

# TRIBAL PEASANTRY

IN BONAI HILLS



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# **TRIBAL PEASANTRY IN BONAI HILLS**

(AN EMPIRICAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY OF  
A HILL BHUIYAN VILLAGE, ODISHA)

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BHUBANESWAR**



# A HILL BHUIYĀÑ VILLAGE

An empirical Socio-economic Study

Dissertation  
for Doctorate (Dr. Phil.) *Magna-cum-Laude*  
in the Philosophy Faculty  
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*By*  
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Dedicated  
To  
My Teacher  
PROF. TARAK CHANDRA DAS  
Calcutta University

## PREFACE

The Government of Odisha was very much in the front rank among the states with high density of tribal population in organizing a Special Tribal Research Institute to study the problems faced by the tribal population. The then chief minister of Orissa, Nabakrushna Choudhury, had love and high regard for the tribal cultures and had deep sympathy for the tribal people in their striving for a better life, free from exploitation and poverty. He established the Tribal Research Bureau by consulting a foremost Anthropologist. Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose, among the first scholars recruited to this Bureau was Lakshmann Kumar Mahapatra, who had just passed Anthropology with high grade, at Calcutta university in 1952. He was made Joint Secretary of the Bureau, headed by Dr. Nabendu Dutta Majumdar, IAS; who had obtained Doctorate in Anthropology from the famous North Western University in USA.

The Advisory Committee, of which the Chief Minister was the Chairman and the Minister for Tribal Affairs, the Vice-Chairman, had decided to get the problem of Shifting Cultivation in the Paudi Hills, studied by the Research Scholar, Mahapatra, who undertook the study in 1953-1954. He had selected the Tasda village on the top of the hills above Mahulpada village, where he stayed in a hut in the winter months, just when the shifting cultivation cycle was to be initiated.

He returned to Bhubaneswar after about four months, when he fell seriously ill with malaria. He had made detailed investigations into the economy and socio-cultural life of the Hill Bhuiyan.

Afterwards, he went again to the hill village, without any scholarship, to complete the unfinished study in 1957, when he was selected as a Fellow with a Hamburg University Nehru Fellowship for three years 1957-1960. He completed the research by collecting further data through correspondence with some school teachers and villagers of Mahulpada. This enabled him to complete the thesis work by 1959-60 at Hamburg University. He was examined and awarded Dr. Phil. in Cultural Anthropology, Sociology and Comparative Education in 1960 *Magna-cum-Laude*.



Fortunately, the University there as a special favor, did not insist on submitting the Doctoral thesis in printed form, as the fellowship was not sufficient for this purpose.

Thus, regrettably, the thesis was not published in 1960, though this was a pioneering scientific work on shifting cultivation which had drawn scholars from eighteen countries besides the UNESCO which participated at the International Symposium on Shifting Cultivation in 1978 at the Department of Anthropology, Utkal University.

It was a great relief and a matter of high satisfaction for me, when the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI), Bhubaneswar, under Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste Development Department, Government of Odisha evinced genuine interest to get this thesis published.

I acknowledge with thanks to Commissioner-cum-Secretary Sri Santosh Sarangi IAS, Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste Development Department, Government of Odisha and Sri B.K. Nayak, IAS, former Director-in-Charge of SCSTRTI, Bhubaneswar, for encouraging me to complete the work to the best of my ability. I also extend my thanks to the concerned members of the institute for their help.

I am happy and grateful to the Government of Odisha for this favor.

January, 2012

(L.K. MAHAPATRA)

## FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to know that the unpublished 1960 Doctoral Dissertation by Professor L.K. Mahapatra, awarded Doctorate *Magna-cum-Laude* at Hamburg University, Germany, is being published by the Government of Orissa in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research Institute in January, 2012. This Institute, originally established by the Government of Orissa in 1953 as Tribal Research Bureau, was the earliest tribal research institute in an Indian State, along with the one established by the West Bengal Government, in which I was the Research Officer.

L.K. Mahapatra in Orissa was assigned the task of making field research among the Pauri Bhuiyan of North Orissa, who were shifting cultivators or swiddeners.

His pioneering research was highly appreciated.

I am also happy to know that he had undertaken research among the swiddeners of Indonesia in the island of Sumbawa in 1988, which has been published in 2011 by the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, (Govt. of India) Bhopal.

I wish him all the best.

*B.K. Roy Burman*  
B.K. Roy Burman

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE ...



The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI), being a premier institute of repute, a Government organization functioning under the administrative control of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Development Department Government of Odisha, has been in pursuit of its best to generate, accumulate, disseminate and facilitate in implementing the ideas into actions for welfare and development in favor of a small universe of scheduled communities of the state. The executives of development units of the state committed for uplifting the scheduled tribe and scheduled caste communities seek to develop enduring guidelines through their attempts to accomplish something desirable. Despite measures taken for development of Schedules Tribes and Scheduled Castes by Government and non-Government agencies in their striving for a better living with dignity, it has been observed that a considerable number still remained underprivileged.

Recently, due to capital intensive global transformation, the natural resources have gained market importance. As a protective measure in the interest of forest dwellers, a few Acts and Rules have been passed and put into force by Government of India as well as the Government of Odisha. However, as a result, for unfinished development and welfare initiatives in mainstreaming the tribal peasant communities, it became necessary to search for a better alternative approach. There is no single muse of development to prolix, but research findings of stalwarts which are usually found enduring since decades deserve to be circulated in form of text. While the institute is committed to honor scientific empirical research and searching for effective references on development including the areas of tribal peasantry, it was realized the importance of one of the scientific studies undertaken by Prof. L.K.Mahapatra, a think-tank, that remained unpublished deserves to be published. This manuscript, on a cursory reading, gives an immense insight about the life style, culture, customs and tradition etc. of tribal peasantry. In a sense, the work portrays insitu the realities of the past that have gone into the fading history in the rapid pace of socio-cultural transformation due to acculturation and their process of integration to the modern life among the paudi Bhuiyāñ. In publishing such a rarest of the rare of its kind the institute will be highly benefited.

The study undertaken by Prof. Mahapatra in Bonai Hills, among Paudi Bhuiyna shifting cultivators, way back in 1950s, was recognized by UNESCO as having indispensable research importance in an international symposium held in 1978. Due to dearth of studies on proto-peasantry in the state, SCSTRTI through its high level committee has decided to publish his monumental manuscript based on empirical scientific social anthropological research.

Prof. Premananda Panda  
Director, SCSTRTI,  
Bhubaneswar-751003, Odisha



## TRANSCRIPTION

Only the sounds which are either not present in the English alphabet system or are modified to suit the present purpose, are indicated below. Only the words of local significance have been transcribed in the next. To avoid confusion place-names like Odisha, Bonai, Talcher, Pal lahara etc. have been left untouched. Pāuri Bhuiyāñ words in common use among themselves are indicated thus, 'tisria' and the local non-Pāuri words, differently, e.g. "Sarpane".

### Vowels :

- a = 'a' in "ball" or 'o' in "pot"
- ā = 'a' in "bar"
- e = 'e' in "net" or "era"
- i = 'i' in "hit" or 'ee' in "deep"
- o = 'o' in "go" or "goat"
- u = 'u' in "put" or 'oo' in "noon"

### Consonants :

- kh = aspirate 'k'
- g = 'g' in "go"
- gh = aspirate 'g'
- jh = aspirate 'j'
- t = 't' in French "ete"
- th = aspirate 't' in "thin"
- t = 't' in "to"
- ṭh = aspirate 'ṭ'
- ṇ = cerebral 'n'
- ṅ = nasalized 'n' in "sing"; as in the Spanish
- d = dental 'd' in French 'de'
- dh = aspirate 'd'
- ḍ = 'd' in "do"
- ḍh = aspirate 'ḍ'
- ṛ = liquid 'd' (in Oriya ॠ)
- c = 'ch' in "church"
- ch = aspirate 'ch' (ॡ in Oriya)
- bh = aspirate 'b' in "abhor"
- ph = aspirate 'p' in "philosophy"
- l = cerebral l (ॢ in Oriya)

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## INTRODUCTION

### (a) A Sketch of the Bhuiyān Population—its geographical and cultural distribution and differentiation

The Pāuri or Hill Bhuiyān of North Orissa ex-States belong to the far-flung Bhuiyān "population". According to the famous pioneer ethnographer S.C. Roy, this population may be estimated in 1931 at about one and a half millions (Roy, p.42). He introduces a useful distinction between "Tribal Bhuiyān" and "Titular Bhuiyān" (Roy, pp.4-10), which distinction, however, is not maintained in census records. The total Bhuiyān population extends from Sikkim and Jalpaiguri District of North Bengal in the North to the Ganjam District of Orissa in the South, and from Tripura in North East India to Kanpur, Lucknow and Sitapur Districts of Uttar Pradesh in North India (Roy, p.42)

#### The Name Bhuiyān

According to Roy the name Bhuiyān and its several variants are derived from Sanskrit "Bhumi" meaning 'land' (Roy, pp.2-3). He notes that the term or its variants have been applied to "widely separated communities, either in the sense of autochthones or children of the soil (Bhumi or Bhui), or in the sense of reclaimers or owners of the land (Bhumihār), or as implying some connection with land (Bhuiyān)". (Roy, p.3). "The Pāuri Bhuiyān believe that their first ancestor sprang miraculously out of Mother Earth and hence the tribe is named "Bhuiyān" or "Earth-born". (Roy p.264). B.C. Mazumdar, however, opines that in the Buddhist work called Majima Nikaya, the tribe is mentioned as the "Bhainyan" or "Bhayan" of Ukkala Bassa (Utkal or Orissa). (Roy, pp.3-4, Mazumdar pp.31-32). This view of the origin of the name has not yet been accepted. Even Mazumdar contradicts himself, as shown by Roy (p.3).

#### Sub-Divisions of the Bhuiyān

Roy distinguishes between a southern division and a northern division ("Sections") of the tribal Bhuiyān. The Orissa ex-States form the centre of the Southern division and the Districts of Hazaribagh and Gaya in South Bihar form the centre of the other division. (Roy, p.2).

Roy gives names of 15 sections of the Bhuiyān : (Roy, pp.28-35)

1. Des Bhuiyān or Māl Bhuiyān – the most primitive section, of which the Pāuri Bhuiyān of Keonjhar, Bonai, Pal Lahara and Bamra ex-States are perhaps the only representative. They have the tribal emblem of a carrying pole (bāhāngi) and speak a dialect of Oriya.
2. Parjā Bhuiyān or Rāutāli Bhuiyān – the bulk of the Plains Bhuiyān in Orissan ex-States, known in Hazaribagh District as Bhumini Bhuiyān. According to my information in south-eastern Bonai, however, Parjā and Rāutāli Bhuiyān are different though closely allied groups. The Rautāli section seems to be on a higher rank than the Parjā, who



may accept cooked food from the other, but not vice versa. Intermarriage does not come in question. Moreover, the Parjā Bhuiyāñ are served by Barber and washerman castes but unlike in the case of Rāutālī Bhuiyāñ they are not served by Brahman, but by Baisnab priests.

3. Sāntāri or Sāntālī Bhuiyāñ – alternatively named on my enquiry Sāñuntālī or Sāññintulī Bhuiyāñ. Roy assume that this name refers to the great Sāntāl tribe in Orissa, Bihar, and Bengal. But I was always informed that this section is served by Brahman, Barber and washerman castes. And so far as I know the Sāntāl tribals in Orissa have never been extended such high Hindu ritual services. This section is reported to be found in Bonai and Keonjhar Plains.
4. Rājkuḷī or Baṛ Bhuiyāñ – They are reputed to have originated from the union of Bhuiyāñ women with men of the ruling families in the ex-States.
5. Khandāit Bhuiyāñ or Pawanbams Bhuiyāñ – These are a section of the Plains Bhuiyāñ, whose ancestors had served as militiamen or Paik. In Singhbhum District they are known as Pawanbams Bhuiyāñ or the offspring of Hanumān, the mythical son of the Wind-God.
6. Sāoñtiā Bhuiyāñ – refers, in the opinion of Roy, to the Sāoñti Hinduized tribe in northern ex-States of Orissa. This seems quite plausible.
7. Bāthudī Bhuiyāñ – obviously refers to the Bāthudī tribe, largely hinduized, which till 1950, had retained the characteristic musical instrument, cāngu (like tambourine), common to the Hill Bhuiyāñ and Sāoñti but never to the Sāntāl tribe.
8. Khāṭī or Kāṭṭī or Kāṭṭīāri Bhuiyāñ – Unfortunately Roy does not give any details of this section. Kanṭī Bhuiyāñ seems to be merely another alternative name of this section. Both Kanṭī and Khāṭī mean “pure”. The Kanṭī Bhuiyāñ seem to be highly hinduized, served by Brahman, Barber and Washerman castes, although the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ won't accept water from them. However, the Kanti are acknowledged in Dhokāmunda colony to be on a higher status than the Pāuri. The Kanṭī are alleged to be in Kuirā Parganā and Keonjhar Plains, while the priests of Bāñeswar (Siva) temple in Bonaigarh are reported to be Kanṭī Bhuiyāñ.
9. Rikhiāsan Bhuiyāñ – the name is alleged to be derived from the ancient Hindu ‘risi’ (holy sages), who like the ancestors of Bhuiyāñ lived on the roots and fruits of the jungle. This section is very strongly represented among the northern division.
10. Musāhār Bhuiyāñ – of Gaya and other northern Districts of Bihar are “eaters of rats” and are considered ‘untouchables’. Such delegation to the lowest ritual status is, however, rare for the Bhuiyāñ population. A beef-eating wild untouchable group, calling themselves

Bhuiyāñ, was met with me in 1954 in Mirzapur district, Dudhi Tehsil. This last group is known also Palamau District and perhaps in Surguja ex-State of Madhya Pradesh.

11. Ghātwar Bhuiyāñ or Tikāit Bhuiyāñ or Rae Bhuiyāñ of the Santal Parganās, Hazaribagh, Gaya, Monghyr, and Bhagalpur Districts who generally are land-holding families. Originally Ghātwar Bhuiyāñ to have been entrusted guarding of hill-passes.
12. Donsonā or Dandsenā Bhuiyāñ
13. Naksiyā Bhuiyāñ
14. Hāke Bhuiyāñ
15. Dāke Bhuiyāñ

Roy does not give any information on these groups. He himself had doubts over these names (p.28) and suspects them to be mere descriptive name or nicknames. At any rate, Dandsenā seems to be derived from a common family-name among the Khāṇḍait Caste of Orissa.

Further, Roy designated the Sections 1, 2, 4, 5 and 11 as the "Bhuiyāñ proper" as distinguished from the other groups, who are today either independent tribes or castes. To this one must add also the Kanṭi Bhuniyāñ in Section 8.

#### Socio-Cultural Differentiation of the Bhuiyāñ Proper

The allegedly wild Bhuiyāñ in the forests of Sargujā ex-State are not yet studied. They may be even having a language of their own, as the beef-eating wild Bhuniyāñ of Dhudi Tehsil in Mirzapur District appeared to have one. On the basis of available date, however, the Pauri or Hill Bhuniyāñ of northern Orissa ex-States appear to be the most primitive section, depending wholly or mostly on shifting cultivation.

At the other extreme are Ghātwar or Tikāit Bhuiyāñ in Bihar and Bhuiyāñ landlords in Gangpur ex-State, who claim to be of Kasyatriya or Rajput (warrior) caste. According to Risley (Vol.1, p.111), "some of the leading Bhuniyāñ families have come to be chiefs of the petty states of Orissa, and have merged their identity in the claim to quasi-Rajput descent".

In between are graded the various sections according to their ritual and economic status and the stage of hinduization. It is not rare to find prosperous families far ahead of their section in social advance.

Russel and Hiralal have advanced a promising hypothesis. The Bhuiyāñ of North Bihar in a predominately Hindu country were reduced to the position of low-caste Musahār as mere drudges. The Bhuiyāñ of Chotanagpur, characterized by partial and late Hindu occupation, retained their rank above the lowest Hindu castes, but below the Hindu Cultivators; their condition is comparable to that of the Gond and Baiga of Central India. At the other extreme,



however, the Bhuiyān of North Orissa ex-States, where the Hindus were colonists, were recognized as landowners and former rulers, and thus a considerable portion of the Bhuiyān rank like Hindu cultivating castes or even like the Khandait, who as former militiamen, have high prestige. It is pertinent to point out that under similar conditions in sāntāl Parganās of Chotanagpur the landholding section of the Bhuiyān have attained high social status, engaging Brahman priests on ritual occasions. (Roy, pp.4-5 on authority of Buchanan's Bhagalpur Journal, 1810-11).

All the Bhuiyān sections, with probable exception of wild Bhuiyān of Surguja and Dudhi region, speak dialects of the prevalent regional language, that is, local dialects of Hindi and Oriya. Except the Hill or Pāuri Bhuiyān, all are settled agriculturist and have no Cāng tambourine, or youth dormitories and all have been to a smaller or larger extent hinduized. Even the Pāuri Bhuiyān have not been free from Hindu influences. They do not take beef nor do they rear swine and water from their hand is taken by all Hindu castes. Only the washerman and not the Barber or the Brahman serve them in Mahulpada area.

The Plains Bhuiyān of North Orissa ex-States (Gangpur, Bonai, Pal Lahara, Bamra, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Nilgiri), especially the Khandait or Paik Bhuiyān and Parjā and Rautāli Bhuiyān have developed subdivisions like Dasgharia (ten family) or Pānosagharia (500-family) or even Pandarsagharia (1500 family) with sometimes commensal or even connubial taboos between them. On the other hand, they have organized their communal groups on an increasing scale from 'Pirh', 'Parganā', 'Des' into inter-state-or-District assemblies which regularly meet (Roy, p.309-10). This coalescing process therefore has gone much further than among the Pāuri Bhuiyān, who have inter-village associations, called 'bār' and probably in recent years, regional Mahādesa assemblies.

Details of the Plains Bhuiyān culture are described by Roy in his book (pp.304-315). Although they are still sticking to many socio-religious ceremonies and festivals, and social customs of the Hill Bhuiyān, they have taken over a large assortment of Hindu rites, festivals and customs and attitudes.

From the point of view of culture history the Pāuri Bhuiyān of Kuirā Parganā in North-East Bonai is very interesting and instructive. In this rather well-watered valley with suitable soil, the Pāuri have long taken to settled cultivation and thereby improved their economic condition. According to Patnaik (1957, (a) pp.20-24) the Kuirā Bhuiyān are literate in greater number, are working to some extent in nearby manganese and iron mines, are requiring the services of Brahman and Barber more and more, have changed certain elements of dress in the local Hindu way and are forgetting their own folk-literature in favour of Hindu epic poetry. They have also modified some festivals or refashioned and renamed them and are neglecting some others. According to Roy, in imitation of the Plains Bhuiyān they also claim to be "Panca saiā"

(500-family). Bhuiyāñ and he noted that they were fast coming to be recognized as such. Since long have they modified the 'Bar' organization by subsuming all 29 Kuirā village under one Bār. The more prosperous among the Kuirā Bhunyāñ, Roy noted, even disclaimed relationship with Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. The Kuirā Bhunyāñ as a whole have already in Roy's days adopted the sword as their emblem, while the proper Pāuri emblem is a carrying pole (Roy, pp.99-100). All this shows where the wind is blowing.

### Habitat and Population of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ

The habitat of the Hill Bhuiyāñ section lies roughly speaking, between 21° and 22° North Latitude and 85° and 86° East Longitude. This area is characterized by an extensive mass of tangled hills and elevated valleys that run in the form of a crescent along the western borders of Keonjhar ex-State and stretches into Bonai and Pal Lahara ex-States. This range is the watershed of the Baitarañi river on the north and the Brahmañi on the south. These jungle-clad hills and high wooded valleys in the northwest of Keonjhar, north-east of Bonai and north of Pal Lahara ex-States form the home of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ (Roy, pp.43-44). I was told there were at present 7 villages of Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in Bamra ex-States while Pal Lahara claimed 12. The west-and-south-ward extension of Pāuri Bhuiyāñ territory seems to be not of much significance. In Mahuplada region the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ have occupied former Juāng villages in many cases, to this day, therefore, worshiping juāng deities.

It is impossible to isolate the population of the different Bhuiyāñ sections in the census records. It is also not certain how many Bhuiyāñ are actually engaged in shifting cultivation. Dr. H.F. Mooney's gross estimate in 1950 (Mooney, p.4) puts the Bhunyāñ shifting cultivators as 39,600. Since he does not mention the Bentkār tribe, also shifting cultivator in small groups, this figures may be slightly reduced. On the other hand, some Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in Bonai and Keonjhar, Pal Lahara and Bamra have left shifting cultivation, and might have been excluded from Dr. Mooney's calculation. Even then, my own guess of their population at 50000 (Mahapatra, 1956) may still be an error on the right side.

### Physical and Cultural Affinities

Roy gives some anthropometric measurements and other observations on the body-type of the Pāuri Bhunyāñ. They are today unanimously accepted as belonging to the Proto-Australoid (in B.S. Guha's classification, Census of India, 1931) or to Pre-Dravidian (in A.C. Haddon's Races of Man, 1926). A useless controversy once raged as to whether the Bhunyāñ were Dravidian or Kolarian (like Munda or 'Kol'). It is, however, not yet scientifically and conclusively established that all the tribes or castes coming under Roy's "Bhuiyāñ proper", - not to speak of the total Bhuiyāñ 'population' - belong to the same physical type or at least might have been derived from the same ethnic group.



Then Roy notes that the cultural affinities of the Bhuiyāñ are with the Mundā tribes of Central India, and not with the Dravidian-speaking tribes of the South. He points out that among the Bhuiyāñ the Mundā or 'Kol' culture elements are "overlaid more or less by a veneer of Hindu culture varying in density according to the social position of the particular section or family." (Roy, p.26). It is obvious that the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ culture meets his assertion much more than other sections, unless of course, the beef-eating wild sections in Surguja and adjacent region testify to the most extensive affinities. It should, however, be noted that both the northern and the southern divisions of the Bhuiyāñ reveal resemblances to, or affinities with local cultures in their respective areas to a great extent.

### **The Historical Position of the Bhuiyāñ in Orissa**

The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ have played very important roles in the history of northern ex-States of Orissa. In Keonjhar, the Pāuri had installed a Raja and thus inaugurated the present Dynasty. In recognition of that the investiture at the coronation ceremony is made by a Bhuiyāñ chief. They similarly installed another Raja in Bamra. In Bonai they helped the present dynasty's occupation of Bonai and till today there is a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ Chief as landlord. Perhaps other Bhuiyāñ sections were similarly powerful in Mayurbhanj, Nilgiri, Pal Lahara, and certainly in Gangpur, where there are a number of Bhuiyāñ landlords. The Plains Bhuiyāñ held fiefs to supply militiamen to the Rajas, but the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ was not so burdened. On the other hand, he revolted, from time to time, against the Raja's officers and even interfered in cases of unrightful succession to the throne. (Cobden-Ramsay in Feudatory States of Orissa Gazetteer).

The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ has traditionally been recognized as the "lord of the hills", as one of the earliest inhabitants of North Orissa. The immigrant tribes from Singhbhum, Chotanagpur, and Keonjhar, the Munda, the Cerenga Kolha and the colonizing castes from other parts of Orissa openly admit his preeminent status in these areas. So much so that immigrant tribes would not collect thach-grass from the jungle before the Pāuri did. This may partly be on magico-religious grounds, since the Pāuri holds a special worship before the mows thatch. However, all the immigrant tribes and castes depend on Pāuri priests or other Bhuiyāñ priests for worshipping and appeasing the local deities. Shiva temples tended by Bhuiyāñ priests show the extent to which their status has been recognized by Hindu immigrants. On the other hand, it gives rise to a very important question, whether some elements of apparently Hindu culture, like worship of Shiva-Phallus and of cows were not integral parts of the Bhuiyāñ culture before they came into contact with the Hindus.

### **(b) The Course of Field Studies**

Mahulpadā, a settled village with a police station, lies 26 miles away from Bonaigarh, the former Capital of Bonai ex-State and now Sub-divisional Headquarters in Sundargarh District

of Orissa. In this southeast corner of Bonai, where the borders of Pal Lahara, Keonjhar and Bamra are almost at a stone's throw, the Reserve Forests have been thrown open for colonization of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ at Daleisarā and Dhokāmunda, 8 to 6 miles from Mahulpadā. The perennial hill-river Kolā, with its perennial feeder hill-streams, has carved out a narrow fertile valley with the Derulā village at the head and Jagati-and-Mahulpadā twin villages and Kumḍih village along its course.

I arrived in Mahulpadā on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1954 along with a work-assistant or Orderly, Shri Jagabandhu Naek. I stayed in this area until the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 1954, in total for 54 days right on the Hill village of Tasdā among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. Other days I spent either in visiting other nearby villages (Burhabhuiñ Pāuri village, Derulā Pāuri village, Barouā Kolha-Munda village, Jagati and Kumḍih, largely Gond villages and Jagati colony of Cerengā Kolha families), or resting at Mahulpadā due to serious malaria-infliction, both of Shri Jagabandhu and myself at the end of our stay, or for visiting Daleisarā Bhuiyāñ Darbār festivities and visiting Bonaigarh for bicycle repairs and some provisions.

I got one wattle-hut constructed for me on a corner of the dancing platform of lower Tasdā. The loose straw thatch leaked when it rained. The unplastered wattle-wall was protected from the winter winds with the help of bamboo mats used for drying Mahula flowers in the spring.

Later on I got the opportunity again in the last week of May 1957 to visit Mahulpadā, Tasdā, Hātisul, Derulā (and Baḍbil) villages till the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1957. But the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ were heavily engaged in firing the swiddens.

Just before leaving for Europe in October-November 1957 again I managed to visit the area for about 9 days under great difficulties of communication, as the road was not yet free from flooding from hill-streams and the bridges were not yet renovated. This time I visited Mahulpadā, Tasdā, Derulā, Daleisarā and Dhokāmunda colonies (including the Gohābandhā colony of Tasdā families). Although the visit was possible to make to Tasdā the male population was staying overnight in their swiddens guarding the ripe crops from animals and for harvesting. The swiddens lay unfortunately at a great distance from the village site.

### (c) Problems and the Focus of Research – The goal and the limitations

The field studies among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ were undertaken as a Project under the Tribal Research Bureau, Government of Orissa. This Tribal Research Bureau was inaugurated in 1953 to aid and advise the Governmental agencies engaged in tribal areas, especially the Tribal and Rural Welfare Department, on basis of scientific studies. This was thus an organization for Applied Anthropology, that is, for applying anthropological knowledge for administrative purposes.



The administrative aim in the Pauri Bhuiyān Project was to find out the social economic and religious basis of the Bhuiyān's sticking to shifting cultivation, and also to find out ways how the colonization schemes might be improved to attract the shifting cultivators of the region. Because of the urgency of the problem of stopping shifting cultivation this Project was given top priority.

The Pauri Bhuiyān had been investigated extensively by S. C. Roy in the early 1930's. But an intensive study of their shifting cultivation economy was still wanting. So it was decided to concentrate on one shifting cultivation-village in the first instance, then to undertake comparative studies of similar villages in other areas; thirdly, to study some old settled villages with or without shifting cultivation; lastly, to evaluate some recently established colonies. The study was to cover at least two year.

Unfortunately for me, I had to interrupt my studies in March 1954 when serious malarial fever forced me to be carried downhill. Later on I left the Tribal Research Bureau for teaching at the Lucknow University, and field studies could not be resumed before 1957 for short periods.

Another Research Scholar from the Tribal Research Bureau was for some time in Derulā, the old settled village in Kolā valley, still engaged in shifting cultivation. The result of his studies are not known to have been published.

Under these limitations the presentation in hand is bound to be incomplete in parts, especially because my later visits were not quite fruitful for reasons beyond my control.

In this dissertation the focus will be economic life of the village in its social, technological, and magico-religious-ritual setting. The following general problems are kept in view as points of reference:

1. To what extent is the cooperative or communal spirit expressed in village life?
2. Whether shifting cultivation is a "way of life" in this village.
3. Whether the village is an adequately isolable unit of socio-economic study.

#### (d) Methods followed

As outlined in the previous section, the hill-village Tasdā was selected for intensive study of shifting cultivation economy for the following reasons :

1. Tasdā is an illiterate, old Pauri village of average size;
2. It is sticking to shifting cultivation;
3. Only a section has come down to the nearby Government colony in 1951; this will afford a reliable basis for comparative study between the colony and the parent village during the course research;

4. Tasdā lies about 4 miles up the hills from Mahulpadā, where I could collect my mails;
5. It was soon found out that Tasdā is one of the most important village & for ritual purposes in the 'Batisbār' Organization.

As, however, Tasdā is situated on the borders of Bonai-Pai Laharā ex-States, and at some distance from Bāmrā and Keonjhar ex-States borders, and lies on the somewhat frequented trade-route (foot-track) through Pāi Laharā to Keonjhar and Keonjhar Bhuiyān pīrās, it has a slightly unique position. But this condition does not seem to have made much difference. Moreover, other hill village like Hātsul (16 Households) would have been too small, or Uskulā and Soso would have been also slightly unique with allegedly greater dependence on day-labour in mines at a distance, or with a section depending on some terraced cultivation in lower Uskulā.

Equal emphasis was not given to all aspects of culture, as is the regular procedure of monographic study; but it was definitely intended to gain the basic and broad outlines of all aspects of culture in what was meant to be the first phase of intensive studies of the village economy. Especially regrettable is the omission of an inventory of their material culture, which was postponed for the second phase of the studies. However, it is hoped, it will not effectively hinder understanding the economy.

