *Mankis* and *Mundas* refused to eat with those of the *Parjas*, and there were some outcasts with whom no one would take food. The Headmaster found that by careful handling, it was possible to reduce the groups to three in number, the one consisting of the sons of privileged classes in Kolhan, the other those of the *Raiyats* and labourers, the third of outcasts, who were only two in number. The most interesting result of this reorganisation, was the grouping together of cousins both paternal as well as maternal, who did not know each other and were therefore separated into different food groups.

This social exclusiveness explains the diversity of food that has become customary among the two groups mentioned above. The first group has adopted a number of dishes from the caste people, and has learnt to use spices and condiments which are now regarded by them as indispensable ingredients of cooking. The second class still prefer to keep their indigenous system of preparing food undisturbed. During my ethnographic tours I took food with all classes of people, obtaining invitations unobtrusively as guest of rich and poor alike. Experience revealed that the two classes differ much in their tastes, inclinations and propensities. Poverty alone does not account for all this difference. The price of the ingredients is such as can easily be afforded by the people. Besides, they are grown by the villagers for sale or barter.

There are, however, two features which are common to the dietary of the two classes. The one is a natural dislike for milk and its products, the other is the universal use of *Illi*, or rice-beer, which, as we have already pointed out, is still the staple food and the universal drink of the Hos. Even today boiled milk is not taken by the Hos, but butter obtained from fresh milk of buffaloes, is considered a delicacy by the educated or more advanced section among them. There is no taboo on milk, for I have never come across any superstitious idea connected with milk in Kolhan, though some rational explanation is given by the elders of the tribe. They agree that milking of cattle is not proper for it is equivalent to depriving a child of its mother's milk. Other explanations are that the cattle are grazed in the forest and the snakes which are abundant there are known to drink milk, so it may prove fatal to man. The most ingenious explana-

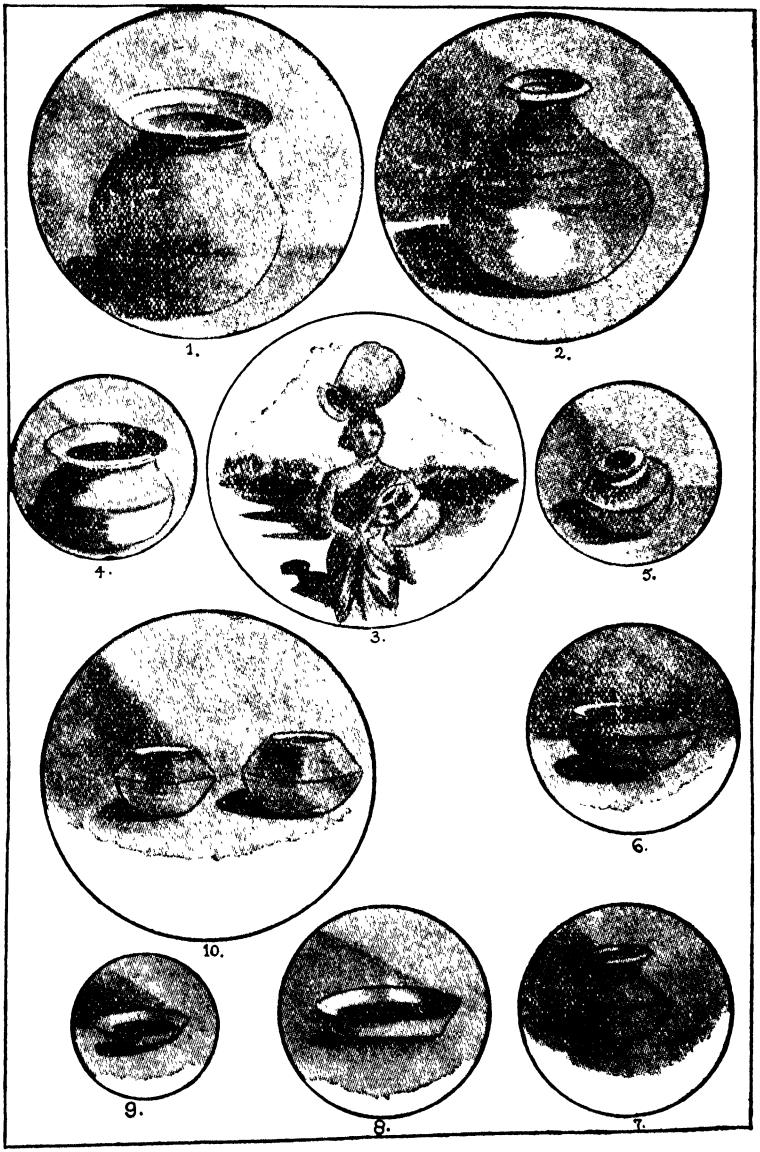
tion was given by a youngman who had recently succeeded his father as the *Manki* of an important *Pir*. He said that as the snake is the protector of the Nagbansi Raja of Chota Nagpur, who is of the same race as the Hos, and as snakes live on milk, the Hos have tabooed milk for the benefit of the snake. But nowhere in the Kolhan is milk regarded as excrement as amongst some Mongoloid tribes of Assam. The utility of cattle in the Kolhan has been greatly reduced by this fact as well as by the gradual abandonment of beef as a popular item of food. They are now meant only as a measure of value in deciding the *Gonong*, i,e., bride-price. The little scratching of the fields done in Kolhan is not a hard job for the cattle, so they are still given over to the Ahir, or the village Goala, who makes his living out of them. The Hos keep an account with the Goala and generally do not take any care of the animals.

Rice-beer or *Handia* named after the pot or *Handi* in which it is brewed, is known by different names in Kolhan, such as *Illi* and *Diang*. This home-brewed liquor is not only an universal food of the Hos, it is also a sacred thing. The idea that the provider of food is a god to those for whom it is provided, seems to be applied in this case. When it is the staple food, the life-giving fluid of the Hos, it must be regarded as sacred, and its preparation is associated with certain rites and ceremonies. The story of the creation of the Hos throws some light on the origin of this important beer. *Singbonga*, the supreme god of the Hos, was offended by his creation, and he created an atmosphere of leaping flames which burnt to death every species of living organism, including men. When *Singbonga* realised the consequence of his fury, he was sorry for what he had done, and approached all the lesser spirits to ask them if they knew of any living soul. It was *Nage Era*, the river goddess, who said she could bring out two souls she had hidden under the sheet of water if *Singbonga* would promise not to do them any harm. When that was conceded, *Nage Era* produced a couple, a brother and a sister, and out of this primaeval pair, *Singbonga* wanted to repopulate the world. But it was soon discovered that the couple were not attracted to each other sexually, so what else could the High god do but to teach the couple the preparation of a kind of beer, known to-day as *Illi* ; when they partook of this intoxicating liquor, they forgot their relationship, and out of their mating came forth the ancestors of man, of the races and

castes that people the world. *Illi* is therefore a sacred drink of the Hos, for *Singbonga* the god of gods taught men to make it.

This beer is brewed in every house, and on ceremonial occasions, when the need is large, certain families who are reputed to be expert brewers are asked to do it for the entire village, or the particular family or families requiring it. The usual method is to boil rice in a large earthen vessel *Tundi*, until it is boiled into a thick paste ; all the contents of the *Tundi* are then poured on to a small mat and allowed to cool. Several pieces of *Ranu* (a fermenting substance locally made) are powdered and are spread over the paste, and the whole is again put into a new *Tundi*, and kept on one side in a corner of the *Ading* for three days. After three days or so, there is a concentrated fluid floating on the surface of the *Tundi*; this is known as *Rasi* and is very strong and intoxicating. This *Rasi* is taken out and when mixed with water produces the *Diang* or *Illi*. When the *Rasi* is extracted the precipitate is taken out bit by bit, palmful or two and kept on the bamboo sieve and strained through it by pouring water and stirring with the fingers of the right hand. This is the usual mild beer known as *Handia*, also called *Diang*. The remnant of the rice paste, the precipitate, is used as bait or *Mehra* for fishing. Every evening or on alternate evenings, Ho women prepare this life-giving fluid and the children and men sit in the courtyard round the women and watch them do it. The first leaf-cup of this beer must be presented to the ancestors in the *Ading*, and drops of it are scattered round the *Tundi* in the name of hosts of spirits or *Bongas*. There is a wooden *Matia* or ladle for distributing the beer, and they make the required number of *Pulias* or leaf-cups which are also kept by the side of these beer pots. The original pot in which the beer is brewed is carefully kept aside, and it is taboo to distribute the beer for consumption from this pot. The beer must be poured into a second vessel and distributed from that. The woman who prepares the *Illi* is required to observe certain rules of ceremonial purity. She has to take a bath immediately before she begins to prepare it, or she changes her dress wearing a clean *Sari*, which in some families is kept for the purpose. Young children are not allowed to touch the pots. When the *Diang* is made, men do not disturb the women while they are preparing it. The women also keep silent and do not respond to any querry that may be put to them. These taboos

and rites are not regarded with sanctity today but violation of these tabooes in earlier days was believed to be ominous for the *Diang*, it



(1–10) Specimen Pottery; (3) shows how a woman carries pots.

was sure to taste bitter. Other rules make it obligatory for a family to offer *Diang* to all persons assembled at the time of distributing

it to one or more members of the house. Then they must keep some *Illi* in the house, as it is unlucky to run out of it. The third rule forbids lending any of the beer to neighbours after dusk. The last is a general taboo found all over northern India, that no neighbour or friend may borrow any white liquor or its preparations, as for example, milk, curd, etc. The prohibition among the Hos is based perhaps on the fear that it is possible for the family which lends it, or the family who may share it afterwards, to be injured by the influence through the liquor, of witches and sorcerers.

It must be mentioned here that the Hos usually take one full meal a day, the rest being made up with rice-beer, fruits and roots, and anything else they get from the chase, or from their friends who may distribute their surplus. Aged people are still found to subsist only on rice-beer, and occasionally a meal of rice. A crude preparation of meat by roasting minced meat in leaf-cups thrown into the fire and eaten hot also serves as a change. Some families in Kolhan take their principal meal in the morning and some in the evening while people who live in the urban centres and attend offices as peons, bearers or menials, take one meal in the morning, and one in the evening after they come back from their duties. There is no tiffin in either case.

The following list of dishes was compiled during my tours:

Lower Classes: *Morning Meal.*

(1) ½ seer of boiled rice prepared the night before, and allowed to stand over till morning with water added to it, known as *Basi*, one or two chillies, two onions, a small pinch of salt plus *Illi*.

(2) ¼ seer of *Basi* as described in No. 1 with salt but no chillies. *Mohua* cake made of *Mohua* flower, crushed, dried, pulverised and made into a paste with water, and baked—*Illi*.

(3) Venison boiled in water with salt added and made into a curry, taken with cakes made of mango seeds. The mango seeds are put in a dragnet and kept under water for a week or so, when the peels decompose, the inside kernel is washed in water, dried in the sun, powdered into flour, mixed with water to form a paste, rolled into sheets and baked in the oven—*Illi*.

(4) ½ seer of boiled rice prepared the previous night, allowed to stand, without adding water, with tender leaves of *Pipul* tree, or *Sajina* boiled in water also starch of tamarind seeds boiled in water which makes a delicious beverage.

(5) Boiled rice with leaves of *Lathyrus sativus* boiled in water. Fruits of *Sal* trees, pulverised and made into small thick cones.—*Illi.*

(6) *Mohua* cakes made by the process described in No. 2, with a gruel made by boiling *Sajina* sticks in water with added salt. —*Illi.*

(7) Boiled rice with salt and red ants put into leaf cups, thrown into fire, and when the cups begin to be scorched, taken out, and the roasted ants inside serve as first-class delicacy. —*Illi.*

Evening Meal

(1) Rice and lentils cooked together with chillies and salt.—*Illi.*

(2) Rice, fish fried in oil, with pieces of dried tamarind.—*Illi.*

(3) Meat of game birds, or pork roasted in fire. The process is similar to the one described in No. 7 above, but the meat is minced, put into leaf-cups and roasted in the fire —*Illi.*

(4) Dried ribs of beef, soaked in oil, put into the fire and roasted with *Lama* or seeds of *Mimosa scandens*, and also sorrels. —*Illi*,

(5) Chicken or beef roasted in fire, maize and brinjals boiled with rice.—*Illi.*

(6) Mashed yams with mutton or goat-meat boiled with chillies, onions and salt.

The Higher Classes: Morning Meal

(1) *Chapati* made the night before from wheat flour, with salt or molasses.

(2) Rice boiled the previous night with water added to it, chillies salt and dried pulse juice, made into a paste.—*Illi.*

(3) *Mohua* cakes, with curried vension, and fried brinjals.—*Illi.*

(4) Rice cooked with brinjals and pieces of pumpkin.—*Illi.*

(5) *Chapatis* and vegetable curry with pumpkin, brinjal and *Sajina* sticks.—*Illi*,

(6) Roasted pigeon with rice boiled with lentils mixed with curd.—*Illi.*

(7) Rice and tamarind cooked together with leaves, flowers or fruits of the *Sajina.*

Evening Meal

(1) Rice and *Dal* or pulse juice.—*Illi.*

(2) Rice and curried fish with brinjal, yam and spices.—*Illi.*

(3) Curried chicken and *Chapati* (rare).—*Illi.*

(4) Game birds and mashed yam and *Mohua* cakes.—*Illi.*

(5) Dried fish or mutton with onions, chillies, turmeric powder and rice.—*Illi.*

(6) Deer (or porcupine) roasted or curried, with boiled rice (rare.)

(7) Rice with curried eggs and lentil soup.

The above represent some typical dishes in the Kolhan, and the varieties that are described do not mean that the same family varies its menu from day to day. Nor do the dishes resemble those that one would expect to be served on a European table. Most of them are very crude preparations, and they have yet much to learn in seasoning the curries and adjusting the ingredients to the standard requirements of such recipes as are obtainable among their more advanced neighbours. Repetition of the same food for days and months is common. The same meat prepared in the same way was offered to the writer for days together, and that in the house of a substantial cultivator. Further, there are certain seasons when fishing and hunting afford a plentiful supply for their food requirements, and during these periods the Hos gorge themselves to satiety, while in other periods they live on starvation diet. This improvidence is more characteristic of the lower classes as the substantial section has learned methods of storage and possesses money to procure them for future needs. In spite of this, we find more variety in food among the lower classes, for in their constant state of want, and with their efforts to satisfy their bare physical needs, they have to make experiments with their food which lead very often to the discovery of new methods of food production (as for example the preparation of flour from many vegetable roots). The higher classes possess more stable methods of food production, but their efforts and experiments are limited by the pres-

criptions they have deliberately borrowed from their Hindu neighbours.

Children are not fed in accordance with any prescribed system of nutrition, and their food varies with the locality. Though we find to-day a few successful cultivators using cow's milk for infants as a result of contact, milk never formed a part of the regular diet of the Hos. In cases of illness only milk is prescribed, and that medicinally. Even then goat's milk is preferred. Children take a long time to wean and usually three to four years elapse before the child learns to partake exclusively of the tribal diet. To teach the child, the mother gives him a small bone to play with, he bites it and learns its use. He is given a little rice-beer to sip in a leaf-cup, or a few grains of cooked rice are placed in a leaf-cup which he learns to pick up and put into his mouth, while the mother watches him with admiring eyes. Often she makes a ball of boiled rice and holds it in a role to his mouth and he bites it at regular intervals. But the first real change at weaning is to *Illi* which the Hos regard as a food, as well as drink. When the child grows up to be a boy he goes out with his bow and arrow, and shoots at small birds that perch on twigs, and then puts the spoil into the fire, roasts, and eats it. He learns also to catch insects, grub and birds, which he shares with his companions. He follows his father, brothers and cousins into the forest, climbs the trees, and collects fruits and roots which supplement their limited diet.

The Hos are a hospitable people. They are keen to entertain guests, and cater pleasantly to their needs. The following two songs are worth quoting.

nepa paromere tamaku tamasatada ko tamaku
therepa paromere berenga benga bangi jolena berenga
pekaye joka nidi me tamaku tamasatada ko tamaku
nuthui joka godeme berenga benga bangi jolena berenga.

Maranggara gitile dipare kharbuja nutuputu
nuringgara kochakudure bengamai senegone,
jomega sananginha, kharbuja nutuputu
nuhuge sananginha ko kochakudure bengasenegone
dakharbuja jetelolore, nesusibila
kocha kudur bengasenegone, sardinuture nesunogoda.

On the yonder bank of the river tobacco is grown
On this bank brinjal is grown
Take as much tobacco you need for your *ficca*
Take brinjals as many as you require for cooking.

On the sandy bank of big river
Water melon has grown in abundance
On the bank of the small river here on the fields
Brinjal has grown luxuriantly.

O, how I long to eat of the abundant melon
O, how I long to cook the brinjals
Water melon is delicious when it is eaten in summer
The brinjal has no comparison when cooked in winter.

5

In a tropical climate people are not found with any superfluity of clothes on their person, and the Hos living as they do in a warm and moist climate, do not occupy themselves with much dress. Yet we cannot say that they go about in a state of nudity, or that they put on leafy garments which the Juangs in the Orissa jungles still prefer to cotton clothes. The lower castes who live in the Kolhan, seldom wear any upper garment to cover the portion from the waist upwards. In winter they put on a woollen rug, or a sewn *Katha* or an Italian shawl to protect them against the cold, which is often very severe. The Hos have little to learn from their immediate neighbours, though missionary influence has effected certain changes in dress among the Christian converts. Proximity to urban centres like Chaibassa or Jamshedpur has not encouraged the use of many new articles of clothing, and styles and fashions in dress have little appeal to the Hos but in recent years, and particularly after the second World War, remarkable changes are noticed in dress and household paraphernalia. Young men put on pyjamas and trousers, women put on fine *Saris*, coloured blouses and even slippers, and dance with umbrella tied to the waist.

If we compare the mode of dress and decoration prevalent in the Kolhan today with that of a few decades back, we shall see what great strides the Hos have made in this matter. Writing about the mode of dress prevalent in Kolhan, in 1854, Sir Henry Ricketts said, "Though ashamed, they with few exceptions wear no more clothes than they did when they had yet to learn that something more than a few leaves was customary out of Singbhum." Col. Dalton also describes how the men and women of the Hos (even those that are wealthy) have no concern for their dress at all, especially in the remote villages.

Before foreign clothes invaded Kolhan, a Ho woman would remain satisfied with a coarse *Sari*, called *Langa*, six cubits by two, made by the village Tanti or weaver, and a man would only wear a *Doputta* and a neat narrow strip of cloth called *Botoi* which is very short (about 4½ ft. by 6 to 10 inches) tied round the loins, a small portion

being allowed to hang in front. The *Sari* covered the portion from waist to the knees and under the *Sari* was worn the *Botoi*. Ho women in the villages keep one *Sari* and a *Langa* or two, 3 yds x 1 yd which is generally used to cover them. *Botoi* is an underwear for them and should always be worn under *Langa* or *Sari*. In some areas it is known as *Denga*. *Botoi* is tied round the loins of small children and in former days even the adults put it on. During the *Maghe* festival, the *Deuri* or the village priest wears only the *Botoi*. Now-a-days, *Denga* is replaced by '*Shaya*', a result of contacts with the urban areas, but it has come to stay, it appears. Inside her house, the Ho woman wore only *Langa* for seldom did she possess more than one *Sari*, which she put on when she had to go out. The portion from the waist upwards was left exposed, and even to-day, the *Jhula* or jumper is worn exclusively by Christian converts. During the last few years, fine cotton fabrics, Japanese and English, have slowly penetrated into the interior parts of the Kolhan, and the natural disinclination of the people to wear these imported stuff, has been conquered with astonishing quickness. It is not unusual now to see even old men in old clothes, particularly second-hand shirts, tunics or jackets which are occasionally doled out to them by philanthropic agencies. However, the aged people have still particular liking for customary rags which they prefer to longer *Dhooties* or even *Botoi*. The women are also sparing in their use of clothes. When they take their bath in the river, or the village *Bandh*, they remove the cloth and enter the water in *Botoi* or very often naked. Exposure of the bust of Ho women does not appear to excite unusual interest among young men who might be seen plunging into the water in the same tank. Men and women are found to behave in an admirable manner and seldom do they indulge in indecent jokes or suggestive gestures. It is only when men other than Hos, tourists, hide-dealers, labour contractors, and small traders come to the village that the Ho women have to 'behave.'

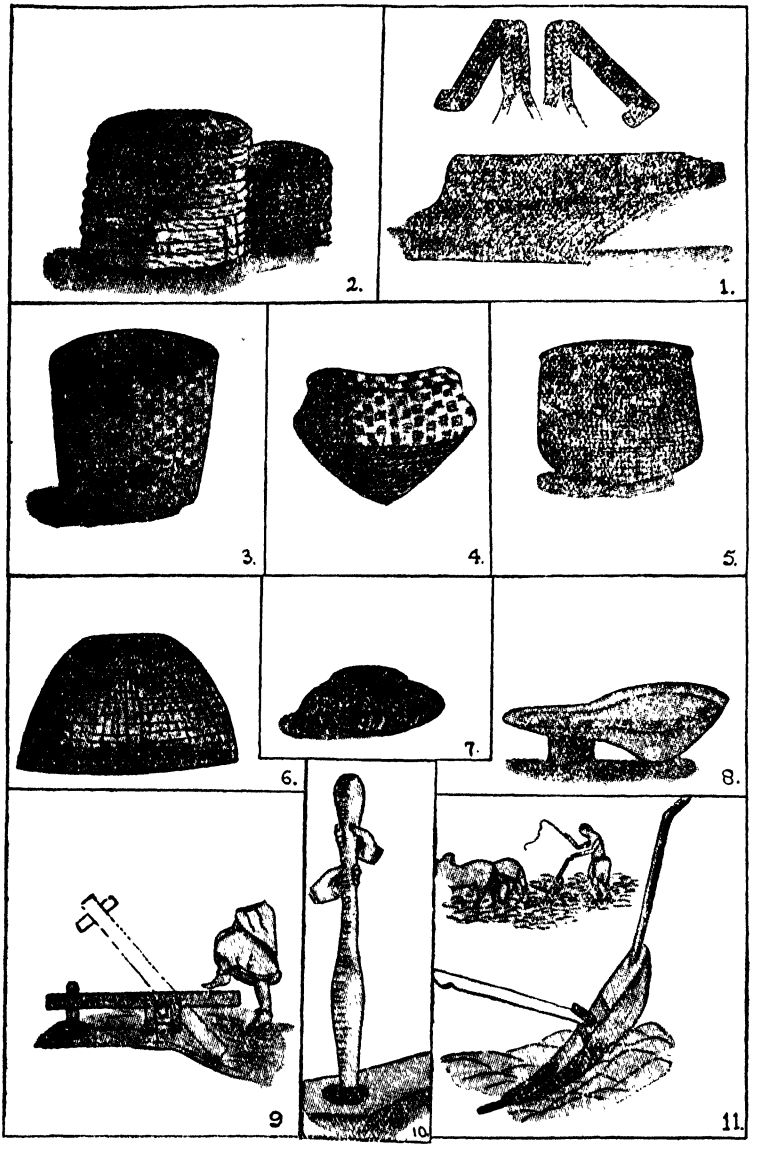
The Hos are great admirers of flowers and any lack of dress is amply made up by floral wreaths and floral ornaments. Those used most commonly are the *Palas* and the *Sal*, while creepers of various kinds adorn their graceful limbs. In the dancing arena, or *Akhara*, of the village, night after night, girls come tastefully decorated with flowers and jewellery and many coral and bead necklaces and armlets

and their attractive dress elicits loud appreciation from the young men. The girls possess lovely black hair sometimes reaching to the knees or lying in curls round the shoulders. When they move out of the house, the hair is tied in a knot on the back of the head. The most attractive mode of hair dressing is a large disc-like knot at the back of the head, which is usually covered with flowers or garlands of creepers. They take elaborate pains to dress their hair, and the effects of the bright red colour of *Mohua* (*Bassia latifolia*) and the pale yellow of the *Sal* (*Shorea robusta*) flowers, add charm and distinction to their beauty.

A change in the mode of dress is now met in the areas round about Chaibassa, and the *Diku* villages of Jagannathpur, Jaintgarh, Kotgarh and Manoharpur. Here various modifications have been effected in recent years, but these are not as yet general and only a small section of the people have adopted them permanently. Others use them on festive occasions or when they go to other villages on special errands, at marriage parties, or when attending fairs or the meetings of the reformists in Kolhan or of the Adibasi organisation.

Men wear *Pichouries*, or *Barkies*, i,e., *Chadars*, *Benta* or turbans and carry napkins, or *Gamcha*. The *Sutui*, or jacket is sometimes worn by men, specially those who have been outside the Kolhan, and worked in mines or plantations, or as coolies in survey and settlement operations, in and outside Kolhan. Children up to five years, usually go naked, but those of the higher classes, use Khaki shirts which sell cheaply in the weekly markets. The educated Hos, (i.e., those who have read in secondary schools or colleges), don shirts and banians, and I have even found silk underwear being used. These cases are very rare and when the boys return to their villages they gradually revert to their original dress. The imported patterns of dress are still tabooed on ceremonial occasions, when the members of the villages, or of the family, have to take any direct part in propitiatory rites, or in sacrifices to the numerous spirits, or godlings, who rule their destiny. Nor are they allowed to put on these clothes during certain social ceremonies, as they are believed to undermine the solemnity of the performance. But those that wear costly stuff like silk shirtings and silk banians, or use socks and shoes, are distinguished from others by an epithet borrowed from the popular vocabulary, viz. *Baboo*. Thus, as I could see, changes in the customary dress have come to

stay in Kolhan, and at present they are hindered by financial difficulties. Even the substantial classes are not above want and while



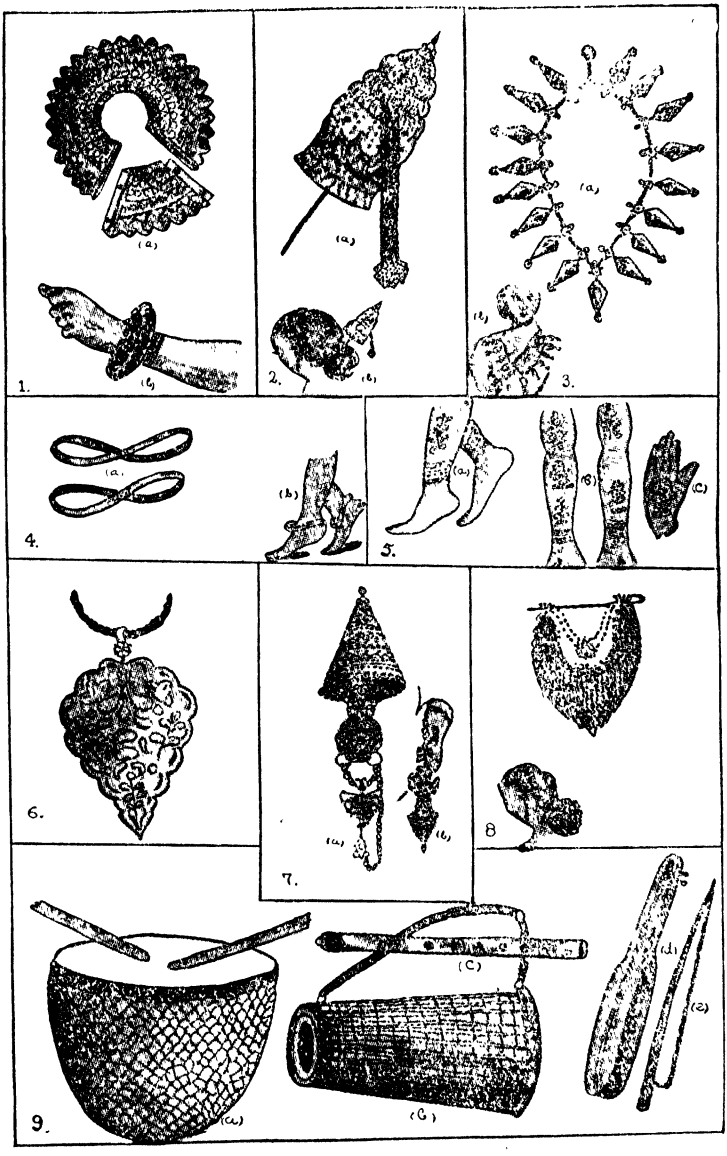
(1–7) Baskets, mats & covers made of rope, cane or bamboo ; (8) Lamp ; (9 & 10) Husking apparatus & pestle ; (11) Plough.

articles of conventional necessity are difficult to procure, luxury in any shape cannot have much scope. The Swadeshi movement has

spread its riples to Kolhan, and the reformist section in Kolhan, being nationalist at heart, advocate indigenous wear, so that the desire for finery has been stifled to some extent. The war has, however, emphasised the use of *Khaki* and young men are fond of *Khaki* while *Bush* or Siamese shirts have invaded the interior of the district.

The Hos do not like very elaborate ornaments. A simple wooden bead necklace, a small ear-ring and a pair of bangles are all a young man will wear, while older men seldom put on any such decoration. *Karas,* wristlets made of brass or iron, rings of iron or copper are also worn by men. Women wear anklets or *Andus*. The wearing of them is extremely painful, yet women are extravagantly fond of them. The *Guna* or *Nakfuli* (i.e. nose pin), *Murkhi* or ear-ring, *Hisir* or necklace, *Sakom* or bangles, are the ordinary jewellery worn by women. The following ornaments are also favoured ; the *Tada* or bracelet for the upper arm, *Masakom* or spiked bangles which serve as offensive weapons for women, *Katari* or very thinly spiked bangles, *Gingri-sakom* or brass *Choories*, *Mudam* or small rings for the fingers, *Bachindi* or silver or brass pins. *Kapa* and *Jhimjhimia* are seldom seen now. Men wear charms (tied round the neck or arms by means of black strings), against snakes, tigers and other dangerous denizens of the forest, while roots of wild plants and creepers with charms muttered into them by the *Deonwa* (witch doctor) are also tied round the waist as a protection against miscreants and sorcerers whose influence is much exaggerated in Ho society. On festive occasions, the women adorn themselves with garlands of plaited flowers, wristlets and armlets, artistically made of *Sal* flowers. The hair as has been said before, hangs in curls round the head. In the villages adjoining the Khunti sub-division, men tie a white tape or a strong creeper round the head in the fashion of the Mundas. Just above the right ear, fastened to the tape is a small wooden comb, which they very often use to dress the hair. Cheap glass bangles, both Indian and foreign, and small necklaces imported from abroad and plastic bangles, rings and combs have found their way into the Kolhan, and the Ho women are very fond of them. Gold ornaments are seldom found and only well-to-do families possess tiny pins and rings made of gold. Silver is replacing nickel, and American gold articles are very much admired by wealthy families.

Besides the dress and ornaments we have detailed above, tattooing is a common form of personal decoration. Though it has



(1–4) Ornaments ; (5) Tattooed limbs ; (6–8) Jewelry ; (9) Musical Instruments.

become less popular among men, women are still fond of it, and it is done when they are quite young. It is seldom practised by boys

who attend schools or colleges, though they sometimes inscribe their own initials on their forearm. Tattooing is done in the village markets and weekly bazars. Though there are certain customary beliefs regarding tattooing, which the elderly women know, the young girls who volunter themselves for such decoration know little of their sanctity. Quarrels often arise between mother and daughter regarding the designs to be tattooed, though in the end the daughter has to yield. The usual explanation given by the mother in support of a particular design is that 'all your aunts, sisters and cousins have this design and they are happy wherever they are ; you should follow their lead." Women tattoo their faces, particularly their foreheads, while men tattoo their limbs and some times their chests. Tattoo marks on women are believed to be necessary as absence of tattoo marks is sinful, and it is believed that if there is anything that survives after death, it is these marks. The soul is believed to be identified by these marks. The tattoo marks in a village or among the members of one sept are not all of uniform pattern. Patrilocal residence makes it obligatory for girls of one sept or of one village to live in different villages after marriage, so that in one family there may be different varieties of tattoo marks. Usually three or four designs are popular in one village, and the choice is restricted to these. Innovation in designs is not frequent and is seldom accepted without misgivings. Tattoo marks found on men denote either distinction won in hunting or other tribal activities, or are simply decorative symbols. Whatever they are, when the body is prepared for cremation after death, these marks are kept exposed. Mutilations and cicatrices are seldom noticed among the younger generation, but tattooing in the case of women is accompanied sometimes by dilating the lobes of the ear or the alae of the nose, especially important for the Hos being the latter form.

CHAPTER IV

TRIBAL ORGANISATION

The Ho village may be inhabited by members of one *Killi*, or it may contain two or more *Killis*, though one of the latter happens to be dominant over the rest. The *Munda* is usually from this dominant *Killi*, and as such, his influence within the village derives not a little support from the leadership of his own *Killi*. Ho society is divided into several clans which take their name from some animal, plant or material object. They have been described as totemistic, and many of their beliefs have been collected by earlier writers to explain the tabooes and superstitions they are alleged to possess about their totems. Sir Herbert Risley tried to explain the origin of totemism by an analysis of totemic beliefs in India, which is an integral part of totemism in other parts of the world. Yet he believed that the religious side of totemism was in disuse, and totemism in India possessed only the social side (i.e. exogamy).[1] Members of a totemic sept cannot marry within the sept, but have to marry outside. Exogamy is a characteristic feature of Ho social organisation. The members of a sept or *Killi* cannot marry within the sept. Thus we have what is generally known as totemic exogamy. In villages where there is one *Killi* or several *Killis*, which are only divisions of one major *Killi*, like the Purty, marriage within the village is tabooed, otherwise, as in Konslaposi, Kotgarh and multi-*Killi* villages, marriage within the village has never been tabooed by the society. The most effective taboo in respect of marriage is the rule of *Killi* exogamy and it is still the principal feature of marital organisation of the Hos. Exogamy has nothing to do fundamentally with totemism in India, as exogamy is a widespread form of social organisation found in most societies primitive or advanced. Risley has mentioned different types of exogamy, and it is found in some form or other, in all tribes and castes in India.

[1] Risley, H., People of India (1915), p. 105.

The higher castes in India are exogamous but eponymous.[1] The Naga *Khels* in Assam too are exogamous. It is also certain that worship of trees, animals and material objects, does not prove totemistic beliefs, nor do the innumerable restrictions about food and drink constitute totemism. The monkey is sacred to the Hindus, and they seldom kill one. In several parts of the United Provinces, the monkey is made a scapegoat, and is ceremonially killed, and buried on certain days of the year, but they will never think of killing one on other days. Similar restrictions are customary about the killing of snake, cat, owl, and other animals. Thus we find that dietary rstrictions, religious or superstitious attitude to animals, plants and material objects, or even the rule of exogamy, do not by themselves prove the existence of a totemic cult. The totemic names that are found among the Hos, do not mean that the animal or plant denoted by a *Killi*, was worshipped, propitiated or venerated by them, or that there were any dietary or other restrictions connected with these animals or plants.

Dr. Hutton has reintroduced Frazer's conceptional theory to explain the origin of totemism, though he admits the inadequecy of the theory. He writes,[2] "It is, however, likely from every point of view that while it (totemism) may have originally started with the conception theory in ignorance of the fact of paternity, it has been encouraged and perpetuated by the ideas of life matter, a separable soul, transmigration and probably other connected ideas, and that number of these have contributed to totemism as still found in India". It is true, as Dr. Hutton thinks, that once the idea of totemism is started, it would be kept alive, and fed by ideas and sentiments, not adequate in themselves perhaps, to start the theory. It is also true, as Dr. Hutton further remarks, that the psychological considerations, sometimes urged as causes of totemism, cannot be regarded as the actual causes, since ideas must have some ultimate reference to observed experience, but they will contribute to the retention of an idea, which would not otherwise survive. If the ignorance of the role of paternity has given start to the institution of totemism, then the latter should have been a universal feature of social organisation.

Writing about Juang totemistic septs, Elwin gives an ingenious

[1] Op. cit. p. 161.

[2] J. H. Hutton, Census Report of India 1931, Vol. I, p. 412.

theory of totemic septs (Man In India, Vol. 28, Nos. 1 and 2, p. 24) 'the septs have come into being partly by imitation, partly as a result of actual historic happenings. For example, a man kills a pigeon and soon afterwards goes blind. The medicine-man connects the blindness and the pigeon. The sufferer decides that the pigeon must be worshipped and protected. Soon he finds himself a member of the pigeon sept.'

When we analyse the stories connected with the origin of totemic names among the Hos, as well as among other cognate tribes, we realise how the innumerable *Killis* of the Hos have come into existence. Most of these stories explain how the totemic relation has emerged out of a dire necessity at a time when human help could not be requisitioned, or was of little avail. The association of the Hos with animals and plants can be easily explained, as in a pre-agricultural stage, it is the animals and plants that are important and so any connection they may establish for immediate relief must be with these animals and plants. In an agricultural stage, on the other hand, the connection with cattle and with natural objects, such as the sun, the moon and the powers presiding over rain, storm and the like, is the more appropriate, and we know that agricultural people all over India, worship natural objects in preference to sylvan deities, and even to the fauna and flora of their forest habitat.

Sir Herbert Risley gives the names of 46 Ho septs, but there are many more which have escaped his notice or are of recent origin.[1] Of these septs some have animal and plant names, the rest are either names of localities or eponyms, while a few represent some portion of totems, e.g., *Kudadah*, the juice of black-berry. Most of the totems are not items of food, and there exist few dietary restrictions among them. The beliefs that one finds with regard to totemic objects among the Hos, may be traced to a recognition of the assistance the totemic animal or plant is supposed to give to the members designated by it, and also to the fact that the totemic object or animal is still regarded as a guardian angel of the clan. Totems such as *Kaundinya or* tiger, *Tubid* or the closing of a hole with straw or similar things, *Hasada* or water sprouting from the earth, snakes, bamboos, baskets, bricks and arrows do not explain that the totemic bond is connected with dietary restrictions. Even if the association with

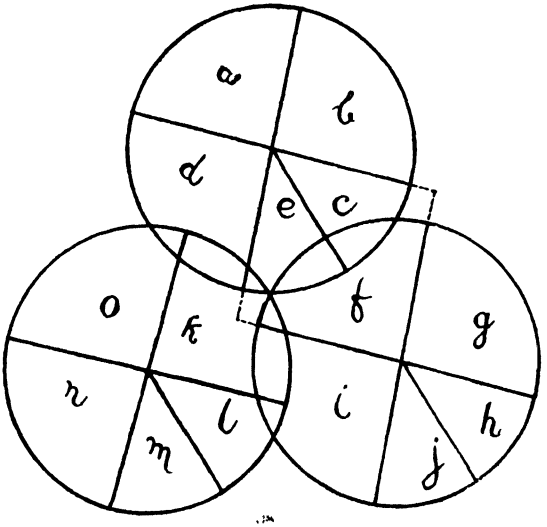
[1] Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by Risley, See also People of India, p. 96.

animals and plants started as an accidental connection, as we have suggested, there yet may evolve a superstitious or religious regard for animals and plants in accordance with the theory of transmigration of souls and connected ideas current in popular Hinduism. The Hos later became permanent cultivators and since they could not explain this association, as many of the customs and practices necessary at one stage of economic life become useless and redundant in another, they might have been influenced by the popular belief in the possibility of their descent from animals, and plants, and as such may have learnt to venerate them or even worship them. At present, however, there is no trace of any such worship or veneration, nor do the people believe in their descent from these animals or plants. These sept names are nothing to them beyond names designating a consanguineous group of persons, and the only taboo that is obeyed by the Hos is that members belonging to the same sept do not marry among themselves. Cases of such marriage occur in the Kolhan, but the contracting parties defend these alliances on the ground that they are strangers to each other, and do not share the same *Sasan*. It remains the rule, however, that members of the same sept living in the same locality cannot marry, and any liaison between a man and a woman of the same sept is severely punished, and the family is branded as *Kajomesin*.

We have described how marriage within the *Killi* is not possible among the Hos, and we have also shown that the Hos are divided into a large number of exogamous septs. Yet, it is not true that a man belonging to one *Killi* can marry or does marry in any of the 50 or 60 other *Killis* that one meets with in Kolhan. All these *Killis* are not unrelated groups. The Purty *Killi* has seven subdivisions, and marriage within these sections is prohibited by custom. There have been cases of such marriage, but they are not favoured by the tribal society. Many of the *Killis* have been split up into smaller fragments, and marriage between these smaller groups is not tabooed. Except those *Killis* that are common between the Mundas and the Hos, others whose corresponding divisions are absent among the Mundas, or the Santhals, are in all probability of later origin. When the Hos left their brethren, the Mundas, and arrived in successive groups at their present habitat, they developed a new social order characterised by exogamy among the new *Killis*, and also by a territorial endogamy,

The division of the Mundas into smaller *Killis*, due to an increase in their number, has been explained by Mr. Roy in his monograph on the Mundas and their Country. He writes, "As time went on and generation multiplied, each *Killi* became enormously enlarged and the unwieldy brotherhoods came to be further subdivided into separate *Killis*. The subdivision was probably expected to avoid the necessity of the members of one *Killi* having to travel a long way off into the domain of another *Killi* to seek wives for their sons and husbands for their daughters." Thus it appears that even *Killi* exogamy is not absolute, and in course of time, when there is an unusual increase in the numerical strength of a *Killi*, the latter may, and actually does, split up into two or more groups.

Besides the *Killi* exogamy, there is a further customary restriction which can be explained by a diagram. If we plot the marriages of a particular locality on paper, we find that they indicate also the direction of territorial organisation in Kolhan. There is no deliberate matrimonial grouping perhaps, as there is no prohibition for marrying outside the groups, but the people prefer to keep their alliances within certain territorial limits. For example, if there are three con-



tinuous *Pirs*, and each of these *Pirs*, for convenience' sake, contains five villages, with one *Killi* in each village, we have three groups of villages, viz,. a, b, c, d, e; f g, h, i, j; k, l, m, n, o.

As every *Killi* is exogamous, and must therefore marry outside, the extent of intermarriage will depend largely upon the permutation and combination of these 15 units, though they may go farther afield. In actual practice, when we plot the list of marriages by generations, we find that the limits of intermarriage are artificially restricted. Proximity to each other is usually the determining factor, and as we trace the marriages through the generations, we find that the marriages of the oldest generation living, were all confined within the smaller circles and rectangles, while as we trace forward to the present time, the circles tend to enlarge themselves till the local barriers are broken down. The oldest marriages were mostly confined to near groups, and generally within the *Pir*. The present marriages are mostly outside the *Pir*, and include alliances between a and n, h and n, c and j, and so on. The advantage of the older system, if such it may be called, was the formation of a matrimonial unit within closer groups by exchange marriages and preferential matings, thus evolving a sort of extended village grouping, which served to develop a reciprocal economic partnership among two or more contiguous villages. The rapid development of communications, and the opening up of inaccessible areas in recent years, have made it possible to enlarge the circle of alliances, and to-day, the whole of the Kolhan is a social unit; and yet it is strange that marriage to-day is more difficult than it was before.

The Hos are a patrilocal and patrilineal people. When they marry outside the village, the wife must come to live with the husband, residence being patrilocal. Women among the Hos do not inherit, they have only the right to be maintained by the family of their birth or of adoption by marriage. They identify themselves with the interests of the family, so long as they live with their parents, and after marriage, with the *Killi* of their husbands. As the *Andi* (ceremonial) form of marriage is becoming difficult owing to the prevailing rate of *Gonong*, and in many cases, is being replaced by mating or *Oportipi* (capture), and *Rajikhusi* (mutual consent) forms, the wife has to be formally admitted to the society by a ceremonial feast. There are many couples in Ho villages who have never contributed to any tribal feasts or shared in any ceremonial gathering to solemnise their partnership, and their social dis-qualification has not been removed on that account. In those cases of *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi* where the parents

of the girl demand and are satisfied with *Gonong*, the public transfer of cattle and of money constitute the right to identification of the wife with the family and *Killi*. In cases of *Anader* (intrusion) and in those cases of *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi* where no such transaction takes place, tribal feasts constitute an indispensable preliminary to patrilocal residence within the village. So long as a bride is not formally admitted to the *Killi*, she has certain disabilities with regard to the family, the *Killi*, or the village. The family *Ading* is the most sacred enclosure within the hut and a woman must be formally admitted to the family and the *Killi* before she is allowed to enter it and perform the daily rites traditionally prescribed. The fear of ancestral spirits becoming enraged at irregularities of this nature and causing harm or mishap to the members concerned make it necessary for the bride to be formally admitted to the family. The festivals of the Hos are private as well as communal. There is the communal worship of the *Dessauli* and *Singbonga* by the village *Deuri* and also worship done by the families themselves. It is at such periods that the wife has to be formally admitted before she can take part in the rites.

So far as the family *Ading* is concerned in cases of *Anader* or *Oportipi* if the bride is not a *Kajomesin* (out-caste) a ceremonial offering of a cock to *Singbonga* by the bridegroom or his parents leads to formal admittance of the bride to the family. In cases where the bride is a *Kajomesin*, the *Ading* is tabooed to her and her husband and when they begin to live saparate they may or may not keep the *Ading*. If they keep one, the husband performs the duties at the *Ading*. Thus, Rengo of Kotgarh village was living with a *Kajomesin* wife, and though Rengo was on very intimate terms with his wife and children his wife occupied a separate hut and the family *Ading* attached to the main house was looked after by Rengo himself. When Rengo was away from the village, his paternal aunt (i.e. father's brother's wife) looked after the daily ministration to the family ancestors, while his wife and children had to supply what was necessary for the performance of the customary rites.

When the *Maghe* or *Baha* festivals come round, and the whole *Killi* or the entire village participates in the ceremonial feasting and worship, a bride who has not been formally admitted to the society, may be so admitted if the particular family offers a sacrifice to the

village Dessauli, and contributes *Illi* and rice towards a communal feast. No particular quota is insisted on by the *Killi* and the attitude in such cases is sympathetic rather than prejudiced. It is only when one of the parties is a *Kajomesin* that special rules are devised by the *punch*, but each case is decided on its own merits and no rigid rules exist as to procedure among the Hos.

So long as the bride does not take part in public festivals of the *Killi* or of the village, and does not undertake to minister to the ancestral spirits in the *Ading*, a Ho can marry and live with a *Kajomesin* wife. Bamra lived with a *Kajomesin* girl, Subhani in Konslaposi, in the Bantra *Pir*. The latter was not allowed to cook food in the family *Ading*, and had her separate hut, where she cooked and lived with her children. Subhani, however, had no tribal rights, and was an out-caste. During the *Maghe* festival Bamra offered a cock to *Singbonga* before he was allowed to participate in the village worship. Gangaram Manki of Bantra Pir, proposed that Bamra's wife, Subhani, should be admitted to the *Killi*, as otherwise his children were being put to great difficulties. A few elders of the village supported this proposal, as Bamra was an indispensable lobourer; he was very skilful in the construction of houses, and he had to get up on the roof of every house for repairs, and however he might avoid his wife, he could not escape pollution. The members of Bamra's *Killi* unanimously opposed his wife's admission to the *Killi*, and Subhani could not therefore be admitted. It is true that Subhani moved more freely later-on than she did before, but it is hoped that in a few years such disabilities would gradually disappear.

Thus we find, when a village contains more than one *Killi*, the authority of the village in social affairs is subordinated to that of the *Killi* concerned, and in the case of any important issue affecting the interests of the latter, the elders of the *Killi* have the last word. It is also certain that in economic activities when the entire village is involved, the authority of the village elders is supreme and absolute. There is no clash of interests between the village and the *Killi*, when the entire village is inhabited by one *Killi*, with a sprinkling of families belonging to other *Killis*, who do not possess an efficient organisation among themselves. But in those villages of the multi-*Killi* type, as for example, Kotgarh, Gundipoa, Hatgamaria, Majhgaon, and Konslaposi, such clashes as occur have resulted in the weaken-

ing of the authority of the *Killi*. As an offence against the *Killi* is not usually a general one, and even if the members shun an individual family, the latter may associate with the families belonging to other *Killis*. In some villages, where the Munda and the Manki happen to wield sufficient influence, offences against the *Killi*, even when there are more *Killis* than one, are dealt with severely, and in such cases clashes of interests and confusion of control of this kind, rarely occur.

2

Clans and Traditions regarding their Origin

(*a*) *Lugum Sept*

When the Hos were a hunting tribe living on the chase and wild fruits and roots, a band of them descended from the north-west during the annual hunt. While they were chasing the game, one of the boys climbed up a tree in the centre of the forest to secure some *Lugums* or *Tusser* when the rest of the company left the forest. He waited for them, but they were not to be found, he cried and cried, but nobody was there. When night came, the fear of animals drove him to the topmost branch of the tree, and he remained there all night. Next morning a fresh batch of hunters entered the forest and discovered the boy. They took pity upon him and led him to the river close by where he was bathed and given some rice-beer to drink, after which they took him home. Then arose a difficulty as to who should feed the boy. One man of the party had a large family, there were seven brothers, and this man was asked to take the boy and bring him up. He consented and the boy was told to tend the cattle of the family. These people were Sidus by *Killi*. When the Hero festival came they thought to themselves, "We do not know his *Killi*, how shall we eat with him?" They then approached the eldest brother and asked his advice, he said, "Yes, I know his *Killi*, he has a *Lugum* with him, so we should call him *Lugum*, and he shall prepare food for us." Then the brothers gave him two pots, one a *Chelang*, or small vessel with a wide neck, and one a *Tundi*, or large vessel, for cooking food in the *Chelang* for himself and in the *Tundi* for them. The food was cooked and the brothers proceeded with the boy to the family *Gora* land to offer sacrifice to the *Hero Bonga*. The boy re-

mained with them, and in due course married and was responsible for the origin of the *Lugum* sept of the Hos.

(*b*) *Deogam Sept*

Deogam is a bird. Its peculiarity lies in its call note, which sounds like "Had Deogam." In very early times, when the Hos were coming from the north-west, on the way one of the women had a child born to her. It happened that at this particular moment this bird cried out, "Had Deogam, Had Deogam," and this was unanimously taken as a good omen; so the descendants of the child took *Deogam* as their sept name. The bird is always welcome to this sept and, on former occasions, food was offered to the bird whenever its voice reached them.

(*c*) *Tubid Sept*

Tubid is to close a small hole by soft materials. When the Hos were on their way to Kolhan, a woman gave birth to a child. It was the custom with the Hos to bury in the ground the placenta and the umbilical cord in an earthen pot, but as no such pot could be had at the place, the woman discovered a mouse hole nearby and sent down the placenta and the umbilical cord through the hole. The descendants of this child came to be known as *Tubids*.

(*d*) *Hasada Sept*

Hasa means clay and *Da* water. A particular section of the tribe, while migrating to Kolhan, determined to settle down wherever the earth and water should suit their taste. Now they began by tasting the soil and the water, and finally came to a place that suited them. The descendants of this section came to be known as *Hasada*

(*e*) *Kalundia Sept*

The preparation of *Handia* was taught to the Hos by *Singbonga* or the Sun god, so that they have been preparing rice-beer ever since they were created. Now, when they were coming to Kolhan, their stock having been exhausted, a particular batch halted at a place to prepare liquor. But when they started to stir the contents of the *Tundi*, or vessel in which the liquor was fermented, they found to their disappointment that they possessed no *Lundi*, or ladle. *Ka* means not, and *Lundi*, ladle. Henceforward, the members of this particular branch were identified with *Kalundia*.

(*f*) *Purty Sept*

This is a division of the Ho tribe and includes as many as seven septs. The story of the origin of the Purty sept is related thus. While on their way through a dense forest, the seven sons of a couple wandered in different directions in quest of food, the youngest remaining with the parents. In course of time the brothers were identified, but each had adopted a particular sept name during migration, the youngest adopting Purty. The descendants of all these brothers are known as belonging to the Purty clan, and no marriage can take place between the members.

(*g*) *Barai-Munda Sept*

This is the name of a Ho who became the *Munda*, or headman, of a certain village. The descendants of this *Munda* all belong to Barai-Munda *Killi*. Hochauli is the place from which the Barai-Mundas came. It is to the west of Jorapukur. The general belief is that the Hos have all come from the north-west.

(*h*) *Melgundi and Kaika*

These two septs have descended from a common ancestor. Marriage is forbidden between them. *Melgundi* means a *Peepal* tree, and *Kaika* also signifies a tree. While on the way a mother gave birth to two male children, one of them under a *Peepal* tree and the other under a *Kaika* tree; the descendants of the former thus came to be known as *Melgundi*, while those of the latter as *Kaika*.

(*i*) *Kudadah Sept*

Kudadah means blackberry juice. It is said that the ancestors of the sept on their way to Kolhan got thirsty and no water could be procured, the village *Bandhs* being all dried up. So they quenched their thirst with blackberry juice, but for which their lives would have been lost.

(*j*) *Jamuda Sept*

Jamuda, *Honhaga*, and *Kandeyang* are all sub-divisions of the *Jamuda* sept, marriage relations being forbidden between them. *Jamuda* means a waterfall. The origin of the *Jamuda* sept is similar to the *Kudadah*. A woman gave birth to three male children at one time. The mother got very thirsty and found a waterfall in the neighbourhood. The cool water of the fall satisfied her thirst and

out of gratefulness she named the first boy after the waterfall, and descendants belong to the *Jamuda* sept.

(*k*) *Samad Sept*

While hunting in Kolhan, a particular section of the tribe pitched their temporary abode near a jungle and then went out in search of game. A whole day passed but no game was to be found. The hunters grew very hungry and some got exhausted. At last a deer was killed and the hunters gathered round the game to partake of it. As the hunters were many in number, one of them took an axe and cut the meat into pieces, which were evenly distributed among them. The act of cutting meat into small pieces is called *Samad* by the Hos, and the descendants of this section of the tribe became known as *Samad*.

(*l*) *Charads and Charabayads*

On a cold day a number of Hos were out hunting when rain came pouring in and the hunters encamped for the night on both sides of a small rivulet. Those on the right bank somehow got up a fire and began to warm themselves, while their friends were shivering with cold on the left bank. The latter then besought the former for fire to warm themselves and it was sent. This shivering sensation is known as *Charad* or *Chorad* in the Ho dialect. Those without fire henceforward were known as *Charads*, their friends on the other side, who helped them with fire, being known as *Charabayads*, i.e., friends of the *Charads*. Marriage is forbidden between these two septs, or *Killis*.

3

Though the family as a segregated unit existed in earlier days, and was not lost entirely in the *Killi*, nevertheless it was not a self-contained unit. The interests of the family found their fulfilment in the larger interests of the *Killi*. In spite of this, we know that there is a division of function between the family consisting of husband, wife and immature children, and the wider family consisting of a larger group of persons, or the entire *Killi*. Production of food is still a corporate responsibility of the extended family but after food is distributed among the individual families, it is the function of the latter to see that the food is economically used. The children

belong to the family but their education and training are matters which must be decided by the wider family group or the *Killi*. An individual may violate an established usage or taboo, but the wider family group has to account for it, and it sees to the compliance of the member concerned with the punishment meted out by the *Killi punch*. Illness in the family is primarily a private matter, but the wider family group, or the *Killi*, has the right to take any action necessary to prevent a recurrence of the same. The worship of gods and spirits, is done on a communal basis, as for example, when the entire *Killi*, or the entire *Hatu*, performs sacrifices and observes feasts and festivals, but the individual family has its own obligation in the matter, and after the communal worship by the *Hatu* or the *Killi*, to which each individual family has to contribute in cash and kind, every family has to perform its own worship in the family *Ading*. Again, most of the relations existing between the family and the *Killi*, are based on the principle of reciprocity and a family receives assistance in proportion to that which it renders to others in times of need. Marriage, death and festivals among the Hos are apparently communal affairs, as the rites and ceremonies connected with them, are performed by the *Killi* or the entire *Hatu*. When the *Killi* kinship was stronger than it is to-day, there was a common *Jangtopa* (the annual ceremony of the dead) for the whole village, and each villager had to contribute his quota to the expenses of this communal performance. To-day the annual ceremony has been replaced by individual celebrations after each death in the village, but the expenses of the ceremony are still met by subscription, and the quota system continues even to-day. The reciprocity of obligations is more finely developed in case of marriage, where part of the bride-price is also paid by the entire village, not to mention of the expenses of feasts and festivities in connection with it. As the *Killi* kinship is overshadowed in many villages by a new alignment of kinship between families united by marriage, the contribution of the different families related by marriage has become more important than that of the *Killi*, though the same principle of mutuality of obligations governs the co-operative pool. In those villages where the dormitory still stands as an institution for the education and training of tribal youth, it is the custom to send the children as soon as they attain a certain age to the village dormitory, the boys to the bachelor's hut, and the girls to the hut for unmarried

girls. In villages which do not possess a girls' hut, the latter are distributed between the widows of the village, who have huts to spare. The bachelors' hut is in charge of a captain, while the hut for girls, if any, is in charge of an elderly duenna, who is expected to superintend the morals of her charge. The children get their meals in their parents' house, but sleep in these dormitories. The maintenance of the dormitory house is the concern of the families, and thus each family has to contribute something towards the expenses of this tribal institution. The dormitory organisation has been completely disintegrated and there are no dormitories today in Kolhan though traces of the institution may be found in the villages adjoining the Khunti subdivision of the Ranchi district in Bihar.

Although the Hos live in families, sometimes one man living with his wife and children, and sometimes a group of brothers or agnates sharing the same house, and participating in common economic interests, the basis of social organisation is the, *Killi* or sept. The *Killi* partakes of the nature of a clan, and is the same as the father *sib* of the American anthropologists. All the members of a *Killi* are united together by a bond of kinship, and marriage within the *Killi* is prohibited. The members of one generation behave towards one another as brothers and sisters while all men who are of the same generation as one's father are addressed as *Gungu* (father's brother), and respected as such. As residence is patrilocal, the wife comes to live with her husband and his people, and she identifies herself with the latter's *Killi*. In all activities of an economic order, the interests of the *Killi* are fundamental, and those of the family are subordinated to that of the former. The members of the *Killi* must conform to the code of behaviour customary to it, and in case of any breach of this code, they forfeit the right to protection by the *Killi*. In many villages of the uni-*Killi* type, the interest of the *Killi* coincide with those of the village, so that disaffiliation from the *Killi* leads to alienation from the village as well.

Though the *Hatu* and the *Killi* may be identical in many cases, yet there is a difference between the two. The *Killi* is primarily a social unit, while the *Hatu* is a political unit. The *Hatu* is presided over by a headman or *Munda*, while the *Killi* has its authority vested in its elders. The *Munda* is responsible to the *Manki* who is the divisional headman, as also to the administration of which he is a func-

tionary, while the *Killi punch* is responsible to the *Killi* itself. The former is nominated by the Government from among the original or *Khuntkatti* families, but the latter is elected by the people.

A Ho, therefore, recognises three kinds of affiliation. First, he is a member of a family and he has his rights and duties as such. Secondly, he is a member of the *Killi*, and is bound by its rules. Thirdly, he is a member of the *Hatu* which carries with it certain privileges and obligations. We have seen above how in some *Hatu* of the multi-*Killi* type, there is a clash of interests possible and how this leads to a confusion. Such troubles as may occur from time to time are the direct outcome of the growth of a sense of competition among the different units of the village, engendered perhaps by cultural contact and a greater knowledge of their immediate economic possibilities. The chances of friction, however, are reduced to a minimum by a closer cooperation between the authorities of the *Hatu* and the *Killi*, and in all cases of breach of the customary rules of conduct, the village headman is assisted by the elders of the *Killi*.

To an outsider, a Ho village appears to be a social, as well as a political unit. The land is at the disposal of the village headman, and the rent is payable to the latter. The village forest is supervised by the *Munda*, with the assistance of the *Dakua* or *bailiff*. The *Munda* is responsible for any crime within his jurisdiction ; he possesses the power of a head constable and exercises it. In cases of epidemics in the village, he organises vigilance parties, and supervises the arrangement for warding off epidemic or transferring it to other areas. He is appealed to in all secular cases in the village. With the assistance of the elders of the *Killi* he decides the date of festivals. He attends the marriage parleys, and advises the villagers about their duties and responsibilities. He is also the trusted patron of the youth organisation of the village. His house in many villages shelters the dormitory, where an independent house does not exist to accommodate it. Besides this, he has his political and administrative duties. So the village is normally the most important institution to which the Hos are required to own allegiance, and yet it is not the first and foremost of obligations of the Hos. The *Killi* is often more exacting than the village, and in matters of religion, and social relationship, a Ho is extremely loyal and faithful to his *Killi* code. It is why the *Killi* figures so much in Ho songs and legends.

The emotional bonds of childhood with the members of the family, depend largely on the share the latter takes in the protection, as well as in the control of the nutritional process. This, among the Hos, is inseparable from the idea of the regular worship of clan ancestors which are sheltered in the *Ading*. Thus with the dawn of awareness, the child comes in touch with an institution which exercises a pofound influence on his mind. The segregation of the *Killis* into *tolas* brings about a closer tie between the children of the same *tola*, and therefore of the same *Killi*. Before they come to share the rights and duties of membership of the *Hatu*, (which they do at an advanced age, usually after they marry), and start a plot of their own, their association is mainly with the members of their *Killi*, whom they know as father and father's brother, brothers and sisters. The prohibition of marriage within the *Killi*, and the customary method of obtaining wives from without, help them to realise the nature of kinship between the members of the *Killi*. Further, the ceremonial propitiation of the *Dessauli* by the *Killi*, and the worship of the *Oa Bongas* on such occasions, simultaneously with the elaborate ceremonies performed by the entire village, explain the inter-relation of these two institutions. The names of children are always names of members of the *Killi*, living or dead, and there is a continuity in the process of selecting names. The terms for brother and sister apply also to the father's brother's children or those of the *Killi* mates, though terms for father and mother denote only these persons. Usually the village is a larger unit than the *Killi*, and the hunter, or the fisherman, distributes his surplus catch, as a rule, among the families composing the *Killi*, and not to the entire village. The members of a *Killi* also follow many industrial pursuits together. The propagation and collection of *Lac* are usually done by members of a *Killi* working together. The breeding of *Tusser* is done by batches of people who in most cases belong to the same *Killi*, and not by individual members ; the building of houses, construction of dams and channels for irrigation purposes, ploughing, sowing, weeding and harvesting are carried out by the *Killi* working as a corporate body. Thus there arises a bond of association between the members of the *Killi*, which is hardly equalled by that existing among the members of the *Hatu*, although from the point of larger interests, the *Hatu* should be the dominant group. In fact the precise relationship between the *Killi* and the *Hatu* depends on the relative

size of each, the degree of economic interdependence within the village, the nature of the political control exercised by the village Munda, as well as the composition of the population within the local area.

In some villages, adjustment between members of different *Killis* is now a matter of choice, and common economic participation in the larger interests of the *Hatu*, is attended by bickerings and friction between two or more *Killis*. The fact of living in the same area is not always enough to sink the animosity arising out of traditional feuds or to reduce the social distance between constituent *Killis*, and it is in such cases that the authority and prerogative of the village chiefs are constantly exercised to effect the normal working of the social machinery. To-day the peaceful life of the interior has been stirred by the cultural waves from other parts. The seasonal emigration of labour outside Kolhan, and the flow of labour from other parts to the mining and industrial centres in Kolhan, have shaken the stability of the primitive social organisation. The lure of urban centres, and the counsel of litigants and touts, have encouraged disaffection against the local authorities. The disintegration in social and religious beliefs and customs, has reduced to some extent the importance of joint worship, and ceremonial feasts and festivals. The numerical increase among the Hos and the consequent lowering of the standard of living have introduced a keen sense of rivalry and competition within the village, while the reduction of the number of traditional occupations, due to a change in the economic environment and the absence of others which could well replace these, have led to a breakdown of the co-operative machinery which hitherto had afforded the key to their social stability. The kinship ties which we have described in detail above, all have therefore been undergoing modification.

To-day, the family has become the dominant element of their social organisation. This does not mean that the institution of the individual family did not exist among the Hos before, or that the social bond created by the common interest of the parents in one another and in children, as well as their economic partnership was loose in earlier days. It only means that the interests of the family are regarded to-day as of greater importance than that of the *Hatu*, or even of the *Killi*. As competition replaces custom as the dominant economic motive of a society, rivalry, jealousy and suspicion between the members of the group are inevitable, and a reorientation of social life on the basis of

self, rather than the group, disturbs the form and destroys the function of social organisation. Thus, a change in outlook is widely manifest in Kolhan, and the phenomenal social solidarity of the Hos, mentioned by the early ethnographers, shows signs of weakness. Yet the lagacy of their *Killi*, or clan discipline and social cohesion, has not disappeared. A Ho family may live independently, it may be a definitely segregated unit, it may constitute a unit with husband wife and immature children, apart from the remainder of the community, but the land is owned and cultivated jointly by a group of brothers or agnates, the rent is paid by the head of the family, who is the oldest male member living, the family property other than land consisting of cattle, money and movable possessions, is held in common, and even the family ancestors may be worshipped under the same roof. An example of this family grouping may be cited here. Lachman of Konslaposi has three sons and two daughters. Tupra, Barakuar and Disu are his three sons. Tupra has three sons and three daughters. Barakuar has three sons and one daughter. Disu has only one son. There are three houses in the family where Lachman with his wife, three sons and their wives and children live. The daughters have all been married. Lachman and the three sons cook their food separately. Disu shares the same house as his father, and his wife cooks for Lachman. The other brothers live in separate houses. The *Ading* of the family is in Lachman's house, and all dishes prepared by the different families are offered in this *Ading* before they are taken by the members concerned. Except this and the possession of the family property by Lachman, each family is independent of the other.

The arrangement described above makes the Ho family of to-day resemble the joint family we find among the high caste Hindus. It is held by some that the social formation, on such lines, as found in Kolhan is due to cultural contact with the Hindus, and is thus a borrowed trait. Joint family connotes joint food, which however, is absent in this case. But this system of family organisation may be the natural consequence of a change from the stage of direct appropriation of food to a stage characterised by permanent agricultural life with rice as the staple grain. Rice cultivation, as the principal agricultural occupation of the Hos, requires permanent corporate activities to ensure stable supply from the tillage of land so that the idea of group association for economic purposes, such as exists among the Hos was

perhaps a necessary condition of the change from nomadism to settled agricultural life. The key to this extended grouping may be found in the cult of joint worship in the *Ading* and all those whose ancestors are sheltered in the family *Ading* form the group.

Again, the earlier methods of capturing wives from neighbouring *Killis* and the consequent feeling of animosity between warring neighbours are things of the past. The absence of communications and the fear of importing the magic of other *Killis* into the village, no longer exist in Kolhan to the same extent. Women who could hardly come back to their own village after they were married to other villages, do come periodically to live with their parents. Family life has evidently become more complex to-day than it was before. At the same-time, a new alignment of kinship which we may call the 'extended family' to avoid confusion with the Hindu joint family, has become possible because the *Killi* has expanded into a very large group by multiplication, and its influence on the individual family has consequently weakened.

CHAPTER V

TRAINING AND RECREATION

Whoever has lived with the Hos for any length of time must have noticed how the women do most of the work while the men sit indoors, or in the courtyard of the village headman smoking *Ficca*, and playing with children with earthen balls and wooden sticks, or showing them how to make arrows and to shoot them. We have found that weaning among the Hos takes place at 30 to 36 months, and even after this, occasional suckling is not denied to children. But unlike many tribes, the Ho mother is not constantly associated with her child during the whole period of suckling. As soon as the mother is fit to take part in domestic work, which she usually is after eight to ten days, she shares with her husband the duty of keeping the child. Rarely is she seen walking with the baby strapped to her back, though as soon as she finishes her work she takes over her charge from the father, and hugs it or holds it on her lap. From the time the baby is six months old until it is 2 or 3 years, the child moves from one to another, from mother to father, and from father to elder sisters or brothers if any, to allow the mother to do her house work. When the father is also busy, specially during the agricultural season, or when he goes out of the village, the child may be clumsily carried by its small sister who may be six or seven years old. Often it is put down on the ground under a tree, or the shadow of a house, and the sister may run off to play with other children, only to come rushing back whenever the baby seizes something nearby to put in its mouth. The mother may come occasionally to see how the child is doing, and to suckle her baby during intervals, but most of the time from morning till evening the child is with the father, sister or brother. There is no fixed routine of sleeping, waking and meals for the baby and the Ho mother times her attention to the child in accordance with the cry of hunger. The sister stills the baby's cry and hunger by sounding a *Dama* or *Nagera*, by singing songs, or by screams and laughter, and

often by putting her finger to the mouth of the child, and also by hugging it to her breast just as her mother does. Sometimes, the child becomes so fond of the sister that it refuses to return to its mother, and the latter has to put her nipple to its mouth before it can be physically transferred to her. This relationship with the sister grows more and more, and for the first five years or so, the child becomes her pet. It often happens that the sister wants to get away and join her playmates, and she handles the child in such a way as to make it feel uncomfortable and want to change its position. Mothers are often heard to complain against the rough handling of the sisters and warn them every time not to treat the baby unkindly, yet the child remains most of its waking hours in the company of its sister. In spite of the fact that the Ho mother has little time to spare for the child and as her association with the child is occasioned by its nutritive needs, the children are very affectionately reared, and the father, and small brothers and sisters of the child perform as tenderly as the mother herself, all the small services it needs. Children sleep on the backs of their small sisters or on their laps, while the latter sit in company with other girls and listen to stories told by the old women.