## 1. Observation

- (a) Apart from observing the settlement, the material culture, the entertainments (games, music and dancing), trading in the village and at Mahulpadā and some festivals or festivities (Pus Puneñ, Divination and sacrifices), and swidden-occupation, cowherding, Gossip groups etc.,
- (b) I also undertook much participant observation (Pancāyat Meetings, some Festivals and Festivities like Āgcalā, Dihabandhāni, Incorporation of a witch in the village, a Funeral, a Name-giving Ceremony, communal fishing. Participant observation was possible, because I had been accepted as a resident in the village, although for a temporary period.

## 2. Interview

- (a) Guided interview with informants, singly or in a group, was mostly employed to elicit information on what could not be observed during my stay or what occurred rarely or once-for-all. Also with this method I collected songs and data on house building, marketing, birth, marriage, sickness, death and funeral, magico-religious practices



and cycle of festivals and ceremonies, and filled up many gaps in the understanding of observed facts. Of course, during these interviews, guided as they were, every rein was loosened for some spontaneous, hitherto unsuspected information, even sometimes for indulgence of the informant's vanity or sentiments.

- (b) **Schedules** – Interview with the help of printed schedules was somewhat more rigid than in case of guided interview above. Data on food supply (seasonal variation of availability), consumption of food (daily), production processes and crop yields, village census, family income and expenditure, and on indebtedness were collected in this method.
- (c) **Genealogies** – Genealogies were collected primarily to find out the relatedness or otherwise of the villagers to each other. So most of the genealogies are short and lacking in many details. Some genealogies were meant to illustrate the principle of lineage and to help in collecting kinship terms and behavior (not complete) and in tracing inheritance claims (not complete). Collection of genealogy is in itself a type of rigid interview. On basis of these genealogies further interviews were sometimes undertaken in order to check upon informants or to elicit further information.

### Language

The language spoken by the Hill Bhuiyāñ and other castes and tribes was the local hill dialect of Oriya, the other tongue very close to my mother tongue. It took me about a week to understand properly what was meant in their daily conversation not directed towards me. The hill Bhuiyāñ have a special variant of this hill dialect, characterized by stressed consonants and use of substitute phonemes rather frequently (n for l, or r for d etc.).

### Experiment

It was on a very humble scale in the field of Songs. I was requested repeatedly by the young men of Tasḍā to give them some songs, as any learned man of their acquaintance was supposed to know by heart a number of them. As I did not remember any, I had to compose four songs. Two of them were accepted and two others not. The results and their cultural significance will be dealt with in a separate paper on Folk Songs, but will be hinted at in the last part of this dissertation.

We also attempted to teach them the alphabet. This experience will be treated in the last part also.

### (e) Reactions of the Villagers

When I was making preparations at Bonaigarh to move to Bhuiyāñ areas, news reached the Bhuiyāñ in no time that one "Bhuiyāñ Officer" was coming to Tasḍā. In the atmosphere of

repeated and increasing pressure on the part of forest, revenue, and welfare officials on the villagers to leave shifting cultivation and come down to live in colonies, they could interpret my appearance only in one way: I was some sort of special officer to try to bring them down. Tasdā was by them well-known for the resistance they were putting against governmental pressures. So their initial suspicion was only intensified when I wanted to live among them for a few months. It was however mollified in some ways, because I was not behaving officiously or offensively like a traditional "officer", and moreover, I took part in the burial ceremony of an important man, in fact a member of the newly established Mahulpadā Pancāyat, "just like a co-villager", - that is how they felt. Later on I was admitted into many of their 'open' ceremonies or even Pancāyat Meetings, when they accepted subscription from me or asked my advice or opinion. Later on I became a regular participator in their rice-or-millet-bear sittings and grew familiar with the children and womenfolk. It went so much so that it was jokingly rumoured that two girls were assigned as future 'wives' of my orderly and mine. My taking advantage of the custom of establishing quasikinship relations through friendship with a youngman of my first-name, or with another having my elder brother's first-name, worked very fine. In this way I became a quasinephew of the Headman of the village and related to every other villager in some way or other. If they suffered my presence at first, they came gradually to accept me and even to expect me, if not to welcome me. My official position, their inference that I was more 'learned' than the S.D.O. (the head of the Subdivision) from his offering me his chair, out of normal courtesy at Mahulpadā, and also that I received more pay than the Officer-in-Charge of the Mahulpadā Police Station - all this added to my stature, so that one day the Sardār or Head of the Parganā (installed by the Government) paid me a courtesy visit. However they liked me as a person, they did not trust my harmless assignment. They were somewhat free with Jagabandhu, my Orderly, whom they would anxiously ask how long we were going to stay or where else we were moving or what were the aims of this visit, etc. I had to address them on more than one public occasions that the purpose of my visit was quite harmless, but might be helpful at least for their children, when they would learn about their forefathers' ways of life. I am sure, they were not convinced, even when I showed them books on other tribes and areas.

Murmurs reached me that the villagers were anxiously waiting for my departure, when they would set out to celebrate "Dhulāni" and "Rahni Bhasnā" ceremonies; because it was made out to me that a stranger was not allowed to stay in the village during the ceremonies. In Derulā I asked the grand old Hādi Nāek, who said there was no such rule. Actually the snag was that a naked woman would have to take away the ceremonial twigs used in the second ceremony and leave them in the stream before the day-break. As I was observing everything and taking it down, this "barbarous" or "obscene" custom would also be recorded to the permanent



shame of the Bhuiyāñ ! They were quite right, as they judged from what the higher Hindu castes think about it. Here I was definitely unwelcome, because only after the ceremonies they could undertake cutting the jungle in their swiddens. Similar social pretensions had also hindered my field-studies in 1950 in Keonjhar in a Bāthudi village. But the Bāthudi further suspected that I had come to degrade their caste-status by exposing their "vulgar" customs. It may be of interest here to note that my own caste status being high along with that of my Orderly, we were accepted as at least of equal ritual status. Had any one of us been an "untouchable" or even "touchable-but-water-cannot-be-accepted", their reception might surely have been different; at least, I could not have entered on familiar terms with each and every one right inside their houses.

On the other hand, they could appreciate that I had to fill up certain schedules, although many wondered why I was taking another village census after the recent one of 1951. They had also all sorts of fear of increased taxation etc. when I collected crop-statistics and data on family budget. But they appreciated my recording their indebtedness and consumption of food – in spite of this activity being something of a nuisance to them. They also liked it very much when a Moneylender from the valley left the village in fear of my presence. They were not shy of photography.

I could gauge their liking for me when on my second visit after 4 years in 1957 they contrasted my approach and behavior towards them with that of another research officer. I also came to know that a song was composed about me and my Orderly, but it was forgotten by the time I visited in 1957.

The purpose of this lengthy description of their reactions is that with its aid a proper evaluation of general reliability of my materials may be arrived at.

I think, except for the information on the crop-yield for 1953, other information has not been polluted materially by their general distrust of my official intentions. I have also tried to check up the facts as much as possible from different persons or different villagers.

#### (f) Terms defined

The definitions here attempted stem out of empirical needs, and are, therefore, provisional in nature, but binding for the purpose of this dissertation.

#### Shifting Cultivation

Cultivation on a hill-slope after cutting and burning the plant growth, continuously for upto 4 years, the ashes supplying the only or the main manure; the cultivation plot (swidden) is then, abandoned for recuperation, to be taken up again for cultivation after a lapse of some years, thus cultivation and fallowing appearing in a cyclical order.

Cultivation means not only turning up the soil with a digging stick, hoe, spade or even plough, but also, in its more primitive form, making holes with a stick or even finger for sowing seeds or tubers or shoots (as among the shifting cultivators of Assam and further India).

### Agriculture

Settled cultivation on the relatively flat land with the help of animal-drawn ploughs or power-driven machines.

This meaning of the term seems to be widely accepted, although some authors still persist in speaking of shifting agriculture (cf. Izikowitz, p.206).

### Swidden

A plot of shifting cultivation under use. This convenient term has been given currency by Prof. K.G. Izikowitz in his book (p.7 f.n.). In old dialect of North England "swithen" or "swivven" meant "burned clearing".

### Way of Life

Life is used here to mean "active part of existence, business and pleasures of the world" (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1954, p.687. For example, "high, low, life, social customs of upper, lower, classes"). "Shifting cultivation as a way of life," will thus stand for "the requirements of shifting cultivation as the major factor in organization of socio-economic life, recreational activities and magico-religious cults in a rural community."

The following definitions of types of human activity are adapted from "Cooperation and Competition in primitive societies" by Dr. Margaret Mead (pp.16-17).

**Collective** : in which individuals are assembled.

This may be co-operative, competitive, or individualistic.

**Individual (Solitary)** : in which individuals act alone. This may also be cooperative competitive or individualistic. Prof. R. Piddington prefers the term 'solitary', which is value-free and is not confusing (Vol.2, p.605 f.n.).

**Competition** : when the primary emphasis is on the goal with little or no reference to competitors.

**Cooperation** : when the goal is shared because its attainment will bring benefit to each individual.

**Helpfulness** : The goal is shared only through the relationship of the helpers to the individual whose goal it is.



Three derivative but important types of human activity may be added to the above types for clarifying and emphasizing their specific nature.

*Communal* : when an activity is cooperative in the interest of the community (village or hamlet) at large. A variant of it may be termed communal partnership, when similar communal activities are done by several parallel groups by turn.

*Mutual Helpfulness* : when in a fixed inter-helping group every member is assisted by the others for attainment of similar or identical goals.

*Reciprocal Cooperation* : when the goal of an individual is shared by a number of individuals, because its attainment in this case will assure promotion of similar (identical) goals of each member of the community, if required.

**Bhuiyāñ "population" or "people" or "tribe "**

S.C. Roy uses all the three terms in his pioneer book, *The Hill Bhuiyāñ of Orissa*.

"Tribe" has not yet been properly defined in the context of modern changes. It may have political, administrative, linguistic, ethnical, historical, territorial and even religious aspects. In India, perhaps also outside, an ethnic group marrying within itself, exclusively or mostly, may be taken for empirical purposes to denote a tribe. From this point of view there will be several tribes among the Bhuiyāñ corresponding to their several endogamous sections.

As a minority-group in a county, "people" connotes a certain consciousness, not necessarily organized of unity within the group, which is lacking among different sections of the Bhuiyāñ in different States of India. It is also not possible to assert that they are of the same race or ethnic status or had the same cultural history.

Therefore, the only other term "population", seems to be suitably neutral, but not arbitrary, for use as a blanket-term for all who are supposed to be "Bhuiyāñ".

"Cooperate Village Ownership" and "Clan-section" are defined on pages, 142 & 178.

## PART – I

### THE VILLAGGE TASRĀ

#### 1. GEO-ETHNIC SETTING

The Pauri Bhuiyāñ hill-village, Tasdā, or Tasrā, lies at 21°37'10" N. latitude and 85°9'18" E. longitude, about 6 kilometers away to the east of Mahulpadā, the administrative centre with a Police Station and a School. Recently a Post-office and the seat of Mahulpadā village Pancāyat have been open at Mahulpadā.

Tasrā is at present divided into 2 tola or hamlets: Tal or Lower Tasrā and Upar or Upper Tasrā. On the official map this differentiation is not shown, presumably because at the time of surveying they lived together at Tal Tasrā. It appears, the height of Tal Tasrā from the mean sea level is less than 1500 feet and that of Upar Tasrā, less than 2000 feet. There is Belsarai or Beljhari, a hill-stream to the north, about 250 feet down Tal Tasrā. There is a steep ascent from the river-bed to Tal Tasrā, as the river has carved a broad deep gorge against the very steep hillside leading to another hill-villager, Tare, on the north.

There is another but smaller stream up a gentle slope to the south of Tal Tasrā. Thereafter begins another steep ascent to Upar Tasrā. This smaller stream is named Kainda Jharan and is dry in the winter except for some pools. The Belsarai river flows into the Kolā river above Mahulpadā and is perennial; so is also the Kolā. Perennial springs and streams are characteristic in this eastern region of Bonai.

There is a third, very small stream, lying to the east of Tal Tasrā and still smaller lying to the southwest of Upar Tasrā, which supply the drinking water. They become mere springs in the winter and in the months of March, April and May sheer pools of water. The Upar Tasrā spring often dries up completely.

From Tal Tasrā a gentler slope and then a steeper ascent up the hills lead east-south-eastward to ladumḍih and thereafter down to Tanagulā. Both these villages fall on Pal Lahara side of the border, while Tasrā lies in Bonai ex-State.

The relative position of Tal Tasrā and Upar Tasrā may be expressed thus : If a man be seated resting his back on an armless chair, with the feet stretched downward slightly away from the body, the slanting thigh portion will roughly represent Tal Tasrā and the shoulder area, Upar Tasrā. The only misrepresentation involved is that Upar Tasrā is not even, unlike the shoulder, and Tal Tasrā has some flat lands, of course, mostly man-made. The head forms the high hill Bābhūñi, that towers up above Upar Tasrā. From Upar Tasrā Mandaghar (Bachelors Dormitory) one gets a good view of the bare hill-top of Radā village in Pal Lahara to the north-east, where sandy soil and perhaps recent swiddens have produced this typical landscape. According to



Dr. B. Sinha (in his paper "Natural Regions of Orissa", Geographical Review of India, June 1957, p.34), to the east, "in the Bhuiyāpiḍh and Juangpiḍh subdivisions the mountains are completely (?) devoid of any forest cover due to shifting cultivation (Jhum cultivation), practised by the Bhuiyas and Juangs of the area which has initiated the soil erosion of a severe type." But in Bonai, especially in Mahulpadā region this description does not seem to fit.

To continue the quotation: "Even though these forests belong to the group of "northern tropical moist deciduous" type, the "Sal" (*Shorea robusta*) trees fail to dominate the tree association."

This mountainous region forms according to his scheme, "the dividing range between the Baitarani (eastern) and Brahmani (western) rivers" (bracketed notes mine). The general nature of the rock is the ancient Deccan system. "Those of the Keonjhar-Bonai- Pal Lahara tract belong to the Iron Ore Series of the Dharwars, which in this area consist principally of intrusions of epidiorite with some quartzite and, at the higher altitudes, hematite-quartzite and iron ore. The caps of the mountains are often extensively lateritised. The soils yielded by these rocks are for the most part red clay loams: excellent forest soils. They appear to erode comparatively slowly and stand up to the onslaught of shifting cultivation better than the majority of the soils found in the southern tract." (Dr. H.F. Mooney, Report on Shifting Cultivation in Orissa, Government of Orissa Press, 1951).

To quote again Dr. Sinha, "economically this region is very valuable since it contains important deposits of iron, manganese and mica ores in the Mānkarnachā hills and a little to the south of it, deposits of gold are also met with." The 1 million-ton steel plant of Rourkela will be fed by the rich hematite ores of Tāldihā and Bārsuāñ, for which purpose a railway upto Bārsuāñ has already been constructed. It should be noted that Bārsuāñ is only about 45 kilometer away from Tasrā.

Rainfall or temperature variations are not available for the area. Tasrā is said to receive more rainfall than the valley of the Kola or the eastern villages of Ladumdih or Tanagula. It is cooler in summer at Tal Tasrā than at Mahulpadā in the valley, partly because of the deep foliage of groves, and at Upar Tasrā, partly because of an incessant wind. In winter Tal Tasrā is protected from cool north winds as it is ringed on three sides by hills, open to the west. But Upar Tasda is colder, because it is open to the winds.

There are mango groves along the Belsarāi and other hill streams. Sal (*Shorea robusta*) seems to have been the primary forest cover of the area, although today secondary vegetation predominates except in the reserved forests. How far this condition is due to shifting cultivation, and how far due to unchecked and indiscriminate timber felling for supplying railway sleeper since 1838 till about 1941 in Bonai, one cannot judge today. Sisu (*Dalbergia sissoo*) is also rare. The Asan (*Terminalia tomentosa*) and Peasal (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) are more frequent. Plenty of the Kusum (*Schleichera tringa*), Kend and Mahul or Mahwa (*Bassia Latifolia*) and a



good number of Dumru and Purhai fruit trees have been spared from the axe of the shifting cultivator. A bushy bamboo grows in the abandoned swiddens, where characteristically "tilau" tree (*wend landia exserta*) and 'dhaulā' etc. form the main forest cover. A wide variety of edible roots and tubers, berries and fruits and flowers, as also wild herbs is used by the Hill Bhuiyāñ and their neighbours.

Elephants come in big herds from Keonjhar or Pal Lahara sides. Tigers are not rare. But bears are very frequently met with. Wild pig or 'barihā' (*Sus Indicas*), the Sambar or *Cervus unicolor* (*Rusa aritotelis*), the 'cithal' or spotted deer (*Axis maculatus*), the mouse-deer or 'Kutra' (*Meminna Indica*) and the four-horned antelope or 'shingalmiriga' (*Fatrecerus quadricornis*) as also 'jhinkmusa' or porcupines are rather common, whereas monkeys are plenty. While various species of rats and mice are omni-present, 'nilgai' (*Portex pictus*) has become very rare. Peafowls, jungle fowls, pigeons, and a wild variety of wild birds abound in the forests. Most of the animals and birds do harm to plantations or crops. Bears are a menace to communication even in day-time between Tasrā and Mahulpadā during the season of berries and fruits. Though tiger claims some men, bears are more feared by the local people including the Bhuiyāñ. Snakes are found in good number but death due to snake-bite seems to be not frequent in the hill. It is interesting to note that a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ has to spend about 3 months in watch-huts in his swidden to guard the crops against animals and birds, and that the men killed by tiger are feared as very powerful evil spirits capable of taking the shape of, or entering into, tigers to kill more men.

Till today officially recognized as tribals, Gond or Rāj Gand (royal Gond), seem to be one of the earliest settlers in the Kola valley, while the hills were inhabited by Juāng (Tasrā, Kuṇu, Kundlā, Burhābhuiñ south), Bentkār and Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. Later on, it appears the Gour or cowherd caste, and casā, the agricultural caste, came to colonize the area. Simultaneously or slightly later still, appeared the Mundāri tribes in several waves, the Mundā Kolha and the Cerengā Kolha from Singhbhum and Keonjhar areas, when the Bhuiyāñ were supreme in the hills with a sprinkling of the Bentkār as at Tasrā till about 30-25 years ago. The Kissān tribe in Burhakhamañ village are late immigrants. On the other hand, the weaver caste, Pan, seems to be one of the earliest settlers in the valley. The black-smith, Khāti caste, the oilman, Teli caste, the wine-distiller-cum-money lender, Shundi caste, as also Dhoba or Washerman, are later immigrants. In 1954 a barber caste family was brought from Keonjhar, and was given land at Mahulpadā to settle down there.

The hill-villages are by nature exclusive, that is, inhabited by one ethnic group-except for one or two families of Gour Caste. In the valley the villages are mostly composite, but each ethnic group keeping to a separate site, or at least to a ward of its own. In case of Derulā, the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in mass emigration from two hill villages have settled on two separate sites, away from the old Pāuri settlement, the dominating nucleus of the village. In the table of composition



of following villages, the numerically dominant caste or tribe is placed first while the one politically dominant is underlined>.

1. Mahulpadā – Gond, Casā, Pān, Hill Bhuiyāñ, Khāti, Dhobā, Gour, and Mundāri Kolha Barber
2. Jagati – Gond, Cerengā Kolha, Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, Gour.
3. Derula – Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, Mundā Kolha, Gour
4. Kumudih – Gond, Casā, Pān, Shundi, Khati, Teli, Gour, formerly Cerengā Kolha
5. Barcua – Cerengā Kolha, Mundā Kolha
6. Matikhani – Cerengā Kolha, Mundā Kolha
7. Burhābhuiñ – Hill Bhuiyāñ, Gour (Burhābhuiñ, Bamra) – Hill Bhuiyāñ, Gour, Bentkār
8. Burhā Khaman – Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, Kissan, Gour
9. Hatisul – Pāuri Bhuiyāñ,
10. Tare - Pāuri Bhuiyāñ
11. Nagariā – Mundāri Kolha, Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, Gour
12. Rengāli-Gond, Gour, Pān, Mundāri Kolha, Cerengā Kolha, Pāuri Bhuniyāñ, Kamār.
13. Ladumdih – Hill Bhuiyāñ, (Pal Lahara)
14. Tanugulā – Hill Bhuiyāñ, Cerengā Kolha, Gour, (Pal Lahara).

The composition of Mahulpadā given here does not take into consideration the caste or tribal affiliation of the police personnel of the Police Station, who keep on changing from time to time.

Of all the tribes and castes, the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ / the Bentkār and the Cerengā Kolha (wrongly spelt, Erenḡā Kolha) practised shifting cultivation. Other tribes and castes are settled cultivators, the Casā being the most clever and the best agriculturist. The Munda Kolha follow them very close so do perhaps the Kissān. But the Gond, though they are co-villagers with the Casā, are not so alert to the needs of agriculture. The Cāsa, the Gond and the Gour, and the Hill Bhuiyāñ of the old settlement of Derulā have irrigated fields. Irrigation channels run to the fields of sugar-cane, wheat and potato, belonging to the clever and energetic Casa Headman of Mahulpadā and to sugarcane fields of the Gond in Mahulpadā-Jagati from a dam across a perennial hill-stream at the head of the village. In Derulā two channels have been opened by partially damming the Kola river, up near the village-site and again downward, to irrigate the seed-beds among the terraced fields. In the valley they have besides the terraced rice-fields also "gurā" or upland cultivation. On this flat upland field "dāhi", or burning of cut bushes or

branches of trees spread on the field, is also practiced till this day to grow mustard or sesamum and 'kulthi' (*dolichos biflorus*) in the first year and upland rice the next year, with a fallowing period of 3-4 years.

While an enterprising Cerengā Kolha family was found to engage in well-irrigation, common in the Chotanagpur area, the Mundari Kolha have dammed up a hill-stream to irrigate their tobacco fields.

All the tribes and castes speak Oriya, but the mother tongue of Munda and Cerengā Kolha is Mundāri while the Kissan have a Dravidian language, according to N. Patnaik in *Tribes Research Journal* (Inaugural Number, 1955, p. 12).

There are two schools in the valley – at Mahulpadā an ordinary Lower Primary School from the year 1943 and at Derulā a school of "Sevashram" type from 1954 – meant primarily for Bhuniyān-Kolha tribals with more Governmental help and with a larger share of handwork in the curriculum.

Lastly, we are to note that the Pāuri have turned partly settled cultivators in the valley as in Derulā or in Burhābhuiñ (south) with well constructed high terraces in the latter against the hill-side, and that the Cerenga Kolha practice shifting cultivation, restricted by the Government, and depend more and more on settled cultivation. Both the Pāuri Bhuniyān and Cerenga Kolha are being enticed, coaxed or threatened to come and settle down in the colonies started by the Government at Daleisara and Dhokāmunda since 1950-51; and they have largely succeeded in bringing whole villages down.

The Benthār of Bamra in Kāliapāhar and Burhābhuiñ (Bamra) have been mostly settled in Government colonies now.

## 2. Settlement History and Village Plan

Every Pāuri Bhuniyān village was founded by ancestors of one or more lineages (bamsa), which together constitute a 'Kutumb' group. Derulā village in the valley had 3 lineages. Dehuri 'bamsa' from Sambalpur area the Girhi 'bamsa' also from the west, where from the Naik 'bamsa' joined the others in Derulā. The Girhi 'bamsa' was already for some time where Jagati lies today. All these three 'bamsa' coalesced together to form the 'Kutumb' group of Derulā, which is founded at least for 8 generations, say about 200 years. Hadi Naik, the village headman of Derulā, a ripe old man of about 90, told me that the ancestors of his and Tasdā founders had come from the west, and both Tasdā and Derulā were founded near about the same time. Therefore, Tasdā and Derulā founding fathers have always considered themselves as one 'Kutumb' group. The families descended from the founders or first occupants constitute a group, called 'Mātiāli' or sons of the soil, as distinguished from immigrant 'Paraja' or subjects in a village.



The Tasra 'Māiṭālī' group points to Bamra, wherefrom their ancestors came; they also occupied other sites before coming to Tasra. In the neighbourhood of Rengālī village in the valley of the Kola to the west there was an ancient site of Tasrā Bhuiyāñ, not very far from Gohalbanda government colony, where some Tasrā families have settled since 1951.

The next site where they lived was Mahulpadā-Jagati, where still one family of 'Māiṭālī' group of Tasrā is living after emigration from Tasrā. As in Tasrā the arrival of the Dehuri 'bamsa' can be traced upto 6 generations backward and also their 'kutumb' relationship with Derulā Girhi 'bamsa', who were in Jagati for some time, it is quite probable that Tasrā village is slightly younger than Derulā. However, in Tasrā the Dehuri 'bamsa' is related as "brother" to the 'Naik' bamsa, which supplies the village headman. These Tasrā founders also claim 'Kutumb' relationship with Dehuri 'bamsa' of Kundala, now in Dhokāmunda colony.

Before the Bhuiyāñ occupied the jungles of Tasrā the Juang had lived at Puidih in the south. Burhābhuiñ (south), Derulā, Kunu and Kundiā, and even a valley-village Barcuā worship to this day the Juang deity 'Sarani Pāt', and refer to former Juāng occupation. There is an interesting story related to me at Derulā as to why the Juāng left the area. The Juang did not worship the 'Cheliātokā' mountain-deity. Therefore, it is said, Cheliāthokā drove them away naked. As Cheliātokā mountain lies more northward, it seems the Juang had inhabited a large area in eastern Bonai. At Kumudih and Barcuā, Tasrā Dehuri 'bamsa' priests have to worship the village deities, as also at Rengali and Mahulpadā-Jagati; except Barcuā the other three sites are known to have been formerly occupied by the Tasrā Bhuiyāñ.

The first settlers came to live in the 'Amdih' or 'the site with mango groves to the north of Tal Tasrā, just above the Belsarai river. This site is rather even and water was very near at hand, and of course mango and fish. Perhaps the attraction to the river during summer of the wild animals also had something to do with the site. Jackfruit trees were planted by them there.

After three generations the villagers shifted to Tal Tasrā or Tal Dih, where old Jackfruit, tamarind, and mango trees stand witness to those days. The shift was motivated by the death of so many persons due to rākas or evil spirits.

It seems from about the occupation of Lower Tasrā they shifted about once in every ten years from Lower to Upper and from Upper to Lower Tasrā. According to my data on occupation of swiddens as far back as 1915 this has been the case.

It is said, about 70-100 years ago, there were 15 houses of Bentākār and about 80 houses of Bhuiyāñ. About 50-70 years ago, the number came down to about 10 houses Bentākār and 60 houses of Bhuiyāñ. There were Bentākār only 5 houses about 25-30 years back living just above the Tal Dih but below the Kainda Jharana stream. After a youngman, Dharani, of Dehuri 'bamsa', fell in love with a Bentkar girl and married her, he was outcasted from Pāuri Bhuiyāñ



society. Thereafter pressure must have been exerted against the staying of the Bentkār, who along with Dharani went away to Kālā-Pāhār in Bamra ex-State.

Among the immigrants into the village, those from Iti village in Pal Laharā ex-State hold pre-eminent place, perhaps due to their very early migration. One special sacrifice is made to the ancestors of Iti group at the 'Dihabandhani' or "village site Foundation" Ceremony.

Immigrants from nearby villages of Pal Lahara, Bamra and Bonai, and even from some distant villages in Keonjhar have at one time or another come to stay for some time in the village and some of them settled there almost permanently.

Recently, because of stoppage of shifting cultivation in Bamra and non-availability of sufficient swiddens in Keonjhar, and due to reservation of many hills in the mining areas near Kuira Pargana of Bonai there has been much immigration, so much so that about 1950 there were at least 56 houses in the village. But as in 1950 there ran a rumour that in Bhuiyān area of Bonai shifting cultivation would be strictly prohibited, punishable with imprisonment and fines, at least 6 families went away to Bamra, Keonjhar and Pal Lahara. Another effect was that the village resolved to occupy, at the same time, two sites, Tal Dih and Upar Dih, at the same time, so as to use up the jungle near the sites.

Then in 1951 only 11 families agreed to go down to settle in the Government colony at Gohābandhā, about 10 kilometers to the west of Tasrā.

There is one known case of older, but temporary, emigration from Tasrā among the 'Kutumb' group. Sindhu, the present senior headman's father, lived in Mahulpadā-Jagati for some years when his children died often in Tasrā. Another known case of settling in Mahulpadā in the valley because of some terraced lands seems rather unique.

### Village Plan

The boundaries of Tasrā village are well-known to the villagers. On the north the Belsarai separates Tasrā from Tare, on the east the boundary line runs between Bonai and Pal Lahara ex-States, on the west the village area extends upto the terraces of Mahulpadā cultivators, and on the south upto the northern sides of the hills, at the feet of which Burhābhuiñ (south) village lies.

As the village is split up into two, the swidden areas are similarly divided. Thus the Kālindā Jharana stream marks the customary boundary between them. This has been magico-religiously sanctioned, it is alleged, from the days of habitual change of sites for convenience of covering the swidden areas. Thus, if someone living in Tal Tasrā cultivated above the boundary-stream Sarni Pat will punish him. But some had cultivated swiddens in Tal Tasrā, while still living in Upar Tasrā with impunity.

## Tal Tasrā

In the sketch-plan it will be noted that the village site has convenient access to water in 4 directions. On the west the hill stream flowing only in the rains does not appear to have been used except for irrigating two small terraces right across its bed near the head.

In former days when the whole village lived in Tal Tasrā, the open level platform, square in form, buttressed by big boulders, formed the centre, around which houses ranged. At present due to the partition of the village there are house only on the western and northern sides of the platform, which is really the dancing arena and meeting place for gossip or welcoming the guests. A longer house looking west is at the northeast corner of this platform and serves as the bachelors dormitory and guest-house as also council-chamber for the elders.

Southward, the platform gradually rises and yields to bushes and a cactus by which is Nisar, a village deity in stone upright about  $\frac{1}{2}$  meter high. At the south west corner is a sāl (shorea robusta) tree under which rests the shubh khuntī or the auspicious wooden post, or the "diha bandhani khuntī" or the post of foundation of the site.

Slightly distanced from the platform are the cowsheds of individuals owners, and then the living houses. More people (11 households out of 17) live on the north. The 'Māṭiāli' people are generally flanked by the immigrant families. Only the family no.3 (Māṭiāli) is found a little isolated from the agnates.

Except on the south due to elevation, the houses are fringed by upland garden plots at the back-yard sloping downward, and in the east, where at least 6 terraced plots may be spotted. Besides there is often some kitchen garden especially in the north between the upland garden and the houses.

The most characteristic appearance of this village-site is its green screen of fruit tress, mostly jackfruit, but also mango and tamarind. A few custard-apple, guava, orange and indigenous plum trees are also there. The Jackfruit are found everywhere on the site and especially round the dancing platform or "Manda Darabār". The banana plantation is a big enterprise in the southeast of the platform. Besides this there are smaller plantations in the kitchen garden, especially plenty in the northeast corner of the site.

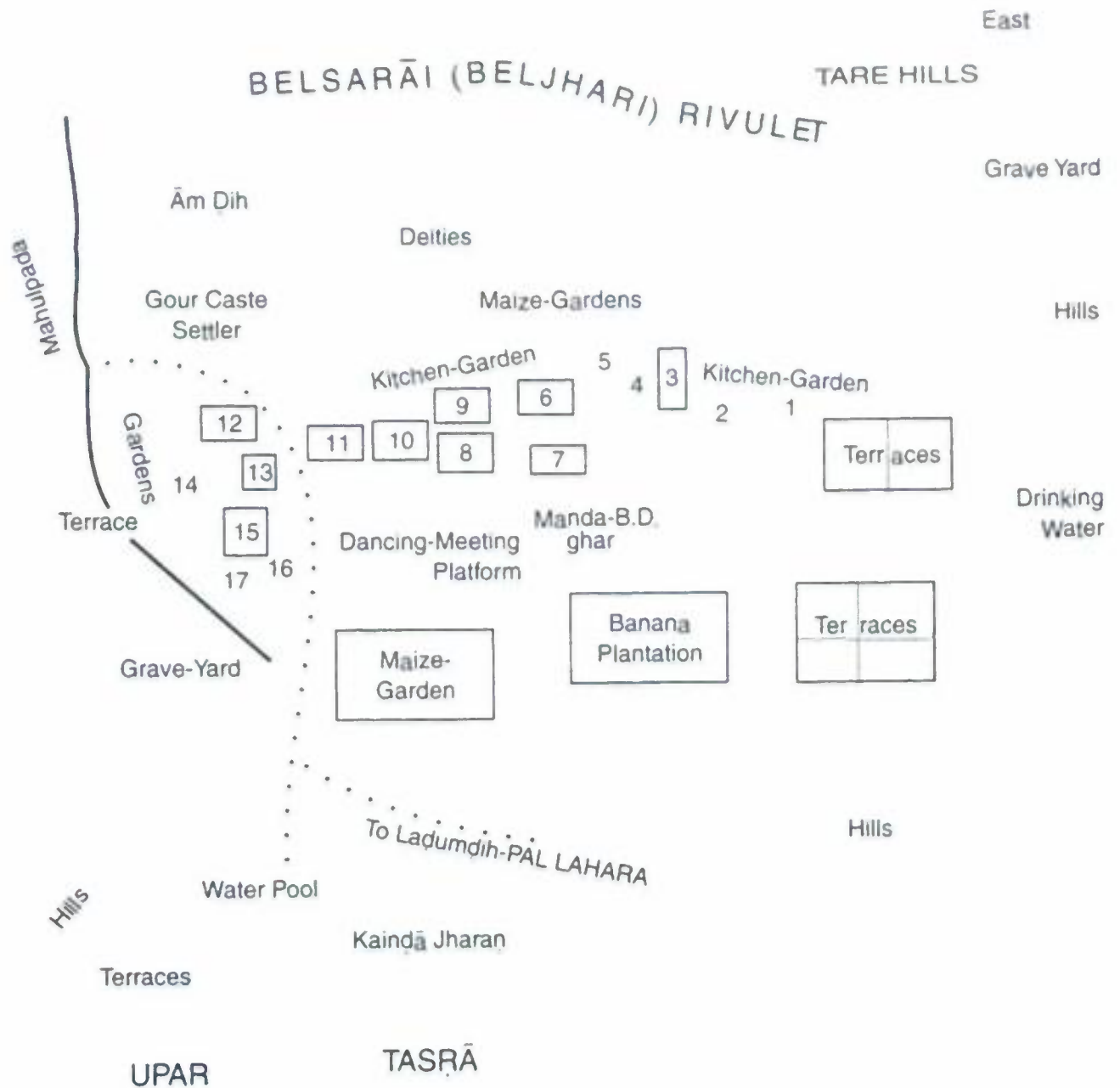
At the northwest corner may be noted the older site "Ām diḥ" with a big grove of mango trees and also some jackfruit trees. There is still another level site to the south, formerly inhabited by the Bentkār and lately by some immigrant families, with a few younger jackfruit trees. The southern hill-stream is also lined with mango trees especially where the footpath crosses it.

The drinking water is collected from the spring at the eastern end, where also men and women may take a bath, but on the boulders up on the bank. But during summer people mostly go to the Belsarai river for bath and washing clothes and food materials, for which purposes in



winter and spring months, say upto March-May, the southern stream is used. The eastern and southern streams have been made into big pools of about 3 meter diameter, and periodically they are cleaned or deepened or set with stone.

## TAL TASRA



1 = 1P=Household no.1, 'Paryā'

3 = 3M=Household no. 3, 'Māṭiā'

BD = Bachelors' Dormitory



The grave-yards of the village are two – one on the Belsarāi river bank at the north-eastern corner with some 'salapa' or Caryota palm trees still standing (recently felled for the pith). This was used for "good" and "old" men. The other one on a hill-look immediately to the south was meant for women and married but not important men. These graveyards are used by both hamlets for all the families in cases of "regular" death. For burying the unmarried and young children Kuldih to the west is used by both hamlets.

Lastly to be noted are the seats of the deities on the bank of the Belsarāi in what appears to be sacred groves, which are forbidden to fell or harm in any way. 'Gāiñsri' or the village goddess is alone under a big tree. 'Badām' and 'Bhim', two other important village deities lie under some old trees at a distance. On the west are 'Mahāpāṭ' and 'Bābhuni Pāṭ' under 'Kasi'. 'Asan' and 'Jhingani' trees overgrown with 'ācandi' creeper. Other, somewhat less important, deities, "Kālā Pāṭ" in the west under a 'Kādi Kendu' tree and "Mā Bhaer" under a 'Kasi' trees. are not shown in the sketch plan.

The houses and upland garden plot of the Gour caste family are shown on the plan to the northwest of the site, right at the entrance to the village. This Gour has lived there since about 10 years for better pasturage for his buffaloes.

### Upar Tasrā

There are more households (20 out of 37) here than in Tal Tasrā, where however flatter ground for house-sites is characteristic.

The "Manda Darbāra" platform and the bachelors dormitory and since 1957 the 'Thākurañi ghara' or the temple of 'Bisri Goddess lie on a spur of the mountain with a hillock to the west. From the platform runs a wide lane-cum-water course dividing the village into two halves, the eastern and the western, both rising backwards to the hills.

Here, however, for topographical reasons the houses cannot be ranged round about the platform, while topography again has guided an apparently linear arrangement.

Although here also as in Tal Tasrā some immigrant families are peripheral like Nos. 18, 19, 32 and 34, some others (36, 37) are nearer the village centre or the platform than the senior Headman (No.35). However, the two important priests in Nos. 20 and 26 are in full view of the platform.

Upland fields, banana plantations and kitchen gardens occupy similar relative position on the open side to the southwest, but on the hill sides of the east only kitchen gardens are possible. Thus upland gardens are much smaller in number than in Tal Tasrā.

Jackfruit trees are very few and mangoes also much less in this rather new site. Banana plantation is however bigger here.

The women have to wade a long way down to the southwest water-point, where a spring has been made into a pool, which however dries up in April. Then the women have to go down still farther and steeper to Kāindā Jharan in the north and to the Belsarāi rivulet to wash clothes or food materials or to take a bath.

The usual deities near the platform, the 'Vishār' and 'Shubha Khunti' are here.

Other village deities are : 'Babhuni Pat', 'Sar Pāt' under a 'sal' tree, gainshri, 'Badām' and 'Bhim' under a 'Kalam' tree, and a 'Rakas' (demon) in a 'Jami' tree.

### Settlement Pattern

While Tal Tasrā shows a circular pattern and Upar Tasrā apparently linear, both are agglomerate types of settlement with irregular disposition of houses, one behind or aside the other.

Hatisul, another hill village, shows this irregular agglomeration with, however, the bachelors' dormitory and the houses of the Headman and priests near the centre.

Again Burhābhuiñ (south) shows an apparently linear pattern like Upar Tasrā while Derulā is a type by itself, lying as it does partly on a hill-slope and partly on the valley. Some families of Derulā moved up the hill-slope due to floods. Very thick posts of a large 'mandaghar' there speak of a prosperous past. But the present dancing platform, 'Thakurāni ghar' and the dormitory lie at the entrance. This village is agglomerated irregularly with some scattered houses in between the valley site and the hillside colony.

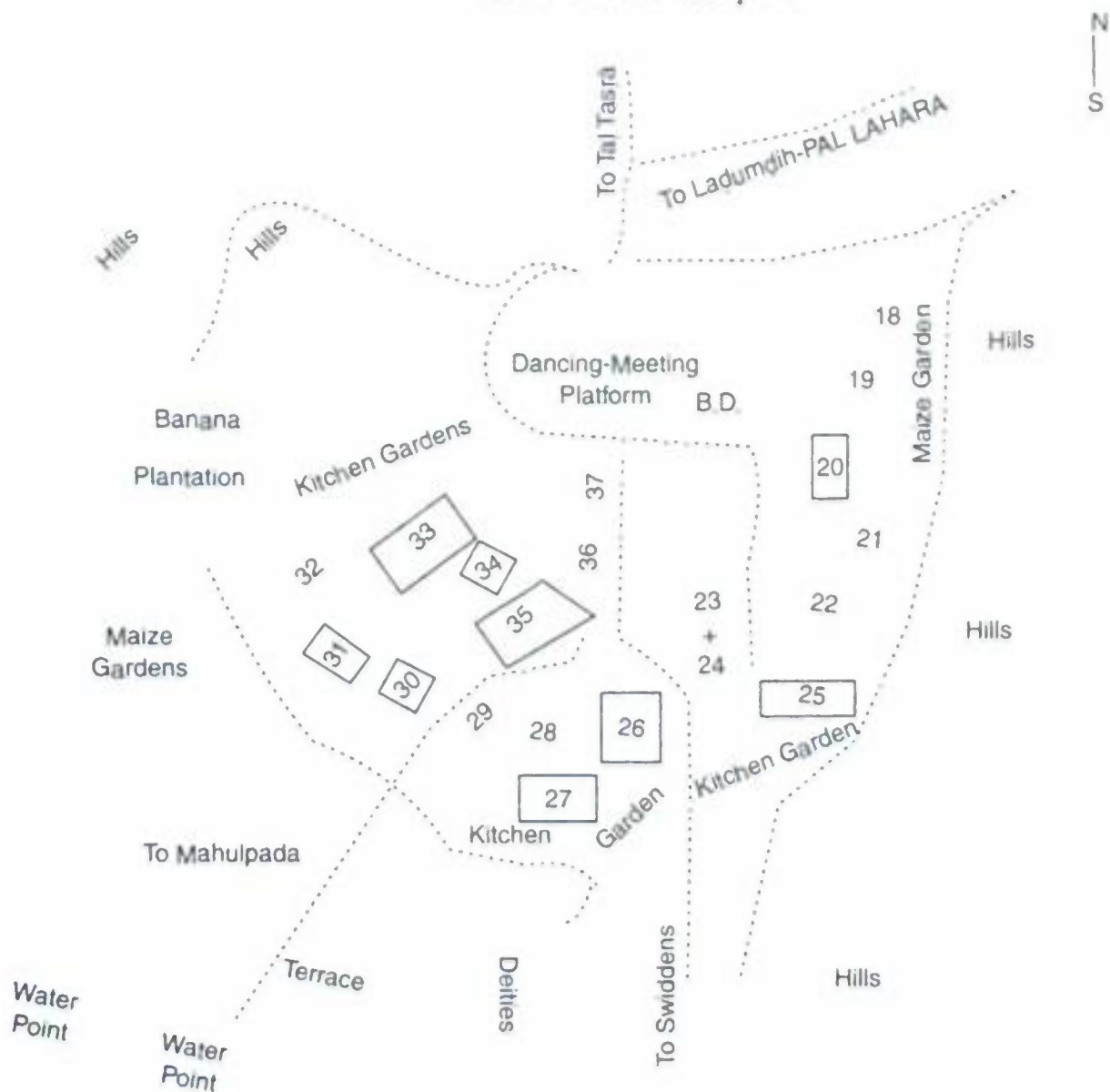
We must, however, note that during the season of watching swiddens against animals and birds, watch-huts are scattered in the swiddens so as to cover as much area for watching as possible.

Another point of special note is the fact that in response to an emergency situation of administrative prohibition of shifting cultivation, and also partly due to the desire to exploit the far-flung higher areas for swiddens, the Upar Tasrā site is being persistently inhabited in spite of the lack of suitable water-supply, and ex-haustion of swidden land. According to the customary shifting of site, they should have come down in 1954 to Tal Tasrā and also the Tal Tasrā people should not have left Upar Tasrā before 1954 (actually they moved down in 1951).

### 3. Demography and Migration

In 1954, between the 24th January and the 6th February I completed the recording of village Census. The total population, except the family of Gour (cattleherd caste) in Tal Tasrā, stood at 156, 79 male and 77 female. The distribution of age and sex are given in the table below according to the marital status.

# UPAR TASRA



B.D = Bachelors' Dormitory

T = 'Bisri Thakurani' Temple 1957

18 = 18P = 'Parjā', Household no. 1

35 = 35M = 'Majālī', Household no. 3



Abbreviation M = Male, F = Female

Age-Group	Unmarried	Married	Widowed	Total
(0+)-5	M 15, F 11	-	-	26
(5+)-10	M 12, F 7	-	-	19
(10+)-15	M 6, F 7	-	-	13
(15+)-20	M 4, F 2	F 2	-	8
(20+)-25	M 4	M 6, F 6	-	16
(25+)-30	-	M 10, F 12	-	22
(30+)-35	-	M 5, F 3	-	8
(35+)-40	-	M 6, F 4	F 2	12
(40+)-45	-	M 2, F 4	M 1, F 1	8
(45+)-50	-	M 3, F 3	-	6
(50+)-60	-	M 4, F 4	F 4	12 +1 F Divorced
(60+)-70	-	M 1	F 4	5
Total	M 41 F 27	M 37 F 38	M 1 F 11	M 79 F 1 Divorced F 77

It will be seen that the men and women balance each other, but there is some unbalance in the distribution. Among children upto 15 years of age there are 33 boys against 25 girls, while in the old age, 50-70, there are 5 men against 13 women. In the last column 60-70, there is a preponderance of old women. Similarly, the fact, one widower against 11 widow, points to some unbalance. But on the whole, the smallness of the population size does not enable one to characterize any tendency, and also does not encourage any comparison.

### Difficulties of Age-counting

Apart from the above-mentioned inadequacy there is a very probable source of error : the method of counting age. Pāuri Bhuiyāñ does not engage an astrologer as most of the Hindu castes in the valley do to cast a horoscope. They do not have any recognized method of counting age. I happened to strike upon the method of correlating a child's birth with the particular swidden which was felled that year. As some remembered the serial of swiddens, it was very helpful as a rough but reliable yardstick of age. It could be useful in case of the children, but not for all. Because simply the association was no longer remembered by other that the parents and there were 18 of immigrant families, or rather more precisely, 51 persons were born outside Tasrā. I had, therefore, to count age of adults largely by a process of back-calculation on basis of their children's age.

### Migration

Shifting cultivators are forced to migrate sooner or later due to exhaustion of the soil or greater distance of the fields to the village-site, or even due to some magico-religious ideas;

for example, if there is a sudden mortality wave, the deities or ancestor spirits might have been angry.

Such mass-scale migration of villages does not seem to be characteristic of the Pāuri Bhuiyān, except when forced by Governmental measures to come down in recent years.

The characteristic modes of Pāuri migration as revealed in Tasrā are twofold :

1. Periodical changing of the village-site within the boundary of the village. This happened in case of Tasrā every ten years between Tal Tasrā and Upar Tasrā till 1950-51. S.C. Roy also notes, "in some villages this shifting of sites is done once every ten years." (p.56)
2. Individual families and also individuals (including daughters married off) shift between villages and even between boundaries of former states. Almost always they follow some relative or relationship already planted, and rarely are they stranger in the adoptive villages.

While dealing with the settlement history of the village I have noted the spurt of recent emigration due to governmental pressure. In former times also it seems migration was characteristic of the 'Parjā' ('subjects' or immigrants) rather than of the "Mātiāli" or the sons of the soil.

The migration-picture will be perhaps clearer if we analyze the population of Tasrā in terms of the place of birth.

In 1954 there were 29 males and 26 females of the 'Mātiāli' group as against 29 males and 11 females in 'Parjā' group who were born in Tasrā. Other 52 'Parjā' were born in Keonjhar (3 males, 7 females), Pal Lahara (8 males, 16 females), Bamra (7 males and 9 females) and in other areas of Bonai (4 males, 8 females).

But this table in terms of place of birth does not go enough. The data on actual migration of families and individuals from and to Tasrā would have been satisfactory. But we may, however, note that there were about 2/3 of the population born in Tasrā and 40 females against 22 males were born outside Tasrā.

This last fact will be partly explained if we analyse the marriage data in terms of place of Birth :

Number of Marriages between persons born in Tasrā : 2

Number of Marriages between persons outside Tasrā : 7

Number of Marriages with wives brought from outside :

(a) in 'Mātiāli' families : 14

(b) in Parjā : 10

Number of Marriages husbands from outside : (a) in Mātiāli-families : 5



We may just mention a few known cases of immigration to Tasrā to portray the general tendencies in the traditional ways.

- (1) Two generations back Mali Girhi's elder sister was married to Thengu of the priest families of Tasrā and his father came from Khadkā thereafter to settle in Tasrā. Later on Mali Girhi himself shifted to Pattamundai in Bonai to his wife's father's (Māṭiāli) village. Recently Mali's son Paṭra married a daughter in the Tasrā priestly family and Mali's whole family including married sons were welcomed in Tasrā. It will be interesting to remember that Mali's father's father had shifted from Paṇsuan Keonjhar (where they belonged to Girhi 'bamsa' of priests) to Khadkā in Pal Lahara after Mali's father had married from the priestly families of Khadkā.
- (2) Kandā and his sister sought shelter in Tasrā along with their widowed mother, and later on the present Headman of the village married Kanda's sister. Subsequently Kandā went away to Mahulpadā in Keonjhar and returned after about 5 years in 1952, at a time when the village foundation ceremony is held and the Parjā are formally accepted after their formal request.
- (3) The Headman's Sister's husband settled in Tasrā about 30 years ago some time after the marriage and so his nephew today is in Tasrā.  
A similar case occurred when a former Headman reared an orphaned boy from Khadkā, whose father had married a daughter from the priestly families.
- (4) A widow whose father lived in Tasrā came back to Tasrā from Sadung in Keonjhar. Her mother's sister's daughter was married to a priest and also formerly his own younger brother was living in Tasrā, before he shifted to Paceripani in Bamra (his wife's parents). Then her position was further stabilized when her daughter was married to an immigrant Youngman in Tasrā.
- (5) An important member of the priest family of Tasrā had married from Khadkā and his wife's sister was married to his co-brother from influential Īti families. Later on his wife's brother was married in 'magā' from (the costliest and most valued) to the sister of the present Headman.

Now the mother-in-law of son and daughter of the priestly family was charged as 'Pangunī' or Sorceress and was driven out of the village Khadkā. So she came with her sons to seek shelter in Tasrā and was accepted in spite of her being a potential danger to Tasrā people.

The same story was rehearsed when her co-daughter was outcasted from Ladumdih in Pal Lahara for sorcery and was again accepted in 1954, but by Upar Tasrā where the Headman and other close relatives lived.

- (6) Those cases may be supplemented further by one, showing a quite different motivation to migration. The Headman's elder sister was married in Kadalidiha, Bamra. As children



died and also her mother-in-law died, the family moved on to Tasrā, where the brother (the Headman) is expected to be very helpful. Then afterwards, as shifting cultivation was allowed in Kadaḷidih, they were invited by the agnates of her husband. After about 8 years' stay in Kadaḷidih there was again pressure from the government and moreover, they also lost some children; thus again they returned to Tasrā.

This brings us to consider some cases I observed in 1957 in order to reveal at least another process of incorporation.

In 1956 came Karmu to Tasrā from (Bonai) Paṭṭamund, where the Bhuiyān have mostly taken to settled agriculture, for swiddens. He became the cowherd and got some remuneration in kind, and moreover, Upar Tasrā cooperated in cutting for him a swidden. In 1957 followed his father Tera to Tasrā and took up Karmu's function as cowherd and Karmu attended fully to swiddens. Of course, they moved with their individual families.

Danai, who is related to Tera as wife's brother's son, followed his suit but settled in Tal Tasrā, where he could be a cowherd in 1957. he had only upland field in paṭṭamund but no cattle.

Now Danāi's only relative in Tasrā is Mali Girhi in case (1) above, who stands to Tera in the relationship of wife's sister's husband.

Kaṭhu or Kaṭhiā is younger brother to Ṭuri, the widow mentioned in case (4). He had left for Pāceripāṇī in Bamra where he had some jackfruit trees and his wife's natal home. Now there is strict ban in Bamra on shifting cultivation, and so he is here again back.

There is another family of Parjā recently shifted from Bijadih, Bamra and is in Tal Tasrā adjacent to his sister's husband, who is a Parjā himself but is sister's son to the Headman of Tasrā.

So between 1954 and 1957 6 new families have immigrated to Tasrā. Similarly there had been also shifting of sister of 3 families from Tal Tasrā to Upar Tasrā, ostensibly because of better swiddens. One of them is the junior Headman of the village himself and two others are 'Parjā families'.

Now we may try to characterize the General tendencies of migration of individual families.

Firstly, claims of former parental residence or a relationship with some elder in another village seem essential in expecting welcome and ready cooperation for a decision to migrate there. Secondly, the direct relationship with the 'Mātiāli' or founders' families appears to be most valuable as it ensures cooperation of the dominant group in the adoptive village.

Thirdly, if the direct relationship with the 'Mātiāli' group be very strong and very recent, as in the case (6), there is great probability of even a sorcerer or sorceress with his or her family to be accepted.

Fourthly, if a village function could be found, a very weak relationship to a villager (even a 'Parka') as in case of Danāi, does not stand in the way of acceptance into the settlement.

#### 4. The Course of Life

Before we go into the details of economic and social life it is fruitful to be acquainted with the general course of life of a Tasrā villager. To know how he is born and brought up, how he courts and marries, how he deals with diseases and other tribulations and meets the challenge of adult responsibilities, and what happens on his death – in other words, how he lives in the village, grows up and dies there – will deepen our understanding of the village life as a meaningful whole.

##### A. Birth and Infancy

###### 1. Birth of a Child

Children are considered as the natural and normal goal of marriage. When the Headman of Tasrā did not beget any child from his first wife he married for the second time. Death of children is one of the most serious calamities in the family. Therefore, when one after another child dies in spite of all magico-medical care, a family may even leave the village, which might have sheltered some evil forces. As the Pāuṛi Bhuiyāñ society is patrilineal, the lineage (bamsa) especially suffers, if there be no son in the family to continue the line.

Therefore, birth of a child is a great happy event for the family and their kindred. There is no special mode of announcing birth. But in a small community everybody knows who is expecting when. It is important also to note that the village observed cessation of all ceremonial or ritual business for one day. This is known as 'janam Bithuā' or birth-taboo.

When the labour pain starts, a midwife may be called in. In a particular case the midwife was the parturient woman's brother's wife, who lived just across the lane. In another case both the husband and his mother were absent. Women of the hamlet came to the help of this second parturient woman. But the help was so diffuse involving a number of women then present, that the mother-in-law could not specify any particular women as the midwife.

In the first case the midwife was closely assisted by the woman's mother-in-law. It was a safe delivery without much pain. It is said, in case of protracted labour, the bark of 'baruni' tree is pounded and is anointed on the head of the parturient woman to bring about an easy delivery and to expel evil spirits. In the present case the placenta ('phula' or flower) also came out without difficulties. If it did not come out the old mother-in-law would have supplied pressure on the stomach. She did not know of any medicine for that purpose. It was she, the child's father's mother, who was privileged to cut the naval cord with an iron blade ('kāṭi').



The midwife bathed the baby (a girl) in warm water, rubbed it and basked it in the glow of the fire. She raised its nose, squirted a mouthful of water into the ear of the babe for clearing the auditory passage, and also shaped the head with pressure. Similarly she bathed, massaged, and basked the mother. The idea is that both the baby and the mother are, at the time of birth, physiologically 'cool' and should be warmed up. This conception is very common among the Hindu castes of Orissa. The baby given mother's milk.

After birth the child is in a vulnerable condition. The mother is forbidden to take certain food like 'biri' pulses, millets (kāngu, kada or tisdīā), banana, egg-fruit, fish, crabs, and meat or roasted rice. She is allowed to take rice with 'suturi' beans or 'khulthi' pulses and could take papaya, although it was not being given. Such precaution is taken, as otherwise the baby cannot 'endure' and will fall ill. Thus there is a magical association between the food taken by the mother and the milk taken by the baby. Such restrictions are lifted after a month or so. The baby also should not be taken out of the habitation-site for the fear that wandering evil spirits might take away its life. But no magical harm attaches to the parturient woman, if she be attended to by a barren woman as the midwife.

I observed on the ninth day of the birth of a son how the father's mother was bathing the baby in warm water mixed with turmeric. With a dirty piece of cloth she was rubbing the face and eyes, and squirting out a mouthful of water into the ears. Later on she forced the water out of them by blowing through each ear, which was turned downward. She reassured me, however, that one should not clean the ears in such manner when one has eaten something. This harms the ear.

The ritual effect of birth in the nature of birth-pollution is socially very important. The family is immediately segregated ritually so that nobody may take water or fire from it till clothes are given to the washer man from Mahulpadā for washing. The new mother herself remains untouchable till then, tended by the midwife only, after the eighth day or so of the birth a ceremony called 'Uthiāri' as celebrated with feasting and from then on the father and other members of the household will be ritually clean and may offer cooked food, water and fire to others. But the mother herself is still taboo till after the fourth month in case of a daughter and after the fifth month in case of a son. Only then can she cook for the ancestors and can she touch water at public water points. The father is, however, not under any strict taboo, as he can take bath at public water-holes. But he cannot join any village ritual as a full participant till the mother is ritually clean. The mother is not given hard work till the baby learns sitting or eating rice.

As there is no dramatization of the event of a birth, there are similarly no stringent taboos during pregnancy. An expectant woman is, however, not allowed to approach the grave-yards for fear of evil spirits or to do hard work.'



## 2. Name-Giving (Nam tulā or picking up the name) Ceremony

It is a very important social event in the life of the child.

In the above mentioned first case the ceremony was celebrated on the 5th day, a Sunday, while in the other case it was held on the 15th day, a Wednesday. Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are auspicious days. In another case the name-giving was not held even after the 15th day.

It is a purely household affair, although outside help is necessary, because the ancestors cannot be worshipped by inmates of the house till the mother is ritually clean.

I attended the ceremony in the second case, that of the son of a Priest (20 M). His main house was plastered with a mixture of cowdung and earth by his mother in the early morning and water mixed cowdung was sprinkled in the courtyard. This made the house and the surrounding ritually clean.

A girl of agnatic relationship, 12 years old, officiated as the priestess. She cooked the porridge of rice (jāu) and separately 'biri' pulses with brinjal (fruit of egg-plant) and papaya. Then she offered them to the ancestors of the priest in the sacred corner '(bhitar)' in the main house. This worship of the ancestor-spirits is very significant, as the child is ordinarily given the name of an ancestor. It is believed in such cases that the baby has been born in the body of the ancestor.