As soon as a child has passed three *Maghe* festivals (that is the usual way of counting years in Kolhan) or when the mother feels she has conceived again, the breast is considered unhealthy to the child. It is not always possible for the mother to induce the child to leave the breast immediately she wants it to, but she has to explain to the child that it is not proper for a big boy of three to be hugged at her breast, or that her milk has turned to poison and must not be taken by him, or she paints the nipple with a coat of *Neem* paste so that the child leaves it in disgust. Some children of four or five years of age want to be fed from the breast before they go to bed at night, but public disclosure by the mother of such conduct has often achieved success, as children are ashamed of this being known to their playmates. This shows how social disapproval and ridicule play an active part even at such a tender age.

The difference between boys and girls becomes more and more pronounced from the fourth year or so. While children seldom put on any clothes before they are seven or eight, girls begin to wear a piece of rag round their loins, earlier than the boys. While the Ho girls and Ho boys in their teens are attractive to look at, Ho children

seem positively ugly. The exposure of their bodies to the sun and rain, their constant playing of muddy and dusty games, the hurried meals which they take with particles of food and drink falling and sticking on their bodies make them look quite disgusting objects at times. But as soon as the boys take to the use of bows and arrows, and walk in batches of four to five in search of small birds, or follow a peacock from one patch of jungle to another, clapping and shouting, they look smart and becoming. Hours and hours are spent very happily by their playing popular games, such as *Kanju*, *Sekar*, *Kasa*, *Hotadanda* and *Tukaodanda*. Their temper is extremely mild and agreeable, and quarrels between boys of the same age are infrequent. The smaller boys follow older ones and their fathers at times, while girls keep to the company of their mother or of older girls of the village. There are certain sports which are meant for boys, and certain others reserved for girls. Some of course are played by all. The girls very often stay at home and help their mothers to collect wood, carry water or follow them to the fields and act as nursemaids to their small brothers and sisters. The boys learn to make bows and arrows, build toy houses, skip with ropes made of *Sawai* grass, learn to play on the drum, *Mandol* and cymbals. At night when the young men and women of the village dance at the *Akhara*, smaller boys and girls stand in row behind the dancers and imitate the steps. They very soon become expert dancers. When they go out with their elders to the fields or to collect *Mohua* and other jungle produce, they take their *Rutu* and *Banam* with them and between the periods of work they weave garlands of flowers, put them round their head and neck, and play the flute like the traditional cowherd of the Hindu epics. The boys watch their parents light a fire and roast meat in small *Pulias* or leaf-cups, and when they shoot birds or trap them, they also light a fire and spit them on long sticks and smoke them and eat them on the spot. Toy musical instruments are rare, the boys have always access to the tribal store after they are brought out by some members and placed in the *Akhara*. Before the commencement of the dance and after the completion of a round, smaller boys practise the drums, and sound the *Birdiring*. On festive occasions when the villagers dance day and night, the boys continue to play these instruments whenever the chance is offered them during intervals, with ceaseless energy.

All Ho boys and girls know how to swim. They start in shallow beds of rivers when their mothers come to fetch water, and during the seasons when water stagnates in small hollows, or depressions, on the surface of the land, or *Talaos*, they are taken by their parents and taught to swim. Yet many are the cases of unnatural death due to drowning and they trace it to witchcraft which is believed to be very potent in such case. When the fishing season comes, and the villages organise fishing parties, the children are allowed to accompany them with small nets and receptacles for the fish, and also with a rod and hook. One method of fishing popular among children is for two boys or girls to take a piece of linen and stand against each other, and with one end of the linen above the surface of water, they close up the water by the other end dipped into it and catch small fish. At the age of seven or eight a Ho boy becomes adept in fishing, bird-catching and swimming, and learns ploughing, sowing and weeding as well as herding. A Ho girl gets up early in the morning, sweeps the yard in front of the house, keeps her small brother or sister while her mother rinses the floor of the house, cleanses the utensils, fetches water, and distributes food to the family. Hunting as an occupation no longer exists in Kolhan, so that there is no organised attempt on the part of the Ho society to teach it to the boys.

The rules of etiquette are taught to the children by the parents, and on many occasions I have heard a brother complaining about his sister or a sister about her brother, that they have not complied with the rules of decorum. Among other rules, a small child is taught to obey a member of the *Killi* to listen to his advice or warning, he learns how to bow to a person who is older than himself, or to massage his brothers and sisters, and to distribute food to others if there is a surplus. He is taught to show respect to the village *Munda* and to all the elder members of the village, male or female. He learns also to honour the guest of the family or of the *Killi*, to look to their comforts, to refrain from annoying them, or inconveniencing them in any way. A mother may be seen hugging her son, and pressing him to her breast and saying aloud, "Rengo has done this, my son will never do it, my son will be obedient, my son will be honest, obliging and capable, will be blessed by *Singbonga*, no harm will ever touch him, no illness will overtake him, no man will spite him, no sin will touch him.'

There is to-day no initiation ceremony for boys or girls in Kolhan

only marriage paving the way to social status. Most of the villages do not possess the dormitory house, which even to-day affords a training ground for the boys of the Oraon villages. In those villages where a common house for the boys of the village exists, there is little organisation amongst the inmates, and it is only a sleeping room for those who do not find adequate accommodation in their own houses. Even if there is no dormitory house in a village, boys may, and actually do, sleep together in batches of ten or more in different houses within the village and there arises a bond of friendship between those who share the same house at night. The elders of the village will tell you where the boys of the village are to be found, and in all the activities of an economic order, they are found to associate together, and act like a corporate body. Each of these groups has a leader who is not elected, but who possesses a personality and a capacity for leadership, who selects his followers and directs and controls his comrades for diverse purposes. As soon as a boy is eight to ten years old, and if he has not already afforded proof of being mischievous and wicked, the leader of a group sends a message to him to come and join them. Unless he has already decided to join some other group he is given the opportunity of sharing the company of that group for a few days, after which he may leave it or affiliate himself to it permanently. It is not always true that every village must have a number of such groups. There may be only one such, even if the members are distributed among different houses. It depends entirely on the personality and the tact of the leader, two qualities which may not go together. In those villages where we have a multiple grouping, feuds and hostilities are not unknown between different groups, and the intervention of the village headman and the elders is often required to soften such antagonism. Yet, this is probably a healthy sign of life so long as such grouping is not based on the principle of classes, in which case, friendly relations between rival groups become impossible. But in villages with two or more *Killis* of equal strength, there is either no such grouping or there is segregation of boys of the same *Killi*. It is in such villages, that strained relations exist between the youngmen which in later years take definite shape, and may end in criminal offences.

Although Ho boys learn most of their tribal occupations when young, they are not required to toil hard for their bread and from

the age of ten to the time when they perform the *Bapala* ceremony (betrothal), their life is very easy and comfortable. So long as the parents are alive, they do not worry about food, clothing or shelter. It is only when the parents die, that they are brought face to face with realities. There are hundreds of songs in Ho language bewailing the death of parents, and extolling with pride the comforts of an established home with parents catering to the needs of the children, and demanding little of their co-operation for economic needs. The Ho boys and youths care more for *Dama*, *Dumang* and *Susun* (i.e drums, dances and songs) than for occupations which are expected to assist the family. The watch-word of their life is best conveyed in the following song, so popular in Kolhan:–

Rasikana bu somdi,
Nen jibon mena rebu rasikana kong,
Nen jibon mena rebu rasikana kong,
Kabu nameya somdi,
Nelekan rasika do kabu nameya kong
Nelekan rasika do kabu nameya kong,
Kabu tarina somdi,
Nole hasa leka do kabu tarina kong,
Buru daru leka do kabu wagen kong.

Be merry, my dear!
Be merry as long as this life lasts,
We shall not find,
We shall not find such joy,
Nor are we to live forever, my dear!
We shall not be lasting as the earth,
Nor like trees do we shoot out into new leaves!

Even hard work, toil from morning to night or drudgery in an unwelcome house, as when a girl has to live with her brother's wife or with her *Gawain* (step mother), have not robbed the Ho youth of its proverbial cheer and humour, though if one takes into account the large number of cases of unnatural death from suicide or drowning, one may think it otherwise. Every young man and every maiden of Kolhan must turn up punctually at the village *Akhara* after finishing his or her evening meal and must take part in the dance every night. Cares and anxieties, they seem to have none. They donot worry about the future. Intensely attached to the native land, young men would laze and lounze in the village, even if they have no food in the house. As long as the parents are there to pro-

vide them with food, a Ho youngman seldom worries. The songs below are true to Ho life.

Negaing napuing taikena
Sodom-jom jome khesari chetanerinha
Negaing napuing bangay jana
Sadom jon jome khesari nosorejana.

While parents live
You are fond of delicious *Khesari*
When parents are dead
The soft *Khesari* disappears.

Khesari (*Lathyruo Sativa*) is a kind of pulse. It is considered a delicacy by the Hos, and the example is meant to show the helplessness of the Hos after the death of the parents,–

Again:–

Dinda thanam jarma thanam sepered
Othe thopor pinda dom thega thega ya
Othe thopor pinda dom thega thega ya
Andi nanam korandi nanom sepered
Othe thopor pinda tham mukui chetane ya
Othe thopor pinda tham mukui chetane ya
Honanam hoponanam sepered
Hone jirim jipida stri konre
Hone jirim jipida stri konre.

O youth when unmarried you wore
And kicked the *dhoti* that kissed the floor
Now married, that dhoti you wear
With its sweep up and knees clear
And when children you beget
The *dhoti* then is a weight instead.

Read again:–

Kora non men janom lena
bir jantuleka ge disumen nonora
bir jantuleka ge disumen nonora
nam nam lagedthe
Negaing napuing koji nakaringthan
negaing napuing koji nakaringthan
Chanabredo badredo
Kalijug kuri rem chakade jana.

Your parents search you far and near
And lost their sleep to seek you here
But shame on you, a man so bold
To lie in an easy women's hold.

A woman of *Kalijuga* is a woman of doubtful morality. It is only when young men marry that they have to care for themselves and that also when the parents are dead. So affectionate are the parents that the Ho youth is jealously shielded against want and discomforts, till they become so susceptible to illtreatment or neglect that a slight suspicion is enough to drive an otherwise healthy young man or woman to commit suicide.

The daily routine of a Ho young man, from morning to late night may be summed up in the following sentence, eat, play, eat, play ; eat and dance till the stars change their places, and the darkness of the night fades into the twilight of morning. As soon as the red rays of the rising sun reach the tops of the hills and trees, Ho boys and girls leave their beds and attend to a number of daily engagements which they fulfil without grumbling. Tending of cattle, especially sheep and goats etc., is still done by the village *Ahir*, but in those families which keep their own cattle, the youngmen look after them. They bring the cattle out and goats, if any, and tie them outside the sheds. Then they clean the pigeon cage, and release the fowls from the pen. Next, they retire for evacuation and one by one proceed to the bank of a river or *Talao* for their morning wash. Here they brush their teeth, wash their hands and feet and come to the village *Akhara* or the *Sasan*, where they discuss their daily programme. While the leader plans a scheme for the day, other boys sit in groups, smoke *Ficca*, narrate their dreams and tell their experiences, or indulge in riddles. Kande's son (Kokcho village) Durga once told his playmates, how his father who was away for a long time, appeared before him in a dream with a cock in his hand, and how he was afraid of his father. Next morning, however, he learnt that his father did not come. His mother heard the dream and offered a cock to the *Dessauli*, as she believed that it was a command from her absent husband. Strangely enough, Kande returned to his village within a week which he did not intend previously.

When the programme is fixed, the meeting is adjourned and all the boys disperse. They go back to their respective homes, eat their meals, and lead the cattle to the venue for the meeting. This is usually at the outskirt of the village or at the boundary of the forest, where there is a tall canopying tree. The cattle graze in the neighbourhood, and the boys keep an eye on them. Here they take to

playing games, climbing trees, gathering honey, felling bird's nests, collecting berries, shooting birds and tracking animals in the forest. The girls may follow them to collect wood for fuel, and also participate in some of the mixed games. Thus during the agricultural season, when ploughing is over, and men need not go to the fields, the women attend to them after they finish their household duties, and boys and girls retire to another part of the village for play and work. The doors of all the houses in the village are bolted from outside, men sit in the house of the village headman or of the *Deuri*, and the entire village appears deserted. As the sun inclines to the west, first the women come back and resume their work in the house, then the men with the smaller children, and lastly the young men and women from the forest, with the cattle, wood, and flowers and fruits. After they take their meal, which is usually served when the sun is halfway towards the west, i.e, at 2 or 3 in the afternoon, the young men assemble again at the *Akhara*, while women take charge of their young ones, or go out again to gather fuel, or retire to the *Akhara* to see the children play. The boys and girls play their favourite games while their parents watch them. As the day glides on to the night, the players disappear in the twilight and return to their respective homes. They take their light repast, and as the drums in the *Akhara* sound the tune of welcome, they come out of their homes, and each gathers his or her friend, and file in pairs to the *Akhara*. The girls are tastefully decorated with bead necklaces and lovely garlands of flowers round their heads; the tune becomes quicker and livelier, and the gloom of the night is lifted by the crooning of the girls; the drums continue to beat till midnight, the flutes and cymbals keep company till the party gets thinner. When mid-night approaches, the dancers leave the *Akhara*, but some enthusiasts still remain till the village *Munda* or some elderly member of the village appears on the scene and tells them to stop and go to bed. On all sides of the *Akhara* there are flat stone slabs, on which men and women past their prime may sit, and mothers put their sleeping babies on pieces of mat, and enjoy the music and the rhythmic dance.

It is at dances and at games that the discipline of the youth is mostly manifest. Boys and girls who infringe the rules of tribal etiquette, or defy the orders of the seniors, are not allowed to take part. On many occasions, I have seen girls decked with flowers,

eager to join in, with eyes swollen and tears rolling down the cheeks standing as spectators in the *Akhara*. When questioned, with choked voice they replied that they did not feel well or they did not want to, amidst the whispers and smiles of their friends and playmates. In a village, on the Seraikhela side, I presented a few rupees to the captain of the village dormitory, which still exists there, though there is little internal organisation, and less effective control over the youth of the village. A large quantity of *Illi* was brought by the young men, and at dusk, people began to assemble for the drink and the dance to follow. When the dance commenced, there was a huge uproar, and the songs were getting louder in volume as the dancers were being frequently regaled with the drink. Two modest girls, with watery eyes, suddenly addressed me from behind and on turning back, I found them silent and blushing. I asked them what had happened. They did not explain anything but only asked me to request the captain to allow them to participate in the dance. As I did not think that permission was necessary, I asked them to join in, which, however, they did not. I called the captain, who was in a joyous mood, and asked him to concede to their request. He suddenly turned grave and looked at the girls. The girls lowered their heads and I could realize the situation. But the girls were permitted to join at my request and I still remember the happy faces I saw then. When guests from other villages join in, the dance becomes livelier, and each is anxious to show his or her skill and many a time, I found the girls more attentive to the youngmen of other villages, but as soon as this is noticed, the girls drop out of the dance, and only join when asked to.

SPORTS AND GAMES

The Hos used to play a large number of games, many of which have today gone out of favour. Every Ho village in the morning and in the evening was full of life, replete with joy while the *Akhara* was an arena for display of skill and cooperation. There are games in which children copy the productive activities of their elders, there are others in which they immitate the activities of various animals, identifying themselves with particular species by their gait and movements or by mimicking their howls or groans; sometimes the children are found to create new games by combining elements

from different games. There are also games which display movement, like running, swimming, climbing trees, or mimicking dance movements of particular members of the village, and there are games of skill, chance or enterprise. The bull-roarer, the top, the percussion caps—have a special appeal to naughty children and they make a lot of noise, even to the annoyance of the elders. Elderly boys may play marble or dice, or gamble with cowries, but they may not mix up with the younger children.

Chhur is a popular game of the Hos, and is also played by the other tribes in Chota Nagpur. A court is drawn on the ground by scratching parallel lines on grass lawns, the number of parallel lines limiting the size of the parties, put against each other. The players divide themselves into two camps, and a lottery decides which party should lead the attack and who should defend. The crossing of the extreme line is the goal, and if any member of the attacking side, can come back to the place he started from, after reaching the goal without being touched by any member of the defending side, who stand on guard in the lines. The game is won by the side who can get a member back from the goal without his being caught in the process. If any member is caught, by the other party while attempting to cross the rubicon the party is disgraced and the latter has to change side. This game is also played by the Mundas.

Kanju: Boys make a hole in the ground and they throw a stone each from a distance at it. If the throw succeeds in putting the stone into the hole the thrower wins and stands aside. The throw continues till all the competitors succeed, the one that does not, has to hop up the distance from the hole to the starting place. The others again start throwing stones in the order they began, and the competitor who fails to put the stone in, takes the place of the first defaulter.

Kasa: In this game, stones are thrown at a stick fixed at a distance and not into a hole, as in *Kanju*. The play repeats the procedure as for *Kanju*.

Hotadanda: Each player comes with a stick and a mark of ownership is stamped on it, and a thread is tied to mark it off from other sticks. One of the players collects the sticks from all, and putting them at the back moves fast, letting the sticks slip down in a heap. The stick that lies at the bottom of the pile, is the guilty one, and

its owner must place it in front of him. Others take their sticks and charge the man, to remove the stick placed in front of the latter. If he can touch any body while picking the stick, the latter has to stand aside till no one is available to charge him ; he then picks up the stick and puts it on his head where he has to balance it and walk with it without touching with his hands, to the place fixed beforehand.

Tukaodanda : A rectangular area is scratched out on the ground and lines drawn bisecting the rectangle into two moieties. The players divide themselves into two parties of equal strength and a toss is made ; the party which loses in the lottery has to place all their sticks or *dandas* on the median line. The players of the opposite party now throw these sticks at the heap from a distance of 12 to 15 cubits, their object being to shift the sticks outside the boundary line. The player whose stick falls out of the boundary line comes to the heap of sticks and taking his stick under his armpit begins to scatter those of the opposite party out of the area, care being taken to shove the sticks clean over the boundary line. If the stick, however, remains half outside and half inside, he loses his chance and is regarded as 'dead' by his partners and the next man of the party takes up his position. If all the sticks are thus thrown outside the area, the party is said to score one game, but if all the members are dead before the sticks can be removed from the area, the party loses and the latter has to place the sticks on the median line to enable the other party to try their chance. Before the players begin the game, they make an agreement between themselves that whichever scores 2 to 4 games will be awarded the palm of victory. When one party succeeds in scoring the agreed number, the other party has to place the sticks against each other in a starting posture, so that they interesect one another at the top ; one member from the vanquished party measures 23 steps from the heap of sticks, whereupon the players of the winning side, throw their sticks at the heap. The sticks must be hit to scatter them away from the area marked beforehand.

Kulaochal : This is a sedentary type of game, played by two persons, usually by grown up boys, or by older people. A diagram resembling a draughts board is drawn on the floor of a room or the verandah or on the *Sasandiri* with chalk or red earth, with small pie-

ces of stone or similar hard substance, are placed at points of junction of the three horizontal lines with the three perpendicular lines and with the four sides of the quadrilateral. Two persons sit face to face on two sides of the diagram. 4 of the units are called signs of *Kulao*, the remaining 20 represent *Merom* or goats. One party owns the tiger, the other the *Meroms*, and the latter defends his charge against the tigers. The game is full of thrill and calculations, for a slight error in placing the *Meroms*, means a loss to the owner, the tiger can only kill to the right and left of a *Merom* inadvertently left vacant. The game continues till all the *Meroms*, are devoured by the tigers. The credit is his who can so move the *Meroms* that the tigers may not eat them by crossing them and getting a place to rest to their right or left.

Landapati : In this game one of the players is made a judge and he holds out both his palms on which the players have to strike with their palms saying, '*Landapati keruid guto*'. The judge must catch the striking palms and if he does, the player becomes the thief, and others immediately blindfold him, after which they hide themselves. The judge will now take off the handkerchief with which his eyes were covered and on he runs to catch the other players. If he can do so, before the players safely reach the judge, the stigma is passed on to the player caught by the first thief.

Mali-inu : In this game, the players collect under a big tree when a sort of lottery to decide who should be the *Mali* or the untouchable. A leaf is taken and a mark is made on it preferably at the end. The players are asked to pull the leaf out bit by bit, from the palms of an elder member of the group who conceals the mark, between the palms. The one who draws out the mark becomes disgraced as *Mali*. Next a stick is thrown at a distance by the same person who decided the lots and the *Mali* has to run after it to pick it up, in the meantime, the other players climb up a tree; the *Mali* has to touch the players while climbing, to transfer the stigma to one caught in the process.

Mali-inu in water : This is the same game played in water. The game begins when the players get upto neck in water and each starts making a sound by displacing water with the thumb and the forefinger first held together and then let loose. A player who fails to make this sound is the *Mali*, and he has to catch others who take long dive into water to escape him.

Kind-inu : This is a dramatic game in which one of the players mimics a hen and a second player that of a kite and the rest follow as chickens. The kite sweeps down on the chickens, and the hen has to protect her little charge from the kite either by hiding from or fighting with the kite. The game is simple, the hen heading the line and the kite striking at the hen as well as the chicken in a swoop, which keeps a particular angle, so that a little evasion on the part of the hen and her chickens foils the attempt to strike by the kite.

Gaigai-inu : This is also a dramatic game in which a big circle is drawn on the ground and the players make lottery by means of a leaf as described previously. The man who draws out the mark from inside the palms becomes the culprit and has to mimic a monkey. All the players have to come inside the circle and the *Gai* who has to walk on all fours proceeds to catch the players who move inside the circle, careful not to allow themselves to be approached by the monkey. The *Gai* makes faces at the players, and mimics the shrieks of the monkey. Should a player be caught or get out of the circle to avoid the *Gai* when the latter pursues the player, the former has to play the role of the *Gai* and the original *Gai* is allowed to join the rest.

Baga : This game is played with sticks and potsherds. A four armed figure is scratched on the ground and within it a line is drawn bisecting the one into two. The players are divided into two parties of equal strength and a crude lottery decides which party should take the offensive. The party beaten in the toss plant their sticks upright on the median line at the centre of which is put in a big stick which is the *Baga*. Against each of the sticks save the *Baga*, the players place the potsherds, and the offensive starts by striking against the potsherds from the bottom line. The third line is 15 to 20 cubits off from the second or median line. The players on the offensive, put each a potsherd, on the line opposite the second line, and with the help of the sticks strike the pieces in a way so that the latter may strike against the sticks of the opposite party. In doing so if the potsherds strike the sticks on the defensive line or get out of the first line without touching the sticks of the second line, the players are given a further chance of striking at the sticks from the first line in which case they have to strike against the remaining sticks that could not be displaced before. If they succeed in striking against

each of the sticks on the second or median line they are said to win and are allowed to strike a second time from the third line, i.e. a fresh game begins.

Cock-fight : The most popular pastime of the Hos is cock-fight. Whoever has walked through a Ho village must have noticed the number of powerful cocks reared by the Hos and trained for fight. The season of cock-fighting usually begins in January and continues till the end of May, but days are fixed otherwise also, when all the people of a *Pir*, or two flock together to run their cocks on challenge. During the *Dusserah* and other Hindu festivals, whenever the Hos gather for dance and drink, they may organise cock-fighting on a small scale, but winter is the best time for this national sport. A *Kathi* or *Surukhi* is tied to the right leg of the cock, and a second called *Bankira* to the left leg, the edges of the weapons having been finely sharpened. The parties challenge each other and in presence of a crowd, the cocks are made to fight to the joy of the crowd. The fight lasts so long as the cocks do not succeed in disabling each other, but if one is disabled, the owner of the other cock, picks it up as his prize. When side betting takes place, the game is not played honestly. The judge may take side, his decision may not be fair, or the bird may be doped; all kinds of subterfuges are resorted to and even brawls and fights take place between the contesting owners and their respective supporters.

CHAPTER VI

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

1

The Hos consider pairing as essential to fecundity. They recognise the importance and desirability of mating, so that they would not like even inanimate things to remain unwed. Just as men and women who are unwed and live singly are regarded by the Hos as socially less effective members of the community, so also the trees, and other natural objects on whose bounties they have to depend so much, become useless unless ceremonially mated. Thus tree marriage, marriage of natural objects such as the sun, the moon and the earth are customary in Kolhan. Every species of plants and creepers has sex. The gods of the Ho pantheon are today conceived as male and female, and when they make offerings to them, they try to cater to their taste as man and woman. *Sing-bonga* has his wife *Oteborom*, and some say, *Chando-bonga*. The village *Dessauli* has a consort in *Jahira-buru* (the spirit of the grove). Before the fields are to be furrowed, the earth (Oteborom) is ceremonially married by the Hos to the sun, or *Sing-bonga*, and the blossom of the *Sal* trees indicates the coming of age or puberty of the earth, when marriage means the possibility of reproduction. When they go out fishing they 'marry' the nets and receptacles for fish and before undertaking a hunting excursion, the spears, bows and arrows are ceremonially wed. The fact of this mating is recognised as fruitful in economic undertakings. When the *Sal* flowers blossom, the earth appears like a bride decked with garlands of flowers, ready to unite with the resplendent sun from whom she receives all her energy. The part of the sun is played by the *Deuri* or priest, and his wife plays the role of the earth, and this divine marriage is performed every year before earthly marriages can be arranged. All Ho marriages are celebrated after the divine marriage.

The Hos appear to have regulated their sex life by an alternation of obsession and inhibition. Sex is indirectly inhibited for a considerable period of the year on account of the customary rule of marriage. When the Hos work in the fields during the busy agricultural season they taboo all sexual intercourse in the house. When they go out hunting or fishing, or for rearing cocoons, they practise strict sexual continence. Intercourse between husband and wife is tabooed for two or three years after the birth of a child. This rule to-day is more often broken than observed, and it is probable that the fall in the number of polygynous marriages in Kolhan is due to the lack of rigidity in the observance of this customary prohibition. Polygyny is still a recognised institution among the Hos, and the number of wives indicates the affluence of the husband. A man is seen to boast of his ancestor who had more wives than one, and when he is asked why he has one wife, his answer is that he cannot afford more. The following table prepared from one village, Kokcho, will give some idea about the popularity of polygyny in Kolhan :—

Number of families.	Number of houses.	More than one wife.
28	1	2
23	2	5
18	3	4
11	More than three	4
80		15

A man usually tries to find a bride outside his village, but failing it, he may seek alliance within the village. As there are many uni-*Killi* villages, marriage within the village is not possible. Members of a *Killi* cannot marry among themselves. Any violation of this prohibition is taken as incest, and in earlier days, extreme steps were taken against such an offence. A Ho does not marry outside the tribe as a rule, but there is to-day no legal or social prohibition against his doing so. Though the tribal code has relaxed considerably, those who work in the mining and industrial centres, in or outside Kolhan, contract such alliances, and when they come back to their villages they are not outcasted by the society. Temporary emigrants from Kolhan who leave their land behind, and come at short intervals to work on the land again, enjoy certain privileges

which are denied to the permanent residents of the village. The tribal laws and usages in their case are not so exacting as in the case of the latter. The reason given by the elders of the village is that persons who work outside cannot strictly adhere to tribal prescriptions in their place of work, besides the tribal gods have less interest in their welfare. If they violate established usages, they do not endanger the safety of the village, but permanent residents cannot afford to take such risks. The explanation lies perhaps in the fact that such labourers have less respect for social authority, as they can always escape to their place of work.

A man usually marries within the *Pir* or within a reasonable distance from the village. When a man marries in the *Andi* form, his children are usually married to the family or *Killi* of his father-in-law failing which, some sort of compensation in kind and money is paid to that family. This makes it possible to exchange *Gonong* between two families united by marriage, and also helps to reduce the amount. When a man dies without an issue his wife may live with the younger brother of the deceased husband as his wife, but there is no ceremony to solemnise the union. This custom to-day is not very much favoured by the Hos ; still it is an economic necessity for the widow. A widow does not inherit among the Hos, nor does she go back to her parents. The children, if any, after their marriage do not live with her. The daughters will be married out, and the sons live separately with their wives. The widow if she remains with a married son, becomes a drudge in the latter's family, and her relations with her daughter-in-law are seldom cordial. When she marries the younger brother of her deceased husband, she can maintain her control over her minor children, until the latter set up separate establishments on marriage. The family property and land are controlled and cultivated by the father's brothers who are the habitual guardians of the children. If a widow becomes the father's brother's wife, the members of the family need not adjust themselves further, for they accord the same respect to the woman in both positions. Formerly when a man married and begot no children within two to three years, he had a customary right to marry his wife's sister without paying further *Gonong*, but this right is not now admitted. A substantial reduction in *Gonong* is, however, made by the father-in-law, which makes it still economical for a man who has married one sister and wishes

to marry another; he has to pay in some cases the bride-price for both, for the former, which he had not paid perhaps, and also *Gonong* for the latter which makes it rather difficult for him. In most cases, the sister is first invited to the house, or brought in the usual *Oportipi* method, and kept as the second wife. The relations between sisters sharing the same house and the same husband seldom grow difficult according to the unambiguous statements of many individuals who live with two wives, and are said to be far better than those between co-wives who are unrelated. It is a common practice in Kolhan for two or more wives to share the same hut and sleep in together with one man. In some cases, when one of the wives has grown old she is allowed to live apart with the children. The Hos often marry girls who are much older than themselves, and the difference in age between husband and wife may be considerable. As the wife in such cases ages earlier than the husband, the latter then seeks to marry his wife's sister, which is not greatly resented by the first wife. Widows are allowed to remarry but they usually marry widowers. In one case, a widow married by the very rare *Anader* form.

A Ho may marry his mother's brother's daughter and his father's sister's daughter. In few cases we found marriage with the mother's sister and also with the widowed maternal aunt. But marriage with the father's sister's daughter is not much favoured by them, nor that with the sister's daughter. An analysis of marriage relationship between members of one *Killi*, viz., Laguri, in Konslaposi, shows that all the marriages of the *Killi* were confined to two *Killis* only, so that there appeared to be a tri-clan grouping for matrimonial purposes. Thus, Laguri, Sinku and Babonga *Killis* of Bantra and Kotgarh *Pirs*, form a matrimonial group. In other *Killis* also, though such grouping is not consistently practised, most of the marriages of a *Killi* are confined to two or three. There is, however, no bar to marrying outside the group, and there is no customary prohibition that the Ho elders remember.

The rules of *Killi* exogamy are, however, strictly obeyed, and although cases of breach have increased in recent years, and the punishment prescribed for the offenders has ceased to be deterrent, the horror of the traditional taboo has not disappeared. The village elders are extremely indignant at such breaches of tribal laws, because any offence in the village is believed to be ominous and is regarded as a cause

of all natural calamities, or of economic distress, immediate or distant. The village elders still remember and recite the methods that were used to deal with such incest cases, and these were extremely cruel. Packed in a *Bor* (Bandhi) the offending couple were carried to the peak of neighbouring hill, and were thrown down the slopes of the hillside, till their bones were smashed into atoms. A funeral was observed afterwards by the village to mourn the loss of the departed couple, but their ashes were not interred in the *Sasan*. The violation of this taboo was a crime as well as a sin. The violated taboo avenged itself, as it were, and the violator was sure to meet with his deserts ; even to-day cases of incest are not infrequent in Kolhan, and the following cases will explain the attitude of the people and the methods that are being prescribed by the society to meet the offences.

In April, 1925, I accompanied my friend and assistant, Juria Purty of Pendrasali village, to see a friend of his at Dudbila who was lying ill and had expressed his desire to meet him. The latter used to work in the coal fields of Jharia and was a smart and intelligent young man of 26. When we entered his room, we found him with a very high temperature, surrounded by his mother and other relatives, and the village *Deonwa*. The latter was busy chanting incantations and formula to undo the malign influence of some dreaded power he believed to have caused the malady. The young man came home during the *Maghe* festival, absence from which, without sufficient cause, is regarded as ominous for the family. He intimately knew a girl of his own *Killi*, but obviously could not marry her. During the *Marang Parav* day of the *Maghe* festival, he had danced with this girl for a few hours and retired afterwards to the fields adjoining the village forest. At dead of night, he was discovered in company with the girl at a place which made his guilt clear. His case was duly reported to the village elders. They, however, in accordance with the usual custom in such cases, did not meet immediately afterwards, perhaps to allow the offender sufficient time to expiate his crime. He might leave his house and native village and run back to the coalfields where he usually worked, but he did not. He was overpowered by the gravity of the offence and the majesty of the taboo he had violated, and could not come to any decision how best to atone for his misconduct. His thought was naturally concentrated on the crime, and from that day his health and spirits rapidly declined.

Flurriedly he narrated the whole story to us, and towards the end he said, 'I have earned my death and I am dying.' Two days later we received the news of his death.

In those cases, where the society is called upon to intervene, there are two different methods prescribed, one for the man and another for the woman. The following cases will illustrate this point.

Dasu's son Bamia, of Jetia village, Bantra *Pir*, was living with his paternal uncle Ranchandra's daughter, Subhani. The *Manki* of Bantra *Pir* had to intervene, and he decided to marry Subhani to Kareya Babonga of Rengabari, Kotgarh *Pir*, who was willing to accept her. Subhani was sent to Kareya's village, and this decision was not challenged by Bamia. When Subhani was actually living with Kareya, to whom she was betrothed, Bamia went to Rengabari and fetched Subhani back to his own village. The village *Punch* met again and both Bamia and Subhani were declared to be *Kajomesin*. Bamia has, however, been readmitted to the society on payment of a fine of forty rupees and six *Meroms* or goats for a communal feast but Subhani remains a *Kajomesin*. She has been given two bullocks and some land, and is living separately with her children. (She died last year.)

Rasika Laguri of Sannanda village, committed incest with Oybon Laguri's daughter, Dighli. When the latter was found to be *enciente*, the village *Punch* decided to marry Dighli to Maram Sinku of Sarbil to avoid the consequence. Rasika had to marry Kande Sinku's daughter, Jano Kui, from Baliudi. As Rasika was responsible for the child, he had to pay five rupees, one she-goat and three cocks towards the child's maintenance.

Unkura Laguri of Lampasai (25), had liaison with his own sister Sumi Kui (19); when Sumi conceived she let her friends know that her brother was responsible. Unkura wanted to run away and desert his sister, but Sumi preferred an appeal to the village headman. The matter was brought before the Kolhan Superintendent, who appointed a committee consisting of Gangadhar Munda of Lampasai, Ganga Ram Manki of Bantra *Pir*, Chandra Mohan Manki of Suiamba village, Rengra *Pir* and Sonaram Manki of Baljoi, Kotgarh *Pir*. The Committee heard the case and decided to fine the parents of the couple fifty rupees. The parents were accused of possessing knowledge of this incest. They knew it but did not care to stop it, nor did they

report the matter to the village *Munda*. The case was decided on the 25th June, 1934, but the fine was not paid until the end of July. The movable property of the parents had to be attached, and the money was recovered by auctioning one buffalo and one bullock. The couple had been permanently ostracised, and their parents have not yet been readmitted to the society. There was every reason to believe that the latter would be accepted by the society if they provided a communal feast. In the course of the proceedings, the parents tried to shield their children by explaining the scandal as due to some malignant *Bonga*, but Sumi Kui insisted on the guilt of her brother. Sumi has, by her timely disclosure and by preferring an appeal to the authorities for protection, softened the attitude of the *Killi* to her share of the crime, as otherwise, such cases lead to suicide sooner or later.

In 1930, Dobro Purty was found guilty of incest with his father's step-sister, Madkui. This was discovered when the latter was found to be pregnant. The matter was reported to the village elders, but before the latter could make even a preliminary enquiry, Dobro fled from the village, and since then he has not been heard of. Madkui was then procured abortion. The members of her *Killi* continued to jeer and despise her, for transgressing the rules of *Killi* exogamy, and the woman in desperation committed suicide by hanging herself.

Budhu Sinku of Rugutsai had illicit connection with Jonga Kui of Tamsoi *Killi* of the same village, by whom he had a child. Though they belong to different *Killis*, they are residents of the same *tola* of the village. Tradition has it that both these *Killis* originated from the same stock, so that the members of the *tola* did not approve of such unions. Before Budhu could be summoned by the village *Punch*, he severed all connection with Jonga Kui. The latter appealed for redress.

Though strong feelings against flagrant breaches of tribal laws exist in Kolhan, and the Ho elders are ready to take prompt action, the system of punishment has considerably changed. A *Kajomesin* can, and does obtain admission to the *Killi* by paying a fine and providing a communal feast. Further, as money has become cheap, the fine has lost much of its deterrent character. Another factor making for a change in these matters is the influence of the educated section among the Hos. Though these count a few dozens only, their influence has constantly been exercised to weaken the hold of the society on matters

affecting individual liberty. Social dissensions and ostracism they regard as undermining social solidarity and jeopardising their interests as a political unit. They think that the time has come when their social unity and cohesion should be utilised for their economic welfare, and for furtherance of political rights, and that energy should not be dissipated by petty superstitions and trivial social prescriptions. The organisers of the Ho social reform campaign are insisting on lifting all social bans on *Kajomesins*, and their systematic propaganda has stirred the social life of the village to a greater political consciousness. The effects of this campaign have not been manifest in any general conformity to their programme, yet it must be admitted that the hold of the village and *Killi Punch* is growing gradually weaker, and in years to come, social offences will not provoke the same condemnation as they do even now. The motive for compliance with customary rules lies in a vague fear of natural calamities, of epidemics and diseases, of failure of crops, and of a general economic crisis. The offence of one is believed to involve the entire *Killi* or the *Hatu*, and as such, violation of tribal laws invokes protests and denunciation from the villagers. Therefore, the village *Punch* still insists on exercising its judicious control in social matters to safe-guard the interest of the village or of the *Killi*.

The strict code of conduct regarding incest among the Hos or for the matter of that among other tribal people in India, is proof, if proof is at all needed, that incest has been known from very early times, and the stricter the code and harsher the punishment, the greater probably is its incidence, till social prescription loses its sting as it has in Kolhan. Political wisdom today makes light of such offences.

2

Forms of Marriage

There are various ways of securing a wife among the Hos, the principal methods being, (1) *Andi*, (2) *Diku Andi*, (3) *Oportipi*, (4) *Rajikhusi*, and (5) *Anader*. In the first two, the ceremonial side is extremely important, and in the rest it is practically absent. The fact of living with a woman in the same house is regarded as sufficient for determining the legitimacy of children born in the house, and Ho society seldom worries itself to find out whether the union of the couple

was in acordance with the ceremonial usage, or was merely a voluntary mating. A child born of ceremonial wedlock known as *Andi* has no better claim to the family property than a child born of union without any ceremonial observance, as long as the parents of the child are known ordinarily to cohabit together. Marriage and mating have consequently the same legal recognition, and the absence of ceremony does not make children illegitimate, though it impairs their social status. Families who pay *Gonong* for marrying their sons, and perform marriages according to *Andi* form command respect in the village. Enquiries about the amount of *Gonong* paid by different members of a family are eagerly answered by those who have paid it, while others who have not paid it, remain silent. The way in which they remember these deals and the unerring way the figures are quoted for father, grandfather and even great-grandfather, show that it is considered perhaps as a mark of prestige, to remember and recite how they and their forefathers secured their mates, and how much they spent as *Gonong*. Except such display of family pride it is doubtful whether there exists any difference between children whose parents were married by *Andi* and those whose parents were not.

Today, ceremonial marriage, or *Andi* is becoming less and less general, as it invariably connotes a heavy financial transaction in the form of *Gonong* which is now as it has long been prohibitive. It is not that people who cannot afford to provide the bride-price take to *Oportipi* or *Rajikhusi* forms of mating, that would of course be natural, but the recognition of such unions, has encouraged their adoption even by well-to-do families. In the latter case, the *Gonong* is paid after the union becomes a *fait accompli*. If public opinion be the fundamental force that makes marriage highly desirable, mating in Kolhan, by *Oportipi*, *Rajikhusi* and *Anader*, has also the sanction of the society and hence is supported by the selfsame force. Therefore it is possible that mating in Kolhan in the forms we shall describe below may replace the ceremonial marriage or *Andi* which, as we have said above, is regarded as the natural form of wedlock, and enjoys traditional prestige but that has not altered in any way the practical utility of social selection. Today, even in the families of *Mankis* and substantial *Mundas*, a large number of marriages are runaway or *Rajikhusi*, a situation that has developed due to detribalisation and opportunities for escape from the village.

The ceremonial marriage in Kolhan has taken two different forms, *Andi* and *Diku Andi*. The former is the traditional form, the latter is borrowed from the Hindus. It is only a few well-to-do families who live in important *Diku* villages who have adopted Hindu rites and ceremonies in their marriages. Even in such cases, the traditional observances have not been entirely given up for after the marriage is performed by the *Diku* form, customary rites and usages associated with *Andi* are observed. The main features of the *Andi* form are that the selection of partners is made by the father, or other guardian; a middleman or a *Dutam* is appointed to negotiate between the families desiring the union, and a bride-price has to be paid which must be mutually approved. There is a further condition, which however, is implicit in it, i.e., the headman of the village and the *Killi* elders as also the *Sakhi*, if there be one, must be consulted before the marriage is actually decided upon. This is necessary, as marriage among the Hos is still a communal affair in the sense that all the villagers should participate in it, and also contribute in kind and money towards the expenses involved. This requires the selection of a date when the villagers are usually free from outside economic pursuits and when their granaries are full. As we have seen, marriage only takes place during certain periods of the year, during the period when the harvesting is over and before the next sowing operations begin. As marriage is held after puberty, and as girls do not marry before 18 or 21, and boys seldom earlier than 24, and as there are ample opportunities available for the mixing of the sexes in Kolhan, it is desirable that young people of both sexes should have a free hand in the choice of their partners from among members of marriageable *Killis*. This they have, and from early times this privilege of the young folk has not been denied to them.

When a young man desires to have a girl as his partner whom he may have met in the village *Akhara*, or in other villages, or in the weekly markets and fairs, he communicates his wishes to his *Killi* friends, who inform his parents. The latter then engage a *Dutam* or match-maker to undertake the negotiations and assist in the settlement of terms. Even when the son has made no definite choice, the parents engage the services of a *Dutam* to choose a girl for their son. The *Dutam* first approaches the young man concerned to ascertain whether he has any predilection for any girl. This makes it far more ex-

peditious ; for in such cases if the girl also has a liking for the boy, the parents on either side come to terms more quickly than when the proposal is between two unknown parties. Though in certain well-to-do families, and in those which have developed a new class consciousness and think it necessary to contract alliances with families of higher social status, thereby perpetuating a sort of class system, the young folk of both sexes are less free to select their partners, and yet the final selection lies in their hands , and they can signify their refusal at the time of the ceremonial distribution of *Illi* which will be discussed later on. Even if the marriage is desirable from every point of view and all terms settled to mutual satisfaction, it is not certain that marriage will take place, for the ultimate decision lies in the interpretation of the omens which, if unfavourable, will end all negotiations. When the bride's party is invited to discuss terms in the house of the bride-groom, the omens that they come across on their journey are carefully examined on either side, and if they are of ill portent the negotiations are postponed, or allowed to drop, for no risks can be taken in such important matters. If the omens are good, the marriage is expected to be happy and prosperous, but if unfavourable, there is no knowing how far they may affect the proposed union. In some cases, however, sacrifices are offered to particular spirits to counteract the presaged evils, but if the apprehended dangers are too great to be overlooked, the parties generally decide to call the affair off. This is done by the *Dutam* who takes a *Sal* leaf in his hand, mutters a prayer to *Sing-bonga*, and in the presence of both the parties, tears the leaf into halves. The parties then take leave of each other, and should they desire the alliance in future, negotiations must start afresh.

In the *Diku* form of marriage, the same processes are gone through as in the *Andi* form, with the following additional rites. Whereas in the traditional form of marriage the *Deuri* is required to officiate and offer prayers and sacrifices to *Sing-bonga* and other less important village and tutelary *Bongas*; in the *Diku* form, a Brahmin is called in, who brings a *Salagram Sila* (black fossil ammonite) before which the couple have to promise eternal fidelity and mutual protection. The bridegroom has to move round the bride seven times with a steel knife in his hand, after which he has to paint the forehead of the bride with vermilion, and the latter does the same on the forehead of the

bridegroom. The replacement of the indigenous priest by the Oriya Brahmin who lives by begging, or by preaching the worship of Siva and Narayan, has not been complete even in those families who have introduced him to officiate in their marriage ceremonies, for the essential rites in accordance with tribal prescriptions are still observed by these families simultaneously with the introduced rites. Nor is it a case of a change in beliefs, or in the attitude of the Hos to their tribal spirits and their importance in their social life. It is mostly due to a false idea of prestige attaching to the adoption of Hindu prescriptions which make them conscious of their superiority to their tribesmen that has favoured the formation of classes in Kolhan.

As the bride-price is invariably paid by the parents of the bridegroom, the selection of the bride and the amount of *Gonong* to be paid are matters in which Ho parents are directly concerned. While they are anxious to select a bride for their son, they are extremely reticent about their daughter's marriage. It is against all known canons of etiquette to mention or discuss the prospects of a daughter's marriage among the Hos, to advance proposals without being approached by the other party, to initiate negotiations or to engage a *Dutam*. A girl may grow into a maiden, and remain a spinster all her life, but her parents or guardian cannot propose her marriage without detriment to family pride and social status. The proposal must come from the other side. This attitude is responsible for permanent celibates of both sexes in Kolhan, and also for the widespread custom of *Oportipi* and other forms of mating described below. When you ask a Ho father, why he does not marry his daughter, (for after all marriage of a daughter does not entail much expenditure to the father) he would immediately reply, "I am ready to marry her but where is the proposal?" When you ask a further question, why he does not find a bridegroom, or engage a *Dutam* to do so, his answer would be a pale and fleeting smile. When the girl in marriage fetches a price, she must be an asset, and one would imagine that when the family property is divided among the heirs, the daughters also will be similarly distributed among them. But this is far from being the case. The unmarried daughters after the death of their father, may live with one or other of the brothers, and a special provision for their maintenance is made while partitioning the holding as well as the movable property of the father, but the expected bride-price for the

girls does not enter into the consideration of the village or *Killi Punch* in deciding the respective shares of the brothers. It is taboo to consider them as property in exchange. Hence, when the father dies, the brothers remain as passive as the former in the matter of their sister's marriage. When the brother marries, his wife does not always live happily with her sister-in-law as quarrels and bickerings are frequent which ultimately make the girl elope with a young man of her acquaintance, or yield to the wishes of her captors. Many of the *Oportipi* marriages would not have happened if the girls had been happy in their homes. When a man finds a woman and drags her to his village with the help of his comrades, she usually yields to her captor, because refusal to live with him means further trouble in the household of her sister-in-law or that of her step-mother. When a girl is captured by some stranger and is taken to the latter's village, it is usual for all the female members of the girl's village to come out armed with sticks and stones, and invade the village of the captor. Whereupon it is the usual practice not to offer any resistance, but to allow them to sack the house of the captor and take any thing they want from it. The rescue party is, however, less anxious to recover the unfortunate girl than to assert its traditional rights. The girl who is thus captured feels that her new home may after all prove an escape from the drudgery and hostility of her sister-in-law. At the same time it may mitigate the uncomfortable situation she would be in, if she had to explain matters to her relations when she returned home. A girl captured and taken by a member of a different *Killi*, and kept as his lawful wife, does not suffer any social stigma. If she is returned or brought back home by the rescue party, or by her parents, she will be an object of ridicule to the village or of gossip among the village women. In 99 cases out of a hundred, a capture means a permanent union, unless divorce dissolves it. There appears to be a further consideration. The custom of rubbing vermilion on the forehead of the captured woman by the captor, (which is also an important feature of the ceremonial marriage), produces perhaps a psychological effect on the mind of the woman concerned. Her submission to her captor and her refusal to accompany the members of the rescue party are partly accounted for by a vague and mysterious implication of this customary usage (Sindur-dan). What seals the marriage contract among the Hos is the painting of vermi-

lion, and when the same is applied by the captor, the difference in the two forms becomes a matter of minor importance inasmuch as the essential rite has been performed.

Marriage by capture is said to be an institution of predatory life and disappears with settled life. It may or may not be an early practice in human society. Some have taken it as an indispensable stage in the evolution of human marriage, others deny that it is to be at all taken as marriage. Marriage by capture may be due to the scarcity of women which makes it obligatory for a group to seek to supply its marital needs by capture, as among the Naga *Khels* of Assam. It may also be due to the prohibitive nature of the bride-price, which makes it difficult for a man to marry under ordinary conditions. Among the Hos, it results from an excessive bride-price, coupled with a popular social more that it is improper for parents or guardians to take active steps to marry their daughters off. When economic conditions improve, ceremonial marriages become more popular, and when crops fail or agricultural prices become unremunerative there is an increase in the number of runaway marriages and marriages by capture. In most of the families of *Mankis*, *Mundas* and well-to-do cultivators, marriage by capture or by mutual consent which does not require any exchange of gifts, or bride-price, is becoming infrequent. The proportion of *Oportipi* to *Andi* is 10 to 90 in well-to-do families, and 70 to 30 in ordinary families. The following table compiled in one village will give some idea of the relative proportion of marriages under the two forms. The genealogical tables compiled and printed along will strengthen the evidence we have put forward.

Konslaposi	No. of Marriages	No. of Andi	No. of Oportipi and Rajikhusi
Manki family	32	26	6
Munda family	27	19	8
Average family	56	21	35
	115	66	49

In other words, taking the whole village, 57.4% of the marriages recorded were in accordance with the *Andi* form, and 42.6% were *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi*. The proportion of the *Oportipi* in different

groups tabulated above is as follows: In the *Manki* families, 16.6%, in the *Munda* families, 30%, and in ordinary families 62%. In other villages too, the percentage of *Oportipi* or *Rajikhusi* is similar if not higher. Thus we find *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi* methods of securing wives in Kolhan are more popular with the lower sections of the tribe, while in the higher classes the percentage decreases till *Andi* becomes the usual form. In many cases of *Oportipi*, the bride's people can, and often do claim a bride-price after the couple have settled down as man and wife. In such cases, the amount of bride-price is determined not by the social position of the bride's parents but by the material circumstances of the bridegroom. In some cases discussion of the terms often continues for months and even a year, yet no decision takes place. The bride-price may not be paid in cash or kind immediately after agreement is reached, but it is considered a solemn obligation which the Hos do not repudiate.

We find from the table given above that *Oportipi* is not only practised by the poorer families, but many youngmen belonging to well-to-do families take recourse to *Oportipi* for certain practical reasons. It is not always possible for a man to marry in the family of his choice, for the selection has to be mutual and the other party to it may not agree to the marriage. A man may wish to marry a girl belonging to a higher class than his own, and her family may not countenance the proposal. Again, he may fall in love with a girl who does not respond to his feelings, and yet he may like to possess her. In all these cases *Oportipi* affords an easy solution. A girl married by *Oportipi* does not lose public esteem, nor do her parents suffer in social prestige. On the other hand, the latter may obtain an adequate bride-price if the bridegroom is sufficiently well off.

An example of *Oportipi* and the circumstances that led to it will be found in the following case. Surya Purty of the village of Karlajori, in Gumra *Pir*, is an ordinary cultivator. He has a piece of land but he is known to be extremely lazy and his circumstances therefore are not satisfactory. He approached the parents of many girls in his and other villages, but every time that his own house and property were seen by the bride's people, they declined to consider the offer. He proposed to a number of girls in the village, but he was refused. One day he was attracted by a girl who was carrying a load of firewood on her head accompanying a group of women pro-

ceeding to Chaibassa. He approached his friends and enlisted their sympathy. When the party was on its way back to Nachrai, Surya with his friends lay in ambush near Baihatu. As soon as the women were within their reach, they fell on them and caught hold of the girl. The women replied with stones and earth, but the men were too strong for them, and forcibly brought the girl to Karlajori, Surya's village. The girl piteously pleaded for her release. She began to weep and cry, but they did not listen to her. The rest of the women ran to their village and informed the male members of what had happened. The girl and Surya were kept in the same room for the night. The girl wept all night, but Surya did not yield. In the morning a crowd of men and women from Nachrai armed with *lathies* came to demand the girl, but she could not be traced. Then they sat down to discuss the *Gonong*. The elders of Surya's *Killi* agreed to give four heads of cattle and ten rupees, and the girl was approached by some female members who knew where she was. She was asked whether she would live with Surya. At first she was unwilling, but the female members of Surya's *Killi* persuaded her, and she eventually agreed to stay on. Surya has a daughter and they have been living happily ever since.

Besides *Oportipi*, there are two more forms of securing wives in Kolhan, viz., *Rajikhusi*, and *Anader*. The former is marriage by mutual consent without any ceremony or payment of bride-price, the latter is a form of intrusion marriage, found among most of the Munda speaking tribes in India. If a young man, and a young woman love each other and decide to marry, and the parents on either side are unwilling to accede to their wishes, the couple may elope and live away from the village till such time as their parents revise their opinion. There is no *Gonong* paid for such a marriage and no ceremony is required to solemnise their companionship. Mahati Sirka of Tentara village, Thai *Pir* had one elder brother. His father wanted to get both of them married. The first was very strong and hardy, but was known to be an idiot, so that no girl could be obtained for him. Mahati was healthy and clever. The father tried to get a wife for Mahati. The bride's people came from Gundipoa to discuss terms and examine the cattle. After a careful scrutiny the bride's people refused to accept the cattle, and thus the negotiations came to an abrupt end. Mahati felt insulted and asked his father

not to negotiate for his marriage. Mahati was friendly with a girl of the village who belonged to Bari *Killi*. He proposed to her that they should elope. The girl was sincerely attached to him, and readily agreed. She took all her money, trinkets and clothes, and waited for him at midnight by his door. Mahati met her, and the same night they set out for Ulidi, a village ten miles from Tentara. The next morning the parents of the girl found their daughter missing, and when they learnt that Mahati also was missing, they realised what had happened. After five days, Mahati's father implored him to come with the girl and live with him assuring him that he need not be afraid of the girl's father. Mahati and the girl are now living as man and wife and are happy with their family.

The most commonly practised form of marriage is *Oportipi*, and the rare is known as *Anader*, which is the same as the *Nirbolok* of the Oraons. The girl forces herself into the family of her lover where she is seldom welcome. This extreme conduct may be due to a sincere attachment which induces the girl to sacrifice her position, prestige and material comforts to her love for the young man. Two reasons may prompt her action. If a young man and a young woman fall in love, and if for some reason or other they cannot marry, the girl may take the risk of introducing herself into the family of her lover to secure her position. Again, there are cases in which a young woman may admire a young man and finds no possibility of alliance; the only way open to her then is to resort to *Anader*. Before she attempts it she informs her guardians, who try to bring about an arrangement, failing which, they permit her to act according to her wishes. The girl then sets out for her lover's village, and on arrival at the house, informs her future mother-in-law why she has come and what her intention is. This naturally incenses the mother who proceeds to use abusive language towards the girl. The presents of *Diang*, rice and other provisions, which the girl may bring with her, are thrown away, and the girl is severely reproved for her unusual conduct. At first she keeps silent, but when the fulminations reach a certain limit, the exasperated girl denounces the mother for her undue indulgence to her son which has brought about this situation. If the son had been properly looked after and controlled, he would not have indulged in flirtations and ruined her life. The scene usually turns into a brawl and the neighbours pour into the courtyard to watch it.

The mistress of the house cannot however continue for long in this strain, she is pacified by the neighbours and the girl is alllowed to stop in the house. The period of probation is of course very trying for the poor girl, for she has to do all the duties of the house as a menial. The mistress puts all sorts of obstacles in her path. When she brings water it is poured away again, she is not given good meal, and is certainly not allowed to sleep with her lover. Yet her determination is rewarded in the long run by her success in gaining the sympathy of the members of the family and winning their confidence. When the parents of the boy find her useful, they allow the girl to remain in the house as their daughter-in-law. No ceremony, not even the painting of vermilion is required to bring about the union, and no bride-price is required to be paid. Sometimes the trouble and hardship of the period of probation prove too much for the girl, and she runs away, but this is rare. In exceptional cases a girl may take to *Anader* by mutual agreement with her lover.

3

Bride-price and Mating

The social code regulating marriage in Kolhan has been described in detail in the preceding section. We shall discuss below the nature of the bride-price and its effects on social life in general and marriage in particular. Though the higher classes in Kolhan prefer to marry their sons and daughters by the *Andi* form, the majority find it advantageous to have recourse to less regular unions. What starts as an irregular union may be made regular by the later transaction of a *Gonong*. In most of the unions by the *Oportipi* form, a nominal bride-price is paid if and when demanded. This does not mean that there is no difference between *Andi* and *Oportipi* or *Rajikhusi*. The elaborate ceremonies performed in connection with *Andi*, and the cooperation displayed by the members of *Killi* and village on such occasions, explain the social prestige associated with it. Even if no bride-price is paid, the children do not suffer from any social ignominy.

The *Killi* elders realise the effects of an excessive *Gonong*. They know that the practice of demanding high bride-price has resulted in an unusual increase in the number of runaway marriages, in *Oportipi* and *Anader*. They will tell you how lifelong celibates of both

sexes are numerous in Kolhan, and why the marriage of Singbhum maidens is so long postponed. The problem was faced by their ancestors, and they are facing it themselves today. Sympathetic administrative officers have tried to assist them in putting an end to this scandalous state of affairs. Resolutions have been passed at mass meetings convened by the Government and by the people themselves; the rate of *Gonong* has been unanimously reduced in these social conferences. Some enthusiastic members have tried to introduce them and to give effect to their unanimous wishes, but the problem still remains as difficult and as acute as ever. The rate of *Gonong* no doubt depends upon the material circumstances and the social position of the families concerned, yet it remains arbitrary and excessive.

It is indeed surprising how the custom of demanding cattle as *Gonong* was introduced in Kolhan. We have every reason to believe that the predatory and hunting life of the Hos was superseded by an agricultural life and that the pastoral life was never a stage in their economic development. Even now the Hos do not tend their own cattle. They do not milk them. There are no rites, ceremonies or magical beliefs connected with cattle. The ploughing is usually done by bullocks, and that on a joint or cooperative system, so that a Ho family seldom needs a herd of cattle for its ordinary domestic or agricultural requirements. The cattle serve as *Gonong* and are transferred from village to village as such. Very little care is taken of the animals, and the breed is extremely poor, even compared with that possessed by their *Diku* neighbours. Every family usually possesses a number of cattle, which are handed over to the village Ahir or some labourer in the village who makes his living out of them.

The Hos often sell their cattle to provide for their domestic needs. Goats are the liquid assets of the Hos, so also are fowls and pigeons. When a man wants to marry, it is the custom for the *Killi* members to assist him by contributing a head or two of cattle, towards the *Gonong*. For services rendered to a family in cases of emergency, it is still the custom to pay in cattle. When a Ho family receives a number of heads of cattle as *Gonong*, it usually transfers these to the care of the village Ahir, with a stipulation that after such and such a period of time so many heads should be returned to it. That acts as interest, but they

never gain much from such transaction. There is a system of equating cattle with money. The price of bullocks in Kolhan fluctuates with demand and supply, but the price of cattle as *Gonong* is fixed by custom. One head of cattle is taken as equivalent to three or four rupees in deciding the amount of *Gonong*. Well-to-do families always exchange cattle, but poor families often equate cattle with rupees. In some cases, however, an arbitrary price may be fixed by mutual agreement.

Cattle as a medium of exchange, and as a measure of value are widely known in India. Even today, during the *Sradh* ceremony of the Hindus, it is the custom for a householder to make gifts of cattle to the Brahmin. The term *Go-dhan* still survives in the popular vocabulary and means that cattle is money. In the great epics of the heroic age in India, cattle played distinct part as wealth. Property was evaluated in terms of land and cattle. Kings fought for cattle in ancient India, and the vanquished compensated the victor by paying in cattle. Thus it is possible that the custom of paying cattle as *Gonong* may be a borrowed trait, and may have been due to their association with the Hindus who used cattle as a medium of exchange and a measure of value. How far it is borne out by facts, remains to be ascertained.

Most of the writers of the 19th century who have written on the Hos, have denounced in unequivocal terms the practice of demanding a high *Gonong*, which had in no uncertain way affected their simple social life. One effect of this practice was the increase in the number of unmarried men and women in Kolhan. People abstained from marriage not because they courted celibacy as a principle of good conduct, but because of the exorbitant price demanded for brides which prevented willing young men from seeking matrimonial alliances, if their means did not permit them to do so. The girls are also conscious of it. They make themselves as attractive as they can, dance with young men of their acquaintance, attend *Akharas* of neighbouring villages, flirt and romp with their friends, and are not too coy to receive in public attentions from those they admire. With all this, men do not propose. The songs sung by the young folk in the *Akhara* are full of references to this supreme fact of their social life and yet little has been done by the society to redress this social iniquity.

The other effect of this excessive *Gonong* is the postponement of the marriageable age in Kolhan, which has resulted in innumerable

cases of liaisons within the village, and between members of the same *Killi*, and a general lowering of the standard of morality within the tribe. The social sanction that obtains in Kolhan for premarital license does not mean that premarital license is general. It only means that cases of premarital license are not taken seriously, but are condoned. When marriage becomes a remote possibility, and when both the sexes are conscious of it, immoral practices are not viewed with alarm, as they afford the only escape from artificial repression. This is how young men and women in Kolhan explain cases of incest, and of irregular unions. The sexual license said to be general during the *Maghe* festival in Kolhan, and also during the other festivals, is not of a promiscuous nature. The use of obscene languages by the Hos during the *Maghe* festival, when sons revile their parents, and parents their children, has been misinterpreted by Col. Dalton. Such customs as we find among Hos are not unique, or without parallels elsewhere. On the occasion of the *Maghe* festival, it is the custom to abuse the *Bongas*, to strike them with magically prepared sticks, to hunt them and drive them out of the village. This is known as *Bonga Honr*, and is an essential agricultural rite. The sons who revile their fathers represent men on earth, *Horoko*, and the fathers who repay with admonition, play the role of the *Bongas* (Bongako) so that the whole affair becomes symbolical and not an actual passage of arms between father and son.

Again, promiscuous mixing of the sexes does not necessarily mean sexual communism. So long as the girls are young they mix freely with young men, but as soon as they attain the age of puberty they are seen mostly in the company of girls. Boys and girls of the same *Killi*, playing together, dancing together, and passing most of the time together, behave like brothers and sisters, and it is indeed doubtful if sexual license is a necessary or indispensable consequence of such association. But it is true, and the writer has the unambiguous statements of the elders of the society to corroborate him, that when young girls find that the chances of marriage are remote, i.e., when they pass their teens, they become restless, as is but natural, and yield to *Oportipi* to escape the drudgery in their own household, the ill-treatment of their sister-in-law, or the prospect of remaining spinsters all their life.

The average bride-price in Kolhan consists of 10 to 15 heads

of cattle, forty to fifty rupees and ornaments, besides 50 to 100 pots of *Illi*, and the cost of feeding the *Killi*. As regards the latter item, the custom of contributing in kind to the expenses of marriage by the members of the *Killi*, or the village, helps to reduce the expenses. Being improvident, the Hos possess next to nothing to meet the expenses of a regular marriage. The result is that the number of *Andi* is decreasing daily, and irregular intimacies are the order of the day. How foolish the custom of demanding high *Gonong* is, will be apparent from the increase of runaway marriage, and marriage by *Oportipi* and *Anader* forms. The Hos know that if they do not moderate the rate of *Gonong*, their girls are likely to be carried off by force or to elope with their friends, but still they insist on the high bride-price, which they do not get in many cases. As has been pointed out in the previous chapter, the bride-price is not regarded as real income to the family, for it does not add to the family property in any real sense of the term. It maintains the economic *status quo* of the family, it upholds the social prestige of the family which receives the *Gonong*. In case the girl is married by *Oportipi* or *Rajikhusi*, the social position of the parents remains unassailed. That is why the *Gonong* remains excessive and social opinion has not asserted itself strongly against this practice.

As early as 1868, Dr. Hayes convened a meeting of representative men of the Hos for the express purpose of discussing the question of high bride-price in consequence of which the number of marriages was annually diminishing and immoral intimacies between the sexes increasing. It was resolved that in future the bride-price was not to exceed ten heads of cattle, and that if one pair of oxen, one cow and seven rupees were given, it should be received as an equivalent to the ten heads. For the poorer classes, it was fixed at seven rupees. There is little evidence to show that this resolution was actually acted upon. In his letter forwarding the final settlement report of Kolhan, 1896, Mr. Bompass, while disagreeing with Mr. Craven's suggestion to fix a date for the *Maghe* festival (which we shall refer to in another connection afterwards), wrote, "A far more popular interference would be for us to fix a limit to the bride-price. I already decree only moderate sum when cases come into court, but all the *Mankis* agree that the only way to stop the practice would be to fine parents taking an excessive *Gonong*." Thus it is certain that the bride-price

in Kolhan has continued as usual in spite of the recognition by the people themselves that it is an iniquitous custom. In 1924, a few Ho reformers took up the question again, and their attempts in this direction have been described and discussed in an article elsewhere.*

The poorer classes in Kolhan have unfortunately realised that the bride-price adds dignity, and increases social prestige, and they also insist on higher bride-price than was customary.

Marriage was easier among the poorer classes before ; today the situation has completely changed, and *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi* have become more frequent. The landless labourers who migrated to the industrial centres and came back with plenty of money, wanted to rise in social status, and they were ready to pay a high *Gonong*. Many of the families, which would have received them as their equals before they left their homes were afraid to admit them, as they could not anticipate the decision of the social elders with regard to their social position. Therefore, the demand for bride-price increased, with the result that even poorer families demanded a higher *Gonong* than they did before. During the period of the ecoomic boom prior to the world-wide depression, a Ho cultivator was in a much more flourishing state. A Ho labourer earned enough and to spare, the prices of *Lac* and cocoon increased termendously and supplementary occupations were paying. Thus, during this period, the number of *Andi* increased, while the bride-price was settled in rupees and ornaments. Although there was no reduction in the bride-price, the people could afford to pay, and the number of *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi* appreciably declined. Ho elders began to talk about such forms of mating as illegal, and representations were made by social reformers, to make these marriages unlawful and criminal. The forcible taking of women was compared to abduction, for which heavy penalties are provided in the Indian penal code. Well-to-do families preferred to settle the bride-price in money, poorer families demanded cattle in lieu of coin, which according to the latter meant a claim to social status. This situation, however, changed and with the gradual raising of agricultural prices and an increase in unemployment in the industrial centres, the arti-

* The Cry of Social Reform in Kolhan by D. N. Majumdar, Modern Review, March, 1925.

ficial inflation of *Gonong* has reacted on the social life by encouraging, and almost popularising irregular unions. There is also a marked change in attitude towards *Oportipi*. *Oportipi* is associated with a number of customary practices, some of which are planned and concerted, some sudden and violent. It requires some courage and involves risks. Cooperation between villagers, or members of a *Killi* is essential for success, for violence is punishable by law, and complaints may reach the headquarters of the district and thus involve a trial by a competent court of justice, or by the tribal elders. In either of these cases, the offender cannot escape the consequences. When governmental control in social matters was less effective, *Oportipi* was an ordinary social practice sanctioned by tradition and supported by public opinion. Even if there was violence on the girl, it was not regarded as a criminal offence. Nor is it today a criminal offence like rape. Yet public opinion is decidedly against really forcible abduction. Thus *Oportipi* has become a tame affair mutually planned in many cases. The couple first agree to live as man and wife, and a mock abduction is planned and carried into effect. The girl, though willing, does not like to come to her lover's house without some show of force, and she arranges to come out with some of her friends; as soon as the young man and his friends appear on the scene and take hold of her, she makes a pretence at escape, but finally yields to the man. She is brought home by her captor and lover, and her friends report the incident to her parents. The attitude of 'drag me and I come' is general, and therefore, 90% of the *Oportipi* cases are virtually *Rajikhusi*, which means marriage by mutual consent. The word *Rajikhusi* is taken from the local Hindi dialect. In *Oportipi* some bride price requires to be paid, if and when demanded. In *Rajikhusi*, no such transaction takes place, and the couple live as man and wife. Their children are legitimate and inherit the family property. No ceremony is required to validate such a union, and no formal procedure exists for the dissolution of marriage. The duration of such a union depends on the couple themselves, and when they decide to break off, they separate without much ado.

The methods of securing wives, and the amounts of *Gonong* paid by a number of families in Konslaposi (three *tolas*), Roborosai, and Kotgarh, with geneology are given below. The data were collected in 1935.

Family No. 1

Lachman of Konslaposi married in Kundrojor and had to pay a *Gonong* of 40 heads of cattle, and 50 rupees. He has three sons, Tupra, Barakar, and Disu, and three daughters. Tupra is 35 and married in Sagorkota village. He paid 20 heads of cattle and 25 rupees. He had three sons and three daughters, of whom two sons and two daughters survive. Barakar is 30, and he married in Siajo. He paid 9 heads of cattle and fifteen rupees. He has three sons and one daughter. Disu married his mother's sister in Kundrojor and paid 13 heads of cattle and 45 rupees. Lachman's first daughter was married in Jamda and fetched 25 heads of cattle and 45 rupees. His second daughter was not married according to *Andi*. She went to attend a marriage ceremony at Amjora during the month of the *Maghe* festival, where she was detained by a young man, and was made to live with him. Lachman realised 6 heads of cattle and 11 rupees after one month. Lachman is a substantial cultivator and pays an annual *Malgoozari* of 16 rupees.