The priestess brought some water in a brass pot and some uncooked sun-dried (aktā) rice, 'jatangi' oilseeds, and turmeric powder. Firstly, the name of the father's father was suggested by the elderly women present and the priestess dropped a grain of rice and 'jatangi' oilseed with turmeric powder while uttering the name. When both the rice and 'jatangi' oilseed float it is considered that "the ancestor has come". As in this case the rice sank down the ancestor "had not come". So the name of great grandfather was tested in the same manner and with the same result. Next the name of the elder brother of grandfather was taken. Failed in this attempt, the wife of the great-grand-father's elder brother was called, but both the rice and 'jatangi' oilseed sank down. If she had 'come', the name given would have been a male version of hers. Lastly, the name of the great grandfather's elder brother was tested. As this time also the grain of rice sank down, the father's mother took a chance with the name 'Pankhirā' after the festival 'Pankhirāpithā', on which day the grandson was born. Fortunately this worked and the name-giving ceremony was at an end.

It is not compulsory to hold a name-giving ceremony. In fact, in cases of repeated loss of children, the new baby is spared from the fanfare of name-giving. Instead, the baby is "presented" to a man of lower social status – low-caste Ghāsi or Dhobā washerman, tribals like Bhumi,

Khādiā or Kolha. In case of 23 P household the elder brother was named after Juāng, a Ghāsi from Dālsuān in Bamra, who had received one cloth, was feasted with rice and meat, and given Rs. 10.0 as "price". Only then was this youngman "readmitted" into the Pāuri society in an 'Udhrā' ceremony before being married. Sometimes such names are also given at the name-giving ceremony. A boy in the household 18 P was named Khādiā after an ancestor. Sometimes name like Amin (land surveyor) was also given, presumably on some association with the official.

Names are also given after festivals or days of the week on which the baby was born and sometimes after some physical peculiarities as in 'Kandā' or 'Kandi' (stammering) and 'kanā' (one-eyed). Names after Hindu gods, Rāma, Shiva, Dāmodar, or after mythical heroes like Arjun or Sanskritic names like Mangalā, or Bhuban or Samara, are not infrequent. Pet names may be given also after a behavioural popularity in the early infancy, as in case of 'Kaeu', who cried too much '(Kae-Kae).'

### 3. First Hair-cutting

It is the privilege of the mother's brother to cut the natal hairs of his nephew or niece for the first time. Usually this is his first visit and he brings some present for the baby. There is a small feast in the household in this connection. The mother's brother is ordinarily presented with a new cloth.

### 4. Weaning

It is never abrupt and comes late, not before 3 years ago. It is not unusual to find children of 4 years to be still sucking at the breast.

But long before weaning bits of rice-cakes, softened by chewing by the mother or other women, are given to the child. When a few milk teeth have sprung up cooked rice is gradually given.

During infancy the child is carried most of the time and later on it joins in play with older children. Rarely do infants play alone. One toddler of 3 was playing by itself with about 15 leaf-cups made from jackfruit leaves. But always the infant is taken care of by elders and older play-mates. No infant was ever beaten during my stay, and it is said, beating children below 7 or 8 years is something like misdeed ('dosha'). Neither infants nor children are treated harshly.

## B. Childhood and Education

Functionally, it may be said, childhood sets in when a child might roam in the hamlet and play unattended. Girls of six or seven may begin bringing in small ground pots of water with their



mother or father's mother – at first in a playful manner. Boys, however, go on playing, more often with a toy bow and bolt. Boys and girls still play together, but now assume roles appropriate to their sex. Girls learn more and more of housework, like sweeping the floor, washing an utensil, putting the fowl in the pen or watching the drying things against birds etc. Boys and girls at the age of 8 or 9 begin to accompany the parents to swiddens and help them in doing titbits and watch them working. They accompany them to the forests for collecting food also. Later on from about the age of 9 or 10 they watch the swiddens against birds and help in harvesting fruit and vegetables etc. Boys may even go out fishing along with a party when as early as 8 years of age and may join a hunting party as early as 10-11. Thus as the age advances children take more and more share in productive activities and they learn by observing, playing, and imitating and with minimum amount of direct instruction. Such instruction is, however, given only when one commits a mistake in imitating an adult. In such instruction by way of correction little verbalization is necessary. Teaching of morals is also restricted to a few occasions. When there is a quarrel between children involving beating any elderly man or woman nearby may intervene and punish the bully. A child is reprimanded if an offering to the ancestors is omitted before eating or some sacred place is desecrated. Beating is very rare and comes because of repeated negligence of duty or of disobedience. Quarreling among children is similarly rare.

Though children take care of smaller siblings, they cannot be considered as being burdened with them, as it happens in Samoa.

Except one old man of 60 none of the present villagers had learnt writing and arithmetic. He had, however, now forgotten everything.

#### 1. Ear-piercing

Piercing of the ear-lobes of both boys and girls is considered necessary before marriage, and is meant for receiving earrings in the case of a girl. At the age of five or six years a girl's ears are pierced with a thorn named 'Samudar'. In one case the father had done this to his daughter of six. He had also pierced the ears of an agnate, a young boy of 12 years. The holes are not made to increase to an abnormal size as in many tribes of Assam or further India.

#### 2. Nose-piercing

It is practiced only in case of girls to enable them to receive nose-rings.

#### 3. Binding the Bun (Khusā bandhibā)

A girl's hairs are collected into a bun, at first by her mother or some other elderly woman. Henceforward she usually puts on a small sari and some more ornaments.

#### 4. Games and Plays

(a) Playing at Dancing – Out of jackfruit leaves are made in the shape of cones "men" and "women" and these are arrayed to imitate "Cāngu" dance. This is played by smaller children.



Bigger children of 8 or 10 along with some smaller ones, as young as 5 or 6, play at 'Karmā' dance imitating men and women. A boy of ten was found playing at 'māṇḍal' drum of a bamboo stem hanging from his neck. This drum is beaten at the time of 'Karmā' dance.

- (b) Playing at Bar-Kaniā (Bride and Bridegroom) and Gharkarā (making a House). Out of jack-fruit leaves bride, bridegroom, go-betweens, marriage party, priest, cattle as bride-price showing eyes, horns, tail and muzzle, goat for feasting and water vessel etc. are made. Children of both sexes play together, but play differently. They are also sexually differentiated in skill at making these toys. Thus no boy or man would make "women" or "bride" showing her symbolic purdah, anklets and nose-rings. They always remarked, "Oh, the girls know it – we don't." In house-making rice, pulses, vegetables and meat are "cooked" and served in cups of jackfruit leaves.
- (c) Playing at Hide-and-Seek - In a moon-lit summer night this is very much enjoyed bigger children of both sexes when they play in small groups of 4 or 5.
- (d) Hāṇḍipitā or Breaking an earthen pot – A group of boys play at this. One after another a boy is sent blind-fold to smash an old inverted earthen pot kept about 20 meters away.
- (e) Dhapā – This is played at by girls. A few small pebbles are thrown up together and caught in one hand while falling. If some pebbles are still on the ground, other pebbles in the hand are let into the air and the former pebbles are picked up in time so as to catch the falling ones together. When successful the picked up pebble is counted as one credit and the game goes on till all the pebbles are thus picked up.
- (f) A boy of 11 was once found with a spring mechanism made on a banana-leaf stem for hurling pebbles with a bent bamboo-strip held in position with two sticks at the ends.
- (g) Even older boys of 10-11 years were found once very much enjoying a jackfruit leaf turning at the pointed end of a stick, as one ran against the wind.
- (h) One early morning at about 5-30 in February boys of 10-11 were wrestling with each other, while younger boys were watching with interest.
- (i) Playing with bow and bolt gradually gives way to hunting small birds. A child of 8 was quite an expert in taking aim and killing birds at short range. He was highly appreciated by the adults.

Similar transition from play to production occurs also when boys set various snares near the village-site for catching wild birds.

It is important to note that most of the games are played in a group, however small it may be. Secondly, older boys did not like to play at the game (b), rather they would go in for wrestling

or simply jumping from rock to rock with other boys. Whether such tendency foreshadows a developing competitive spirit or just an inclination for more bodily exercises, I am not sure. It is still harder to say if such a tendency has any parallel among girls.

### C. Youth, Marriage and Adulthood

Boys and girls begin to sleep in the bachelors' and maidens dormitories at the age about 9-11. They are respectively designated as 'Bhendia' and 'Dhangdi', thus linguistically establishing their change of status. All the 'Bhendia' of hamlet sleep in the same dormitory, a public building, also used as a guest house and as a council chamber by the elders. This building is known as 'Mandaghar'. The other dormitory is called 'Dhangdibasā'. The maidens sleep in one or two huts, in the surplus space which is not needed by a widow. Sometimes married man also sleep in the bachelors' dormitory because of lack of space at home.

#### 1. Life in the Dormitories

On normal days the bachelors' dormitory occupies the central place in social life in a hamlet. After taking the evening meal, shortly after dusk, young men turn in one after another and join the gossiping elders round the fire in 'Mandaghar'. Always in winter and at night at other times there is fire in big logs. The youngmen heat the tambourines (Cāngu) and sound them to attract the attention of the maidens, who join them in no time. It is considered against discipline when a dormitory girl or boy does not appear for dancing without satisfactory excuses. The senior maidens and bachelors supervise observance of this regulation, as of others, like cleaning and plastering of 'Mandaghar' and Mandadarabar' (Dancing Platform and Assembly Square) or supplying of leaf vessels for guests by the girls, or bringing of logs for the 'Mandaghar' fire and fetching of water and fuel or cooking for the guests by the boys.

The youngmen beat the tambourines and sing in unison, while the girls dance around the platform. Married men and women and younger children often join the dances and singing. Old women and men also may join. The observing older women instruct the girls when they go wrong in stepping or posture.

The frequent pauses between dancing and dark surroundings give sufficient opportunities for flirtations and wooing. Care is always taken to avoid having a liaison with a 'Kutumb' young person, marriage and sex-relations with whom are considered in cest. Near about midnight the boys and girls go to sleep in their dormitories on a normal day.

In the dormitories the older comrades instruct the younger ones in songs, playing on 'Cāngu', in correct manner, organize and plan joint activities like a dancing party to another village or helping in a village marriage or funeral ceremony. There is conflicting evidence on the point whether younger entrants are made to massage the senior members. But it is certain, there is no age-grade system, although the younger ones run errands and do most of the routine



work of the dormitories. However, the younger ones do criticise the actions of the older comrades in the dormitory; but there is a strong esprit de corps among the dormitory members as against the outsiders. The younger ones learn from the mutual sharing of experiences of the older members and here also they come to know of the dark side of their parents and elders, and of the villagers as a whole. By spending more time at the dormitory, the boys come to participate, not always passively, in the discussions and decisions of the elders, who sit in the bachelors' dormitory most often in their free time. Girls de-husk paddy or help in other ways in village festivals, marriages or funerals and get some reward.

Thus life in the dormitory has its educative, erotic, recreative, and integrative aspects in the community besides meeting the need of sleeping space. It is, in short, a necessary stage of preparation for meeting the needs of adult life.

But it must be noted that the bachelors' dormitory is better organized and carries more importance than the maidens' dormitory. There is a senior bachelor informally recognized as the leader, though he was never known as the 'Dangā-pahulia' the usual term applied to such a leader. A married youngman wanted to be 'Danga-Pahulia' to enforce discipline and compel the bachelors to fetch logs of wood and the girls properly to plaster the walls of 'Mandaghar'. According to Roy (p.192) this system is prevalent in Keonjhar and Pal Lahara. On the other hand, an old widow, under whose guidance and watchfulness the girls of Tal Tasrā behaved themselves was known as the 'Gharmanṇi'.

Youngmen and girls of the dormitories organize picnic with materials begged at some festivals or collected among themselves or grown in a swidden collectively cultivated by them.

## 2. Dancing Parites and Courtship

After harvest and during the early summer dancing parties of young women or youngmen visit other villages in the neighbourhood. Tasrā parties visit Derulā, Daḍumḍih, Tanugulā, Radā, Khadkā, and perhaps a few other villages and also Pāuri Bhuiyāñ colonies in the valley.

Girls go under the supervision of an elderly woman, and the youngmen, married and unmarried, under that of one or two responsible married men. Sometimes youngsters not yet sleeping in the Dormitory are enthusiastically sent by their parents. Ordinarily such visits are already notified, but not necessarily always. A visiting party of girls carry rice cakes, prepared by themselves, and share them with the youngmen of the host village. The youngmen then play host to them and feed them. When youngmen go on a dancing party, they carry 'Cāngu' tambourines, ripe bananas, roasted (fluffy) rice etc. and share the eatables with the girls of the host village. They may even bring some money for the girls, who play host to them.

The visit of a dancing party brings romantic commotion to the village. There are invariably night-long dances, much laughter, and flirting and wooing in between the pauses. If a pair



takes fancy on each other with a view to marriage the visit is prolonged and the hosts feast the visiting party. Friends of a youngman always help in wooing for him, coaxing; and if still not amenable, fling pinching remarks, for examples, "You are never going to marry a son of Raja or a Babu (big official); your fate is definitely tied with a Pauri Bhuiyāñ; so, why not marry now and this man?" Such jubes of ten break the ice.

Relation thus planted go on deepening on meeting at the markets or on other occasions. Such courtship often leads to certain types of marriage, called 'Ghica' (marriage by capture), or 'Manmāni' (marriage by mutual agreement) or 'Dharipal' (marriage by elopement).

When the dancing party finally leaves the village, the host girls or youngmen accompany the guests upto a stream or crossing of footpaths. Then they sing, facing each other, the farewell couplets, largely standardized, but with all zest and real feeling. It is a touching sight when the girls as hosts kneel down and pay obeisance to the guests, who also return the compliment (without kneeling of course). Then the guests depart singing or sounding 'Cāngu' till the reverberating music is caught in the stillness of the jungle.

Courtship is also carried on in nightly dances, on occasions of visit for trade and barter or of visit to relatives, fairs or festivals in other villages.

### 3. Marriage

Getting married is a normal expectation in the life of youngmen or girl. Those few men who cannot get married because of certain serious physical defects or diseases are considered highly unfortunate; because, there is no wife to cook for them or look after them, and there are no children to take care of them in old age. Of course, there are kinsmen in and out of the village. More important, they cannot run a household of their own, and cannot, therefore, have the usual social status of an elder in the village community, and must be hanger-on of a kinsman's household for life. In Tasrā village, however, there was no case of unmarried man, a somewhat deaf man having been helped to marriage at a late age. A rather dumb woman could not be married in the regular way, but was seduced, and thus was forced upon the seducer. The lot of an unmarried woman might be still worse than that of an unmarried man. A hermaphrodite in Burābhuiñ (south) was leading the life of an unmarried woman.

Marriage is a great social event and an occasion of village celebration and solidarity. The village assembly has vital roles to play in all cases except in "junior Levirate", which does not involve any establishment of fundamentally new legal and social relations, and in re-marriage of the widowed or divorcee on mutual agreement.

#### (a) Age of Marriage

The Headman had married at the age of 12 a mere girl of 10 about 37 years ago. This was the lowest age at the first marriage recorded. There were only two other cases of girls marrying at

the age of about 15, just after their puberty and these occurred also in the last generation or earlier. In 1954 there were married girls from the age group 15-20 onward. The highest age at the first marriage of youngman is 34-35, and the youngman's marriage was delayed because of his partial deafness. In this case the difference of age between husband and wife was also the greatest, 10 years. The latest age at which a woman first married is 27. In this case the wife was two years older than the husband, as in another case. In a case of levirate the husband's younger brother was 5 years younger than the widow. Otherwise, either the age of both of husband and wife was the same or the husband was 2 years, rarely 1, 3, 4 or 6 years older than the wife. My remarks on the difficulties in counting age on page 24 are here also applicable, with an added predilection of the informants to standardize the answer.

In 1957 I came to know of the marriage of a Tasrā boy of 14 with a girl below the age of puberty. In 1954 in Mahulpadā region I had come across two cases of attempts at marrying such immature girls. In one case the police had intervened, but later on relented.

### (b) Forms of Marriage

In 1954 there was only one man, the Headman of the village, who had two wives. His first wife was barren and he had married the second one with her consent. His father had once 4 wives at the same time. It is matter of pride and prestige to be able to "feed" more than one wife. The economic condition of the households usually improves through having more working wives. The younger brother in the richest household, 24 P, has now a second wife; and here the economic motivation is still more prominent, as the first wife was not barren.

The village is, however, overwhelmingly monogamous and polygyny is marginal inspite of it's attractions and economic justification. The main reason may be the deterring expenses of a marriage ceremony, which are too much for an average household. Besides, girls do not like the prospect of having a co-wife, and prefer always to marry a 'dindā' man or bachelor. However, as polygyny is permitted, and under certain conditions even encouraged, Murdook would call this society polygynous (p.28).

### (c) Modes of getting married

The various modes of marriage may be considered broadly as several alternatives, excepting enforced marriages. Though all are socially recognized, legally valid for inheritance, they vary in prestige-value and cost. The data on the population of Tasrā in 1954 are presented in the following Table, for purposes of which only the last state of marriage is considered. Also, a widow or widower or divorcee is taken to constitute one marriage. A man in marriage with two wives is given the credit of two marriages.

It will be noted that the highest number of marriages have occurred by capture any by elopement. But the distribution among the 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā' is different, appreciably so in the case of marriage by elopement and marriage by mutual agreement. There is a high number of marriage by formal parental negotiation, but it must be remembered that 3 old widows are counted among the 'Mātiāli', as against one old widow among the 'Parjā'. However, 4 of these marriages



Table of Mode of Marriage (one marriage unspecified) 1954

	Mode of Marriage	Mātiāli	Parjā	Total
1.	'Magā' or 'Mangā' (Marriage by formal parental negotiation)	6	6	12
2.	'Jhinkā' or 'Ghicā' (Marriage by capture)	8	6	14
3.	'Bahipalā' or 'Dharipalā' (Marriage by elopement)	4	10	14
4.	'Man-saudā' or 'Manmāni' (Marriage by mutual agreement)	2	4	6
6.	'Gharjuāin' (Marriage by adopting a son-in-law)	x	1	1
5.	'Gateinebā' (Levirate)	1	1	3
7.	(Enforced Marriage)	x	1	

were held in the 'Parjā' households who were recent immigrants with a heritage of wealth from their settled agriculture in the old village. The remaining marriage was held about 40 years ago. Two marriages by negotiation were held in the 'Mātiāli' group about 30 years ago and one 10 years ago. The adopted son-in-law has married a daughter of 'Mātiāli' group and lives with his father-in-law. Similarly the enforced marriage took place in case of 'Mātiāli' woman who now lives in a 'Mātiāli' household, that of her brother.

In the table above the modes of marriage are arranged in a decreasing order of costliness and prestige-value under the following reservations. Cost in marriage depends partly on the mode of marriage but largely on the capacity of the bridegroom's household and demands of the bride's. Marriage with an unmarried girl is always considered higher in prestige-value for the bridegroom's household, except in case of an adopted son-in-law. Although levirate and "enforced marriage" go under the same name, the latter is definitely of the lowest in prestige, as it brings humiliation on the husband's household.

Thus it is obvious, that the 'Parjā' group, as a whole, allowing for the exception of recent wealthier immigrants, has shown the tendency to enter into less costly marriages of lower prestige-value.

## 'Magā' or 'Mangā' Marriage

As noted above, this is the costliest and most valued mode of marriage. I have data on two recent marriages, one in Tasrā in 1950, and another in Gohābandhā colony in 1955-56, both in the 'Mātiāli' section of Tasrā village. The fuller account of the latter case will be described with supplementary information from the first case. Both marriages were of the same type, 'Āni Chādibā' or "Bringing the bride to her husband's" by the bride's party. Another type of lower prestige-value, that of 'Mulabahi niā' or "Bringing the bride-price to the bride's father", was not recorded in details.

The youngman, Bakhlu, in the first case had fixed upon a girl and had told his parents of his desire to marry her. In the second case, Guna, the youngman, had no such initiative. His father had got the word from the girl's father and mother's brother at the time of 'Karmā' festivals in November-December 1955 in a drinking bout at a relative's place in Gohābandhā. This promise was respected when an approach from Khadkā was later turned down by the girl's father Burhākhaman village.

A formal betrothal was held at the girl's house, when Guna's father's mother's sister's son visited Burhākhaman with two pots of rice-beer, and some cakes called 'Kanuā pithā'. This ceremony is called 'Sur galeibā'. If the hands of the girl were refused, the messenger would have returned without taking food in Burhākhaman. Now they brought empty beer-pots back eloquently announcing that their mission was successful. In December-January 'Pus Parab' festival Guna's mother went with cakes and meat to see the would be daughter-in-law. December-January is the month when harvesting and harvest celebration wholly occupies the time. Running go-betweens is forbidden in this month. Two 'Bandhu' or affinal relatives of some proficiency in speech-making were selected as go-betweens of 'Kandhirā'. After arranging for the marriage expense the go-betweens were sent. They arrived with a toll-tale sound of their clubs made on the ground and left the clubs against the wall of the girl's house and met the Village Assembly, who now took up the major responsibility in marital transactions. The Village Assembly also enjoyed the rice-beer brought by the go-betweens. (One pot of rice-beer is meant exclusively for the girls' father). This is called 'Bārbhāi Khiā' or 'Feeding the Public'. The go-betweens approach very respectfully and the speech is mostly ornamental and winding, and the atmosphere, highly formal. It was decided when to hold the ceremony 'Kantā Leutā' and where. Then the go-betweens returned to their village and reported the matter to the Village Assembly.

The 'Kantā leutā' ceremony was held, as usual, on the bank of a stream lying between the two villages. Men and women from both the villages participated, also the go-betweens from both the parties. Mother's brother of both the youngman and the girl should also be present. A big



feast was borne by the prospective bridegroom's household. In Guna's case the expenses were, rice 40 Kilo, one he-goat, one fowl, biri pulses 2 Kilo. In Bakhlu's case the rice amounted to 52 ½ Kilo, the other expenses being the same. The go-betweens busied themselves in arriving at an agreement over the bride-price or 'Kaniā-mula'. Firstly, the go-betweens of the bride's party will propose something higher than they usually expect; their counterpart on the bridegroom's side will suggest a reduction – all calculation being done with stone pellets. It was decided that Guna's father would have to give two heads of cattle, rice 105 Kilo, one he-goat and another castrated he-goat, besides one sari for the bride's mother, one cloth for the girl's brother and Rs. 1.00 to the bride's mother as a symbolic compensation for feeding the girl so long. One of the cattle is meant for the mother's brother of the girl. It was also decided when the marriage would take place.

The girls' father now gave his daughter symbolically away to the go-betweens of the bridegroom's party, saying, "Kāni Kuji tar, olei jamdi tar, chuā haichi bālak, sāutīle darap, nāīnta narak. Āme dauchuñ upara hate, tame dhariab tala hate. "Freely translated, "From now onwards the girl belongs to you, be she one-yard, hump-backed, or greedy; she is mere girl, if you look after her well she will be treasure, if you don't she will rot. We are handing over the girl with hands high and you are receiving her with hand low (meaning complete giving away of the girl)."

At the time of drinking beer before the feasting, provided liberally by the bridegroom's party, the girl's father formally met the bridegroom, who must pay him obeisance by kneeling down and bowing his head up to the ground. This ceremony is called 'baradekha'.

As the time before the final celebration was very short, the go-betweens from both the sides had to make frequent trips. The Village Assembly in Burhākhaman demanded 40 Kilo rice, sun-dried paddy 10 Kilo and one he-goat for worshipping the ancestral spirits in the girl's house. The Village Assembly of Gohālbandhā on the other had were prepared to offer 20 Kilo of rice and the other things as asked for. This was eventually agreed to and the go-betweens carried the goods, called 'ladani'. It was also decided when the brides would be brought to the husband's village for being ceremonially handed over.

On the evening before the day of marriage ceremony, at Bakhlu's house there was a feasting for the villagers and relatives on the occasion of 'sitalāñi' or worship of the ancestral spirits. This was not mentioned in Guna's marriage history, presumably due to oversight. 40 Kilo of rice and 4 Kilo of biri pulses were cooked for the feasting.

On the morning of the marriage, at the bride's house the ancestral spirits are worshiped in a 'sitalāñi' ceremony and the villagers are fed with the 'ladani' contribution given by the bridegroom's party. At the worship, the ancestors are notified that the girl is from this day

transferred from her 'Janamkuthā' or "birth-place ancestors" to the 'Marankuthā' or death-place ancestors'. Bakhlu had to bear 60 Kilo rice and one goat for this feasting and worship.

Afterwards the bride's party, including her brother, sisters, father, mother's brother and his wife, and other relatives, youngmen and girls, and villagers along with one go-between from the bridegroom's side reached an end of the bridegroom's village and waited there. The mother of the bride should not come along with the party. There were 'cāngu' tambourines and drums plied by Ghāsi untouchables. The party carried 3 clothes and presents to the bride in a red-coloured closed baskets, made and sold by Hāri untouchables. Then the pair of 'mixed' go-betweens was sent with the message that the bride to be taken home. The bridegroom, his parents, brothers and sisters and other villagers went to ceremonially receive the bride. The ceremony of meeting the bride is called 'muhañ bhet'. A black fowl was sacrificed to 'Bharāli Pāt', the tutelary deity of the 'Bār', to which Gohālbandhā and Tasṛā belong. The mother-in-law smeared the paste of turmeric, 'gandhā' and 'añlā' aromatic roots, on the face of the bride and the bride's mother's brother's wife did the same to the bridegroom. This was done by either of welcoming the other party. Mother's brother of the bride tied a knot in the cloths of the bride and bridegroom with turmeric, 'gandhā' and 'añlā' roots. This knot is called 'añlā ganthi', symbolically uniting the bride and the bridegroom. Bakhlu's mother had then given the bride a necklace of coins as a present. The go-between now formally introduced the important relatives on both the sides to the bride and bridegroom.

The bridal party now advanced into the village and met and mingled with the host village. There was great din and busle. The girls on either side vied with each other in a singing contest, hurling remarks at each other. The youngmen of both the sides staged a mock-fight. There was hilarity at its highest.

Meanwhile the bride and the bridegroom had been carried by their respective elder sisters (actual or nearest classificatory) husbands, in Bakhlu's case by his father and Bakhlu himself by his classificatory mother's brother. The bride was seated on a strawgranary containing in Guṇa's case 20 Kilo paddy of all sorts and in Bakhlu's case 35 Kilo paddy, which was placed on the inside floor of the main hut with the kitchen. The sisters (actual and classificatory) of the bride brought her down the granary and got the paddy as their usual due. The ceremony is called 'Kaniābasā' or "seating the bride".

A roof of wattle had been constructed on the 'Maṇḍa Darbār' to shelter the bridal party, where they rested. The feasting of both the parties with rice-beer and spirituous liquor was immediately followed by nightlong dancing and merrymaking. This feasting called 'Chatar Bhāt' required 70 Kilo rice and 'biri' pulses 4 Kilo, and in Bakhlu's case 80 Kilo rice and the same amount of 'biri'. 'Biri' pulses are sine qua non in a marriage feasting.

At night the bridal pair fed each other.



Next day morning the father-in-law gave a new sari to the bride before she formally cleaned the yard in front of the house to demonstrate that she has assumed her duties as a housewife from that day. The sari is called 'dāṇḍa badhā lugā'. I think, due to oversight this was not mentioned in case of Guṇa's marriage.

The bridal party was specially treated with 'muhaṇḍihua' or "breakfast beer". Then the serious business of measuring the bride-price 'mula napā', was taken over by the go-betweens, under jocular, standardized, songs hurled at the go-betweens of the opposite party by the women of both sides. Firstly, rice, and the he-goats, secondly, the cattle, and thirdly, the clothes and Rs.1.00 were paid. The understatement from the bridegroom's side, for example, "you have now received the handful of broken grains", "check the head of cattle whether it suits your pleasure" etc., are characteristic. The wary receiver must strike his head of cattle with a pebble; at this time the bride's father receives an unceremonious smearing of fresh cowdung on his buttocks and is also symbolically beaten up with the head of a club by the bridegroom's party. If the cattle do not come up to expectation the receiver will remark, again with gross understatement, "Let the elephant of my 'Bandhu' (affinal relative) remain at home, but let him give me a small thing". After the handing over the bride-price a special rice-beer called 'guḷa mada' made from 10 Kilo rice in Guṇa's case, was partaken of. In Bakhlu's case the bride-price amounted to 120 Kilo rice, a he-goat, a castrated he-goat, two heads of cattle and 2 clothes and one Rupee. The tragicomical touch in the procedure of measuring bride-price was that in reply to the query, "Whether the 'Bandhu' has given in sorrow or with pleasure?" the bridegroom's party must say, "Yes, with pleasure".

Guṇa's bride had received also dowry of a brass vessel, one brass water-jug, and a brass cup besides a pair of gold nose-rings.

There was another feasting the same day after midday when 70 Kilo rice and 4 Kilo biri pulses in Guṇa's case and 80 Kilo rice and 6 Kilo biri pulses in Bakhlu's marriage were consumed by both the parties. This is called 'pakḥālabhāta' or 'cold rice', originally perhaps meaning that it was preserved in water from the last night's feasting. After this the mother's brother of the bride, and in Bakhlu's case a Tasrā go-between who stood in the relation of his classificatory mother's brother, "cut" the 'anla ganṭhi' by opening it and got one anna (Rs.0.06) from the bridegroom's father. The bride was then finally and formally handed over by her father, mother's brother's wife and elder brother's wife etc. after bathing her and clothing her with a new sari, 'lugā' caudākhand (literally, fourteen pieces of cloth). The bride's father ceremonially washed the feet of both the daughter and the son-in-law, and put turmeric powder with his fingertip between their eyebrows. The bridal pair made obeisance to him and he gave the Rs.1.00, received as 'Khirikhiāṇi tankā' for his wife from the bridegroom's father, to his daughter, perhaps on behalf of the bride's mother.

The bridal party retreated and the village celebrated the marriage again drinking beer and dancing.

Even then the bride was not yet a full-member of the family, as she could not yet cook in the main kitchen or for the ancestors. Full incorporation of the bride is realized only when 'deucinā' and 'telabandāna' or "introducing the bride to the ancestral and other spirits" and "greeting of the pair by the kinsmen and villagers with oil" are celebrated.

From Bakhlu's account it appears, the bride's mother's brother had specially contributed 10 Kilo of rice and one fowl to the young persons of the village of the bride for their help in marriage, and one cloth for the bridegroom and one sari for his sister's daughter. He got one of the cattle as his share in the bride-price.

The cow taken by the bride's father was returned after 4 years in Bakhlu's case as in most cases.

#### Ritual Incorporation of the Bride

After a few days in the same month, Phagun or February-March Guna's case, Baisākh (April-May) in Bakhlu's case, this important part of the marriage ceremony was held. It is called 'deucinā' and 'tela bandāna', as mentioned above.

At day-break a 'Rāuliā' medicineman, father's younger brother of Bakhlu in Tasrā, exercised the evil-spirits, which might have accompanied the bride. He too a black fowl to the jungle and sacrificed it to these spirits. This 'chaḍāni neuñchā' ritual would also protect the bride from tiger, bear, thorns in the jungle of her new village. Also 2 black fowls were sacrificed to 'Curuni bhuta' for such purposes. The data are, however, not available for Guna's marriage.

In the morning the bridal pair stood on a yoke and the women relatives who are in a joking relationship with them bathed them. Thereafter they smeared 'gandhā' and 'añlā' aromatic paste on them to the accompaniment of hearing songs flung between the women belonging to the bridal and the bridegroom's parties. In the mud created by bating there was medley dancing with singing jocularly. In other cases there may be drums playing at this time to heighten the frenzy. This dancing is called 'Kāda chaṭa nāca'.

The most important ceremony is the worship of ancestral spirits in the sacred corner or 'bhitār' by the bride with the assistance of her mother-in-law or other close 'Kutumb' women. The bride symbolically cooked in a new earthen pot porridge of rice, in Guna's case 4 Kilo, and offered it to the ancestral spirits of her new home. Then she distributed the offered food among all present. This ceremony, called 'hāndi sarā', thus dramatizes not only her ritual reception by the ancestral spirits but also her full status as a housewife witnessed by both the villages. This may also be looked upon as the actual consummation of the marriage.



After midday the feasting called 'deucinā bhāta' or feasting on occasion of the introduction to the gods, required 80 Kilo rice and one half of a castrated he-goat in Guna's case, and 60 Kilo rice, one goat and 2 fowls in the case of Bakhlu.

After food the bridal pair was seated on a date-palm mattress in the courtyard and the right hand of both of them were dipped in a brass jug full of water. The women relatives of the village and outside now encircled the pair and one by one they greeted by applying oil ('tula' or *bassia latifolia*, castor or 'kusum') and turmeric powder on the forehead of the pair, and by offering them small presents of money. If the greeting relatives be senior in age or in relationship, the bridal pair must make obeisance to them. This ceremony is called 'tela bandāna' or 'auspicious greeting with oil'.

Then came the ceremony called 'deu juhārūni' or saluting the gods. The bridal pairs were carried by the elder sister's husband or husband's younger brother to the crossing of foot-paths on the east and there a priest offered some sundried paddy and turmeric to Dharam god and the ancestral spirits. Then they were brought on to the front verandah of the 'Manda Ghar'; the 'Manda Darbār', The assembly and dancing platform, is worshipped with the same materials as earlier. The bridal pairs paid obeisance to 'Manda Darabār' as also to Dharam and the ancestral spirits earlier.

Towards the evening another feast, called 'barga bhāta' or 'desha bhāta' or 'feast for the public', most of whom were villagers, was made ready with 80 Kilo of rice and half a goat in Guna's case and 80 Kilo rice and one goat in the case of Bakhlu.

The day ended with dancing, singing and drinking beer. The marriage had thus come to be solemnized. Till this ceremony was over, the pair was ritually not fully clean, and therefore could not participate in village or family rituals.

### Presenting 'Māni Lugā'

Still there is a snag. The mother of the bride has not yet come to visit her daughter and bless the couple. She is never to accompany a bridal party during the marriage.

Now she comes with some women relatives and the pair of go-betweens appointed on the bride's side. She brings usually a basketful of rice-flour as present. She greets the couple by pouring water on their feet, and blesses them by applying turmeric powder on the forehead. The pair makes obeisance and she is presented a sari, called 'māni lugā' or "cloth of honour". She is feasted heartily.

The go-betweens, who have helped so much and so long now dismissed. In Guna's case they had worked for about 3 months. They had the honour of arranging a successful 'maga' marriage, besides the present of a cloth each.

### 'Ghicā' or 'Jhinkā' Marriage

This mode of marriage, literally by seizure or capture, is a misnomer except in a few cases. One such case was the marriage of a somewhat deaf man in household 2 P, for whom till a late age no girl was found. At last he fixed upon a girl from Khadkā and told his 'Maṭājī' relatives who stood to him in mother's brother (classificatory) relationship. Three friends then were sent to the girl's village and were glad to learn that she had gone bathing. They lay in wait for her in the bush on the way. An old woman was coming with her in front. As she first passed on, the girl was caught by the youngmen unawares and was carried away screaming and crying. Upon the old woman's question she was informed that the girl was being taken to Tasdā for a marriage. After some distance the girl stopped crying and walked with her captors, in full suspense for the unknown fate. At Tasdā she was received into the household by her mother-in-law and other elderly women.

After 2 or 3 days her mother and some elderly women of Khadkā visited the bride-groom's place and were feasted with fowl meat. On their return two go-betweens were sent by the village Assembly of Khadkā to realize the customary fine and bride-price. But the mother of the girl had already seen the poor economic condition of the household 2 P. So the bride-price was not insisted upon. The customary "fine" of 40 Kilo rice and one goat was paid. The people of Khadkā must have feasted with this. In the case of the household 13 M the "fine" or "ṭanda" was, however, consumed by both the parties at a place near the stream, lying between the two villages. In this case the bride-price was not pressed for, even when the bridegroom's family had more cattle and could easily pay. However, in some other cases the usual bride-price, consisting of 120 Kilo or so rice, 2 heads of cattle, one he-goat, one castrated he-goat, one sari for the mother of the bride, was paid. As usually it happens, the cow for the father of the girl was returned afterwards. In household 27 M the promise of paying the "fine" and bride-price never came to be exercised during the life-time of the bride-groom. However, it must be noted, that for a marriage by capture as late as 1933 the customary "fine" was only 10 Kilo rice and one fowl. The "fine" is more a matter of prestige than economic benefit for the girl's family. The bride herself is also no less proud of this customary payment. But the main attraction for this mode of marriage seems to be the postponement of payment of bride-price and even a probable remission of that, besides the prestige-value of the marriage.

Coming to the more usual procedure of this marriage, one must remember the wooing scenes at the dances, when visiting dancing parties, or meeting of girls and boys on barter trips, or for visiting relatives, or for helping or even working for them, offer such opportunities. Successful wooing through persuasion and jeering, or even unsuccessful wooing leading to this mode of marriage, takes place most often when the girls are the visitors in Tasrā. The attachment might have started at some village or the parties might not have come across each other till then. This doesn't stand in the way. At other times the girls may themselves suggest this mode of marriage in preference to 'Manmāni' or marriage by mutual agreement. The girl's



parents may come to know of the attachment, if it is slightly long-standing, especially if the pair belongs to the same village. In one case in the household 14 P, the parents of the Youngman had taken the initiative and suggested a girl to him, who readily consented. The girl in this case, however, was carried after the dances against her will, crying and struggling to get away. In other cases when the Youngman and his friends had wooed a girl, with prior discussion with and approach of the parents or the guardians of the youngman, the girl usually got to her feet after a few yards of being carried away in a "simulated" capture, and without much ado fled with the bridegroom to the jungle. The pair were always given some food articles later in the day by friends, and sometimes they cooked food, with materials thus supplied, in the jungle – a most enjoyable picnic. At dusk, as usual, the bridegroom in the household 7 M, returned to the village first, the bride left at an end of the hamlet in the gardens waiting. The mother of the bridegroom with some elderly women of the village approached the bride and welcomed her into the house. The mother-in-law washed the feet of the bride and her son with water mixed with turmeric and applied turmeric powder on the forehead of both of them. The bride then bowed to the mother; the bridegroom should have also bowed. Perhaps he was too shy and nervous on this occasion and he was excused as a mere "boy". A new cloth was later on being worn by the bridegroom and it was dyed yellow with turmeric, as usually the marriage dress is.

After a few days the girl's mother paid a visit to Tasrā was feasted. Then go-betweens were sent, and Tasrā villagers complained that the Village Assembly of Raḍā was too greedy. They wanted both the "fine" and the bride price at the same time. Though this girl was captured, she had not screamed or struggled; for that reason, the Tasrā villagers argued that, it could not be 'Jhinkā', but that it was 'Manmāni'. The girl had also, as alleged, confided to her mother that it was 'Manmāni' marriage. But the Village Assembly of Raḍā had independent evidence from Tasrā, as an influential relative on visit at Tasrā had heard of the marriage being discussed as a 'Jhinkā' one. After receiving the go-betweens two or three times it was decided by the Village Assembly of Tasrā that the girl herself should try to influence her parents for not pressing for the bride price in the immediate future. Unfortunately the marriage fell through.

This case shows how the procedure may be viewed as something between 'Jhinkā' proper and 'bahipalā' or marriage by elopement. This was the opinion given in all similar cases happening during my visit to Tasrā.

As on the occasion of 'Mangā' marriage, the ritual incorporation of the bride is held, in some cases even after a year or so. In the household of 13 M, for example, the worship of the ancestral spirits was done by sacrificing one fowl besides offering the porridge. Besides one black fowl was sacrificed to 'Baghiā' deity. 80 Kilo rice and one she-goat were cooked for the 'deucinā bhāta' at day-time and at the evening 80 Kilo rice and one she-goat for the 'desha bhāta'. The youngmen of the village were treated additionally with porridge of one Kilo rice and next day with 2 Kilo of rice and taro. The other related ceremonies described in the 'mangā' marriage were also observed in this case. 'Māni lugā' was also offered at the time of the mother's ceremonial visit.

### 'Dharipaḷā, or 'Bahipaḷā' Marriage

This is the romantic marriage by elopement born of somewhat longer attachment between a Youngman and a girl. As in one case the parties reached an agreement after dancing on where to meet and then they eloped all the way from Khadaḷiḍiḥa in Bamra to Tasrā on the same day – a distance of about 20 kilometers. The bride was warmly welcomed, as the parents already know of their son's attachment and was ceremonially received. Afterwards the ritual incorporation of the bride was celebrated and the marriage was consummated as in 'Jhinkā' marriage.

In 1924 or thereabout the youngman's father in household 14 P, had married in the same manner. He had to give 160 Kilo of rice, one he-goat and one castrated he-goat besides a sari for the mother-in-law, while a bullock was given as late as 1953 to the father-in-law's heirs. But in another case of marriage in household 5 P, about 1930, no bride-price was paid. As late as 1950 in a marriage in household 1 P also no bride-price was paid. Thus payment of bride-price in this mode hangs from the capacity of the bride-groom's household. In 1953 a tribal assembly or 'Mahādesa' has decided only to contribute 4 pots of native beer made from about 12-16 Kilo cereals in case of a 'Dharipaḷā' marriage.

### 'Manmāni' or 'Mansaudā' Marriage

Mutual agreement on the part of both the youngman and the girl is the basis of this marriage. The attachment might be old or as fresh as two or three nights of dancing.

Even though this mode of marriage casts no bride-price it is not eagerly sought after. Girls prefer 'Ghicā' to 'Manmāni', because the stigma lies in the suspicion that the couple was long in league with each other and the girl is perhaps pregnant. As the prestige-value of 'Manmāni' is lower than that of 'Bahipaḷā', yet no bride-price may be paid in either case, at least in three cases I was told to record 'Bahipaḷā' marriage, which was later on verified to be 'Manmāni'.

In this mode of marriage the ritual incorporation of the bride is celebrated as mentioned above.

An important village priest in household 10 M had married, for the fifth time, a woman divorced by her first husband. Though for all legal and social purposes the marriage was valid, it is literally known as 'Manmāni'. Ritually, however, this marriage was of an untenable nature, so that he had to leave worshipping powerful 'Baḍām' god at Tasrā, though he could worship the village deities at Kumudih village as before. I am not sure if he would have the same fate were it a case of levirate.

With regard to 'Manmāni' and 'Bahipaḷā', as the marriage involves mutual consent, it is always adult. But in a 'Jhinkā' marriage girls before puberty may also be carried away, as it happened in two known cases.



### Junior Levirate

In household 4 P the house-father has "taken over" the elder brother's widow, as his wife was killed by a tiger. There was no ceremony, no payment of any kind. I am not sure if he would have kept the widow if his own wife were alive. If the widow had married in 'Mangā' mode, she must have had to marry within the 'Kutumb'; otherwise she could have married outside by paying the compensation in the form of feasting of the 'Kutumb' or payment of a head of a cattle. A widow of Nāik 'bamsa' or lineage was taken over by one in the relationship of husband's younger brother in the Dehuri 'bamsa' without any payment. However, a 'Parjā' was allowed to keep a widow of Nāik 'bamsa' (mother of Terā in household 8 M), but as he stood in relation of husband's elder brother (classificatory), he had to be ritually "purified" by the 'Bār' organization.

### Adopting a Son-in-Law

The Headman got one orphan youngman to marry his daughter and live with him as 'Gharjuāiñ' since 1952. All the expenses were borne by the father-in-law and the 'deucinā' and 'tela bandāna' ceremonies were also held. However, the youngman's family has no independent existence, and has also no "sacred corner" of his own, though his children like himself will be 'Prajā' and not 'Mātiāli'.

This marriage, though contracted with an unmarried girl, carries less prestige than the levirate and the remarriage, primarily because the husband and wife cannot claim to have a household of their own, neither can they inherit all the property of the bride's father. In day-to-day life, however, they do not suffer any difficulty or loss of face, as they are part and parcel of the Headman's household. Keeping the son-in-law and the daughter has served the Headman in maintaining his economic status as one of the well-to-do men in the village.

### Enforced Marriage

This happened in the case of a rather dumb woman who was made pregnant at a late age by 'Bandhu' man of 'Tasrā'. It was proved before the Village Assembly that he was the culprit and he was thus forced to take her over. This taking over the woman, although enforced, is known by the same term as junior levirate, 'Gateinebā'. The woman is living in her brother's household 26 M, after divorce.

### "Bride-Price"

Known as 'Kaniā-mula', or simply 'mula' or price, this is not to be confused with purchase of the bride as a chattel or slave. Far from that. The classical mode of marriage with bride-price is 'Mangā' or 'Magā', literally meaning marriage by 'begging' for the bride. The marriage is considered most stable, as it is a matter of prestige for both the villages and lineages of the

wife and the husband, 'Jhinkā' and 'Dharipalā' marriages, when bride-price may be paid, are rated higher in prestige for both the parties than 'Manmāni', where no such bride-price is customarily demanded. In a case of divorce in household 4 P men did not take it seriously in both the villages, because it was a marriage by mutual agreement or 'Manmāni'. The bride-price is stabilizing factor, especially so in case of 'Magā' marriage. In fact, I have not heard of divorce in a marriage by this mode at Tasrā. It assumes stabilizing function through the fact that the village assemblies of both the parties have come to play a major role in solemnizing the marriage with (actual or potential) bride-price. Moreover, it also confers prestige on both the parties concerned.

### Marital Life

If there is some sexual licence before marriage, it is strongly prohibited for married persons. Adultery is considered one of the greatest threats to marriage, but it seems to be rare. Clandestine relationship, however, may not be ruled out. Married life is mostly peaceful, as both the partners know their place according to the old traditions and customs, which, however, leaves the final say to the head of the household, at least theoretically. Beating of the wife at serious differences of opinion only establishes this right of the husband. Some men confided to me that women need such chastisement as guarantee for their continuing good conduct. Yet, it is hardly deliberate, except perhaps in a case of impending divorce forced upon the wife. However, in the two cases of beating the wife during my stay, the public opinion was always in favour of the women.

A man or a woman gains in social status appreciably after marriage. Sooner or later the couple establish their own household and share in the responsibilities of corporate village undertakings equally. The head of the household becomes a responsible citizen and his say in the Village Assembly carried more weight, other things being equal, than what is preferred by an unmarried contemporary youngman.

Constancy of attachment between the partners is prized and having children is an important cementing factor. But marrying or keeping wives, even five times in a lifetime, does not usually discredit a man.

### Divorce

Divorce is relatively easy. It is possible for either of the partners to divorce or desert the other. The most common causes or occasions of divorce and desertion are described below.

In 1957 an old man of 63 claimed that at no time since his childhood had the Village Assembly anything to do with a case of divorce or desertion at Tasrā.

(a) The first wife of Rāma in household 14 P did not distribute food equitably among the members of the household. She kept more for herself hiding. The parents decided on a divorce



and with the consent of their son the father broke a piece of straw in two. This action symbolized that the marriage was broken. There were some witnesses. The divorced wife had to return an ornament and a new sari given to her by her husband's household. As the fault was completely on her side, her parents or their Village Assembly did not take up the cause.

(b) If the wife be a thief, on repetition of the crime, she is divorced without any compensation.

(c) If the wife be a sorceress, she may be divorced. I know of at least 3 sorceresses who were driven out of the village, but were not divorced. That points to the reservation, that the sorceress-wife may be tolerated in practice if she does not cause direct harm to her own household.

(d) Laziness and inefficiency in work threaten the economic security of the household. But in the case of divorce of the first wife in household 4 P this charge was just a camouflage for the intention of bringing another wife. The women folk of Tasrā pointed out the industriousness of this woman, with which she had toiled in the swiddens. Even if she had a baby at her breast she had to go, and the villagers, convinced as they were of the injustice imposed on her, did not raise a finger against it. An old lady told me that the divorced wife had the claim to one year's upkeep, as she had worked for the household during the growing season. But she was dismissed away only with a new sari, 7 ¼ Kilo 'd'hung' beans and 8 Kilo of 'gangei' millets. She was to get some more cereals later on.

Most important to note here is the fact that only the wife was devolved by breaking the straw before the witnesses. The child could be recovered when it grew up, anytime after weaning, by paying Rs.2.00 and a new sari to the mother as a symbolic compensation for her suckling the child. As the child was a son, I am not sure if the claim on it would have been retained were it a daughter. At any rate, to lose a child through divorce is considered as the height of folly that a father may commit. In this case also the Assembly of the divorced wife's village did not intervene.

(e) Adultery when discovered or proved leads to one of the two consequences under the supervision of the Village Assembly. If the paramour be not a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, the wife is outcasted. She may be accepted into the adulterer's community after being 'purified' by the caste or tribal organization. If the adulterer be a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, he had to take over the woman and pay a fine or 'tanda'.

(f) If a co-wife be married against the will of the present wife or if the co-wife does not treat the former wife well, the latter has the right to appeal to the Village Assembly, which may allow her to desert the husband, - even if she were married on payment of bride-price, with no costs.

(g) If a woman gives birth to a monster, for example, to a tiger-child" in the case of enforced marriage, divorce follow with no costs. Because, the woman not only did not bring forth normal child, but also is herself a source of unlucky and evil forces.

## D. Diseases and Afflictions, Remedies and Sanitation

The Pāuri Bhuiyān are noted for their endurance. They will not mind a moderately high fever, common cold or small open cuts, till they cannot work or the gangrene sets in a cut, or the common cold or fever persists. The yaws, which is rampant in the hills, does not bother them till they cannot walk or work. However, they are by contrast very quick in attending to the ailments of infants and small children, as of the cattle.

### 1. Causes of Diseases

We may divide them under the following categories : (a) Natural; Possession or Intrusion by (b) deities of 'deotā'; by (c) Spirits; (d) Punishment for sacrilege; (e) Sorcery or 'pāngan-nāshan', or simply 'pāngan'.

#### (a) Natural Causes

Firstly, we must note that there is a conception of "hot" and "cold" effects of material objects, especially of different kinds of food. Weather, water, and wind also affect the body and cause fever, common cold and cough. Yaws is believed to be originating from the intestines and ultimately being exposed on the soles of feet. Fracture of bones and cuts are referred to their obvious natural causes. Some people complain of stomach disorders because of taking native beer. Indigestion, constipation, and diarrhoea are similarly explained in reference to food.

#### (b) Deities or 'Deota' as Cause

Deities of various powers and nature are held responsible for a large number of diseases.

(1) The weakest deity seems to be the one causing joint aches, called 'sandhi-bindhā deotā'. From back muscles, the nape of the neck, shoulder joints down to the stomach level aches are mobile, and one patient feared that the 'deotā' might have gone inside the chest and stopped the heart-beat.

#### Divination

In a sudden attack, say, of blood dysentery, or persistent fever, dysentery, blood in phlegm, etc., or malignant boils, gangrenous wound, or repeated outbreak of fever with the same symptoms in about the same month in consecutive years, the cause is sought to be divined by professional diviners, called 'saguñiā'. They divine with a length of 'Chana' grass. They can deduce therefrom if a deity or a spirit or sorcery had been the cause of an affliction.

In serious cases affecting the village well-being, like epidemics of cholera, pox and measles, or of livestock diseases, a recourse is taken to what is known as spirit possession; actually a person is possessed by some deities who announce through the medium who they are and what will satisfy them if they are not to plague the village any more. Those who sway under such possession are known as 'Bāru'.



- (ii) 'Bāuti' – This deity is responsible for numerous superficial lesions on the legs or head, leading to death, if not appeased.
- (iii) 'Paghurā' – This deity consumes from within the body, as in a case of persistent occurrence of blood in phlegm, or in case of persistent fever of a child. This deity is often mentioned with 'Tuṇuā', a spirit.
- (iv) 'Deurā-Kācuni' - 'Deurā' is the younger brother of 'Paghurā' and is always named with 'Kācuni'. They also consume the patient from within. A case of accidental cut growing gangrenous was attributed to them.
- (v) 'Hingulāi' – This Hindu goddess is responsible for cholera, pox, measles ('gundi'), and persistent constipation ('shulā maidān').
- (vi) 'Bishri Thākurāni' – This Hindu goddess usually appears in dream. She causes epidemics of cattle, and certain human diseases and even epidemics like cholera.

Besides, in one case astrological explanation of broncho-pneumonia inflicted by 'Sani' or Saturn was borrowed from the Hindu and the Gond in the valley.

#### (c) Spirits

- (i) 'Mashāni Bhuta' – The "spirit of the grave" (the spirit of death ? ) is the most harmful one. It caused a child to be unconscious, not blinking the eyelids, and not taking food or milk for many days, persistent fever in the same month for three consecutive years, and serious troubles in a carrying woman.
- (ii) 'Curuni' is the spirit of a woman died in pregnancy. She causes especial harm to pregnant women and babies.
- (iii) 'Tuṇua' is alleged to be 'Pitāsuni', that is, the spirit of a deceased maiden. But it is also said to be the spirit of one who has died vomiting blood. It is taken as the cause a still-birth by "eating" the embryo. But it is most often associated with 'Paghurā' deity. Goats are also affected by this spirit.
- (iv) Ancestral spirits – A baby did not take mother's milk on the first day and even in the morning of the second day. But in the evening of the first day (note how urgently steps were taken), it was divined that the father's father had possessed him.

#### (d) Punishment for Sacrilege

There is a 'Rākās' or demon in the 'Jari' tree near the water pool in Upar Tasra. Once in the old days a villager had cleaned the earthen cooking pot in water, which is strongly forbidden as a sacrilege. Before the villager had crossed the adjacent maize garden he was vomiting blood. Immediately, however, the demon was pacified by worshipping him and ritually purifying the water with turmeric and sun-dried rice. Then the patient recovered.

Sacrilege and neglect of deities and ancestral spirits are also punished with sickness or epidemics.

(e) Sorcery

Some actual cases of suspected and "proved" sorcery are recounted below to give a vivid picture of the atmosphere of the belief. The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ women are feared in the valley for their sorcery. But some Tasrā villagers themselves opined that 'Khādiā' tribal women are the most powerful, then come the Gond and Casā women in the plains, and the Pāuri women are relatively less harmful or powerful. In Tasrā there are at least three former 'Pāngani' or Sorceresses, all of whom were driven out of their husband's villages. Khadkā, a settled village of Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in Pal Lahara, had at least 2 sorceresses and 2 sorceerers who were driven out and were accepted in Tasrā in the recent past, to the intense private criticism of many villagers. The headman and his second wife are feared and hated intensely as committing sorcery. But the driven out sorceresses are considered as only potentially dangerous. Sorcery has to be learnt from old practitioners. But I have not studied this aspect. They usually utter some spells at the sight of objects to be affected or send some deities or spirits, like 'Deurā-Kācuni' to inflict an ailment. It is believed by some that sorcery hastens death in 4-6 days, when the individual's fixed life-span (Āisa, from Sanskrit Āyus) is nearing its end.

(i) A priest of Laḍumdh, adjacent to Tasrā on Pal Lahara side, had a cut from the iron plough-share in the right leg above the ankle. Afterward, it became gangrenous and showed an exposed part above the ankle. This was unusual and sorcery was readily suspected. Three medicinemen-cum-diviner or 'Rāuliā' of a higher order than 'Saguniā' referred to above, independently named a sorceress, a widow. The woman was later driven out of the village and was admitted into Upar Tasrā in 1954.

(ii) A sorcerer had directed his evil-eye by uttering spells to himself against a man eating rice. The latter suffered from blood-dysentery so much so that he had to make a pit in the house for passing stool, as he was too much weakened to be able to go outside. It was ascertained that sorcery was committed.

(iii) In a case of 'Ganthi-bathā' or rheumatism (repeated attacks) in adulthood after one in the childhood, a 'Rāuliā' was consulted and he divined with 'Chana' grass that somebody had committed sorcery. Recourse to sorcery-explanation was taken in the third-stage. In the first instances he took some herbal medicine and was not satisfied. Then some medicine-pills from a Hindu merchant was taken along with the powder of 'khai' (fluffy roasted rice) from black paddy and it had worked.

(iv) An important 'Māitiāli' man, Member of the Gram Pancayat of Mahulpadā region as a representative of Tasrā, had recently died of perhaps bronchopneumonia. When he was not being cured for a long time, before his death, sorcery was suspected as committed



by his rival, the Headman, living in the other Hamlet. They had old grudges, it appears, and the Headman was alleged to be jealous of the popularity and external connections with powerful officials, which the Member had through his office. After his death it was ascertained that the Headman had committed sorcery. But fearing his sorcery and position no action was taken against him. This sorcery would have also worked against the lives of two sons of the deceased, if it was not counter-acted soon after the death. A son of the deceased attributed to sorcery even the fact that the paddy that year had dried up in the seed.

- (v) and (vi) Once this sorcery was "established", other men of the hamlet immediately pointed to the same Headman's sorcery for the same type of cold and coughing with rapid short breathing ('dhaiñ'). The Headman had once asked a youngman to be 'Haliā' or hired labourer for a year. His father's brother and guardian had objected to it 2-3 years ago. In 1954, when the above-mentioned Member died, he was again requested for the youngman and he refused again. This youngman had suffered from malarial fever in 1953 January-February, and again in 1954 at about the same time. Thus it was obvious now that the Headman had directed his evil powers against the youngman. A 'Māiāli' priest householder also suspected the Headman of directing sorcery at him, because he had the same ailment, on the basis of superficial symptoms, as the Member had succumbed to. In the former case some steps were taken to avert sorcery.
- (vii) The Headman's son-in-law called his mother-in-law names in a domestic quarrel addressing her as "wife's sister, hundred times my wife's sister", a vile form of abuse. So it was believed by men in the other hamlet that the mother-in-law must have inflicted him with sorcery; otherwise, why should he be unable to walk at that time? I do not think anything was done about the alleged sorcery.
- (viii) A woman was showing me her right leg which was swollen at the place where once there was wound. She said she was bewitched and therefore the wound did not heal up properly. When I asked her wherefrom the sorceress came, she replied to me pointedly, "From this village; why should one of another village bewitch me?" She had, however, not consulted a diviner-cum-medicineman.
- (ix) The Headman's sorcery was also suspected in stopping the blood-marks of an escaping 'sambar', which was hurt by a marksman of Lower Tasdā. The quarrel arose on the point that the Lower Tasrā people claimed the head all for themselves, although some other hunter from the Headman's hamlet might have also hurt and thus had a claim to it in this communal hunting.

Thus we have seen how the range of sorcery stretched from causing serious diseases or ailments in men to affecting the crops and even animals – ultimately thus affecting men.

Except in the first two cases where the relation between the affected households and the sorcerer or sorceress is not available, the atmosphere of jealousy, resentment, disappointment or deprivation was always at the root of suspicion of sorcery. From the telling remark in the case(viii) it is revealing how the villagers themselves are conscious of the tensions which bring about acts of sorcery among the near and even the dear ones. Whether sorcery is a fact or fiction is out of the scope of the present investigation. This much is, however, certain that the belief in, and suspicion of, sorcery is very deep-rooted.