Family No. 2

Disu is aged 50. He married twice and both the wives are living. He had no issue by the first wife, so he married his wife's sister. He married in the village, and did not pay any *Gonong*. For the first wife he paid only 12 annas, and for the second nothing. His first wife was possessed by *Churdu* (an evil spirit believed to cohabit with women thus rendering them barren). There is one son by his second wife. His son has married his maternal uncle's daughter and had to pay 4 heads of cattle and ten rupees. Disu's wife's sister was married by Disu by *Oportipi* form just as his first wife was.

Family No. 3

Mangu Sinku is 55. He, with his five brothers, pays a *Malgoozari* of rupees nine and annas nine only. He married in the village in Laguri *Killi*. He married by *Rajikhusi* and without any ceremony, but had to pay 4 goats to his father-in-law. He has four sons and three daughters. His first son married in the village, i.e., his maternal uncle's daughter and paid 3 heads of cattle and six rupees. His eldest daughter was married in *Andi* form in the village of Amjora, and fetched 4 heads of cattle and ten rupees. His second daughter was married in Jampani

village, and he got 4 heads of cattle and six rupees. His third daughter was married in June (1934) to Khairpal village, and fetched 5 heads of cattle and one she-goat, but no money.

Family No. 4

Kande, now aged 50, married in Marsabila village and paid 32 heads of cattle and 30 rupees. Kande has one son, Gangaram, and two daughters. Gangaram married in Gumuria and paid 25 heads of cattle and 40 rupees. He has one son, and one daughter. Gangaram's one sister was married in Parsa village in Aola *Pir*, and fetched 15 heads of cattle and 40 rupees. His second sister is 25 and still unmarried. She eloped with a young man of the village, but after six months came back home, and nothing was heard of the young man.

Family No. 5

Bikram Sinku, aged 45, had four brothers who died one after another, but his four sisters are all living. Of the sisters, two were married by *Andi* form, one in Jugridar, the other in Kundrojor. The former fetched 40 heads of cattle and 30 rupees, the latter 15 heads of cattle and 40 rupees. The other two sisters were married by *Oportipi* to the same man. Bikram has two sons and three daughters. The eldest daughter was married in Kotgarh, and fetched 15 heads of cattle and 55 rupees. Two other daughters are living in different villages according to *Oportipi*. The eldest son is sixteen years old and is studying in the Middle Vernacular School at Jagannathpur.

Family No. 6

Roya Manki married in Sananda and paid 15 heads of cattle and 50 rupees. He died last year, and his son Bhagwan is the joint *Manki* of Bantra *Pir*. Bhagwan is 18 years old, and his paternal uncle has settled his marriage in Dulki (Gumra *Pir*). He has to pay 15 heads of cattle and 60 rupees. The *Gonong* is being paid by instalments. His marriage will take place after the next *Maghe* festival. Bhagwan has four sisters, all married. The eldest was married to his maternal uncle's son, and no *Gonong* was paid by the latter. The second sister eloped with a Ho school teacher, but after six months the latter had to pay 12 heads of cattle as *Gonong*. The third was married in Jugridar, Keonjhar State, and fetched 18 heads of cattle

and 50 rupees. The fourth was married in Lukipai, in Gumra *Pir*, and brought 25 heads of cattle and 45 rupees.

Family No. 7

Jitu married in Dudbilla, Kotgarh *Pir*. He brought his wife by *Oportipi*, while she was going to the *Hat*. He had to pay two bullocks and two rupees. Jitu is dead. His two sons Bikram and Mana, and seven daughters are all living. His first daughter was married to Mangu of the same village. (F.N.3). His second daughter was married in Noagaon by *Oportipi*, but he received 2 heads of cattle and 4 rupees. The third daughter was married by *Rajikhusi*. His fourth daughter eloped with a young man ; both of them are supposed to be in the Assam tea gardens. The fifth daughter was taken to Amjora by *Oportipi*, but he obtained 2 heads of cattle after four years. The sixth and seventh are both living with a man of the Kotgarh village. The youngest, i.e., the seventh daughter followed her elder sister who was taken to Kotgarh by *Oportipi*. Bikram married by *Oportipi*. He has three daughters. Mana married in Jugridai (Bara *Pir*), and paid 4 heads of cattle and 19 rupees.

Family No. 8

Rengshaw married in Dudbilla in Kotgarh *Pir*. He is an ordinary labourer and has a very small plot of land. He had to pay a he-goat and one rupee as *Gonong*. He has two sons and five daughters. The eldest daughter was married in Noagaon, and he received 4 heads of cattle and 3 rupees. His second daughter was married to his wife's brother's son in Dudbilla, and he was given 2 heads of cattle and 2 rupees. His third daughter was taken by *Oportipi*. He has two small huts, and all the members of the family, excepting the daughters who are married, live together.

Family No. 9

Oybon Hembrom, aged 48, married in the village. He has two wives related as parallel-cousins. Both share the same hut with their husband. By his first wife he had two daughters, of whom one died young. The surviving one was married in Tilaipi village for 4 heads of cattle, 4 rupees, and a he-goat. By his second wife he has two sons, and one daughter, all living. There are seldom any quarrels

between the co-wives. The first wife is nearly 45, and the second is 28. The wives live just as two sisters. Oybon pays Rs. 2/6/6 as *Malgoozari*, and is one of the elders of the village.

Oybon's elder brother Nara is living. He claims to be the oldest man in Kolhan. Nara had two wives ; both died a few years back. The wives were sisters. He had two sons and two daughters by the first wife, and one son and one daughter by the second. Of the children by the first wife, one son is living, the other son and two daughters have gone to the tea gardens in Assam. It is said that Nara was responsible for driving them out of the village. Nara's second wife was very jealous and spiteful, and Nara was very fond of her. The son and two daughters by his first wife could not get on well with the step-mother and Nara indirectly sided with his second wife. The eldest son by the first wife has married, and is living separately with his wife and children. Nara's only daughter by his second wife was married in the village to a young man of *Simko Killi*, and the latter's sister was married to Nara's third son, or the only son of his second wife. Two heads of cattle and five rupees were received and the same *Gonong* plus a rupee was paid as the bride-price for Nara's son. Nara has his separate hut, but his daughter-in-law cooks food for him, and the land is divided between his two sons.

Family No. 10

Karji's elder brother Birga married in Mirgilindi village, Bara *Pir*, but died young. He had one daughter. Karji married his brother's widow, and is living with her. He has one son and one daughter, but he is maintaining Birga's daughter too. Birga's land has passed to Karji, and yet, the family is not in very comfortable circumstances.

Family No. 11

Jarea Marli, aged 45 or 46, has two wives. He married his first wife by *Oportipi* from Sheldaori, and his second wife is from the same village. The latter is Tupra's sister, (see family 1). He paid 4 heads of cattle, and one rupee for the second wife. Of the five children by the first wife (3 sons and 2 daughters) 2 sons died before he married the second time. His eldest son has married in Tonda Hatu (Bantra *Pir*) by *Oportipi*, and has one child. His two daughters by the first

wife were married by *Oportipi*, the first in Hesalpata, and the second within the village. For the first, he received one cow and 2 rupees, and nothing for the second. By his second wife he has one son and one daughter, both minors. He has no land and pays an annual house rent of five pice only. He and his son live together, and are labourers in the village. His son and his daughter-in-law often go to the iron mines for work but come back during the busy agricultural season, when they find just enough work to maintain them.

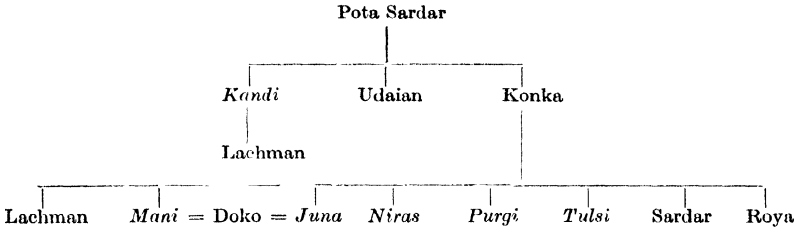
Family No. 12

Mangu married his first wife from Thakur village, Jamda *Pir* by *Oportipi*, and his second wife from Udayjo village, Bantra *Pir*, by the same method. In the latter case, he had to pay 4 heads of cattle, to Lukra, his father-in-law. Jandoi married in the village, Roborosai, Kotgarh *Pir*, and paid 12 rupees, 14 heads of cattle including 2 bullocks. Turi married Selai's daughter in Hathabra (Kotgarh *Pir*) by *Oportipi*, and did not pay any *Gonong*. Robro married in Hamsada (Kotgarh *Pir*), Bamia's daughter, and paid 6 heads of cattle, one bullock and 9 rupees. Hari married Budkal's daughter in Rengabera (Kotgarh *Pir*) by *Oportipi*. Jamdar married in Beterko village Durga's daughter, and paid 17 heads of cattle (with 2 bullocks) and 9 rupees. Jamdar's daughter, Ambuli was married to Ganga of Tontoposi, and fetched 6 heads of cattle and 7 rupees. Menjo was married to Lukum in Beterk to Durga's son (i.e., her mother's brother's son), and fetched 4 heads of cattle. Mecho was married by *Rajikhusi* in the village. Chuba was married in the village and fetched 7 heads of cattle and 6 rupees only. Surdan married by *Oportipi* from Pichua village (Bara *Pir*), but had to pay 3 heads of cattle and 10 rupees. His second wife was taken from the village by *Rajikhusi*. Kundu married Gola's daughter from Tontoposi by *Oportipi*. His son Ladu also married by *Oportipi*. Jano was married by Chamra Ho of Beterke village by *Oportipi*. Somarin married by *Oportipi* in Tontoposi village. Mecho married by *Oportipi* to Budka of Rengabera. Dongra married Turi's daughter from Ketahatu (Bara *Pir*), and paid a heavy *Gonong*, but details could not be had. Mahati married Goma's daughter, and paid 20 heads of cattle and 20 rupees. Jamdar Mahati's son married in Tontoposi by *Oportipi*. Damu married Chokra's daughter by *Oportipi* from Rengabera. Robro eloped with a girl of the village and of the

same *Killi* and both are in Assam tea gardens. Jingi was married by *Rajikhusi* in the village, Lidon to Banjora, Kairi to Kitahatu, Chariba to Aikuti, and Sunu to Bada, all by *Oportipi*. Sungum is an aged spinster.

The geneological tables of a few more families are appended here with.*

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE NO 1



Lachman married in Amjora. Guna's daughter. 14 heads of cattle, 2 bullocks, 25 rupees ; has one young son

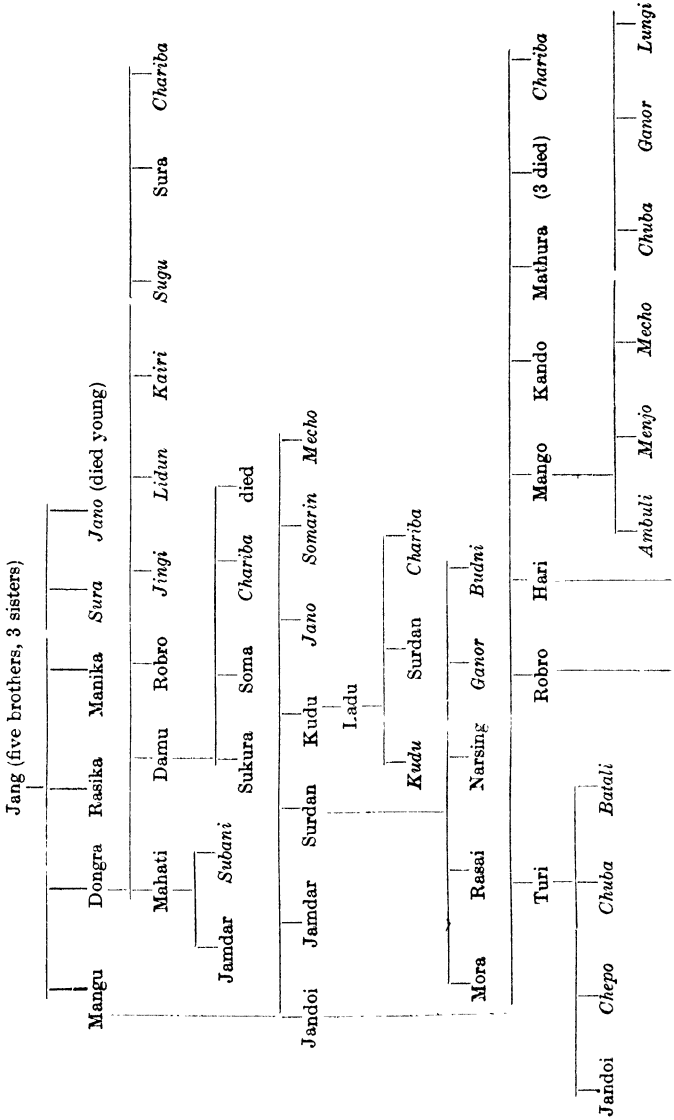
Mani married in Sheldari (Bantra *Pir*) to Doko Laguri. 7 heads of cattle, 2 bullocks and 10 rupees.

Juna married in Sheldari to the same person (her sister's husband). 15 heads of cattle, 30 rupees and 2 bullocks.

*In all the tables, the female names are given in italics.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE No. 2

ROBOROSAI VILLAGE



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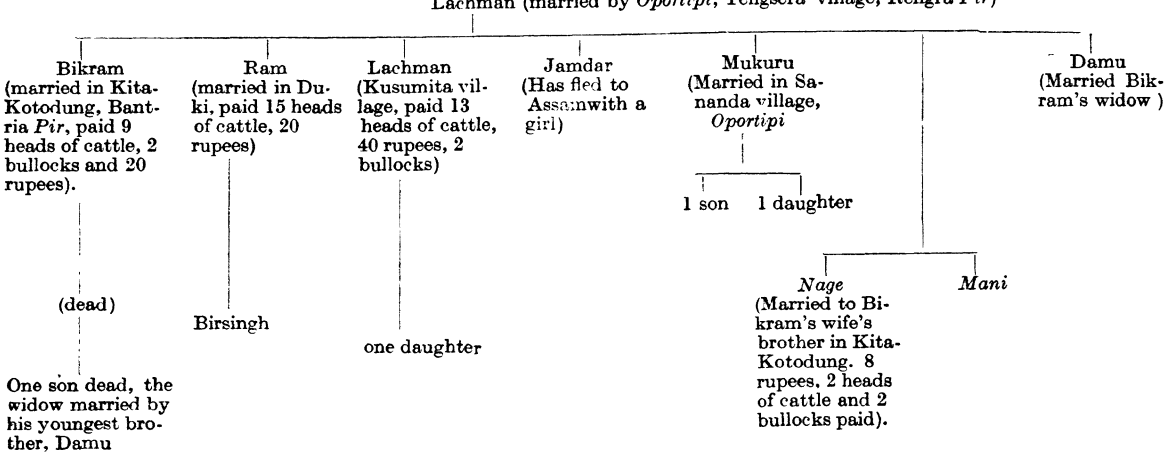

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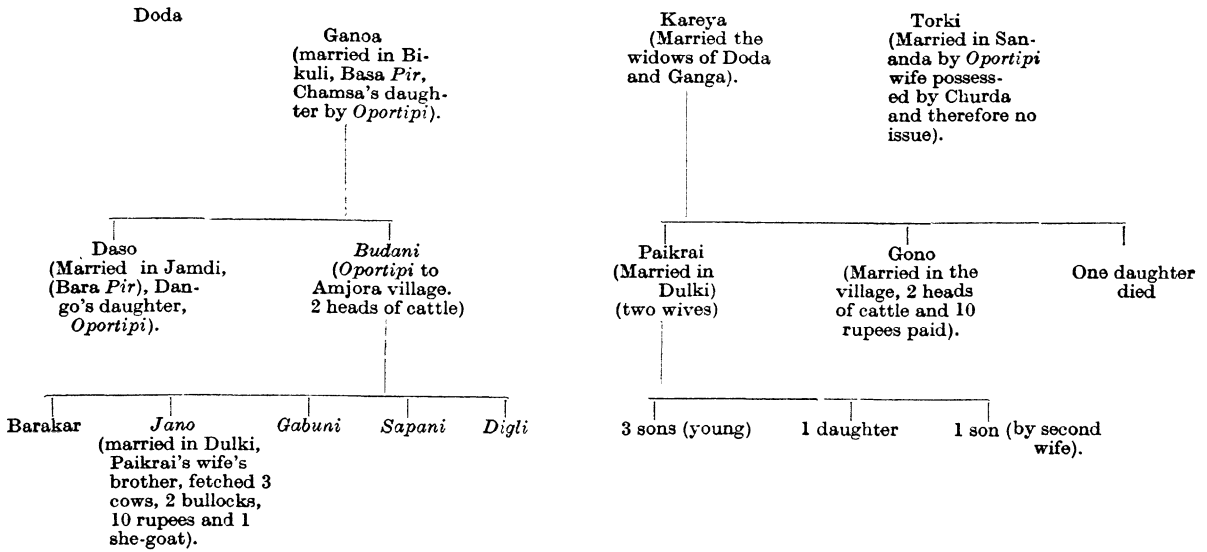

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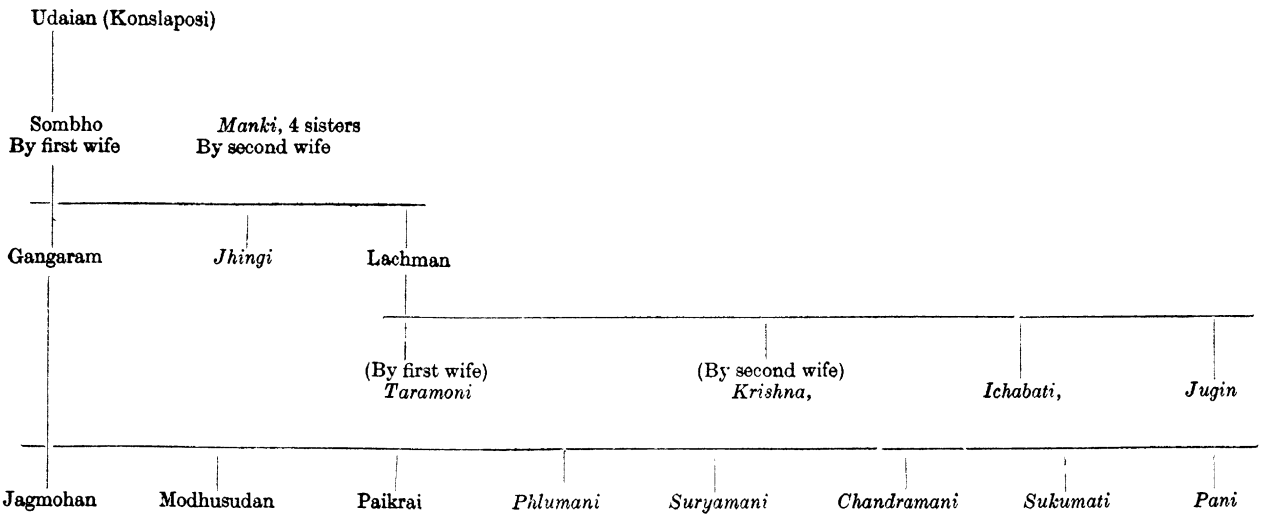
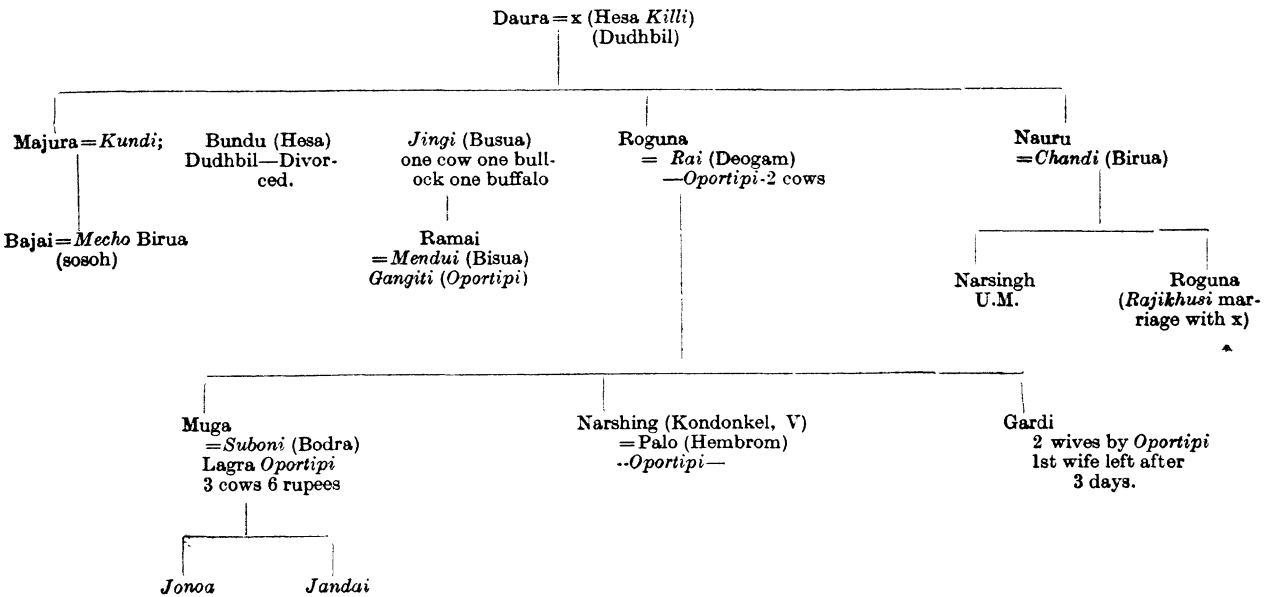


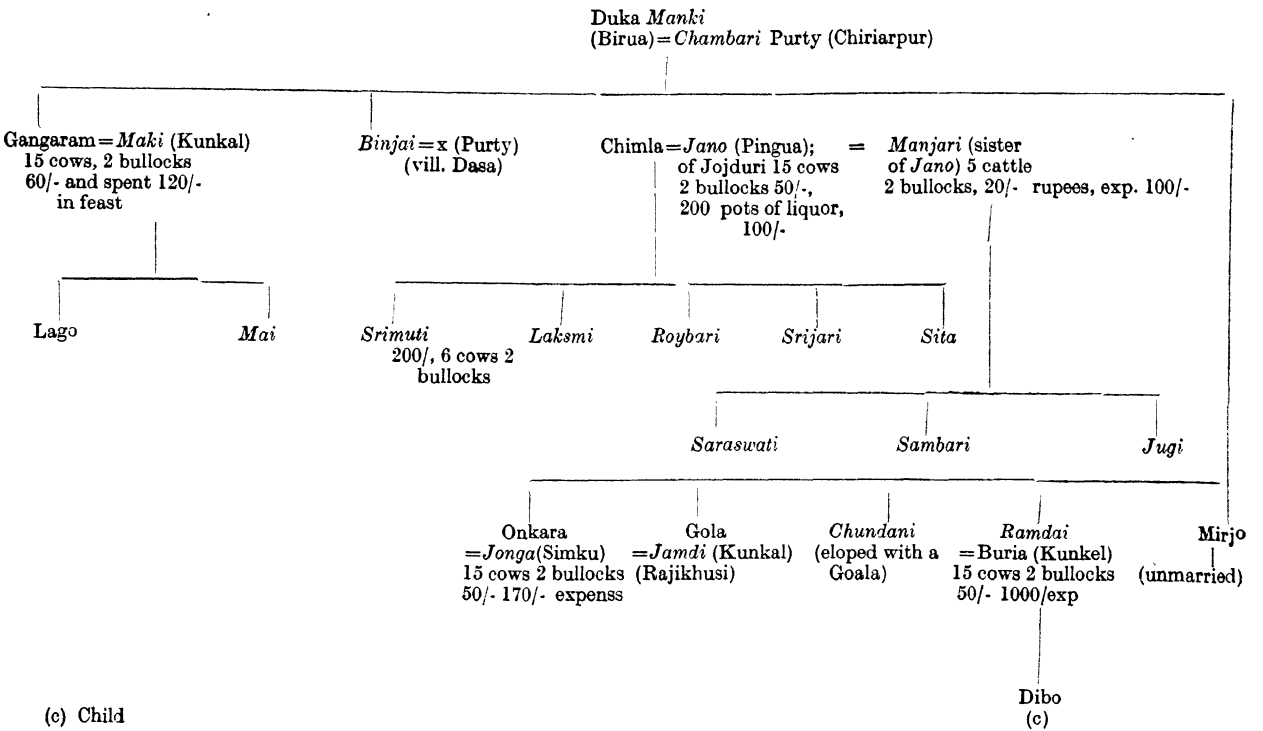
Sombho married in Kunta village (Gumra *Pir*). He paid 30 heads of cattle, 1 buffalo, 1 pair of bullocks and 100 rupees for his first wife, and 15 heads of cattle, 1 buffalo and 50 rupees for his second wife who is the sister of his first wife. Gangaram married Paikrai Tubids's daughter in Dulki (Gumra *Pir*), and paid 25 heads of cattle and 60 rupees and a pair of bullocks. Phulmani, his daughter was married in Sananda, (Bantria *Pir*) and he received 15 heads of cattle, 1 pair of bullocks and 40 rupees. Chandramani was married in Tagra *Pir*, the bride-price paid was 25 heads of cattle, 2 pairs of bullocks and 100 rupees. Suryamani was married in Nakhasa in Cherai *Pir* and he received 16 heads of cattle, 1 pair of bullocks and 85 rupees.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE NO. 6



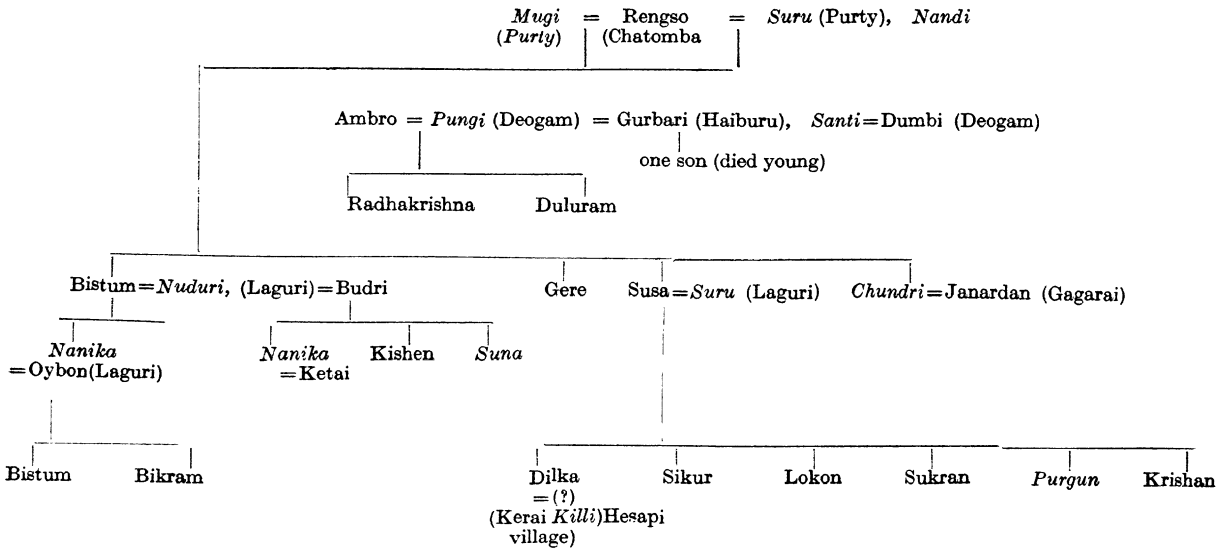
U.M. Unmarried.
Killi within bracket.
x the name not known

Geneological Table No. 7.



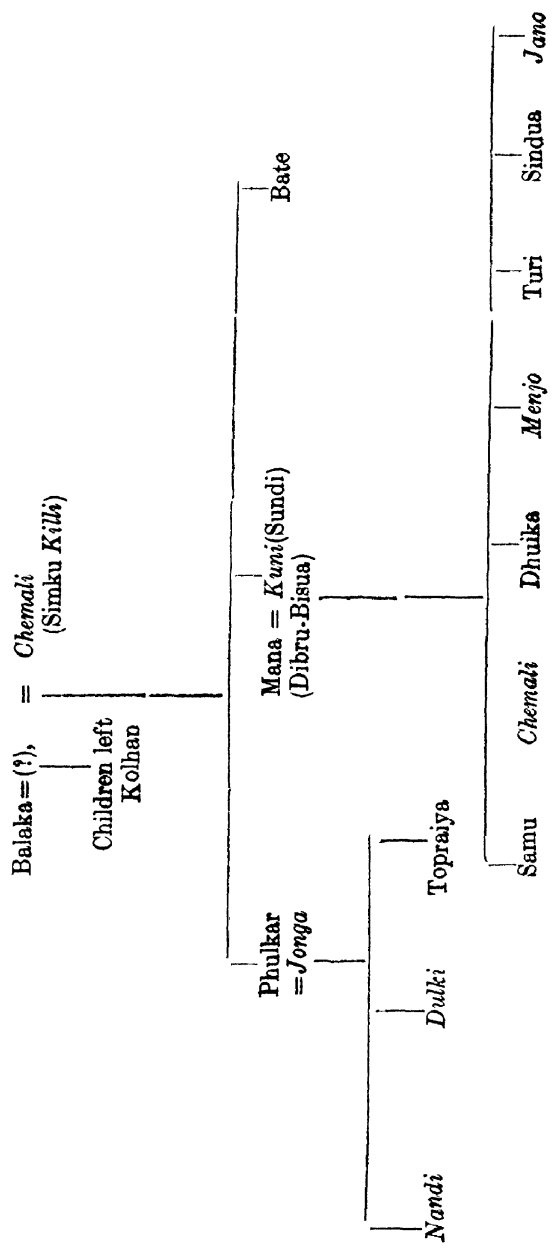
(c) Child

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE NO. 8

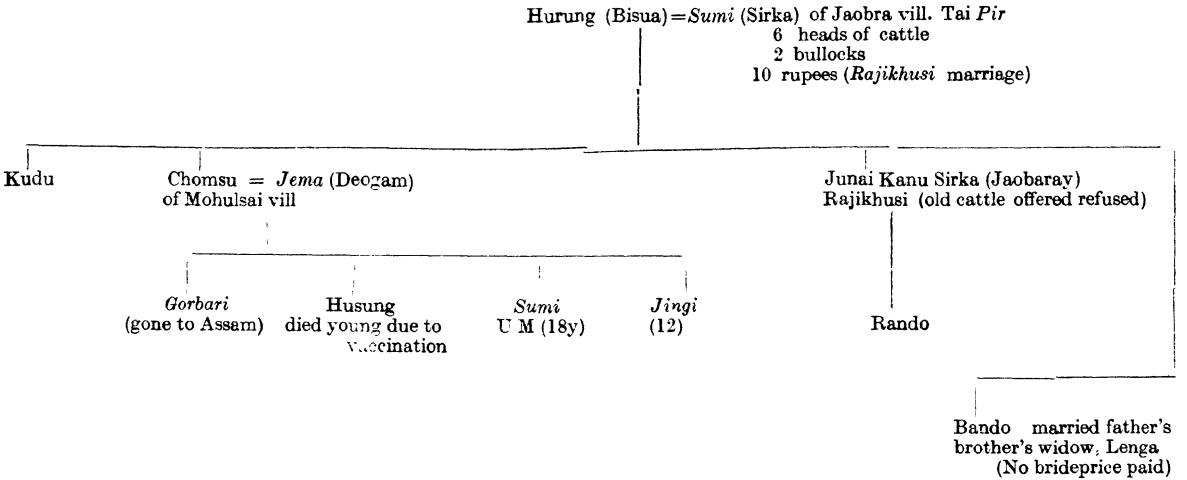


Ambro married Dulu Manki's daughter, his sister married Dumbi, Dulu Manki's son. Rengso married *Suru* and her sister *Mugi* Bistum married *Nuduri* and *Budni* two sisters, Sura married *Suru* sister of *Budru* and *Nuduri*. Ambro paid a heavy bride price and spent, 600/- towards the expenses of his marriage. Most of the marriages in his family were either *Oportipi* or *Rajikhusi*. A substantial family in earlier days did not encourage irregular forms of marriage, today, such marriages do take place whether the family likes it or not.

GENEOLOGICAL TABLE No. 9



GENEOLOGICAL TABLE NO. 10



4

MARRIAGE RITES

The bride-price has to be paid by the parents of the bridegroom, and in their absence, by the guardian. If the bridegroom has no such relation, the village *Munda* may negotiate on his behalf and act as his guardian. In *Andi*, the services of a middleman or *Dutam* are secured, and the amount of the bride-price and other preliminaries are settled through him. In some cases proposals are advanced directly by the father or guardian of the young man, without the interference of any *Dutam*, but the mediation of the latter is sought more for expediency and convenience than because of any convention. The word *Dutam* is of sanskrit derivation and must have been borrowed by the Hos from their *Diku* neighbours. *Dutam* means a messenger and has the same significance as *Ghatak* who arranges marriages in Hindu society. It should be noted that it is the well-to-do families who engage a *Dutam*, while poor families do without him. It is also a fact that cross cousin marriage is more prevalent among the lower classes than among the higher. As a matter of fact, it has become extremely rare among well-to-do families, particularly among the present generation. Does this not suggest that the introduction of the *Dutam* is meant to settle marriages in distant villages without the knowledge of the family of the maternal uncle, while the bridegroom's family remains in the background? Marriages between people of distant *Pirs* are more common today than they were a few years back. A second explanation perhaps lies in their newly developed class-consciousness which makes them seek alliances with families of higher classes. As there is always a risk of being refused and insulted, the preliminary arrangements are entrusted to a *Dutam*.

It is safer to secure the services of a *Dutam*, and the Ho father prefers to keep himself in the background until the negotiations are well advanced. After settling the preliminary terms, the *Dutam* informs the bridegroom's parents who in consultation with him settle an auspicious day, according to the Ho lunar calendar, on which the bridegroom's guests may be received at the bride's house. Six to ten men from the bridegroom's village with pots full of *Diang*, rice and spices, and with he-goats and fowls, proceed to the house of the bride to see her, and discuss *Gonong*. Today, they only go with *Diang*. The

party also takes musical instruments to keep up their spirits during the journey. As soon as they reach the bride's house, they receive close attention from the inmates and their friends. The women of the house or the *Killi* wash the feet of the guests. The guests take their seats on stools made of *Sal* saplings and ropes made of *Sawai* grass. A big mat is spread on the centre of the courtyard for the accommodation of the *Killi* members. Then they are offered *Ficcas*. Thus refreshed, they drink *Illi*, and discuss the omens that may have been noted by the party on its way. This is done in all seriousness, for they believe that the nature of the omens determines the success of the marriage. In case the omens prove too strong to be ignored, the parties take leave of each other, and the bridegroom's party returns to the village. In all cases, the Hos attach much importance to omens and divinations, and before they undertake any work that is likely to affect the well being of the individual or the community, they put their heads together to decipher the nature of the omens they may encounter. The *Deonwa* is the traditional interpreter of omens and sacrifices, and offerings are made to undo the presaged evils. The business is started in right earnest, as they say that it is certain to be successful should the omen prove lucky and they are never likely to regret their action. In the case of the omens not found auspicious, a common propitiation of the *Era-Bonga* is arranged and the text runs as follows :

'O God, the ill omens we ran across, we flew across, today thou God untie them, ward them off, do not keep these evil omens ; the omens to the left, let go away to the left. The omens to the right let go away to the right.'

Then they name all animals and birds they came across in their journey for the marriage negotiations.

After worshiping and a dinner (a sort of picnic) at the time of departure, the bridegroom's party says to the other party ; "Now we leave and abandon marriage negotiations, we shall seek for some other bride so you too are at liberty to give away your daughter in marriage somewhere else." To this the bride's party reply, 'all right, we shall give our daughter to some one else, you too seek some other bride. Now we forsake each other."

In the case of the omens being satisfactory the parties discuss the terms. A preliminary settlement having already been made

by the *Dutam*, it is for the bride's party to work out the details. The deliberations keep the parties engaged for several hours, during which the people drink quantities of *Illi*. The bridegroom's people do not, as a rule, take any food offered by the bride's party. They come provided with rice, pulse and he-goats, and such other articles as are required for cooking their meals, so that they are not at the mercy of their prospective relations. But at present only *Tundis* full of *Diang* or *Illi* are taken with them. Even if they are short of provisions, they refuse any supply from the bride's people till the arrangements are complete, and the date for the *Bapala* has been fixed. The night is spent in dance and hilarity by the young people, and older men spend the time in visiting their old acquaintances and making new ones. The next morning the party returns to its village.

On an auspicious day fixed by the *Deuri*, the bride's party comes to the village of the bridegroom to see the house of the latter, and examine the cattle promised as dowry. The bridegroom's party is informed beforehand so that the family may be in readiness to receive its guests. It makes a large quantity of *Illi*, and provides entertainment for the bride's party. There is no limit to the number of people who may come from the bride's village, and sometimes the number becomes too large for the means of the family concerned, but on such occasions the bride's party comes with presents of rice, lentils, goats and vegetables and pots full of *Illi*, so that the family is seldom put to any inconvenience. This is one of the redeeming features of the Ho marriage ceremony which makes it possible for the joint participation of the villagers in each other's joys and sorrows. Unfortunately, the idea of social solidarity is becoming weaker and the burden on the family is increasing.

Immediately on arrival, the feet of the guests are washed and the party is conducted to the courtyard of the bridegroom's house, where a big mat has already been placed, and stools of different sizes have been arranged all round. The older members are shown greater consideration than the younger. The female members of the village, or the *Killi* give all attention to the guests, washing their feet and passing round *Ficcas*, and *Illi* in leaf-cups. The elders of the village receive the guests with embraces, and perfect cordiality reigns on all sides. *Puhu* (leaf-cup) after *Puhu* of *Illi* are drunk by all the members of the bride's party, as well as all those who are present on the occasion.

Next, the members are shown their *Jambas*, or temporary leafy sheds, for cooking their meals. These are made of leaves and branches of the *Sal*, and ovens are dug inside them. The party is supplied with rice, lentils, goats and cocks, spices, oil, firewood, *Boroh Sengel*, tobacco, and their great delicacy, common salt. For cooking earthen utensils and wooden ladles are given, and *Chitki* (leaf plates) and *Puhu* are supplied for eating the meals. While the party prepares its food, people from the bridegroom's village sit and converse with them. When the food is ready, the bride's party invites some members of the bridegroom's *Killi* to join them in the dance and this adds cordiality to the function, and friendliness continues to mark the rest of the dealings between the two parties.

Next morning, the guests are taken to the tank, or the river close by for their morning wash and they are given *Karkads*, or tooth brush made from twigs of the *Sarjom* (Sal) or *Neem* tree. The bride's people are shown the cattle which they are to approve, after regaling them with a generous supply of *Illi*. If they express their dissatisfaction with the selection, the bridegroom's party tries to please them by changing some of the cattle, or promising to replace them, if necessary. In the event of any disagreement on this account, the *Bapala* is called off. The *Bapala* ceremony begins only after the cattle have been approved by the bride's party.

The *Bapala* is the most important ceremony in connection with marriage, and is much enjoyed by the Hos. It is on the occasion of the *Bapala* that the Hos give themselves up to *Dama*, *Dumang* and *Susun* (i.e., drums, songs and dances), and the whole village takes part in nocturnal revels and jollification. Wit and humour, and gifts of composition of songs are severely tested.

Some typical *Bapala* songs are given below. The women from the bride's side sing the following song :

The girl (you are going to marry) has lips like a hawk,
She is so quarrelsome !
The girl (you are going to marry) has lips like a *Maina*,
She uses her lips freely for a fight
Wherever she will be married she will quarrel,
(She is so talkative).
Whomever she will be married with she will quarrel.
(She is so talkative).
If she is given in marriage in Bundu she will quarrel
If she is mated in Tamar, she will quarrel
(She is so talkative).

The bridgroom's party has the following reply :

Is this the cat-eyed *mendeong*
you had spotted for me, O da la !
Is this the pig-lipped peevish fellow,
you wanted me to marry, O *dada* !
The cat-eyed *mendeong* is here, O *dada* !
Here he is blinking at me with eyes wide open,
The pig-lipped peevish fellow is here, O *dada* !
Here he is grinning at me with teeth wide open.

Again, the bride's people will sing,

Slim and fair like the *Kaka* leaf,
O, you have a maiden (for your wife),
Slim and fair like the *Kaka* leaf.

The bridegroom's people will reply :

Alert and vivacious like a charger,
O, you have a maiden (for your wife).
Alert and vivacious like a charger.

The bride's people sing :

O flat-faced (like a pea leaf) youth,
Why do you eye me from head to foot ?
Why do you eye me from head to foot ?
Only a lone brother she has
How much can she adorn herself with (jewellery),
O flat-faced youth.
Why do you eye me from head to foot ?
Why do you eye me from head to foot ?

The lament of the girls of the village with whom the bride spent her youth in the village :

For long have we two been friends
For long have we been together, my dear !
We have adorned our heads with *Puinyal* flowers
Which grow on tops of hills so near.
For long have we two been friends.
For long have we been together, my dear,
Who shall go with me now to the hill top,
With whom shall I decorate my head
With lovely *Puinyal* flowers.

The songs sung on this occasion are allegorical, crude and often vulgar. The men of the bride's party play on the musical instruments, *Banam* and *Rutu* and the women of the village dance to the tune singly or in pair. The women rub their bodies with oil and turmeric powders, and go together to bathe, while the men from the bride's village watch them, or follow them to the tank or the river. They make red or yellow solutions of turmeric which they sprinkle over one another, and the whole village puts on coloured clothes which look like gala dress. The women deck themselves with flowers and creepers, and walk up and down the village full of the spirit of the occasion. The bridegroom is always surrounded by the girls and is the cynosure of all eyes.

The next ceremony is known as the *Era Thil*, which takes place after a month or two, according to the wishes of the parties at *Bapala*.

The bridegroom, with a number of male friends and relations, is invited to go to the bride's house and the party sets out for her village in time to reach it before dusk. It is essential for the bridegroom to take with him some money. Presents of *Illi*, rice, lentils and he-goats are taken by the party and deposited with the bride's family. In addition, they take with them the whole of the dowry consisting of cattle and money for the final transaction. A warm welcome greets them upon their arrival. Reception is done in the usual manner of the *Bapala*, the bridegroom's party cooking food separately as in the *Bapala*. The night is spent in feasting and dancing. The next morning, at about 9.a.m. the courtyard is cleaned and rinsed with cowdung solution. Mats and *Machilas* are spread on the ground, and all the relations are invited to assemble there. The bridegroom takes his seat in the centre, and waits for the arrival of the bride. Soon after the bride is brought in by her *Killi* mates, and is led to a seat placed opposite that of the bridegroom. The bride and bridegroom exchange glances, and have to inform their respective relatives of their mutual approval. This is done by offering *Illi*. The bridegroom first offers a *Puhu* of *Illi* to the bride, who, if she approves of him has to distribute the liquor to all her relations, after partaking of it herself. The bride on her part, then offers the liquor to the bridegroom who has to repeat the procedure. The bride may not immediately accept the *Puhu* offered to her by the bridegroom, as it is customary for the latter to offer some money, clothes or ornaments to elicit her approval. Ten to twenty rupees are often required to make the bride accept the offer, but there are cases when the bride insists on a higher sum, and it must be paid immediately. Refusal of either party to accept the proffered liquor brings the negotiations to a close. It is true that the refusal generally comes from the side of the girl, for the man has made up his mind before offering the first *Puhu* to the bride. If the worst happens, the parties confer together to decide how to make up the loss the bride's party has incurred. The decision generally takes the form of an invitation to the bridegroom's village, at a later date, to partake of a feast specially arranged for them. But this seldom occurs, as the first refusal is made up by offering an amount higher than that formerly agreed upon. When the bride and bridegroom approve of each other, there follows a battle of wit between the bride's sisters and *Killi* mates, and the bridegroom and his friends.

The girls smoke *Ficcas* blowing the smoke at the bridegroom and the latter has to put up with insults and rough handling from the girls. But everything betokens perfect mutual understanding, so that the whole affair becomes a part of the ceremony which adds prestige to the contracting families. At night the bride and the bridegroom take part in the dance specially arranged for them, and here they try to show themselves at their best. This dance also is a test of the skill and vigour of the bridegroom who has to play his part in the dancing ring.

The *Era Thil* ceremony completes the betrothal, and before the parties take leave of each other, a date and place are fixed for the final settlement of the ceremony. On the morning of the day appointed for the ceremony, five to ten male members from the bridegroom's party leave for the bride's house to escort the bride to the village. They are called *Or-era* men. If the bride's village happens to be far off, they set out on the previous night, so that they may reach there in time to start with the party. The *Or-era* men are received by the bride's family with humility, and after treating them to *Diang* and a feast, preparations are made by the bride and her relations to accompany the *Or-era* party. The bride's party consists of relations of the bride, male and female, and most of the male members of the *Killi*. The party leaves the bride's house with drums and other musical instruments, and arrives at the bridegroom's village at dusk or in the morning. The parties meet at a place midway between the two villages. Each party brings its own ration (rice, cock, hen etc.) as are required according to the instruction of the *Deonwa* who is to perform the *Era Bonga Ura*. The numbers on either side participating are previously fixed. The date of the marriage and the ration to be supplied on the occasion of the ceremony are settled on the spot ; in case of disagreement a second meeting is arranged for. After the fixation of marriage date, the bride goes out with an elderly mate of hers to all the relatives to intimate the date of her marriage, and last of all, she goes to her maternal uncle's house whence she must be escorted to her village by *Dama*, *Dumang*, and *Kuma* party. They are entitled to a goat, twenty pots of *Illi* and half-a-maund of rice and proportionate quantity of other cereals and vegetables. A sufficient quantity of rice beer is taken to refresh the party on their bridal march. As soon as it approaches the outskirts of the bridegroom's village, the women from the bride's

side pluck off branches of trees, and armed with these, they form into line, with the bride in the centre, and with songs and yells meet the advancing party from the bridegroom's village. The bridegroom, borne on a man's shoulders with bow and arrows in his hand, leads his party, and a mock skirmish takes place while the drums are beaten, and the *Rutu* and *Banam* played by the followers on either side. At the rear of the bridegroom's party, a woman carries a pot of *Rasi* which is meant for the bride, and after the skirmish it is offered to her and her defenders. The skirmish lasts a few minutes when suddenly the bride's people take to their heels. It is customary to use slang and filthy words in vilification of one another on this occasion, and the corrupt patois they use are too wild and gross to record. With the ending of this mock tussle, the first act of the drama ends, and the bride is led to the house of the bridegroom amidst shouts and cries of welcome. On arrival at the courtyard all the branches of trees which the women have brought are thrown on the roof of the bridal chamber. The bride's feet are washed by one of the seniormost female members of the family or of *Killi* or by her *Gungu* (husband's elder brother's wife) and a *Sari* dyed with turmeric is offered to her to wear on the spot. Then she is carried to the bridegroom's courtyard. The marriage ceremony proper takes place a few hours after their arrival and sometimes on the arrival of the bride's party to the courtyard. Differences as to procedure in the final ceremony are noticeable in Kolhan, and the following two cases will illustrate the degree of divergence in customary formalities connected with marriage.

In the village of Gundipoa five miles from Chaibassa, I attended the marriage ceremony of Sukha. In response to invitations, relatives and friends of the bridegroom's family had already arrived in the bridegroom's house the previous morning. They had brought with them rice, fowls, he-goats, *Illi*, vegetables which were presented to the family of the bridegroom. Sukha had to fast all day but he was allowed to drink *Illi* as often as he wished. Towards evening when Sukha's bride was seen approaching the village, Sukha took leave of his mother in a pathetic manner. His mother wept all day and seldom spoke, and when Sukha approached her, she embraced him and clasped him in her arms. Sukha tried to console her. His mother asked him where he was going. Sukha answered that he was

going to fetch a girl who would help her in her domestic work and serve her as her slave. Sukha's mother was a little reassured, and Sukha took leave of her to join the party assembled at the boundary line of the village, where they met the bride and her following. In the courtyard, a *dais* was erected and over it, a temporary pandal was raised by placing branches of trees on four bamboo posts, fixed at the four corners of the *dais*. Soon after, the bride with her hair loose and dishevelled was brought in and was led to a wooden seat placed on stalks of grain spread on the *dais*, and close to the seat of the bridegroom. The *Deuri* chanted some prayers to *Sing-bonga* and other lesser *Bongas* of the Ho pantheon, as also to the *Oa-bongas* of the family. The actual ceremony was very simple. The bride and the bridegroom were previously anointed with oil and turmeric paste, and it only remained to paint vermillion on each other's forehead. Sukha was seated on the knee of his maternal uncle, and his bride was sitting with her friends. The bride was asked to sit on the other knee of Sukha's maternal uncle, and here they painted vermillon on each other's forehead amidst the beating of drums and the playing of *Rutu* and *Banam*. The *Deuri* then prepared rice in a new earthen pot, and offered the *Mundi* (prepared rice) to the ancestral spirits. The bride and the bridegroom were then asked to touch the boiled rice offered in a leaf plate, and the bride was thenceforth declared to belong to her husband's *Killi*.

Dulphu's marriage took place at Kotgarh and the ceremony performed at his marriage was slightly different from that of Sukha's marriage, described above. When the bride and her party arrived at the courtyard of the house, a mat was spread there, and the bride and bridegroom were made to sit facing each other. Two small cups, one containing oil, and the other turmeric powder, were placed on the mat. The bridegroom first anointed the bride with a mixture of the two, and the bride then anointed his forehead, which sealed the contract. Four pots of rice-beer were then brought out from the bridegroom's house. Three were carried by the bride, two on her head, and one in her arm, and the fourth one was carried by Dulphu on his shoulder and taken to the hut where the bride's parents had been lodged. After drinking *Diang* to his heart's content, the bridegroom returned to his house leaving the bride with her parents and relations. The guests were then supplied with rice, lentils, he-goats, etc., accor-

ding to the means of the bridegroom's family. The night was spent in feasting, drinking and dancing. In the morning the bride was brought by her friends with dance and songs, and delivered to the bridegroom. The bride's party left in the morning. At the prospect of separation, the bride generally weeps freely. Her parents and relations try to console her and after giving her advice concerning her conduct they leave for their village. Before leaving, the bride and the bridegroom have to salute all the members of the party leaving the village.

The festivities are continued in the bridegroom's house for two, three, or seven days, as long as their resources permit. During the first few days, the bride cannot be persuaded to partake of any food offered in her husband's house and she has to live upon such provisions as may have been supplied by her own people. The bridegroom and his parents and relatives entreat her to take food, but she refuses until some settlement is made with her. She insists on gifts, or money, or both. When persuasions fail, some sort of compromise is arrived at, and the bride receives an ornament, a new *Sari*, or a few rupees, whichever she demands. The first time the bride takes food in the house of her husband is observed by a ceremony known as *Jomesin*. A feast is arranged, a he-goat is killed, and the members of the *Killi* are invited to participate.

On the third day after the return of the bride's party, a batch of female members of the girl's family or *Killi*, return to the bridegroom's house with rice and other things to feed her and her husband so that the girl may not feel that she has been altogether banished from the family of her parents. They are sumptuously entertained by the parents of the bridegroom, and a feast is held in their honour, if the family can afford it. On their return journey, they are given similar presents. The bride may accompany the party if she desires to see her village and her *Killi* mates. After a month or so, the bride and the bridegroom along with male and female members of the family go to the bride's village with all sorts of presents and are cordially welcomed. They are given a sumptuous treat and the party returns satisfied.

When a Ho girl is married before she has attained the age of puberty, she is not required to leave her parents, and the bridegroom's people have no authority to take her home till such time as her par-

ents think proper. When the girl has attained her puberty or is deemed capable of cohabiting, a second ceremony is performed which completes marriage. This is known as *Bandhaparah*. On an auspicious day, the village *Deuri* worships *Sing-bonga* and prepares some rice in a new earthen pot, and after dedicating it to the ancestral gods, the bride and the bridegroom are asked to partake of it. The couple, with the bride's female relations retire next to the village *Bandh* or tank, to take a ceremonial bath. Here much fun is made with the water to the great enjoyment of the women. In one case, a pair of areca nut cutter was thrown into the water by the bride, and the bridegroom had to pick it up from the depths of the tank. The women entered the tank and tried to hide the instrument under the feet to make the search more difficult. The bridegroom puts up with such ordeals with good humour. The whole affair appears to be a borrowed custom. Child marriage is comparatively recent practice in Kolhan, and is only practised by some wealthy families, viz., those of the *Mankis* and *Mundas* who live in proximity to *Diku* centres. The *Bandhaparah* custom is prevalent among the lower, as well as higher castes, in and around Kolhan, and is associated with the puberty ceremony popularly known as *Gauna*. The use of the areca nut-cutter by the Hos is difficult to explain, as the Hos seldom use it. Probably its popularity in the Hindu households and use in the Hindu marriage explain its adoption as an emblem of womanhood.

When the ceremony is complete, the women of the bridegroom's village will sing,

There are no leaf-cups (*puhu*)
The bundle of *chari* (leaves) is also gone,
Go away O kinsmen (*Bala*)
Go away O kinsmen,
Your wives will scold you, O. kinsmen.
We shall tie you with the entrails (of goats) left,
O kinsmen, you look like dried gourds.

and so the longing and lingering looks are turned towards home, and the guests depart with good cheer.

The women from the bridegroom's party, after the completion of the round of feasts and festivities, sing the song below at the time of their departure. The bride is sarcastically asked by the women from the bridegroom's village to name the friends and playmates of the bride so that they could know them, a crude hint about the premarital license obtaining in Kolhan,

O young maid,
Why not twine out the thin threads of your love
Why not twine them out ?
Like the juice of the *Nicha* flower,
Why not shed a few drops of tear
For your friends and playmates of the past ?

5
KINSHIP STRUCTURE

In India kinship nomenclature is mostly descriptive and even where an abundance of classificatory terms may be found today, the tendency is to coin new words for relations and even to borrow from others. If we notice the structure of the kinship system among the Hos or for the matter of that of any cognate tribe in these parts, we shall find that while a group of relations by blood or by marriage has been denoted by the same kinship term, there is always an attempt, we discern, to separate relations by blood from those by marriage and also to extend the courtesy of addressing as a near kin to persons who are ordinarily remote or removed. The use of the courtesy terms is a little puzzling sometimes, as the same term is used to denote persons of both the sexes, a convention which otherwise we could explain by the poverty of the language, but my Ho friends tell me that the term is meant to show the respect that the Hos ordinarily show to the kin whose kinship status is transferred this way. One clever youngman said, it was like *Saheb* and *Memsaheb*, a perfectly understandable construction. There are many kinship terms the use of which indicates 'antecedent social function' as Dr. Rivers put it. *Gawaing* is father's younger brother's wife and stepmother and mother's sister. Mother's sister's husband has the same term as the father's brother, wife's sister has no special term, a Ho ordinarily marries his wife's sister during the life time or after the death of his wife. The maternal uncle and the father's sister's husband are equated by the use of the same term, so also the mother's brother's wife and the father's sister's husband. Wife's father is *Kumang* and wife's mother is *Hatom* in most Ho villages, though the terms *Honyar* and *Hanar* are also in use.

Some kinship terms are used to denote a class of relations, as for example, *Gungu*, *Gaing* and *Teyang*.

Gungu is used for

(a) Mother's elder brother
(b) Father's elder brother

(c) Father's brother's wife
(d) Mother's elder sister
(e) Wife's elder sister's husband
(f) Younger brother's son or daughter.

Gaing is similarly used for

(a) Elder sister's son (M.S.)
(b) Elder sister's daughter (M.S.)
(c) Younger sister's son (M.S.)
(d) Younger sister's daughter (M.S.)
(e) Wife's brother's son
(f) Wife's brother's daughter.

Teyang is used to denote the relations

(a) Wife's younger sister
(b) Elder sister's husband (M.S. & F.S.)

Father's sister's children do not have any special term, they are called *Hatom hon* or *Hatom undi*, the relationship is traced through the female. Mother's brother's son is classed with the father's sister's son. Cross-cousin marriage and marriage with the mother's sister, both of which are popular with the Hos are responsible for a particular type of kinship alignments, but the main trend of kinship structure of the Hos, is a transition from the group to descriptive kinship, and the coining of kinship terms today is to meet the needs of a family system, which the Hos are fast developing.

M.S. = Male speaking
F.S. = Female speaking

Relationship

The terms of address used towards relations by the Hos are as follows:—

Terms used for relations

	English	Ho
1.	Father's father	Tatang
2.	Mother's father	Tatang
3.	Father's mother	Jiang
4.	Mother's mother	Jiang
5.	Father	Apu
6.	Mother	Eyang or Anga
7.	Father's elder brother	Gungu
8.	Father's younger brother	Kaka
9.	Father's brother's wife	Gungu (e) Kaki (y), or Gawaing
10.	Father's sister	Hatom
11.	Father's sister's husband	Kumang
12.	Mother's brother	Kumang
13.	Mother's brother's wife	Hatom (e & y)
14.	Mother's elder sister	Gungu
15.	Mother's younger sister	Gawaing
16.	Mother's sister's husband	Gungu (e) Kaka (y)
17.	Wife's father	Honyar,
18.	Wife's mother	Hanar
19.	Husband's father	Honyar
20.	Husband's mother	Hanar
21.	Elder brother (M.S.)	Bau
22.	Younger brother (M.S.)	Undi, Boko
23.	Elder brother (W.S.)	Bau
24.	Younger brother (W.S.)	Undi
25.	Elder sister (M.S.)	Aji
26.	Younger sister (M.S.)	Undi Kui
27.	Elder sister (W.S.)	Aji
28.	Younger sister (W.S.)	Undi Kui
29.	Father's brother's son	Bau (e) Undi (y)
30.	Father's brother's daughter	Aji (e) Undi Kui (y) Misi Kui (com)
31.	Father's sister's son	Bau (e) Undi (y)
32.	Father's sister's daughter	Aji (e) Undi Kui (y)
33.	Mother's sister's son	Bau, Undi
34.	Mother's sister's daughter.	Aji Undi Kui
35.	Mother's brother's son.	(e) Bau; Undi (y)
36.	Mother's brother's daughter.	(e) Aji; Undi Kui (y)
37.	Husband.	Herel
38.	Wife	Hera.
39.	Wife's brother	Bau Honyar (e Teyang (y)
40.	Wife's elder sister	Aji Hanar
41.	Wife's younger sister.	Teyeng
42.	Husband's elder brother.	Bau Honyar
43.	Husband's younger brother.	Iril.
44.	Husband's elder sister.	Aji Hanar
45.	Wife's elder sister's husband.	Gungu
46.	Wife's younger sister's husband.	Kaka
47.	Husband's elder brother's wife.	Aji
48.	Husband's younger brother's wife.	Undi Kui
49.	Wife's brother's wife.	Misi Kui
50.	Husband's sister's husband.	Bare.
51.	Elder sister's husband (M.S.).	Teyang
52.	Younger sister's husband (M.S.)	Ara

Note.—W.S=Woman speaking, M.S=Man speaking, (e)=elder, (y)=younger, Com=Commonly used.

Gawaing is always used for step mother.

	English	Ho
53.	Elder sister's husband (W.S.)	Teyang
54.	Younger sister's husband. (W.S.)	Ara
55.	Elder brother's wife (M.S.)	Hili.
56.	Younger brother's wife (W.S.)	Kimin
57.	Elder brother's wife (W.S.)	Hili
58.	Younger brother's wife. (M.S.)	Kimin
59.	Son's wife's parents.	Bala (male) Bala Era (Female)
60.	Daughter's husband's parents.	,,
61.	Son	Hon
62.	Daughter	Honera
63.	Elder brother's son	Honpeja
64.	Elder brother's daughter (M.S.)	Honera
65.	Younger brother's son.	Gungu
66.	Younger brother's daughter (M.S.)	Gungu
67.	Elder sister's son (M.S.)	Gaing
68.	Elder sister's daughter (M.S.)	Gaing
69.	Younger sister's son (M.S.)	Gaing
70.	Younger sister's daughter. (M.S.)	Gaing
71.	Elder brother's son (W.S.)	Honpeja (No special word) Homon.
72.	Elder brother's daughter. (W.S.)	Honera Homon
73.	Younger brother's daughter (W.S.)	Honpeja Homon
74.	Younger brother's daughter. (W.S.)	Honera Homon
75.	Elder sister's son (W.S.)	Honpeja Homon
76.	Elder sister's daughter. (W.S.)	Honera Homon
77.	Younger sister's son (W.S.)	Homon
78.	Younger sister's daughter. (W.S.)	Honera Homon
79.	Wife's brother's son	Gaing
80.	Wife's brother's daughter	,,
81.	Wife's sister's son	Honpeja
82.	Wife's sister's daughter	Honera
83.	Husband's brother's son	Honpera Gungu (y)
84.	Husband's brother's daughter	Honera
85.	Husband's sister's son	Honpeja (Homon)
86.	Husband's sister's daughter	Honera (Homon)
87.	Daughter's husband	Ara
88.	Son's wife	Kimin
89.	Son's son	Jai
90.	Son's daughter	Jai (Kui)
91.	Daughter's son	Jai
92.	Daughter's daughter.	Jai (Kui)

Terms for Address

1.	Grandfather (natural & maternal)	Gorom (Tatang)
2.	Grandmother (natural & maternal)	Gorom (Jiang)
0.	Father	Baba
4.	Mother	Ma
5.	Father's elder brother	Gungu or Kuku
6.	Father's younger brother	Kaka
7.	Mother's elder sister	Gungu or Kuku
8.	Mother's younger sister	Gawain or Kaki
9.	Son (W.S.).	Babu or Koa
10.	Daughter (W.S.)	Mai or Bui
11.	Elder brother	Bau
12.	Younger brother	Undi, Bare (W.S.)
13.	Elder sister	Aji
14.	Younger sister	Misiera or Undi Kui
16.	Husband's elder brother	Honyar
17.	Husband's younger brother	Herom
18.	Son's wife's parents.	Bala (male) Bala or Bulaera (female)
19.	Son	Sitia, Aiya-Sitia. (MS, WS)
20.	Daughter	Mai
21.	Daughter's husband	Ara, Tadi
22.	Son's wife	Kimin
23.	Grand-child	Jai

6

MATERNITY AND MOTHERHOOD

We know very little about the rites and customs of childbirth among the Hos, or of any pregnancy rites, or the nature and paraphernalia of the lying-in-room. We are told by Col. Tickell that the husband and wife remain in the house, and the children are sent away with provisions. In case of violent pain recourse is made to divination, and sacrifice of a cock, a goat or a sheep is made. Col. Dalton also mentions the cooking of food by the husband, and in the case of difficult parturition, the appeasement of the malignant spirit by sacrifices. The fact that the husband has to cook food shows the complete segregation of the family. It is not only during childbirth that the Ho husband has to cook food but also during any illness of his wife. As the Hos used to possess a single hut which accommodated the man, his wife and immature children, the same room had to be converted into a lying-in-room, with the result that the children had to be sent to other houses. In those villages with a dormitory house, there was no difficulty in housing them, but otherwise, it was the customary duty of the man's brother or his nephews to keep them.

Maternity or motherhood is much respected by the Hos, and the expectant mother receives perfectly adequate attention from the members of the *Killi* and of the *Hatu*. The Hos watch with interest the gradual unfolding of motherhood. They assume a responsibility for the safety of the woman in hope and the woman as mother. The sympathy displayed and help rendered by the women of the village to the new mother and her family give an idea of the mutual relationship between the members of the kinship group. As soon as information spreads that a particular woman is pregnant, the villagers exercise a secret invigilation seldom noticed by her. When she stirs out of the house or goes to the forest unaccompanied, to collect fruits and roots or to gather fuel for cooking, she is watched from a distance. The husband and other members of the family give all attention to the woman; all her needs are promptly attended to and all her desires are satisfied. They will undergo any amount of personal inconvenience to render her every possible comfort.

When the pangs of childbirth are coming on, the Ho husband may procure some widow as midwife to whom he has to pay a nomi-

nal fee. A midwife is not essential now, as the female relations of the husband undertake to help the family in need.

As the Hos observe *Bisi* or pollution for eight days, the husband has to cook food in one corner of the lying-in-room, when they are living separate. The *Ading* being also the kitchen, is tabooed during this period. The preparation of this room or of the hut which is specially constructed for this purpose (a new custom which is becoming general in Kolhan; the higher classes possessed more than one house so that segregation of the mother was possible; the poorer families find it convenient to have a temporary hut to accommodate the mother and her child while the children may remain in the house) is made by the husband a few weeks before it is expected to be occupied. The Hos use wooden *Parkom* in their sleeping rooms but in the confinement room, the floor is used as bed and is covered with *Sayoo* or *Doomboo* grass or hay which they renew every day or as often as is required. The other half of the floor is kept for a burning fire which is the most useful requisite of this room. The walls of the room which are usually made of thatch plastered over with mud with bamboo posts at regular intervals to support them, are decorated with a number of tools, weapons and cowries. The last are imbedded in a lump of earth or cow-dung and earth made into a paste and placed against the wall. Weapons such as *Sar* and *Asar* (bow and arrow), *Kappe* (battle axe), *Roompa* (trident), *Ganaree* (small net), a few nails, and torn and worn out leather, are hung up against the walls inside, while outside the hut, the walls are covered with thorny bushes and *Sotas* made of branches of *Hessa Daru* (Pipul). Thus the burning fire, the iron tools, the thorny bushes, the magically seasoned *Sotas* or sticks, are meant to protect the woman and her child from the evil eye, and the evil spirits; and the cowries, the *Ganaree* and the branches of the *Pipul* tree are probably fertility emblems.

The elaborate preparation of the confinement room, the tools and weapons that are included in it, the decoration within, and the sacrifices that are performed by the husband before the wife enters the room, are extremely significant as they ensure safety to the mother and the expected child. It does not mean that child mortality is non-existent or rare, but the Hos believe that the human power is limited, and that in spite of one's best efforts, accidents do

happen, and will happen. It is the inadequacy of their methods to cope with the mischiefs of a hostile group of *Bongas* that explains the cases of child mortality, and though knowledge of such agents has increased, the methods invented to deal with them are still archaic. There has developed a sort of distrust of the efficacy of their methods, and a loss of faith in their customary expedients. Unfortunately, medical aid rendered in the important villages of Kolhan, in hospitals and charitable dispensaries, has not been sufficiently convincing, as the cases that come to the hospitals are often very bad ones, or the medical officer in small centres is not equipped with the necessary apparatus. A single case discharged from the hospital without adequate relief, goes far to strengthen their misgivings about the efficacy of the new system. Again, cases of cure are not believed to be due entirely to the treatment given to the patient in the hospital, because tribal prescriptions have not been totally neglected by the members of the family, concerned.

Three kinds of irregular labour are noticed among the Hos. (1) Cases of abortion; (2) cases of early pain and consequent delivery : (3) cases of severe pains attended with spasm in ordinary labour cases. The chances of life for the child in all these cases are meagre. Premarital intimacy makes it necessary to take recourse to abortion, and the Ho women know how to effect it. Girls with such misadventures are usually liable to such troubles, and the only remedy the Hos prescribe is to wear a charmed amulet designed by the village *Deonwa* or by some old woman who is reputed to have received the recipe in some mysterious way. In some cases, the remedy has proved successful, and the children of such women are subjected to wearing similar amulets till they marry. The secret of these amulets may lie in a number of restrictions on the movements of the women concerned, which accompany the use of such charms. The second type of cases is not very frequent, and the Hos believe that a little attention by the husband and the observance of certain prescribed rules are sufficient to reduce their incidence. It must be noted in this connection, that a Ho woman, unlike her sister among the *Dikus*, enjoys almost unfettered freedom of movement and work and though the villagers give particular attention to women in hope, careless disregard of social rules meant for their protection leads to mishaps. Unless a Ho woman is in a state of well advanced pregnancy, she

hardly restricts her movements and she walks up and down the village, carries loads from the forests or pots of water from the village *Bandh* or river, and eats wild berries and roots without the slightest scruple. The village elders know it, and when such cases occur, the husband or the eldest male or female member of the family is indirectly reprimanded. The prescription consists in the sacrifice of a red fowl, and brewing of a pot of rice-beer, which are offered to *Churingbonga* or any other *Bonga*, the *Deonwa* may suggest . In both these cases, the remedies are often ineffective, and though the *Deuri* and the *Deonwa* may chant their powerful hymns and incantations and offer sacrifices to the *Bongas* concerned, the safety of the child is difficult to ensure. The Hos believe that such cases of premature labour do not lead to any fatal consequence to the mother ; for the delivery of the child, whether alive or still-born effects a miraculous escape for the mother. If the child remained in the womb till the full period it would cost the mother's life. There may be some obstetric truth in this belief.

The danger comes most in cases of timely pains, and the Hos are extremely afraid of such cases. Various methods are tried by the Hos to help the mother in her crisis. When the pain becomes intense, some female relation of the former brings a metal plate, or *Thali*, and in the presence of the woman draws a figure of human shape on the plate, the effect of which is believed to be smooth and speedy delivery without any injury to the child, or its mother. When the woman is in an advanced stage, a small piece of Biskanda (a medicine for the relief of pains) is tied round her waist, which has the effect of keeping down pain or discomfort during parturition. When all attempts fail and the woman is in a state of acute agony, the *Deonwa* is summoned in the courtyard, the latter cites weird *mantrams*, and moves in slow and solemn paces round the hut. The carcass of the sacrificed fowl killed by the *Deonwa* is waived over the body of the woman and then thrown into the neighbouring river.

Pregnancy rites consist in certain rules which the mother has to observe, and certain practices from which she has to abstain. The rites are few, no doubt, but the restrictions are many. The Ho women do not strictly conform to these tribal prescriptions, and though the restrictions may be implicitly obeyed in the case of first pregnancy, they have little hold on women who have successfully

tided over the first experience. As soon as the first symptoms of pregnancy are noticed, the family sets apart a red or grey fowl, to be sacrificed to the *Churing-bonga* (a mischievous spirit believed to cause trouble to pregnant women) just as the Mundas would offer sacrifice to the *Gara-bonga* (who is believed to watch over females in their delicate state and preside over childbirth). The Mundas offer sacrifices to a benevolent spirit, but the Hos do it to a malevolent one. From this time on, until the child toddles about or until it is weaned, the woman is not allowed to take frequent baths. She does not enter the family *Sasan*. She does not stand on the *Sasandiri*. She does not go alone to the tank to fetch water. She does not stir out of the hut after dusk, unattended. She does not pass under any string or rope and is not allowed to brew *Illi*. She is not allowed to cook and offer food to the family ancestors in the *Ading*. She cannot touch a *Bunassee* or fishing hook or a *Mahajal* (i.e. a kind of fishing net). She cannot eat the *met* (eyes) or *alang* (tongue) of fish. She cannot eat the *bootie* (navel), *hatang* (brains), or *joroye lye* (entrails) of animals. She cannot eat *Beer Seem* (jungle fowl) or *billi* (eggs) of birds or fish. She abstains from dances and sexual intercourse. She cannot use red ochre for painting or decoration and she does not tread on the feet of others, superior or inferior to her. She does not kill insects, and even avoids them. She does not pass under *Neem* and *Jojo* trees, and does not cook with the fuel of the *Oolee* (mango) tree.

In some cases, it is now possible for the woman to leave the village of her husband and go back to that of her parents as soon as the symptoms of pregnancy are known. This is important, as it allows the girl to fulfil certain obligations she owes to the ancestors of her own parents. When a child is born after a long interval after marriage, or after a few cases of still-births, the parents promise a sacrifice to ancestral spirits when the son or the daughter is born; if the daughter is away, they have to do it in her name. But promises are better fulfilled by the person concerned, so that the girl in the house, can personally perform or direct the sacrifice. The sacrifice of course takes the form of a fowl or a pig, usually the former, which is killed by the *Deuri* and dedicated to the ancestors, and the parts of the bird or the animal, head, liver and tail are boiled together, and eaten by the family after it has been formally offered in the *Ading*. In case the girl is not allowed to migrate to the village of her parents,

which is still the rule, she has to offer the same sacrifice in the name of the ancestral spirits. Very often, however, the sacrificed animal and other offerings are sent to the village of her parents through some servant or messenger.

Rigid adherence to customary usages among the Hos finds its loyal champions among women, and a Ho dares not interfere with customs and folk-rites observed by women. His education and change of outlook may raise some protest in his mind against many unintelligent and apparently futile practices, but he is afraid, lest by his intervention, he should bring some disaster to the family. We find in the lying-in-room and outside many objects and emblems which are of little utility to the mother, or the child, but they are regarded as indispensable, and therefore provided. Juria Purty of Pendrasali, a young Ho student, told me how he tried to interfere in these customary practices in his family, and how he was held responsible for the death of his youngest sister. He was in his home when his mother gave birth to a girl, the youngest of a family of seven children. As an intelligent young man whose outlook had undergone considerable change by association with his teachers and friends of progressive communities, he realised the futility of the superstitious customs and practices observed in his family, and he was determined to end them in his house. He first attempted to convince his parents by telling them how his teachers spoke lightly of their social institutions, how they were hedged in by a useless code of conduct, and how other societies were progressing in spite of the fact that they did not observe any such elaborate rites and practices, but he could not convert them. His father was heard to say that he should not join his school after the summer recess. But he did join. When he could not persuade his parents of this, he took the law in his own hands. He began to put obstacles in the way of the performance of certain essential rites. The custom of beating the walls of the lying-in-room with *Sotas* to scare away the evil spirits who are believed to hover round the room, was not observed. Certain rules regarding purification and sacrifices, were not obeyed, and yet the child survived and grew up just as any other healthy one. He considered it a triumph, but at the age of eighteen months, the baby died of bronchial affection, and no one had the slightest doubt that the child died as the result of his acts.

The Hos are very fond of children, and they regard a child as gift from *Sing-bonga*, and call it '*Sing-bonga emetana*', but they are not ignorant of the role of father in procreation. At the same time, they believe in a number of traditional stories about the origin of man, of the ancestors of the clans, and of spirits fecundating women. On many occasions I was told of children being born to particualr couples by the agency of ancestral spirits, and on replying with similar stories about children being born in the absence of the father for a year or more, they failed to notice or criticise the incongruity of the statements. In cases of difficult purturition, when all known forms of redress fail, the woman is asked to confess whether she has had any dealings with any man other than her husband. If so, it becomes necessary for the safety of the child, as well as of its mother, to offer a sacrifice to the *Dessauli* in the name of the adulterer. Such cases are fortunately rare, and in the three cases that occurred during my stay in the Kolhan, the women were in their first pregnancy.

While spirits are believed to fecundate married women in the Kolhan, they are also regarded as the cause of barrenness. In the village of Noagaon, three miles from Jorapukur, Arjun Tamsoi lives with his wife. They have been married for years and have had no issue. Arjun and his wife slept in the same room and both dreamt every night that they had sexual intercourse, not with each other, but with strange persons. Arjun had coitus with a woman who appeared to him every night as soon as he went to bed, and Arjun's wife had the same experience with another man who used to come to her in her dream. In the mornings they were quite unable to account for this, and though they could not escape nocturnal emissions, their attempts at intercourse were regarded as frustrated through the influence of spirits. Arjun and his wife for four years had no physical contact. They appealed to the village *Deonwa*. The latter advised them to offer a number of sacrifices, and for one year they propitiated all the known and unknown *Bongas* that were suggested by the *Deonwa*. In the end, they were told by the spirits in a dream that they were pleased with the sacrifices and were leaving them. On the moring following this declaration by the spirits, Arjun and his wife showed signs of possession, and in that state they carried a *Petari*, or bamboo basket, to a distant place outside the village boundary and left it

there. Since then Arjun and his wife have been living happily and had several children born to them.

Near Putida, a Government agricultural farm, the wife of Markando Deogam who was only 22 when I visited the family, dreamt that she cohabited with a bearded man every night although she was barren. Whenever Markando desired intercourse with her, he felt himself restrained by a strong man who held him by the arm and threw him down the *Parkom*. Markando had been propitiating the spirits, but with little success. The village *Deonwa* said that he was seriously considering this case and was confident that it would be cured in due course. Cases like this occur frequently in Kolhan, and there are certain rules to be observed, and certain sacrifices to be made by the woman concerned, before she can be cured. Women who have had children after marriage do not have such experiences. Disu of Konslaposi has two wives. The first is barren. She is possessed by *Churdu*, an evil spirit, who is supposed to have coitus with her. As no remedy could cure her, Disu does not live with her.

7

We have said that the Hos appoint midwives to look after delivery cases. Very often, the eldest female member of the family, and sometimes of the *Killi*, does assist. In a number of cases, the husband and the future mother entered the lying-in-room, and the children were removed to the house of their paternal uncle, or of the maternal uncle, if the latter belonged to the village. Provisions were sent with the children so that the family which accepted them for the time being had little to lose for this social duty. At the time of first pregnancy, however, some sort of assistance is needed, and is ungrudgingly given by anybody who has some reputation as midwife. It is also quite common for the husband's mother, and if the woman's mother has no children under weaning age, it is usual for her too, to look after the woman. When the child is born, the mother takes it, while the midwife, or the father, cuts the umbilical cord with the sharp edge of the sheath of the maize plant. Midwives now frequently use a knife held in the fire before use to render it aseptic.

The body of the new-born child is wiped with a piece of clean linen, and the afterbirth is then cleared by the midwife, or the husband, as the case may be. The placenta and the cord are not immediately

buried but are placed in a new earthen pot and kept aside for a couple of days. If then the child shows no sign of illness, the pot is removed from the room and buried deep in the courtyard of the house. Special care is taken to see that these remains are not devoured by animals or removed by any malicious person.

Immediately after the birth of the child, the father prepares warm water and the new-born child is washed all over. The midwife then takes some oil in a small metal cup, or in a potsherd, and warms it in the fire, sometimes adding a small bit of garlic. She has to massage the child all over with this warm oil, for this is believed to keep the child free from cold.

On the first day of childbirth, the mother is given lentil soup (Kurti) and the father a few *Pulias* (leaf-cups) of *Illi*. The mother is not allowed to eat fish for eight days, as they believe that if she eats fish during this period the child may suffer from worms or insects in the belly. Meat eating by the mother during this period is tabooed as otherwise she may suffer from puerperal fever attended with diarrhoea. The mother usually remains three days in seclusion, but may sit at the doorstep of the hut to speak with members of the village who come to pay social calls. The father may go out to fetch water from the river, or *Bandh* or some female relatives may bring it for him, in which case the water is poured into a vessel kept in front of the confinement room. Cooking is always done by the husband inside the hut for the mother as during the days of pollution the couple are practically confined. The door of the hut is kept bolted from within and except for daily evacuations, they seldom stir out. There are no special rites other than those we have already described. The midwife remains in the house for a couple of nights, and if there are no complications, the woman is left to the care of the husband who sleeps with her. In case the husband is away, some female relatives look after her.

The birth of a child is a happy incident in Ho life, and the news is rapidly circulated all over the village. The elders of the *Killi* come and congratulate the couple, so do most of the villagers. The father comes out and greets the visitors by saying, '*Sing-bonga emetana*.' The mother from inside the room shouts out if there is any mark on the person of the new-born baby resembling any relative living or dead. The visitors often discuss the troubles that the couple had

to undergo, and how they bore them. In case of well-established families special dances are held, and the villagers are regaled with large quantities of *Illi*.

The period of *Bisi* (pollution) varies in Kolhan. Those who have introduced Oriya priests to officiate in their indigenous ceremonies and festivals follow Hindu prescriptions. The rest practise eight days' pollution. On the morning of the eighth day, the child's head is touched with a *Deshi* razor, and washed in tepid water. It is then allowed to be handled by the members of the *Killi*. The father also shaves his head and beard, and takes a ceremonial bath with his wife. A pot of *Illi* is kept ready for the family by the other members of the family, or of the *Killi* and the members of the *Killi* offer *Illi* to all ancestral spirits and *Bongas* before they themselves partake of it. The couple and particularly the mother is not allowed to move about the village or enter kitchen or touch water pots etc. The rest of the *Illi* is then distributed among the members of the *Killi*. Even if the pollution ends on the eighth day, the ceremonial feast which admits the couple to the society does not take place on the eighth day. This depends upon the phase of the moon. If the child is born in the dark half of the month, the ceremony must take place in the lighter half, so that, sometimes, the purificatory feast is postponed a fortnight or so. The hut is ceremonially cleansed before the purificatory feast. The walls are painted with yellow or red paint, and the floor rinsed with cowdung solution. If the hut is a temporary shed erected for the purpose, it is demolished immediately after the mother transfers herself to her own house. All the members of the *Killi* are treated to a sumptuous feast in which it is usual for the members to contribute in kind. A he-goat is killed and many pots of beer are consumed. Without this feast, the child is not expected to survive, though originally, the feast perhaps was meant to admit the couple to membership of the *Killi*.

Col, Dalton writes, "At the expiration of eight days, the banished members of the family return, friends are invited to a feast and the child is ceremonially named". Col. Tickell who wrote much earlier has the following : "When the child begins to stand or waddle about the parents think of naming the child". We have seen that the ceremonial purification of the family is not effected after the eighth day It is true that the partaking of the *Illi* means a formal admittance

to the *Killi*, but the family still remains aloof for some time, until the *Deuri* fixes a date for the purificatory ceremony.

The name-giving, therefore, does not take place at the expiration of eight days, nor is it postponed until the child begins to stand or waddle about. The ceremonial naming of the child is an important occasion, though its importance diminishes with the increase in the number of children to the family. It is the *Deuri* who selects an auspicious date for the naming of the child, and the day is celebrated with feast and rejoicings. Perhaps Col. Dalton confused the Ho practice with that of the Mundas. The latter perform the name-giving ceremony after the *Chati-hulang* which is held on the eighth day after childbirth. The Hos do not perform it immediately after *Endachatu*, which is the ceremony corresponding to the *Chati-hulang*. Name-giving among the Hos may be held on the 21st day, or on the 30th day, for the fixing of this date depends on certain definite considerations. The custom of *Sakhi*, which was very popular in Kolhan in earlier days, has something to do with the naming of the child. It is usual among the Hos, for a person to stand as the namesake or *Sakhi* of a new born child, and if any person offers to stand as such, the name-giving is simultaneously performed with the *Sakhi* ceremony. The *Sakhi* has therefore to agree to the date. But the *Sakhi* ceremony is still performed after the name-giving ceremony in many cases, and the former may not take place before the child can toddle about. The principles on which these two ceremonies are based are different. Among the Hos, as well as among the Mundas, the child is usually given the name of a deceased relative, but the *Sakhi* is a living relation, a villager or a mere friend. The *Sakhi* becomes a friend of the child because of his friendship with some deceased member of the family, or of some obligation he owes to the family. If a man wishes to stand as *Sakhi* to the child, and informs the family concerned, his name which may also be the name of some deceased relative, is tried in the usual process of lot described below. If it succeeds he stands as *Sakhi*. To-day, the Hos do not always name their children after their deceased relations. The selection of names in Kolhan shows an interesting change in their attitude. Names like, Kande, Reya, Damu, Dulu have given place to Kanu, Durga, Madhusudan, Bikram Singh, Ram and Lachman, while Jingi, Suku, Mani, Budani, have yielded to romantic names such as, Phulmani, Suryamani, Chandmani, Taramani, and similar names

borrowed from their Hindu neighbours. The names given to-day to Ho children do not reflect any peculiarity of the child, its birth, or its parents. The selection must be made in the usual way though when it is decided upon, it is sealed by sacrificing a cock to *Sing-bonga*. The *Sakhi* custom has also lost its popularity, perhaps for economic reasons. The *Sakhi* binds himself to help the child in every possible way, in sickness, distress or poverty, and the friendship is strong, and lifelong. Such friendship, if it is genuinely offered, entails obligations which are difficult to comply with in these days.

There are a number of customary methods of naming the child in Kolhan. In case the child bears any mark or mole, such as were on the person of a deceased relative, the name of that ancestor is usually given to it. If no such physical similarity is observed, they take to drawing lots. The *Deuri* attends by invitation as also other members of the *Killi*. The *Ading* is swept clean, and the male and female relatives with the couple (parents) sit round an earthen pot full of water. Before the process of drawing lots begins, the *Deuri* invokes the ancestors of the clan to witness the ceremony, while the oldest male members pray to the ancestors of the family. Next they drop grains of husked rice into the water, and one of the relatives suggests a name which may or may not be that of an ancestor. At one ceremony attended by me, the name suggested was that of a school master of the local M. V. School. Now, in order to be accepted, the grains must be even in number when thrown in a handful. In this case they were odd, so the name had to be rejected. As each grain of husked rice is dropped into the water, a name is suggested by the relatives present, after which a second grain is thrown ; if the second grain touches the first and they both sink to the bottom, the name is selected, if not, the process is repeated, care being taken to remove the second grain every time the attempt proves unsuccessful. While the lot is being drawn some of the relatives take *Sota* or stick magically seasoned during an eclipse, and begin striking it against the *Ading* in order to scare away any evil influence from the child.

Another method is to take a number of grains in the palm of the hand and ask somebody to suggest a name. The relatives are asked to say whether the number of grains on the palm is odd or even ; if it is even, the name is accepted, if odd, the process is continued. There is yet another way of naming the child. The eldest male member

of the house takes four grains of *Urid* in the palm of the hand, and rubs them till they become soft. The father of the child has to suggest a name, and one of the four grains is dropped in a pan of water placed before him. If the grain of *Urid* floats on the water, the name is accepted, if it sinks, another name is suggested, and a second grain is dropped until all the four grains are tried. Should all the four seeds sink, the ceremony is postponed till the next month. In the latter case, sacrifices have to be made to the ancestral spirits to save the child from any harm.

CHAPTER VII

DISEASE, DIVINATION, DREAMS AND DEATH

Just as economic troubles, according to the Hos, are traceable to the influence of alien tribes and castes, to the *Bongas* who rule over the destiny of the latter, and who may be set against them to injure their property and destroy their crops, so physical illness, disease and death are also traced to the interference of *Bongas* who may act independently or be invoked by witches and sorcerers to cause loss or damage to their property and physical harm to themselves. The Hos, therefore, live in mortal dread of the *Dikus*. They also greatly fear the witches, whose number is legion. Disease, deformity and death may all be due to the mischief of these witches, so the only remedy lies in offering sacrifices to the malignant *Bongas* and invoking the aid of their beneficent gods. The latter are believed to give a clue to the *Bonga* which may cause their sufferings.

There are two classes of agents which bring affliction down upon the Hos. The malignant *Bongas*, most of whom are really gods of alien people, and the witches and sorcerers who are usually members of the tribe but are anti-social, take delight in their nefarious practices. The Hos believe that all diseases are caused by one or other of the following agencies, *viz.*, (1) natural causes, (2) human agency (witches and sorcerers), and (3) supernatural agency (spirits and malevolent beings). They believe that a man loses his life when his system gets out of his control, that the sign of approaching death is manifest when he no longer feels strong enough to control his movements, or to work like others. The maximum span of life of a Ho is not counted in years, but when a man is old he is anxious to see his grand-children marry, which gives an approximate expectation of life. Death may also result from a duel, or from murder or from unforeseen accidents over which they have little control. Diseases may be caused by the projection of some morbific object into the body, or the abstraction of some important element from the body. It may also be due to the mischief of witches and sorcerers acting on some part of the body, or on some object which

has been connected with it. The methods by which they divine the cause of a particular malady are many and varied, and the processes of thought and the remedies known to them will be discused in detail in the following pages.

Through contact with the outside world, the experience of life outside Kolhan and through the medical aid that is given in certain centres as well as in the district hospital at Chaibassa, the Hos now find it possible to explain many of the diseases which they are heir to, as due to natural causes (which include the modern medical theory and all injuries obviously inflicted by material agency). Though they know that quinine taken in regular doses is effective against malaria, that the *Dikus* take it and are cured of malaria, that the local medical officer always prescribes quinine as well as a bitter tasting mixture which is found to stop the spread of the disease, and ultimately to cure it, in spite of all this they still approach the village *Deonwa* to find out which particular malignant *Bonga* has been offended and demands propitiation. A young Ho who accompanied me on my tours in Kolhan in July, 1934, had a severe attack of malaria at Gua. Gua is a mining centre and is notorious for the incidence of malaria, particularly during the rainy season. I prescribed some medicines which I carried with me, and after three days the fever subsided. I completed the treatment with a preventive dose of quinine which I asked him to repeat occasionally. This young man was soon free from fever, but he would not stay with me, as he felt that he should go back to his village and propitiate the *Bongas*. I explained the causes of malaria and how it is checked by administering quinine and taking preventive measures, as in his case, and though he seemed to accept what I said, yet he was not sure whether his cure was due to my medicines or to other causes. On previous occasions also the fever had lasted only three days, and a propitiation of the *Bongas* by his mother had produced the desired effect. Malaria is a disease which is not acute or serious except when it takes a malignant turn, or is attended with other complications. It is therefore difficult to convince a Ho of the efficacy of the Materia Medica in such cases. The present day attitude of the Hos is still to try all known and unknown methods in dealing with diseases, so that one or other may prove successful. When they take to the allopathic system of treatment in the charitable dispensaries under the District Board, they also take care to propitiate the malignant

Bongas who are supposed to cause the trouble, and medicine and sacrifice together bring about the desired effect. Thus the Medical Officer in the village dispensaries has to cope not only with his lack of necessary equipment (which is due to the small grant he receives), but also with the village *Deonwa*, whose authority is still dominant in Kolhan.

Diseases, as we have already pointed out, may be due to natural causes which are treated by their indigenous pharmacopoeia. They have a traditional knowledge of the efficacy of many roots and herbs, which is handed down from generation to generation. The diagnosis of a disease is always done by the *Deonwa*, and it is not always based on a system of divination, as is often suggested. The examination of urine or *Dukida* is a common method of diagnosing a disease in Kolhan. The method of diagnosis involves a special knowledge which is the monopoly of the village *Deonwa*. A small quantity of *Dukida* or urine is brought in a leaf-cup early in the morning to the *Deonwa*. The latter puts a drop of mustard oil in the urine and intently studies the reaction in it. He knows the meaning of every reaction, and diagnoses accordingly. In case the disease is due to the mischief of any spirit or is caused by human agency, he takes to divination to find out the real cause. The process of diagnosis by studying the reactions on the urine of the patient is known as *Dukidanel*. *Dukidanel*, therefore, is very useful in tracing the cause of diseases, and apparently, is a process of elimination. The *Deonwa* knows a formidable list of medicines, mostly herbal, and prescribes them according to the needs of the occasion.

One of the most important uses of *Dukidanel* is to ascertain whether diseases are due to *Najom* (poison), or *Tiji* (bacteria). *Najom* is regarded as a dangerous method of inflicting disease on the enemy in Kolhan, and one who knows how to apply *Najom* is called *Najomadani*. *Najom* is found in the countryside, and is collected by the witches or sorcerers. The usual method of administering *Najom* is to mix it with *Illi* or with cooked meat. The *Najom* is not destroyed when heated or boiled, so that when a man takes such meat preparation, he is sure to be attacked with diseases, which more often than not prove fatal. The diseases that result from the intrusion of *Tiji* in the system are, cancer, dysentery, and epilepsy. The *Deonwa* can find out by *Dukidanel* whether the disease is due to *Najom* or *Tiji* or other causes. There are medicines which are believed to be powerful enough

to counteract the effect of *Najom*, and when the proper diagnosis is arrived at, the disease becomes controllable.

Diseases in Kolhan are also caused by witches and sorcerers, as well as by malignant spirits, and we shall examine the methods of diagnosis and treatment current among the Hos. There are three distinct classes of agents connected with diseases and death, *viz.*, (1) the *Bongas*, who are impersonal, (2) the witches and sorcerers, who are either barren women both old and ugly, or persons whose ways of life are strange and mysterious, and (3) the *Deonwas*, who are the witch doctors of the tribe. In many villages, as we have noted above, the divination and the treatment of diseases are exclusively done by the *Deonwa*, though occasionally a *Deuri* may act as a *Deonwa*.

The malignant *Bongas* are believed to cause diseases to persons and cattle by direct interference. They may enter into human bodies, causing swellings in the body, or interfere with the normal functioning of the system. This is what we know as spirit-intrusion. In other cases, spirits may abstract the *Roa* or soul substance, reducing it by pressure (during sleep) or suppress it causing the victim to lose his voice. The malignant spirits can also enter into the bodies of persons, and through them administer *Najom* to those whom they want to chastise.

The witches of the village may invoke a particular malignant *Bonga*, and set it against a person or his cattle. Diseases in such cases are due to the manipulations of persons who exercise some control over the supernatural world. The witches may also inflict diseases by magic. The Hos believe that the witch, if she wishes to kill a person, must shoot an arrow at an effigy of the man or at his shadow. The man thus acted upon will not die suddenly. He will develop consumption which is believed to cause holes in the lungs and a slow but terrible death. The arrow is generally shot at night without being detected, so that the victim may be taken by the disease unawares. The witches also make an effigy of the person they wish to harm, with powdered rice or wheat flour, and then prick it with thorns in the certain belief that the intended victim will suffer similar pricks resulting in boils and ulcers all over the body. The witches among the Hos will obtain certain things which once formed a part of the person, as for example, nails, hair, spittle, etc., or some articles which the person uses constantly such as a cloth, ornaments or a weapon, etc. or things which are

trodden upon by him, or even the dust of his feet. The effect on these things of the magical formula, with which the witches invoke the spirits believed to be under their control, varies according to the importance of these articles to the victim. The witches are known to take hair cuttings and pairings of nails of intended victims, and bury them in the courtyard for a week or so, and dig them out on the night of the new moon. The floor of the hut is swept clean, and ashes previously collected are spread in a circle on the floor. Then the witch kindles a fire with dried faggots inside the circle, and throws the hair or nail clippings into the flames. Thrice the smoke is swallowed by the witch, and incantations and formula are recited. When the fire is extinguished, she collects the ashes in a new earthen pot, and preserves it in a corner of the hut, or hangs it from the thatch of the roof. The next process is the same as that of the *Najomadani*. It is generally mixed with *Illi*, or with fruits collected in the forest, and distributed by the villagers, such as wild plums, *Mohua*, *Kuda* or black berry and the like. Such is the magic of the dust that only the victim whose hair or nail has been thus burnt, if he or she partakes of it, will suffer, and not others who may unsuspectingly drink or eat them. The first symptom of the attack will be sneezing by the victim, not once or twice but in succession for a considerable time. This will at once indicate to him the power of some witch over him, and he will call out the names of the *Bongas* and immediately resort to some *Deonwa*. The next stage of the disease is high fever, dysentery or nausea, which come unawares to him.

The method of inflicting disease with the help of the spirit-bundle is common among the Hos and other cognate tribes of Chota Nagpur. The spirit-bundle consists of bones of fowls or other animals, potsherds, grains, broken pieces of trinkets, torn rags dyed with red ochre, etc., all of which the witches promise to the malignant spirit which is invoked.

There are other methods of causing diseases in Kolhan. The transformation of the witch into a cat is a popular belief among the Oraons and the Hos have similar beliefs. The witch in the form of a cat enters into people's houses at night, licks the saliva trickling down the corners of the mouth of some sleeping person, or bites off a lock or two of hair, causing the unfortunate person to fall ill or his hair to fall out.

In all these processes the witches have to be in close association

with the spirits. Every witch is credited with the control of a number of malignant spirits, some of which are like pet spirits whom the witch can use in any way desired. The success of magical processes is also attributed to malignant *Bongas*, for the chants and incantations cited by the witch are all addressed to them. When the witch doctor finds out by divination the proper spirit to which to appeal, offerings are made to the spirit concerned, without ascertaining who the witch is. This makes the witches merely mediums, as it were, and the Hos believe that if they could kill all the witches they would be immune from disease. The belief is so strong that whenever they suspect any person as being a witch feelings run so high that the unfortunate suspect is put to all sorts of ordeals to prove her innocence. Attempts to coerce women to confess their identity have led to violence on them. Some are naturally innocent and many cases are annually brought to the Kolhan Court for decision. It is believed that the witches are trained in secret and that they gather at a place outside the village boundary at dead of night when they indulge in a nocturnal dance. It is also believed that anybody passing by them at night is sure to be molested and killed. Fasting and meditation lead to possession by the *Bonga* and while in that state the witch is asked to carry out the instructions of the malignant *Bonga* which possesses her. There is no direct way of knowing these malignant *Bongas* just as there is no direct way of knowing the cause of disease or the offerings that would cure it.

In all cases of disease the Hos consult the *Deonwa*. The latter has a system of treatment for all of them; he can as Bamia Babonga proudly asserted, study the symptoms of a disease, and find out by sight whether it is a case of spirit intrusion, or the interference of witches and sorcerers, or due to natural causes. When he finds any difficulty, he resorts to *Dukidanel* which gives a very accurate diagnosis. When his treatment in accordance with the diagnosis fails, he takes to divination. The following methods are usually practised in Kolhan.

When a person falls ill, some member of the family takes a handful of *Arua* rice, *Jutid Chauli*, as it is called, and touching the body of the diseased person names all the spirits known to him. The rice is then brought to the *Deonwa* who begins his *Sup* method, known as *Bonga Ṇam*. The *Deonwa* puts the rice in a *Sup*, and asks *Sing-*

bonga and *Nage-bonga* questions, while naming the spirits in succession. In the process of interrogation, if any displacement of the grains is noticed, that particular *Bonga* is believed to have caused the malady. The terms of compromise are also found out in a similar way.

The second method is known as *Danda Nam*. Here, again, questions are put to *Sing-bonga*, but instead of the grains, two men with *Sotas* in their hands sit on either side of the *Deonwa*, and when the formula are being recited and the names of the spirits called out one after another, the men are suddenly possessed and begin to shake their sticks, indicating thereby the cause of the disease. A number of people armed with sticks follow the *Deonwa* into the forest, the latter reciting all the time *Mantrams* or incantations. The party visits different parts of the forest, and if they come to the abode of the spirit which is responsible for the disease, their sticks grow heavy, and they feel the presence of the *Bonga*. The *Bonga* has to be propitiated if the patient wishes to be cured.

In *Rum Num* the *Deonwa* recites his incantations, and a man sits at his feet. The effect of the *Mantrams* is to make the man shake his head and be possessed, and in course of the possession he reveals the name of the spirit who has caused the malady.

A small but thick wooden plate with rice is placed on paddy or husks spread on the floor, and over the *Patki* is placed a *Gandu*. A man is asked to sit on this *Gandu*, while the *Deonwa* invokes the spirits. When the name of a spirit is called out by the *Deonwa*, and the man sitting on the *Gandu* turns round (*Beauretan*-turn) the spirit has to be propitiated. This is *Patki Beauretan*.

A few grains of *Arua* rice are taken in a *Sal*-leaf, and the *Deonwa* touches the body of the diseased person with the leaf. He then mutters his weird *Mantrams* over the grains, and when the name of the *Bonga* causing the disease is called out, the patient feels a heaviness over his body, which makes the identity of the *Bonga* clear.

Two leaf-cups of oil are taken to the *Deonwa* after they have been touched by the patient. The *Deonwa* looks in the oil and discovers some signs, from which he ascertains which spirit has caused the disease.

When the *Deonwa* finds out by divination, or by dream, the cause of a disease, he receives also by the self-same process the prescription for propitiating the offended *Bongas*. In all cases, sacrifices have to be

made and the blood, head, liver and lungs of the sacrificed animal have to be offered with prayers and incantations. When the *Bongas* reveal the cause of the disease or of an epidemic in a dream, they also suggest remedies, *i.e.*, sacrifices that would restore the normal relation between the patient and the *Bonga* concerned. In cases of divination in the manner described above, the result of it is communicated to the patient, if the latter be unable to stir out of bed. The result of the divination and the prescription obtained by the *Deonwa* immediately effect a change in the patient, and within a few hours he shows signs of possession by sweats, which indicate the validity of the prognosis. The offerings are seldom denied, and the task of propitiating the *Bonga*, believed to have caused the disease, is entrusted to the *Deonwa*. In spite of all the efforts of the *Deonwa*, the disease may not leave the patient ; in that case further divination is sought. Whole days and nights are often spent by the *Deonwa* in finding out the real cause of a disease; medicines are used simultaneously with divination, and appropriate spells are recited by him to exorcise the spirit. As the *Bonga* is conceived as a semi-material being, the *Deonwa* touches the head of the patient with his two hands and gradually draws them down from head to face, from face to the neck, from neck to the shoulders, to the elbows, to wrists, down to the palms of the hand, and thence down the nails into the earth. This process is repeated twice or thrice, the direction varying every time but always finishing in the earth where the spirit is buried. In case all methods of treatment fail (and there are many cases where they do fail), the *Deonwa* warns the survivors by saying that the wrath of the spirit has not yet been appeased and that it may involve other members of the family. Sacrifices are made even after the death of the patient, to protect the survivors from further attention from the spirits, and as the spirits of the deceased is conceived as hostile to the family, precautions are taken by the bereaved family against the mischiefs of this spirit as well.

Nor does divination stop with death. The cause of death as well as the form which the *Roa* or soul takes after death, are divined during the *Roa-Anader* ceremony (the ceremony of calling the spirit) which will be described in connection with the death ceremony of the Hos.

DREAMS

The dreams of the Hos are not regarded as real. The Hos have passed the stage when they probably could not distinguish between real and imaginary events. In exceptional cases they may still consult the *Deuri* or the *Deonwa*, but they are sceptical of the latter's crude efforts at paraphrase. Neither the Hos have reached a stage when they can read their personality reflected in their dreams. There is little interest in dreams or in their interpetation but in times of epidemics or natural calamities they get their dreams interpreted and any significance they attach to them, refer more to the future than to the past. The *Deuri* may find the roots of social ills in dreams, the *Deonwa* may suspect witchcraft and aged men and women may even regulate their future on the basis of some standard dreams for which the interpretation has been given by the 'seers' or the 'dreamers' of the tribe, but the youth, as a rule, have lost interest in dreams and seldom do they discuss them. The modern attitude to dreams among the Hos may be described as symbolic in a sense and the interpretation of such dreams when attempted, is more a function of the environment than of the psychic experience of individual or of groups.

The dreams that have been recorded below are a few among hundreds which the author has collected, in the majority of which there is hardly any link between the experiences of the individual and those with whom they share such experiences. Often animals and men change their places, animals pass into men and men as animals without disturbing their thought patterns. The young men narrate their dreams by linking detail with detail, while the old men are often innocent of such rationalisation, but all the same, the dreams as they are described explain the reaction of the Hos to their present habitat and are in a way characteristic of a tribe in transition.

(1)

"I was talking to my son about his marriage. He said he was going to marry in Dudhbila and he had amassed the necessary *Gonong*. I wanted to know when we should have the *Bapala* ceremony, for we needed to store provisions. He said he had brought his wife. Soon a woman's voice was heard and I found she was my daughter. I got a rude shock and woke up."

* * * *

My son and daughter both had left weeks ago for the mines. I rubbed my eyes and told my experience to my cousin who said, 'it was foolish.' Weeks after I heard that both of them had been down with fever there and they wanted to come back but had no money to return.

(2)

"I was coming home from Bharbharia and on the way, it begun to rain heavily. I waited and waited but there was no prospect of a respite. Soon the road was under water and the water rushed towards the verandah I was seated. I did not know what to do. My fear increased. I heard confused voices all around me, the water was leaping up. I took hold of a bamboo pillar and clenched it with all my might. The *Nage-Era* must have been displeased by me. I begged of her to save me and promised a fowl. I begun to perspire and suddenly I saw a streak of lightning and lo ! the water was receding. Overjoyed I yelled and dropped the bamboo pole and splashed down on the mud, and found myself awake clasping the pillow."

* * * *

Such a storm came the next evening, the like of which I had never seen. Not a single house stood with its roof on and all the men and women of the village were in tears.

(3)

"I invited a number of my friends to dinner. I had brought fish and eggs and my *Gungu* (elder brother's wife) was cooking food. The guests were being treated with rice-beer. Suddenly my *Gungu* felt sick and retired for a time and we heard the voice of a new born baby. It was a surprise to me for I did not know that she was expecting a baby. The guests all dispersed without taking food, they bade us farewell; all the food *Gungu* had prepared was lying before me. I started testing them one by one, but before I could finish all the dishes there was sound of footsteps and I looked round and found the guests peeping at the door of the kitchen, all drunk and noisy. I felt nervous and I wanted to run out of the kitchen and then I was awake."

* * * *

My Gungu is a widow since thirty years of age and she is forty-eight and she could not conceive either. A few days after, I was passing by the house of my uncle and found a crowd celebrating the *Bapala* ceremony of his son. I was not invited and even today I do not know why ?

(4)

"Mangta was my nephew. He was ill. I was asked by my mother to see him. His village was six miles away. My mother gave me some rice, a gourd and a pot of *Diang*. I was carrying the gifts. On the way, I found a bear crossing the road. I climbed a tree near by and made no noise, but the bear silently approached the pot of *Diang*, emptied the contents, scattered the rice and walked away with the gourd. I got down and collected the grains but whom should I meet, it was Mangta himself. What a relief it was to see him there. I woke up and rubbed my eyes but there was no Mangta."

* * * *

We had not seen Mangta for years and the family relations with Mangta's parents were anything other than cordial.

(5)

"I was on a beautiful cot in a big house and there were several servants in the house. I asked for *Jeelabi* and the servants brought a plate full of it. The morning meal was served by two fair girls one of which continued to fan me while I was eating. The other girl was more pretty and I asked for her *Killi*. She belonged to the Kalundi *Killi* and was therefore eligible for me. I proposed but she asked me to take her way from the big house. I insisted that I should remain in the house where everything was so easily

available. The girl gradually undressed herself and showed me signs of beating and a gaping wound committed by a *falsa*. I was horrified and swore revenge against the aggressor. She pacified me saying that I could not do anything and the best was the alternative she had suggested. I then agreed to save her and both of us set out for my home. When I descended the steps with her, hand in hand, I suddenly lost my footing and fell on her and I woke up to find me on the floor of my hut."

* * * *

Nothing happened afterwards, except that I got a rebuke from the *Manki* a couple of days after for not marrying my sister Madkui.

(6)

"I quarrelled with my brother and his wife and refused to take food. My sister-in-law was a sensible woman and she came to me, caught hold of my two hands and implored me to take food. Suddenly she was transformed into my mother whom I lost in childhood. Sweetly she touched my chin and asked me to eat. I wept and complained against my brother and she smiled and became my sister-in-law again."

* * * *

I woke up and ran to my friend Rasika. He said, my sister-in-law was my own sister Kundi who died in childhood. The *Deuri* explained it otherwise. He wanted me to marry.

(7)

"I had been to the Chaibassa weekly market and begun spending money right and left. I spent a rupee in the sweetmeat shop, I brought two sugarcanes, two packets of *bidi*, I gave eight annas to the tea stall for a cup of tea and biscuits. I lost eight rupees in betting in cock fight and got up a merry-go-round. Three girls were already sitting in a box and they asked me to join. We swung and swung till we were mixedup. We roared into laughter and yelled in joy and finally got down. When I was out of the box, I found that I was wearing a *Sari* and one of the girls was covering herself partly with my *Dhoti* and partly by a portion of a *Sari* belonging to another girl and we saw and laughed. We came out of the crowd and entered the sweetmeat shop and spent the rest of my money. All of us now started towards our villages which were a mile apart. On the parting of the ways, we clung to each other and would not part till a mad bull darted at us and each of us withdrew in self defence when I woke up to find that my house was full, my sister and her children were there since the early morning and what a noisy crowd the children were."

(8)

"I was playing my *Banam* under a tree and the moon was up. I saw clouds enveloping the sky and the moon was running to hide. The clouds joined in and gradually emerged as a crocodile and the moon was transformed into a fair damsel with a flowing white robe. The crocodile darted against the moon and caught hold of an end of her *Sari* and I shouted for help. I woke up and found myself in a pool of perspiration."

(9)

"I was sitting under the marriage *Mandap* on the lap of my maternal uncle and waiting tor the bride to come in. In the mean time there was a big hue and cry and suddenly I heard the sound of bamboos striking one another, and the breaking of the *Tundi* and pots for *Diang*. My uncle was heard shouting against my father-in-law and using abusive language and I wanted to join my father and others of my village. My maternal uncle would not loosen his hold on me and I was struggling in impotent anger. In the meantime the bride was brought by her relations, but suddenly I jumped, freed

myself from my maternal uncle's embrace and ran for my father. My bride followed me but I did not look at her. She implored me to return but I said, 'no'. and that ended my dream."

* * * *

I have not been able to marry, for the bride-price is too heavy for my means.

(10)

"I went to Mayurbhanj and found my *Gungu* living a comfortable life. She had a beautiful house, a maid servant, enough food, utensils, even a hurricane lantern. I liked the house and the people and my cousin sister specially attracted me. She was fond of flowers and I brought heaps of them for her. We went to the adjoining village for dance and we were so intimate. She wanted to come with me but my *Gungu* would not agree. I was disappointed. I found life no pleasure and left early morning towards the forests. I collected *Kandil* fruits and ate them all till I dropped down and was dead. My cousin came after me and found me lying dead, pushed me and wept saying that I was foolish. Why, said she, she would have come to live with me even if her mother did not like it. I struggled to speak but I was dead and could not. Then she again touched me, I decided to respond and as soon as I spoke, I was awake."

* * * *

There was no one in Mayurbhanj that I knew and I was already married. My wife does not like me and three times she had deserted me.

(11)

"I was dancing in the *Akhara* but the music was faltering and our steps were out of tune. The girls giggled everytime the music was out of tune and I got annoyed. I took up the *Mandol* and begun to play it, the girls got enlivened and the dance gained in volume and the music became rich. I played and played, the play of my life, till I got completely lost in music. Slowly the girls begun to drop out one by one, and each place that became vacant I found a snake filling it in till the whole ring was made of snakes. They hissed in joy, moved to the tune and round they went on and on. Soon they were around me, one touched my leg, then another and still another, and the snakes coiled round me till my body became heavy and could not move. I shouted to the girls and struggled to extricate myself and suddenly I fell down and woke up to find that the rains had made big holes on my roof and the floor was flooded, and my legs were swimming in water.

(12)

"The boys were playing on their *Rutu* and *Banam*. The *Maghe Parav* was on and the village was full of joy and dance and song. I was called to dance, my girl friends from the neighbouring village were at my door, they were waiting for me and I was having my meal. A peon came with a letter and I read it. I was immediately asked to go back to Tatanagar. I was accused of stealing an iron bar. I would not go, the peon shouted for the *Dakua*, soon the villagers were on the scene. I refused to go, I asked my girls to take me with them. They came, they caught hold of me but the peon had already put his strong arms round me. I did not move either way, I would not and struggled to be free when I woke up."

* * * *

The village Deuri gave the verdict of an impending calamity and all the fowls in the village were dead within a couple of days.

(13)

The Dream of an Old Man

"I was in the forests, the *Dakua* asked for a fowl for the *Hero* festival: my wife would not part with one; she was rebuked, she became enraged and cursed the *Dakua*; the latter became a dog and followed me to the forests. Everytime I drove the dog away, it would come back and would piteously look at me. I became suspicious and watched the dog. Soon it took the shape of a man and asked me to follow which I did. Soon I was in dense forests and everything seemed so dark. The man then put together leaves and twigs and set fire to the pile. He begun to dance a weired dance and laughed an uncanny laugh. I was shivering in fright. I shouted for my wife, the man pushed me into the fire, I struggled to escape and my skin began to scorch and I woke up."

* * * *

My wife was sleeping on the floor by my side with very high temperature.

(14)

"I met a witch who taught me how to change into a rat. I entered the grannary of the village *Munda* and devoured the grains. I came out and entered my house but my wife would not recognise me. I got up on her body, she got frightened but I would not leave her. I stuck to her clasping her with all my might. She conceived and produced a litter of rats. I was always near the litter, got mouthfuls of grains for the young ones and my wife took care both of me and the litter. An aunt of mine came to live with us and she did not like rats and killed the rats one and all. I jumped on her to kill her, and blinded her eye and she shrieked in pain and I woke up."

* * * *

My wife deserted me and sent me her ornaments which I gave her and asked me to marry again and I did.

(5)

Burial and cremation both are practised by the Hos. The fact that the higher classes in Kolhan cremate their dead while the lower ones still prefer burial, shows that burial is the earlier practice. Contact with Hindu society explains many of their rites and customs, and cremation may as well be a derivative custom in Kolhan. But the Hos bury those who die an unnatural death, such as suicide, or of smallpox, or of leprosy, or through the agency of the *Bagia-bonga*, or the tiger spirit. In some cases, the deceased leaves instructions with his or her relations to burn or bury him or her, but well-to-do families prefer cremation to burial. The *Jangtopa* ceremony, which may be compared to the *Marvainelkedr* of the Todas (*i.e.*, the dry funeral), has lost much of its communal character, and there is no annual ceremony of the dead in Kolhan. The *Jangtopa* is done after every death, and instead of a unilateral participation in this ceremony, there is what we may call a bilateral participation. It is used to be compulsory for every member of the *Killi* of the deceased to take

part in the *Jangtopa*, but today it is performed by the nearest relatives of the deceased, on both the father's side and the mother's side. *Jangtopa* need not be held on the third day after death (as it is customary), the ceremony may be postponed indefinitely, till such time as it is deemed proper. The bones of the deceased are then interred inside the hut in an earthen pot, and the place where the bones are temporarily laid is called *Jankapari*. The participation of the relations in the *Jangtopa*, as well as in the last rites of the deceased, has introduced a new departure from traditional rules. The relatives on the father's side of a deceased married woman sometimes demand half of her bones, and disputes arise occasionally on this point. The breakdown of the *Killi* system in some villages is perhaps responsible for such changes in custom.

There are certain restrictions as to the use of wood for cremation. They usually use the wood of the *Tarab* tree, the *Sali* tree, and the *Edel* tree. In the absence of these trees, the *Pipul*, the *Karayia* and the *Sal*, may be used. As we have found in the case of other economic activities of the Hos, cooperation among the members of the village, as well as between members of two different villages that may be affected by death, is still the dominant feature of the death and mortuary rites. The coffin is made by the members of the *Killi*, and those who are skilful in carpentry voluntarily take part in this task. The *Chalpa* or coffin is made of wood. It is a long case usually 5 ft. by 2 ft. and about 2 ft. deep. and is covered with a lid called a *Tenen*. The whole case is adjustable. The side planks are known as *Kanati*, and the bottom plank is called *Ganati*, while inside the coffin are two arms known as *Aanr*. The case stands on four pegs or legs called *Mandoke*. It is often shaped into a horse's head at one end, and the head of the corpse is placed against this end. The head of the corpse is always made to face the south. It is the custom among the Hos for all the members of the deceased person's *Killi*, as well as relations and friends from other villages, to come with the presents of rice, *Illi*, new clothes, and money, as soon as they learn of the death. It often happens that some of the friends and relations wish to attend, but cannot procure the presents which they must carry. If this happens, they send word to the village of the deceased to postpone the cremation, or burial, as the case may be, for a reasonable period. The corpse is then brought out of the hut, and is kept guarded

by mourners, who are usually the women of the *Killi*, including the wife or the husband of the deceased. The female relatives of the deceased fill the air with their screams and wailings, which summon the villagers to the *Racha*, or courtyard of the deceased. From the moment of death to the last act of cremation, *Birdiring* or the horn of wild buffalo is blown, and its solemn and uncanny sound strikes a note of alarm in the village. The *Deuri*, the *Munda*, the *Manki* if he be a resident of the village, and the other village officials, such as the *Tehsildar*, and the *Dukuas* (bailiff) come, one by one, to the *Racha* of the deceased, while the women of the village pay their obligatory call to condole with the bereaved family. As the women gather together the wailings increase, and the nearest female relatives strike their head against the wall and tear their hair in grief. When all the members of the *Killi*, and the relations and friends from neighbouring villages have assembled, the *Deuri* takes some *Arua* rice in his hand, and muttering a few incantations in honour of the principal *Bongas* scatters the same from the floor of the hut to the courtyard where the corpse has been placed. The women take the body seven times round the coffin anti-clockwise, and amidst loud wailings, place it inside. In case the body is very heavy, and the women fail to keep the corpse up, men may help them, for the corpse is not allowed to touch the ground after it has been brought out of the hut. If the deceased happens to be a male, all the utensils, *Thali* or plate, *Lota* or water jug, *Sakom* or bangles and ornaments he used to wear, his bow and arrows, and coins, are placed on the coffin, and are all burnt with the corpse. Today the costly ornaments and utensils are not usually burnt or buried with the corpse. If the deceased be a female, the face is covered with rupees, and a new cloth is used to cover the corpse. In case the body bears tattoo marks, special care is taken to keep the marks exposed. Rice and some pulses are then placed on the palm of the deceased and are strained through the gaps of the fingers, on the palms of the members of the family in the belief that good luck may continue in the family. In some parts, the seeds are scattered over the body and are collected by those who attend the funeral, in the belief that when these grains are mixed with other seeds at the time of sowing, a rich harvest will result. The *soul substance* is brought in contact with the seeds to fecundate them, as it were.

The funeral pyre is prepared in advance, and the corpse is car-

ried to the cremation ground by the women. It is borne round the *Kanduked* or the pyre three times, and then placed on the pyre with faggots around and above it. There appears to be some divergence in procedure regarding the next rite, *i.e.*, that of setting fire to the pile. In some parts, in Chiru *Pir*, for example, the eldest son of the deceased sets fire to the pile. In Kotagarh *Pir*, it is the custom to engage a man from a different *Killi*, or a servant from another village, to do it. In Bantra *Pir*, again, at one burial, the first handful of earth was put on the grave by the wife of the deceased. The custom of engaging mourners for the deceased is still found in Kolhan. Does this show that formerly the last rites were performed by the hired widows, or at any rate by members of other *Killis*? In those areas where widows are employed for the last rites they remain in the house of the deceased from the time of death to the next *Jangtopa* day. The widows engaged for this purpose must be barren, or without any living children. This may mean that the services of these widows, who are believed to be witches (for witches are recruited from barren, or old and ugly women), are required to safeguard the family from further misfortune. The corpse is generally burnt at night, and the funeral pyre is kept burning all through the night, while relatives and friends keep watch on it.

At dawn, the women cut two branches of the *Pipul* tree, three or four cubits long, and fetch three or four pots of water from the neighbouring river, or *Bandh*. One of the branches is pushed straight home into the ground at the centre of the *Kanduked*, and the second placed horizontally over the remains of the dead person. Water is then poured from the pots on to the smouldering embers. Next, the women collect the charred bones, put them in a *Hata* or winnowing fan, which is taken to the *Racha* and placed in the sun for the bones to dry. When the bones are completely dried, a new earthen pot is procured and the bones are placed inside. The pot is covered with twigs and leaves of the *Kend* (ebony) tree, and is made to hang from the thatch of the hut, or is placed in a corner of the *Ading*. The party then proceeds to a neighbouring river or *Bandh* for a ceremonial bath with *Sunum* or oil and turmeric paste, and afterwards returns to the village. The relatives and friends who come from other villages are distributed between the families of the *Killi* who cater to their needs, or they may cook in the house of the deceased, after the house has

been cleansed and the floors and courtyards plastered with cowdung solution. The bereaved family is not allowed to suffer any expense for entertainment as the visitors always come with their own provisions, which are delivered to the housewife of the family or the woman who takes charge for the time being. In the same evening, with the approval of the *Deuri* and the village *Munda*, a date is fixed for the *Sabsi* (Sradh) ceremony.

When a child is born, the Hos observe pollution (*Bisi*) for a few days. A Ho renders himself *Bisi* if he enters a house where there is a newborn baby. (*Cf.* Naoa Honom Oraree Bisinjana). The birth of a child entails certain restrictions on the family, and it is not allowed to mix freely in the community, but at death there is no *Bisi* for the family of the deceased. If there is any *Bisi* observed, it is a general one. Restrictions on diet and movements after death are observed by all the members of the *Killi* concerned. During the period from the time of death to the completion of the *Sabsi* ceremony, the *Killi* is forbidden to eat fish or meat, and its members are not allowed to use oil or turmeric paste. They cannot shave their faces or cut their hair. On the third day after cremation, the men and women who set fire to the *Kanduked*, cook a small quantity of rice with turmeric powder in a small earthen pot. The preparation is known as *Sasanmundi*. A flat stone is placed in the courtyard known as *Pauchaiti-diri* where the women wash their hands and feet with a quantity of *Sasanmundi* which is said to purify them. Next, they spread out the *Sasanmundi* in a plate made of *Sal* leaf as an offering to the spirit of the deceased. The earthen vessel containing the charred bones is brought down from the thatch of the hut, and is placed in the *Racha*. The bow and arrows of the deceased are put near it, or his favourite musical instrument, or his umbrella (made of leaves) but if the deceased happens to be a woman, a pot of water or a cloth sieve, or a basket sieve, is placed by its side.

At nightfall, the *Ading* is swept clean, and ashes are spread on the floor of the room. The members of the family sit in the room and one of the male members begins to call the name of the deceased. This practice varies in details in different parts of Kolhan.

"Ela nutum huju me singh subarichi, daru subare
mename hujume ,sikeeko murmuriko rabangjia reyajia."

"Come, spirit, come under the tree or wherever you are, it is cold outside, there are gnats, insects in plenty, why do you remain there, come inside please."

The door of the room is carefully bolted from within, and two persons, a male and a female, proceed to the cremation ground to fetch the shade of the departed. The soul after death is believed to hover round the cremation ground, and must be invited in the following way. From the cremation ground they start for the *Ading*. One of them takes two plough-shares in his hand, and the other carries a pot containing water. As they come, the person with plough-shares strikes them against each other, and at every stroke the women with water pours some of it on the ground. They then go to the spot where the vessel is kept, and touching it with their feet, they approach the door of the *Ading*. Here they ask the inmates of the *Ading* whether the spirit has entered or not. They ask this question seven times, and the members inside the hut at once light a *dip* (lamp), and minutely examine the ashes to see whether any impression is noticeable. As soon as any mark or foot print is discovered, the members inside cry out, *Sukula*, *i.e.*, entered. If, however, after seven addresses of *Sukula Chi Dukuila* (entered or not entered) the inmates do not answer *Sukula*, they have to go back again to the cremation ground and repeat the process.

When an impression is discernible on the floor, the members put their heads together to divine the cause of death, as also the form which the *Umbul* or *Roa* will take. If the impression on the ashes resembles a long line made by dragging a rope, it is believed that death has been caused by the agency of the spirits of dead ancestors. If the traces resemble the footprints of a lizard or squirrels, they believe that *Buru-bonga* has killed the man. Marks resembling the footprints of a crab indicate death at the hands of the *Bagia-bonga*. If it is death from the agency of mischievous witches, the impressions appear like those of a cat's paw. If only holes are found on the ashes, the person must have died from holes in his lungs (*i.e.*, from consumption). When the mark indicates a thumb impression of a human being, death is believed to be caused by *Jugini-bonga*.

To-day, the belief in rebirth appears to be vague, and there is a section of people in Kolhan who deny that reincarnation is possible. The names of the Hos prove, beyond any doubt, that there is a traditional belief in reincarnation. The grandfather reappears after death in the role of the grandchild, and the names of children are selected in accordance with the sequence of death in the family.

Some *Deuris* hold that the soul after death has no sex, and can come back in any form in the family. Others hold that men will be reborn as men, and women as women. They believe also that some ancestral spirits are not reborn at all, because they do not deserve it, whereas others are not reborn as their meritorious life in this world is rewarded by everlasting life afterwards. The following story narrated by Mr. Kanuram Deogam, L.T., assistant teacher of Chaibassa District School will lend some colour to the belief in reincarnation among the Hos. Mr. Kanuram is the eldest son of Mr. Dulu Manki, who has already been referred to in a previous chapter. In 1928, Kanuram's aunt died of dropsy. She was the wife of Dumbi, his father's brother's wife. The *Ading* of Kanuram's family is situated in the centre of a long house, which consists of three apartments, the central being the *Ading* and the two rooms on either side being used as dining rooms.

A and B are two rooms situated on either side of C, the family *Ading*. The room B is scarcely used. There is one door in A, which is the entrance, and one in B, but there is no entrance to C from outside. The *Ading* is approachable only from A and B. The room B is kept closed and therefore the entrance to B from C is also shut. When, on the third day, the shade of the departed was called back to the *Ading* in the usual way, all the members of the house, men and women, were waiting in the dining room A, while a woman was spreading *Rakh* or ashes through a cloth sieve in C. The usual practice is to scatter *Rakh* from the farthest end in C, the woman walking backwards while doing so, so that she may not tread on it. The first time no mark of any kind was visible, nor the second time; the third time, marks resembling the footprint of a human child were discovered. This confirmed the belief that the deceased was to be reborn as a child. Kanuram's wife was three months gone in pregnancy, and as soon as she gave birth to a female child, it was believed that the deceased person was actually reborn into the family. The marks could not be explained normally as Kanuram said, there was no child in the house at the time, and there was no possibility of any child coming to the *Ading* at that hour, and yet the prints were those of a human child. Since this incident, Kanuram, an educated man, able and clever, and himself a social reformer, has been convinced that there is much truth in the belief in reincarnation. (The story and

comments were written down in Kanuram's house, in his presence, at Chaibassa on the 27th of July, 1934).

If the *Jangtopa* is performed on the usual date, that is, on the fourth day after cremation, a general purificatory ceremony is observed by the villagers. They cut their hair, and have their nails pared, and shave themselves. The women throw away old earthen utensils, and the metal ones are washed and cleaned. The villagers then go to neighbouring stream, or *Bandh*, and take a ceremonial bath. The friends and relatives of the deceased are invited, and arrive in time for the ceremony with presents. Non-attendance at *Jangtopa* without sufficient reason is attributed to malice, or antipathy to the departed person. The whole village is astir with the spirit of *Jangtopa*, which is a pleasant function, there being no sign of grief or sorrow anywhere. The departed soul is believed to unite with the souls of the dead ancestors, and the people assemble to celebrate this union. From the night preceding the *Jangtopa*, people begin to flock to the village in numbers, carrying with them presents of *Illi*, rice, fowls and, if possible, he-goats. In the morning the men dig a hole in the family *Sasan*; when the hole is ready, the earthen pot containing the charred bones is brought out for burial. The vessel is then covered with flowers, and is carried by two women to the *Sasan*. Before the final interment, the vessel is filled with rice, and a piece of thread, six to seven cubits in length, is allowed to rest on the vessel, one end of the thread being kept on the surface. The hole is covered with earth, and the burial is thus completed. Next, one of the widows, or a woman relation of the deceased, draws the thread up out of the hole, and runs with it to the hut where death had occurred. The thread device allows the spirit to come out of the hole just covered. A *Sasandiri* is placed over the hole, and oil is poured on it, as well as on the *Sasandiris* of the graveyard. The members of the family then scatter fried rice, and prepare *Sasanmundi*, which is offered on plates made of *Sal* leaves.

All the while, *Birdiring* is blown, and drums beat out *topam, topam, jangtopam*. Finally, a dance is got up which is known as *Jangtopa Asen*, in which the bones are swung to and fro, in tune with music. With the completion of the rites the people drink *Illi*, and parade the village in procession, dancing up and down the alleys to the beat of *Dama* and *Banam*.

CHAPTER VIII

FESTIVALS

Though the process of Hinduisation of the Hos, particularly of the higher classes, has been going on for a long time, and many of the Hindu ceremonies are observed by them, their own indigenous festivals have not been allowed to fall into disuse. Cultural contact with the *Dikus* has resulted in the adoption of many of the latter's festivals; but this adoption means only a participation in the many fairs held during major Hindu festivals, and occasional sacrifices to certain Hindu gods. In the list of *Diku* festivals in which the Hos take part are to be found the *Chat*, the *Dewali*, the *Dusserah*, and the *Chait parav*. The worship of *Mahadev* at the *Chait Parav*, of the goddess *Luxmi* during the autumn, and of the goddess *Shyama* or *Kali* during the *Dewali* is becoming popular among the Hos.

To-day the higher classes among the Hos, the families of the *Mankis* and the *Mundas*, do not take an active part in their own festivals. Nevertheless they retain sympathy with the organisers, and their assistance takes the shape of voluntary contributions to the common pool, out of which the extraordinary expenses are met. To an outsider they appear to be aloof from the tribal life. They themselves will avow that they have little to do with these customary rites but at the same time they would not dream of interfering with them. This is also the attitude of the educated, the so-called detribalised Hos. The family life of many an educated Ho is not different from that of an uneducated Ho. He feels that although the tribal system is not of any use to him, the tribal code need not be abandoned. Even if he discards the material culture of his fellow-men, he has not changed much in his outlook towards his social environment.

It has already been shown how tribal prescriptions and medical aid are believed to be complementary to each other. At the marriage, at the time of his wife's confinement, at death and mortuary rites, a Ho adheres to the traditional social usages of his tribe. He

does not violate prohibited degrees in marriage, nor his *Killi* regulations. In his *Bapala* ceremony he allows the same triad of dancing, singing, and folk-rites. He insists on the presence of his *Killi* mates and relations at his ceremonies and worship-festivals. He thinks that although the feast and festivities that are customary at marriage, birth and death, may not be essential, yet some harm may come through their non-observance, so he does not dare take the risk. Thus, festivals in Kolhan are celebrated to-day with more or less the same traditional rites and the same utilitarian motives.

The Hos observe seven important festivals. These are associated with their agricultural life, and as such their time and season are determined by the needs of agriculture. The following are the traditional festivals of the Hos: (1) *Maghe*, (2) *Baha*, (3) *Damurai*, (4) *Hero*, (5) *Jomnama*, (6) *Kolon* and (7) *Batauli*. Col. Dalton's list is more descriptive. They are:—(1) *Maghe Parav* or *Dessauli Bonga*, (2) *Baha*, (3) *Damurai* (4) *Peri Bonga*, (5) *Jomnama*, (6) *Kolon Bonga* and (7) *Bahtauli Bonga*. Evidently Col. Dalton uses the word *Bonga* to mean *Parav*, which is not a Mundari word. The Hos do not call *Maghe Parav, Dessauli Bonga*, as it is apparently meaningless. In all the festivals, the object of worship is the village *Dessauli*, though prayers are offered to *Sing-bonga*, and other *Bongas* of lesser distinction. Col. Dalton's statement that the sacrifice and offerings are made by the village priest, if there be one, and if not, by any elder of the village who possesses the legendary lore, is not accurate. In those villages where there is no resident *Deuri*, the *Deuri* of the adjacent village comes and officiates at the ceremony. Most villages, however, possess a *Deuri* family. The *Deuri* is usually hereditary but a member of the original *Khuntkattidar* family may be elected a *Deuri*, if and when the family of the *Deuri* fails to continue the line. The *Deuri* may be elected by the village *punch* from the family of the deceased *Deuri*, and indispensably from the latter's *Killi*. Being a village functionary, he is entitled to certain consideration in kind for his services from the villagers, and this is ungrudgingly given. The *Deuri* also possesses a certain amount of land which is usually cultivated and worked by some of the villagers, who do not pay in kind for his services. In the village of Rajabasa, a few miles from Chaibassa, the *Deuri* died in 1934, and the *Maghe* festival of 1935 was performed by the brother of the deceased *Deuri*, at which his minor son

assisted his paternal uncle at the time of worship. The presence of the *Deuri's* son was an essential part of the service, as the mantle of the *Deuri* was believed to have fallen on his son. This son is now of age, and is the *Deuri* of the village.

Most of the festivals we have noted above are associated with agriculture, and the ceremonies are performed to increase the fertility of the fields, to protect the crops from natural and supernatural calamities, or as a part of the thanksgiving service to the village and tutelary *Bongas*. The motive of these festivals is, therefore, the same as that manifested in the rites of all agricultural castes, with whom they share the land; but the mode of worship, and the manner of participation are peculiar to the tribe.

The *Baha* festival is held in honour of the village *Dessauli*. The offerings of *Sal* flowers to him, and the garlands made with them that adorn the girls during the period, show the intimate connection between the *Sal* forest and the life of the residents of the village. The villages of to-day stand on grounds that were once occupied by *Sal* forests and many of them are adjacent to large patches of *Sal* forests.

Before the seeds are sown for the first rice crop, the village *Dessauli* and his consort *Jahira-buri*, are worshipped by the village *Deuri*, and the *Oa bongas* by the oldest member of the respective families in the family *Ading*. If this festival is not celebrated, the seeds do not germinate and transplantation is delayed. When again, the crops grow up, and before they show signs of ripening, the village *Dessauli* and his consort are again worshipped with sacrifices and offerings, and the blessings of the *Bongas* are thus ensured. The rice plants are not expected to mature and yield the desired quantity of grains unless every cultivator sacrifices a fowl in his field, and hangs up the wings of the sacrificed fowl in the cleft of a bamboo stuck in the centre of the ricefield. Next, the Ho cultivator, before he partakes of the new harvest in August and September and October offers a white cock to *Sing-bonga* along with a preparation of boiled rice, and invites his *Killi* mates to a ceremonial feast. As if all these were not enough, the Ho cultivator worships the village *Dessauli* by sacrificing a fowl, or a goat, according to his means, before the straw is removed from the threshing floor to be stacked. It is not true to say that the Hos still believe in the efficacy of their rites. Evidently many of their practices appear meaningless to them through experi-

ence, but although these rites may have lost their productive virtue, their protective role is not denied even by the sophisticated cultivators.

Thus it is clear that most of their ceremonies were originally agricultural rites. These festivals are arranged in such a way as to enable the cultivator to concentrate his attention at critical stages, before, during and after his agricultural operations and at the same time to allow him to participate in these ceremonies without prejudice to his work in the fields. Some of these festivals are held before the fields are ploughed and the seeds sown, and some after the harvesting. There is no fixed date on which they have to be held; this depends on the economic condition of the villagers and, as said before, on the needs of agriculture. If the monsoon is late or the *Sal* trees blossom early, the festivals are either postponed, or expedited. The village elders decide when and how to perform these tribal undertakings. As each village decides for itself, a particular ceremony may extend over a long period. This is true in the case of *Maghe* and *Baha* festivals. The villages which are adjacent to *Sal* forests may have little option in the celebration of the *Baha* festival, as it is essential for the festival to be completed before the first *Sal* flower touches the ground. In villages situated in the plains, the *Baha* festival is only nominally observed, and there is no elaborate system of rites and rituals in force.

The principal festival of the Hos is the *Maghe* which is held in January and February. The importance of this festival and its implications in tribal life has been described by Col. Dalton in his classic account of the tribe. Since then, little has been written about the Hos. Col. Dalton writes, "The festival (*Maghe*) therefore becomes a saturnalia during which servants forget their duty to their masters, children their reverence for parents, men their respects for women, and women all notions of modesty, delicacy and gentleness; they become raging Bacchantes. They have a strange notion that at this period men and women are so much charged with vicious propensities that it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the person to let off steam by allowing for a time full vent to the passions." Again he writes "Their natures appear to undergo a temporary change. Sons and daughters revile their parents in gross language and parents their children; men and women become almost like animals in the indul-

gence of their amorous propensities. They enact all that was ever portrayed by prurient artists in a Bacchanalian festival or Pandean orgie, and as the light of the sun they adore and the presence of numerous spectators seem to be no restraint on their indulgence, it cannot be accepted that chastity is preserved when the shades of night fall on such a scene of licentiousness and debauchery."

This is fine rhetoric but extremely overdrawn. The duration of the *Maghe* festival in Kolhan, which lasts sometimes a month, or more, naturally leads to some undesirable effects. Mr. Craven in 1898, suggested the fixing of a date for the celebration of *Maghe* for the whole of Kolhan. Mr. Bompas, however, did not agree with this suggestion, on the ground that though a good deal of drinking and license is manifested there is none of the open and flagrant indecency mentioned by Col. Dalton.

The *Maghe* festival, no doubt, provides opportunites for young people of both sexes to indulge in amorous adventures and for the villagers to get drunk, but it also affords scope for the selection of partners, which is extremely important in view of the traditional limit to the period of marriage, and the excessive bride-price prevalent. Marriage in Kolhan can only be performed within a certain specified period, always after the *Maghe* festival. This period comes to an abrupt end immediately before the rains set in and the sowing operations begin. It is, therefore, during the *Maghe* festival that marriages are usually arranged, and *Oportipi* and *Rajikhusi* matings planned and effected. The duration of this festival, extending as it sometimes does over six to eight weeks, makes it possible for people of one village to go to a neighbouring one, to the *Maghe* dances, and for people of different *Pirs* to meet together. In this way it is possible for young men to get aquainted with the girls of other villages, and ultimately to choose their wives. A detailed scrutiny of marriage and family life in one village, *viz.*, Gundipoa, has shown that three out of every five marriages could be traced to the opportunities provided by the dances during the *Maghe* festival. The value of social ceremonies and entertainments in Kolhan cannot ne overestimated, as they bring together people of different villages, and of distant *Pirs* which is becoming more and more difficult, because of the reformist movement and the growing class consciousness mentioned before. The educated Hos are not against the performance of these periodical

festivals, on the other hand, money and leisure have led to the adoption by them of a number of Hindu festivals as well, and they are trying to popularise them among the people. Nevertheless many do not approve of dances, or for the matter of that *Dama, Dumang* and *Susung* (drums, dances and songs) but their voice is still thin.

Kanu Babu about three decades back composed the following song as a warning against excessive drinking and dissipation, but it has remained a school teacher's sermon.