## 2. The Remedies

The traditional remedies may be described as against one or the other categories of causation of diseased and afflictions.

### (a) Against Natural Diseases

(i) Cicatrization with a heated piece of iron, called 'Cur Luhā', was observed to be used against headache on the temples, against throat-ache on the throat, and against tooth-sche and swelling on the cheek.

(ii) Folk Medicine – Against stomach-ache one had taken crushed hot chillies in water, against three days' stopping motions cooked 'sajanā' leaves, and against headache pounded 'Cunkul' bark was applied on the head. We have noted how change of diet and basking etc. were made at the time of child-birth for protection of the child and mother from their "cold" condition. Many leave eating goat meat for relief in yaws. A piece of 'Kantā sapti' plant was once tied to the necklace of a small child against his fever.

Besides such folk medicine known to ordinary Pāuri Bhuiyāñ there are some others purchased from the Hindu merchants of herbs or from practitioners of old Indian system of medicine, known as 'Vaid'. One Pāuri Bhuiyāñ of Tanugulā is a 'Vaid', though Tasrā men frequent more the one in Jagati village in the valley and some go to far-off villages in Keonjhar. But the tanugulā 'Vaid' is known to be dealing rather with herbal folk medicines than with Indian medicine. Yaws was treated with a paste out of 'mahan gira', available at Kulā and Mahulpadā markets. Even a fracture of bone could be set, it is claimed, by applying 'hād shankā, a parasite plant, in a special preparation.

(iii) Western Medicine – Dr. N. Patnaik had compiled statistics of patients treated at a Government Dispensary at Daleisarā colonies for 10 Months in 1956 (1957, Geographical Review of Inida, p.13). Patients visited the dispensary for digestive troubles, respiratory diseases, malaria, skin diseases, eye diseases etc, in a descending order of frequency. It is not known what percerntage of the 4467 cases treated were from the hill-villages. So far as I know, the figures include many non-Bhuiyāñ patients also. But it is certain that the picture reflects the general incidence of diseases in the region except perhaps in the case of Malaria, many moderate



cases of which are not reported. In Tasrā there was demand for paludrine and a few other common medicines which I carried with me. But nobody was willing to take the trouble of going to Daleisarā dispensary for treatment. One lost a complete day by going there. I induced a few villagers to go there and take injections against Yaws, but they did not continue till a course was finished. Because, they had already got sufficient relief by taking a few injections, and now the urgency of attending to yaws, known as 'Rasphuti, is gone. They are, however, very much impressed with the success of western medicines, especially of injections, and of surgical treatment of wounds, cuts et. The medical official at Daleisarā assured me that the tribal patients, including Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, responded to treatment with western medicine very quickly.

But some western medicine like ephenyle does not work on some cattle. And this may spoil all the good name of the particular medicine in treating animals. In one case of unsuccessful treatment with phenyle a man turned to folk medicine and made the cow drink the juice of 'arac' roots and 'pudhai' roots (hanging down). Now this created a disbelief in phenyl, so that another man was thiking of omitting it altogether and applying pounded levaees of 'bel' tree.

#### (b) Against Affliction by Deities

(i) Cicatrization of the areas supposed to be plagued by the 'Sandhibindhā Deotā' was a sufficient remedy to contain it.

(ii) Exorcism and Sacrifice – After divining the deity who is causing the disease, a 'Saguniā' or 'Rāuliā' keeps sun-dried rice, turmeric powder and vermilion in a new earthen pot in the honour of the deity, as a token offering with the promise that the rest of the offering, usually a sacrifice of goat or fowls, will culminate in a worship of the deity after the patient recovers.

On the day of worship the 'Rāuliā' invokes and exercises the deity from the patient and offers the sacrifice. Unfortunately I have not recorded more details on the procedure of the worship. The deity is not only exercised but also asked to be satisfied with the sacrifice and give no further trouble.

(iii) Speical Sacrifies and offering of food ('Khai' and molasses) are given to 'Hinguḷā' goddess in case of an epidemic. Otherwise, almost every year a household with children sacrifices a fowl and offers food at the annual festival of the deithy at Kumudih.

For averting cattle epidemics and guaranteeing general welfare of the village 'Bisri Thākurāni' is also worshipped and offered sacrifices. in Tasdā from 1957.

#### (c) Against Spirits

(i) Exorcism or 'Neuñchāpakā' – After divining that there is 'Mashāni Bhuta' in the patient, the 'Saguniā' or 'Rāuliā' utter some spells and at the same time blows puffs of air over the patient and promises the sacrifice of folws or even goat when the patient gets well.

On the day of exercism, the 'Saguniā' or 'Rauliā' visits the patient in the early morning. Taking a handful of sun-dried rice, turmeric powder, 'Sal' resin as incense and charcoal powder he moves the hand over the patient three times ending on the head. On exercising the spirit from the head, he immediately goes into the jungle without looking back with the materials in a leaf ('pusa'). Relatives of the patient follow him with the materials for the sacrifice and ritual. On a cleaned space a place is washed by the 'Rauliā' or 'Saguniā' who will worship. Three lines are made to cross other three lines at a right angle, thus giving nine meeting points. The lines are made with white rice-powder. Charcoal powder is sprinkled round the drawing. 9 heapfuls of sun-dried rice and turmeric power are placed at the meeting-points of the lines. The 'sal' incense is placed in the east at the centre and the worshipper sits on the west side facing east. Meanwhile he had baked a small cake of rice-flour, which is now placed on the central heap.

In one case I observed, a black fowl was first sacrificed to 'Mashāni-Bhuiñ' or the spirit of the Grave-yard. The fowl was twisted at the neck and the head was placed on a heapful with the beak to the east. The blood from the trunk was allowed to pour down on the heapfuls; then it was thrown into the jungle, never to be recovered.

Next a white fowl was offered to 'Mashāni Bhuta'. It was cut across the neck and then the same procedure was followed as in the last sacrifice.

A third, red, fowl was offered to the 'Guru' or 'teachers'. It was also cut and met the same fate. Then he sprinkled water round the 'mandala' or the circle of worship, symbolizing the end.

The two trunks of the white and the red fowls were cooked. The worshipper alone could eat the 3 heads offers, which should be cooked separately. Thus five people had a grand feast of 2 Kilo rice, fowl meat, cakes cut of rice-flour and the inevitable native beer given in honour of the worshipper.

I cannot say how the sacrifice is offered when a goat is promised to 'Mashāni Bhuta' and the 'Guru' are offered fowls always.

### 3. Worship and Sacrifice

In the case of an ancestor spirit plaguing a child, a 'bamsa' (lineage) man worshipped the ancestor spirits after the child recovered. A fowl was sacrificed to the spirit of grandaater and another to the brother-spirits as a further security. Offering of rice-porridge of 8 Kilo rice was also made. The whole family of the worshiper and that of the child-victim besides a brother of the worshipper had a grand meal.

#### (d) Against Punishment for Sacrilege

It has already been noted while describing it as a category of causation of disease (see p.51) ('Tūnuā' spirit is treated as a deity as it accompanies 'Paghurā' deity).



### (e) Counteracting Sorcery

After divining that the repetition of rheumatism rehemutism was a case of sorcery the 'Rāuliā' took 7 'sal' leaf-stems and sun-dried rice and exercised the evil factor (diety or spirit, it is not recorded) and offered sacrifices to it in the manner similar to that described in the exercism of spirits. In the case of gangrenous cut with ploughshare 5 fowls were offered to 'Baghiā' and 'Deurā-Kācuñi' deities in the exercism or 'Neuñchā' ritual

### (f) Appeal to higher deities

In a case failure of exercising deities or spirits, or of serious cases, when natural treatement fails, and sorcery or possession by deities or spirits is not indicated, an appeal may be made to higher deities like 'Bharāli Pāt', 'bisri Thakurāni' or even to 'Kanta Kuañri' to save the patient, some good sacrifice is promised and if the deity "listens" to the invocation the promise is kept.

### (g) Amulets

Not uncommonly amulet made of copper container encasing some magical medicine is worn to avert evil spirits of certain illness. It is known as 'ḍeuñriā' and is also worn by Hindu castes of Orissa. Copper itself has magical properties against spirits.

Before we leave the topic of remedies we must note that again and again the remedies were used in combination or in succession. In the case of rheumatism the antisorecery exercism was joined to some folk-medicine treatement. The patient was also forbidden to take goat meat, 'biri' pulses, 'ruhmā' beans, fish or crabs, curd, gourds, 'mārisha' and 'mākhan' leaves, kanduāni, taro, 'kulthi' pulses, and 'suturi' beans. He gave up all of them for 5 years and took the medicine for 21 days.

## 4. Sanitation

Compared to village in the valley, Tasra is not less clean. Women regularly clean their houses, yards, cattle and goat sheds, clean the utensils and cooking pots scrupulously, keep drinking water separately, and take daily bath. These are daily chores. Public places like the 'manda Darabā' or 'Mandaghar' are also cleaned daily. One takes care not to take a bath in the common pool of water, wash the cooking pots, or leave certain noxious food-articles to be washed in the pool, wherefrom drinking water is collected. But many other food articles and clothes are washed, and in the winter when the stream flows nominally, and in the summer when the pool gradually shrinks up, the water gets really dirty and unhealthy. The water-pools are, of course, cleaned about once a year. The clothes remain clean only for 2-3 days after a washing with the ashes of banana plant or 'ashan' bark etc. this is due to the habit of sitting on the ground. People wear most of the time dirty clothes and no doubt suffer from skin diseases, in spite of taking daily baths.

The interior of the house is dark and ill-ventilated, and when there is fire and the inevitable smoke the eyes burn, and no wonder that eye-troubles are very common. This smoke nuisance is most harmful in winter months when fire is the main protection against the cold. Add to this the smoke of native cigars of 'pikā', which is constant companion of the Pāuri. They urinate just beyond the house and spit on the fire place with not a very careful aim, and outside the house spit out anywhere beyond the working or gossiping place. As there is sufficient jungle around there is no problem of disposal of the night-soil. Although there is no stink of the swine, the open heaps of cow-dung, kept on the maize-gardens ringing the habitation-site, and leaves and other dirt scattered by the fowl in the kitchen gardens at the back of the houses are neither presentable in sight nor wholesome in smell. Fortunately, there are no cess pools or water standing for long, as the hill topography provides natural drainage. Hence, mosquitoes do not infest the hill villages as they do in the valley.

#### E. Old Age, Death and Funeral

Though it is difficult to define old age, one may take men and women above 50 as old. Old age does not mean retirement from the daily chores or cultivation. Men of about 60 years or older women were also active in swiddens, and they were not altogether spared from heavy work. They would go on working till they are very ill, even in old age.

A lonely old father or mother is always taken care of by their grown-up children. A mother may live with them by turn and the parents may live with younger or unmarried children, sometimes also with married sons.

Old men and women are respected and are listened to; their advice is valuable. Their opinion in the Village Assembly has more weight. Consideration such as leaving a seat near the fire is always shown to them by younger ones. They take precedence in communal feasting and direct the affairs of joint undertakings. This ideal picture may be summed up by saying that the old are not divorced from work, not debarred from responsibilities, and not ignored, but rather highly valued in the society. There is no break with the current of life except through death. It is quite another matter when 'Mātlāli' elders have even more say and more power than the elder 'Parjā' men and women.

Death is the greatest calamity that may befall a household, the kinsmen and the village. The village symbolically expresses condolence by stopping all work on the first day of death and on the first day of the funeral ceremony. This stoppage of work is known as 'maran Bithuā'. Till after the funeral ceremony is held, no village rituals are observed.

There are three grave-yards as noted in the Village Plan. One of them is for old and good men, another for women and other men, and the last one for unmarried men and women and children. Babies may be buried in the jungle. There is no evidence that 'Kutumb' and 'Bandhu' (affinal relatives) had their grave-yards separate (Roy, p. 197).



The manner of death determines the mode of funeral. Full honours of a funeral including the "soul-calling" ceremony are awarded a man or woman who dies after marriage, but who may not be killed by a tiger or bear, may not die in pregnancy in case of a woman, or may not commit suicide. Only a few important old men of the 'Māṭiāli' section had been cremated, instead of being buried, as in the normal mode. Cremation is more expensive. Within the last 100 years or so only 6 'Māṭiāli' men were cremated.

If birth of a child was primarily a household and kin-group affair, most marriages were concern of the whole village. In the situation of death, however, in all cases excepting the death of unmarried children, the whole village was bereaved of a full member and therefore had utmost and anxious attention on the proper funeral ritual. This was needed as much for the safety of the village as for comforting the hardest-hit kinsfolk. Firth strikes the heart of the matter when he notes, "A funeral is a social rite par excellence. Its ostensible object is the dead person, but it benefits not the dead, but the living" (1951, p.63). We shall see below how a funeral can be an occasion of social solidarity and exchange of goods and services.

#### 1. Death and Funeral of an important man

The Member of Tasrā, for so he was known, was suffering from cold and cough since before the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January, 1954. He was also having temperature, it appeared, and was going from bad to worse. The 'Pus Parab' of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the 4<sup>th</sup> January must have aggravated his condition due to heavy drinking of native beer. After my shifting to Tasrā on the 6<sup>th</sup>, I gave him some ordinary allopathic medicine I had carried with me. The Member had serious difficulties in breathing. On the day before his death the neighbours were seriously thinking consulting a 'Rāuliā' for counteracting suspected sorcery. On the same afternoon a 'Saguniā', a close 'Māṭiāli' kinsman, advised by a Gond plainsman, was exercising 'Sanidos' or evil effects of Saturn, as the ailment had started in its serious form on a Saturday. He made a bull of clay, blackened it and after uttering spells and exercising 'Sani' from the Member took the clay-bull to the water-point, where he offered it to 'Sani'. He had used a leaf of 'tulsi' plant also on this occasion.

In the early hours of the 10<sup>th</sup> January morning I heard wails from the Member's house. At the day-break there was loud and miserable wailing by his widow and women of close 'Māṭiāli' kinsmen and of his two sons. Soon men and women flocked to the house of death from Tal Tasrā and from the other hamlet.

Preparation for the funeral set in earnest when his elder brother and the village Headman came from Upar Tasrā. A cloth was put over the body, which was placed on mattress on a string-cot, both constantly used by him. Four men carried the body – his elder brother, father's younger brother's son and two 'Bandhu' men. Only men and older youngmen accompanied. To the north-east of the village the grave-yard for the good and old people lies on the bank of

Belhari rivulet. A grave was dug, about 4 feet to 1 ½ feet and 2 ½ feet deep. The corpse was laid on the right side with folded legs and arms, head to the west, face to the east. A new cloth was spread over his body with the face uncovered. The elder brother had carried fire, his eldest son, a winnowing fan with some straw from the hut where death took place, some paddy, one earthen lamp, and some 'tula' oil, besides carrying a brass-jug of water. The eldest son put a 'tulasi' leaf, some copper pice, and the paddy on the mouth of the corpse and poured some water. Then the elder brother ignited the straw on the burning lamp, and crossing his two hands full of earth at the back suddenly threw the earth on the head of the corpse and ran away into the bush without looking behind. He was overcome with emotion.

Then the eldest son and all other present threw earth on the body till it was fully buried under a small mound. On the mound his bow and arrow, a sickle, his cot, and an axe besides the winnowing fan were placed.

The party then took a bath in the Beljhari stream. All 'Kutumb' men excepting the descendants of the dead man's father or their wives ritually purified in a ceremony called 'Jala āñsa'. A fish was caught and each of them dipped it in water 7 times. Then it was killed and buried by the stream. All who had accompanied had to purify themselves by anointing their hands with turmeric paste and oil and touching fire and cow-dung. Those who have taken food cannot observe 'Jala āñsa' the same day, but the next day before eating anything. Now the households of these "purified" men were not ritually segregated. But the household of all descendants of the deceased's father were debarred from using the waterpoints, and fire and food from their houses were not acceptable. On the other hand, 'Bandhu' people cooked for them. The first meal was rice cooked in a new pot with bitter 'neem' leaves, called 'pitābhāta'. All the old cooking pots were thrown away. The widow was wailing almost the whole day, joined by other women at times, recalling all the good qualities of the dead and grieving over the helplessness that faced the widow and immature children.

After my return from attending Bhuiyāñ Darbār festivities I was reported that the neighbours had taken care of the bereaved household and given them food. The washerman had taken the clothes of those who were affected with death pollution. All dancing was stopped in the village and no ceremonies were held. The widow was weeping now and then. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day of death, however, there was an attempt at dancing, which was attended with very few dancers. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day information was sent to a ritual friend of the orphaned son in Radā, and to his paternal cousins and their husbands in ladumdih and kadalidih, formally inviting them to the funeral also. Meanwhile two other non-Bhuiyāñ ritual friends of the deceased himself had been informed and sounded for help.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> day a formal meeting of the Village Assembly was held to decide on the date of funeral ceremony and the organization of the ceremonies and arrangement of provisions of



the funeral. After an introductory speech by the Headman other suggested dates and other items which were discussed. The Headman was summing up the general agreements for final formal approval. The time for dehusking rice and preparing native beer which sets after 3 nights and the genral need to go to Kolā market for economic transactions were taken into considerations. The thirteenth day was thus decided upon, though one could hold the ceremony after ten days of death. On the problem of contribution each one of the directly concerned 'kutumb' men, the descendants of the deceased's grandfather, expected to announce now. The elder brother banking upon his son's tacit support first braved a relatively huge contribution, for which he was immediately appreciated. Then others followed. Expectations from the ritual friends were also discussed. The 'Parjā' of the village also promised some contribtion.

The villagers now prepared native beer, dehusked rice, carried the contributions from the ritual friends in the valley, constructed long trenches as fire-place and made a 'canoe' out of 'simuli' tree for keeping water, stored fuel and leaf-vessels. Information on the exact date of funeral ceremonies was also sent out.

On the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup>, day the guests reached in groups from outside Tasdā. Firstly the Headman assisted by other 'Kutumb' men formally received the 'Parjā' and then the 'Bandhu' or affinal relatives and others from outside Tasrā. This reception is called 'Sankhulibā'. The affinal relatives and ritual friends had their feet washed in the traditional fashion by the elderly women folk.

Then the ceremony of 'Āiñsa Khuntā' was held. Seven pieces of small cakes of sundried rice, a fish, some turmeric powder and a handful of sun-dried rice were placed in a leaf vessel and water was poured 7 times on them. Each of the nearest members of the lineage had to do this, and a few other 'Kutumb' men and women and some 'Bandhu' also did so. The widow took the materials to leave them in the Belihari. The huts of the deceased were also ritually purified during this ceremony. From now on the members of the linear lineage could take fish, meat, eggs or 'biri' pulses, which were forbidden to them since the day of death. Men and boys also were shaved or shorn of hair in this group by the 'Bandhu' people. They all took bath in the rivulet.

One 'Kutumb' man and two 'Parjā' went south to the end of the hamlet in the direction of the grave. A sickle and another iron implement were sounded while calling the soul ('jiu'). "Oh, (naming the dead), come, may you be on a tree or anywhere else, come home." An earthen pot was left at the spot. The party returned sounding the implements. Inside the main hut of the deceased some rice flour was spread out. There was some ant on it. Any disturbance would have done. This proved now that the soul had returned to its old ancestral place.

Meanwhile, native beer was served to the mentfolk. Now inside the main hut the ancestral spirits were worshipped by sacrificing one he-goat and offering of rice porridge. The ancestral

spirits of 'Bandhu' people, called 'Bandhukuliā' were worshipped by being sacrificed fowls. Rice for the feasting was also cooked inside the hut by 'Bandhu' men and women. The sacrificial goat was now cooked. All partook of the offerings in a cleaned space in well-organized manner. The whole of Tasdā village, and 'Kutumb' men of the deceased from outside Tasdā, affinal relatives, ritual friends from other villages and the washerman, - thus about 25 guests were entertained. At night there was also another hearty meal with goat meat. Native beer was consumed in great quantities so that a few were drunken enough to have foregone eating the night meals till about 4 a.m.

On the second day morning offering of 'Subha Dhāna' to the bereaved household was held. In a new earthen pot paddy (about 5 Kilo) was blessed by the assembled public for good crops and for counter-acting secrecy and evil disease-causing agencies. This paddy is mixed with other seed-paddy and is sown for better crops.

The mid-day meal of greater quantity is named 'Desha Bhāta' or the "public feeding" with meat of goat, and of fowls for those who do not take goat-meat. After food the 'Desa' or the public assembled was formally addressed and thanked for their help and goodwill, and obeisance was paid on behalf of the village by the Headman.

Thereafter a meeting was held to pay courtesy to the 'Bandhu' people, some of whom were leaving for their villages. At night there was no cooking as everybody had eaten too much. Beer was now liberally taken and there were cases of heavy drunkenness. There was 'Cāngu' dance till early hours in the morning.

On the third day the final ceremony was held, that of offering 'Māni Bhāta'. So long 'Bandhu' people were cooking; now the 'Kutumb' returned to their normal duties. They were feasted with fowl meat and rice, and the 'Bandhu' and the 'parjā', who were of course the 'Bandhu' in the village, were thus paid respect by the beneficiaries. The 'Bandhu' then all departed being given a hearty send-off by the girls of the village, who had played rough with them in a joking relationship. The washerman and the ritual friends also took leave.

Life returned to normal with a bang. Even a hunting party was organized by the Upar Tasrā people.

Altogether 220 Kilo rice, 3 goats, and 9 fowls and 'bin' pulses besides native beer were consumed during the three days. The contributions received on this occasion were as follows:

From the deceased's :

The 'Kutumb' people had prepared native beer in plenty for the occasion. The deficit between the contributions and actual consumption to the tune of 22 Kilo rice was probably met with the contribution of another ritual friend of the deceased which is however not received. The elder brother and his son had taken the responsibility or repaying the loan of 80 Kilo of paddy, borrowed by the deceased. The orphaned son, when he grows up, will have to contribute on similar occasions on the part of the helping relatives.



1. Elder Brother (25 M)	Rice 40 Kilo, 'Biri' 4 Kilo, Earthen pot Rs.0.44, 1 goat, Rs.6.81, Salt 2 Kilo, oil for cooking and bathing.
2. Elder Brother's son (6M)	40 Kilo rice, biri 4 Kilo, Salt 2 Kilo, and Rs.0.88 for a fowl.
3. Father's elder brother's sons (10 M and 27 M)	Rice 4 Kilo, Paddy 2 Kilo
4. Father's younger brother's sons (12M and 13M)	X X (help in services only)
5. Titual 'Sangāt' friends, Gond	80 Kilo paddy, rice 2 Kilo, fowl 1, earthen pot 1
6. Son's ritual friend, Radā	Rice 2 Kilo, sundried paddy 2 kilo, fowl 1 and 'Ghee' (clarified butter) ½ kilo.
7. Elder brother's son-in-law, Kadalīḍih	10 Kilo rice, 2 Kilo sundried paddy, 1 fowl and one earthen pot
8. 10 M's son-in-law, Laḍumḍih (see No.3 above)	Rice 4 Kilo, fowl 1, and one earthen pot
9. 'Parjā' people of Tasrā – by subscription	Rice 10 Kilo, Paddy 6 Kilo
10. Own Household (15M)	Rice 40 Kilo, 'biri' 2 kilo, salt 2 kilo, 3 earthen pots Rs.1.31, fowl for Rs.0.88, 3 fowls and two goats, and oil from the house.
Total	152 Kilo Rice, 92 Kilo Paddy, 10 Kilo 'Biri', 3 goats, 9 fowls, 'Ghee' ½ Kilo, 7 earthen pots.

## 2. Death and Funeral of a Woman

Though I have not studied this in details, it is reported there are fundamentally no differences in the burial or funeral ceremony. On the grave a bottle gourd vessel and earthen pot for oil are always given to fit in with the characteristic role of drawing water and cooking, but not her ornaments except one or two of small value.

In one case of a priest's mother's death (10 M), the expenses were about 240 Kilo rice and 4 goats, besides other contributions. The three sons of the woman gave the quantity mentioned above, the eldest one in 10 m more than the other two combined.

## 3. Death and Treatment of a Pregnant Woman

There was no recent case in Tasdā. They could, however, give a good account of one in Tare, the next village to the north, of a 'Kutumb' of Tasrā 'Mātiāli' section.

Cemnā Nāek's wife died in pregnancy. He had himself to carry the corpse alone and burry her

with the child in a trench dug out by others. All her ornaments, bottle gourds, mattresses, clothes, baskets were also buried with her. A local 'Rāuliā' medicineman drove 4 'Khasi' thorns at the four corners of the grave. Already thorny 'Debriā' and 'Kumbhādu or Kumbhātuā' creeper were also placed inside the grave by the Rāuliā'. This is called 'Atharāmarā', or magical counter-action against the evil spirit, called 'Curuṇi', in which form the woman could have harmed others.

For about a year Cemṇā was ritually untouchable; nobody would accept fire, water or food from him, nor he could take bath at public water-points. The 'Bār' organization sat at Tare to purify him ritually. This ritual purification is called 'Udhrā'. He had to feed people on a much larger scale than is necessary for an usual funeral. In another case in Badbil hamlet in Derulā Phagu could not cut his hair and nails or shave his beard till the ritual purification. The deceased woman will not be counted as an ancestral spirit.

#### 4. Treatment of Tiger-Kill

When a woman goes for collecting leaves or tubers or fuel or young persons on a duty of herding cattle or even a man going alone through the jungle, one may fall a prey to a tiger. He is then not only counted as an ancestral spirit, but becomes an object of so much dread that nobody would easily name him. All the same they were named before me.

If the tiger has not eaten in full, the rest of the body may be burnt as in a case of a girl of about 16 years in Tasrā.

This mode of death is a danger to a husband, or parents, and the village as a whole. Therefore, in such cases a 'Rāuliā' had to exercise the persons in greatest danger by taking 'pusā' from them as in the case of spirits, sacrificing, as in one case, 2 black fowls to 'Baghiā' deity, and left two brown fowls as free scapegoats in the name of (Deurā?) the subordinate complain to 'Baghiā'. This ceremony is called 'Baḍheibā' or "Sweeping-Off", and it was held at the border of Bonai-Pal Lahara; thus the evil deities were swept off beyond the borders. Thus the danger that 'Baghiā' would kill others was shoved away to another village, another state.

Not all tigers are however "natural" ones or 'Nika Bāgha'. They might be 'Karangā' or 'Lagaṇā' tigers. Such tigers are transformed human beings for a short time. They are very powerful 'Rāuliā'. They can be distinguished from the real tiger by having a body with grey hairs, a shorter head and a tail as an artificial appendage. A real tiger eats all of the kill or if something is left, lies in the neighbourhood for the next meal. But a 'Karangā' tiger eats only in part; for example, in the case of the girl mentioned above, her arms, knees and breasts were eaten. When her body was on fire, the men watching did not find the tiger rushing to extinguish the fire. Therefrom they concluded that it was 'Karangā' tiger. Such tigers, however, usually drink the blood and leave other parts untouched. The spirit of the victim of such tigers may return to kill others in the form of 'Leuṭā' or "returned" tiger.



A 'Rāuliā' becomes such a tiger by soaking his body in the water with a tuber called 'Tungā Madangā' and then by rubbing his body on 'Beṇuā' grass. As he operates in secret and again becomes his own self it is very hard to detect.

In all cases of death through tiger the ritual purification of the persons and the village in danger has to be done.

A person killed by bear is similarly avoided in naming and is not honoured with a funeral ceremony.

## 5. Death of Unmarried Men and Women

They are buried in a special graveyard. No funeral ceremony is held. However, the clothers are given to the washerman and new pots are made for the kitchen.

An unmarried youngman becomes 'Bhut' after death and appears as harmless as a whirlwind. A maiden on death becomes 'Piṭāshuni' and is also harmless.

## 6. Death of small children

They are unceremoniously buried under trees in the jungle and the clothes are washed by women themselves and new pots are made for cooking.

We must note here that infant mortality is very common in Tasrā, presumably among the 'Pāuri in general. Women have lost 5 or 6 children in some cases.

## 7. Delayed Funeral

Sometimes as in one recent case in Derulā village the funeral ceremony may be postponed. Lukiā died in about July-August 1953, but his funeral ceremony was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 1954, as at the time of his death provisions were scarce.

In the cholera epidemic the village may leave the habitat-site for a week or two, but again returns to it and makes new earthen pots for cooking.

## 5. The WEB of Economy and Technology

We may follow Firth by noting that "economic organization is a type of social action. It involves the combination of various kinds of human services with one another and with non-human goods in such a way that they serve given ends." (p.123 Elements of Social Organization). Further, in peasant and primitive communities, "a production relationship is often only one facet of a social relationship." (ibid, p.136). The same holds for other economic relationships also, because of the following conditions. "In the smaller scale communities it may be even difficult to find outsiders; all the members are involved, in one way or another, in an economic situation, as coholders of resources, co-producers, or co-sharers in the reward of production through various social channels." (ibid, p.138). As Tasrā is such a small-scale peasant community, where all are related through filial or affinal relationship, it is often very difficult to categorize economic relations apart from their social matrix.

Under this limitation I shall nonetheless attempt to describe the economic process exemplified in procurement or production, consumption, exchange, and distribution of resources, services and goods. Although I am making use of the categories of classical economics, any rigid adherence to them is out of question, and only in their broadest meaning can they be fruitfully followed here.

Technology has been described here in main outlines as the basis or framework of the economic life.

#### A. Subsistence System

In his Little Community Red field uses this concept with effect. It neutralized the differential valuation between "Production" and "Gathering" economics. "This is constituted of the acts and ideas that gain the people their livelihood." (p.25). This concept subsumes technology, it is not to be confused with "Subsistence Economy".