"No more engage in merriment by drum, dance and song,
toss not your heads in the dancing *Akhara*,
you are drinking leaf-cup after leaf-cup,
drink no more out of big pots, but
seek the road to your country's good;"

A short, sharp and simultaneous performance of the *Maghe* festival in all villages will hinder, rather than assist, the solution of their tragic social problem of marriage, as it will not allow inter-*Killi* nor inter-*Hatu* participations, which is essential for an exogamous community with high bride-price, limited period of marriage, and restrictive social mores.

Much has been written about the licentiousness and debauchery of the Hos during the festivals but all these are generalisations which explain little or nothing about the nature of this *saturnalia* of indulgence. I have participated in a number of such festivals in different villages, have drunk with the people, danced with them their tribal dances, have seen the performance of the weird rites associated with the festival, and have observed the drunken men and women, even after the shades of night have fallen on "such scenes of licentiousness and debauchery." It is true that the people drink leaf cup after leaf cup, until it intoxicates them. They do use gross language, and will be possessed by spirits or *Bongas*, as they will tell you, they may occasionally be seen even romping with women, but there is no ugliness and want of decorum. The girls of the village find their friends among the visitors from other villages, and men their partners from the girls of other villages. Husbands and wives allow a certain amount of liberty to one another, but the liberty is not abused in the way that Col. Dalton has described. The Ho dances require skill and strenuous application, and during the *Maghe* festival, men and women display their dexterity and skill in dancing the tribal dances.

If there is any license, it is usually inter-*Killi* and not intra-*Killi*, and very often result in permanent unions. The tribal elders, and the leader of the village youths are always alert and flagrant indecency is not tolerated, though the war has changed much of their values.

The songs sung, and known as *Maghe Rag*, are mostly amorous. The advent of the festival is marked by popular songs, which describe nature as attaining maturity, and therefore in sympathy with the fullness of the human heart and the desires of man to mate and settle down. The following is a characteristic song sung by young men and women in Kolhan immediately before the *Maghe* festival:—

"Hesa mata matalena, bari mata matalena,
Thik somay reja tuium setherele na,
Hesa mata chabajana, Bari mata chabajana,
Sama geja tuihum bondoleke na.

The fruits of *Pipul* ripen and fruits of banian,
You jackal, you have come in time (to taste the fruits,)
When the fruits of *Pipul* and those of Banian disappear
You come in vain to taste them.

Then again

"Sanengeteng hujulena, kamalbar kumbaruis naomneraing
Gatijati nalomnuru nenganalun nalomhia bodebode, nodengne pritiloleme,
Disum reya dukusuku jatireya rengeraban nalomhia bodebode nodongne pritiloleme,
Nagesomoy negenasara juri kajinaiumene pritiloleme".

I am coming from a distant village, Oh Kamal (lily),
Do not worry, I shall carry you with me,
Do not think of your kith and kin, neither of your parents,
Come out of your house and love me.
Leave all weal and woe, leave the rulings of the *Killi*,
Come out and love me,
This is the time, this is the season for love,
Come out my friend and love me.

Maghe is the time, the season for love, and it is no wonder that people eagerly await the return of the festival every year. The obligatory nature of the festival created certain economic difficulties. Every villager, wherever he may work, within or outside Kolhan, had to come back and join in the festival. Absence from the village without sufficient reason, was ominous to oneself, and also to the relations living in the village. This belief has been weakened in recent years, and dislocation of work in the factories and towns all over Kolhan has made it necessary to combat the pernicious effects of the

festival, and the attempts of the reformers have probably succeeded in encouraging a healthier atmosphere in their festivals, though inter-*Killi* and inter-*Hatu* participation in the festival is still the usual practice. Again,

Buru bithar Maghe bera bethar Magh
Chikathere danrachum na yumeleda
Rutu chenho chenho thege danrachum chinabeleda
Nokoreha tham danrachu thore rutu do
Nokoreha tham danrachu koyong banam do

How did you hear of the *Maghe Parav*
O *Danrachu* (bird) of the interior forests ?
Must you have heard by the tune of the flute
Must you be knowing of it by the music of the *Sarangi*.

The Hos have no fixed date on which festivals are to be celebrated, the date depending on the leisure and economic condition of the village. The *Rutu* and *Banam* indicate the approach and the functions of the *Parav*. Every village has its own reasons for fixing the date and the village of Rajabasa, five miles away from Chaibassa, celebrated it only on the 10th of May, last year, (1949) while the rest of the villages had settled down to the busy monsoon preparations in the fields.

Also

Maghe setera bareng
Chethane lathare disumethe Maghe setera
Bai jomme bareng
Dama dumang rutu banam baijomme
Nimir gapa bai thare
Maghe setera tenere esu ransaa
Ena menthing kajiamthana
Nimir gapa kore bareng baijomme

O dear brother, *Maghe* is on its course
Get ready with drum, flute and *Sarangi*
O what a pleasure in getting ready for *Maghe*,
Brother, dear, get ready with your music.

The ritual of the *Maghe* festival is no less important than its social side. The elaborate rites that are performed for five long days clearly establish the sacredness of the ceremony. The following functions are attended to during the *Maghe* festival:—

(1) 1st. Day, *Gawmara*.
(2) 2nd. Day, *Ote Illi*.

(3) 3rd. Day, *Loyo*.

(4) 4th. Day, *Marang Parav*.

(5) 5th. Day, *Hanr, Magea*.

The functions enumerated above represent in short the cycle of Ho life, particularly on its economic side. They include pastoral pantomimes, dramatic performances, of chasing and tracking game in the forest, agricultural dances, and offerings of sacrifices to the *Bongas* for the prosperity of their chief economic occupation, *viz.*, agriculture.

When the villagers have all completed their winter programme of agricultural activities, and have leisure to indulge in their chief tribal sport (*i.e.*, cock-fighting), they meet at the house of the *Deuri* where they decide upon a date for the celebration of the *Maghe*. The village officials are also consulted. The date fixed, the boys of the village make their *Banam* and *Rutu* and play on them. When the date for the ceremony arrives, the village Ahir is summoned to the house of the *Deuri* who instructs him about the paraphernalia required for the festival. The employment of the village Ahir (Gaw) shows how the artisan elements of the population in Kolhan have been assimilated to the social economy of the tribe. The Hos will tell you that their ancestors did the smelting of iron, and weaving and spinning are still done by them. The employment of the artisan elements dates from the time of their settlement in these areas, as they only follow the practice of the Bhuiyas whom they displaced or assimilated. On the morning of the first day the villagers assemble in the courtyard of the *Deuri*, with offerings of heaps of grass, *Saiu* and *Bunum*, which are placed on a spot rinsed with cowdung solution. Before breaking his fast the *Deuri* takes a bath and puts on a clean white *Botoi*. He then takes his seat in front of the heaps of grass, and invokes the village *Dessauli*, ending with prayers to *Sing-bonga* and the lesser *Bongas*, as well as to the ancestors of the clan. When this rite is finished, the village Gaw is called upon to scatter the grass imitating with his head the ways of cattle which he tends. With mud and dirt sticking to his body, and the leaves and creepers on his hair, he makes a dramatic exit towards the forest, amidst shouts of joy from villagers. The latter then return to their respective houses to offer *Illi* to the *Oa Bongas* in the family *Ading*. The night is spent in dancing and merrymaking.

On the second day, the *Deuri* offers *Illi* to the *Bongas*, a rite known as *Ote Illi*, which is the divine marriage dramatically performed every year. While the *Deuri* and his wife sit together in the courtyard, each holding a cup made of *Sal* leaves, the villagers approach them, and pour liquor from the pots brought by the villagers into the leaf cups. The first man pours into the *Deuri's Puhu* or leaf cup, and the next into that of the *Deuri's* wife. The *Deuri* mutters a prayer and pours the contents on the ground. His wife follows suit. Next the two villagers change places and the first man pours liquor into the cup of the *Deuri's* wife while the second man fills the cup of the *Deuri*. This time also the liquor is thrown down. The process is repeated seven times, each man giving the liquor alternately to the *Deuri* and his wife. After it is over, the *Deuri* and his wife drink from the leaf cups and leave the place amidst the loud cheers of the villagers. The remaining liquor is then distributed among all present. Cheered by the intoxicating drink they proceed to dance at the *Akhara*, which is continued till a late hour.

The next day is known as *Loyo*, which is the day of purification. Every house is cleansed, the people take baths and offer sacrifice to the *Oa-bongas*, and all promises of sacrifice made during the year are fulfilled.

The fourth day is known as the *Marang Parav* day, and is the main function of the festival. The *Deuri fasts* all day but may drink *Illi* at intervals. The ceremony begins after midday when the *Deuri* is taken to the *Bandh* or the neighbouring river for a purificatory bath, accompanied by the whole village, and the music of *Dama*, *Nagera*, *Banam and Rutu*. The place of worship is fixed usually outside the village facing the *Dessauli*. An earthen *dais* is erected the day before. After the bath, the *Deuri* is conducted to this place of worship. The villagers take with them one large pot containing *Illi* (Rasi) a pot full of water, some leaf-cups, one red cock and two hens. The *Deuri* first places on the ground a piece of bark called (Lama) *Ichaba* or twig of *Icha*, and begin by chanting formulas which are abusive as well as precatory, the principle of worship being cudgelling and praying, alternately. A number of leaf-cups, the number varying with the villagers sometimes, are arranged in front of the *Deuri* who pours *Illi* into these cups, each time reciting a prayer. Next he scatters grains before the cock to be sacrificed, and four or five of the villagers

assist the *Deuri* and blow *Birdiring*, each time the cock partakes of the scattered grains. The process is repeated seven times, after which the cock is killed by the *Deuri*, and the carcass thrown aside. Next, the *Deuri* takes the hen which he also kills, and offers to the *Nage-bonga* after his hymns and prayers have been repeated several times. The blood is poured in a leaf-cup and the hen put aside. Lastly, the *Deuri* takes the second hen and offers it to *Buru Bonga*. It is not killed but thrown towards the forest where it is stoned to death by the villagers. The *Deuri* then sprinkles water on the cock and the hen, and the villagers who have actively helped the *Deuri* take them to his house where they are cooked and eaten by the *Deuri* and his assistants. The hen killed by the villagers is the spoil of the village Dom or Ghasia.

The fifth day witnesses a typical ceremony known as the *Bonga-Hanr*, or the expulsion of the *Bongas*. The villagers armed with sticks come out in batches of ten to twelve, and begin hunting the spirits with vociferous songs and incantations. They assemble at the boundary line of the village, and begin by singing, or rather chanting, their invocations in a singsong way. They then race about in zigzag fashion till one of them shows signs of being possessed by a *Bonga*, and points out a spot which is accepted by the villagers as the haunt of the spirits. The possessed man runs with the villagers at his heels to a big tree or jungle near by and addresses the spirits thus,

"We have brought you here,
We want you to stay here,
Please take up your abode on the tree."

In all their sacrifices, the blood of the sacrificed animal is offered as a libation to the *Bongas*, and after it is dedicated in the way described above the *Deuri* dips his fore-finger in the blood, and marks his forehead, arms and chest with it, and finally licks it off with his tongue. The rest of the villagers do the same. The formula muttered by the *Deuri*, and the songs sung in the *Akhara* afterwards by the villagers are mostly obscene and vulgar, and they indulge in them with a strong belief that it is essential for agricultural prosperity.

The prayers offered at the time of the *Maghe Parav*, by the *Deuri* of Bharbharia and by Sirdar *Deuri* of Lisia, Gumra Pir are put at the end of the chapter. They are repeated many a time and after every sacrifice.

TIME TABLE FOR THE FESTIVALS

Name of Festivals	Date	The Bonga worshipped	The Functions	Who Officiates	What sacrifices and requisites.
Maghe.	January-March	Dessauli.	Gawmara Ote-illi Loyo Marang Bonga Hanr.	Deuri.	*Illi*, *Rasida*, cock, hen, *Saiu*, *Bunvm*, *Icha* twig with blossoms, and *Arua* rice
Baha.	March-April.	,,	Baguri Baha.	,,	Cock, *Arua* rice, and earthen pot tobacco, rice. New wooden ladle, *Sal* flowers
Damurai.	May	,,	One day Worship	,,	Cock, hen *Arua* rice, *Illi*
Hero.	June	,,	Gurugiti. Hero	,,	*Babui* rope, wooden pegs, thorny creepers, he-goat, and cock. *Arua* rice, *Illi* etc.
Bahtauli.	July	Dessauli and other Bongas	One day	Cultivator	Hen, cowdung, cooked rice, (*Pareya*).
Jomnama.	August. September	Dessauli Sing-bonga	,,	,,	New *Illi*, rice cock.
Kalam, Karsa	December & January.	Sing-Bonga Marang-Bonga	,,	,, ,,	Fowl, *Illi*, rice Fowl, rice, *Rasida*.

BIR OTE ILLI

Maghe parab bonga :—I Bharbharia Dessauli. Bharbharia hatu ren hesi randi dosi paiki munda-hon ganda-hon do sui-hara siu-kera ko buru talajgara tala sen hora tali basa tanre kula bing tala koite banchao kome, leka-kan ganda-kan tekome, hoyo ko gama ko sadai din leka gamaika. Rogo gugia re rankari jugni bolo tanre kuti kothe harnir kome. Tesing do tapa eli tapa kosoa the seba me tana, nena do ote illi.

II. Bharbharia Dessauli gelbaron ..... to end of I.

III. Bharbharia chonor..... I.

IV. Bharbharia chonor gelbaron.....

V. Rung Mahaburu.....

VI. Mauda-Dessauli, Mauda-Mahadeo, Tepideri-Mahadeo sangi the beti the Bharbharia-Dessauli nen gagar nen-kagi; kagiape gagariape.

VII. Kengri-Mengeri-Dessauli-Huring-Kengeri-Mengri, Marang-kengeri-Mengeri sangi the beti the Bharbharia-Dessauli nen-gagar-nen-kagi kagiape gagariape.

In Orera.

Aham ocha (hay Singbonga) nah nen aray oye nïr-kotong apirkotong ked thea ko tesing Singbonga rah enda atom-endaem, nen ohan aray do alom saitebaya, koyang then do koyang theko ruahura ka, atom then ko atom theko ruahura ka.

Ale japareo kemin kole nam joma, apheo japaregonhe pe tesing thaitebu bapagetana.

Ale japareo gonhea, apeo japare kemin do nam-jom pe. Tesinge tebu bapage tana.

BIR OTE ILLI.

Prayer during Maghe Parab.

1. Bharbharia Dessauli of Bharbharia village, scores of widows, scores of rich and poor, plough oxen, plough buffaloes, in the midst of mountains, in the midst of rivers, while journey, while encamping (in forests) from tigers and serpents, save them. Keep on numbering them, keep account of them (lest they do not miss). May winds and rains (monsoons) pour in as usual. During epidemics if Rankini Jugini enters, drive him away. Today with tapa *Illi*, tapa kossan (Kossan-cooked rice for preparation of Illi). I worship you, I serve you.

II. Bharbharia Dessauli, Gel Baron (twelve children)-(repeat no. 1)

III. Bharbharia chonor, (repeat no 1).
Bharbharia Dessauli. (repeat no. 1).

IV. Bharbharia chonor. Gel Baron (twelve children)-(repeat no. 1).

V. Roong Mahaburu. (repeat no 1).

VI. Mouda Dessauli, Mouda Mahadeo, Pitidiri Mahadeo, jointly you all) tell this thing to Bharbharia Desauli.

VII. Kinjiriminijir Dessauli, Huring Kinjirminjir Marang Kinjirminjir jointly (you all) tell this thing to Bharbharia Desauli.

MAGHE PARAB

TEXT BY SIRDAR DEURI OF VIL. LISIA, GUMRA PIR

Text	English
Pertol desauli, sevametanale	Perto Dessauli, we serve you
Sarametanale ; ara sandi,	we worship you with red cock
Sukalutite; sevametanale	with brown hen we serve you
Sarametanale, Lamajung,	we worship you, seeds of *Lama*
Boonjajung, jomeale nueale,	seeds of *Boonj* may we eat, moy we drink

Text	Ehglish
mera kula, merabing	let no tiger, let no snakes
hisi randi, dosi praja	twenty widows thirty subjects
lekatakome	count them all,
ganda takome Sandupil	number them all, while fetching fuel wood.
Sakamhe; merakula, mera bing	(while) plucking leaves, let not tigers, let not serpents
Sevametanale, Sarametanale	we serve you, we worship you
kitabadchom, tali banjire,	while fetching date leaves, and
mera kula, mera bing	*Sawai* grass, let not tigers, let not serpents we serve you

(*b*) Pertol chonor-sevametanale

(*c*) Pertol Mahaburu

(*d*) Pertol Dessauli, kujur hutub .....

Sowasiko, danaiko, mid gandu	in the same *pinda* (seat)
Mid chalpa, dubtanape,	in the same plank, you all sit,
jaharuntanape	you all congregate
chitirako, maharako, gansiko,	servants, bearers, menials,
matiarko,, domko, duliako	pot-bearers, basket-makers, load-carriers
sevapetanale, sarapetnale	we serve you all, we worship you all

(*e*) Pertol Dessauli Heselberel nage, Barubera nage sevapetanale sara-petanale — we serve you all / we worship you

(*f*) Pertol Dessauli, Tarob ikir nage Tuipara nage era sevapetanale sara pe tanale

(*g*) Pertol Dessauli, kapta gutu Nage, Kujur hutub longor.

(*h*) Pertol Dessauli—Najom sood—nage era
(*i*) Pertol Dessauli—Mahaburupi nage era
(*j*) Pertol Dessauli—Koomsing sood nage era
(*k*) Pertol Dessauli—Pangela hesapi nage era
(*l*) Pertol Dessauli—Pukuripi nage era....
(*m*) Pertol Dessauli—Rugood sood nage era
(*n*) Pertol Dessauli—Kujur hutub gutu nage era
(*o*) Pertol Dessauli—Hesa basa hatu nage era
(*p*) Pertol Dessauli—Edel berapi-nage era
(*q*) Pertol Dessauli—Edel bera longer nage era
(*r*) Pertol Dessauli Kulai churu nage era
(*s*) Pertol Dessauli—Baru ikir nage era
(*t*) Pertol Dessauli Chonrol nage era
(*u*) Pertol Dessauli—Jaher ikir nage era
(*v*) Pertol Dessauli—Tiril gutu nage era
(*w*) Pertol Dessauli Nage oa gutu nage era
(*x*) Pertol Dessauli Nachal longor nage era
(*y*) Pertol Dessauli—kundurgutupi nage-era
(*z*) Pertol Dessauli—Kumbahutu nage era—

Note: 1. *Lama* is the longpadded broad bean like fruit. It is a perennial climber. The leaves used in making umbrellas and water-proof covering (chuku). The plant yields fibre for rope.

2. In (*a*) Pertol Dessauli is addressed. In (*b*) to *z* Pertol Dessauli is addressed and then the Nage eras of surroundings places, and the same text in (*a*) is repeated.

Ote Illi

Text	English
Oteilli Birili tanale, na	Ote Illi and Bir Illi we observe,
dole nueale	now we shall drink
jomeale....bo-hasu	and we shall eat, headache,
lai-hasu bugıakan	colic, pains let we recover from
napaiakan ka kera uri	let it claim, buffalo and oxen,
mindi merom sabinko	sheep goats all
bugiakonoka, Ape sida	may fare well, you formerly
hamhoko, chilikape	ancestors, how you
jomnu kena, enleka, aleo	ate and drank, in the same manner,
jomnuika	we also may eat and drink
ale enamente ape hamho	we, therefore, you ancestors-
oagoe ko sevapetan	spirits we serve
sarapetanale, mera bing	we worship, let not be there
mera kulao ka	tigers.

Baha

Text	English
Mad-kam ba, sarjom ba, jome geda bu,	Flower of *Mahua*, flower of *Sarjom*, we ahall eat
Nue geda bu, hisi randi do-si praja honko	we shall drink, twenty widows thirty subjects,
leka takome ganda takome,	count them, number them, snakes'
bing bolo kula bolo	entrance, tigers' entrance (boundary)
kute-kote machi kote :	to the borders, to the verge,
har darom ru darom	drive back beat back
takome. San dupil, sakam he tanre ;	them all. Fetching fuel wood, plucking leaves while,
mera kula mera bing gea	let not tigers, let not snakes
Siu dai siu harako	Plough-cattle
atingtanre mera kula mera	while graze, let not tiger let
bing, leka takome ganda takome	not snakes ; number them count them.

Hero

Text	English
See-chata-ote, gara chata	Furrowed fields, tilled fields
ote ; here tea ko	crops to be sown
bidey-tea-ko, mera soyaoa,	plants to be planted, let not them rot,
mera ganjoia ; lutising	let not them decay, like *Lutising*,
leka, barusing leka,	like *Baru sing*,
litikan latakange, gut-ban	may they grow in abundance, may
latumban ka	they grow to perfection
bing bolo, kula bolo	entering of smakes and entrance
kuti kote	of tigers, to the borders

machi kote, hardarom, rudarom.	to the verge, drive back, beat back.
Desauli Mahaburu, boka merom-	O, Desaull Mahaburu, uncastrated goat and with basketful
dala choulite sevametan,	of rice, worship
sarametanaing ;	you, I serve you;
(see chata ote etc.)	furrowed fields.

(Offers a *boda* (goat) when paddy about 1′.½ During that Puja eating goat is forbidden for women)

BATAULI

Text	English
Delpunkia Bicha gurulu, hisi randi	Crop of *gundli*, crop of *gundli*, twenty widows
do-si praja ko, jomegedako nuegedako	Thirty *rayats*, will eat (and) will drink
mera lyee hasua ko, mera bo	let not stomach-ache, let not
hasua ko, see dai	headache, plough-able
siu hara ko, atingtan	and plough oxen, while grazing,
gusam tanre, mera kulaoko	let not tiger eat them
mera binjoako san	let not snake eat them,
dupil	while fetching fuel wood;
sakam he tanre, hisi randi	while plucking leaves, twenty widows
do-si praja honko, leka takome ganda takome ;	thirty subjects, count them number them ;
Bing bolo kula bolo kuti kote	entrance of snake, entrance of tiger, to the border
machikote har darom ru darom.	to the verge, drive back, beat back.

JOMNAMA

Text	English
Dessauli Mahaburu nama mata	Dessauli Mahaburu, new wild *mata* green
nama sura jomegedale nuigedale	new *sura* green, we shall eat, we shall drink
nama baba nama chouli jomegedale nuigedale	new paddy, new rice, we shall eat, we shall drink,
kula kore bing kore	to the tigers, to the snakes,
meram akaringlea	do not sell us
meram kehalea ; bugi akan	do not barter us ; let us fare well,
napaikan kale	let us get on well

(*mata-sura* is the name of a green *sag* which grows wild).

CHAPTER IX

CRIME AND CUSTOM

The tribal laws, the penalties for breaches of the same, the ideas of right and wrong, the legal definiteness attained by the Hos today, do not appear to be genuinely indigenous to their culture. The tribal core has blended with elements introduced from alien sources. The Hos have come in contact with codified rules regulated proceedings in court, and with an executive force exercised through the medium of tribal officers. It is therefore difficult to throw much light on the theory of primitive law by a study of the working of their tribal system. Even if the forms of tribal laws have changed, the functions remain much the same. A field investigator in Kolhan stumbles against a body of traditional rules, laws or effective customs, strictly obeyed by the community, which appear to dominate the relation of the individual towards it, and which perhaps explain the social solidarity of the Hos. A study of the working of the customs and usages, of the manner in which obedience to customs is secured, the clash of interests and confusion of ideals which result from the violation of these norms of conduct, the system of control exercised through the medium of the social machinery, and the belief in supernatural vengeance which rationalises the approved standards of the society, will explain the degree of elasticity of their culture.

We have shown the fundamental principles of social life among the Hos, and the tribal traditions that are followed by them. We have recorded the customs and practices which are observed in connection with their economic life, those connected with marriage and sex life, with maternity and mother-hood, their religious beliefs and rites, sorcery, witchcraft, disease, divination and death. Also we have noticed the influence of these customs, the functions which they perform in the life of the Hos, how the cycle of life is governed by an implicit obedience to the tribal code, how violation leads to

disasters and encourages disaffection in the community against the offender,how the tribal officers and the *Killi* elders uphold the sanctity of their traditional laws and make them effective, and how offenders against the tribal code are cut adrift by the members of the group and, above all, the public opinion that sustains such control.

All offences against the tribal code cannot and are not brought for trial before the tribal court. Some pass unheeded some are met by the frowns of the elders, but some are too serious to be overlooked. Offences against the *Killi* are not always met with punishment, nor have the tribal officials jurisdiction over them. The gradual widening of their outlook made possible by outside contact and the resulting complexity of life in general, have made it possible for the Hos to underestimate the importance of tribal laws. In many cases where a verdict of public condemnation would have been the minimum penalty for an offence, today the offender escapes even a trial. Incest is not punished by murder, but by social boycott which, as we have seen, is not a deterrent to such offence. Experience of other lands, a knowledge of the possibility of independent living in labour centres and the formation of classes within the community make it difficult to enforce conformity to tribal code even within limited areas. Suicide. which was a general and common practice resorted to by indiscreet presons violating tribal laws or as a result of public disapproval of their conduct, has become less frequent. Witches are not so miserable today as they were a few decades back, and the social opprobrium that is associated with witchcraft does not invariably lead to any personal injury to the witch, or perpetration of any violence to her family or possessions. In earlier days, tribal laws were regarded as sacred, and any infringement was severely condemned. The offender was made to redress the wrong committed by him by offerings and sacrifices before public gatherings, so that the effect of violation was not patent. This precluded the possibility of realising the results of acts of infringement of tribal laws. To-day, breach of customary laws is not always punished and yet, it may not be followed by a disaster, so that more and more people are encouraged to omit the performance of customary rites and disobey tribal laws. However, breach of tribal laws even today is followed by a feeling of suspense, and if any calamity, personal or collective, happens, the offender curses himself and ends by promising to comply with the law in question.

It is not the traditional fear of supernatural pains and penalties alone that explains the attitude of the Hos to tribal laws. There are some laws which appear to be designed to secure cooperation among the members of the group, to encourage joint efforts and reciprocity of relationship among them, which lead to a better understanding between the members of a group, and between those of different groups. By complying with such laws, they can adjust themselves with the forces of their environment, can resist the effect of privation, disease and epidemic, and finally ensure a better adaptation to the changed and changing conditions of life. So long as the laws are believed to subserve the objects for which they were intended, the effect of a willing compliance can hardly be over-estimated.

The custom of transferring diseases from one village to another affords a case in point. Whenever the Hos find that a particular disease has assumed an epidemic form, they approach the *Deuri* of the village to undertake propitiatory measures. The *Deuri* invites all members of the *Hatu*, and the tribal officers and substantial cultivators, and listens to the experiences of the individual families which have paid toll to the epidemic. He then decides to placate the village *Dessauli* and worship *Sing-bonga* and ask for the cooperation of all the members of the *Hatu*. The *Dakua* or the bailiff is instructed to procure the necessary requisites for the worship and sacrifice. The *Deuri* fasts for the following 24 hours until the time of the ceremonial worship, and concentrates on his task. The next evening, before it is dark, the *Deuri*, followed by the villagers, proceeds to the neighbouring river where he takes a ceremonial bath, and with hardly a rag round his loins, he approaches the abode of the *Dessauli*, with the villagers at his heels, while some members of the crowd sound the *Birdiring*. The sacrificial requirements have already been deposited by the *Dakua*, and the *Deuri* faces the setting sun and mutters weird incantations, glorifying the *Bongas* and imploring their aid. All the villagers solemnly stand round the *Deuri* while two of the villagers assist the latter in the sacrifice. A black hen is usually offered to the *Dessauli*, but the form of the sacrifice may be revealed in dreams, so that a cock, a pig, a he-goat or whatever animal is asked, is offered by the village. Some thread dyed red, or a piece of red rag is tied round one of the legs of the hen, and the *Deuri* holds it in his arms and offers his prayers. The hen is allowed to partake

of some grains scattered on the ground, three times, before it is finally offered to the *Bonga*. The singnificance of this practice is to offer food to the hen, in the name of the ancestors, in the name of those living, and in the name of those that are yet to come, thus securing the dead, the living and the unborn against harm. When the *Deuri* has finished his prayers, he throws the hen some distance away,and the villagers pelt it with stones and chase it out of the village until it reaches the outskirts of a neighbouring village or a forest. This custom is widely practised in Chota Nagpur and adjoining areas. The Korwas offer a goat to the disease-spirit. The hen is carried by some Ho villager in his arms, and he places it within the boundary of the adjoining village or forest. Special care is taken to see that it does not return to the village where it has been offered to the *Bongas*. After this rite, the Hos retire to their respective houses and throw away all their earthen utensils and cooking pots, as well as any cooked food that may remain. The *Aḍing* is cleaned and plastered with cowdung solution, and new earthen pots are used for cooking. The value of confidence brought about in the manner described above, and the ceremonial cleaning of the house and the kitchen, which serves as a preventive measure, cannot be exaggerated, and it is no wonder that the epidemic is often brought under control.

The tribal law forbidding a person to take food from a stranger, from the *Dikus* and from members of other tribes, has already been referred to. The value of this prohibition also has been noted in connection with disease and witchcraft. The Hos resent any infringement of this taboo, and any person who disobeys the injunction of the society is branded as *Kajomesin*. The word *Kajomesin* is derived from *Ka-* no, *Jom-* to eat, *Esin-* cooked food, so that *Kajomesin* stands for one from whom a Ho dares not take cooked food. A *Kajomesin* is cut adrift by the members of the tribe, and no social relationship with him is possible, unless the society re-admits him by the elaborate process of *Jati*, which we shall describe below. So long as the restrictions are not removed, a *Kajomesin* is not allowed to touch any body's water, connot eat with anybody, and even if he dies, his corpse cannot be touched by the members of the *Killi* or the *Hatu*, nor put in the *Sasan*. A *Kajomesin*, even when he is restored to the *Killi*, deos not attain full social status within the village. There are no apparent social disabilities, and he is entitled to all the privileges of

membership of his *Killi*. In spite of this, a *Kajomesin* who has been re-admitted to the *Killi*, finds it difficult to marry in families which have no such past, and he has always to pay a higher *Gonong* than is usual with people of his status. When he violates any tribal law, the social machinery is not immediately set in motion, as a certain latitude is given to him which is not allowed to members of the tribe in general. Although once a *Kajomesin* is not always a *Kajomesin*, yet the ignominy is too deep to be erased once for all. This has created a new element in the population of Kolhan. The families of *Kajomesins*, who have been accepted by the society but upon whom full social status has not been conferred, are finding it advantageous to marry among themselves, and are thus creating a class within the class.

The process by which a *Kajomesin* is re-admitted to the society, is called *Jati*. The village *Munda* and the members of the *Killi* to which the *Kajomesin* desires to reaffiliate himself, hold a panchayet. Debar of Kitahatu committed incest with his father's brother's daughter. The *Killi punch* held its sitting under a big mango tree in front of the village *Sasan*. The young man was sitting with his father and paternal uncle, all with folded hands. When the charges were stated by an elder of the village, the paternal uncle tried his utmost to shield his nephew. Debar did not answer the charges. The *Killi punch* heard all witnesses and summed up the proceedings in a brief statement. It accused the parents of the young man and the girl. The father of the girl was asked to arrange for her marriage, within two months from date, which could be done by bribing some young man of a different *Killi* to marry her. The young man was asked whether he wanted to expiate for his crime, to which he replied in the affirmative. An elaborate ceremony of purification was announced. Next day the *Deuri* approached the abode of the *Dessauli* and placed three sticks tied together with *Babui* rope and covered the same with thorns. In the afternoon, Debar with his parents and a few villagers, at the instance of the *Deuri*, went to the neighbouring river where he took a bath with oil and turmeric paste. He then proceeded to the abode of the *Dessauli* where the *Deuri* and the *punch* were waiting for him. The *Deuri* was supplied with a red cock and other requisites by Debar's father for the sacrifice. In the usual manner, described above, the *Deuri* offered the cock to *Sing-bonga* with prayers and incantations,

and the blood of the sacrificed cock was poured into two leaf-cups which were respectively offered to the *Sing-bonga* and the *Dessauli*, and drops of the blood were allowed to fall on the ground in the name of the *Oa--bongas*. A pot of water with its contents dyed with turmeric, made ready beforehand, was sprinkled over Debar seven times, and three times over the rest. Debar was told to take a few drops of the blood from the leaf-cups, and dilute it with *Illi* and drink the mixture in the presence of all assembled. Thus the horror of the breach of the tribal law manifested itself, as it were, in the blood of the sacrificed cock, and restoration to the norm of the tribe was ceremonially observed by the offender by drinking the blood. Next, Debar was told to cook food for the members of the *Killi* and other elders present on the spot. A he-goat was killed and the feast was partaken of with great cheer. Debar thus expiated for his crime.

There are degrees of social offence in Kolhan, and not every breach of the customary law is met by ostracism. It is only for offences of a very grave nature that a *Killi* takes such a drastic step. While for petty offences, a small fine (which may be in cash or in kind) is levied by the *Killi* elders and spent for ceremonial purposes. The major offences for which a person may be made a *Kajomesin* are few in number. They are as follows :—

(1) When a person transgresses the limits of consanguinity (incest within the family).
(2) When a man is guilty of *liaison* within the *Killi*,
(3) When a man takes food from the hands of the *Dikus*
(4) When a man lives with a *Kajomesin* wife and eats food cooked by her.

There are some families in Kolhan who are not *Kajomesins*, but who are nevertheless subjected to certain social disabilities. Nothing has been proved against them but they are suspected to have committed some such offence. They are also cut adrift by the members of the *Killi* for offences, alleged to have been committed by their ancestors but have remained unpunished. Under this group come many labourers who worked in the mines but have resettled permanently in the village. There is no evidence against them ; it is mere suspicion that they have violated social rites that prompts such action. But labourers who are affluent and do not settle permanently in the village enjoy a higher social prestige. Poverty among the Hos is a

great disqualification; it is indeed a social crime, and a poor family is subjected to disabilities which are difficult to explain otherwise. The son of a poor man cannot eat under the same roof with the son of a rich cultivator, and doubts and suspicions are always entertained about the bonafides of the poor, for poverty exposes people to temptations. When a man takes food from a stranger, he has to explain his conduct before the *Killi*, and in most cases, the *Killi* elders insist on a fine which must be paid before the man is allowed to participate in the tribal life. One of the most important results of cultural contact among the Hos has been the fission of the tribe into classes which share the same economic environment, cooperate with one another in all their economic undertakings, offer prayers and sacrifices to the same *Bongas*, participate in customary feasts and festivities, recognise relationship between themselves as members of the clan and the tribe, and yet maintain their identity. Restrictions on intermarriage between these classes are not yet rigid, but those on commensality are already strict enough to allow fusion. Besides the elaborate processes of social expulsion and ostracism, there is another social corrective which is essentially a passive force, viz., public disapproval. Its strength lies in the fact that all members of a *Killi* or of a *Hatu*, have common venues of meeting together and the action of particular individuals within the community comes up for discussion and criticism in these gatherings. A person can easily gauge the effect of his or her doings on the tribal opinion, and by experience learns to estimate its form and magnitude, so that actions which are calculated to provoke public opinion, are controlled without any direct exercise of the social prerogative vested in the *Killi* or *Hatu* elders. The action that the Ho society views in an unfavourable light, and which evoke protests from the members are:—

(1) Neglect of family duties and obligations.
(2) Desertion of dependents.
(3) Refusal to entertain guests.
(4) Repudiation of debt and *Gonong*.
(5) Adultery.
(6) Theft.
(7) Wilful destruction of other people's property.
(8) Witchcraft, sorcery, administration of *Najom* or poison.

Suicide and murder are not essentially bad in themselves, for they may be the natural consequence of the functioning of the tribal laws. They cause alarm, and no doubt involve the society in trouble but the society does not lose sight of the motives. The infringement of tribal laws regarding incest provokes condemnation, and may lead to suicide. Cases of suicide and murder are cited by the village elders to instil ideas of sanctity of tribal laws and discipline within the society, which often act as social suggestion.

There are other ways of enforcing conformity to tribal laws in Kolhan. Stories and folk-tales are current among the Hos, how theft, adultery, and incest were punished even when these offences were committed in secret and without the knowledge of the society. Thus the following story widely known in Kolhan, explains how theft is punished. Two brothers were coming from the field, each with a sack of paddy on his head. Suddenly the elder brother stopped and said, "Brother, I am dead tired and cannot move, will you get me some fire from the village so that I may smoke my *Ficca*? The younger brother unloaded himself and ran to the village to fetch the fire. In the meantime, the elder brother opened his brother's sack and transferred a portion of the paddy into his own. When the younger brother came back, they lighted *Ficca*, and after some rest returned to the village. Shortly afterwards the elder brother died, and was reborn as a bull in the same village. The bull also died soon, and its skull, somehow, fell in the kitchen garden of the younger brother. It was winter and tomatoes were growing in the garden. A thief wanted to steal them, and when he crossed the fence and dropped in the garden, the skull addressed the thief, "Friend, do not steal. I did and I am still suffering for my crime. I took only a handful of grains, and I have been unable to liquidate my debt; and I am here watching my brother's yams and tomatoes." The thief ran away in mortal dread.

There are many actions which are encouraged by the society and the man who performs them receives some social recognition and approbation. Special skill in hunting, fishing, basket weaving, carpentry, dancing, singing, making of musical instruments, is appreciated by the Hos, and they show their recognition by consulting those possessing it whenever they undertake such activity themselves, or by following their lead, and also by citing them as examples to children and young people. This leads to the continuity of specialisation to

a certain extent. Hospitality is an attribute of the good householder and the Hos approve of it. The capacity to give feasts and entertain guests is very much prized by them, and in all their social and socio-religious functions, feasts are indispensable. A traveller in Ho villages is always welcome, he will be offered *Ficcas* and *Illi*, and food if necessary. The following song popularly sung in the fields of Kolhan, addressed to travellers will explain their attitude to guests:—

Nepa paromere tamaku tamasatada ko tamaku,
Terepa paromere berenga bengebangi jolena berenga,
Pekaya joka nidi me tamaku tamasatade ko tamaku,
Nathui joka godome berenga bengebangi jolena berenga.

On the bank of the river there. the tobacco is grown,
On this bank. the brinjal is grown,
Oh friend, you may take the tobacco as much as you require for *ficca*
You may pluck the brinjals as mch as you require for cooking.

Injury to person and wilful destruction of property are very much resented by the Hos, and if they do not get any redress from the tribal officers, they take the help of witches or engage the services of *Najomadani* to punish their enemies. Witches who are suspected of causing injury to persons and things without provocation are very much dreaded; and the Hos shun them publicly, though they are not branded as *Kajomesins*. They hate the witches, dread the *Najomadani*, tolerate the magician, admire the *Deonwa*, and respect the *Deuri*. Witches who assist the villagers against the mischief of other witches, and who undo the effects of witchcraft by counter-spells or psycho-physical exercises, are not treated unkindly and the Hos reward them for their services by contribution in kind to their maintenance after the annual harvest. They distinguish protective and productive magic from destructive magic and the fact that the same person may be responsible for all kinds of magical practices does not encourage a general disapproval of his methods. But a witch or a magician who lives alone and keeps himself aloof from the social life of the village is always suspected of mischief. Offences against a person evokes condemnation of the entire *Killi*, but it does not alwa ys lead to joint action. Witchcraft against a person or a family is usually taken as a challenge to the society and the victim of witchcraft is sure to be assisted by his *Killi*-mates and fellow villagers. This is how witches are beaten and cudgelled occasionally by the villagers and in

cases where witches are brought to trial, little sympathy is shown by the villagers and even by their *Killi* mates,

We have not mentioned anything about the attitude of the Hos towards adultery and divorce. An adulterer is a menace to society, and the Hos offer a cock to *Sing-bonga* to escape the consequence of adultery. The man who is found guilty of adultery is fined by the *Killi* and ridiculed by the village. In case the husband does not want to live with his wife after the crime has been detected, the adulterer has to accept the woman as his wife or mistress and the child of the union, if any, is entitled to inherit his property. He is also liable to pay back a certain share of the bride-price paid by the husband. In case a girl deserts her husband and lives with some man in a different village, the members of the husband's *Killi* assist the aggrieved husband to bring her back from some public place, such as a market or a fair and this establishes the right of the husband; but in such cases the woman usally escapes again from her husband's village. The *Manki* of the *Pir*, with the assistance of the *Mundas* of the villages concerned decide such cases, and some compensation in kind and cash is usually paid to the husband. A wife may desert her husband for maltreatment, for incompatibility of temper, for his inability to maintain her or for other reasons. The husband has to bring her back from markets and fairs. Three times the husband is assisted by his friends and *Killi* mates but in the event of her escape again, he gives her up. There is no formal proceeding for divorce. The attempts of her husband to take her back to his village and the fact of her escape again and again serve as proof of her disaffiliation from her husband's *Killi*. The Ho society does not possess any regular code regarding divorce, and a woman who is deserted by her husband or divorced finds it difficult to marry. In most cases, she lives as a mistress or a concubine.

There is no Mundari word equivalent in meaning to taboo, the word *Bonga* being commonly used to explain the source of all prohibitions. There are, however, two important classes of taboo among the Hos, one relating to food, the other to marriage. The object of all prohibitions is to protect a person or a group of persons from injury or danger. The violation of taboo is attended with risks, not only to the persons who violate it but to all who are in any way associated with them, as for example when a group of persons belonging to differ-

ent *Killis* participate in an economic undertaking. The typical taboos in connection with food are those which have traditionally been prescribed for women who are pregnant. The purpose is not only to safeguard the physiological system but also to shield the mother and the child from the harm done by witches, etc., who use food for the administration of *Najom*. The Hos have tabooed *Karpendu* (*Ruellia suffruticosa*) to women. Its root is used to prepare *Illi*. If a larger dose is taken it cuases abortion. Similarly, the root of Ankoadaru (*Alangium lamaruii*) which is used as a Laxative, is tabooed to pregnant women. A number of plants and herbs are tabooed which have, on analysis, proved to be poisonous. The violation therefore of such food restrictions has led to disasters which have maintained the confidence of the people in their efficacy. The Hos taboo all kinds of inter-dining between different *Killis*, between different classes within the same *Killi*, between persons of different tribes, and between strangers even if they belong to the same *Killi*. Taking food from strangers is dangerous to the person who takes it, and it may be so to others of his group also. Consequently, a person who violates a taboo is ostracised, and is made a *Kajomesin*.

A similar taboo exists in connection with mating, though its force has been weakened by the disintegration of religious beliefs. The endogamy of the tribe is not sacred today, with the result that many marriages have taken place between the Hos and other tribes. *Liaison* between *Diku* men and Ho girls is increasing, and cases that have occurred in Chaibassa during the last ten years or so would fill a volume. Thus, there being no longer any deterrent to mating with strangers, social authority vested in the *Killi punch* has to exercise its prerogative to ensure a compliance with social traditions. *Killi* exogamy has not led to an indiscriminate alliance between the different *Killis*, and as far as our knowledge goes, taboo on marriage outside a particular local area can be traced to a dread of unfamiliar *Bongas*, who were conceived as hostile, and therefore dangerous. It is a fact that the vague conception of a mysterious power, defined as *Bonga*, has resulted in the postulation of a number of spiritual beings who possess a share of this power in greater or lesser degree, but are known to be equally vague and uncertain. This accounts for the name of the *Bonga* varying so often with the locality. *Disum-bonga*, *Katumarang-bonga*, *Marang bonga* are one and the same, but are conceived as different

entities in different parts of Kolhan. *Baram-bonga* is said to be the older name for *Sing-bonga* (Col. Dalton). Hoffman does not corroborate this, and according to him the Mundas know nothing of this identification. Hoffman has identified this *Bonga* with the spirit who causes epidemics. He further says. "The sacrifices offered to *Baram-bonga* are made to the east of the village, *i.e.*, in the direction of the Ganges, as some maintain, because the Ganges is considered by the Hindus as the originator of smallpox." The Ganges is not regarded by the Hindus as the originator of smallpox. Even if it is so, it involves an additional knowledge of the geographical position of the Ganges, which is not to the east of the Ranchi district. Offering of sacrifices to the east of the village may have some connection with the sun, as in all the sacrifices which the Munda speaking people offer to the maleficent *Bongas* the prayers end with a thanksgiving to *Sing-bonga*. *Baram-bonga* is identified with *Jugini-bonga* among the Hos. This explains the role of *Baram-bonga* as causing epidemics. Whenever an epidemic carries off any of the villagers, the caste Hindus offer sacrifices, and worship the goddess Kali who is conceived of as presiding over epidemics. The goddess is accompanied by two of her maids who are known as *Dakini* and *Jugini*. They are the agents of Kali through whom the diseases are spread. The identification of *Barambonga* with *Jugini-bonga* is thus easily understood. The *Bongas* of one village are not necessarily those of another though the names may be the same. As a result thereof, the *Deonwa* of a village often establishes friendly relations with the *Bongas* of other villages, and in many areas we find one *Deonwa* catering for the needs of a number of them. The witches of one village, during their training, are also required to propitiate the *Dessauli* of neighbouring villages along with the *Dessauli* of their own village, so that the effects of their spells and activities may not be destroyed by the rivalry existing between the gods of different villages. The *Deonwa* of Jorapukur is consulted by the neighbouring villages, so also *Bamia Babonga*, the *Deonwa* of Konslaposi, is known and consulted by the whole of Bantra *Pir* and even by people of the Kotgarh *Pir*.

The influence of the *Deonwas*, in other words, the knowledge of the *Bongas* of an area, determines the limit of exogamy, for there is risk in marrying in villages the *Bongas* of which are unknown. Though it is difficult today to furnish a definite proof of this mental

attitude, the knowledge of a wider area brought about by better transport and communications coupled with the disintegration of their indigenous beliefs and practices, has made it possible to extend the limit of marital selection. It nevertheless remains true that the villages which are closely allied by ties of marriage are those which share the same gods and spirits, and in many cases the same *Deonwa*.

(2)

Criminals are said to vary in their type and character. Lombroso believed in a criminal type and brought weighty evidence in support of his assumption. Goring, though differed with Lombrosian technique of typing, demonstrated that English criminals as a group are very inferior in physical development to the law abiding population. Hooton thinks that the biological inferiority of the criminal is no less marked than his economic incompetence and ineffectiveness and general stupidity. (Homo-sapiens—Whence and Whither, *Science*, U.S. LXXXII 1935., p. 30.) Identical twins have been observed to react definitely in similar manner than fraternal twins with regard to crime. Not all agree with the heredity of crime, for environment receives thousands of unfortunates who are forced to a career of crime.

Kretschmer describes certain constitutional types of criminals. The body type he calls Pyknic, Leptosome and Athletic. The Pyknic is characterised by narrow bodily cavities associated with long limbs. The Leptosome has large body cavities but short limbs. The Athletic possesses symmetrical body proportions. The constitutional types have been associated with different patterns of crime. Thus Leptosome carefully 'plans his delinquent acts,' the Pyknic is 'prone to intemperance and sex excesses' and is usually the leader of daring criminal enterprises and so on.

Regarding the feeble-minded and the psychopathic, estimates of their percentage in the prison population in different countries vary considerably from 18 p.c. to 38 p.c. Some prisons report 20 to 25 p.c. feeble-minded alone. According to one estimate 80 p.c. of the criminals are said to possess subnormal intelligent quotient. Of the 1979 cases investigated by Prof. Roots (1924-26) he found 70 imbeciles incapable of further education; 661 morons who are not educable,—they have never gone, and never will go beyond the primary

stage; 882 borderline and dull normals who could not go beyond the 7th standard, 296 apparently normal persons who would profit by a vocational training; and only 70 persons of superior intellect. The mental testing of 300 prostitutes undertaken by the University of Copenhagen in Denmark show that 48 p.c. of the prostitutes were retarded in intelligence, 25 p.c. were constitutionally psychopathic, 8 p.c. suffered from hysteric diseases, many were morons or were victims of self-indulgence, even of homo-sexuality. Gruhle's researches had shown that 18 p.c. of the criminal population in Germany were traceable to bad environment, while 82 p.c. could be put to inborn dispositions. These estimates are not given much credence due to the absence of unanimity regarding the validity of psychological tests, particularly those which are used to determine the Intelligence Quotient. (I.Q.).

The influence of the ductless glands on the growth of the body and some of its parts requires careful evaluation. The less development of some of the glands, their malfunctioning may render the entire body system out of gear. For example, it has been claimed that the lack of balance of some of the glands may affect sexual maturity and disturb normal sexual life. Diseases of particular glands may produce nervous annoyance, intolerance, hysteria and neurasthenia. Imbecility, gianticism and dwarfism are alleged to be caused by the malfunctioning of some of the glands. If the disorder of the ductless glands, as claimed by competent physiologists, have such effect on physiology and general mental life, it is perhaps natural to seek in the disharmonic body proportions and somatological anomalies, the roots of criminal behaviour.

Sheldon's study of morphological types has brought new hopes in the ultimate correlation between body build and diseases or temperamental maladjustments. The asymmetrics or disharmonies of the body build constitute what Sheldon speaks of as 'dysplasia.' He classifies the varieties of human physique, into three types with two others, one of which he calls balanced and the other sporadic between whom he distributes the human population. The human physique he classifies into 79 types. The structural basis of these large varieties are three, which he calls, Endomorphs, Mesomorphs and Ectomorphs. The first, according to Sheldon, is characterised by a predominance of 'soft roundedness throughout the different regions of

the body, with an exaggeration of the digestive viscera.' It is called Endomorph, because the digestive viscera is derived principally from endoderm, which is the inner germ layer. The Mesomorph is typed on the basis of accentuated development of certain structural forms of the body, derived from the mesoderm, while Ectomorph represents a type characterised by the predominance of surface area relative to bulk and of the brain and central nervous system relative to 'mass.' The last gives the impression of a delicate and fragile body build. According to Hooton, Sheldon's Endomorphs and Mesomorphs resemble in general structure the Pyknic and the Athletic, though the latter is more functional than structural, while Ectomorph may be the same as 'Asthenic' of Krestchmer. It is only when we come to the details of the criteria for the somatotyping that our difficulty becomes pronounced. The taxonomic scheme is determined by standardized photographs on which Sheldon used a measuring technique on the negatives with 'pin-point callipers' from which he derived the indices. Care, of course, was taken to see that the photographs were free from optical distortion. If the photographic technique is found superior to the usual anthropometric one used in criminal typing the possibilities of the method must be admitted.

(3)

Mental diseases provide incentive to crime, and it would be worthwhile to notice how far our data from primitive and archaic societies, explain the incidence of particular types of crime and criminal behaviour. Regional factors are supposed to cause mental diseases. The arctic people are said to be extremely suggestible. As soon as the children begin to dance, men and women, even old persons among them would join in and behave as children do. The Laplanders are said to be hyper-sensitive and 'an unexpected touch, whistling at a distance or strange appearance throw them into a fury.' The Siberians are said to be subject to nightmare and spells of somnambulism, they are even known to sing in sleep, though in their waking hours, they plead ignorance of the experience. Arctic hysteria consist of maniacal attacks, spasms, trances, howls, dances and epileptoid seizure. The equatorial zones similarly throw into question, the hereditability of mental disorders. In many primitive societies, the stereotyped pattern of life does not allow sufficient latitude for devia-

tions in the affairs of life. Neither does primitive society provide scope for the development of hypernormal or abnormal personality, as the weaklings who fail to adjust themselves to the realities of life are eliminated in traditional ways. The maladjusted child finds no competent care-taking to enable it to survive and live long. Yet maladjustment proceeds in the wake of culture change. A socialized or rigid pattern of life is not compatible with needs and requirements of changing configurations of desires, atttudes and personal aims. The same social organisation, which eliminates the maladjusted child, develops the germs of maladjustment, for the seeds of psychic tension are generated in the nature of changing cultures or contact-economics. As the social life in primitive society does not compromise with individual differences and deviations of desire from the group norm, those individuals who have intiative, intelligence, sublimated impulses would fail to orient themselves. Again the born leaders, and hereditarily equipped individuals or gifted ones, would find the limits of social development irksome and stiffling, also the individuals who have been crippled by disease find conformity uncongenial to their personality development, so that these naturally will crave for freedom; and an intense desire to redress the inequities of the normal environment is likely to produce misfits and engender neurosis. The territorial basis of primitive structure while it provides a familiar and unchanging reality with regard to their habitat, also developes a monotony which needs be relieved by orgies and uncanny feats, dances and weird seances, resulting in tribal warfare and vendetta. The bleakness of the northern regions of the globe or the monotony of the desert even of the riverine or deltaic parts of India, produce inactivity and isolate personality so that as Weyer says ('The Eskimos, p. 386), 'The prolonged darkness and monotony of winter contribute to the prevalence of peculiar mental disorder among the people round the polar region.' The balance of mind that is created by social intercourse and by a manipulative contact with the environment cannot be maintained in the absence of the latter, thus producing the high tension which may find a release in neurosis, while social mobility and a great tempo of life produce disharmony in personality adjustment; isolation and monotony also do account for mental unbalance or development of the Shaman personality, orgies, weird recitals of hymns and spells and even mutilations and cicatrices on the

person, and other like uncanny experiences in primitive society. The criminal activities of many primitive tribes may be traced to a disorganisation of family life, to the stiffling of individual initiative by a rigorous code of tribal conduct, and temperamental maladjustments. Many a case of suicide has occurred among the Hos of Singhbhum and other tribes of the Munda group in Bihar, from a feeling of neglect and frustration in young women, and many murders have been committed on the slight pretext of nonconformity with the tribal pattern of conduct regarding duties and obligations. Women are too touchy and temperamental and cruelty, desertion or inattention has made them pay dearly by making them anti-social. Barren women or women who have been maltreated by their families, have taken to witchcraft and sorcery, who end by committing suicide or become victims of tribal wrath and meet violent death in the hands of their own people. Excessive drinking, adultery and faithlessness are some of the important causes explaining the incidence of tribal crime.

The barometer of crime among the aboriginal population of Singbhum is showing a steady rise since the war. In one year, i.e, 1947,42 cases of murder, 13 cases of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, 33 cases of grievous hurt, 35 cases of simple hurt, 5 cases of abduction, 7 cases of rape and a crop of cases of suicide were reported to have been committed by the aboriginal and semi-aboriginal elements in the population of Singbhum. In 1946, 1590 cognisable and 756 non-cognisable crimes were reported, in 1947 there were 1566 cognisable and 1022 non-cognisable crimes. The increase of non-cognisable crimes is probably due to the free reporting of the cases before the magistrates. There were 21 false cases mostly traceable to spite or malice in 1946, a similar number was recorded in 1947. Burglary and theft, dacoity appear to have increased after the second world war and the local authorities account for this high incidence to demobilisation of the army personnel in Kolhan. Cattle lifting, poisoning and breach of trust also account for a large number of cases. In 1949, 24 cases of murder were reported of which 4 were due to intrigues, 2 to land dispute, 3 due to revenge, 4 on account of witchcraft and the rest traceable to miscellaneous causes. The influence of liquor is said to have accounted for a number of cases of murder and faithlessness of wives and witchcraft are the two other important causes for murder or suicide. In 1948-49, 34 cases of suicide were

reported, of which 14 were of males, 19 of females and only one committed by a child. The police classification puts 2 out of this 34 to incurable diseases, 6 to family bereavement (only the women were involved), 5 to domestic quarrels, 4 to frustration in love, 2 to ill-treatment by the husband and 18 cases were of a complex nature or those for which no immediate cause could be deciphered. There are a crop of deaths due to unnatural causes, drowning claimed 44 in 1948-49, snake bite accounted for 63, attack by wild beasts claimed 8, miscellaneous causes accounted for 50 deaths, all enquired into by the police. The figures put down are not absolutely reliable as we had to depend upon thana reports in most cases, but I should think they are fairly indicative of the crime situation in aboriginal Singbhum. The tribal people do not ordinarily resort to petty thefts, robbery or arson, but contacts with civilisation and with the semi-aboriginal elements have produced wants the satisfaction of which require an extra income which some of the youthful aboriginals find it easy often to get by stealing or pilferage. Even then they do not seem to have become adepts and confess their guilt at the slightest provocation.

The crime situation in Kolhan calls for an explanation. An evaluation of the motives to crime, is possible on the evidence of concrete cases. The slightest inattention or neglect, has often led healthy men and women to commit suicide, while aged people suffering from incurable diseases or from chronic poverty find in suicide an easy escape. In many tribes, excessive drinking lead to a crop of murder or assault, but not so among the Hos, and even if drinking is an auxilliary cause, touchiness and sentimentality account for most of the reported cases. Here if an explanation is needed, I should think that it can be found in the values the Hos attach to their social life. A Ho wants to live, wants to enjoy life to the lees, he is unmindful of his future, he lives in the present and he does enjoy his life. He leaves thinking to the elders, who leave it to the tribal chief, the *Deuri* and the *Deonwa*, and when he is face to face with realities he escapes from the situation or becomes dependent on others. But he does not become abject in his surrender, he does not always fit in and when he does not, he finds suicide a panacea for his ills. A few cases selected at random from the many that occur in Kolhan will explain the motive to suicide or murder among the Hos.

Naguri Kui had been to a neighbouring market and returned late in the evening, in a drunken state and begun to talk incoherently; her aunt Sombari Kui questioned her, on which she admitted to have taken poison to end her life. The village *Munda* was informed and he came with the *Dakua* and ordered her to be sent to the hospital at Tonto for treatment. She resented but had to go. She was examined by the doctor but no poison was detected in her stomach. Sombari and Naguri were returning from the hospital after the latter's discharge from there, and as they reached the outskirts of their village, Naguri asked Sombari to proceed. She said she would come by another route but Naguri did not return home and it roused suspicion in the house till Sombari had to seek her out. She discovered Naguri hanging from the branch of a *Neem* tree on a hillock by; death was due to suicide by hanging and there was no foul play discovered on enquiry. The relations and members of the village accounted for the tragedy by suggesting that Naguri was disgraced in the eyes of the people, and she could not stand the ignominy so ended her life and it was, they said, perfectly natural.

Roya, son of Jareya Ho of Bara Mirgilindi, Bar *Pir*, aged 17 years died of suicide by hanging in November last year about 7-30 P.M. On the day of the occurrence, Roya had a quarrel with his sister Chani Kui, who accused her brother of obtaining gram and fried rice in exchange for paddy without informing the parents. This led to altercation, resented much by Roya. The same night out of annoyance or grief or both, Roya committed suicide by hanging from an *Imli* tree near his house.

Janea, son of Motai Ho aged 25 years of Boliaposi village, died of suicide by hanging from the branch of a banyan tree hear his house. On the night of the occurrence the deceased had a quarrel with his parents. The mother was disgusted and went away with her children to sleep in the house of one Doboro Ho, and his father went to call Mohti *Dakua*. In the meantime, the deceased left the house. On his return Motai did not find his son but he did not worry for he thought he had gone somewhere. In the morning the body of Janea was discovered near the house, hanging from the baniyan tree.

An old man of 65, Kolai Ho, son of the late Marka Ho of Gumra *Pir*, was ailing for more than a year, he was tired of life and when the

other members were out of the house, he tied a rope to the beam of his hut and died by hanging.

The case of Rup Singh Ho was a little different. He was the son of Baud Ho of Kunkal. Lamsa, Rup's elder brother, rebuked him saying that the latter never looked after the cultivation and did not do any work for his living. He was a lazy lout, he said. At this Rup was terribly upset and left home immediately. A few days after he returned home and remained till the next day. In the evening Lamsa asked his brother to join him for meal, but he was not present when the meal was served. The brother did not worry as it was usual for him. Next morning one Dadu Ho on his way for evacuation, saw a towel lying under a mango tree and when he looked up, he saw the dead body of Rup Singh hanging from a branch of the tree.

Dashma Kui, aged 21 years, sister of Sadan Manki of Asura was in love with a man with whom she was consorting off and on. The parents did not approve of this and one day brought her back against her wishes. She did not yield to her parents' threats, and died by taking poison of *Kandil* fruits.

Janki Kui, daughter of Hirin Ho of Jaldhar was suffering from menstrual troubles and the *Deonwa* traced it to *Churail*. She was so tired of her malady that one night she committed suicide by hanging.

Kumari Kui, daughter of Birsingh Ho of Kandugutu, aged 30 years was unmarried and was living with her brothers. One day she went to collect cowdung and came home with a load of it on her head. She felt fatigued and hungry and demanded food on return. There was delay in giving her food and thereupon she became so enraged that she started abusing the members of the family and all those present on the spot. Food was served to her but she refused to take it and fasted for the night. Early morning she did not wake up as usual and others looked for her and found that she had bolted the door from inside. The door was broken open and she was discovered hanging from the roof, dead.

Sini Kui daughter of Mana Ho of Tantonagar (Kadbari *Pir*) died by drowning in the river. The deceased was known to have been suffering from epilepsy and usually she got into fits on every full moon night. On the day of occurrence she went along with other women to fetch water. She started taking her bath but her delay made others leave her alone. In the mean time, she was said to have got

into fits and dropped into water and died by drowning but local people suspect it to be a case of suicide.

On the 4th March 1949, Sadhu Tanti and Jamadar Ho of Arrahasa reported that Kendya Munda was absent from his house since the evening of the 3rd. He was not found on thursday, i.e, on the 5th, but when the wife of Shikur Ho went to the jungle for fuel, she found the dead body of Kendya hanging from a tree. She reported this to the village. The village *Munda* was called who with other villagers went to see the body. Information was sent to the *Manki* of the *Pir* but the latter did not come as the *Maghe Parav* was on and he could not leave the village. The case therefore was reported to the Police. Kendya had no enmity or quarrel with anyone and no foul play was suspected. Sadhu Tanti and Jamadar Ho reported that Kendya was absent since tuesday when the *Maghe Parav* was over in the village. Shikur's wife discovered him on thursday. There was *Maghe Parav* in the village of the *Manki* for which the latter did not come. Kendya was twentyfive years of age and used to live with his cousin brother Mangla Ho. The deceased was wearing a *gamcha* or napkin and a shirt and was hanging from the ends of his *dhoty* which belonged to him. One cotton rag was also found spread near by.

Chilgi Kui daughter of Mangla Ho stated that on tuesday she was down with fever and her husband was drunk and hence Kendya cooked food. He cooked for himself and gave her as well. Kendya told her that she was going to dance in Kurkutia. The *Maghe Parav* in the village being over, Kurkutia was the nearest, about half a mile south where the *Parav* was continuing. Since then she did not return. Mangla Ho supported the statement but gave out that about a fortnight ago, one night, Kendya Ho had entered the house of Ram-Rai Ho in a drunken state in the absence of the latter from the house. Next morning Ram Rai returned home and his wife reported to him the incident. Ram Rai threatened to assault Kendya. According to Mangla, Kendya committed suicide out of fear. Kendya was a bachelor and used to live with his cousin brother Mangla and the property was joint. Jano Kui daughter of Ram Rai Ho said that Kendya had entered her hut in the night before in a drunken state. She had informed her husband about it but did not know what happened afterwards. Ram Rai had gone to Gua in search of a job. Motai Ho pleaded ignorance of the antecedents narrated above.

On 7.4.48. the house of the Kunja Tanty caught fire and he suspected that the deceased Sikur Ho had set fire to his house. His house burnt down to ashes and he said that he would do the same thing to the house of Sikur. Thereafter, Kunja set fire to the house of deceased Sikur and while the latter was going to his cattle-shed to protect his cattle, Kunja Tanty struck him with a *falsa*. Deceased Sikur Ho died on the spot. Sonai Kui widow of the deceased and Jonga Kui, his daughter, went to infrom the *Munda* about the murder and the *Munda* came to the spot. The *Munda* found, on reaching the spot, that the houses of Sikur and Kunja had burnt down and that Sikur was lying dead with an injury on his back. The *Munda* sent the *Dakua* to the *Manki* to communicate the news to him. The house of Kunja is close to the house of deceased Sikur and the village Dhurirta proper is about a mile from these two houses. According to the *Munda* there was a long-standing quarrel between Kunja Tanty and the deceased Sikur over a fowl. The *Munda* did not find Kunja in his house and learnt Kunja had gone to Chaibassa. He followed him to Chaibassa and found that Kunja Tanty was at the P.S. In the meanwhile Kunja Tanty came by bus to Chaibassa and while he was taking his breakfast in the shop of a confectioner there, P.W. Mahesh Singh, a C.I.D. constable who was also there, learnt that Kunja was speaking publicly that he had committed a murder in his village. Mahesh Singh thereupon took Kunja to the D.I. of Police and thereafter took him to the Kolhan P.S. where he submitted a written report.

One 20.1.49, the Pargana *Manki* of Gada-Rajabasa came to the police station with Deogi Kui and reported to the effect that on the same date he was informed by Nandu *Dakua* of Rai Hatu that Hadi Ho had assaulted Deogi Kui with *tangi* and injured her. On this the *Manki* came to the spot and made inquiry. He got the blood-stained earth and bloodstained *tangi* from the place of occurrence. Hadi Ho had assualted Deogi Kui with a *tangi* on 9.1.49 at about 5 P.M. suspecting her to be a witch and he could not be traced. She had wounds at several places upon her body and was sent to the hospital for treatment. Hadi is the cousin brother of the deceased. He did not know anything regarding previous grudge between Hadi and the deceased. Balram *Munda* the cousin brother of both Hadi and Deogi Kui, when examined, said after the occurrence on the same day, Hadi Ho went to Balaram *Munda* and informed him that he had

injured Deogi Kui with *tangi* as she was a witch. The latter came to the spot and found Deogi Kui lying in an injured condition near her house. Deogi told him that Hadi had assaulted her with a *tangi*. in Hadi's house which he produced before the *Manki*. On examining her mother, Mathe Kui and brother Chand Singh Ho, both said, 'that they were at *Khalihan* on the day of the occurrence. They said that there was previous enmity between Deogi and Hadi. Hadi was suspecting her as witch. Deogi Kui expired on 23.2.49 at 4 A.M. in the hospital. Wounds were inflicted upon her by some hard blunt as well as by a cutting weapon. Death was from shock and hamerage.

The Kolhan Superintendent visited the spot and found that there was a *Kutcha* road running to south-north direction by the side of Deogi's house. The occurrence took place on the narrow village land. Hadi and Deogi have common courtyard, it was found that blood stained earth were scrapped from the place of occurrence.

Deogi died after recording the followings declaration, "Hadi Ho son of Joto Ho of Rai Hatu village Kolhan, is my cousin, son of my eldest uncle, assaulted me as he suspected me to be a witch. Hadi struck me with a *tangi*."

Accused Hadi Ho is absconding.

On the 14th March last year the mother of Arjun Purty expired. Arjun Purty and Dadu Gardi Purty were two brothers. These two brothers had cut a Doka tree from the *parti* land to take wood for the purpose of covering the grave of their mother. Some portion of the tree was left at the spot. On the morning of 15.3.49, Arjun Purty, deceased Dadu Gardi, Ram etc., went to fetch the remaining portion of the wood. When they were under the tree Ganga Ram appeared and asked them not to take the wood. Thereupon, the deceased and others left the wood and went to the house of the *Munda* to inform him. The *Munda* said he was proceeding to the spot. He advised them to inform also the *Dakua* of the *Manki* which Dadu Gardi and others did. They colleted a mango tree near the house of one Pramanik, and proceeded to the place from where the tree was cut. Ganga Ram

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P. S. Police Station
P. W. Prosecution Witness.

claimed the tree as his but Dadu Gardi claimed it as belonging to him. Thereupon, Ganga Ram kicked Dadu Gardi. Arjun Purty caught Ganga Ram by his legs and fell on a piece of stone sustaining injuries thereby. Ganga Ram got up and caught hold of Ram by the neck but the *Dakua* with the *Manki* and the *Munda* intervened and separated the victim form the assailant. In the meanwhile the wife of Ganga Ram viz., Mandodari Kui brought a *gupti* from her house and Ganga Ram took it from her. He chased Dadu Gardi Purty who ran but Dubraj and Pandu blocked the passage of the fleeing Dadu Gardi from the front. When Dadu Gardi was thus stopped from flight, Ganga Ram caught him up and ran his *gupti* into the chest of Dadu Gardi. Not satisfied with this feat of cruelty, the assailant Ganga Ram violently jerked the *gupti* inside the body of the victim while he took it out from his body. In other words it means that while taking out the *gupti* from the body of the victim, Ganga Ram wanted to make the wound thus caused more extensive with a view to kill the deceased. Gangaram then shouted for the *Munda* who fled and then he hit the *Dakua* of the *Manki*. Lagiram Ho who was also on the side of the victim was chased by Ganga Ram and in another *tola* he drove his *gupti* in the belly of Lagiram Ho causing a wound through and through; shortly after the injury was caused to these persons, Dadu Gardi expired. In the afternoon of 16.3.49 the *Manki* started for the spot reaching there in the morning of 17.3.49. He tried to recover the *gupti* with which the killing was resorted to but in vain. He, however, could recover its case including four pieces of *Doka* wood i.e. three from near the house of the accused Ganga Ram and one from near the house of Pandu. Subsequently the dead body was post-mortemed by the Civil Surgeon, Chaibassa. The injured were examined. The witnesses were examined by the S.I. of Police and finally Dubraj Pandu, Gangaram and Mandodari were charge-sheeted. It is stated that it is customary in the *Purty* community that when a tree is cut for covering the grave of a deceased person the tree thereafter becomes the property of the person so cutting it and none else can take any portion of that tree. The trying magistrate summarised the prosecution story as follows :—

On 13.4.48 Gopi Tanti, husband of Darimba Tanty was returning home from the house of one *Ojha* after a *puja* to cure him. The chaukidar, Sukra Tanti, since dead, raised an alarm that Gopi Tanti was

being killed. Darimba Tantin went up to her husband and found that he was lying with several injuries on his person. The deceased died at the spot but before he expired he told Darimba that Dumba Ho had killed him and he was dying. Thereupon Darimba raised alarm on which Debi and several others came. The deceased owed Rs. 10/- to the accused. Debi Ho and Sukra Tanti went to the house of the *Munda* (P.W.3) and told him that Dumba had killed Gopi Tanti. The *Munda* went with these persons to the place of occurrence and found Gopi Tanti lying dead with several injuries on his person. He sent Hurdub *Dakua* the same night to inform the *Manki*. Next morning he sent Soma Ho to catch Dumba. During the night of occurrence, inspite of his searches the Dumba could not be found at home. Dumba came to grips with Soma Ho in which both of them received injuries. Dumba was arrested and when the *Manki* came he was handed over to the latter. Dumba pointed out a place in the bed of the river Kongira from where he took out a *falsa*,two arrows and bow and handed them over to the *Manki*. Dumba said that because the deceased did not return Rs 80/- which he owed to him, he had killed the latter The *Manki* took Dumba, the articles recovered and the dead body to the Kolhan P.S. where he submitted a written report.

The motive is said to be that the deceased owed some money which he would not return. Quarrels leading to murders on such account are common in the Kolhan area.

In continuation to this, it was also reported that the wife of Dumba Ho was sleeping with her child and her husband went out to ease himself when Gopi Tanty visited her house and enquired about her husband. She told him that he had gone out. At this Gopi in a drunken state wanted to molest her. She abused him saying that he was old and of another caste and yet he wanted to outrage her modesty. She got up, in the meantime her husband returned and enquired what was the matter. She reported to him, at which her husband abused Gopi. The latter gave a *lathi* blow to her husband. Her husband went inside the house to bring his weapon, and Gopi took to his heels. Her husband followed him armed with, she said, "a weapon she could not name, as it was dark". Her husband returned home and slept quietly but did not tell her anything about what happened.

CHAPTER X

ROOTS OF RELIGION

The tradition of the Hos regarding the creation of the world, and the origin of the human race has been described as follows in Colonel Tickell's account of the tribe published in Vol. IX of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, (Old Series) p. 797. *Oteborom* and *Sing-bonga* were self-created. They made the earth with grass and trees. Next they created animals, first those that man domesticated and afterwards the wild ones. A boy and a girl were then created and put together in a cave to people the world. Finding them too innocent to give any hope of progeny, *Sing-bonga* taught them the preparation of *illi* or rice-beer which excites the passions, and in course of time, they brought forth twelve sons and twelve daughters. When the first parents had produced these children, *Sing-bonga* prepared a feast of flesh, of buffaloes, bullocks, goats, sheep, pigs, fowls and vegetables, and making the brothers and sisters pair off asked them to choose the kind of food they wanted for their sustenance before starting out into the world, The first and second pair took bullock and buffaloes' flesh, and they originated the Hos and the Bhumij, next took the vegetables only and became the progenitors of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. Others took goat and fish and from them are the Sudras. One pair took shell fish and became Bhuiyas, two pairs took pigs and were the ancestors of the Santhals. One pair got nothing and seeing this the Hos gave them of their surplus, and the descendants of these became the Ghasis, who were the menials in Kol villages, and are supported even to-day by the Hos in Kolhan.

A different version of the story runs as follows : *Sing-bonga* is self-created, and he created the earth from a lump of clay (*hasa*). To people the earth, he made it habitable by creating all kinds of trees, plants, herbs and grass, rivers, and tanks and birds and beasts of all sizes and descriptions. And the 'horohonko' or the sons of man were born of the egg of a bird, *Hur* or swan. Out of a swan's egg

came forth a boy and girl ; they were the first human beings by whom the earth was peopled. But this creation did not last long. *Singbonga* was some how offended by his own creation and he became enraged. In his fury he created an atmosphere of blazing flames. When all life was thus destroyed, *Sing-bonga* saw the folly of his fury and repentance seized upon him. He then began to seek out traces of life and approached all the lesser gods to find out if they had hidden any soul. At last, *Nage-bonga* or the water deity, came with a pair of living souls, which she kept under the sheet of water, a brother and sister, and with this pair, *Singbonga* decided to recreate the world of man. As the pair were consanguineously related, as brother and sister, sexual intercourse between them could not be natural, so what else could the High God do, but to offer them *Handia*, an intoxicating beverage and the intoxication and abandon, effected through this liquor made sexual intimacy between brother and sister possible, and the Hos were created.

It is indeed difficult to analyse the religious ideas of the Munda speaking tribes in Chota Nagpur, in view of the culture-contact they have had for nearly a century with Christian Missions, and from times immemorial with their Hindu neighbours. This has inevitably led to a miscegenation of culture and the borrowing of many traits, even though we admit that the latter have undergone modifications in accordance with the spirit of their own culture and the pattern of their social structure.

The following table brings out certain facts about the religious life of the tribes mentioned above. At a glance it shows that all these tribes have been more or less influenced by Hinduism and Christianity, in greater or less degree, according to the districts inhabited by them. The most remarkable increase in Christianity is shown by Mundas, the Oraons, and the Kharias. These tribes are found mostly in the Ranchi district. The relations between the Hindu landlords and the aboriginal *raiyats* have never been satisfactory, and the detailed account of the many troubles and insurrections given by Roy in his monograph on the Mundas will explain the increase in the number of Christians among the tribal population of the district. The small number of Christians among the Santhals and the Hos, particularly the latter is also explainable. While the Mundas had to suffer from a hundred and one ills at the hands of irresponsible landlords, the

Hos and the Santhals migrated to areas where they could live in comparative peace, and extend their settlements on to virgin land free from exacting landlords and land-grabbing middlemen. The Hos occupy Kolhan which is a compact area inhabited exclusively by themselves, and enjoying a form of protective administration.The Santhals

Tribe	Name of the year	Actual Strength	Number Tribal	Per Mille Returned as Hindu	Christian
Ho	1911	420,179	854	143	3
	1921	441,424	885	112	3
	1931	523,158	748	248	4
Munda	1941	490,498	655	181	164
	1921	460,319	522	274	204
	1931	549,764	459	298	298
Santhal	1911	1,407,316	801	801	6
	1921	1,477,471	617	377	6
	1931	1,712,133	659	342	8
Kharia	1911	133,657	505	283	212
	1921	124,531	362	364	274
	1931	146,037	211	353	436
Oraon	1911	587,411	719	89	192
	1921	566,383	619	170	211
	1931	637,111	423	349	228

have spread far beyond their original confines, and are distributed over a very wide area. Thus the Hos and the Santhals have not felt much need for the assistance of the missonaries in their struggle for economic emancipation, which have contributed much to the growth of Christianity in other areas. The Census Report of Bihar and Orissa (1931) point out that in districts where the Santhals are dominant, they have maintained their tribal religion and have not felt the need of returning themselves as Hindus, while in those areas where they are in a minority they have not been able to maintain their identity. A similar explanation is possible of conversions to Christianity. Where they live in compact groups, and are superior in number, their tribal organisation has remained strong, and conversion to Christianity is not appreciable. The typical case is afforded by the Hos. They still maintain their tribal organisation, the traditional beliefs are still regarded as sacred, though there is less rigid adherence to tribal customs and rites due to Cultural contact, and Christianity has not asserted itself in Kolhan. The Christian Hos are found mostly in the adjoining States, and as has been mentioned in the Census Reports of B. and O., 1931 (p.257) 80 p.c. of these are to be found in the Gangpur State.

We also find from the foregoing table that the process of Hinduisation is steadily proceeding, and in some tribes the proportion of Hindus to the total strength of the tribe has nearly doubled itself in 20 years. Thus among the Hos, there were 143 Hindus per mille in 1911 while in 1931, the number was 248. In areas predominantly aboriginal, there is a movement away from Hinduism rather than towards it. This, however, does not apply to Kolhan, where from all accounts it is known that there is, among the higher classes, a distinct and decisive tendency towards Hinduism and against Christianity, even if it may not be admitted by the people themselves. The social position of Christian converts in Kolhan till recently was not enviable, and they were treated with contempt by the Hos. There is therefore little chance of any further conversion. There are a few influential Christian headmen and *Mankis* in Kolhan, but their authority and prestige are derived from their political influence, and the recognition that they have had from the local administration. Their opinion in social matters carries little weight with people of their own village, or *Pir*, and they do not interfere in affairs which are purely of *Killi* interest, or which involve traditional rules of pains and penalties.

Though the isolation of the Hos and their protected form of administration have secured to them many of their traditional cultural traits, yet it must be admitted that their cultural life, particularly their religion, has been influenced to a large extent by Hindu examples, and to a small extent by Christian ones. The analysis of the names of the Ho *Bongas* will explain how far this process of cultural contact has influenced their essential beliefs, and how far they only touch the fringe of their religious life. The principal beneficent *Bongas* are not many. *Sing-bonga* or the Supreme God, *Nage-bonga* or the river goddess, supposed to be the wife of the former (according to some, *Chando-bonga* is his wife), *Dessauli*, or the god presiding over the *Hatu*, *Marang-bonga*, *Disum-marang-bonga*, or *Marang-buru*, the god of the ancestral home of the Hos, which according to Bamia Babonga, *Deonwa* of Konslaposi, was on the top of a mountain, complete the list. More details about these gods will be given later on. The malignant and maleficent *Bongas* are practically innumerable, and they differ according to locality. In Konslaposi, Kotgarh and surrounding areas, the following list of maleficent *Bongas* was collected, though it is certainly not exhaustive:—

*Kar-bongako:—

1. Suni Kar,
2. Rahu Kar,
3. Dinda Kar
4. Chuhar Kar.

Gara-bonga or Gara Satamai (Nai Bhagawati of the Oriyas)

Buru-bongako:—

Spirits residing on hills

Bagea-bonga:—

The tiger spirit.

Jugni-bongako:—

1. Baram-bonga
2. Churdu-bonga

*Hankar-bongako:—

1. Bisai Chandi
2. Chinta Dain
3. Kaltud
4. Barma Chandi
5. Ranga Chandi
6. Maikudra
7. Ranga Kani

Most of the malignant *Bongas* of the Hos are not indigenous to them, but have their counterparts among the neighbouring Oriyas: as for example, *Gara Satamai* is the same as the Nai Bhagawati of the Oriyas, from whom they have evidently borrowed it. Their propitiation is not the monopoly of the village *Deuri* who is the priest of the Hos. It is usually performed by a *Deonwa* who may belong to any other tribe, or may even be a *Diku*. *Kar* is not a Ho word, it is the same word as *Kal*, the destroyer, and is associated with 'time.' The word *Kali* which signifies the goddess of that name in popular Hinduism is derived from the same word *Kal*. *Suni Kar*, *Rahu Kar* are none other than the planets *Sani* (saturn) and *Rahu*, known to the Hindus as *Kal*. *Gara Satamai* is perhaps a name for the spirit presiding over tanks and ponds (i.e., stagnant pools), and *Satamai* is a corruption of *Sat-ma* or step-mother, the real mother being *Nage-*

* Not of Hos,

bonga, the river goddess. The word *Chandi* (another name for Kali) is taken from the Hindus, particularly by the Oriyas, for example, *Bisai Chandi* (poisonous), *Ranga Chandi* (blood thirsty or red); *Chinta Dain* and *Kaltud* (a corruption of Kalketu), *Jugini-bonga* is none other than *Jugini*, who with her counter part *Dakini* is said to accompany *Kali* or *Chandi*. Thus it is that most of the names of the malignant spirits of Kolhan, are foreign to the Hos.

If one examines the beneficent *Bongas* of the Hos, one finds that they are the names of natural objects believed to exercise a beneficent influence on their life and happiness, and to them as such, the Hos offer periodical prayers and offerings as a part of their thanksgiving service. The sun, the moon, the river and the mountain, are the principal *Bongas* of the Hos, besides, *Dessauli* which is the usual village godling of the Mundas, as well as of the Hos. *Dessauli* has always a fixed abode which is situated somewhere outside the village boundary, the *Dessauli* of Mohulsai, also of the neighbouring village, is situated in a grove opposite the Circuit House, Chaibassa, near a tank. It is usually under a tree, where the Hos place a flat stone slab on which *Dessauli* is believed to rest. The tree is tabooed to the Hos. No one may pluck leaves of the tree, or cut its branches, fell it or plough the land under it. *Dessauli* is the most important god of the Hos, and has practically replaced all other beneficent *Bongas* except *Sing-bonga*, who is identified with the Supreme Creator. *Dessauli* appears to be a forest deity, and his consort, *Jahira-buru*, is conceived as the spirit of the village grove or *jahira*. Both are beneficent, and every village knows the place of these two *Bongas*.

Sing-bonga is the principal god of the Hos, for he created them. The version of the story of their genesis runs as follows: *Sing-bonga* was offended with his creation and created an atmosphere of blazing flames in order to destroy all life on earth. *Nage-bonga*, unknown to any one, kept two souls, a brother and a sister under a vast sheet of water. This fact was discovered by the crow who informed *Sing-bonga* that there were still some souls left. *Sing-bonga* promised a fowl, a buffalo, a bullock and a goat to *Nage-bonga* in exchange for the souls, for he had realised the ill consequence of his fury and wished to recreate men on earth. When *Nage-bonga* refused, *Sing-bonga* offered her a pig, and promised not to destroy the two souls. At last *Nage-bonga* agreed, and thus *Nage-bonga* is believed by the

Hos to be fond of pigs, and offerings of pigs are made to her on important occasions. The rest of the story has already been told.

Nage-bonga or the river deity is a very sympathetic *Bonga*. She is known in some parts of Kolhan as the wife of *Sing-bonga*. She is very fond of pigs, and the Hos offer pigs, fowls, turmeric and eggs to her. Wherever there is *Nage-bonga*, water never dries up. *Haldi* or turmeric is given to her for her bath, and also eggs, because the shells are meant to contain water. When *Nage-bonga* is offended people suffer from conjunctivitis, and diseases of the ear. Hydrocele is caused by *Nage-bonga*. She is believed to have some place of abode inside the river. As it is seldom known where she actually dwells, the Hos do not disturb the water by throwing stones or refuse into it. Bamia Babonga, the *Deonwa* of Bantra *Pir*, believes that when *Nage-bonga* is offended she kills the offender by shooting him with an arrow at midnight. This belief, however, was not corroborated by the other *Deonwas*, I had met.

The form of *Dessauli* as conceived by the Hos varies in different parts of Kolhan. As the interpretation of the size, shape and form is the monopoly of the village *Deuris* and *Deonwas* in Kolhan, and as much of their beliefs is influenced by their knowledge of other religions, the *Deuris* differ in their interpretation. In Bantra and Kotgarh *Pirs*, it is the usual belief among the Hos that *Dessauli* appears in dreams and whenever people dream of a man on horseback, or a European or a man with Khaki turban, they know that *Dessauli* is offended and demands placation. *Dessauli* has a fixed abode, either within the village, or outside it. He is usually regarded as a benevolent deity and is believed to protect the Hos from the ravages of diseases and epidemics and from those evil spirits which are foreign to them. *Dessauli* gives rains, averts hail and storms, and is also the god of harvests. The Hos offer periodic sacrifices to *Dessauli*. The *Deuri* offers a hen and a cock during the *Maghe* festival and during the *Hero* festival every family may offer a fowl or subscribe to a he-goat to be sacrificed. When epidemics or diseases prevail in Kolhan, the *Deuri* offers a hen, a cock, a goat, (a buffalo, and a pig) as revealed in dream.

There is much difference of opinion about the place of *Marang-buru* in the Ho pantheon. In some villages it is called *Marang-bonga*, in others *Marang-buru*, while *Katumarang* and *Disum-bonga* are other

names for the same deity. Katumarang is the god of a few *Killis* in Kolhan, viz Simki, Laguri. Babonga, Chatomba, Chatar, Kora, Jirai and Herai, who do not worship *Marang-bonga*. It is said that when water was drained off from a tank, a knife was found and it was hung up on the eves of the house. At night the man got a dream in which *Marang-buru* asked him and also the village to worship the knife or *Katni-Marang*. Similarly, *Purty Killi* which is the largest *Killi* in Kolhan having more than seven exogamous subgroups, now worships *Disum-Marang-bonga* which is the same as *Marang-buru*. *Marang-buru* is not worshipped at any festival. When the Hos dream that somebody on the back of an elephant appears in the village, or somebody is attacked by a buffalo, they believe that offerings should be made to *Marang-buru*. The same mode of worship as in the case of *Dessauli* is prescribed and sometimes *Marang-bonga* is worshipped along with *Dessauli*. It has also a fixed abode (to the north of) in the village, and worship is made facing north. Some say that they have a faint recollection of their ancestral home where this mountain lies. It is believed to be perpetually covered with snow, which may suggest the Himalyan origin of the Hos. The worship of *Marang-buru* as a Ho deity may be an early creed with the Hos., for there is little unanimity about the identity of this god, except that it is a huge (*Marang*) mountain, covered with snow situated somewhere to the north of Kolhan.

Before we describe the malevolent *Bongas* of the Hos, we should distinguish between the village *Deuri* and the *Deonwa*. This is significant because the roles of these two ministers differ. The *Deuri* is almost always a Ho. In those villages where the *Deuri* is a non-Ho, he is also the *Deonwa* of the village. The *Deonwa* may or may not be a Ho and he may belong to any caste or tribe living in the village. There may be more than one *Deonwa* in a village but there is only one *Deuri*. The *Deuri* is born, while the *Deonwa* is usually made. The difference is due to the fact that the *Deuri* is entrusted only with the worship of the benevolent deities, who are few in number. His duty is more or less the offering of a thanksgiving to the *Dessauli*, and occasionally to *Sing-bonga*, *Nage-bonga* and *Disum* or *Marang-bonga*. The last is not very much invoked by the Hos. But the *Deonwa* may have to deal with a legion of spirits, malevolent and mischievous, who interfere with every department of Ho life. Most of the

spirits which the *Deonwa* has to propitiate, are of foreign origin, and new ones are created. When the *Deuri* worships the benevolent gods for a particular disease or some material loss to an individual family, the *Deonwa* will propitiate a malevolent spirit, and both claim to satisfy the god or the spirit with equal success.

In some villages, the *Deuri* overshadows the *Deonwa* but in most cases the latter is more powerful than the former. The resourcefulness of the latter and the more definite character of his prognosis make him easily a favourite, and this is why some *Deuris* to-day have taken also the role of *Deonwas* to retain their clientele. The result has been a blending of functions, and a position that obscures the real distinction between these two village functionaries. The method of divination practised by the *Deuri* and the *Deonwa* is nearly the same, but the manner of propitiation and worship remains distinct. The Hos have kept their indigenous mode of worship intact so far as their benevolent deities are concerned, but new methods and processes have found ready access with the *Deonwas* in ministering to the needs of these borrowed spirits.

To take one example, the propitiation of *Kar-bonga* appears to be different from the mode of worshipping the village *Dessauli*, or even the *Marang-buru*. *Kar* is propitiated when any body dreams of a magician or a Mahomedan. The *Deonwa* offers molasses, *ghee*, milk, curd and honey, sandal-paste, flowers, and an oil lamp. A black or red cock, or a black and young she-goat are sacrificed to *Kar*. An effigy of straw is made, and is thrown out of the village after propitiation. The manner of worship indicated above resembles a Hindu ritual, with *Pancha Gabya*, *Chandan*, and *Bali* or sacrifice.

When again, the *Deonwa* dreams of a snake, a crocodile or a fish, he believes that *Gara Satamai* is offended. She is propitiated in the following way: A *Gandu* or stool is placed on the ground, and seven small earthen pots of water are placed on it. The pots are painted with vermilion and twigs of *Gulanchi* flower are put in the mouth of each of the pots. Offerings of a cock or a hen are then made to *Gara Satamai* by the *Deonwa*.

When they dream of a tiger, they believe that *Bagia-bonga* requires to be propitiated. This appears to be the tiger spirit worshipped by all the Munda speaking tribes of India, as also by Hindu castes in Bihar and Bengal. In the latter province, the cult is known as

that of *Dakshin Rai*. There is some confusion about the identity of this *Bonga*. The *Deuri* also worships the tiger spirit, but in association with *Buru-bonga* which is the jungle spirit. As the tiger is the chief dreaded element in the forest, the association is not remote.

When the *Deonwa* dreams of a trader carrying merchandise on the back of a bullock, he will tell you that the *Baram-bonga* is offended, and needs propitiation. *Baram-bonga* is responsible for small-pox and cattle diseases. The association of small pox with cattle is common in Kolhan, and offering of a black hen, or a red cock is made by the village Ahir. The Ahir keeps the head of the sacrificed animal, and the body is taken by the Hos who cook the meat and eat it.

The roles of *Churdu* and *Hankar-bongas* are also known through dreams. If they dream of a *pipul* tree, *Churda* needs propitiation under it. The usual requisites for worship are turmeric, vermilion, *Arua* rice, *Gulanchi* flower, a black hen and a red cock. When dogs or cats appear in dreams, it is believed that the *Hankar-bonga* is displeased, and must be propitiated by the *Deonwa* with stones, burnt charcoal, *Gulanchi* flower, vermilion, a red cock or a black hen, and a peacock's feather.

How a tribe adopts an alien god, assimilates it to its culture and changes the rites and usages to suit its own tribal pattern, will be found in the adoption of the *Manasha* cult in Kolhan. The use of amulets and charms and the skill of the *Deonwa* in eradicating the poison of snake-bite by chants, hymns and massaging, were considered sufficient in earlier days to cure snake-bites and the snakes are abundant in the hills and woods of Kolhan. The difficulty of communications in those days was great, so that deaths from snake-bites could not be reported throughout the length and breadth of Kolhan. Even if these indigenous prescriptions were insufficient to protect the lives of the Hos, who were victims to such accidents, the need of a change of procedure was not much felt. The failures of the *Deonwa* were taken as the result of the deceased's own acts or of his violation of certain important taboos. To-day each case of failure is reported to the headquarters station of the district, and the news spreads like lightning all over Kolhan. Thus the insufficiency of their own methods has encouraged a number of people to adopt the Hindu goddess *Manasha*, who is believed to preside over snakes. A number of young men have learnt the spells and prayers to this

goddess as a protection against snake-bites, and as a method of driving the poison from the system. The *Guru* or teacher is usually an Oriya *Ojha*, who teaches spectacular methods of invoking the goddess, and to-day there are a number of centres in Kolhan where these *Mantras* are taught to the disciples whose number is rapidly increasing. In the heart of urban life, in the village of Dumbisai, which is two furlongs from the Chaibassa town, Gono used to teach his disciples the secrets of this cult, and the latter included the second son of Babu Dulu Manki, sometime aboriginal member of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council. Every fortnight, two days before the *Amaosa* or the new moon, Gono made an enclosure in his courtyard under a big tamarind tree and sat in meditation there. His forehead was painted lavishly with vermilion, and on either side of him were plates of *Arua* rice with molasses, and banana cut into small pieces. A few leaf cups of *Illi* were also placed along with the offerings. On all sides of the enclosure, his disciples sat with folded hands to listen to the weird and unintelligible *Mantras* which are nothing but names of Hindu gods and goddesses with their modes of worship, the details of the offerings of which they are fond, and stories of the assistance they have rendered to this or that individual in times of calamity. They are muttered and sung in such a sing-song tune that very few could understand that they were mostly in Bengali spoken in Oriya style. After three to four hours of meditation and the recitation of the hymns which were sung by his disciples in chorus, Gono fell prostrate before the small mound of earth which represented the goddess *Manasha* and suddenly the situation outside the enclosure developed into one of great activity. The disciples began to shake their heads, foam at the mouth and knock their heads against the wicker fence, some receiving nasty cuts. Then three or four of the disciples took canes in their hands (which were kept near the mound within the enclosure), and began to strike each other. It was a piteous sight to see Manki Saheb's son being beaten mercilessly by his co-disciples, for he was not yet possessed as the others were. This young man (i.e., Dulu Manki's son) was the *de facto Manki* of his *Pir*, as his father was old. The participation of the *Manki's* son in such rites indicated the attitude of the people, the masses and the classes in Kolhan, towards the adoption and assimilation of alien gods, although it is apparent that this *modus operandi* is characteristic of their cultural pat-

tern. Gono gathered round him a large number of disciples in Dumbisai, mostly young men and children. People from neighbouring villages, such as Sikursai, also flocked to his fold. Gono's disciples, after being tested in the way described above, tied a black string round their arms on the day of the new moon and thereby believed to be immune from snake-bite. Considering the incidence of unnatural death due to snake bite in Kolhan, the cult of *Manasha* must have appealed to the youth, and the spectacular recital of the cult, did much to strengthen beliefs in its efficacy. But Gono did not continue his weird rites for long, and he disappeared into oblivion.

The synoptic interpretation of dreams as a means of explaining the role of the gods seems to be of recent origin. It aims at a greater definiteness and exactitude, and thus is traceable to the influence of the *Dikus* all round, particularly, to the Oriya Brahmins, who have gained much popularity with the higher classes. The nature of the dreams, such as meeting a Mohomedan, a European, a peon, somebody on the back of an elephant, or a trader carrying merchandise on the back of a bullock, suggests that the association of their gods with the foreign elements in the population is not accidental, but is engendered by a habitual mental process which attributes all their miseries to the presence of the *Dikus*. In some cases, however, similarity of experience is evident between the Hos and the *Dikus*, as when small-pox is associated with a merchant carrying merchandise on the back of a bullock. This is a common belief in popular Hinduism, and an epidemic of small-pox is preceded by such dreams.

The adoption of alien gods by the Hos has forced their own tribal gods into the background, although it is true that they still have respect for them. It is also a fact that the Hos pay more attention to malignant powers than to traditionally beneficent powers. Thus *Sing-bonga*, *Nage-bonga* *Marang-bonga* and *Chando-bonga* do not receive as much worship or as many offerings and sacrifies as do the *Chandis* or the *Hankar-bongas*.

Much confusion has arisen in recent years concerning the significance of the two words, *Buru* and *Bonga*. Both are Munda words, and in common usage they have a very wide application. Sometimes they have been interchanged. A Ho may say, *Marang buru* meaning the god of the mountain, though correctly speaking, he should say, *Marang-buru-bonga*. *Buru* in Munda languages means a hill, big

or small. Thus *Bicha-buru*, *Jhandi-buru*, *Lutu-buru*, *Budha-buru*, *Kulpu-buru* are names of hills in Kolhan. Dr Campbell in his Santhal-English Dictionary, gives three meanings of the word *Buru*, viz.,) (1) mountain, (2) a spirit or object of worship, (3) a religious festival of the semi-Hinduised Bhuiyas. As the last meaning, it has very limited application ; the festival being a local one, it may be dismissed. Dr Campbell writes, "The primary meaning of *Buru* is the same as that of *Bonga*. The two words are often joined together, as *Bonga-buru*, *Bonga* being a gloss on *Buru*." S. C. Roy also uses the word *Buru* to mean a spirit. He writes, "The original significance of the word *Buru* was god and in that sense the name would apply to *Sing-bonga* (who was the original *Marang-buru* or the great god). But this sense of the word is now obsolete. And the name *Buru-bonga* is applied to a spirit which resides in the hills. Roy reiterated this significance of the word *Buru* in an article on 'Totemism and Religion', (B. and O. Research Society Journal, June, 1925). The Rev. P. O. Bodding in a paper on, "The Meaning of the words *Buru* and *Bonga* in Sonthali." ((B. and O. Res. Soc. Journal, March, 1926), disagrees with this double significance of the word *Buru*, and after analysing the uses of the words, *Buru* and *Bonga*, comes to the following conclusion : "The result of the examination of these two words is, that *Bonga* is the common name for a spirit of the spirit world and that *Buru* really and originally means a mountain but may in circumstances be used metaphorically for the same spirits, viz., the spirits supposed to have their residence on hills and mountains and those that are worshipped by the village priest as distinguished from those that are worshipped by the priest who officiates for the village in connection with the *Bongas*, i.e., on the outskirts and the village boundaries., Dr. Campbell further writes about the significance of the word *Buru*, "that the modern word *Bonga* has so entirely superseded the more ancient word *Buru* that the present generation of Sonthals are ignorant of its real significance." It is difficult to understand why the word *Bonga* is called a modern word. The Rev. P.O. Bodding says, "The word *Bonga* is not an Aryan word ; a similar word may be found in some other languages (Dravidian) but the connection is doubtful. It seems just as possible to take it to be a genuine Sonthal word." The Hos use the word *Bonga* to mean all spirits and powers that move in air, water or land, and the word *Buru* to denote hills, or ranges of

hills. It is also true that they sometimes use the word *Buru* to mean a *Bonga*, just as *Maraug-buru* or *Jahira-buru*, but they can always separate the idea of spirit from that of the hill, as when they mean only a hill and not a hill spirit. Most of the big hills in Kolhan are known as seats of powers, and approach to them without sufficient protection (which may be in the form of amulets charms or promises of sacrifice) signals danger. It is evident that the very name of a *Buru* reminds them of a *Bonga* associated with or presiding over the hill, and thus the popular significance of *Buru* has come to be established. *Buru* is also meant to signify jungle, not every jungle, but those that are on the tops of hills, so that when they offer sacrifice to *Buru-bonga* on the *Marang Parav* day of the *Maghe* festival, they mean the forest spirit that resides on hills. The transition in meaning from *Buru* as mountain or hill, to *Buru* as forest, is not very difficult. Hoffman writes, "The original Mundas lived in the vicinity of the Himalayas. It is natural for them to have looked upon those majestic heights as the abode of the Creator. Hence the word *Buru* came to denote divinity itself, and subsequently according to the genius of the language to denote many cognate ideas such as to acknowledge as god or to adore."

The word *Bonga* requires some explanation, as I believe that the word spirit does not convey the real meaning. It is indiscriminately used by these tribes to denote all sorts of powers or spirits. The Rev. P. O. Bodding writes, "All the spirites worshipped by the Sonthals are called *Bonga*." S. C. Roy translates *Bonga* as deity as well as spirit. He writes, "The idea that the Mundas are worshippers of malevolent spirit appears to have arisen from confounding these two classes of deities who are the *Manita-bongas* or gods to be worshipped with a class of spirits who require to be appeased or propitiated. This latter class are indeed no gods at all nor are they believed by the Mundas to be such."Thus we find that the word *Bonga* is a generic name, and is applied indiscriminately to refer to gods and spirits. The real meaning of *Bonga* is a power, a force, and the religion of the Hos may be called *Bongaism*. This power is so distinctly conceived by the Hos, that the belief in particular spirits may be destroyed without affecting their belief in *Bongaism*. If a tree is regarded as the seat of a *Bonga*, the Hos dare not fell it, or cut its branches, but if any *Diku* or any member of a different tribe fells it, he may not feel aggrieved for the

Bonga cannot be destroyed, it unites with the larger unit which is also *Bonga*.

Hoffman explains *Bonga* as a being beyond the reach of sense-perception. He further explains by saying that '*Bongas* are those living beings which though firmly believed as existing and influencing us for good or for evil, can neither be seen nor heard nor perceived ; though fluttering about everywhere they are, so far as sense-perception goes, just as if they were not,' A Ho recognises the existence of a world of *Bongas*, but this world is not away from his own, it cuts across his own, and he realises the presence of this world in his every-day life though he can not express this association in terms of space, distance, height, or depth. When a Ho dies, he goes to this world, he is '*bangaia, to die is 'bangai jana,' to live is 'menaia.*' It is not a transformation or a metamorphosis, it is only a reversion, a union with the world of which it was a part, a fraction of *Bonga*. The power which we have called *Bonga* is possessed by every individual, every animal, every plant, every stream, rivulet, tank, rock, tree, forest, field and mountain. It is possessed in greater or less degree by man, which gives him his power over, or makes him submit to others. When a man possesses a personality and wields authority over others, he is a *Bongalekan*, i.e., a man like a *Bonga*, an old, great or in any way respectable man. The Europeans are powerful they are administrators, managers and big merchants, they wield great influence and power, they do not worship *Bongas*, because they are themselves as good as *Bongas*, cf. "*Saebloko inki begar bongarenko, akoge bongalekano ente chikan bongako managain*".

Bonga is a power, a very big power, which pervades all space, as it were; *Bonga* has not got any shape or form. It can take any form or shape. A mountain is the seat of a *Bonga* but the mountain is not the *Bonga* itself. The river is known as the *Nage-bonga*, but the water in it is not the *Bonga*. The sun is known as *Sing-bonga*, but the warmth of the sun, or the day light is not the *Bonga*, it is only the radiation of the *Bonga*. The tree and the stone slab placed under it are referred to as *Dessauli*, but remove the stone slab, cut down the tree, *Dessauli* is still there. It is possible to transfer this power, or *Dessauli*, by prayer and supplication to another tree, and set up another seat as his abode. The sun, the moon, the river, the mountain become gods by virtue of possessing this power, and not by themselves. This power

which we may call *Bonga* gives life to all animals and plants, it encourages growth in plants, it brings rains, storm, hail, flood and cold. Like the Polynesian *Mana*, it kills and destroys evils, stops epidemics, cures diseases, gives current to rivers, venom to snakes, and strength to tigers and wolves. From this belief in power, the Hos regard every known phenomenon in nature as its manifestation, and trace everything to the presence of a *Bonga*. They carry the idea further to explain all the evil done by men, by the evil eye, and the evil tongue, the activities of witches and sorcerers, and call every maleficent or beneficent deity, *Bonga*. *Bonga*, therefore, means only a power, a source of all power as it were. A hierarchy of power is also recognised, with the sun at the head and a number of lesser powers, such as the moon, the *Marang-buru*, the *Dessauli*, *Nage-bonga*, *Jahir-buru* and others, ranged in order of their traditional prestige, influenced to a certain extent by their experiences. But this conception is not essential to *Bongaism* proper, it is something which has evolved in the course of their association with the different manifestations of this power. The hierarchy might have been established by a process of trial and error in the course of their attempts to adjust themselves to their habitat, and all that surrounds them.

What was only a vague and mysterious power became identified later on with the thing, or object from which it derived its name. Thus we find to-day that the word *Bonga* is popularly used to mean the object with which it is associated, as if the thing itself was the power. The seat of the power was identified with the power itself, and thus mountain became a *Bonga*, the sun became the Supreme Being, the river was taken as the *Nage-bonga*. What was known as the power of the river, that which made the water flow, the tide to rise, the current to pass, became the same as the river itself; and thus a change in thought was accomplished. The idolatry of their Hindu neighbours might have served as the impetus to this mental change among the Hos, and their attempts to realise the abstract in the concrete manifested themselves in the conception of the different sizes and forms of *Bongas*,

Although the Hos believe in the beneficence of their *Bongas*, they also know that these *Bongas* can, and do punish or chastise them. Earthly failures, bodily afflictions, and material losses are accounted for by the fact that they often disregard the traditional rules of conduct,

and fail to follow the mode of life, which alone can ensure a peaceful and happy existence on earth. Whenever they fall victims to a disease or an epidemic, when their crops fail, or their dexterity in hunting and fishing are of no avail, they first blame themselves and not the *Bongas*, which shows that they are not merely worshippers of malevolent deities. They believe that their action interferes with the will of the *Bongas* and hence troubles arise. So long as they follow the traditional rules and usages, which have been followed by their ancestors, they need not invoke their deities, but if they violate them knowingly or unknowingly, consciously or unconsciously, some reaction must follow. The source of an illness or a calamity is traced by the *Deuri* and the *Deonwa* through revelation in dreams only. There is no direct way of knowing the role of *Bongas* in their day to day life. It is revealed in dreams, and it is only the *Deuri* or the *Deonwa* who can interpret the significance of these dreams. That is how diversity of beliefs exists in Kolhan about the shape, the size and the role of the *Bongas*, and the methods and prescriptions of propitiating or worshipping them. The beneficent powers, when solemnly approached by the *Deuri*, always give a clue or information as to the real cause of things, so that there subsists between the Hos and their beneficent gods a friendly relation which is used to their advantage.

The cultural status of the Santhals in Chota Nagpur, Bihar, is higher than that of the Mundas, the Hos and other tribes of the Munda family. This has been due to the long periods of contacts with alien castes and tribes the Santhals have had and are still having in the area they inhabit and in the various parts of the country they have emigrated to in comparatively recent times. Opinions are likely to be divided on the question of a scheme of social precedence among the tribal groups but most of us perhaps will place the Santhals at the top, and the Birhors at the bottom of the scale, the intermediate wrungs are occupied by the Hos, the Mundas, the Tamaris, the Kharias, and the Korwas in order of precedence in cultural height. The higher the status of a tribe in this scheme, the greater the contacts it has with alien elements in the population, (known as *Dikus* among the Hos) so that, disintegration of indigenous traits of culture and acculturation are likely to be the least evident among the Kharias or the Birhors, though it may not be true in all cases.

If anything provides the primitive groups with a lease of life,

with tools of adaptation, it is the change in their religious attitudes, in their mode and manner of worship, in the personalities of their indigenous pantheon and in general religious beliefs. It is not, however, necessary that their religious life should undergo a transformation, or a metamorphosis. What is needed is an elasticity in their attitude to religious beliefs and prescriptions, and the Munda speaking tribes show such elasticity in no small measure. The careful accounts of Munda culture given by S. C. Roy (*The Mundas and their Country*) shows how the religious ideas of the Mundas have been influenced by Hinduism and by Christianity. The tradition of the Santhals, how humanity became depraved and God decided to destroy mankind, which he did except that he shut a good pair up, in a cave in a mountain called 'Harata,' 'how the world was created, how the first pair presented themselves to them, how the *Bongas* of the Santhals were driven away from the presence of *Sing-bonga*, and how they came down to the earth and settled in the villages, how *Marang-buru*, the chief disciple of *Sing-bonga* become discontented and rebelled against his master, the Supreme Being', all point to the influence of Christianity on their indigenous beliefs. How the soul or *roa* of the Mundas after death is carried away by the *Jom Raja* (the devouring king) to his abode in the South, how the Hos are encircled by a host of evil spirits they have only heard from their neighbours but had no occasion to test them, whom they have to minister to at regular intervals, how the Ho pantheon has been enlarged by the *Deuri* or the tribal priest by incorporating rivers, trees, and personalities they may not have seen or come across, all these indicate the concretisation of their 'sublimely vague beliefs' of the world of spirits, or *Bongas*, high and low.

It is therefore necessary to handle our field material on primitive religion very carefully. The blending of cultures in tribal areas has produced a complex cultural life even among the most unsophisticated of the primitive groups. Many ideas are new, the old ones have been put forward in new garb and questions regarding the authenticity of recorded statements when put to tribal people, today, elicit answers in accordance with their interpretation of the motive of the person making such inquiries. Thus when one group of Santhals claim the rainbow as the bow of the mythical hero 'Lita', another group calls it Lakshman's (brother of Sri Ram Chandra) bow. While thunder

and lightning are manifestations of an angry deity, out to kill and destroy, they are also interpreted by some Santhals as the sound of the firing of guns by Ram Chandra and his faithful brother Lakshman.

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

The belief in the efficacy of placating their *Bongas*, has led the Hos and other cognate tribes to evolve a significant code of service and ministration to them and the desire to make everything concrete has introduced innumerable gods and spirits in the primitive pantheon today. To the field anthropologist there does not exist any distinction between, animism and popular Hinduism, As Elwin has pointed out in a booklet on the effects of contacts with civilisation on the aboriginal tribes in India (*Loss of Nerve*), the distinction between tribal religions and Hinduism or the previous classification into 'animism' and 'Hinduism' is meaningless. 'The tribal people are always willing to worship a few more gods if by doing so they can gain some material or social advantage,' On the other hand, the Hindu has no objection to include in his multi-god pantheon a few tribal gods. Judged from this angle, the tribal religions represent today, 'marginal religions,'if we may use the phrase, and such marginal religions as we find among the Gonds of the Central Provinces, 'who possess a richly furnished system of worship,' a meticulous code of ministration to their gods, beautiful little shrines where they sacrifice animals and offer prayers, 'a priest-hood comparable to that found among the lower strata of the Hindu society', and periodical pilgrimage to known and reputed places where some of their high gods are believed to dwell, can hardly be distinguished from the religion obtained among the lower castes of Hindus. The latter do not only possess these elements but also have incorporated in their religion , many tribal gods whose roles they have come to know by association with their votaries. The tribal religions everywhere have been permeated with Hindu ideas,

rites and rituals, and it is indeed difficult to draw a line between them and popular Hinduism.

It is a fact of every day occurrence that so long as the gods are invoked in a body, or no reference is made to any particular god or goddess the religious minded Hindu does not show as much concern as when particular gods are mentioned or invoked to aid him or to avoid any disaster hanging over him. The same attitude is noticeable among the Munda tribes, for so long as no proper name is used, the *Bongas* do not excite as much concern as when a particular *Bonga* is mentioned. This is how the Hos annually drive away their *Bongas* out of their village, after the *Maghe* festival so that they may not be required to pay constant attention to their needs and aspirations. But the *Dessauli* must not be named, the *Marang buru* or even the *Nage-eras* must not be suggested for that would bring sure calamity to them and to their possessions. The *Deuri* of the Hos may name these *Bongas* but usually he refers to places where they are believed to reside, so that as among the Santhals, so among the Hos, the *Bongas* are 'appellatives' of some sort. No definite ideas about the *Bongas* can be had from the *Deuri* or priest of the Hos, and except a vague conception of power, indefinite and impersonal, the *Bongas* do not appear to have any objective existence. The fact that the *Bongas* dominate the life of the Hos, they preside over the various aspects of life, bless them or chastise them for their deeds and their crimes, they can give them plenty and prosperity, shows only the extent of anthropomorphism. Questions regarding the personality of these *Bongas*, of the shape, size and other characteristics, are usually evaded by the tribal priests, not because they are afraid of telling the truth, but because they do not possess any knowledge thereof. "They can neither be heard nor perceived, though fluttering about everywhere, they are, so far as sense perception goes just as if they were not." Though they feel the sure and certain influence of the *Bongas*, they consider them as manifestation of a power, one that they have attempted to control and manipulate but which has always overpowered them in all spheres of life.

It is only in their dreams that they get glimpse of *Bonga*, at least its probable reactions on their life. The benevolent powers or *Bongas* are represented by the tribal officers or the village *Deuri*. As the latter are important elements in the village polity, dreaming them or about

them—warns them of impending calamities, of diseases and epidemics and also provides them with prescriptions for their maladies and how to get their grievances redressed. While higher powers, and benevolent gods are thus conceived and interpreted, the evil spirits are known as in dreams, but usually during their *Singi-Dum* or day dreams,or when they doze sitting or reclining amidst their engagements and always when they dream of ordinary common men and women particularly the latter. Samru of Pokharia saw a woman driving an ailing boy out of the village. It did not strike him that it was only an illusion. He followed the woman to the big tamarind tree at the outskirts of the village. There were people sitting under the tree making ropes from fibres. He shouted for help, yet he saw that they did not move nor did they care to stop the woman. He got annoyed and asked them why they were so indifferent. He learnt that they did not see anything. He was surprised, immediately he saw a dust storm coming and a whirl-wind followed—the stock of *Sabai* grass was blown off. He proceeded back towards his house—he heard a noise and wail of is family, he learnt the death of his nephew, Udiya..

Most diseases follow certain dream expriences. A slap on the heek by the village *Munda*, received in dream, has resulted in swelling of the gums and cheek, a push from behind by the *Deuri* or the village priest in sleep infects the dreamer with a chronic malady and another push is required from the *Deuri* to cure him. Epidemics follow warnings in dreams, the *Deuri* is often heard in dreams to announce to the villagers, of impending calamities, he gets warnings from the *Bongas* in his dreams.

Bamiya Boipoi, ex-*Deuri* of Duralu narrated his experience while he was *Deuri* years ago. One night he was coming back from a neighbouring village, when he heard somebody cry aloud :

"*Ayum jomme, Bamiya Deuri, hasu duku hujutana*", warning him of impending disaster. He tried to locate the sound, he looked round, he looked up, the stars lit the sky but there was no sign of any person anywhere. He came back with a heavy heart and warned the villagers and entreated them to offer sacrifice to the *Dessauli*. The people did not listen to him. The *Maghe* festival was approaching, many fell ill, all his assistants were down with fever, they died except Juria who usually is employed to sacrifice animals before the *Bongas*. The latter sturggled hard but survived, though a wreck of himself.

The villagers realised their mistake, they assembled at the *Deuri's* house and promised to sacrifice a goat, at Borobhoji. Soon the promised sacrifice was made to *Dessauli* and the disease came under control.

Sega Munda of Durita heard a warning in the summer of 1937. He was sleeping and he felt that somebody from behind was pushing him. He woke up, it was midnight, but there was none by him. While he was wondering how he was roused from his sleep, he heard, "*Ayum jomme proja honko hasu duku hujutana*", a warning that calamity was in sight for the villagers. Subdia *Deuri* of the village heard the warning and Koneya who resided just near the supposed seat of the village *Dessauli* also heard the same. A week only elapsed when an epidemic came over the village and men, women and children died by hundreds.

The dreaming of foreigners, of merchants on horse back, of Europeans, people who are very powerful and wield influence over them, gives portends of future catastrophies, and thus is regarded as manifestation of a vague supernatural power, one that is the cause of all energy. The cycle has of late become a *Bonga*, the powerful rail engine is a *Bonga*, the aeroplane is a greater *Bonga* than any of the above. That is why these are becoming emblems of clans today among the Oraons, they are equally important among the Hos. When the curiosity of a child is raised by any mechanical contrivance, however simple or crude it may be, it is immediately satisfied by calling, it a *Bonga*, he understands *Bonga* in the same way, as his father or any adult of his tribe does, it gives him a vague idea about a power, the nature of which he does not know, nor the adults of the tribe would worry about. The very mention of the word *Bonga* is enough, and all his reactions can be easily anticipated.

The popular god of the Hos is the *Dessauli* who is the deputy of *Sing-bonga*; *Dessauli* is powerful and interferes with their life and happiness. They do not know the shape or size of *Dessauli*, they merely worship and when they approach *Dessauli* with prayers and offerings, he presents in dreams as the *Deuri* or *Manki* or the *Munda* of the village. How many times the *Deuri* of Jorapukur has appeared in dreams and how he has represented himself as the *Dessauli* the villagers know too well. The *Deuri* has been prayed to, propitiated, satisfied with gifts and his predictions about the future of the village have all come true. The respect that the *Deuri* receives from the villagers is seldom

equalled by any shown to other officials of the village polity. There is an unconscious hierarchy established among the officials of the village in accordance with the roles they play in the affairs of the village. Dulu Manki who had represented the Hos in the Bihar Legislatures has often been seen in dreams warning the people or chastising them, which has resulted in calamities to the village, which could only be averted by propitiating the village *Dessauli* or *Sing-bonga*, the great god of the Hos.

Power and influence are wielded in various degrees by people and the difference between one man and another is considered to be due to the degree of power possessed by them. A Brahmin in the interior villages in Kolhan assured me that he had not to take any precautions against the Hos for they do not come near him for fear of being affected by his touch. He said it was different with the depressed and exterior castes who often transgress the limits of pollution by coming too near him. The Hos, even in those areas where the Brahmin has not penetrated, avoid him. A Ho will not give drinking water to a Brahmin however the latter may insist, if he is pressed too much, he would pour water in the *Lota* from a respectful distance, so that he may not get the shock of touch from the Brahmin. This reminds one of the mutual avoidance between Brahmins and the Holiyas of the South. When the former enter the *Parachary* or settlements of the latter, the influence of the Brahmin is made innocuous by pouring cowdung solution on his head, by beating him with broom stick and by putting round his neck a garland of torn shoes. The Brahmins have to swallow this humiliation for the reward which they receive in the shape of heavy interest from the *Holiyas* for money advanced to them. Such precautions are found necessary in mutual interest and the origin of this practice is explained by the belief in *Mana* or an impersonal force, which, I should think form the substratum of primitive religion everywhere. The superior receives the inferior very cordially no doubt, but the latter will avoid being too near the former as he will tell you, it does not do any good to him. This may have determined the mode of salutation commonly practised among the Munda tribes, the possibility of coming too near each other is avoided by an elaborate movement of the limbs which completes a circle in some case.

A Ho will take food from a stranger, he will not cook food along with members of other clans in the same kitchen, he will not use an

oven already used by others, he will improvise his own oven and cook his meagre meal himself. The avoidance between man and man, between clan and clan, tribe and caste, has been dramatised in games and these are popularly played in the villages. This avoidance does not result from a regard for ceremonial cleanliness, nor has it been introduced by Hindu initiative as may commonly be held, but it appears that the avoidance is a precaution designed to avoid contacts between persons who possess different degrees of approachability on account of their inherent power or *Bonga*. This power is possessed by both animate beings and inanimate objects in greater or less degree which account for their respective qualities, and their influence on human life. The possession of this power by an inanimate object does not transform it into a conscious being, the difference between the living and the non-living being only a matter of the possession of this vital energy. It is a kind of force or power, which is conceived to be inherent in persons and things that accounts for the religious responses of the Munda speaking tribes, and this force or power is variously represented in beings and things in accordance with their effectiveness or utility. The possession of a soul or *Jivi* or *Roa* does not make much difference as the power of a person does not depend upon the soul it possesses but upon the degree of power inherent in the person. The soul or *Roa* is itself composed of this power, and the soul substance is nothing but the power located in the soul. The custom of eating the heart or liver is nothing but invigorating the power located in the soul. The custom of eating the vital parts of the body to augment power is derived by the Hos from the self-same belief.

Bonga is used indiscriminately to signify man, animal, plant and even material objects. The power possessed by animal or plant is derived from the impersonal force, *Bonga* and thus it regularises social conduct and individual behaviour in respect to the animal and plant kingdom. Even material objects receive adequate importance by virtue of this power. The plough and other agricultural implements possess this power in some form, and this makes them effective in farming. The man behind the plough is necessary, the bullocks which drag it in front are indispensable, but the amount of work done by the plough is not proportional to the labour spent by man and beasts together, but must be supplemented by the inherent force of the plough, which is the *Bonga*. Stones are believed to chang etheir

places, they are even supposed to grow by themselves, they are known in the old to fight one another, as for example, when one hill sent fire, the other replied by sending snakes but the latter were stopped from attacking the former as on the way through the village, the snakes were sliced into pieces by men, the village is till today remembered as 'Bing Tapan' - (the slicing of the snakes). The river flows its course by itself, its strength is in the current which represents the power that is *Bonga*. There are eddies and whirlpools, these are centres of power ; the Hos exaggerate the importance of this natural interplay of forces, and call them *Nage Eras*. Offerings and sacrifices are made to the *Nage Eras* for avoiding their interference with their life and happiness. They hear the voice of the river in the sound of the water, in the splashings and the bubblings, and in the "chatterings over stony ways" and they call it *Nage Era*. When they are asked about the seat of *Nage Era*, about the shape, size, form, nature and attributes of this river dwelling spirit, they have no answer to give, for they know not what the *Nage Era* is but it is the *Bonga* of the river, just as *Marang Buru* is that of the great mountain and *Jahira Buru* that of the sacred grove. The milky way is called '*Bonga hora*' it is the source of *Bongaism*—the gaseous look of the milky way represents an indefiniteness, an impersonal force or *Bonga* of the Hos.

This force which I have called *Bonga* is impersonal but that does not mean that anything that possesses *Bonga* should be animate. Those who have studied primitive religion or have written about it, know how even inanimate objects have been credited by primitive people with a personality. Thus, although most of the *Bongas* are conceived in animate forms, even inanimate objects are known as *Bongas*. Even if lower psychology recognises the difference between animate being and an inanimate object, which is indeed doubtful, in practice and in myths, the latter is very often given animate roles, and thus the distinction becomes more academic than real. Death reduces the power in man as it escapes through the pores of the body, through the eyes, the nose, the mouth and cases are known when fissures in the skull have indicated the exit of this vital energy. When the power possessed by a medicine man or *Ojha* do not descend to the disciples as is the usual belief of the Munda tribes, the disciples keep watch over the spot where the *Ojha* or medicine-man is cremated so that they can get some mystic power of their learned *Guru*. It is

not to control the spirit of the departed and through it, the power he possessed, but it is simply the belief that a dead-man's power escapes at death and the proximity of the cremation spot would make it possible to seize some part of the escaped force that explains this solicitude of the disciples. Even when the Hos approach the cremation ground with this idea, they are nevertheless anxious to pray to the departed, and all the rites and ceremonies must be gone through in order that the survivors may enrich their influence by possessing some measure of the escaped power; that is why 'to die' is *'Bongaia'* among the Hos, which probably is a corruption of *Bonga* meaning the union with *Bonga*, or impersonal force; that explains why the Santhals use the expression, *'Goc ko doko Bonga kana*, "the dead ones have become *Bongas*". Some Santhals were asked by Rev. Culshaw, if they meant by the above phrase, that the *Bongas* have no shape or form to which they replied in the affirmative. But Rev. Culshaw thinks that they were probably rationalising—for the use of the animate pronominal suffix *'—ko'* tells against the impersonal character of *Bonga*. I need not point out how inanimate objects are often addressed as animate, how gender is commonly interpreted in advanced languages, and how natural objects and phenomena like the sun, the moon, the thunder, lightning and fire are conceived in our language. These are frequently given animate roles, and are addressed as personalities. It may or may not be a disease of thought or disease of language as Maxmuller puts it, but that does not detract from its reality. Rev. Culshaw thinks that the custom of drawing image of the dead after cremation, on the spot where the body was interred or cremated, and of making offerings to it in its name, bears out the interpretation that the *Bonga* is still conceived of as personal and not as "a part of a large whole which is *Bonga*". The Hos draw circles round the spot of cremation, and the Korwas of Mirzapur put stones in circles round the place where cremation or burial takes place; this is not to conceive the deceased as a personality, but it is perhaps meant to hedge in the *Roa* or *Jivi* of the deceased, as otherwise the alleged antipathy of the disengaged soul may find expression in injury or harm to the survivors, a common belief among all primitive people. The raising of menhirs, dolmens and circles of stones is not also an attempt at personification. The following note of Rev. Culshaw is interesting: "I was standing by my bicycle conversing with some Santhals, when

a child of about two, carried in his father's arms, pointed to the trade mark of a lion on the cycle and said, *Bonga*. My surmise is that the child had seen pictures of Hindu deities in his village and thought that all pictures were *Bongas*." I would explain this experience a little differently . It is indeed difficult to conceive that the two year old child has a knowledge of the shape and size of lions, he knows also about the Hindu deities and further has been taught to regard all pictures as *Bongas*, and what is more important, the child must have developed his vision so much as to point out the trade mark of the cycle, from a distance and while he is carried on the arms by his father. As the Hos do not approach foreigners and as Europeans are regarded as *Bongas*, it is probable that the father must be at a respectful distance from Rev. Culshaw. The dazzle of the spokes and that of then ickel in the cycle raises the curiosity of aboriginal children—and without being asked, many are seen to fetch grass to feed the 'animal' which is the cycle itself. I should think that the strangeness of the conveyance, something which is rare in the interior of the Santhal country, has stirred the curiousity of the Santhal child and the father who could not himself understand its mechanism, has stiffled the curiosity of the child by saying that it was *Bonga*—and a *Bonga* certainly it is to the aboriginal people.

The difference between personal and impersonal should not be taken seriously. Personal deities have become impersonal, while impersonal ones have been conceived as personal. *Sing-bonga* is gradually receding from the Munda pantheon, and it will become an unworshipped god very soon, if the present clash of cultures and contacts of social groups continue. The small-pox has entered the pantheon of the Hos as *Mata*, as *Angar Mata*, among the Korwas, and many other diseases will be installed as personal *Bongas* as their indigenous pharmacopaea proves more and more futile against the ravages of diseases. "The Santals", writes Rev. Culshaw, "regard as animate all those beings which their experience, and arguing from the analogy of human behaviour, appear to be independent agents, those entities, which either, in fact or in myth, display what we may call personality." This, however, does not exclude the inanimate objects from being considered as possessing 'personality' and many such objects figure as gods of the tribal people in the Chota Nagpur Plateau. But this personality is not the same as is found in the Hindu concep-

tion of god heads, it is the possession of the force or power, I have called *Bonga*, that endows personality to the gods of the tribal pantheon. But all this is possible because of a widespread general belief in a source of all power, a force that pervades space, which gives shape and form to their host of gods and goddesses, as the nebulae has shaped the constellations.

Further evidence regarding the impersonal character of the *Bonga* may be gathered from the hymns and prayers addressed to the *Bongas* during the principlal worship-festivals of the Hos which have already been detailed before. In the hymns and prayers addressed to the gods of the Hindu pantheon, we get ideas about the shape, form and nature of the divinities. The features of the Hindu divinities, are faithfully portrayed in them, but no such reference is found in the tribal hymns and prayers; the latter are protective formula, which refer to the dangers to which the Hos are exposed, and supplications to the *Bongas* to protect their life and property form their main theme. A few of these hymns and prayers have been given with their literal English renderings. All these are addressed to the *Dessauli*, which represents the supernatural power of their habitat and as such does not possess any shape, size or complexion. It is either the power of this village, that village or of a group of villages. The higher the number of villages in a group, the greater is the power of the *Dessauli* and the *Deuri* who serves the *Dessauli* gains his status in the village in accordance with the effectiveness of his rendition of these hymns and prayers.

To sum up, the *Bonga* is conceived by the Hos as a power, one that pervades all space. It is indefinite and impersonal to start with. That is why it is believed to take any shape or form. This power gives life to all animals and plants, 'it encourages growth in plants, it brings down rain, storm, hail, flood and cold. It kills and destroys evils, stops epidemics, cures diseases, gives current to rivers, venom to snakes and strength to tigers, bears and wolves.' The vague idea of power later on condenses itself and is identified with things or objects of his environment, as the latter is regarded by primitive man as part of himself.

Bongaism is based on a general emotional attitude towards the entire primitive milieu. Such attitude may be specified or projected to particular objects under stress of tradity and under the conditions

of interest and attentional fixation to individual phases of the environment. Experiments of *Gestalt* psychology has shown that the adjustment of an animal under controlled conditions is not to particular unity but to the situation as a whole. The primitive man's adjustment is similarly to the whole environment and not to any part alone. This correlation between the environment and primitive man is essentially intimate as the unity of the body or the correlate of the various limbs. Objects of environment are regarded by him as parts of himself. The appearance of a strange man, animal or plant disturbs this integral adjustment. A break in the latter means that all the desires and trends of action are disoriented from their setting in things. Such disorientation is effected with pain through tension which arises due to the need of new adjustment and through the failure of satisfaction on the part of the desires and trends of action that turn away from their object.

If pain is convertible to fear as has been shown by psycho-analytic research, (Jones,E—Papers on Psycho-analysis, pp. 456-7) pain involved in new adjustment is translated into fear and thus we find among the Hos and other cognate tribes, the villagers who had never seen white men, are thrown into terror immediately some such person appears before them. Such fear and bewilderment,however, are not fixated on the person or object alone but on the entire environment. The objects of the environment were, however, a part of the personality so long. They were therefore, animated, just as the limbs are animated. The process of sudden alienation from the personality through the introduction of an object believed to be strange does not change their character. The environment remains animated but strange. It comprises objects of fear, dismay or of a similar order of emotion. The maladjustment may set in through the introduction of one object, the fear etc., however, pertain to the whole.

It is only where the primitive man is restored to some kind of mental balance that he can view his own personality, the pictorial self as distinct from the environment that the seed of personification is sown. The environment which was a part of the self, now becomes a set of other selves subject to the Law of Participation. Impersonality gives place to the personality in religious experience and the living environment becomes gradually full of living persons or *Bongas.*

This hypothesis may explain why the child or even the adult of the primitive society should call a European an *Bonga*. For the European does not fit in with the environment and threatens to break up the integral adjustment of primitive life. Tradition and myth may also separate certain things or animals as not parts of the environment. These may then become *Bongas*. There may be certain occasions in which tradition and myth break the normal adjustment to life. A pervasive sense of fear and holiness then may suffuse the entire surrounding. Dreams supplement this conception of power. While dreaming of tribal officers or priest represents the beneficent traits of *Bongaism*, the evil spirits, those that do injure their person, or destroy their crops and material possessions are suggested by dreams of common persons, of old barren women, or by illusions, such as seeing 'a damsel in distress' or 'beating a boy by a woman' who disappears in smoke in face of pursuit.

CHAPTER XI

THE HOS AS THEY ARE TO-DAY

The Hos are not an isolated people. If they are migrants into Singbhum, as they appear to be, they had migrated due to expansion, or more probably to escape the exploitation and tyranny of the alien landlords, whom they contemptuously address as *Diku* in their new home. Christian missions have worked at full speed for decades in the Munda country, and the Hos know the benefits of missionary activites and the price their brethren the Mundas had to pay to get those benefits. Therefore, we take it that the Hos had come into contacts with other castes and tribes from very early times. Even in Kolhan, the Hos live in many parts with the Tantis, the Goalas, the Kumars, and in some villages they have ousted the alien elements, in others they are sharing with the alien castes, the land and the vegatable resources they produce or gather from the forests. It is no wonder that the Hos have introduced rites and acquired culture traits from the more advanced communities, while their own practices have also been diffused outside their habitat.

The material aspect of their life has undergone a great change. The leafy booths and wicker walls have given place to substantial houses, even bungalow type houses are met with in Kolhan. Their furniture which used to consist of a bed stead and a wooden stool, their crockery which included a few earthen vessels, wooden ladles and leaf plates, their dress which was nothing more than rags and loin cloth, have all been replaced by more substantial, more artistic, and more durable patterns. Umbrellas made of steel frame work and cloth and paramatta all imported or made elsewhere in India, have pushed their leafy counterparts out of many homes (*Rung Chatom* or *Rung Sakom*) and hurricane lanterns have replaced the indigeneous *Kupi*. An usual sight today in festivals, and markets is the procession of women moving in files, with umbrellas on their head, or in their armpit if the sun is hot and during dance, the women usually tie umbrellas to their

waist or hold them aloft, while the body responds to tune of the music and the rhythm of the dance.

Bamboo combs are fast disappearing as also the bangles and other ornaments worn by men. Women prefer light and sparkling glass bangles to heavy *Sakom* and the habits of dilating the lobes of the ear and mutilating the nose with heavy metallic cones and tubes made from cork like branches of a shrub and some times of *Gangai* or *Jowar*, have been replaced by elegant ear-rings and nose pins. New designs for the nose and ear are constantly being adopted, and even caste women wistfully look forward for them, though may not put them against convention. Though women keep their bust covered when out of doors, most have not yet taken to upper garments, such as the *Jhula* or jumper, though these have begun to be used by young women. In the urban centres, in Chaibassa and in Jamshedpur, the distinction between Christian mode of dress and the aboriginal seldom exists, and a woman's wardrobe contains both upper and lower garments, which are daily washed with soap or soda. Seldom does a Ho woman smell, a trait which their sisters in other parts may profitably copy. Soap has become a necessity, and scents a popular luxury; hair oils, liquid *Alta*, *Kumkum* and nail polishers, have found their way into the houses of the poor and rich alike. Women among the families of *Manki* and *Munda* find outdoor work derogatory to their social status, and prefer to observe *Purdah*, in a way, but economic needs or social calls, bring them out, more often than they would otherwise have liked to, but domestic help has become a fashion if not a necessity. The indigenous mat has been replaced by *Durries* and bed sheets and mosquito curtains are found in moderately well-to-do homes. Shoes have become popular and canvas shoes are exchanged for paddy or onions or chillies. Substantial cultivators don shoes in presence of strangers, though the quality of the shoes they wear may not be very reputable. Children in the villages have not learnt to put on shoes, but those in urban centres possess a pair or two each, even if they may not use them. Poorer families put on wooden slippers, which they make themselves, with leather straps they buy from the market. Shorts and shirts are the commonest dress for children of well-to-do families, and poorer families like to dress their children in similar style. A youngman who once played in his school eleven, and had earned his

jersey, was found to don it whenever he happened to go out of the village and for the prestige associated with his school colours, he even told lies to those who enquired about his sporting outfit, merely to justify his uncommon dress, for he always gave out that he was going to play football, even if it was a season when playing football remains a pastime with small children alone. Artistic and gaudily bordered *Saris* have become fashionable and the simple clean and white *Sari* which gave such a distinction to Ho women is fast being abandoned in favour of the former. The global war put fabulous money in the hands of tribal women for the major part of labour required by the army in Choto Nagpur was supplied by the women, and fine or superfine varieties of cloths found a ready market in Kolhan, to the consternation of the village weaver. The village looms today in many centres, are being used for making napkins and sheets which are sold to the *Diku* population. Turbans are much in vogue these days, and even the villagers in the interior wear them if they can afford to. At night, cheap electric torches, send their shooting rays into the forests or the dark recesses of their rural abodes, while imported toys, and trinkets, bead necklace and shell bangles, tempt parents and children alike.

The Hos have become disease conscious, as it were. The principles of public health are to-day better appreciated than they were a few decades back. If you ask a man or woman why she is so lean and thin of body, he or she will always have a yarn ready to tell, and suggestions for medical aid donot fall on deaf ears. They cry for medical aid, more of it, for quinine and for pure drinking water, and show the least courtesy to witches and diviners, though the village priest still has an important role to play in their struggles and vicissitudes of life. Witchcraft still continues to be a bogey for them and hundreds of cases of wilful injury to witches or suspects mar the peace of rural life. Housing has received much attention and new houses are dearer, more substantial and adequately furnished and are always an improvement on existing ones. The low mud hovels are being replaced wherever it is possible, by dwellings, built of timber and mud, roofed with tiles, and scattered houses are becoming rare either due to increase of population or the needs of concentration and security. The high cost of building material does not allow new houses to be built and many families, migrate to industrial towns

or to mines in search of new homes and are found to huddle together, five to fifteen per room, rather than live in leafy huts in their villages. There is a general breakdown of tribal solidarity and group activities today are becoming difficult to organise, while transport and craftsmanship have become too costly to secure, both having been socially provided so long under the old tribal economy. In many villages today, the vaccinator finds little resistance and greater welcome, and hundreds submit to inocculation against cholera, plague or typhoid. The insides of their houses are as clean as one would wish for, and the walls of their houses are gay and colourful. Red, yellow and grey are popular mural shades. Food, however, has not received much attention from poorer families, though, tea, biscuits and cakes, sweets and cigarettes, find ready reception in the house of an urban family or that of a *Manki*. Vegetables used to be sold but now a taste has grown with the result that their kitchen gardens are better looked after, and even the interval between two sowings in their fields is utilised by growing seasonal and quickly growing species. Educated Hos, i.e., those who had some schooling have developed a taste for tea, and even frequent restaurants for cutlets, chops and curries which they donot get at home. A new sweetmeat shop at Chaibassa fitted with modern furnitures, electricity and service, finds the Hos, an appreciatve clientele. On a rainy day which was also the *Bazar* day a Chaibassa, hundreds of Hos, men and women took shelter in the verandah of the Circuit House and they easily accommodated themselves in the chairs and switched on the lights without the slighes fear or diffidence.

The indigenous games of the Hos, both indoor and outdoor, do not find welcome among school children, though the villages have not abandoned them yet. Hockey has a particular fascination for the Ho boys and matches between villagers have become popular The children shape their own sticks from the twigs and branches of trees, and make wooden balls though the latter may not always be round. Football has become very popular and bids fair to become the national game of the Hos, and those who have shown skil in the game, move from village to village and enthuse others in the game. School teams compete one with the other and parents feel proud of their boys even if they donot understand the game.

No longer does an ethnographer find an innocent crowd in the villages, eager to respond to his querries, or willing to talk about their customs and practices or receive advice on matters affecting their health and happiness; the people have become sophisticated, intolerant of strangers, and suspicious of other people. The lack of sympathy for them and in their progress has made them realise to-day that hardly any good can come from contacts with the *Dikus* and they are often bitter and sarcastic in their parleys, and conversations. In many villages, there are people today, men and women, who have been outside Kolhan, who have lived for periods long or short, in mining centres, in Jameshedpur, or in the tea plantations of Assam and Darjeeling or have worked in the Jute Mills round about Calcutta. These speak Bihari, understand Bengali or Oriya and are proudly conscious of their contacts with outside. These people have brought back with them many an article of luxury as well as useful domestic ones which now find favour with their compatriots in the villages. The census figures for bilingualism, which has been put down as twentyfive percent, are moderate estimates, and in many parts of the Kolhan today, an ethnographer should be able to converse with the Hos in perfect confidence in the Bihari rural dialect, or in Oriya, but the Ho generally does not speak in any language other than in Ho, and even if he understands your question, he will reply in Ho, an attitude which bars mutual approach. Women insist on speaking their tribal dialect and the *Dikus* have to learn to speak Ho if they want to deal with them in the market or as employers. Time is still an indefinite thing for the Ho and even educated Hos will not keep to time even if engagements are mutually agreed to. Many a time my informants had to be sent for, though their interests needed their contacts with me and an opportunity for a drink had always put my time table out of gear, a not very pleasant experience for a field investigator.