##### 1. Resources and Means of Livelihood

###### (a) Food Production

As will be described below there are three ways of producing food: by shifting cultivation, garden cultivation and groves, and by insignificant terrace-agriculture. The overwhelmingly important method of food production is the shifting cultivation.

###### (i) The Land and the Crops

Cultivation in any form is intimately dependent on, and in simpler technological levels largely guided by, the soil types, the topography, and the seasonal variation of temperature and humidity. The Hill Bhunyan recognized this dependence on the monsoon rainfall and the different soil types and on topographical features. Land enters into the good production as a factor largely through these three aspects. The limitation of availability of land has been great importance in recent years, when in 1951 and 1933 the Tasra Bhunyan had to use a measuring cord to delimit the swiddens precisely. In another way the scarcity of land emerges as the resultant of topographical features. For garden cultivation one requires relatively flat land behind the habitation-site, and as for terracing, it is possible on some flat pieces of land irrigated or capable of being irrigated by hill streams. As the Bhunyan is no expert terrace-agriculturist like some Saora of South Orissa or Santal of Bihar-Orissa, his technological poverty only accentuates the topographical limitations.

We shall deal with soil types in some details as they directly affect the crops, given the other factors of production almost equal in the same hilly region of Southeastern Bonai and adjacent areas of Pal Lahara and Keonjhar. Unfortunately these soil types have not been scientifically identified or their nature determined, or the crops in all cases correlated.



1. 'tān māṭṭi' or Hard Soil – It will get hard in two or three days of the rainfall, so that one cannot easily work with a hill plough on it. This soil predominated in Tasrā hills and in Tare nearby.  
  
Crops – This soil interspersed largely with boulders or outcrops of rock is however suitable for growing the prized bean 'dhunk' (*Mucuna sp.*), and Caster (*Ricinus Communis*) in the bamboo stumps or the rock crevices. On the other hand, it is not very suitable for paddy and some millets like Eleusine Corocana.
2. 'gunḍiān māṭṭi' or friable soil – It is very loose with some sand contents. It is also called 'Kundā Pāuñsiā', being ash-coloured. The grey hill-top of Raḍā in Pal lahara is a typical sight from Upar Tasrā. It is also found in Laḍumḍih, the adjacent village to Tasrā in Pal Lahara and in other Bonai villages to the north, like Sarāikaḷā in a valley.  
  
Crops – 'Dhunk' and other beans and Caster and 'gangei' (*Sorghum vulgare*) do not grow well, but the millets (*Eleusine Corocana* and *Panicum miliaceum*) and paddy are more productive.
3. 'ranga māṭṭi' or lateritic soil – This is found with small pellets of laterite and is characteristic of Tarmā Kānth areas of Keonjhar.
4. 'Kaḷā māṭṭi' or Black Soil – It is found in Baḍ-ḍih in Pal Lahara.
5. 'dhuba māṭṭi' or white soil – It is met with in the valley village of Māṭikhani, and in Guhālbandhā and Jhinkara-gahirā colonies.
6. There is record of a further type of sub-type, 'bāli catia' or perhaps loam, which holds water. Here 'jaṭangi' (*Guizotia abyssinica*) does not grow well, while 'dhunk' (*mucuna sp.*) does. On the whole almost all crops thrive well in this soil.

Besides the soil types, vegetation type in the swidden and some topographical features also affect the cultivation of specific crops. If in a swidden there are no big trees, 'dhunk' cannot be planted; when there are no rocky outcrops caster is not planted, as other crops are in competition for the cultivable space; lastly, if there are no 'khani' or deep holes in the earth, often made by the bear, at any rate formerly made, 'Kanduañi sārū', a taro crop is not ordinarily planted. All varieties of climbing beans are possible to cultivate because of tall saplings in the swidden killed by girdling fire round their stem.

Certain crops like tobacco do not grow well under the shadow of Caster plants, while it is also believed, under the shadow of 'rai' tree with big leaves paddy, 'jaṭangi' oil seeds and 'biri' (*Phaseolus munga*) thrive well. The damp environs of a rocky outcrop is especially prized for caster plants.

Further influence of "Land" as a factor will be apparent from the discussion of hazards in cultivation, while the role of the seasons will be dealt with under the section 'Rituals and Recreation.'

A way out of the scarcity of land for a specified village, is to beg for land from an adjacent village. In 1957 3 or 4 swiddens were made on the Tare Hills overlooking Tal Tasrā by giving some consideration to the villagers of Tare for the concession. Similar concession but on a more permanent basis was granted years ago by Hatisul hill-village on the north-west to Derulā villagers in the valley; in this case, however, only the right to exploit wood and bamboo annually was conceded.

## (ii) Shifting Cultivation or 'Kamāna Cās'

Swiddens and Fallowing : every year a piece of forest is felled and burnt to serve as swidden for the families of Tasrā. About two generation back it was customary to fell that patch of forest where the tree-cover had killed the undergrowth. That meant that the trees could grow bigger within the longer fallowing years, about 15-20 years in duaration. That also meant that there was not much weed to fight against. In 1953 rarely one or two swiddens had no undergrowth, while in 1954 the newly selected patch of forest had too much of undergrowth and not many tall saplings.

The fallowing period had come down to be as low as 7 years in case of some swiddens near the villager site, while far-off patches of forest may not be felled for 25-30 years. In the life-time of an about 55 years old man a hill-top patch was cultivated only once and another distant swidden only two times. There are at least 40 such patches to my knowledge and I suppose, there are more to be revealed on specific enquiry. The reason for this supposition is very strong on sheer mathematical ground. A Hill Bhunyāñ normally cultivated 3 swiddens in Bonai and Pal Lahara: a first-year swidden, a second-year one and a third-year one. If formerly they fallowed for at least 10 years and changed sites every ten years from Tal Tasrā to Upar Tasrā and vice versa there should be at least 60 patches of forest to complete the normal cycle.

In 1953 however in Tasrā not more than 10 families cultivated the third-year swidden, because of virulent weeds (sāṅkuḷi), and secondly, because of lack of seeds. The villagers assert, however, that in Pal Lahara villages of Radā and Laḍumḍhih only the forest patches with no undergrowth are felled, and, therefore, a third-year swidden is cultivated with profit. I do not know if the tendency to cultivate two swiddens, both felled in the same year, has been only a recent phenomenon. Tasrā men claim that it is not so. At any rate this has been observed in many families with greater manpower between 1951-53. What seems to have been the traditional allowance is that one might take up another smaller swidden to cultivate certain crops like caster or ḍhunk, which would not suitably grow in the allotted swidden. In such case he might like to cultivate the swidden in the second year also or even in the third.



## Operations in Shifting Cultivation (First-Year Swidden or 'Biribhuiñ')

1. **Selection and Occupation of a Swidden-patch:** During hunting expeditions or jungle thatch-mowing, cattle-herding, or honey-seeking activities, and also when men and women go out looking for roots and tubers, fruits and berries, the villagers come to know in the most intimate detail about the condition of different forest patches. If it is a nearby patch they know exactly for how many years it was left fallow, in case of father-lying patches, one knows if the undergrowth is dead or the forest is "mature" (pākal). After the harvest festivals and house-repairs and some necessary rituals like 'Ācala' Puja their attention continually rests on this important question. In the month of Māgh (January-February) 1953, or latest in the next month, as in 1954, the Village Council decided formally on the specific patch of forest to be felled. On tallying of several suggestions, with an eye to the nearness to the last-year swidden it was fixed. In this meeting it is also decided who will get a swidden beside whom. As all the swiddens are in one patch of forest and there are wild animals and birds to guard against, this becomes an important problem. The ordinary convention is that one who gets a swidden at the end, and so more exposed to the jungle marauders, will get one near the middle next year. But actually I found it was not so ideally applied. Firstly, elderly cultivators were given at least two years near the middle for one year at or near the ends, while the bachelor cultivators were treated in the opposite manner. Secondly, if there was an old woman or an old man without able male family-member she or he was given a swidden near the middle. Thirdly, the senior Headman and perhaps also some important priest-families seemed to enjoy the privilege of having their swidden almost always near the middle. Fourthly, if the new patch is adjacent to the Last-year one, a family will be given the opportunity to make a new swidden adjacent to its old one. Fifthly, if a particular section of the new patch of forest was formerly cultivated by oneself or by ancestors one may make his new swidden on it. But as there is no strict law of transference of this right of use, it is observed that some "outsider" families have cultivated, whereas in other cases the descendants have kept to the swidden, used by them or by their father.

We should also note another important principle that the size of the swidden to be allotted depends partly on the size of "mature" forest-patch and partly on the size of the family-unit working on a swidden. In 1954 a family-swidden of two brothers was about double that of a conjugal family's swidden to the mother of the two brothers was coaxing her son's wife's brother, the senior Headman, for a bigger swidden, but to no effect.

I went along with senior Headman and a group of Upar Tasrā men and his daughter and the said woman, while another party with some senior men and priestly family-heads went in another direction to allot the specific swiddens to each family-unit of Upar Tasrā. The Senior Headman was pointing out by way of guiding suggestion the boundaries of individual swiddens according to standing trees, rocky outcrops or similar land marks. At each stage he was awaiting the approval of the accompanying group and especially of the individual family-head

concerned with the swidden. He himself selected a rather flat piece of forest, with a few rocky outcrops, called 'rāsiguḍā, or upland for 'jīangi' or 'rāsi' oilseeds. He cut some twigs, and his daughter about 9 years helped him in cutting and laying out the twigs along the boundary on one side, while the natural landmarks formed the boundaries on the other sides. His son-in-law who cultivated along with him before, was given a separate swidden this year for growing castor oil seeds. He was perhaps excusing the selection of this choice plot for him by saying that next year it would be convenient for him to cut new swidden just below his swidden.

When he came back and joined the other party allocating the swidden, he was explaining to them how he distributed the swiddens and under what considerations.

A man from Tal Tasrā was also given a swidden in Upar Tasrā areas, because he wanted to grow some castor oil seeds, and on another version, because he wanted to reserve a swidden for his brother from Khaḍkā in Pal Lahara.

The senior Headman's younger brother, who was headman of the Tasrā colonies in Guhāḷbandhā in the valley, was also granted in absentia a swidden on his former request. At Guhāḷbandhā allegedly no more forestes were available for making swiddens. But this preferential treatment to him was possible only because his elder brother was the Headman of Tasrā.

In the end I should explain that the formal occupation of swiddens was rather delayed, by about a month, because of my presence in the village. The people feared governmental repercussions if they felled the forest during my stay in the village. But I was not leaving them soon; practical common sense dictated that they should occupy the swiddens then at any cost. Later I came to know that they would offer the ancestral god, 'Kamāḷbuḍha', a fowl-sacrifice if I was made (supernaturally?) to go away from the village. This however, dramatically heightens the anxiety they felt over the delay in holding some ceremonies (Dhulīāṇi) and cutting the new swiddens. Otherwise, there would not be enough time for the wood to dry up, so that it might be burnt in April-May, as normally they do, before the onset of first Monsoon out-breaks.

2-3 After 'bhuiñ ābura' or occupation of swiddens comes the heavy operation of clearing the swidden. One's wife, or able daughters, even of the age of 9, go on cutting away the bushes, grass and other undergrowth with an axe or bill-hook. This operation is called 'budā retā' or cutting the bush and is done from down-hill upwards. The husband or able male worker cuts, immediately following, the big saplings or trees with his axe, sparing some species. This is called 'kāth katā' or cutting the wood. The species spared for their permanent use are, 'kendu', mango and 'cār' for fruits, 'mahul' for flowers and oilyielding fruits, 'puḍhai' and 'kusum' for fruits and raising stick-lac and in some other areas in the north also 'ḍahanca' for fruits. Dumur tree is sometimes left for their fruits and for raising stick-lac, although its roots are believed to harm the crops.



The species of trees spared temporarily for being girdled and burnt later on are " Sal (*shorea robusta*) and 'asan' (both permanently preserved in northern areas for growing taras or wild silk), 'kurhai' 'bārang', 'dhaulā', 'tilay' (*Wendlandia exserta*), dhamuni, 'kanior', 'bandhan', 'karua', 'ḍega', 'ghanti', 'kakhḍā', 'kaḷam' etc. These are left standing at a distance from each other.

The bushes are left together at places and the tree branches are cut into small lengths and left in piles. The natural pits are not to be filled up with them, where taro will be planted.

If the swidden is too big for a family group, some workers or helpers are engaged. In one case I have recorded a father and his son doing all the work, his wife perhaps was not free or able to undertake this operation.

4. All the former operations are ordinarily finished by 'Phaguṇ' month (February-March). In about two months the swiddens become dry and fit to be burnt up. Shortly after the communal hunting or Ākhuli Pārdhi, individual family-heads or male members stack up the bushes and wood piles and put them to fire at convenient distances, so that fire will easily spread all over the swidden. This operation is called 'kāṭha catā thekābā' or putting fire to the out wood. This burning of the swidden means according to Dr. E.R. Leach that "the seedbed is broken up by fire."

5. After 5/6 days when the earth is again cool, men go to the swidden and the remnant from the burning is piled round the stem of the standing trees to be burnt. By this process the tree is literally roasted and dies slowly. This is called 'aḍā thula and 'puḍā' or simply, burning the trees by girdling.

6. When in the month of Baisākh or Jeth (May-June) the first showers fall women plant castor in little holes in the swidden in the damp depression near a rocky outcrop, in the crevices on the rock or on the burnt stumps of clumps of bamboo and dhunk at the feet of bigger trees (girdled). Another day, in dry weather, they come to plant, a few seeds in a hole, cucumber, melons and gourds near the rocks or near the harvesting ground, and some beans like 'jhaṭuā', 'suturi, and 'ruhmā' are planted at the foot of the girdled trees. Afterwards when there is some more rain, the taro or 'kaṇḍuāṇi sārū' is planted in the pits by a woman when the earth can be easily dug up with an iron digger.

In this work of planting a man may also help a woman, who is primarily responsible for such planting. However, a man plants seeds of eggplant (*ṭhengu bāigaṇa*) on leveler ground near the harvestground in holes, which are also as in other case, filled up.

7-8. Then comes the worship of village deities in the month of 'Āsārh' (June-July) – called 'Āsārhī' Pujā. After this it is permissible, during heavy rains in July or August, to sow the main crop, 'biri' (*Phaseolus mungo*), after which the first-year swidden is named (swidden for 'biri' or 'biribhuiṇ'). The cultivator goes on sowing 'biri' by broadcasting while his wife or daughter

follows him cutting away the shrubs and weeds and thus covering the seeds with them so that the seeds may not be located and picked up by birds. This operation goes on from sector to sector horizontally and uphill. The operation are respectively called 'biribunā' or sowing 'biri' and 'pāṭikatā' or cutting away shrubs and weeds.

9. Closely after sowing 'biri', the same day, or next day morning, the man returns to the swidden to sow 'rāsi' or 'jaṭangi' oil seeds (*Guzotia abyssinica*) along the width in sectors and along the boundaries of the swidden. The illustration is a schematic presentation of this operation, called 'rāsi hira diā' or making ridges with 'jaṭangi'. They become literally ridges of tall plants with beautiful yellow flowers growing thickly together and giving a checkerboard pattern to the whole swidden in October-November.

10. 'Jur bachā' or Weeding. This strenuous operation is very important for the crop. Though ordinarily women and girls attend to this work, sometimes as in one known case the family-head also helped them (as in the case of planting also). The weeds are piled up on the rocks or simply left in the swidden to rot. Along with this or shortly after, the bushes are also cut away with billhook by the woman, which is known as 'budā retā' or cutting the bush. These operations are held in the month of 'bhuda' or August-September after the worship of 'Saraṇi' and other rituals.

11-12. Vegetables Harvest 'Mānkaḍa Jagā' or watching against Monkeys. From about the middle of September this becomes a regular occupation for the younger boys and girls at the day time. The monkeys in the hills are notorious for their love for 'biri' and other ripening fruits in the swidden. By September many varieties of melons, cucumber, gourds are ripening. Shortly afterwards the fruits of egg-plants and pumpkins and 'dukhā' vegetables are also ready. Numerous birds and stray animals also worry the watcher.

13. In the month of Kārtik (October-November) or slightly earlier 'suturi' and 'ruhmā', the climbing beans up the girdled trees are pulled down by women and the pods are beaten up and the seeds brought home. But they cannot be consumed before observation of a ritual 'nangakhiā' for the village deities.

14. 'Biri-ghicā' or -'jhinkā' or pulling out 'biri' plants with pods.

This is done in the month of November or in the next month when the 'biri' pods are ripe, but usually after the harvesting of paddy in the second-year swidden is finished with. Both men and women may do this work, though women are ordinarily entrusted this work. The 'biri' plants are kept at different places in the swidden, but are thinly spread out so that they will dry up as soon as possible in the weak winter sun.

15. 'Khalā tiari or preparing the harvesting ground. This consists of the male member scraping off the soil near about the middle on a flat piece of ground or on an outcrop of rock marked out



for the purpose. Ordinarily the women, in one case even the man, plaster the ground with a mixture of cowdung and water, after clearing the space with a bamboo broomstick. In one family, that of the junior headman, a small improvised shelter was made with banana baves as 'chan' grass was not available. This was meant for taking rest at meal-time during the day and keeping the harvest in protection against birds and monkeys before carrying them home.

16. biri pitā' or beating the biri harvest – when the 'biri' plants are sufficiently dried up, a man of the family collects them, aided by the women folk, and piles them on the harvest-ground. There the man beats the whole plants with pods with bamboo winnowing fan, which is raised up against the wind and the grains are emptied down. The wind blows away the chaff.

The women also may take part in beating 'biri' at least in one family they have as also a man may winnow the chaff away.

17. 'rāsi dāiba' or reaping the 'Jaṭangi' oilses – Ordinarily the women, but also men, reap the plants with a sickle, leaving about 15 centimeter on the ground. The stalks with seeds are heaped at places and left to dry. This is done in the month of 'Magusir' about December.

18. 'rāsi pitā' or beating the 'Jaṭangi' – After about a week, they are collected and piled together on the harvest-ground, where the men beat them with clubs and winnow away the chaff. They also carry the grains home in baskets. This operation may not be finished before about the middle of January, as in 1953-54 harvest-season.

19. 'Kandūāni sārū khurā' or digging up 'Kandūāni' taro.

20. 'Dhunk and Jhatuā tuḷā' or collecting 'dhunk' and 'jhatuā' beans.

21. 'Dhunk pitā' or beating 'dhunk' beans.

In December-January, sometimes before harvesting the taro, the women or men pull down these climbing beans. 'Jhatuā' is brought home. 'Dhunk' are normally left under 'Jaṭangi' stalks in the harvest-ground or hut. Then after a day or two, the woman beats 'dhunk' seeds in a bunch against a piece of rock to yield the kernel.

22. 'Jadā tuḷā' or collecting castor seeds.

In the month of March-April or 'Cait' the castor will be ready when the women will go to collect them and bring the seeds home by breaking the pods.

But apart from this operation the work in the first-year-swidden is considered finished after taking 'dhunk' home. Watching in the swidden is normally continued upto the harvesting of 'jaṭangi' with occasional watches till 'dhunk' is harvested, say till about early January (from about mid-September).

Operation in Second-year Swiddens (or in 'dhānbhuiñ' or 'Jala' in the paddy-swidden)

1. 'Jagharā' or 'Jagharā' and 'budā retā' or cutting the jungle and bush. After 'dhuḷāñi' ceremony, in March, or latest early April the women cut the jungle and bush in a old swidden, with an axe. This work is not so heavy as in the first-year swidden, as the growth is sparser and smaller. The cutting are heaped at places except on the pits.
2. 'Jagharā Kutā and thuḷāiba or dāgiba' or collecting the bush-cuttings and setting fire to them – Ordinarily the women and in some cases the men carry out this operation, when the cutting are dry in a week under the hot summer sun of April or May.
3. 'dera katā' or cutting the shrubgrowth.
4. 'dhānabuñā' or sowing paddy – The ceremonial sowing of paddy on the 'tithiā' ceremony is already over.
5. 'haladharā' or ploughing.

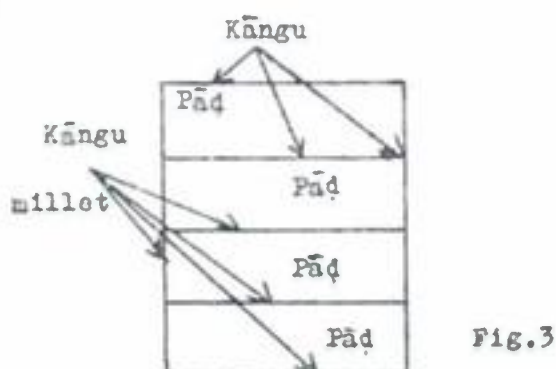
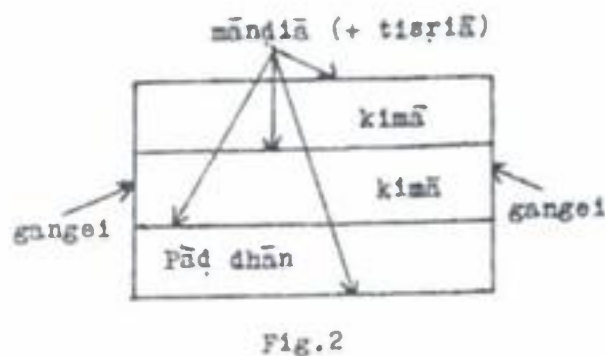
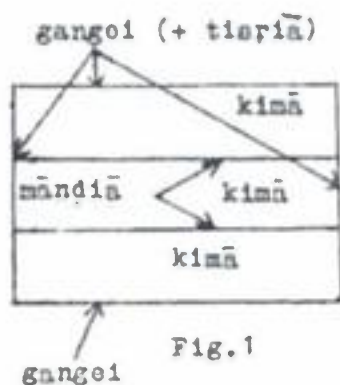
In the month of Jeth or in May-June, after the first Monsoon showers, the soil is slightly wet and the real out-break of monsoon is yet to come after several days. In such a weather the women cut the shrubs along the width of the swidden. Immediately or in the next few days, men follow them sowing paddy mixed with seeds of (sometimes 'gangei' and 'tisriā' millets and) early maize and melons and cucumber, by broadcast method. Immediately afterwards the men plough up the field contour-wise and the operation – cycle goes on uphill. After cutting the shrubs they are left in the swidden and are ploughed up along with seeds – thus partly serving as "green" manure. This turning up the soil also covers the seeds from the birds and gives them suitable conditions for germinating. Where the rocky outcrops or corners of swiddens do not allow ploughing, the women or even men later use a primitive picklike tool with a hook of iron, called 'gardaṇi' for scratching up the soil after sowing. 'Pād' or early paddy is sown at the bottom while 'kimā' or late paddy in the greater area.

6. 'hira diā' or making ridges. Shortly after sowing paddy the women may bring some 'Kāngu' millet seeds on the rocky areas where paddy won't grow.

Then the man sows 'kada' or 'māñdiā' and 'gangei' millets as boundary-lines in the one case and as horizontal lines or ridges in the other – thus dividing the swidden into sectors or 'kiāri' (literally-corn-field, hence, the term "ridge" as in the plains). 'Gangei' or 'māñdiā' may be mixed with 'tisriā' or 'kāñhiā' millets. Sometimes 'māñdiā' and/or 'tisriā' may form the horizontal boundaries of a swidden also. The three illustrations below will show the difference clearly. Ordinarily, the second figure shows the majority practice with perhaps the variation that all the boundary lines and not surely the two, may be sown with 'gangei'. But the junior headman had two 'jala' or paddy swiddens and so he



could afford to grow 'pāḍ' or 'pāḷa' (early paddy) in one and 'kimā' paddy in the bigger swidden.



7. Planting of vegetables and late maize, - A woman makes holes in the earth and puts several seeds together of one variety and fills up the whole. 'Duḍkā' or sponge ground, egg-plant and late maize are thus planted in the rainy month of Asāḥ (June-July).
8. 'Ruhmā' and 'suturi ruā' or planting 'ruhmā' and 'suturi' beans.
9. Taro planting.

The trees of the old-swidden are still standing. At their feet a woman makes holes and plants the bean-seeds in the rainy weather.

Those who have more taro to plant, pieces of 'kaṇḍuāṇi sāru' are put in the pits.

10. 'Juḥ bachā' or wedding; 'budā retā' or cutting bushes.

The women pull out the weeds, cut the bushes with a billhook and keep them either on the rocky places or leave them under boulders pressed down. This is done usually in the month of 'srābaṇ' (July-August).<sup>2</sup>

Those who can, or if the weeds are too rampant, there may be a second weeding about a month after-towards the end of the heavy monsoon.

This second weeding is very good for the early paddy, which flowers about this time.

There may be even a third weeding for the late paddy in about October when the monsoon has stopped and there may be unhindered growth. But the third weeding is not common.

18. 'Kimā dhāna ṭhulāibā and māṇḍibā' – Collecting the late paddy and threshing.

A man or a women collects the paddysheaves and heaps them on the harvest ground. Then it may be trodden upon by 2 or more cows. The men and boys take the whole charge of the operation, the women helping only in winnowing away the chaff. Then it is brought home by men with carrying poles and by women on their head in baskets.

19. 'gangei dāibā and pītibā' or reaping 'gangei' and beating it.

20. 'tisriā dāibā and pītibā' or reaping 'tissriā' and beating it.

21. 'Kada or māṇḍiā dāibā and māṇḍibā' or reaping 'Māṇḍiā' and treading it.

After harvesting paddy these millets are reaped by women usually one after another, not necessarily in this order, and also harvested by treading or by beating the crop wrapped in a date-palm-leaf-mattress with a club, as in the case of 'tisriā'. Sometimes 'māṇḍiā' may fall off the ears in the swidden; but it cannot be taken up before finishing with the late paddy.

22. 'Suturi and ruhmā ṭulibā' – The collection of these beans are again usually the women's job and may be done at any time harvesting the paddy in December.

23. 'Jadā ṭulibā' – or collecting the castor seeds.

The castor trees of the old swiddens may still be standing with another crop in 'Māgh' month (January-February). It is the work of the women usually. But in some cases the trees are cut away, if the cultivator thinks they will give too much shade to the paddy and other cereals.

The watch-huts remain standing after their occupation till about December when all the cereals are harvested. Next year their materials may be used for constructing a new watch-hut if the next paddy-swidden is not too far away.

### Third-year Swidden or 'Naa'

After the first showers of Monsoon in the month of Jeth (May-June) in the wet soil some poor millets called 'Jāli' or 'suāñ' (*Echinoochloa crus-galli*), or 'gundli' or 'gulji' (*Panicummiliare*) are first sown broadcast by a man, who ploughs up immediately contour-wise up the hill side. The weeds and shrubs already out by women or men are thus ploughed up with the soil. Then hardly any attention is paid to the swidden till in the month of Kārtik (October-November) or Bhuda (August-September) respectively these are collected. Immediately also a harvesting ground is prepared by scraping off the soil. The crop is left there 2-3 days for drying up. With feet the crop is trodden up and down to separate the grains. After winnowing off the chaff the crop is brought home. Along with 'jāli' millet, 'kukar kāngu' (*Sorghum*?) also often grows.



### Other Crops in the swidden

In the first year swidden, after the first showers in Jeth (May-June) the wet soil is scratched up with an iron-digger near the future harvesting ground on a suitable soil. Tobacco seeds, preserved from last year's crop or borrowed, are sown on the soil and then covered with earth. Alternately this sowing is done in the month of Asārh (June-July) after sowing 'biri' pulses. The plants are big enough to be transplanted in the Kitchengarden or Maize-garden, either in Gahmā month (July-August) or Bhuda month (August-September).

In the second-year swidden near the watch-hut are also chilies and gourds grown, so that the gourd-creepers may climb up the hut.

Turmeric (*curcuma longa*) is sometimes grown in the first-year swidden, as also seldom 'muga' pulses (phase sp.). Seldom are also grown 'suturi' and 'ruhmā' beans by being sown, in addition to being planted at the feet of burnt trees. The species sown are however smaller.

Sweet potatoes in small number are also grown by some in the first-year-swiddens, as also another taro called 'pithā sāru'.

In the second-year swidden curiously enough, 'mandāphul' or marigold grows sometimes. The unmarried girls love to put such flowers in their braids of hair and bring them from the valley below. These flowers are ready by the time of Karmā Parab (festivities) in the month of Kārtik (October-November).

Formerly 'thurki kapā' or cotton was grown on the rocky places as a two-year crop.

### Irregular Practices

There are some relatively gently sloping lands round the habitation site. These are called 'guḍā', which is also the same term for upland-cultivation-plots in the valley. In cases of emergency, as in 1950, when shifting cultivation, was feared to have been officially banned, or latter when an important-member of the 'Maṭiāli' group fell ill this land was cultivated just as in shifting cultivation but requiring much less labour due to very small bushes and plants on it. It should be noted that 'guḍā' land does not constitute a category of land of permanent importance. Secondly, in rare cases paddy was grown in a new swidden, perhaps because the paddy swidden was small.