Many are the ways the Hos have come into contacts with civilisation. The *Mankis* and the *Mundas* come into close contacts with the administrative staff, and have frequently to visit Chaibassa or Jamshedpur. They learn the ways of the urban people, see things, for themselves and try to live upto their new experience. Money can buy comforts, and the village officials find it easy to obtain them but the poor tenants donot have the means, so that such comforts

are regarded as the previlege of the few. Yet the tenants have developed an awareness of things they should or could possess, and are more informed today than they ever were. The imporvements in dress, food and outlook among the substantial class in Kolhan has no doubt reduced the prejudices of the high caste people towards the Hos, but even this has not produced any levelling of social distance between them, a point which the classes among the Hos, always make a bone of. The Hos ban commensality with the *Diku* and whatever the social status of the latter may be, any one who takes food in a *Diku* house is branded as *Kajomesin*. In many Ho houses, particulary in *Manki* or *Munda* families, visitors to-day receive hospitality of a different sort, and instead of the customary *Illi* or *Diang*, tea or ovaltine prepared with tinned or dried milk is served and crockery may be displayed in prominent corners of the house, but no domestic servant will eat food cooked by a *Diku*, however great the temptation may be.

The contact of the administrative officers with the tenants is mainly derivative, as the indirect rule obtaining in the Kolhan does not require direct dealing with them. In recent years, a lot of disaffection against the decisions of the hereditary tribal officers and village elders, has been noticed, and the incidence of crime in the Kolhan and the number of law suits show a phenomenal increase. Prior to the global war, the Kolhan Superintendent used to maintain three registers which recorded the petitions from the Hos. The first register (A) recorded *Manki's* reports against the village chiefs, for not carrying out orders of the authorities, for evicting *Dikus* from their *Elakas*, against *Raiyats* for cutting trees without permission, complaints against a *Manki* or a *Munda* for unauthorised sales of trees to non-resident *Raiyats*, or for settling lands with such of them and so on. The second register (B) dealt with applications of a tenant for possession of land, for partition of land between co-sharers, for recovery of *Gonong*, for recovery of wages from contractors under whom the applicant might have served, and other petitions involving a claim for money which would be monetary suits if treated under the civil procedure code, and also for the possession of land with damages and *mesne* profits, etc. The third register (C) was miscellaneous, and included applications for the construction of, or repairs to private *Bandhs*, for the taking of water from a private tank for irrigation, prayer for

a *Punch* and the election of members thereto and orders on a person to accept a woman as his wife or mistress, as the case might be. The number of cases filed in 1933-34. in the Kolhan Court is given below:

Number of cases 1933–34	Register A, B & C	Number of cases 1930–31
379	A	384
569	B	822
240	C	286
1188		1492

During the last few years a new classification of cases has been introduced and the cases have been put under five heads, (A) cases instituted on reports of *Mankis* and *Mundas*, (B) cases of civil nature, (C) miscellaneous petitions, (S) settlements of *Parti* land and (M) mutation. The figures for each for the last three years are given below:

	1946–47	1947–48	1948–49
A	350	534	317
B	304	236	258
C	1265	180	311
S		317	751
M		407	173
	1919	1674	1810

The variation from year to year, is difficult to explain, and in many cases, it depended on the personality of the Kolhan Superintendent and his interest in the *Raiyats* placed in his charge. In any case, the number of cases, was not sufficiently threatening, and most of the complaints could be arbitrated by judicious handling of the parties. The arbitration of cases in the village by the tribal officers is not a very satisfactory method of settling disputes as they are not always honest or efficient either. Many of these tribal officers are grabbing, and others quarrelsome. They sometimes dissipate the *Malgozari* paid to them before it is deposited with the treasury. Local disputes or family dissensions are made the subject of vindictive reprisals or of private gain, and private grudges are satisfied by deliberately manipulating evidence. The tribal officers have learnt many vices from their association with touts and litigants. There are many cases of embezzlement, bribery and corruption by the *Mundas* and the *Mankis*. They suppress crime for consideration. No longer dependent for their position on the good will of the people, they can seldom refrain from using their increased judicial and exe-

cutive responsibility thrust upon them for private or political ends. They are dependent more on the administration, and cater to the officers, flattering their caprices. Conscious of their social and political status, they have adopted a higher standard of living while their constant association with people whom they cannot afford to imitate, together with the expenses which they have to incur to maintain their position as leaders of the tribe, make it impossible for them to live within their means. As a result, corruption and bribery are becoming more frequent. But this fact alone does not explain the number of law suits in the Kolhan. Aliens and those of the Hos who have frequented industrial centres or plantations, foster a spirit of discontent among the people, and it is often found that persons who have a little education or some knowledge of law, take advantage of the more ignorant aborigines to evade the local *Panchayat* system and get their civil suits decided on the evidence of the witnesses they produce in court. Steps have been taken from time to time to remedy such evasions of customary procedure. The Kolhan Superintendent uses a tribal inspector to assist him, and he is responsible for the efficient functioning of the tribal machinery. To ensure that the *Panchayat's* decision may satisfy the parties to a dispute, the Deputy Collector in charge of Kolhan (Kolhan Superintendent) is required to attend the final sitting of the *Panchayat*, question the members, and record for himself the essential issues involved in the disputes and the *Panchayat's* opinion on them. All disputes require to be enquired into and settled by arbitration in the village by the village *Munda* and the *Manki* of the *Pir* concerned. When the headman fails to settle a dispute, the Kolhan Superintendent, must himself proceed to question the parties and the headman, as to all details to refer all settlement and other records available and to make out clearly the history of the dispute and the points for decision. Thus the essential points in the administration of civil justice in Kolhan are (i) that the disputes are arbitrated in the village assembly and not heard mainly from such individual witnesses as can be produced in court, (2) that all orders are communicated direct by the officer in charge of the administration to the *Pir* or village headman, and not through the medium of *Diku* subordinates. Parties however, are entitled to apply to the Kolhan superintendent to have their cases decided in the regular form of a civil suit on payment of court fees,

but this is only allowed after every effort has been made first to settle the dispute in the village assembly, and the result of such proceedings recorded. The efficiency of this system depends among other things, upon the knowledge, the Deputy Collector possesses of the language, customs and traditions of the people and the frequency with which he can visit his *Elaka* or jurisdiction, in connection with the cases which require to be decided by this system, for even if the Hos, many of them can speak Hindi or Oriya, they seldom do so before the strangers or the administrative staff and their case often goes by default, if the officer does not know the language or the dialect of the Hos. An unhappy situation exists today in Kolhan, as the officers including the Superintendent, donot speak Ho, and even the tribal welfare officer and his subordinates appeared ignorant of the Ho dialect, not to speak of their ignorance of the existing ethnographic literature, of the half-a-dozen or less publications dealing with Ho cultural life.

In many *Pir's* to-day, new *Mankis* have been appointed by the Kolhan administration who are usually selected from the *Khuntkatti* families, or from those who have substantial stakes, and as most of the villages have a *Marang Killi*, the officers are normally from it and thus related to the original *Manki* or his family. These *Mankis* are mostly literate, though in some cases, even the tribal members of the District Board are known to be incapable of reading or writing, but they are all the same respected in their own village or *Pir*. The new officials are found to wield greater political weight and more informative control over the tenants. This was the reason given to me by the then Kolhan Superintendent in 1936, why the number of civil cases had been reduced from 1942 to 1188, though I should think there must be other causes as well. The barometer of crime in India moves up and down with the prospects or otherwise of good harvests, and a tribe in transition may not behave differently, for it is the ability to spend that determines the incidence of law suits. The price of *Lac* was Rs.2/- per eighty tolas in 1929-30, in 1936, it came down to 6as. Similarly one *Pan* (80) of cocoons fetched Rs.1/- in 1929-30, it was 5as. per *Pan* in 1935-36. This alone must have affected the tenants in the Kolhan tremendously, for they were supplementing their meagre income from the fields, by their income from these subsidiary industries. Litigation had also become costly. In 1920, a petition to the Kolhan court cost 2 as., in 1935-36, it cost twelve annas and so also

the process fees have increased. All these must have contributed to a fall in the number of law suits. Again, the number of cases, however, does not give any idea as to the total number of people involved in law suits. It is the normal practice for a group of persons who are either of the same *Killi* or are co-villagers, to accompany the petitioner or the defendant, and thus legal procedure in the courts, involves the idleness of a considerable number of people who may not be directly concerned with the cases. The petitioner and his comrades come the previous evening and take shelter under trees if it is summer, or in the verandahs of some public building or inside the cylindrical cover of their native carts which they may bring along with them. They seldom go to *Dharamsalas*, though there are two or more of them in the Chaibassa town. They cook their food in the open air and attend the court from morning till it is closed for the day. During this period, they sit in circle, smoke *Ficca* and discuss the chances of the case or the subtelities of law as they understand them. Each one has an opinion about the officers, or the clerks with whom he has to deal, and touts and litigants hover round them to educate them in matters of law and legal procedure. The results of litigation are seldom an unmixed blessing for the people. Inspite of the good intentions of the administration, the tenants are financially ruined and driven to despair after protracted trials. Had it not been for the touts, and for people whom they look up to particularly the 'war veterans, or political agitators, the majority of the Hos would prefer to suffer wrongfully at the hands of their own tribal officers rather than receive the so-called competent decision from the courts. The only way the present system of the administration of civil justice could be made efficient is to strengthen the tribal organisation, so that the tribal officers should be really responsible to the people and not merely to the administration as they apparently are at present. In view of the growth of social distance between classes in the Kolhan, and the consequent clash of interests and personalities, it is also doubtful if such responsibility can adequately be discharged by the tribal officers. The tendency to-day has been to bypass the village officers or to fret against their decisions and more people run to district or subdivisional courts than ever anticipated. A situation which is bound to level up the administration of Kolhan with the normal administrative machinary of other districts. An anthropologist would not view this

with equanimity for indirect rule has not proved bankrupt in tribal areas elsewhere and before such levelling is permitted, a thorough search for the missing formula must be made.

The mines and factories within the Kolhan, and the prospects of employment in distant plantations and in liminal towns are exercising a tremendous influence on the life and labour of the Hos. There are iron mines in Kolhan and iron-foundries and steel works at Jamshedpur. The metallurgical industries of India have found a native asylum in and around the country of the Hos. The ancestors of the Hos knew the art of smelting iron, the present generations are therefore, not averse to working in mines. The domestic needs for implements and weapons as also of other tribal elements in Chota Nagpur, are supplied by the Agharias, who are now the iron-smiths, but the latter are not a distinct people, in race or in culture. Singbhum is also rich in other minerals,. The agricultural portions of it are mainly in the basin of Porhat. The mineral deposits are associated with the rocky lands. There are five big mineral centres in Kolhan Karanjia (2) Jhinkpani (3) Gua (4) Noamundi and (5) Monoharpur. Most of the lessees are not equipped with the modern techniques and methods of extraction. The lessees donot find it profitable to extract anything other than the best quality ore, for little of this is consumed in the local market, they donot use any ore below 55 p.c. iron, in content. The best British and German ores contain about 33 p.c. iron and even the first grade Swedish ore rarely exceeds 50 per cent. Chromite of which there was a world-wide shortage during the global war, is used in this country if it has a chromium content of more than 40 per cent. It may be suggested that in the interest of conservation of minerals, the superior and inferior grades should be extracted in a definite proportion and the manufacturing concerns should be made to use mixed ones instead of the high grade one as at present. Labour saving devices are absent in some of the mines. Iron ore at Manoharpur is still being transhipped from the mines on light railway to the standard gauge wagons by man power, which would have easily been done by a gravity chute. Picks and shovels are still used for raising and transhipping ore and it is carried largely by man-power to-day even in the best managed concern.

The technical staff and highly paid labourers are usually from outside the district or even from outside the Province, and there is

a whispering discontent among the local inhabitants which may find a dubious outlet in the near future. The remedy is not a legal enactment prohibiting employment of non-provincials, but to organise and train skilled labour, within the province, so that it would be cheaper for the firms to employ local labour. Besides, mines are Indian and it is an accident that they happen to be within the borders of a province. If any community should be encouraged to avail of the opportunities for training, it is the aboriginals and it is nothing short of a scandal that money is being minted in the mines, but not a share of it goes towards improving the living conditions in the villages of the aboriginals who work these and in whose territory, the mines are situated. The standard of wages paid in the mining centres is comparatively low. This is largely due to the ignorance of the labourer and the mystic ties that he has with his land ; he would prefer to work on low wages than move out ; neither the aboriginal labour has any root in the labour movements. He is as shy of foreigners, as he was before, except that he has become too ready to come out of his village to work for his living ; his own leaders are not born agitators, neither are they allowed to create trouble away from their villages, Even now there are places where a male labourer is paid only as -/5/- per day. This is the rock bottom wage that a labourer can have but this is not enough for his survival in health, unless he is provided with cereals from home. Labour Unions have now been formed in Karanjia, Gua and Noamundi. The political awakening of the *Adibasis* has worked wonders, and the president of a Labour Union in Kolhan is a Ho and efforts are being made by the *Adibasis* to capture the Unions at Noamundi and Jhinkpani. If the activities of the Labour Unions in other parts of Bihar are an indication, the possibilities of the Mining Labour Unions are immense, so also the chances for the aboriginals.

The routine work in the factories is not very popular with the Hos, still there is today a permanent Ho population in Jamshedpur. The population changes its units no doubt, but there is growing up a considerable Ho element. I met half a dozen Ho mechanics at the Chaibassa bazar on a sunday. They work in Jamshedpur but came to meet their girl friends on a day's visit, proposing to return by the evening train for the night shift they were booked for ; these are hopes of the Hos for to-day and may be fear as well for to-morrow. The same however, cannot be said of mining labour. The mining centres

of Gua, Noamundi and Manoharpur do not possess a permanent mining community. Nor is there any likelihood of one developing. Noamundi gets a constant supply of local labour, as on all sides of it there are Ho villages. The complexion of labour in Noamundi, therefore, is more healthy than at Gua. While the proportion of women to men at Noamundi is nearly equal, at Gua there are 3 men to every one woman. Many of the pairs working at Noamundi are related as brother and sister, and husband and wife, or as near cousins while at Gua such complexion of labour is absent. The rate of wages at Gua is naturally higher than at Noamundi. At Gua, labour is recruited by Thikadars (contractors) from the interior parts of the District or from the adjoining States, even from Chhattisgarh but local labour is available at Noamundi. As the latter come from their villages, which are nearby, the workmen can always bring rice from home whenever they run short of supply instead of having to depend on shops as the labour have to do at Gua. The mining companies now subsidise the supply of *Ata* and rice. and because of this the price of food stuffs has not gone up very much, yet there does exist a disparity in price levels at different mining centres. The bordering native States still sell rice cheap and smuggling becomes profitable though the risks have increased considerably. Various subterfuges are resorted to by the local people both of the States and of Singbhum and one of them is to sell commodities in terms of rice so that the latter becomes a medium and a measure of value but this can allow a limited transaction though enough for small needs. Barter of grains with salt is also a local practice and it is possible to collect rice in exchange for salt or for pottery, the latter being seldom sold for cash. Onions also are bartered for rice. There is another fact which makes labourers decide in favour of Noamundi. The work at Gua has to be carried at a higher altitude than at Noamundi. The labourers are to remain at the top of the *Jhandi Buru*, whence they can only come down on saturday night or the morning following, the bazar day at Gua. Thus the difficulty of labour at Gua and the absence of local labour account for the comparatively higher wages there but the advantage thus derived are off-set by the higher prices of food-stuffs and of liquor. While liquor used to be sold at 4 as a bottle at Gua, it was sold at Noamundi at 2 as in 1935 to 1936, the prices have since doubled. Gua has a smaller labour population

than at Noamundi and the housing conditions in the former centre are far from satisfactory. The damocle's sword in the shape of retrenchment is always hanging over labour, and whenever demands for better accommodation are made, they are met by the cool and calculating reply, that, "we are getting labour saving plants and very soon we shall not be requiring the labour force available." It is pity that the labourers at Gua living on the top of the mountain should see the feast of light all round, but their modest demand for an electric point near their huts, which would prevent accidents at night, could not be met for technical reasons. There are two classes of tenements in the mining centres, one built by the company and the other by the Thikadars, though we are told that they are subsidised by the mining companies. The first set of hutments are habitable, the second decidedly not; though the latter accommodate the bulk of the labour population, tribal or otherwise. The clean inside of these hovels, constantly plastered by cowdung mixed with clay by the tribal labour, which is an earnest of a better living should have opened the eyes of the authorities but nothing is meant to be done unless the labour becomes a voice to reckon with. Under these conditions, it is no wonder that drunkeness and debauchery are increasing in proportion to the helplessness of the labour and the temptation offered by the outstills. The annual rental paid by the excise shops, and the outstills is uncannily large, and nothing has been done as yet to counter-act the evils of drunkenness. Gono, a labourer had a row with his wife and he beat her. The latter would not cook food and the couple were hungry but would not talk to each other. When we asked the man why he did do so, he smiled and said that the beating was a revenge against the treatment he received from the Thikadar; 'I beat her when I am drunk, and I drink because it helps me to forget what otherwise I cannot bear', quite an honest and straight forward answer.*

Tribal labour in most of the mines, is temporary for definite reasons. The Ho is proverbially lazy and has still limited wants. The forests are mostly denied to him, but a bow and arrows still secure him his meat diet, the vegetables grow wildly, particularly gourds, pumpkins

*Tales of woes of the labourers were told to me and my students last year when we went to study conditions in mines. We donot want, however, to embarass the managements by repeating them here.

or vegetable marrow, cucumber and *Sag*, and the fields provide him his cereals, and tubers. So long as a Ho has rice in his *Bandhi*, enough to brew ricebeer he prefers to remain at home. In case of urgent need he would first send his sister or even his wife and remain at home till the time for *Malgoozari* comes or the dates for festivals are annouced by the village *Dakua*. It is for paying *Malgoozari* and occasional feasts and festivals, that a Ho comes to the mines and that also when he finds no profitable employment in his village. Labour in the villages of Kolhan is not remunerative. Here he works for paddy, while in the mines he receives cash. The average wage he can get in the villages is about 4 as per day and in those villages, inhabited by the *Dikus*, he may bargain for a couple of annas more, but there is no 'pitch and pay and go your way' in the village, so that whenever he is in need of cash and cannot obtain it by the sale of *Lac* or *Mohua* or *Kusum* he comes to the mines. In the mines, a man can get upto Rs. 1/2/- or even more and a woman 12 as, provided they work on piece wage, which is 'killing labour.' If he works on daily wage, he invariably works less, gets less as wage and he seldom works for more than 4 to five days a week. If a labourer works continuously and if he is reasonably temperate in his habits, he can certainly save a fiver or even ten rupees but the lure of the trinkets, and foreign clothes often makes him part with his savings, unless his creditor seizes his earnings on the spot. This is the saga of mining labour. Yet the mines attract labour. Two considerations pull the tribal labour to the mines. One is the immediate need for money to pay debts or *Malgoozari* or for providing clothing or expenses in connection with festivals or social ceremonies, the other is the lure of a free and unfettered life in the mines away from social control. When the labourers come back from the mines, they do receive an indirect social approbation from the *Killi* members, which is due to their success in tiding over crises, their knowledge of men and machines, but above all due to their ability to spend. The intermittent character of their employment and the strong outstill liquor they get habituated to, after strenous work in the mines, shatter their health and reduce their efficiency so much so that skilled labourers are not many among the Hos. The managers tell us, that the tribal labourers are quick of perception and quite competent to follow instructions and their skill develop probably quicker than that of other communities, but what

they acquire they lose in no time and most of the labourers end where they started, as coolies. The health of the people in the mines is never satisfactory. Besides the low vitality which the Hos possess and which has been still further lowered by indiscriminate drinking, there is the high incidence of malaria which is incredibly severe and malignant in Gua as well as in Noamundi. While more attention and systematic propaganda are evident in Noamundi, the same is not true of Gua. The figures supplied to us from the Noamundi dispensary which pertain to the years 1928 to 1934, show the gradual improvement effected by the mining authorities through careful methods of control. These were intensified during the second world war for purposes of war economy but since the termination of hostilities, there has been an unconscious slackening of control measures, and the incidence of malaria has increased in consequence. The other diseases from which the tribal labour suffer periodically are those of malnutrition, such as stomatitis, night blindness, diarrhaea and dysentry, for which they have to take recourse to their tribal pharmacopoea. Inspite of the low wages, the unsatisfactory conditions of their houses, the high prices of provisions and the liquor booths where they squander away their money, there is a continuous stream of labourers coming in from different parts of Kolhan, as well as non-Ho labourers from the neighbouring Orissa States and a similar stream on their way back to their homes, so that the effects of the mines on the social life of Kolhan cannot be over-estimated. In any case, during the last fifteen years, general awareness of the Hos has increased and demand for hospital care and for medicines has gone up sky high, and the arrangements available for medical aid are not adequate to cope with the demand for aid. Even those who get treatment in the hospital and cared for in the outdoor section of the dispensaries functioning in the tribal areas, are vocal in their protest against the companies, for they even doubt the efficacy of the prescriptions or the genuineness of medicines doled out to them. On many an occasion we had to empty our chest of medicines commonly available in the dispensaries as the people had little confidence in the prescriptions they get there.

A comparison of the conditions in the mines with those prevailing in the tea plantations will show that the emigrants to the latter, have more opportunities of learning and incorporating new cultural

traits than those who work in the mines or frequent there. In the case of the mines which are mostly situated in and around Kolhan, the labourers do not lose touch with their society or their tribal traditions. The *Maghe* and *Baha* festivals in the neighbouring villages attract them, and they can return to their villages when they want to. The natural environment of the Hos still remains the background of their cultural responses. In the case of plantations, the new and unfamiliar environment makes them part with their customs and practices and force them to adopt new ideas and to imitate new practices without much difficulty. 'Behave in Rome as the Romans do,' is the general response of tribal labour in plantations and in liminal towns, and as the possibility of their coming back often to their distant homes is not great, detribalisation if it happens, as it does, has little effect on the culture of the area they migrated from. It is I think a practical suggestion if we could encourage migration of tribal labour in families but that would require proper facilities for accommodation for them, a problem that most of the employers do not want to face. Instead of building sanitary dwelling for the labourers which are one-room tenements and where inspite of the best intentions of the mining authorities, privacy and family life are bound to suffer, the labourers should be subsidised to build houses for themselves which would gradually lead to a permanent mining population in and around the mining centres; it is doubtful if for years to come, mining as it is, would claim a skilled and specialised community permanently depending on it, and so long such a skilled guild does not develop, conditions must be provided for attracting healthy labour.

The constant contacts the labourers today have with the outside world as provided by the markets and the *Dikus* have encouraged new wants and a demand for modern products. To get these wants satisfied, the Hos must work in new conditions of money economy and must labour. They are living in the areas where the industrial development is progressing. The villages, though affording temporary welcome to the labourers cannot hold them long as their prestige is associated with their ability to spend and not merely their periodical return. Thus the open arms of the village are assured them so long as they continue to migrate at intervals to the industrial and mining centres. This affords a constant source of repulsion though the pressure is indirect. This repulsion from the vil-

lage, can be utilised by the employers by catering more liberally to the needs of tribal labour which will tempt the latter towards the centres of employment, and ultimately may develop permanent settlement in their new domicile. It is the problem of securing to tribal labour its social environment and this alone can check detribalisation at the same time it will make tribal labour dependent on the industries thereby encouraging specialisation and skilled labour.

The relation of the Hos with their neighbours, particularly the lower castes of Hindus, the Goalas, the Tantis and Kumahrs, most of whom appear to be immigrants in Kolhan from the adjacent Orissa States, has not been very cordial from the beginning. Jito who makes the pottery for the Hos of Jamda and neighbouring villages was offended when he was asked questions about the *Maghe* festival, for he said, it was a festival of the aboriginal Ho, while Bamia Ho of Sarangbil, who was witnessing the fire-walking ceremony, when he was asked about the beautiful mural decorations of the Kumahrs, said that the Hos were the originator of this mural art, a claim which could not be upheld even by the oldest Ho residents of the village. A Ho may take part in a non-Ho ceremony, a *Diku* may be found dancing in the *Akhara* with the Hos, but each would protest being confused with the other. The lower castes of Hindus domiciled in Kolhan claim superior extraction and culture, and would refer to the aboriginals as *Kols* and *Kuis* and as ignorant savages, but they watch the rites and ceremonies of the Hos, even offer sacrifices to Ho *Bongas*, but always are mindful of their identity. Yet, there is hardly much to show any cultural difference, except in their gods and festivals. The dress worn by the inferior castes, the food they take, the gods they worship, the customs and practices they own, are not such as the Hos could imitate with profit. In the village of Sarangbil, in the *Diku* part of it, for example, half a dozen cases were recorded by us of elopement or desertion by the wife, and many are the cases of adultery and breaches of the sexual code. In Bara Jamda, last year we found a Goala living with his sister-in-law while his brother was working in Jamshedpur and when the propriety of this was questioned by us, he did not even share our concern but looked as if it was an innocent practice. These *Dikus* worship stones and trees, ugly idols and fantastic spirits, they believe in witchcraft and sorcery and easily resort to superstitious beliefs and rites, to cure them-

selves of chronic maladies or loss of crops or domestic worries. Consequently, cultural contacts with the local *Dikus* have not helped the Hos in any way to lead a better and healthier life, nor to meet their difficulties. The contempt of the Hos for some of the 'exterior' castes finds expression in some of their popular games we have already described, as for example in *Mali-Inung*. The Dom, the Dosadh, the Ghasia and also the Chamar are untouchables to the Hos, and they refuse to have contacts with them. A handsome Ghasia youth of Dudhbila, got a severe thrashing for being friendly to a Ho girl, though the latter is still responsive and enamoured of the youngman. A Ho friend of mine narrated the tale of a young Ho girl who committed suicide because her parents would not allow her to go out with a Tanti youngman to whom she was deeply attached. Once they managed to escape from the village, but the girl's brother forcibly brought her back and kept a watch on her movements, till she in utter desperation committed suicide. The parents as well as her brothers were not very much aggrieved at this tragic end, though the mother was in tears for months.

Whatever be the attitude of the vocal *Adibasi* today, the Hos are definitely inclined to Hinduism and they have begun to observe Hindu holidays and festivals. While collecting family budgets in many Ho villages, I could discover that the families spend on clothes and gifts on *Dewali*, *Holi* and *Dusserah*, and in the Chaibassa town and in important *Diku* centres in Kolhan where the *Durga Pujah* is celebrated with great pomp and show, all aboriginal children put on new clothes and even the women don coloured *Saris* and assemble for prayers and *Pujah* along with their caste neighbours. On the *Dusserah* day in Sarangbil, the Hos of several villages gathered to celebrate the festival and a gala dance was arranged in which hundreds of girls participated, a market was held, with provision for amusements and the men busily engaged themselves in their national sport of cock fight, all together was a spectacular event, I had not noticed before. On the other hand, 100 yds away, in the same village, the Kumahrs were performing their mystic rites of fire-walking, in which the Hos, both men and women were merely spectators. An elderly Ho woman, Chandi, who was standing by, when asked particulars of the ceremony, smiled and said 'it was not a Ho ceremony', though several Ho youngmen were claiming the mural decoration on

the house, specially made for the occasion as a Ho originality. The weired rites of the Kumahrs, differ from similar rites of the Hos in one essential: while the Kumahrs have made fire-walking an art, only meant for a few specialists, the Hos participate in their ceremonies without any such formality; men, women and children pool their efforts and share the joys together. The average Ho is attracted to these alien rites and ceremonies by their novelty and probably for want of any counter attraction but the substantial Ho families, however they may profess their tribal religion, have begun to look upon alien customs and rites as their own. Social prestige is associated with the adoption of Hindu practices yet those who claim this privilege are conscious of their economic exploitation by the higher Hindu castes. In an enquiry in Bharbaria, we witnessed a good-humoured discussion about the social status of the Hos, between a number of Ho elders and an aboriginal welfare officer newly appointed by the Kolhan administration. The latter wanted to prove that the *Dikus* in many Ho villages were the antochthonous population, and therefore had similar rights to the Hos who were immigrants, or even greater, but the latter loudly protested and would not yield an inch, if they could, ultimately asking for my verdict, which I was generous to give in their favour. Had it not been for the rights to hold land and the expropriation of tribal land by the *Dikus*, the relation of the Hos with the *Dikus* would have been much healthier. It is on the economic plane that the battle for rights is being fought, and economics had played a decisive role in such matters every where. Many of the castes of *Dikus* enter Kolhan for trading purposes. They get permission to build a house and carry on trade, but gradually they bring their caste men, become landed proprietors ; such cases have happened in Majhgaon, Jaganathpur, Jainta-garh and Haut Gamaria. Evasions of tenancy legislation are pretty subtle and the administration had to amend the law relating to tenure of land in Kolhan which permitted transfer of land between *Adibasis*. In many cases, *Benami* transactions took place, usually in the name of aboriginal servants by the *Dikus* till transfer of land between the *Adibasis* has been banned ; it can only take place with the approval of the Deputy Commissioner or of the officer to whom such power is relegated. The *Dikus* pay higher wages to the local labour, which make it difficult for the Hos themselves to secure it when they need it. The *Dikus* exploit and

usurp tribal land by various methods, fair and foul, lend money and extort exorbitant rates of interest which the Hos can seldom repay. Few outsiders know that this obligation is utilised by free and even forced labour though such is illegal. The result is a disorganisation of the system of economic cooperation within the village. The reforming elements in Kolhan about a decade back, decided even to withdraw from contacts with the *Dikus* altogether and preached non-participation in the festivals and ceremonies of the *Dikus* and in attendant periodical fairs.

We have already referred to the influence of fairs and weekly markets on the Hos. There are four old *Bhattis* or outstills in Kolhan, viz., at Noamundi, Gua, Chaibassa and Monoharpur. Four new ones were added by 1935, they are at Kharband, Haut Gamaria, Tantanagar and Jagannathpur. The effect of these *Bhattis* on the health and happiness of the Hos, we have already discussed before.

There are a number of Upper Primary and six Middle Vernacular Schools in Kolhan. The M.V. Schools are situated at Purnea, Chitimiti, Asura, Dumuria, Sonua and Jaganathpur. Most of these places are *Diku* centres, so that the Ho boys receive instruction along with the *Diku* children. The Headmasters whom we consulted about the proficiency of the aboriginal boys,were all emphatic in claiming that in the lower forms, the Ho students can compete successfully whith their *Diku* colleagues and do even excell them sometimes. This is in conformity with our experience of primitive education in other lands. The Upper Primary Schools are 19 in number. These are situated at

(1) Majhagaon,
(2) Kotgarh,
(3) Kasirah,
(4) Balandia,
(5) Nakahasa,
(6) Donkarata,
(7) Burigora,
(8) Gitilpir,
(9) Kokcho
(10) Nanda,
(11) Rajabasa,
(12) Kanataga
(13) Tonto,

(14) Lagra,
(15) Jaintagarh,
(16) Borkela,
(17) Peteta,
(18) ard (19) Sialjuri and Bhartharia,

There are in Singbhum 9 aboriginal boys' hostels functioning today. They are at Manoharpur, Majhgaon, Bharagora, Manpur, Sundarpur, Chakulia, Khandamanda, and Mohulia, and there is also an aboriginal girls' hostel at Jagannathpur,. In Saraikhela and Kharswan there are two boys' hostels for the aboriginals.

The teachers of the schools mostly, are ill-equipped, if they are *Dikus*, they usually affect a higher standard of life no doubt, but they do not have any special qualifications. The pay of the teachers is such that it does not attract any capable man to such posts. Religious education is banned in schools and the curiosity of the students is stiffled at the start by the dread the students develop for the teacher if he be a *Diku*, and by his ignorance if he be a Ho. One characteristic of the Hos is their indecision. A Ho can not make a decision by himself, he has no initiative either, he must seek the guidance of the village priest, diviner, *Munda* and *Manki* and if need be of the *Deonwa*. Even when he takes a decision he can easily reverse it, should the omens be ominous ; if he has to decide, he very often takes to lots. This he learns from his child-hood ; he decides his games by lottery, his beliefs in reincarnation are reinforced by drawing lots, he gives name to his child by lottery, and decides on dates of ceremonies and festivals by lottery. If the worst comes to the worst, he will take a leaf, tear it into two halves and decide to break off engagements or part with pleasure or profit. The students, however, are receptive, but not critical, lack confidence but are eager to learn. Education in schools, as is being imparted today does not help the children to think for themselves nor to develop personality. The family solidarity protects conservatism within and discountenances latitude in social commensality with the *Dikus*, though inter-tribal marriages are not viewed with much alarm as it did before. Even conversion to Christianity is no bar to cultural reciprocity and if the present is an indication of the future, the stigma of conversion will not stand in the way of tribal solidarity which the politically conscious elders are so keen to cement. In social matters the classes have taken

the initiative for reform and reorientation, but the masses are still lukewarm or definitely uninterested so far as it goes. Kanu Ram Deogam of Dumbisai, once insisted that both the sexes should participate in preliminary negotiations in marriage, including the *Bapala* ceremony, and it was done for the first time in Kolhan, in cremonies in his family, but today only the most advanced and substantial familes are found to follow this lead, the rank and file have not responded to this new initiative, nor is likely to.

There are four dispensaries in Kolhan besides the District Hospital at Chaibassa, and those owned by the industrial and mining companies. The following figures were obtained from the records of the Jagannathpur Dispensary for the five years ending with 1933 :—

DISEASES	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933.
Dysentry	52	36	118	95	157
Diarrhoea		37	127	37	55
Malaria	907	1149	1336	1296	917
Rheumatic fever and Rhematism	19	10	4	1	3
Pneumonia	1	2	7	3	1
Tuberculosis	0	1	9	16	6
Respiratory diseases except Pneumonia		516	492	465	348
Primary Syphillis	0	0	5	22	22
Secondary	2	1	3	3	15
Gonorrhoea	0	5	14	13	25
Worms in the belly (round)	109	131	237	366	367
Diseases of Eye	203	609	213	440	520
Ear	188	232	256	237	207
Skin ;	483	557	685	568	591
Leprosy	0	0	0	5	7

The proportion of tribal patients (mostly Hos) to others, Hindus and Mahomedans is given by the following table:

	HINDU	MAHOMEDAN	TRIBAL
1927	2059	653	1079
1930	2550	875	1585
1931	2639	960	1658
1932	2861	1035	1162
1933	2745	1002	1332

Considering the proportion of the *Dikus* to the total population of the area, the number of *Diku* patients is certainly rather high but the number of tribal patients is significant. This, however, does not explain the incidence of disease or the actual number treated. The same man may be recorded more than once and that is always the case in dispensaries, whose utility is measured by the number of patients, registered in the attendance book, thus keeping the absolute number much smaller. Nevertheless it is certain that the tribal people do come for treatment in these dispensaries and in future their number will increase appreciably. Medical aid, in the hospitals and dispensaries, does not as we have said before, substitute their tribal prescriptions, but only supplement them. In most of the cases of tribal patients, a cure is difficult, because the patients are brought too late, or when they have developed complications. Again, instructions as to diet and medicine are not always followed by the patient or by her relations. Narsing is a case in point, he was suffering from malignant malaria, had developed jaundice and the doctor thought the case to be a hopeless one, yet he was anxious to help him. Every time he was asked to control his diet or regulate it, his wife asked the counsel of the village *Deonwa* and the latter prescribed very rich protein diet including venison and mutton. The case deteriorated till the doctor had to admit his discomfiture, and Narsingh went down the way of all flesh. The majority of the tribal patients come from the higher classes, the labourers who have worked outside and from the *Kajomesin* families, as the village *Deonwa* still holds his clientele among the poorer sections. The Hos suffer mostly from malaria, respiratory diseases, and diseases of the eye, ear and skin. Lack of vitality due to the insufficient food they eat, deficiency of vitamins in their diet, and excess of drinking, lead to these diseases, which also explain premature death among the Hos. Venereal diseases were practically unknown among the Hos of the interior, and most of the cases that came for treatment were from the *Dikus*. A few cases, that came to our notice, were traceable to the association of Ho women with *Diku* men or with Ho labourers who had worked outside Kolhan. In the urban and mining centres the incidence of V. D. is naturally greater and it results from indiscriminate sexual intercourse. So long as premarital license was confined within the tribe, the sexual diseases were confined to the delinquent elements. To-day, Ho women often

live with *Diku* men at Chaibassa, Majhgaon and Jagannathpur, and catch the taint which they transmit to the tribe. Much therefore should depend upon the efficiency of measures of mental and social hygiene, and on propaganda against the racial poisons, and this fairly and squarely, is a responsibility of the administration. The war has brought many an ill to the Ho society and both drinking and diseases have increased in alarming proportions. The tribal elders find their influence on the wane, and political expediency make them reticent with regard to social lapses. The youth of the two sexes are more independent, and public opinion has gone to sleep, as it were, a tragic situation indeed. Many are the couples that one can see on the fields and high roads, drunk and disorderly and without decorum, and youth seem to be in revolt against tribal mores and etiquette, an unpleasant aftermath of war. Never did I see such wanton and at the same time such indifference to public opinion as we had noticed during the festivals in Kolhan last year, and never did I find the tribal leaders so deliberately indifferent and lukewarm in discussing this tribal pathology, which should receive the condemnation from the elders in no uncertain terms. A few years of war, and Kolhan was not a scene of it, should not make such a colossal change in tribal outlook on morality possible, but it has, and it is imperative to diagnose the roots of this tragedy. A change from a barter economy to a money-dominated one, has been going on for decades but that by itself should not tempt the people to misbehave particularly in an area, protected from contacts and enjoying a big dose of indirect rule. The political consciousness that one finds growing among the *Adibasis*, should on the other hand, make the people close their ranks, and develop a national interest in their traditional culture ; this is growing but slow. Does it mean that the dis-organisation of tribal life has reached the depth of despair ? An answer must come from the administration and tribal elders.

The advent of the railways and the improvement in roadways have facilitated the movement of people and have also increased marketting facilities. Although the Hos have hardly realised the value of time, they seem to have developed ideas of personal comforts, so that whenever they have to undertake a journey of a few miles which they had usually covered on foot, they take the train

or bus, though even to-day they do not travel alone or want to either. On roadways, even if they do not possess the requisite fare, they will higgle with the bus conductor and would agree to be carried some distance on payment of a fraction of the scheduled fare and then cover the remainder on foot. The colonies of traders and labourers that have sprang up at the stations on road-sides and bus stops, depends on the Hos for their requirements and this has induced the Hos to grow vegetables and they even started keeping cows to supply milk for the tea stalls, in these centres. The Hos are also recruited for construction works and road gangs. The railways have aided in the opening up of Kolhan. The rich raw materials both vegetable and mineral, as well as the capacity of the tribal people for consuming manufactured goods, are too great to be overlooked. As the Hos are not yet in a position to take their future into their own hands, the more they come into contacts with the outside world, the better it is for them. The exploitation of their economic environment by the *Dikus* is not an unmixed evil, though steps should be taken by the administration to check unfair competition which may eventually destroy their will to live and disorganise their personality and group development. Whatever progress the Hos have made, is only skin deep, and exploitation of the Hos by the *Dikus* is easy, such is being done by the excise shopkeepers, traders in hide and skin, itinerant merchants, mobile smiths and sellers of trinkets and jewellery. One sees scents, oils, soaps and cosmetic and other toilet products even in the interior markets, a sight which forebodes evil.

Finally, we come to the influence of alien religions and the Missions on the cultural life of the Hos. Here the Hos are on more solid ground, for the ditribalisation has not affected their religious life to the extent it has, say among the Oraons, or the Mundas. The advantages of the various seasonal festivals, which are integrated with their economic life, make it difficult for the Hos to abandon them or to show less courtesy to the priest and officials whose role is still regarded as beneficial, if not effective. The conditions among the Mundas who had to suffer a lot of hardship from the hands of alien landlords and from their greed for extortion and expropriation had aided Missionary enterprise, and that is why we have a substantial element of Christian converts among them. The economic assistance rendered by the Missions to the primitive tribes of Chota Nagpur Plateau

has been ably described by Roy in his monograph on the Mundas and their Country. Wherever the Missions have established their stations, the people of the neighbourhood have sought their aid and have gratefully acknowledged the assistance received. Missionaries were not all bad, the Church being a learned vocation, it had always attracted brains and the learning and competence of the missionaries where they have worked for the tribal people selflessly, if they have, produced a respect for the person and the creed of the missionary, so that the transfer of allegiance from the tribal religion to Christianity has not provoked urnest. The motive to change one's religion has normally been economic particularly among the tribal people, and the converts have been held not by an appeal to the gospel of Christianity, or by a reorientation of tribal attitude to religion. The tribal people have been urged to discard their faith, their traditional beliefs in *Bongas*, in witchcraft, and sorcery and have been promised material reward, immediate or distant. Any people who struggle for survival must adopt tools for survival, and religion with the Hos has been a tool of adaptation something by which they can maintain a friendly relationship with the power that is *Bonga*, something which enables them to secure a bumper crop, and so obtain a sort of social security. When it comes to placating evil spirits, or Hindu deities, the Hos have always responded with practical sagacity and a transition from their indigenous faith has not been very uphill, but then, the conditions in Kolhan have been different from those obtaining in the Ranchi district; landlordism is absent and the ecomomic status of the average Ho, is better than that enjoyed by the cognate tribes. So the missionary influence in Kolhan has been insignificant. The converts were outcasted but to-day many live in peace with their heathen compatriots, and have even disowned their loyalty to the Church. They belonged, and for all practical purposes have returned to the tribal fold. The political expediency of uniting the various sections of the tribal people, has been clearly visualised by the politically conscious elements and Christianity has no scope to-day or in the near or distant future. During the war and afterwards, many of the Mission houses, and even Churches were requisitioned for the army and the transfer of power, made conditions uncertain so much so that many establishments were closed or they were handed over to 'native' christians. A new situation seems to have developed, by the return of the missionaries, and subtle

methods are being adopted by the missionaries in preaching the text of the scripture and in uplift work particularly among the students. The missionaries openly say that they do not want converts, but they would ask the tribal people to attend Church service, for the fun of it, so that for the future, the work of the missionaries will be educative and ameliorative and not aggressively selfish. But the questions that I found on the lips of many of my aboriginal firends, which must have been felt but not expressed before is, why ? Is it still necessary for the Missions to remain in occupation ? Even Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru came in for criticism in an assembly of tribal leaders the otherday at Chaibassa, for allowing the missionaries to return. The missionaries if they want to work among the tribals must change their approach to tribal problems, by a spiritual emphasis rather than a materialistic one, veiled or overt, as they have so long done, and quality and not quantity of the converts should be the aim to-day of any religion which flourishes on conversion. Missionary enterprise in education was necessary when education was not emphasised as a nation building department, but to-day India has turned a new chapter of hope and achievement which is anchored on education, primary and adult, and the working of Missionary educational institutions can easily be handed over to the nationals of the country without fear of lowering the standard of education or the efficiency of those taught in these institutions. The desire on the part of the educated Hos to capture and run these institutions for them and by them is only a symptom of the awareness that the educated youth of India has developed, and the sooner this is recognised by the alien agencies interested in education the better it is for the future of the institutions run by them.

A tribal culture has to be viewed in the light of its historical and social background. As for a country, so for a people, economics is not everything, neither its social heritage, unless the latter fulfils a purpose and a design for living. It is useless to harp on a people's past unless the people can adjust its pretensions and professions in the context of material problems affecting its life and happiness. In various parts of India, the changing economic environment has forced tribal and backward people to new moorings, an industrial economy has superseded the time old leanings to agriculture and a sedentary life that agriculture encourages, but such transition from one economy to the other has not helped the tribes to effect a permanent adjustment to conditions found inevitable or inescapable. The problems of tribal life need to be viewed in the light of tribal dynamics. Where the tribal population are facing bleak economic prospects in their own settelments, the problem of adjustment can be solved by a reorientation of their economic life without troubling about a compromise with their primitive social structure ; where, on the other hand, the tribal elements live away from their home, as for example, in the plantations and liminal towns, divorced from the social or communal life customary in the villages, the problem is to maintain a continuty of their cultural life. Industrialisation in India, has been introduced without considerations of local or territorial conditions, without much planning, and it has produced complications, particularly in tribal cultures. It is a fact that many of the Indian industries depend entirely on tribal labour. The tea industry, for example, has been entirely built up with *Adibasi* labour from Chota Nagpur and Chhattishgarh. It is claimed that six lakhs of tribal people from Chota Nagpur are permanently settled today in Assam for tea alone. The tribal labour as is engaged in industries is still of an indirect kind as most of it is 'contract labour' and the conditions of tribal labour are not directly the concern of the industries which indirectly employ them through accredited contractors. Manbhum supplies most of the coal requirements and the coal mining populations are almost entiretirely *Adibasis*. Singhbhum alone raises enough iron ore to feed the entire metallurgical needs of India, also of other Asiatic countries, and most of the labour is supplied by the tribal populations in and around the mining centres. Indian copper corporation at Mosaboni and Moubhandar employ tribal labour and the Jute Mills at Calcutta

and its neighbourhood draw upon tribal labour in response to the needs of their maintenance and expansion. Even urban labour in Calcutta and agricultural labour in rural Bengal draw on tribal sources.

To-day, under the prevailing economic conditions, one would think that the disintegration of tribal life is as real as the lack of social solidarity in the rural communes. Yet where tribal solidarity has waned in consequence of detribalisation, a new cement has been found in political interests and the *Adibasi* population in some parts are showing signs of an awakening. This new political consciousness has sidetracked the problems of tribal maladjustment particularly in Chota Nagpur, Assam and the Orissa States. It is this political aspect that has brought the tribal problem out of cold storage, and a priority has been stamped on tribal welfare activities in different parts of the country.

Experiences of the past particularly in respect of the treatment and care of the depressed castes, are likely to help rather than hinder a realistic approach to tribal problems, and it is the need of the hour to assess with competence and sympathy, the problems of tribal adjustments and tribal welfare. An alien culture is always handicapped by a lack of perspectives with regard to ameliorative measures needed to tide over the present crisis in tribal life, but the tribal leadership is not sufficiently alive to the goal of tribal life, though an intolerance and an inferiority complex among tribal spokesmen are aiding the forces of estrangement. The search for a panacea is human, but it has always eluded our grasp, so it always will. There is no one solution to tribal problems, there is no one common platform to demand it. There are levels of cultural development and there are different patterns of life that the tribes own. The Gonds of Hyderabad live under conditions which make a certain plan of action necessary. The Mundas and Santhals require a different plan for rehabilitation as the conditions in Bihar have made the tribal elements conscious of their strength and of importance of their common front against exploitation organised or unorganised.

The plans of tribal rehabilitation must recognise the cultural levels of the tribes and not be drawn on set formulas as is being done. If Hyderabad has followed one plan, Madras or Bihar need not follow the footsteps of Hyderabad, for conditions are not the same. In some cases, for example. prior to education and employment of tribal

teachers, the problem of bread must be solved. K. J. Save points out in the case of the Warlis, 'An ardent reformer will unhesitatingly say that all improvement must be educational and the primary education is the basis of everything. This indeed cannot be disputed. But in the case of the Warlis, prior to education, the problem of bread must be solved. The natural instinct of hunger must first be satisfied. In case of people who hardly get bread twice a day literacy is a tall talk. A hungry man refuses to digest anything but food. Time and again it has been pointed out in these pages that poverty is the way of life of these people. To enable them to get their food is therefore the supreme need.' Literacy is still concidered primary and has been given top priority. In some States of the South, primary education has been compulsory but the literacy figures have not recorded an appreciable increase. Schools exist but they do not function. Teachers and parents are often found to conspire to defeat the purpose of education by allowing the students full liberty to engage in domestic or rural economy of the village and schools overflow with students when Inspectors come to visit such institution only to disperse on departure of the visiting staff. The teachers get their paltry remuneration from the State coffers but their immediate needs are catered to by the villagers who are grateful to the former for such effective aid. As the rural life of the country stands today, in most parts literacy has no meaning or significance unless it be an aid to livelihood. Thousands of villages in India donot have a post office and millions are born and die without posting a letter or having to read one in one's life time. The poverty of the Bhils of Gujarat is proverbial. The Bhils in some parts are labelled as "Criminal" and are treated as a criminal tribe, registered or unregistered. In one Taluka of the Panchmahal district, a few years ago, we saw the records of 21 dacoities committed by the Bhils. Gangs of 20 to 50 Bhils have been arrested for looting carts, the spoil when divided between them could not help them even with a day's food requirements and yet they committed such loot or dacoity and faced criminal proceeding in court. Lack of means of livelihood, chronic destitution and criminal neglect of their needs and requirement by the administration have forced the Bhils to a criminal career. Chronic poverty and destitution, have become the pattern of Bhil life, and they have begun to think of their incompetence in terms of their traditions and mythology which explain their

miserable plight to-day. For example, the Bhils own a tradition of kinship with Parvati to whose spouse, Mahadev, they went for *dahej* or bride price. The myth says how five Bhils, said to be brothers of Parvati went to seek bride price from her lord and the latter refused them saying that he had nothing to give except the bull, 'Nandi.' The Bhils were told that the hump of the animal contained untold wealth but the Bhils could not understand what it meant, killed the bull and found nothing in the hump. The foolish act has condemned the Bhils to a life of poverty and squalor.

It is on the plane of sympathy and understanding that the future welfare of the tribal people need be viewed, for knowledge if divorced from sympathy, is not likely to help, on the other hand tribal problems may assume hydra-headed proportions. Distrust flourishes on ignorance and lack of sympathy, and already the cup of tribal life in most parts is full of miseries.

In the tribal areas of Bihar, which is to-day inhabited by a large number of tribal groups, the process of transition is pretty rapid. Old mores and customs, tribal insitutions and the self-sufficiency of the rural communes, all have given way before a new consciousness dawned on the youths of both the sexes, through contacts with the alien elements of population domiciled in their midst. The social solidarity and cooperation between the members of the same village which protected families from starvation or provided the necessary means to indigent families for rehabilitation are not evident today, and there is a considerable amount of bitterness and dissension among the villagers though the tribal society is functioning under the old system of village tenure and leadership. The global war had complicated the social life of the tribes and the avenues of employment that it opened up before the people served to disintegrate family life and all that it stands for

Excessive brideprice, customary among the tribes, has made it impossible for indigent families to provide bride to otherwise eligible young men and bride capture and elopement have become too frequent. The break-up of the old village economy which catered for the needs and requirements of incompetent or destitute families, by subscribing to the village fund maintained by the headman usually in kind, for meeting the expenses of marriage and social ceremonies of those who could not provide the means required for these functions, has

shifted the emphasis from legal form of marriage to companionship or even to concubinage and the crop of inheritance cases in tribal society to-day may be taken as a symptom of the instability of family relationship or as the result of marital maladjustment, a chronic situation in some parts. The intensity of hatred one meets in tribal parts against men and women suspected of witchery which is taken to be the immediate cause of their social and economic incompetence is another manifestation of economic instability of the primitive tribes in the new set up. Another significant effect of the transition in tribal economy is the shift of tribal leadership from the hereditary tribal elders to the detribalised youth of both the sexes. So long the tribal society was integrated and strong, it was not possible for individual members of the tribe to live away from home and work for independent livelihood. To-day the scope for employment outside the village, independent of village economy, has brought the dissenters, adventures, and the needy out of their moorings, and they no longer look up to the rural communes for assistance or even for redress of their woes and hardships.

The Hos are overwhelmed by the superiority of their neighbours. Their dress, their food, their customs and practices have no place in the general set up of the district they inhabit or the people with whom they come into contact. When they adopt the dress, food and ways of life of their neighbours' they do it to look better, to be considered more advanced and to gain social prestige. But everytime they adopt alien customs and mores, items of material culture of their advanced neighbours, they have to drop out some of their indigenous traits, and also certain values.

When they adopt or imitate alien habits and ways of life, they find themselves cut off from their own tribesmen, but are not considered equal to those whom they imitate or whose ways of life they adopt. In some cases, this failure has developed an inferiority complex among a section of tribal people, while many have fallen back on their own systems of beliefs, values and activities. A revivalism is manifest today among the advanced section of tribal population, and traditional beliefs and practices are beginning to receive a new appraisal. This new revivalism finds its natural outlet in the growth of tribal solidarity, in a political consciousness, which manifests itself in the *Adibasi* movement, a sub-nationalism, which is the result of contra-accultura-

tion. Tribal art, myths and legends, folk songs and other form of oral literature, are being revived and the intolerance, the detribalised elements showed towards drums, dances and divination, has been replaced by an active interest in showing the skill and merit of tribal dances and in eulogising the role of dance in economic rehabilitation or as palliative concommitants. To take an example, one educated Ho was keen to prove the role of dance in European culture, and took pride in the fact of abandon, that normally follows in the wake of festivities—a trait, which he said linked their indigenous culture with that of the Europeans. The tribal art of the Kumahrs of Kolhan is claimed as originally having belonged to the Hos, and the fire walking demonstrated to us by the Kumahrs of Sarangbil, was explained to us as originally invented by them, a statement difficult to substantiate. Even marriage by elopement, or *Oportipi* was claimed as a trait of advanced culture. and the proto-historic civilisations of Harappa and Mohenjodaru, they would swear, to be their own contribution. Thus tribal prestige is to-day in owning what they had, or believed to have possessed and in restoring values they lost, though one can easily detect the conscious and deliberate efforts they are making to get these claims accepted.

On the part of the *Dikus* settled in their land, there is a grim determination to recognise this change of attitude and in its reorientation in the light of the new context, and deep in their hearts they have realised the necessity of looking at things from the angle of incipient nationalism among the *Adibasis*. But prejudices die hard, and often the *Dikus* may be found to quarrel with the *Adibasis*, for not agreeing to serve them as they did before, or even to swear at the low breed and their mean demeanour which virtually is a reaction against the new set up in which the tribal people refuse to serve them as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

The tribal villages still function, the village organisation still continues, the head-man is still a recognised authority and the standard of living in average tribal home has not appreciably increased, though individual families who have gone out and come back with money, have a better standard today. Customary needs and requirements are met today in the same way, though the alignment of families is based more on mutuality, than on communal considerations. But there is a new hope and a new ambition surging in the mind of every

man or woman in tribal India, a desire to profit by the transfer of power, an unseemly haste in cashing whatever comes to the counter, and pretend injured innocence in all matters that pertain to administrative initiative. I asked a *Manki* of a *Pir* who had come to spend a holiday, with the family of *Manki* of Bharbharia, if he approved of the feverish efforts of the local administration with regard to the introduction of the *Thana* system, and pointed out the benefits that may reach every door in Kolhan; he smiled and said "This is a design for tightening the yoke in Kolhan, and not to help or rehabilitate the countryside. 'Why, don't you see, Dr. Saheb, the Government has no confidence in the tribal officers, they cannot be depended upon in emergency, so the police must come in on some pretext or the other." The reaction is not hostile but informed.

The sensitiveness of the average man and woman in Kolhan, does not compromise with situations in which the Hos are regarded as silent spectators or ignored apathetically by their alien neighbours. The Hos are anxious to come together with other people, particularly the aliens with higher standard of living, and higher pretensions to social status. But they are proud of their culture, and claim the country as their own. The *Khuntkattidar* families are used to certain privileges, and they have learnt to bolster up their values and have preserved them at great costs. The response of the Hos to administrative measures, or to kind treatment or sympathetic handling is not uniform. Even in ordinary daily life, the substantial families are fond of pomp, show, dignity and status and even if the means of families are low, the desire to show off is by no means insignificant. Here, we think, rehabilitation of tribal life in Kolhan should be attempted on lines different from that of other tribes. A general uplift and measures towards it, does not appeal to all sections of the Hos. On many occasions, we have spoken of all round improvement, equality of treatment, and major problems of tribal life, but in every case, the answers have showed ambitions, hopes and expectations of classes rather than the masses. When a Ho speaks of his tribal achievement to-day he has begun to speak of individuals, rather than of the tribe; the intelligentia which is microscopically meagre claim posts and positions which will raise the prestige of families and benefits like the sinking of a well, repair of a tank, or irrigation facilities, donot command as much enthusiasm as does the news of the success of an indvdual in securing

a high paid job, or an University degree. The class mentality is highly developed in the Kolhan today, and the tribal prestige consists in raising individual status and satisfaction of class vanity. Here, we should think, the administration can effect greater contribution to tribal welfare by tackling problems on the basis of stratification, rather than forging an all-out offensive. One of the ways in which the standard of tribal life can be raised among the Hos is that side by side with provision for mass education, both primary and adult, the administration should make available liberal dose of help to ambitious families so that the role of saviours may be reserved for the educated sons and daughters of substantial families, those who have any pretensions to *Khuntkatti* rights in the village. The educated Hos have already an influence in social life disproportionate to their numerical strength and if more of them are thrown into the society, the benefits are likely to be greater and adjustments to new conditions spectacular. The Hos resent the aliens, and are highly suspicious of their motives, but the educated Hos can and will help to achieve what the administration should stand for, viz., all round tribal progress and welfare. The nascent nationalism that manifests itself in the movement for political rights, will keep detribalisation in bounds and educated tribes may not be mere carbon copies of their advanced neighbours.

In the Kolhan, there is a resentment among the people against tribal officers, for their unsympathetic attitude and grabbing of power for selfish and personal ends. The discontent has been fomented in some cases by touts and agents of lawyears, and the economic conditions have aggravated distress, so that the demands of a higher standard of life which the tribal officers have adopted, cannot be met without stooping to malpractices, extortion and cunning. A change of tribal officers is indicated and in some *Pirs*, new officers have been chosen for administrative expediency. But this does not warrant the appointment of persons who do not command respect or that of the appointment of non-tribals as tribal officers. The *Thana* system is being viewed with misgivings and suspicion, and whatever be the initial success of the new initiative, the displacement of the traditional control by the *Thana* system, whether deliberate or not will recoil on the administration sooner or later. It is necessary to put the new duties now devolving on the *Thana* officers, to educated youngmen of the community or intelligent persons among them, whose official role and

usefulness will slowly act as corrective to the general laxity of tribal control and the lapses of the tribal officers. The clan and village solidarity that still exists, must not be disintegrated by imposing a system which apparently seems expedient, but can work as an agency for detribalisation. In one of our ethnographic tours in Kolhan we met a smart *Thana* officer who was asked to help us in our enquiries. He read upto the Vth standard, could not speak the tribal dialect but possessed a common sense and cunning. In his broken dialect, he begun to promise an Utopia for the Ho villages, a well in every house, a canal to irrigate every village, a grain *Gola* every ten families, plenty of rewards for good conduct and school with free food and free lodging to every Ho child, boy and girl, provided they listen to him and help the visitors whom he interpreted to them as having come for a survey of their sorry economic plight. He got hold of a few people who came more from fear than from conviction but others laughed at his promises and sneered at him for his indiscretion. Six months later, we found the same man in a tip top official kit, promoted to the rank of an Inspector and placed in charge of the training of *Thana* officers. He asked my blessings, I could not withold it remembering the old adage 'nothing succeeds like success.' This is how the *Thana* system is going to work, its utility is to the administration greater than its projected concern for tribal welfare. If the inferior officers in tribal areas, the forest-guards, and other personnel of the ministerial or supervising establishments, teachers of tribal schools, need be recruited from tribal population and this has already been conceded by the various State' administrations, the appointment of *Thana* officers must be made from the educated or otherwise competent tribal youth of both the sexes.

Every village has a contingent of able bodied intelligent and hard-working women who cannot expect to settel down for want of suitable proposals or the incompetence of the youngmen to provide the necessary *Gonong* or means to maintain life. These girls fade away without doing good to the society, their time is ill-spent and where they find a shelter they drudge to keep it. Education of the girls, their training in the professions and vocations will help the tribe to raise its standard of living at the same time these girls can be put to gainful occupations which will contribute to the country's prosperity. There are several professions in India where women are needed, but they are not attracted to. Nursing is a neglected profession in

India, and the entrants are not of quality nor the conditions of service so attractive as to pull the women towards this profession. The free and unfettered social life the tribal women lead in their villages, the hardwork they are capable of putting in and the unemployment in the tribal areas, are colossal waste of India's man-power. During the last war a considerable number of tribal women, generally from the Christian community from the Ranchi district in Bihar were recruited to the W.A.C.I. and they filled many important technical and non-technical posts and acquitted themselves with credit. The tribal women trained in the vocations can adjust more freely than their sisters from middle class families and they are a healthy lot. Today they spend their time in wasteful journeys to and fro, from end to end of the tribal country and even a 20 miles' trek to a weekly market with an anna worth of *Sag* or leafy vegetable is wistfully looked forward. In one weekly market in Chibassa we estimated the total value of commodities, mostly produce of their kitchen gardens to be Rs. 11/- at the prevailing market rate and the sellers, mostly women, numbered 84 persons. Similarly the buyers who ususally buy a pice of salt or a pice worth of tobacco leaf, or an anna worth of kerosene oil, number thousands, and the total purchases of a village ten miles away from the market amounted to Rs. 3/8/- and the number of purchasers were as high as sixty. The crowd in a market is not composed only of buyers and sellers, there are many whose interest is in gossip or drink at the booths, though rice beer forms even to-day the main fare in them. Every woman in Kolhan spends half of her waking hours in work which involves walking miles away and back and if there is an urban centre in the neighbourhood, or a railway station, she will undertake a journey of several miles morning and evening to sell an anna worth of vegetables or a seer of rice, coming back with a packet of salt or any other small needs of the family. A colossal waste of man-hour energy which can be avoided by proper planning and cooperative efforts.

The fact that labour unrest in tribal India has not upset technical development or impeded production in factories and mines, as it has done elsewhere where industries are put in gear by non-tribal labour, must be an argument for special treatment of the tribal labour. The main cause for steady, and peaceful labour recruited from tribal sources is its migratory character, which makes the units change, so that permanent labour population is difficult to create particularly in the

mining centres. The tribal elements invade the mines driven by urgent needs of cash, either to pay *Malgoozari* or to pay off debts incurred for unproductive purposes, like ceremonies and festivals, and as soon as the requisite amount is obtained by service, the labourers go home to spend it in the village, coming back only when it is imperative to do so, or when tempted by the contractors with high rewards. The conditions in labour centres, particularly with regard to housing, sanitation, and the hours of work, donot appeal tothe tribals, and the period they remain in residence, becomes in fact a long wait for a cash transaction, as it were, and there is no other attraction for the tribal elements who resist detribalisation and wistfully look towards the village, to return and live their tribal life. The indirect method of employment in mines, for example, where the labourers are recruited and engaged by the contractors, help the Companies, to transfer their obligations to the former, so that even genuine grievances do not get redress and contractors always shield themselves by blaming the companies concerned, and the latter escape by being impersonal in the matter of labour management. But this is not likely to continue forever, and in the interests of tribal labour as also of the country's needs for production, a new approach to tribal labour is urgent and imperative.

Technical development is closely linked up with the technical competence of labour personnel, and the latter can only be raised by a permanent labour population and one depending entirely on the industry or industries employing them. To-day aboriginal labour ignorant and unorganised as it is, does not even know their rights and possibilities, and they have no permanent interest in their work, neither they are aware of the limits of their sinews, or of their endurance. They work like work-animals, treated as such, exhibited like specimens and controlled by inertia and circumstantial factors. There is no arrangement for training in skilled labour, and they learn the work by trial and error, and they always feel an inferiority complex in presence of non-tribal labour.

If aboriginal labour has not added ferment to the boilling pot of miseries, the labourers elsewhere are facing, it is no reason why their case should go by default. In Chota Nagpur the aboriginal tribes supply most of the unskilled labour in factories and industrial units, and these are rural in the sense, that they have no permanent home in their places of work, and visit their home and families as and when

percent of the profits of the industrial and mining concerns, which are fabulous or were in the past, has been spent in rural welfare activities or in rural reconstruction, firms like the Tatas, of course, being an exception. In Singhbhum, big mining companies have earned rich dividends for decades with aboriginal labour, but the villages which have put the mining on its feet, have not benefitted by the sinking of a well or by an endowed school, not to speak of medical aid or sanitation and health activities. The much maligned missionaries, inspite of their interested approach to tribal culture, will get the palm in any impartial enquiry into the welfare activities touching tribal life. The industries have received more than they have parted with though *Dharmasalas* and other benefit schemes figure in urban economy in lieu of conscience money for sins that are traditionally regarded as avenging themselves in the world to come, if not on this side.

The mines in Singhbhum employ aboriginal labour and the miners' remuneration even to-day is not sufficient to keep families of miners above the poverty line. The wages paid lose their real value in exchange of commodities and services essential for survival in health and vigour, and the holes in their pockets are too many before the wages are transferred into value. The *Thicadar* must have a slice as commission for obtaining the employment and as interest for the money advanced before taking up job and during the period in between the date of joining and the first pay day. The liquor shop always claims a substantial share of the wage, the *Panwala* must have his share, and trinkets and tinsels vie with food, and win the battle of loyalty. The income that remains for food and other pressing needs is too insignificant to pull the labourer through, and demands on their income, other than for food, always claim a priority. The result is, that the intake of food is not sufficient to meet mere physical needs and the hardwork that mining entails, is done at the expense of muscles and flesh that they possess in lean quantity. An estimate of the calorie requirements and the intake of food was done for mining labour in Gua and the following table will be educative.

It will be seen from the Table below that the tribal miners receive very inadequate food, qualitatively and quantitatively and even the basic calorie requirements are hardly met by the food intake. The elderly group (41-50 yrs) gets a little more than what the younger

miners get out of food intake but if this level of consumption of food remains, the question of vitality and survival of the tribal labour must be matters of deep concern to the industries and the administration, both. A few handfuls of rice in a *lota*, cooked once a day serves as the food of a labourer, who has to put in 8 hours of hard labour, though

Age Groups (1) Students (206) (2) Miners (139)	Average Basal Metabolism or basic calorie requirement as a function of S/A			Total Calories required	Calories obtained from food intake
	Stature (cms)	Weight (Kgrs)	Basal Metabolism (hour)		
(1) 12 yrs	151·43	37·86	51·24	2612·72	Not Ascertained
(1) 13 yrs	154·83	39·83	53·20	2664·48	
(1) 14 yrs	159·33	44·91	57·10	2769·04	
(1) 15 yrs	162·10	47·87	59·48	2830·24	
(2) 25-30 yrs	160 6	45·37	57·76	2784·80	1886·9
(2) 31-40 yrs	162·3	49·00	60·12	2847·12	1939·7
(3) 41-50 yrs	161·1	48·91	59·32	2826·00	2128·00

The total calories required in twenty-four hours as shown in the last but one column of the table have been calculated by dividing the day into three eight-hour periods (1) eight hours' sleep (2) eight hours' rest and (3) eight hours' work. In the first case the basal calories per hour have been multiplied by eight; in the second case some allowance has been made for minor activities and so 30% of B. M. R. together with B. M. R. have been multiplied by eight to get the total for eight hours' rest, and in the last case 960 calories have been added to the product of the B. M. R. and the time. These 960 cal give the additional requirement when the muscles are doing strenuous labour. Besides these considerations 300 cal have been added to every age group for the energy spent in locomotion and travelling throughout the day. The total of all these give the values tabulated in the last but one column of the table.

a large number of them can have a rice meal, a square one per day, if they choose to, and the latter is regarded as a satisfactory consumption level by the labouring miners. If the entire income of the miners could be utilised for food and necessities, and every miner can fall back on his land or can supplement his income from labour and the occasional yields from his fields, the situation would not have been so bad, but the commitments of the mining labour on different fronts, if equated with the income they receive are too inadequate to balance the other side, and under-nutrition, disease and consequent absenteeism, pull their weight to bring down the level of necessary food intake. In the villages, knowledge has began to dispel superstition with regard

to food, and vegetables have become a necessity but when the same rural elements come to the mines, they forego vegetables and eat rice with chillies or with a little lentil soup, the latter being a luxury; land being plenty, it is possible to farm part of it, and aboriginal labour may be drafted to produce vegetables for the Companies, to be supplied at cost to the labourers, who must be made to consume them in their own interest and in the interest of the Companies themselves. Education and propaganda, cooperative societies of the multiple benefit type, and better living societies, periodical medical examination of the miners and facilities for medical aid, are some of the basic requirements in the mining centres, but the most important welfare measure needed is a change from impersonal to personal relationship between the employer and the employed. It is too much to expect this in these days of large scale and mechanised production but the least that can be done is the owning by the employer, or the firm, of direct responsibility for the management of labour and not condemn the tribal labour to the mercy of the *Thicadars* and contractors whose interest in labour is temporary, and even does not last throughout the period of the contract they are engaged in work. Tribal labour is traditionally disciplined, leadership is still nascent, and rural ties are not yet disintegrated. Tribal labour working in families, is stable and responsive—and the needs of their rehabilitation are not too exacting. Mines in India can continue to draw upon tribal labour, and be free from labour troubles for decades, if only the managements respond to the simple requirements of the tribals; these are bound to increase in proportion to neglect and apathy shown by the managements, and to the spread of discontent through organised agencies which to-day flourish on ignorance and imaginary grievances.

Tribal dances, even to-day, can be a source of healthy recreation and an integrating force if encouraged, and occasional dance meets arranged by the industries, and individual and group skill recognised by awards of merit, will surely aid restoration of values and cement social ties. Annual sport meets in which tribal games must figure prominently, competition in the use of bow and arrow, running, climbing and tracking game in the forests, duly recognised as events of tribal interest, will go a great way in stabilising tribal cultures.

Literary associations, circulating libraries, essay competitions, health activities such as providing *Akharas* or gymnasiums, better

living societies, organised distribution of reward for successful farming, ceremonial planting of trees in the tribal villages and formation of youth squads to develop the spirit of rivalry and healthy competition between them, even to protect the plant they grow, and rewards liberally provided for good crops, clean surroundings of villages, better dress and health of the people and control of crime, should provide the necessary incentive to tribal life. Cinema shows, with the tribal life as their background, and tribal achievements as their themes, can do a lot in raising the stature of tribal cultures, and the evil effects of tribal inertia, lazy habits, of witchcraft, sorcery and divination must be screened before them to enable them to evaluate their indigenous cultural traits, and aid them in struggles for adaptation. The merit of family life, the reciprocity of obligations and mutuality that exist in the villages, the competence and skill of their youth to scale up the ladder of cultural progress by filming the success of students in their studies, or organising cooperative efforts to remedy social ills, are the methods that would help to organise personal and group-life in the context of the changing canvas of tribal ideas and aspirations. Tribal response to cultural dynamics depends upon personalities, and group mores can be changed through personality development, a process which should be the most vigilant concern to those who have the tribal welfare at heart and work for it. In a battle of loyalties to the tribal pattern of life and the new order that has been forced on the primitive people to-day, even now the former wins the palm, if only the values are expressed through examples and deeds rather than by merely suggesting a passive link with the past. The past must be understood in the context of the present, and the present will stabilise the future if it can find its fulfilment in the moorings of the past. There was no golden age, there can be none in the future. Life is a process of adjustment and in its unfolding, it has thrown out individuals who are misfits and the latter have both helped and hindered cultural progress; the misfits are misfits in the context of a dynamic setting, and if only, the misfits could be fitted into the structure of life, the process that is life will continue to unfold itself, adjust and march on to man's destiny through an integration and synthesis that constitute the core of the dynamics of culture change and culture crises.

APPENDIX I

SOME FOLK-TALES OF KOLHAN

BUIDU BURA ONDO CHUTU REYA KAHANI

BUIDU BURA AND THE STORY OF A RAT

Munu-reya kaji chi musing din Buidu Bura Siutanetaikena
Old story that one day Buidu the old man was ploughing

Ondo sitan-sitante miad chutu sinum tada. E n t e
and while poughing one rat ploughing found. Then

Buidu Bura chutu do goji teya namtana, mendo chutu kaji keda
Buidu (old) rat to kill wanted, but rat said

A! Buidu Bura alom gojinga, ain miad esu bugin buding
"O ! Buidu Bura don't kill me, I one very good trick

jagarama." Ente en chutu do lijare tondom-kite oate idi-kia
will tell you." Then that rat in cloth binding home he took ;

Chutu mi chipud leka baba jom-keto kaji-keda, Buidu
rat one handful of paddy eating said, "O ! Buidu (old)

Bura tising karamcka ko ama oare sim-ko-jom-teyako-kapaji
to-day foxes your house in to eat your fowls pro-

tana, enamente am miad datarom sabukayate simko-cha duar rey ukua
posing therefore you one sickle holding fowl house on door

kanome ondo bolo-tan redo-ko tombakome,, Buidu Bura
remain hiding and they entering strike them." Buidu

enkage rika keda ondo sabin karamchako tomba-ked-koa, mendo
accordingly acted and all the foxes he hit ; but

bandia karamcha kaji-keda, chuilamatey sim sodape tana?
tail-less fox said, "when the fowl did peck you?

Buidu Bura cha tombapetana." Chanab do Buidu Bura
Buidu it was who pecked." Afterwards Buidu

ol-lente sabin karomchako kaki-nir-ked-koa. Eta musing
coming out all foxes put them to flight. Another day

ondoge karamchako bichar-keda chi abu Buidu Bura
once again foxes planned that we Buidu Bura's

ohare godra-godra-mindibu kumbua. En kaji chutu aumada ondo
house-in ram shall steal. That plan the rat heard and

Buidu Bura kajiada chi tising do karamchako ama chare
Buidu told that to-day foxes your house-in

Godra-mindiko kumbua ena mente am miad mogaru saba-kayte
ram will steal therefore you one mallet taking

mindi-ko-cha duar re ukuakanome ondo bolo-redo ko ente
ram's fold door on remain hiding and enter if they with that

koram kom. Buidu miad miad-te sabin koy koram pura ked koa.
strike them. Buidu one by one all he struck

ondo chanab te bandia karamcha ko bolo-ichitana, mendo bandia
and afterwards tail-less one they asked to enter but the tail-

aher tege adana, ondoy kajiakotana chi chuilamatey mindi
less beforehand knew and he said that when is it that rams

rope-tana? Ini Buidu Bura cha koram pe—tana. Chanab do
butt you? there Buidu surely is striking you. Thereafter

Karamacha-ko
the foxes

e-poromogekonereana. En reoge Karamcha-ko kako boroyana
took to flight. Even then foxes were not frightened

Ondo musing din bakaire kakaru kumbu teya ko tik keda-ondo
and one day in garden pumpkin to steal they planned that

en kaji chutu ayumad koa. En kaji Buidu Bura kajiruaia
plan the rat overheard. That plan to Buidu re-told

ondo kaji keda, "A Buidu Bura, am tising do pura leka
and said "O ! Buido you to-day a good deal of

kakaru-utu jomakam ondo kakaru dupila kaete sikua-baher
pumpkin-curry eat and pumpkin on head hanging a rope (Sika)

haka-tazte
to rest on—

en-re dubakanome ondo en kakaru ko huaeteya ko sanang
thereon sit and that pumpkin to bite they want

redo petepetetan ehi me. Buidu Bura enkaye rika keda
if you purge." Buidu accordingly acted.

Karamchako seneyana ondo miad ujeyane te kakaru hua keda.
Foxes went and one jumping pumpkin bit.

En dipilang Buidu Bura potopototane ehi adu keda.
In the meantime Buidu purged down.

En ehi jomkedte karamcha esui ransaiana ondo kajikeda chi
That stool eating the fox very glad became and said that

nen kakaru da esu matakana ondoing boga tab keda. En kage
that pumpkin was over-ripe and so I broke it. In the same way

sabin karamchako rika keda ondo kaji keda-mendo bandia
all foxes did and said, but tail-less

karamcha kaji keda. "Naha da naae kakarum joman eni
fox said, "Well now you think to have eaten ripe

Buidu Bura cha chi-tan enape jom tan." En bandia do
pumpkin, Buidu surely is purging, you eating." That tail-less

Saning rege taina ondo eta karamcha kodo esu ko kurkuraia
at a distance stood and the other foxes much got angry.

En Buidu Bura nutum kaji ked rege bandia karamcha do
That Buidu's name uttered tail-less fox

esu ko kakia ondo ko huaia. Ente musing karamcha ko bichar keda,
they chased and bit. Then one day foxes planned

"Nen Buidu Bura halte abui chakad bua, musing-bu
This Buidu Bura us outwits, one day

baigoia" Nen kaji kapaji tan re chutu aumad koa ondo
we will kill him by black art. While talking about this plan the rat overheard them and

Buidu Bura jagaraya-ente chanab do chutu Buidu buri
Buidu Bura informed them afterwards the rat Buidu's wife

te kaji samjao taiya chi am musing din haming gojeyana
explained to that you one day your husband's death

mente ra-ra me. Buri era enkage musing din ra-a tana ondo
bewail. The old woman accordingly one day mourned and

karamchako ayumaia. Ente karamchako buri era ko kulitana,
foxes heard her. Then foxes old woman asked

"Chia jiang okoye gojeyana-enam ra-a tana." Buri era
well, grand mother who is dead that you weeping? The old woman

kaji keda, "Haming cha gojeyana." Karamchako kajikeda,
replied, "My husband died." Foxes said,

"Enredo jiang aleole ra-ra ondo hasa gara reole ur-denga meya."
"Then grand ma' we also shall mourn and grave help digging".

Ente buri era eyad ko gehae. Karamchako ondo buri era
Then old woman said 'yes' to them. Foxes and old woman

ser jati te eu potom tad miad mutu ko topa keda. Ente
torn mat wrapped one log they buried ;

chanab do sabsin rea koy diliad koa, Buidu Bura do
afterwards *subsin* ceremony invited them. Buidu Bura

ukuakante menae gea. Diliakan somae tebayan re sabin
remained hidden. Fixed time having come all

karamchako seter lena. Buri era orakente ondo mundikete
foxes arrived. The old woman bathing and cooking rice

omad koa. Ente nelko tanae chi sabin ko repe tana.
served them. Then she saw them all snatching one another's share.

Buri era metad koa chi apedo nekape repeya ena mente
The old woman told them, "you this way snatch, therefore

tangan tangan neing tol tapeya—en redo esu bugilekatepe
separately I will tie you. Then only much peacefully

jomeya. Buri era tol tad koe te mandi emad koa. Tik ko jom
will eat". The old woman tying them rice gave them. Just when

sekao tan dipilang Buidu Bura mogaru sabakaete oa bitarete
they finishing Buidu Bura mallet holding from within house

ol lena ondo sabin karamcha koe koram goe ked koa.
came out and all foxes struck them dead.

NOTES :

Sikuar baer—Network of ropes to carry things in baskets.

pete pete tan—with the sound 'pete pete'.

poto poto tan—with 'poto poto' sound.

ser jati te eu potom tad—adj. clause, qualifying log.
meaning, a 'log which was wrapped up with an old mat

Sabsin-sradh ceremony

MASURI JANG REA KAHANI

A Masuri Seed the Story of

Esu din rea kajichi mido doba hon ondo barandi hon king
Long ago of story that one Dhobi's son and a barber's son they

sapakiana. Musing doba hon esu ko erang kia ondo eni
had same name. One day Dhobi's boy was much scolded and he

oaete eta-disum-te nir teyae namtana-Enkage barandi hono
from home to other land to flee wanted. In the same way barber boy

erang ki teko nir tana. Chanabdo musing din midtareking
being scolded was fleeing. Afterwards one day at one place

bepetaeyana. Doba hon kaji keda, 'chia saking! okon tem tana?''
met each other. Dhobi's son said, "Well my name sake, where to?"

Barandi hon kaji keda chi aing ko erangintana enamenteing
Barber boy said that 'I am scolded therefore I

nir-tana ondo am do saking okon tem tana? Doba kaji keda chi
am fleeing and you name sake where are you going ?, Dhobi's son said

ainyo ko erang kiding teing nir tana. Ente chanabdo midte
'I being scolded am fleeing.' Then afterwards together

nir tea king kaji keda. Huring saning king senoeyan re
to flee both agreed. A little distance having gone

miad ro-masuri jang king beta tada ondo ena holad-te
one dry *masur* seed both met and that with razor

had chata kedte miad miad chata king hating ked-tiking jom keda
splitting each one piece dividing ate

Barandi hondo holad, nepelupurum, racham eman sabine iedakada
Barber boy razor, looking glass, scissors, etc, took with him.

mendo doba hondo sama tege senotana.
but Dhobi's boy empty went

Seno seno te miad esu marang buru reking tebaeyana
going one vast forest in both reached

En buru re miad munda lekan kula undu taikena ondo eni-
in that forest one headman-like tiger's den was and he

aya undutarege dubakante porja koa bichare bichara. Doba hon
near his den sitting was administering justice. Dhobi's son

ondo barandi hon king giti teya taed nam namte tik en kula
and barber boy sleeping place in search of just tiger's

undu king nam keda ondo nida do enrege king taiyana. Tik-
den both found and night therein passed. Just

nida diplang do kula hujulena ondo chadlom do undu-re
in the night the tiger came and tail in den

adutaete dubeana. Enpa undu bitar re doba hon ondo barandi
placing sat. There den within Dhobi's son and barber's

hon lo king kapaji tana. Barandi hon menkeda, 'Alangnen
son were talking. Barber's son said, "We both

kula. chadlom lang hadia." Nen kaji ayum ked te doba hun
this tiger tail will cut." This speech hearing Dhobi's boy

kaji keda, "Kalanga, neko nentare nimin kulako duba kana, ondo
said 'We wont, these here so many tigers and sitting and

ni-lang hadiredo alang doko hua goe langa" Mendo barandi
if we both cut this one we both shall be bitten to death."

hon kae manatingeyana ondo sakite kajiada, "Kam
But barber boy did not obey and said to his namesake "As you

manatingredo enanga masuri jang em ruainme." Ente doba hon
don't obey *masur* seed return me , "Then Dhobi's son

manating-eyanaiondo kula chadlom had ked geyaking. Kula
agreed and tiger's tail they cut. The tiger

hasu ki redo esui betengeyana ondo sabin kulako nireyana.
with pain much startled and all the tigers fled

Doba hon ondo barandi hon king nida nidage etare tainteya
Dhobi's boy and barber boy also by night other place to

king nameyana. Ente miad marang daru reking rakabeana
lodge went in search. Then one big tree both climbed

Huring gari re buru ren raja joto kula en-daru-suba-rege
Shortly jungle's king the lion under that tree

soba kada. Sabin kula ko ondo, had ked bandia kula
held a meeting. All the tigers and the tail-cut tiger too

seterakana. Doba ondo kulako nelked te esui boro keda.
arrived. Dhobi's boy tigers seeing got very much afraid

Barandi hon doba hon lija te koto re toljuataiya, enreyo
The barber boy Dhobi's boy with cloth to a branch tied him

imine boro keda chi dokol dokol te aye tola kan koto
even then so much frightened that trembling the
rapudeyana ondo etere hasa hoso tane eueana. Eutandipilang
branch broke and on ground with a crash fell. While
barandi hon kaji keda, "Mara talang saking sabkome,
falling barber boy said 'Go on my namesake, catch them,
nekogelang nambatana." Nena ayum kedte sabin kula ko
these we seek." This hearing all tigers
nireana. Chanab do sapakia eta tiking senoyana.
fled. Afterwards both to another place went.
Sen sente musing nida pang miad rakshas oha rekıng taiyana
Going one night one giant's house in both stayed.
ondo hora paete kercha kudlam, sid bor baer, Chacha hata
and on their way worn out spade old rope, (made of straw) winnowing
ondo miad sukuri hon king id-torsa kada. Anegeyan redo
fan, and one small pig both took. At dawn
rakshas huju lena ondo neletana chi oha do bitar paete
the giant came and saw that the house from within
handeda kana. Ente rakshas okoy mena mente eukeda. Bitare
was shut. Then giant who is there out cried. From
teking kaji ruaiya, "Aling mena linga." Rakshas kuli ked
within both replied, we two are." Giant asked them
kinga, "Chimin ben peana? Aking kaji keda. "Kaling peana"
both, 'How much strength have you?' Both said, "We two have no
Rakshas kaji keda, 'Acha, abena dataing nel leka." Ente
strength." Giant said, "Well, your teeth I will see.' Then
Khirki-hora kercha kudlam king udubaiya. Rakshasa enae nel
through window worn out spade both showed. Giant that seeing
kete leye udub ichi-ked—kinga. Aking sidboro baer king
tongue told them to show. They both old straw rope
udubaeya. Rakshas kaji keda, "Abena lutur nel-teyain sanang
showed. Giant said "You two's ear I want to see
tana." Ente chacha hata king udubaeya. Chanab re
Then old winnowing fan both showed. Afterwards
Rakshas kaji keda, "Acha sabinein nel pura keda-bo-ren
Giant said, "Well I saw everything—of head
miad siku udubainben," Aking sukuri hon king udubaeya
one louse show me." Both pig's young one showed

Aking Rakshas king kulikeda, "Alingado sabinam nelkeda,
Both giant asked, "Our all thing saw,

ama leye honang jokam nel ichialing redo esu bugina."
your tongue if you show us it will be very good."

Rakshas akinga kaji manatingeyana ondo leye udubad kinga
Giant to both's speech agreed and tongue showed them.

Ente barandi hon Rakshasa leye had-teyae-namtana mendo
Then barber boy Giant's tongue wanted to cut but

doba hon do esui boroye tana. Barandi hon kaji keda, "Da
Dhobi's boy was much afraid. Barber boy said, "Give

enredo holama-nem-jom-ked-masuri-jang em urainme." Doba
then the *masur* seed you ate give me back." Dhobi's

hon kaji keda, "Acha enredo hadi reom masuri jang okonetein
boy said, "Well then you may cut him, *masur* seed where

namana." Barandi hon chilika Rakshasa leye had keda
from I shall get." Barber boy as soon as Giant's tongue cut

enkage Rakshas gurean te goeana ondo enta mayom te pereana.
soon Giant fell down dead that place with blood

Aking chanab do Rakshas oa kata rama, ti-rama ondo lutur
overflowed. Both afterwards Giant's toes, fingers and ears

king had kete eta tiking senoyana. En Rakshas iminang
cutting elsewhere went. The Giant was so

dustui taikena chi okoyo aya oha-te sen teya kako borsaeya
wicked that no one to his house to go dared.

Ena mente raja hukum tada chi okoye nen Rakshas goia-ini
Therefore the king ordered that whoever that Giant will kill

lo ayain hon erain andi kite ada rajain emaia Aking-had-
with him my daughter marrying half the kingdom I will give.

ki chanab miad kunkal chatu bari tade te en Rakshas-oha-
Their cutting him afterwards a potter carrying pots past

iapate seno tan taikena. Chilika en kunkal Rakshas goia
Giant's house was going. As soon as the potter saw the

kane nel kia enkage chatu ko taba rapud kete Rakshasoa
dead Giant soon threw away pots in Giant's blood roll-

mayom-re bati kena ondo esu ransa te ohate ruaena. Ente
ed himself and very gladly to home returned. Then

Kaji biur keda, "Aing (kunkal) en Rakshas-ain goe kia."
declared. "that Giant killed."

Raja ena-ayum-kedte-esui-ransaena ondo kunkal-lo raja-hon-
King hearing that became very glad and with potter
era-a andi hobaotea din ko din tada. Nepa kunkul do-
princess marriage day was fixed. Now potter to
rajahon-arain-andi mente aya hon buri sabine ru-nir ked koa.
marry the princess thinking his children and wife all beat
Tik andi-din-tebayan-re doba hon ondo barandi hon kingho
and drove away. When marriage day came up Dhobi's boy and
en raja oha king setereyana ondo king kaji keda, "Aling
barber boy too that king's house arrived and said. "We two
Rakshas do goe taia, hunkal goe tairedo, chilkan nisan koe
Giant killed if the potter killed it what signs has he
agutada-aling do ne aya leye, lutur, kata-rama, tir-ima
brought? We two this his tongue, ear, toes, fingers
sabina ling agu tada." Neako nel ked re kunkal do
everything have brought." These seeing potter was
chakad-reko-leka-kia ondo ahako gaha esed taete ru nir kia.
found a liar and sewing up his mouth beat him away.
Chanab do barandi hon ondo raja hon era lo andi hobayana
Then barber boy and the princess marriage took place and
ondo esu bugi leka eko taiana.
they lived very happily,

RENGE SITIYA- KAHANI

Poor boy's Story

Misa mido esu renge sitiyae taikena. Aeya engate
Once one very poor boy was. His mother
suad taikena. En sitia merom gupikete ja bati ko
alone was. That boy goats tending wages they
emaieya entegeking asulentan taikena.
paid him by that both maintained themselves.
Musing din engate baria lad-e baileda, ondo ena mipiad-
One day mother his two cakes made, and that one each
king hating-keda.
both divided.
Sitia lad jomjomte merom gupi senoyana.
By cake eating goats to tend went.

)kontare dimsi go-at koa entare
Where daily he penned them

naid kukuruakan daru taikena. En sitia
a holow of tree was. The boy

omsare-lad na-aye pangeng jomea men
the cake remaining after eating later on to eat

rukedte en kukuru daru re ema-tuda.
thinking that hollow tree in placed and went.

1yubpang huju-ura tanre neletana
In the evening while returning found

hi lad do banoa. mendo endar-re miad
that cake was not, but there one

laru harayana ondo en-re lad jo-yana
tree grew up and there-on cakes grew

Ena nel kedte en sitia esue ransayana ondo jo-lad jom-kedte
That seeing that boy very glad became and fruit-bread eating

a-te senoyana. Enkage dimsi en sitia meromko
home went. This way daily that boy goats

o-at taite en daru reya lade joma. Musing din jomtu-
put into pen that tree of bread ate. One day giantess

ra-darusubare seterlena ondo sitiyae kajiatana, 'Aino
under that tree reached and to the boy spoke, "For me also

alang lad euain me." Sitia daruetege kajikeda,
dear bread drop." Boy from tree spoke,

"Mar ondo ote rengeu-ama," Jomtu era kaji keda,
"All right on the ground I drop for you," Giantess said

"Kanya, ote-ote-sohano-tedo." Ondo misa sitia kajikeda,
"I won't, it will smell like ground." Once more boy said,

Lija-re ondo atangeme." Jomtu-era kajikeda, "Kanya
"On cloth then receive it" Giantess said. "I won't

lija-lija-sohanotedo" Amge agulente ti-rem emain
it will smell like cloth." You personally coming down in

redo esu bugioa." Ente sitia agulente
hand give me it will be very good!" Then boy alighting

ti-re emaitan taikena. En dipilang
in hand was going to hand over. That time

jomtu-era sitiya sabki-te bosta-re tolkiya
giantess boy catching in a sack tied

ondo aya oate dupil-id-kiya. Sensente hora-re
and her home carried him on the head. Walking on way

eni da tetang kiya ondo sitia dona-tui te da nu-te
she felt thirsty and boy bringing down from head water

senoyana. En japa ta rege sitan hoko taikena
to drink went. Near that ploughing men were

ondo enko en bosta ko ra keda ondo sitia ko nir-ichi-kiya
and they that sack opened and boy let run away

Chanab en bosta-re diriko pereura kedteko tol esed keda
Afterwards that sack in stones refillling fastened

ente siuteko ruhayana. Jomtu-era ruhalente bosta reya
then to plough returned. Giantess returning sack's

potom aya oa-te dupil seter keda, ondo rakedte nele
parcel her home carried on head, and unfastening looked

tan redo sitia kae nam taya. Ente menkeda. "Tisinge
for the boy could not find him. Then he thought "To-day

chakad kidinga, gapado kae pochao-a." Gapater tik
he outwitted me, to-morrow he will not escape." Next day just

entarege jomtu-era en sitia-e beta-ura-taia. Ayer
on the same spot giantess that boy again met. As

musing leka-ge chakad ki-te sab-kiya ondo bosta-re tol-
before deceiving him caught him and in sack bound

kucha-ki te oate dupilid kiya mendo netora okontareo ka-e
him to home carried on her head but this time no where

don-keda. Ente eni honte era-a kajiada, "Ni—
put it down. Then she to her daughter said. "This

tising eng aguakaya ondo isitai-me, aing orantein
very day I have brought and cook him, I to bathe

senotana. Honte-era chuila bosta-e rakeda enredo
am going. Now daughter when sack unfastened then

sitia honte-era-e subkuchakite basangakan dare udur
boy her daughter seizing boiling water in pushed her

kanju kiya ondo-e nireyana. Jomtu-era orakenete
down and he ran away. Giantess bathing

ruha len redo honte-era basanga-kan dare goja kan
returned when her daughter boiled water in seeing

nelkite esue ra-honor-Keda.
her dead much bewailed.

TUYU ONDO SITANU

Fox and ploughmen

Sida nen disum-re diri, daru, tuyu ondo kula balu-ko
Formerly this earth, stone, tree, fox and tiger bear

kapaji-tan taikena. En dipilang mido siutan ho ta-te miad
all talked. That time one ploughman to one fox

tuyu huju lena. Ente metaia chia saking! Chutu
came. Then said, "Well *Saking*! rats

kodo-ko si namo tana-chi bano? Ho kaji kedo-eya
plough out or not? Man said, yes.

saking namogeyako. Enta rege miad bunum taikena.
Saking they are found. On the spot an ant-hill was

En bunum toang kete tuyu—do en chetan-re dub ichi
That ant-hill breaking the fox thereon made him

taiya. Huring gari redo tuyua dubui nidir-ko
sit. After some time fox hip white ants

jom-putu kiya. Ho chanab do miad chutu si-nam li-te
ate into. Man then a rat poughing out

jid-tege tuyui amada, Chilika tuyu chutui jom-keda
living to fox gave. As soon as fox rat ate

en-jaked chutu-do dubui-pa horae nir ol tabeyana. Ente
immediately rat hip through ran out. Then

tuyu-do ransa-te ni miad tain, ni miad tain chutu mente
fox through gladness this one my rat understand-

miad-i-ge jom biur tana. Tuyu dubui nelen tan redo
ing the same one ate again and again. Fox hip saw when

aya dubui putuakanae. Ente an hoe kulitana-chia
his hip was penetrated. Then that man asked well

Saking dubui-do okoy tharein dalob ichina. Ho
Saking hip who will cover. Man

metaitana muchi tare dalob ichin-me. Tuyu muchie
said. "Have it covered by a drum maker." Fox to drum maker

Kajiada atea muchi ain dubui dalob tain-me ondo dimsi
said. You drum maker, my hip cover and daily

mipiad simkoing aguama. Chanab-do muchi tuyua kaji
one fowl I will bring you. Then drum maker to fox's words

ayum keda ondo dalob taiyae. Ente tuyu dama sotate
obeyed and covered him. Then fox drum stick with

dubui ru lekan tana.
hip beat.

Musing din tuyu hatute seneyana ondo dubui dubu-dubu-tan
One day fox to villages went and his

ru idin tante, eyu idi tanai-chi-ochai paiki parja-ko,
drum. You all people,

sabin nir-atape. Raja-ko huju tana. Nen kaji ayum
all flee away, the kings are coming. This speech hearing

kedte sabin-ko nireana ond tuyu sim-ko aya ji-pere jom
all fled and fox fowls to his heart's content

kedkoa ondo miad-do muchi idada. Enkage sabin din sim-ko
eating one he took to the drum maker. In this way always fowls

jom jom-te jom chabako tonaye. Musing din sabin ho—ko
eating he finished. One day all the people

budi keda. Miad sukuri-oha-re mido buri-era-ko handed-
devised a plan. One pig-house in one old woman shut

kur taia. En dipilang-e tuyu dubu-dubu-tan ru hujui-
up. That time fox drumming came

tanai ondo dimsi eyui lekage eyu hujui tana . Sabin
and as usual came crying . All

ho-ko buriera suad-ko bageatuia Okon dipilang tuyu
people women alone left. While fox

seter lena buri era kaji keda "Ne gecha tuyu amge
approach old women said, "There you are ! fox, you

chakad te sabin simkom jom chabake tana" Ente tuyu
by deceit all fowls eat up." Then fox

esui kurkureyana ondo buri-era data-e tuing rapud kia ondo
very angry and old woman teeth struck and broke ;

sim-ko jom ked koaye. Chanab-do nireyan ho-ko hujurua
and fowls ate. Afterwards the men who fled re-

lened buri era-ko kulikia, "Sari gechi Raja, kodo-ko
turning old women asked, "Was it true that Rajah

*huju lena?" Buri-era kaji keda, 'Su-yu."**
came? Old women said "fox"

* As she lost her teeth she could not pronounce 'tuyu' (fox) but 'suyu' and wh the teeth were made and fitted, she could correctly say 'tuyu'

chanab-do buri-era suku-jang teko tata-ruu-liya. ante-ko
Then they old women pumpkin seeds with made her teeth, then

kuli kia ondo buri ara tik-tik "tuyu" mente kaji keda.
they asked and old women correctly 'fox' uttered

Sabin ho-ko bichar keda-chi-abu nen tuyu-bu Sabia.
All the people planned. We this fox will watch,

Ente miad budi-ko uru nam keda. Ini sabi lagid kita
then one plan they thought out. To catch him

galang tan buri-era murti situad-reya ko bai leda ondo
mat-making old woman's idol of wax made and

enado tuyu-huju-hora-reko dub tada. Ente tuyu-do huju
on the way the fox used to come seated it. Then while fox coming

tanre kaji keda, buri era! hora atomain-me ban redo dama
said, "Old woman make way for me otherwise with

sota tein hudma meya mendo buri ara jokao kay atomeyana
drum stick hurl at you but the old woman did not move even a bit

ondo tuyu dama sota-te hudma kia. Dama sota anrege
and the fox with drum-stick hurled at him. The drum-stick in that

atayana, ante tuyu buri-era dama sotaye asi urai tana mendo
struok, then fox old woman drum-stick demanded but she

kaye amaya. Chanab do tuyui kurkureyana ondo buri-era
did not give. Then fox too got angry and old woman

kuam-re tega kia-mendoe atayana. An dipilang sabin ho-
on the chest kicked but was stuck. That time all men

ko nir huju leda ondo tuyu ko sab kia ondo esutikilekateko
came running and fox they caught and very soundly

tam kia ondo chanab-do tam-tam teko tam goy rena kia.
beat him and then beat him quite dead.

RAJA HONERA ONDO MANTRIHON REYA KAHANI.

(*King's daughter and minister's son's story*)

Asu din reya kaji chi miad raja-a honera-ko pura leka-ko.
Long long ago one king's daughters many

taikena ondo miad asu bugin koatani taikena, Sabin
were and one very beautiful. All

koa kui miad school-re geko parao kena. Eratan-ko parao
boys and girls in the same school read. For girls the

teya-do chetan mahala-reya ondo koa tan-ko parao teya-do
room was in upstairs and for boys study room was

latar reya. Enka enka-te huring din chanab-re Raja-a
downstairs. in course of time King's

hon-era-ko mantri hon-re esu-ko pritiyana ondo eni-lo andin
daughter with minister's son fell in love and with him to

teya-ko sanangeyana. Mendo mantri ayer tegaya hon-do
marry wished. But the minister beforehand his son

esu bugilekate kaji samjao taeyae chi Raja hon-era kolo
well instructed him that with king's daughters

alom hepela ondo alom kapajia. Enlekage mantri-hon-do
do not meet and do not talk. Accordingly minister's son

aputeya kaji esu tik lekate saitiba keda, mendo enreoge
father's words thoroughly obeyed, but even then

chanab-do perao parao—te mantri-hon-do mido Raja-a hon-era
at length during school hours minister's son with one of the

laye apasoraye-ana. Chanab-do baro jakeda mon miad sutam
king's daughters came into intimacy. At last both's hearts were bound into one

re toleyana. Baro jaked king seped hapanumeyan redo
cord Both grew young then to

eta saning disum-te nir teya king sanangeyana. Ente
some distant country to flee they intended. Then

musing tala nida miad sadom-re dubeyan tiking nireyana.
one midnight riding a horse eloped. That

En sadom-do-misa hansa li-re l gaudi ujena. Mantrihon
horse once 7 miles galloped. Minister's son

ondo Raja hon-era, jome nuiteya taka poyesa-ko pura-aleka
and king's daughter, for food and drink money much

king id keda. Raja hon-era-do miad esu tangan lekan
they took with them. King's daughter one very peculiar sword

torai ida kada. En torai esu lesera ondo ente diri lekan
took. That sword was very sharp and with it anything

kere teya reyo misa ma-a-ke rege odoa. Nepa akinga apu-
hard as stone with one stroke broke. There their par-

ko esu-ko nam lekad kinga mendo jan hatu reyo kako beta tad
ants thoroughly made a search for them but in any village did mot meet

kinga. Aking-do misao ka-nelad lekan disum reking setere-
them. They both a country never seen arrived at

yana, ondo midta redo sen sente da tetang ked kinga. Aking
and at a place in their journey they felt thirsty. They

da nam namte miad rakshas-ko oha reking setereyana. En
both water to search a giant's house came to. In

rakshas oha-re ho kohatan-ko ondo akoa engate taikena.
that giant's house seven boys and their mother lived.

I ho-ko bitar-re-te turui ho-ko andia kana ondo sabin koyete
Out of seven six were married and the youngest of

huring ni Damagurguria-do dinda tege taikena. Okon
them all Damagurguria batchelor was. That day

mantrihon ondo raja-honera en rakshas oha king beta leda, en
when the minister's son and king's daughter to that giant's reached, that

musing do Damagurguria re era nam lagid Sabin undi boya eta
day Damagurguria for bride to search all brothers to a foreign

disum teko sen lena. Mantri-hon ondo Raja-hon-era en
country went. Minister's son and king's daughter that

rakshas koa engate da-a king asitana. Rakshas
giant's mother for water drinking asked. The

Buri era-do Raja-hon-era-e nel ked-te esui ransaena ondo
old giantess king's daughter seeing became very glad and

aya honte Damagurguria-re andi teyae sanangeyana. Buri-era
her son Damagurguria to marry wished. The old woman

uru keda-chi en seped (mantri-hon) do raja-hon-era kumbu lite
thought that youth (Minister's son) king's daughter stole

nira kana ena mente enkina jagar jagar-te esui gahari ked
away therefore talking to made them very

kinga, enreyo aya hon kodo auri geko setera. Chanab do
late, even then her sons did not turn up. Afterwards

mantri-hon ondo Raja-hon era eta tiking senoyeyana-mendo
minister's son and king's daughter somewhere went-but

senotan dipilang buriera mi chipud leka mani jang sakam-re
at the time of their departure old woman one handful of mustard seeds in a leaf

chipud kete akinga sadom chadlom re-tol tada.
packing to their horse's tail bound.

manijang okon tare eua, en-ta-re enete miad ba daru darua.

Huring saning king senoyana rege
A little distance they had gone when

rakshasko sabin-ko seter rua lena. Ente engate-do
little giants all returned. Then their mother

esui erang ked koa, ondo kajiad koa chi na-age mido esu
scolded them much, and told them just now one very

bugin kuitani mido ho id taeya, aking na-age nir beta
beautiful girl a man took, they two just now run and

kingpe ondo era reye ruai-pe, mani-ba-age otong id-pe-en
reach them and girl snatch, mustard seeds you follow-and

rege pe betakinga. Engateya kaji ayum ked te kau bau ba-
then you will find them. Mother's words hearing hurriedly followed

a otong otong teko beta ked kinga. Beta ked king redo-ko
the seeds and found them. Where they came over them both,

mantri-hon-do ma-a goi teya-ko sanangeyana, Mendo Raja
the minister's son to slay they wanted, But kings daughter

hon-era esui kaji keda enteko bagetaiya ondo kajia-ko
much pleaded then they left him and she said to

tana. "Aing aing-tege apeloing senoa mendo ainya miad kaji
them, "I willingly with you shall go but my one word

ayumepe." Rakshasko aya kaji manatinge-yana-ko. Raja-hon
(Damagurguria bage ke-te)
listen to". The giants her words listened excepting Damagurguria, the

era sabin rakshas-ko panti-re tingu ichi ked koa ondo aya
king's daughter made all the giants stand in a line and her

torai olkete sabin misate ma-a goy ked koa. Ente mantri-
sword drawing all together slew. Then with minis-

hon-lo esu saning teking senoyana. Damagurguria esu
ter's son very far went. Damagurguria in the

renge ho a rupre bodola kan-te aking ayer-pa-re seno tana.
disguise of very poor man before them walked.

Ini nelkete raja-hon-era esui urui-ana ondo ini sadom gupi
Him seeing king's daughter was much moved and him to graze the horse.

lagid king keya kia. Huring din bugi tege senoyana mendo
they took. For some days all went well but

musing din raja-hon-era-a torai sadom-gupi tani sab keda.
one day King's daughter's sword syce took

Ente mantri-hon doye ma-a goe kia ondo raja-hon-era idi
with it minister's son slew and king's daughter to take

teyae sanangeyana. Musing din Damagurguria-lo daru ma-a
he intended. One day with Damagurguria to fell a tree
teking senoyana. Daru ma-a dipilang torai-do ote-re em
went. At the time of felling sword on ground
ada ondo em-torsa-ge Raja-hon-era aya torai sab rua keda.
placed and immediately king's daughter her sword seized.
Ente chanab-do Damagurguria-ye ma-a goy kia raja-hon
Then afterwards Damagurguria slew. King's daughter
do aya goya-kan ham-te ta-te senoyana ondo aye japa-re
to her dead husband went and near him
dubakan-te esui ra-a keda. Huring gari rege Singbonga
sitting much wept, shortly afterwards God in
buri-era rup lene-te huju lenaye. Buri-era kuli kiaye chi
guise of an old woman came. The old woman asked
"Chikan reyam ra-a tana? Ente raja hon-era aya duku
"Why are you weeping?" Then king's daughter her sorrows
sabine jagar keda. Chanab-do buri-era esui uruyana
all related. Afterwards old woman was much moved
ondo enia ham-te jid-rua-kia. Ente chanab-do mantri
and her husband revived. Then afterwards minister's
hon ondo raja-hon era-lo en buri-era esuking manating kia.
son and King's daughter that old woman paid much respect.
Huring gari rege en buri-eraye danangeyana. Chanab-do
Shortly the old woman vanished. Afterwards
en disum reking rajayana ondo esu ransa-te ham-buri king
in that country they became King and Queen and in great happiness husband and
taiyana.
lived.

PUTAM HON KING REA KAJI

Two Young ones of Dove Story

Munu rea kaji chi miad putam marang daru re bariae jarom
Long ago one dove big tree on two eggs
leda. En jarom kingete aereatedo miad asu bugin andia
laid. Those eggs from the first one very good bull
uri ondo chanabaetedo mido koa-tan sitia jonom lena.
and from the second a male child was born.

Koatan sitia do Lita ko nutum kia. Lita marangean redoe
The boy Lita was named Lita when grew big

andia uri daruite agu kia. An disum rege raja-hon ko
the bull from tree brought down. In that country princes

taikena ondo an ko lo Lita ondo andia uri dimsi king
were and with them Lita and the bull daily both

inunga. Raja-hon ko andia uri chehera nel kite idi tea
played. Princes bull's beauty seeing to take him

ko bichar keda. Musing din raja-hon ko kaji keda,
thought. One day princes said,

"Atea Lita ! tising bu inunga. Am daianredo ale miad uri le
"Aye Lita ! to-day we shall play. You if win we one bull

emama ondo ale daian redo ama uri le idia". Lita eyad
shall give and we if win your bull we shall take." Lita agreed

koaye ondo inungcan redo ko Lito ge daiana-ante uri maide
with them and when they palyed Lita won and bull one

nam kia.
he got.

Musing din enka ko kaji keda chi rajah-on-ko dai redo
One day like this they said that princes win if

Lita-bauteya uri ko idia ondo Lita daiyan redo barso
Lita-brother the bull they will take and Lita win if two-

takae nameya. Enbentrango Litage daiyana ondo bar-so
hundred rupees will get. That day too Lita won and two

takae nam keda, Eta musing Raja hon-ko Lita-a andia-
hundred rupees got. Another day princes Litaa's bull

uri ondo akoa uri-lo-ko ropo ichi ked kinga, en musingo
and their bull with made them fight, that day too

aya uri-ge daiyana-ondo pura leka taka-ko emaya.
his bull won and much money they gave him,

Enleka-ge hati-lo misa-ko ropo ichi ked kinga, enreyo
Similarly with an elephant once they made them fight, in that too

Lita-a andia uri-ge daiyana ondo joka leka disum-ko emaya.
Lita's bull won and a part of kingdom they gave him.

En dipilang Lita-do esui munda-huju-utana, ente raja-hon-
That time Lita very rich began to grow, so princes

ko esuko kurkuro tana ondo andia uri idi teya geko sanangey-
very much grow angry and bull to take they wanted.

ana. Chanab-te raja-hon-ko kaji keda. Lita ama uri-lo
Afterwards princes said" Lita your bull with

top-lo bu lardi kinga". En kaji Lita eya kedtege
cannon let us make them fight". To this word Lita had to agree.

Andia uri kaji keda, "E Lita undi na-do ain top-lo kain
The bull said,"Oh Lita brother this time I with cannon

daigeya enamente am aing, gojeyan-re ainya med-king, upnia-
fight, therefore you on my death my two eyes, four

kata-ko ondo chadlom aguruayeme, ente ama oa duar-re topa
feet, and tail you bring, then on your house door bury

tame. Baria kata king oa bitar-re baria baranda pare
them. Two feet within the house, two toward the verandah

ondo med-king-do ayer kata king japa-re ondo chadlom-do
and two eyes front feet near and the tail

doya kata king chanab pare topa tame." Andia uri top-lo
hind feet behind bury them." The bull with cannon

larai kenaye mendo haraoyanaye ondo gojeyanaye. Lita ayer
fought but was beaten and he died. Lita as

kajia-kan lekaya rika keda. Raja-hon-ko na-a doko
settled before acted. Princes now

diayana ondo Lita-a baba-biti-ko reye urai teya-ko
won and Lita's grain and riches to snatch away

bichar keda.
they resolved.

Lita topa tad kataye-te seta-ko, med kinge-te uruking
Buried by Lita from feet dogs, from eyes two black bees

ondo chadlomete aye aye-te aye-te hansaoteya hanasa baiyana.
and from tail self-acting whip was made.

Musing din Raja-hon-ko Lita kulaye toa-ko agu ichi tayeya.
One day princes Lita hare milk asked to bring.

Baria uru-king ayer-tege honan kulaye king nam kiya.
The two bees before hand a hare with young ones found out.

Chanab-do seta ko, uru-king jadu reya hanasa ondo Lita
Then dogs, bees, the magic whip and Lita

honan tate-ko senoyana. Uru-king do kulaye med king tui-
to the hare with young ones went. Bees, hare's eyes stung

tana ; chabuk-do kulaye hansa tana, seta kodo okon pao
the whip whipped the hare, dogs nowhere

kako seno ichiyaia ondo-ko huaitana. Chanab-do kulaye
allowed her to go and they bit her. Then hare

kaji keda, "Alope gojinga—ape janape sananga enageng
said,"Dont kill me, you whatever like that will

emapea." Lita kaji keda-chi ale janao bano ama toa ge
I give you." Lita said "To us nothing but your milk

ema leme. Kulaye ya keda-ye-ondo Lita toae taue ked-te
give. Hare agreed, and Lita milking her to the

raja-hon-ko ta-te id keda. Lita teko kulaye toa taue
princes took the milk. Lita while returning after

kete huju ura tan dipilang bauakan kulaye-hon kaji keda chi
milking the hare the eldest hare's son said

eh ma ainyo neko loin senoa. Raja hon-ko tate toa-ko id
"o mother I too with these shall go. To the the princes they milk took

keda ondo huring kulaye honoy kaji keda chineko ainya angain
and young hare also said, "These my mother

tayetege toa doko agua kada ondo ainyo nainghujuakana.
from milk brought and I too have come.

Ente raja-hon-ko-sariyana-ko, Musing din kula toa
Then princes believed, One day tigers, milk

agu leme ko metaiya. Nen dipilango kulaye toa chilika teko
to brimg they told him. This time too hares milk as they

agu leda enka rika kede tege-ko aguleda ondo bauakan kula
brought by doing the same they brought and the eldest cub

honoye huju lena. Nen dipilango raja-hon-ko sariyan tege
also came. This time too princes had to believe.

hobayana. Nen hobayan paiti kore Lita-ge daiyan chi raja
In all these feats Lita having won princes

hon-ko esu-ko kurkureyana ondo larai teya-ko din tada.
were greatly angered and to fight they fixed a day.

Lita-a sepai kado upnia seta-ko baria uru-king., miad
Lita's soldiers were four dogs, two bees, one whip, one

hanasa, miad kulaye ; ondo miad kula ; mendo raja-hon koa
hare and one tiger; but princes' soldiers were

sepai kodo pura leka-ko taikena. Lita joka-doy boroy tan
many. Lita somewhat afraid

taikena mendo kulaye kaji keda, "E Lita jokao alomboro-ya
was but hare said , "Aye Lita, even a bit don't fear

ain-ge sabin goy chaba koa." Larai hobao tan-re kulaye
I all shall kill." In the battle field hare
upun-hisi mon hambal torai-te misa tege raja-hon-ko ondo
with four score maund heavy sword at one stroke princes and
akao sepai koy ma-a goy ked koa. Raja goy an redo chanab-
their soldiers struck them dead. The king being killed afterwards
do Lita rajayanaye, kula-do mantri lekaye taiyana ondo kodo
Lita became king . Tiger as minister acted, and the others
aya dasi-ko ondo chitra-ko leka-ko taiyana. Lita
became his servants and followers. Lita
chanab do raja honte era andi kete esu suku te pura-a sirma
then king's daughter marrying very happily for many years
Lakaye raja keda.
ruled.

RITUI GONDAI REYA KAHANI

Ritui Gondai's Story

Sida dipilang Jagannathpur-re mido Jagannathsingh nutum
Long ago at Jagannathpur one Jagannath Singh by name)
raja taikena. Aya hati-ko ondo sadom-ko pura leka-ko
a king was. His elephants and horses many
taikena. Sangar-te seno redo aye dub-hati-re miad sona
were during hunting excursion his elephant one gold
reya damarkom hakataiya. Kachari oa-do nen barsing
bell hung. His court building at present
mena Gangaram Mankia oa di-re taikena ondo enteyo hati-
Gangaram Manki's hometead was and there to on ele-
re dubakan tege seno tane taikena. En dipilange
phant sitting he used to go. At that time at
Mirgilindi hatu-re Ritui Gondai Sinku taikena. Ni esu
Mirgilindi village Ritui Gondai sinku lived. He was very
munda ondo peyaney taikena. Kaji-te ayumoa-chi aye miad
rich and strong was . It is heard that he one
ti-tege gel ho koy taba daiya koa. Nen Ritui Gondaia
hand with ten men could fight. This Ritui Gondai's
hal chal raja-a oa jaka setereyana.
news even to king's palace reached.

Musing din raja-a Gansi hati reya damarkom kumbu kedte
One day king's Ghansi elephant's bell stealing to

Ritui Gondai oa-re uku te akaring kedaye. Okoy okoy doko
Ritui Gondai's house stealthily sold. Some

meneya-chi en gansinge hapate Ritui Gondai oa re haka tuda
say that the Ghansi stealthily in Ritui Gondai's house hung

ente honang Ritui Gondai kumbu sab ichi teyaye bichar leda.
and to get Ritui Gondai arrested as thief resolved,

Damarkom adeyan re raja sabin hatu ren munda manki ko khabare
on the loss of the bell king all village Mundas and Mankis news

emadkoa chi okoy sona reya damarkon nam ruainya eni pura
sent that whoever gold bell recover be must

iname namea. Gansi-ko ondo sepai ko nam teko senoyan-
reward shall get. Ghansis and Sepoys to search went

redo miad abarum-tan sim apir oleyanaye. Apir ol en tan
one sitting on eggs hen flew out. While flying

re en sim sona reya gauti aparob-te taki keda. En oaren gusia-
that hen gold bell with wings struck. That house's owner

do Ritui Gondai. En-ho chanab-do kumbu reko sab kia ondo
was Ritui Gondai. That man afterwards as thief was arrested and

raja ta teko id kia. Raja chanab-do maed reya dinki te
to the king they took him. King afterwards from Dhenki with

rung goji teyaye hukum keda. Gel ho-ko dinki tega keda
to pound to death ordered. Ten men Dhenki paddled

ondo hisi hote Ritui Gondai ko sab kucha kite sel undu reko
and twenty men Ritui Gondai held and in the hole they

giti kia. Eni ai duna-do dinki tela darom keda chanab-do
lay him down. He seven times Dhenki held back, afterwards

aya sanang tege goy ichi kena. Goyki teko dinki-lo-ko
of his own accord allowed himself to be killed. Killing him with Dhenki they

topa tayeya. Aye topa kan-ta nen barsing jake neloa.
buried him:The place of his burial is seen to this day.

Eni pukuri kuti reko topa tayeya ondo en pukuri-do nen
He was on the bank of a tank buried and that tank even

barsing jaked Ritui-Gondai pukuri-ko nutum tada. En
these days Ritui Gondai Pukuri they have named. That

pukuri-do Jagannathpurete kata chambra pare mena.
tank is to the south of Jagannathpur.

CHIKATE TANIKO HOKO KAKO JO-JOMA

How the wild dogs men not they eat

Misa taniko hoko hora sentanko nelad koa.
Once wild dogs men footpath walking saw.

Ente taniko urukeda chi hoko chikate pariya reyo
Then wild dogs thought that men how waste land too

sen senteko hora daiya. Tani ko menkeda
by walking footpath. Wild dogs thought

chi abu chikate ako leka kabu hor-diaya.
that we how like them not we can make path

Abubu hora leka. Ente taniko horay lagidte esu jor
We too try to make path. Then wild dogs to make path very hard

sangiteko jikintana ondo jikijikite dubuiko pora
jointly rubbed their hips on land and by rubbing hips wore

chabayana. Mendo jokao kako hora daiyana.
out completely. But even a bit not they could made path.

Ente taniko urukeda, "Nen paiti re gechabu haratingeyana,
Then wild dogs thought, "This work in we are defeated,

eta paitire misabu badababadia. Huring din chanab
other work in once we will compete. Few days after

puraleka hoko marang diri garite oretan taniko neladkoa.
many men big stone in a cart drawing wild dogs saw.

En hoko en diri sasanre ten topa lagidko or-hujuetan
Those men that stone burial-ground dead men in order to bury were

taikena. En paitiko nelkedte taniko kajikeda,
drawing. That work they seeing wild dogs said

"Abuo musing diri orte-bu--sena". Taniko
We too one day stone will go to draw". Wild dogs

sotakote diri tari-utab-kete ore-teako
with poles stone raising from ground wanted to

sanangeyana. Tara tanikodoko tariakada,
draw. Some of the wild dogs raised

ondo tarado ti-katakoteko udurakada. En
and some with hands and feet pushed That

dipilang tariyakadko laga ked kote a-tada.
time those raising with poles feeling tired let down the poles.

Ente undertanko sabinko diriteko tengojeyana. Chanab
Then those pushing all of them with stone pressed to death. Afterwards,

jid sareyakan taniko kaji keda "Hon, hon, abu ako-lo
surviving wild dogs said, "No more no more, we with them

kabu badabadia enamente ako kabu-jom-daiyakoa. En
cannot compete therefore them we cannot eat. That

dipilangete taniko abu-hoko jombua.
time since wild dogs us men do not eat.

STORIES IN ENGLISH

Buidu Bura and the Story of a Rat

One day Buidu Bura, an old man was ploughing his field when he found a field rat. Buidu attempted to kill the rat but the rat became vocal, and implored Buidu not to kill him and promised to tell a secret. Buidu was pleasantly surprised, put the rat in a corner of his cloth and took it home. The rat was given a handful of paddy. Then the rat opened his lips and said : 'O Buidu Bura to-day the foxes have decided to enter the pen to devour your fowls. You take your sickle, hide between the folds of your fowl pen, and strike the foxes when they enter the pen. Buidu followed the advice and struck the foxes with the sickle. There was a sly fox without a tail, who gave out the secret, viz. that it was not the fowls who pecked the foxes, but Buidu himself who put the foxes into flight. Another day the foxes decided to steal Buidu's goats. The rat scented the design and informed Buidu that the foxes would invade his house for the goats. 'Take one mallet', said the rat, 'keep yourself in hiding behind the doors' of the goat-house and strike the foxes when the latter enter it.' Buidu did as he was instructed, and again the tailless fox enquired of his fellow pack who butted them, did the rat do it? It was Buidu who put the foxes to flight. Even then the foxes were not routed completely. One day, they planned to steal pumpkin from Buidu's kitchen garden, but the clever rat overheard them and communicated the plan to Buidu Bura. 'O Buidu', said the rat, 'eat a lot of pumpkin curry and put a pumpkin on your head and let it hang from a rope. When the foxes will touch the rope purge on them.' So did Buidu Bura. The foxes came and jumped up to bite the pumpkin and immediately Buidu flooded them by purging on them. The foxes, however, did not know what happened, they were overjoyed by eating the stool but thought that the pumpkin must have been over-ripe. All the foxes ate the excreta but the tailless one said' 'how silly! you thought you had eaten the ripe pumpkin, but what you did eat was only Buidu's excreta, The other foxes become furious but were chased out by Buidu. Lastly they decided that as Buidu has always out-witted them he

should be killed by black magic. This plan also was overheard by the rat and he informed Buidu. The rat approached Buidu's wife and said 'O lady. you wait your master's death.' The foxes heard her and approached the old woman asking 'whom are you mourning, O grandmother?' The woman replied, 'My husband is dead, so I am weeping'. 'We also mourn your loss, and we shall help digging grave for your husband' said the foxes. The woman nodded approvingly. A torn mat was wound round a log, and the foxes joined with the old woman to bury it. Then the foxes were invited to the *sub-sin* (sradh) ceremony while Buidu remained hidden. At the appointed time, the foxes came for feast. The old woman took her bath and cooked rice and served it to the guests. The foxes got excited, begun to snatch each other's grab when the old woman proposed to tie each to a post so that none could snatch the food meant for the other, and each could eat peacefully. This the foxes agreed to and they were tied and given more rice to eat. No sooner had the foxes finished their grab, Buidu came out of his hiding and struck the foxes dead by his mallet.

The Story of A Masur Seed

Long ago, a Dhobi's son and that of a Barber were namesakes. One day the Dhobi's son got much scolding in his house and he decided to leave home. As luck would have it, the barber's son also had a similar fate in his house, and he also was fleeing. Both of them met one day at a place. The Dhobi's son said, "well comrade, where are you fleeing ? "I have been scolded, and I am running from home, where are you going, my namesake ?" said the Barber's son. Both came to know each other's misfortune and they decided to keep company. Just when they had gone together a little distance, they found a parched *masur* seed; it was cut into halves with a razor blade, each got a part and ate it. The Barber's son had with him his razor, mirror, scissors and other paraphernalia of his profession but the Dhobi's son went empty handed. They entered a thick forest and they suddenly saw a big tiger's den and the Dhobi's son sat at the entrance and begun to mimick the role of a judge administering justice. Both of them occupied the den and passed the long hours of the night in deep sleep till they were awaken by the tiger who placed his tail inside and sat near the entrance. The two comrades inside whispered

to each other. The Barber's son said to the other, 'Let us cut off the tiger's tail'. The Dhobi's son did not approve of it, for said he 'Look there are so many tigers sitting there. If we cut the tail of this we both shall be eaten up. The barber's boy did not obey, and addressing his namesake, asked him to return the *masur* grain he had eaten from him. But this the Dhobi's son could not, so he agreed and the tiger lost his tail. The tiger shrieked in pain while all the other tigers took to flight. Then the two friends came out of the den and started to find out a place to rest. They then climbed up a tree, but lo ! the king Lion of the forest came in and begun audience under the tree. All the tigers including the one whose tail was cut were also there. The Dhobi's son got frightened but the Barber's son got hold of his cloth and tied him to a branch of a tree. Even then the Dhobi's son continued to tremble in fear and in his nervousness, he broke the branch to which he was tied and with a crash he fell to the ground. Just then, yelled the Barber's son, 'Go comrade, catch the tigers, for we want them.' That gave the signal to the tigers to flee, and the two friends peacefully walked away. They then visited a giant's house and on the way to his haunt, they took with them a worn-out spade, an old straw rope, a winnowing fan and a small little pig. Early in the morning came the giant but found his house shut from within. "Who are you inside?" shouted the giant. Immediately came the reply, "We two are here" "How strong are you." Both replied. "We have no strength." "Then show your teeth" gnarled the giant. The two comrades, put the worn-out spade through the window. "Show me your tongue," yelled the giant. Both of them projected the old straw rope, on which the giant asked them to show their ear. Both brought out the winnowing fan. The giant saw all and then finally growled out, "Show me a louse from your head.' The boys from inside threw the pig out. Now it was the turn of the boys, they politely said, "Now that we have shown all that you wanted to see, why not come thee out with your tongue." The giant took out the tongue and placed it across the window. The barber's son immediately took out the razor to cut it, when the Dhobi's son held his hand in fright. The former became very annoyed and asked the latter to give back the *masur* grain. Then the Dhobi's son agreed and asked his friend to proceed with his business. The Barber's son cut off the tongue of the giant, and the latter fell down groaning and in a pool of blood.

Then both came out of the house severed the giant's toes, fingers, and ears and with these spoils, they proceeded on their journey again. The giant was notorious for his wickedness and no one dared come near him. His depredations increased so much that the king of the realm had to announce a meatly reward to any one who could kill the giant. The reward was half his kingdom and his daughter's hand in marriage. A potter was passing by the house of the giant and saw his leviathan body lying in front of the house. No sooner he saw the giant dead, he threw the pots away, rolled himself in the giant's blood and came back home. The king was informed of the giant's fate and as promised, he offered to marry his daughter to the potter and a day was fixed for the ceremony. The potter now being the son-in-law-designate of the king, beat his wife and children and drove them out of his house. On the day appointed for the ceremony, the Barber's and the Dhobi's sons both arrived and informed the king of their adventure. What proof, said both, "have the potter, that he killed the giant". The potter was found out and the king ordered that his lips should be sewn up and he should be banished from the state. The Barber boy then married the princess and lived happily ever afterwards.

The Story of a Poor Boy

There was a very poor boy, who lived alone with his mother, he tended goats and maintained himself and his mother by the wage he received for his work. One day his mother made two cakes and they had one each for food. The boy went with the goats for grazing. There was a hollowed tree on the spot where he penned his flock every day. Thinking that he could eat his share of cake later on, he placed part of his cake inside the hollow. In the evening, he searched for the cake, but did not find it but in its place, he found a tree which was full of cakes. That made him overjoyed and he danced in happiness. Daily he penned the goats near the tree and filled his belly with cakes hanging from the tree. One day a giantess came under the tree while he was plucking cakes from the tree. 'Do please pluck a few cakes for me, will you dear boy?' said she. 'Then receive them' said the boy from the tree, throwing the cakes at her on the ground. "O, no" said the giantess," they smell earth, I shall not eat them" "Then spread your cloth" asked the boy, but again the giantess replied, "O, no'

The cakes will smell cloth." She implored the boy to come down and hand the cakes on to her. The boy alighted from the tree and innocently approached the big woman with his hands full of cakes, but no sooner he was within her reach, the giantess caught hold of her, put him tied into a sack and carried the boy home on her head. On the way, she felt thirsty, placed the boy on the ground and went to a pool for water. The peasants working in the field got curious of the sack and came to find the boy tied in the sack and loosened the ends to allow the boy to escape. They then filled the sack with stones, tied the ends and returned to their fields. The giantess returned with the sack, opened it at her house but found no trace of the boy. Then she murmured, "Today he outwitted me, but to-morrow he shall not escape.' Again on the same spot, the giantess met the boy. This time also her wiles succeeded, she put the boy again in the sack, carried him home, this time without stopping on the way, and delivered the sack to her daughter. Thus she spoke to her daughter, 'I have succeeded in fetching him, now cook him alive', I go for bath. As soon as she had gone, the daughter opened the sack, but before she could catch him, the latter pushed her into the boiling water, and off he went. The giantess came back but found her daughter dead in the boiling water and wept bitterly.

THE FOX AND THE PLOUGHMEN

Every one could talk in earlier days, earth, stone, tree, fox, tiger bear, all talked. A fox came to a farmer and asked him, "Friend, do you plough out rats from your field?" The farmer said, "Yes, comrade, they are many is the field." There was an ant hill near by. He levelled the hill and asked the fox to sit on top. After some time the white ants ate up the hip of the fox. The farmer in the meantime caught a rat and presented it to the fox. The fox devoured the rat alive, but it ran out of the uncovered hip of the fox. The rat was caught again by the fox and every time the fox did so, the rat escaped, the fox thought he was catching a new rat every time. Then the fox suddenly discovered that his hip was eaten up. "How", said the farmer, "would you cover your hip," and he suggested that they should go to a drum-maker. The fox said to the drum-maker, "O friend! do cover my hip up. I shall bring thee a fowl every morning." The drum-maker obeyed and the hip was covered by him. The hip now became like

a drum and the fox begun to beat it with a stick. One day the fox entered a village and started beating his drum. "Ye people of the village" shouted the fox, "the king is coming, you must flee from the village." As soon as the villagers received the tidings they hurriedly deserted their hearth and home and the fox had a hearty meal of fowls and he took one to the drum-maker, as he had promised to, earlier. This was repeated from village to village and the fox had a very hearty meal every day. One day, the villager met and decided upon a plan. They shut up an old woman in a pig stable. The fox came as usual beating his drum and the men all left the village leaving the old woman. When the fox entered the pen, the old woman blurted out, "I see, you silly fox, you eat the fowls by your cunning." The fox became angry and struck the old woman and broke her teeth and then he began his daily feast of fowls. The men returned home and enquired from the old woman, "Was the king here?" As the old woman lost her teeth she only whispered *suyu* and not *tuyu*, the Ho word for fox.

The woman's teeth were made with pumpkin seeds, and then she could tell how the fox deceived all of them. Now the people met again and decided to keep watch on the fox. They got up a device. A woman's effigy was made by tieing a mat with rope and this was placed on the spot where the fox met the old woman. As usual the fox asked the woman to make room for him, if she did not, he would hurl the drum stick at her but the woman in effigy did not move and the fox struck her with the drum-stick. Then the fox demanded the drum-stick of the woman, but she did not give it back. The fox got into temper, and fell on the woman, kicking on her chest, and the legs got stuck on the mat, when the farmers who were in hiding came out and belaboured the fox to death.

The Story Of The Princess And A Minister's Son

Long long ago, a king had several daughters, one of which was very beautiful. All the boys and girls used to read in the same school. The girls' room was upstairs and the boys' room below. In course of time all the daughters of the king fell in love with the minister's son and they wanted to marry him. The Minister had warned his son before, not to meet or talk to the king's daughters and the son

obeyed the father. Yet the Minister's son could not escape meeting the daughters of the king and he fell in love with one of the daughter's and the latter reciprocated his love. Both then decided to leave for a distant land and one midnight they stole away from home on horse back. The horse galloped uninterrupted for seven miles. The couple had plenty of money with them to buy enough food and drink and the king's daughter also took a mysterious sword which was so hard that it could cut any stone into two by a single stroke. The parents ordered a search for the couple but did not find them. In the meantime the couple crossed into another kingdom, stopped on the way for they felt so thirsty. In quest of drinking water, they came to a Rakshasa's house. This house was inhabited by seven boys and their mother. Out of the seven, six were married and the youngest Damagurguria was still a bachelor. The day, the couple entered the Rakshasa's house, all the brothers with Damagurguria had gone in search of a bride for the latter. The princess and the minister's son, asked the woman for drinking water. The woman was so pleased to see the princess that she wished if she could marry her son with the latter. She thought that the minister's son had stolen the princess and she started her yarn to delay the departure of the couple in the hope that her sons would arrive in the mean time, but the latter did not arrive. The princess then left with her lover, but the woman had in the mean time, put a packet of magic mustard seeds tied to the horse's tail. They have gone a little distance when all the sons of the woman returned. The mother took the sons to task and narrated the incident of the beautiful girl and asked them to trace the trail of the mustard seeds and snatch the girl from her companion. The sons obeyed the mother and traced the couple out by following the track strewn with the mastard seeds. They overtook the beautiful bride and wanted to kill the Minister's son. The princess stopped them, appealed for his life, and said "I shall go with you, if you would listen to me." The little Rakshasas listened to her and she made all the brothers except Damagurguria, stand in line and by drawing her sword, she slew all of them by a stroke. Then she went with the Minister's son but Damagurguria in the disguise of a poor man walked in front of the couple. The princess did not recognise him and felt sorry for his poverty and asked him to graze her horse. For some days, all went well, but one day the syce took the princess's

sword and slew the Minister's son and he now intended to take the king's daughter. One day the princess went out with Damagurguria, who fell a tree and while picking the wood he placed the sword on the ground and immediately the princess seized the sword and with it she slew Damagurguria, The princess went to her dead husband and wept bitterly for him. Shortly god appeared in the guise of an old woman, and enquired, "why she was weeping." The princess then narrated her story and the old woman was visibly moved. The latter then revived her husband and made a gift of him to the princess.The couple worshipped the old woman, who disappeared immediately. Now the princess and the Minister's son were happily wed and ruled in the country as king and queen.

THE STORY OF THE TWO YOUNG ONES OF THE DOVE,

Long ago, a dove laid two eggs in the hollow of a big tree. Out of the eggs came out a fine bull and a human child, a boy. The boy was named Lita. Lita was very handsome and everyday played with the princes. The latter were so fond of Lita's bull that they decided to dispossess Lita of his precious possession. One day while playing, the princes offered a wager that if Lita won, a bull would be given to him, but if he lost, he would part with his bull. Lita agreed but won. A second time the princes bet Rs. 200/ and if Lita lost he would part with the bull. This time also Lita won and got a lot of money. Lita's bull was made to fight with an elephant and the bull won as usual and a part of the kingdom was given to Lita by the princes. Lita became rich beyond measure. Lastly the princes again challenged him and said' 'Lita, let your bull fight against the cannon'. Lita agreed. The bull addressed Lita and said, 'This time I cannot win against the cannon, but when I die, you fetch my two eyes, four feet and tail and bury them under your doorstep. Put the two feet within the house, two towards the verendah and two eyes near the feet of my forelegs and the tail near the hind feet'. The bull faught against the cannon and died. Lita followed the bull's advice. The princes won but as they did not get the bull, they wanted to snatch away Lita's riches. Two dogs came out from each pair of the feet, two black bees from the two eyes and from the tail came a self-striking whip. One day the princes asked Lita to fetch hare's milk and the two bees found out a hare with young ones. The bees stung

on the eyes of the hare and the dogs kept watch and the whip slashed on the hare, so that it could not escape. The hare implored Lita to save her and promised to do as she would be asked to. Lita asked for milk and the hare yielded it. While Lita was returning with milk, the eldest of the litter addressed the mother hare, asking her to let him go with Lita. So the hare accompanied Lita. Lita offered hare's milk to the princes and the hare said that it was his mother's milk and he was there to stand as witness. The princes had to believe Lita. Another day Lita was asked to fetch tiger's milk. The same method secured the tiger's milk and the eldest of the cubs came with Lita. When the princes could not beat Lita in their game, they decided to fight with him. Lita's army consisted of four dogs, two bees, one whip, one hare and one tiger. Lita was afraid but the hare assured him of success. With the help of his army and equipment, Lita won. The tiger was made the minister and others became his servants and followers. Lita then married the king's daughter and lived happily ever afterwards.

The Story Of Ritui Gondai

Long ago, there lived at Jagannathpur (in Kolhan) a king by the name of Jagannath Singh. He had a large crowd of elephants and horses. When he went out on hunting, he used to tie a gold bell round the neck of his elephant. His *katchery* was situated on the spot where today stands Gungaram Manki's house, and he used to come to his *katchery* on back of this elephant. There was one Ritui Gondai Sinko in Mirgilindi village. He was very rich and noted for strength. It was rumoured that he could fight single handed against ten men. His fame reached the king's ears. One day, a Ghasia stole the elephant's bell and sold it to Ritui Gondai. Some say, that the Ghasia did not sell it but stealthily hung it in Ritui's house to charge the latter with theft. When the loss of the bell was reported to the king the latter summoned all the *Mundas* and the *Mankis* and declared an award for the recovery of the gold-bell. The Ghasias and the sepoys, all scattered themselves in search of the bell. In one house, a hen was lying egg, and suddenly she flew and in her flight she struck the gold bell. The owner of the house was Ritui Gondai. Ritui now was arrested for theft, and taken to the king. The king ordered that Ritui should be pounded to death under the *dhenki*,

Ten men paddled the dhenki and twenty men seized Ritni Gondai, he held the dhenki back seven times but ultimately decided to be killed. Ritui's body was then burried and even today, the place where it was burried can be seen. As he was buried on the bank of a tank, the latter is known even today as Ritni Gondai Pukuri. This tank is situated to the south of Jagannathpur.

How Wild Dogs Decided Not To Eat Men

Once upon a time the wild dogs saw men walking by the side of a road, without using the centre and thought to themselves that men waste land by making foot paths. We can also make foot paths, they said. Now the wild dogs started rubbing their hips on land to make paths but. the hips wore away completely in the process but not a bit of path they could make. Then they thought, "We are beaten in this but we shall compete in other work". A few days later, the wild dogs saw many men drawing a cart load of stone. These men were fetching a *Sasan Diri* to bury some one. The wild dogs said, "We too one day shall go to fetch stone." They went with poles and wanted to raise stone by raising it with the poles. Some pushed the poles below the stone, others started with hands and feet, but those who raised the stone with the poles got tired and let slip the stone and all those who were pushing the stone, were pressed to death. The surviving dogs now met and said to one another, "No, no, we cannot compete with men, and therefore should not eat them". Ever since the wild dogs do not eat men.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED :—

J.A.S.B.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

J.O.A.S.—Journal of the Americam Oriental Society.

J.R.A.I.—Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

R.B.A.—Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science

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