### (iii) Gardens and Groves

These sources of food-production are next in importance to shifting cultivation. Gardens are of two types :

- (a) 'Bākhuri' or (for want of a better term) Maize-garden
- (b) 'Pandāra' or Kitchengariden or Tobacco garden

Similarly, groves are two types :

- (a) Fruit trees, mango or jack-fruit (*Arto carpus intergrifolia*), in groves or singly
- (b) Banana Plantations

### Bākhuri' or Maize-garden

From this garden not only maize as the main crop, but also the important mustard oilseeds and a few gourds and turmeric are harvested. When a family does not occupy a kitchen garden, it grows also tobacco in this garden. Sometimes 'kandūāni' taro is also cultivated. 'jhatuā' beans are also grown against the branches of trees planted in the earth along the boundary.

### Manuring

For cultivating this garden every year a hill Bhuiyāñ understands the need of manuring. So every day the year round cow-dung or goat-dung is deposited on it at places. When one has no Kitchen garden, one also places there garbage, ashes from the fire-place, used leaf-utensils, husk of corn etc.

### Maize-Sowing and Ploughing

In the month of Jeth (May-June) after first monsoon showers the garden is sown broadcast by a man, who immediately afterwards ploughs counter wise field, so that the manure is also distributed and the maize-seeds covered with earth.

### Maize-harvest

By the month of Bhuda (August-September) the early maize is coming to ripen. As they ripen they are plucked by women or men.

### Sowing Mustard and Ploughing

In the month of 'Dasahara' (September-October) a man sows the mustard seeds broadcast and then ploughs the garden counter wise and also up and down for the same effect as in case of maize-sowing and ploughing. Noteworthy is that while in the case of maize-sowing only one ploughing countourwise is given, for this cash-crop mustard, two ploughings are made.

### Mustard Pulling ('sorisa ghineā') and beating ('sorisa pitā')

A woman pulls out the mustard pods and brings them home. After they are dry in the sun in 4-5 days she puts them in a date-palm-mattress (paṭiā) and beats them up with a club. The grains are then cleaned by winnowing away the chaff.

### Turmeric

It is a two year-crop raised exclusively by women. Its tubers are planted in pits dug up with an iron-digger, more often in the maize-garden. The husk of cereals is given as manure.



### 'Pandāra' or Kitchen-Garden or Tobacco-garden

The main crops here are tobacco for the men and the earliest maize. Invariably there are bottle gourds and some yams sometimes, guided to platforms or trees, even on house-tops; there may even be some banana planted. This is usually attached to the domicile, but may lie a few yards away. An enterprising elderly man had also cultivated ginger and tapioca ('similiā ālu').

Tobacco seedlings are taken from swiddens or from the Kitchengarden itself, and planted during the late rainy season, about September. But the tobacco-bed has already been very painstakingly manured with cow-dung and garbage-manure and ploughed to a fine soil.

In October-November the tobacco leaves are ripe and are plucked and dried.

Tobacco is so important a crop for the men folk that the tobacco-field receives cow-dung; secondly, the maize-garden may be given goat-dung, if there is scarcity of cow-dung; secondly, the maize-garden is ploughed only once and the tobacco-field, however, twice. The kitchen garden itself is also therefore termed tobacco-garden.

The earliest maize or 'thuḷki juāri' covers almost the whole garden till they are plucked in late August. It is sown and ploughed up by men in Jeth month (May-June).

### Fruit-Trees

As is already noted in the section on village plan the fruit trees are concentrated in the habitations site affording a shady cover.

The mango trees are however found mainly along the big hill-streams and are also consciously planted and tended. Mango fruits ripen in May-June.

There are also some tamarind trees which yield a sour fruit used for cooking certain delicacies.

A 'barkuli' (zizyphus jujube) plum tree in winter is very much loved by the children.

There are some guava trees also planted by one Bhuiyāñ and owned by him. Some papaya trees are also cultivated.

However, the most valued trees planted are the jack-fruit trees. I have found a ring of bamboo-wickerwork protecting the young plant. These are individually owned. Jack-fruit ripens in April to June.

### Banana Plantation

Rarely near the house in the Kitchen garden or 'bākhuri' (maize-garden) banana are grown. For that purpose a big plot of land is fenced out in both Tal Tasrā and in Upar Tasrā. Here banana is cultivated in clumps belonging to individuals of a hamlet together.

In 'Bhuda' (August-September) when it is still raining suckers are planted in a shallow pit, dug out with iron-digger or plough-share. It does not require any tending.

#### (iv) Terrace Agriculture

The topography of Tasrā village leaves few chances for terrace-agriculture. Still with imagination and enterprise, if not ingenuity, a village headman 2 generations ago had carved out some small plots at Tal Tasrā. Some others in the present generation as also in the last one followed suit. In total there are about 10 terrace fields at 4 places in the village, owned by 'Māṭiāli' families (8) and 'Parjā' families (2). In 1953 only 4 plots were cultivated.

The present senior headman had about 1949 constructed a stone-dam across the water-course leading from Upar Tasrā to the water-hole stream ('cuāpāni). In two years the garbage and silt from the hamlet area filled up the field and made it very fertile. In 1951 he cultivated it.

1. Ploughing – After the scanty showers in the month of Phagun (February-March) it was ploughed once contour-wise and another time up and down. As there was so much of fertile silt cow-dung manure was given sparingly. The manure was thus ploughed up along with shrubs and grasses.
2. Sowing Paddy and Ploughing – Just when it was going to rain in the month of Jeth (May-June), the plot was sown broadcast with paddy and then ploughed up and down and contour-wise.
3. First Weeding – Immediately before thinning out the paddy plants by ploughing the weeds were taken out by two men.
4. Thinning the Plants – By ploughing in the plot filled with water in the month of Gahmā (July-August) the plants were thinned out and well-distributed. The ploughing was done only contourwise.
5. Second Weeding – After the paddy plants were thinned out they grew well; but soon there were some weeds more. This weeding at almost the end of monsoon kept the field reasonably clean for the further growth towards bearing fruit in about October. Two men had worked at weeding.
6. Reaping Paddy – With sickle a small length of the stalks with the ears were reaped and stacked into sheaves by two men. These were left to dry. Meanwhile a harvesting ground was made ready.
7. Treading the Paddy – With the help of cows the paddy was trodden upon. Then the chaff was winnowed and blown away. The harvest was then carried home.

It will be noted that all the work connected in this terrace-agriculture was carried out by men. Of course, women help at the time of weeding and reaping. They do certainly bring the manure



to the field. But this terrace-cultivation coincides with the swidden-cultivation of late paddy. The seed used in agriculture is however a plains variety.

A sister's son of the village headman, a Parjā from Bamra, had cultivated a terrace in the bed of a small water-course in a depression at the back of his house. After harvesting paddy from this agricultural plot he was seen growing horse-gram, a rarity in the hills, as the soil was reasonably wet in the winter of 1954.

The other terrace-plots lie on rather flat grounds shown in the village plan.

No transplanting is done where the silt from the water-course will bury the seedlings deep. But in other cases of flat land not lying in the water-course, such transplanting is done in alternate years or after two years, without manuring the fields, as in the valley. In that case transplanting takes place in the month of 'Gahmā' or July-August, after the field is made into a thick puddle by ploughing and dancing, so that the paddy plants will be fixed in the mud. There is no thinning operation required here.

#### (v) Rotation of Crops

As described above, except in terrace-agriculture (with a single crop) various crops are, either together or one after another, cultivated. In the swiddens there is a yearly cycle of rotation, while in the gardens there is a seasonal cycle of rotation.

In the first-year swidden the ashes and green weeds supply the manure, with which the 'biri' pulses, 'jatangi' oil seeds, various climbing beans and a few root-crops of tare and sweet potato and a large variety of vegetables as also Castor are raised. For the second-year swidden the fresh ash-manure is not sufficient, especially so if most of the standing trees are spared again for climbing beans. But the leguminous plants of 'biri' and beans add nitrogen to the soil and thus fertilize it sufficiently. The second-year swidden with its most valued crop, paddy, with maize and several varieties of millets and a few vegetables, is however ploughed up. This additional breaking of the soil with plough, in contrast with the similar effect exclusively under firing (vide E.R. Leach, *Advancement of Science*, Vol.6 (21), page 27, 1949), as in the first-year swidden, is very significant for the second-year crops.

In the third-year, however, the soil is so exhausted that only some miserable millets can be raised after ploughing. The weeds grow more dominant and productivity very low and cultivation thus uneconomical. That most of Tasrā Bhuiyān have left practicing the third-year swidden is entirely due to their awareness of its uneconomic features on their soil with much weed.

Thus we find that this yearly rotation of crops in swiddens has its inner logic and definite ecological advantages.

I do not think that the ordinary Pāuri is conscious of this. But he is surely conscious of its benefits from a different angle. He raises in the first-year swidden 'biri' pulses and 'jatangi' and

castor oil seeds almost wholly to be exchanged for rice, the most valued cereal for food, as also for ceremonial exchanges and for barter. The millets are grown largely for making starchy beer.

In the maize-garden after the early maize mustard is grown. The manure is being deposited all through the year, even when there is the standing crop of maize. While for the early crop with some vegetables and beans only one ploughing is considered sufficient; for mustard, the late crop, two ploughings is considered sufficient; for mustard, the late crop, two ploughings and more manure are necessary. This seasonal rotation goes from year to year on the same plot, because the fertility of the soil is renewed with manuring. The leguminous beans of the early crop also help build up fertility for the second crop. Mustard brings the much-needed money.

In the Kitchen garden however the manure is more of "green" type, with better humus being also under trees; when an early maize is raised with one ploughing, there is sufficient fertility left for tobacco cultivation. Even then the tobacco field, usually much smaller than the area devoted to maize, is also more intensively manured and the soil is literally made into powder. Thus it can bear a good crop, although coming later.

It will be seen that the rotation of crops is conditioned, or from another angle reinforced, by methods of manuring and breaking up the soil as much as by social values of the crops.

It is not known whether they learnt the value of rotation-cycle from experience or from others. But it is firmly grounded in their economic use of the land. Thus when a man cultivated a relatively flat land (with mere bushes) for paddy in the first year, he grew some poor millets in the next year and left it fallow thereafter.

#### (vi) Hazards of Cultivation

There are three classes of hazards in cultivation in the hills, apart from one's illness or non-availability of seeds, unsuitability of the soil, or sudden governmental restrictions as in 1950-51. These are : climatological, ecological, and super-natural.

Climatological hazards – The vagaries of the monsoons are notorious. It may rain too much or too little, too early or too late, or in unexpected periods or in disappointing quantities. Moreover, the main rainy season in the summer may be too short or too long. All its variations have their decided effect on the process and the fate of cultivation as also of other activities. Recently in 1956 there was too much of rain in Mahulpadā region and it affected the crops very badly.

Similarly, in 1951 there was a lot of rainfall at the beginning of the season, which washed away many seeds, but it ceased just when the paddy was "pregnant" or coming to bear fruits, when it was absolutely necessary.



Unless one appreciated these hazards one cannot understand the universal and contagious anxiety of the cultivator in the short but uncertain sowing season between the first showers of the southwest monsoon and its real break-out. Then one can also understand the divinatory observations of nature. Thus it was reported, that if in winter the trees shed leaves first from near its stem there will be a good late paddy crop. While if they shed them first from the upper branches, then the rains will cease before the end of the season, which, however, will be good for the early paddy. I believe, there are a few more such divinatory observations and beliefs to bring some certainty and order and moreover to prepare the cultivator for the worst. If it augurs well, it does not mean that he immediately runs into debts assured of a better harvest next year, or that he slackens up. Because, he knows it fully from his past experiences how unreliable these predictions may be due to other hazards involved in the situation.

Ecological Hazards – Scarcely after his anxieties on the weather and rainfall are ended, begin the ecological problems, that of the contending weeds, insects and pests, and wild animals and birds. As we have already dealt with the weeding problem we shall turn our attention next to the remaining two.

In 1952 paddy was worst-affected by 'gandhi' pests, while in 1953 the picture was slightly better, and in 1951 the crop was almost normal affected by 'gandhi' but rarely. Only in 1950 there was no loss due to them.

There are two varieties of pests: 'gandhi' much more harmful than the other, 'muhāñ' which is a yearly phenomenon. The plants are at first affected by 'muhāñ' in the month of Gahmā (July-August) and thus turn yellow. This does not harm the plants so much. But afterwards 'gandhi' may come. It "sucks the milk" (juice) of the paddy plants, in August-September in case of early paddy, and in September-October in case of late paddy. That is, just when they are growing to bear fruit. The loss of crops due to these pests may even force one to search for a day-labourer's work in the valley. Sometimes the crop may be so destroyed that it may not even be worth while to reap.

Similar insects or worms affect 'tisriā', 'kāngu' and other millets. Seeds are sometimes eaten up by ants. Castor is affected by an insect 'bherandā', at first on the leaves, then in the fruits. Pests may also severely affect mustard plants.

When the crop is spared from the pests it may still be devoured or destroyed by wild animals, birds, and even some domestic animals like goats, cows, and buffaloes (of outsiders). The elephants are feared most; they come in herds from the east and destroy more than they can eat. They came in 1952 and the banana plantations were their special delicacies, although they loved also paddy. Monkeys are especially troublesome from 'biri' pulses and 'd'hung' and other beans. The menace of the monkeys and elephants are dramatically referred to in their folksongs.

Wild pigs, sambhar and other species of deer, also are attracted to the swidden crop. Various kinds of rats, big and small, also porcupines destroy much crop, so much so that there is a special ceremony against the menace of rats and that sometimes in the maize-garden a watch-hut may also be erected. Maize may be eaten away by even bears, who also like to dig at 'Kandūāni' and other taro.

The goats and village cows in the gardens and sometimes in the swiddens, especially the cows and buffaloes of Mahulpadā in swiddens near Mahulpadā, are also harmful agents.

Various birds of the jungle destroy the crops. Some birds seem to be specialized pests for particular crops.

Constant watching, day and night, become an inevitable response to these ecological hazards. Even then the loss cannot be totally avoided.

These climatological and ecological together with petrological factors may be viewed as natural factors or collectively "the land", as affecting production of food and other resources of livelihood.

Of quite another dimension are however the supernatural factors, the beliefs and practices concerning the super natural which affect the fate and processes of cultivation, either through their working on the natural factors, or directly,

The insect-pest, 'gandhi', is believed to be caused by evil spirits ('rakhni-juguni'). This has become especially virulent from about 1952 when the aeroplanes flew frequently overhead. They believed that these evil spirits came along with the aeroplanes. To appease them they have to offer 'gurpanā' or molasses-water after sowing, in August-September for early paddy and September-October for late paddy.

Besides these evil spirits there are various other jungle and mountain spirits, village deities and ancestral spirits of the 'mātiāli' and 'parjā' families, the 'Bār' deity Bharāli Pāt and his formidable associate Baghiā, the Juāng deity Sarani, not to speak of appeasing a spirit against the menace of rats. Almost all of the important cultivation-operations cannot be undertaken, as in cases of fishing, hunting, and collecting certain articles, without invoking, appeasing specific deities, spirits and demons. Through their contentment or forbearance or protection only can the cultivator be free from serious anxieties for the unknown and unknowable factors of human life including the economic life in particular. Even the good working condition of the cattle has also to be supernaturally insured. Good crops, good health and healthy cattle, all hang together upon the benevolence or forbearance of the supernatural agencies to a great degree. Thus we find at the 'diha bandhāni' ceremony (for setting on the site or Village Foundation Ceremony) an elaborate divination oracle held for prediction on the welfare and progress of the cultivation, the village community, the men and of the hunting. If any of them does not show good prospect, there must be some supernatural factor responsible, along with the known natural factors. Because, the anger or illhumour of a supernatural, agency in one



aspect is only a signal that it might affect also other aspects of life, unless properly treated. In terms of such process of indirect causation is perhaps to be explained the widely-held idea among primitive tribes, that success in hunting brings success in cultivation also.

A concluding example will perhaps make the importance of the supernatural factors somewhat clearer. If in a particular year too many elephants or tigers appear, meaning a threat to the villagers, cattle and crops a special ritual is observed, so that all offences against the supernatural agencies may be thus atoned for, and the menace withdrawn.

Whether economists will agree to accept these supernatural factors along with the natural factors as somehow affecting production, that is a separate question. But we have seen, as will be made clearer in the section on "Rituals and Recreation", that the supernatural factors are not the least important aspect of the economic life of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ.

#### (vii) Productivity and Labour

Under the limitations mentioned above productivity of cultivation has to be considered in Tasrā, as in Pāuri Bhuiyāñ hills at all. Some part of the produce is, like the maize and some early-ripenning millets like 'tisrā' immediately eaten in the hunger months, some other like vegetables and fruits are rarely measured or counted, except banana crops, while one also does not think of measuring the root-crops grown. A cultivator, however, well remembers the out-turn of cereal crops and the crops with which he could get rice or money.

As I have not measured the swiddens, gardens or terraced plots, one cannot apply the criterion of land-size to assess productivity. Where it is recorded, it gives only the rough measure in 'bulāni' (or one turn made with plough-cattle) about 50 meters across the slope, the coverage up the slope (or down it) after capacity. Thus roughly it will be possible to compare the relative size of the holdings. A swidden of 2 'bulāni' may be slightly more than 1 acre or about half a hectre. This may be considered as the normal Swidden for a simple family at present people having more manpower have also cultivated more 'bhuāni' or another swiddn, if suitable land be available. It should be remembered that one has at least two swiddens, thus about 1 hecter.

As against the view that productivity can be measured by the size of land under use, E.R. Leach asserts, "The efficiency of rice growing techniques cannot be assessed simply on the basis of yield per acre of land cultivated. Land is only one of the factors of production. One needs also to consider the outturn per unit of labour." (Advancement of Scient, Vol.6 (21) p.28, 1949). I have collected some data on labour units involved in shifting cultivation, but they are not equally exhaustive in each case. Produce of cereals and cash-crops are recorded for 3 years, but with some margin of doubt as to the correctness of statements in the context of their reactions towards me, already discussed in the introduction. I have selected only those data on productivity which are considered reasonably reliable.

There is another criterion of assessment of productivity – the proportion of the seed planted or sown to the total out turn of a crop. The total out turn however is as uncertain due to various reasons as the seed-quantity is certain. Moreover, here the non-availability of seed is a great factor of bias. In rather frequent cases either a crop has not been cultivated or cultivated only in a parcel of the area set apart, only because of this reason.

We shall try to analyse our data with regard to the three criteria of productivity, in as much as these are applicable singly or jointly. But their corroboration is not attempted except in general terms, mainly due to partial incompleteness of the data.

Table I (Second-Year Swidden)

### Size and Yield of Swidden 1952-53

Outturn in Kilogram in round figures. Note – within brackets – seed quantity and working Unit.  $\Delta\frac{1}{2}$  stands for boys who cannot plough as yet and  $0\frac{1}{2}$  for girls who cannot weed or reap. The data are selected from among cases where the land-size was recorded and the working maintained normal efficiency during the years.

Size of Swidden	Household Number Crops (Working Unit)		1952	1953
2 bulāni	6 M ( $\Delta 1\ 01$ )	Paddy (Late)	(sick)	270 (20)
		(Early)		80 (12)
		Millets		95
2 bulāni	17 P ( $\Delta 2\frac{1}{2}\ 01$ )	Paddy (Late)	(destroyed by	200 (16)
		(Early)	160 (16) elephants)	160 (12)
		Millets	90	95
3 bulāni (1953)	15 M ( $\Delta 2\frac{1}{2}\ 01$ )	Paddy	160	320
1 bulāni (1952)	15 M ( $\Delta 2\frac{1}{2}\ 01$ )	Millets	120	135
3 bulāni	20 M ( $\Delta 1\ 02$ )	Paddy (Late)	360 (60)	-
		(Early)	'destroyed by gandhi'	-
		Millets	160	-
4 bulāni	8 M ( $\Delta 1\frac{1}{2}\ 03$ )	Paddy (Late)	400 (40)	600 (27)
		(Early)	320 (26)	200 (10)
		Millets	180	120
6 bulāni	24 P ( $\Delta 2\ 03$ )	Paddy (Late)	-	720(40)+360)
		(Early)	-	? 30
		Millets	-	370
5 bulāni	35 M ( $\Delta 2\ 04$ )	Paddy (Late)	800 (80)	-
		(Early)	400 (50)	-
		Millets	320	-
		Castor	80	-

Thus in 1953 a 2-bulāni swidden might produce an average about 346 Kilo paddy about 84 Kilo millets. In 1952 it might have produced on the average about 347 Kilo paddy and about 116 Kilo millets. However all these statistics may be more or less understated except perhaps in the cases of 8 M and 35 M. One thing is very clear: the extreme variability of the yield from



year to year or between household, when the size of the swidden and the reaction-bias be held constant. Similarly the seed-yield ratio is also variable. These tendencies will also be evident from Table II and III below.

Table II

Yield in First-Year Swidden in Kilo (Approximate)

Size of Swidden	Household Number (Working Unit)	Crops	1951	1952	1953
2 bulāni	6 M ( $\Delta 1$ 01)	Biri	-	40 (2)	40 (3)
		Jaṭangi	-	30 (2)	40 (4)
2 bulāni (1951)	17 P ( $\Delta 2$ 01)	Biri	20 (1)	(destroyed	40 (3)
4 bulāni (1953)		Jaṭangi	10 (1)	by Monkeys	80 (1)
2 bulāni (1951)	33 P ( $\Delta 1$ 01)	Biri	80 (2)	-	80 (4)
3 bulāni (1953)		Jaṭangi	20	-	40
		Dhunk	80	-	10
		Castor	40	-	40
3 bulāni (1951)	20 M ( $\Delta 1$ 02)	Biri	60 (6)	40 (2)	-
2 bulāni (1952)		Jaṭangi	60	20	-
		Castor	40	35	-
4 bulāni (1952-53)	8 M ( $\Delta 1 \frac{1}{2}$ 03)	Biri	200 (10)	80 (4)	160 (10)
1951 - perhaps		Jaṭangi	120 (4)	120 (4)	80 (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ )
Also 4 bulāni		Castor	28	40	Not "worth recording"
		Dhunk	120	40	
4 bulāni (1953)	15 M ( $\Delta 2 \frac{1}{2}$ 01)	Biri	20 (2)	-	80 (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ )
1 bulāni (1951)		Jaṭangi	20 (2)	-	80 (2)
		Dhunk	Not "worth recording"		40
5 bulāni	35 M ( $\Delta 2$ 04)	Biri	200 (15)	-	-
		Jaṭangi	200	-	-
		Castor	160	-	-
6 bulāni	24 M ( $\Delta 2$ 03)	Biri	-	120	-
		Jaṭangi	-	10 (destroyed)	-
		Castor	-	60	-
		Dhunk	-	80	-

Thus in 1953 a 2 bulāni swidden could produce on the average, about 48 Kilo 'biri' pulses and about 40 Kilo 'jaṭangi' oil seeds. In 1952 it might be on the average about 40 Kilo 'biri' and 25 Kilo 'jaṭangi'. In 1951 a similar swidden might have produced on the average, about 68 or 70 Kilo 'biri' and about 50 Kilo 'jaṭangi'. The destruction of crops in 1952 has very clear effect on the outturn. In all these calculations the bias of reaction towards me has to be reckoned with. Thus the senior Headman abnormally lowered the yield while giving his crop statistics, for 1953, when I was there, while his data for 1951 and 1952 were more or less reliable. The junior headman's data (8 M) seem to have been affected with a constant amount of bias, which I feel must be much less than in other cases.

There are some other quotations of crop-statistics, which show less influence of the reaction-bias, and although they have no record of the size of swidden, they do give us a good impression of the productivity in shifting cultivation.

Table III

Household Number (Working Unit)	Crops	1950	1951	1952	1953
20 M (Δ1 02)	Paddy	720	-	-	-
	Millets	200	-	-	-
10 M (Δ1 01)	Paddy	-	560	600 (80)	1040
	Millets	-	70	80	100
	Biri	-	80 (2)	80 (5)	40 (6)
	Jatangi	-	80 (1)	80 (1)	80 (1)
	Dhunk	-	-	80	40
35 M (Δ2 04))	Paddy	-	800 (40)	-	520
	Millets	-	140	-	320
	Castor	-	80	-	Dhunk 80
	Jatangi	-	-	-	240
24 P (Δ2 03)	Paddy	-	-	840	-
	Millets	-	-	240	-

For a bigger yield, not only a bigger swidden, but also a larger labour-power is very necessary. Thus higher produce goes with the employment of "reciprocal-cooperative Labour" groups, as in the households Nos. 35 M, 10 M, 8 M, 24 P, and often in 20 M and 26 M (Δ1 04). But the converse is not true. Thus the household 3 M employs such labour group to cover the labour shortage in his one men-one woman working unit. Secondly the household 33 is reported to be producing sufficient crops for their upkeep without the use of such labour-groups and without running into debts. Here we should note the high frequency of the use of such labour-groups and also the higher productivity in the 'Mātiāli' families of Tasrā.

In the third-year swidden one might get, if lucky, from a two 'bulāni' swidden about 180 Kilo millets, or even next to nothing. In fact one year a third-year swidden was left to grazing by the cattle, as it promised little better.

Production in the gardens, especially from the maize-gardens, is available in respect of only mustard. Apart from its wide variability, the data yield no comparative basis, as the size of the gardens is not known. Men like the senior Headman may grow mustard about 80 Kilo in 1953, 120 Kilo in 1952 and 160 Kilo in 1951 from about five kilo seeds every year. It was not possible to record the yield of the subsistence crop, early maize, as it is eaten as soon as it ripens right from about September. Tobacco is produced in most cases sufficient for a whole year, and in rare cases the surplus may even be sold in the market.

The size of the terraced rice-fields is also not determined, but they are smaller than one 'bulāni' of land, in about half the cases half a 'bulāni' each. Their yield, however, compares somewhat favourably with that of shifting cultivation, if we take into consideration the seed-



yield ratio. In shifting cultivation the yield of paddy is only rarely more than 20 times the seed sown, while invariably the yield in terraced field appears to be more than 20-fold, even sometimes 30 times the seed. In terms of labour it is very difficult to determine the relative productivity, as in shifting cultivation paddy is grown along with so many different varieties of crops.

In separate tables below are given the labour requirements of cultivation in the swiddens, as also in gardens and terraced fields, as far as these data were recorded. The villagers are not conscious of time as calculated in hours, but are roughly guided by the sun. when the sun has moved down sufficiently westward, it will be considered time for mid-day pause and meal, and the labour-unit considered half-a-day's work. In reality it may be nearly 2/3 of the day's work. Thus according to the season and distance of the swidden from the village a half-day's work may be for about 6-8 hours and a full-day's work about 10-12 hours'. Only in case of ploughing the cattle can not be worked in the hot sun for long hours of a stretch and the work is very tiring. So, a half days ploughing mean about 4-5 hours work before mid-day. Therefore, in the following tables labour is measured in terms of days and not in hours. Transport after harvest is not specifically recorded, as in most cases, the crops are transported by the working unit on the days of work.

Table IV

Labour-days in First-Year Swidden (1953 March-April to January 1954)

Name of operations	Household No. (Working Unit)				Remarks 0Δ = male or female
	8 M (Δ1½, 03)	12 M (Δ1½, 02)	31 M (Δ2, 01)	5 P (Δ2½, 01)	
1. Occupuig swidden	Δ1½ x ½	Δ1 x ½	Δ1 x ½	Δ2 x ½	Upar Tasrā and Tal Tasrā went as a whole separately
2. Cutting the bush	02 x 5 x ½	01 x 5 x ½	Δ2 x 2 x ½	01 x 6 x ½	In 31 M the woman was ailing
3. Cutting the wood	Δ1x4x½ Δ 6x1x1	Δ1x5x ½	Δ2x2x ½	Δ2x6x1	8 M got 5 mat through cooperative labour-service to help. Heavy work from early morning to sun-set.
4. Stacking the wood and firing	Δ1 x 1	Δ1 x 1	Δ1 x 1	Δ1 x 1	In 12 M the younger brother of 13 M fired the swidden
5. Girding the trees & firing	Δ1x5x ½	Δ1, 01x2x ½	Δ2x2x1	Δ2x4x ½	
6. Planting Castor, beans & vegetables	02x2x1 ½	Δ1, 01x2x ½	01x2x1	Δ1, 01x2x1	
7. Planting taro	01 x 1	01 x ½	01 x ½	01 x ½	
8. Planting egg-plants	Δ1 x ½	-	-	-	
9. Sowing 'biri'	Δ1x6x ½		Δ1x4x ½		
10. Cutting shrubs	03x6x ½	01, Δ1x3x1	01x4x ½	01, Δ1x3x ½	
11. Sowing 'jatangi'		Δ1 x ½		Δ 2x5x ½	

12. Weeding, cutting shrub	02x4x1 03x1x1	$\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$ $02x2x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2, 01x4$ $x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2x7x1$ $01x2x \frac{1}{2}$	
13. Watching begins	01x nearly 3 months	01 or $\Delta 1x$ nearly 3 months	$\Delta 1x$ nearly 3 months	$\Delta 1x$ nearly 3 months	Watching takes almost the whole day
14. Harvesting vegetables, gourds	0 $\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$	0 $\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$	0 $\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$	0 $\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$	As the fruits ripen they are harvested by anybody who is in the swidden at the time.
15. Harvesting ('sutun' & 'ruhmā', beans)	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	
16. Pulling out biri	02x2x $\frac{1}{2}$ 01x2x $\frac{1}{2}$	02x2x $\frac{1}{2}$ 01x2x $\frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 1, 01x2$ $x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2x 01x3x1$	
17. Making harvest-ground and hut	$\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$ 01x2x $\frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 1 x \frac{1}{2}$ 01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 1 x \frac{1}{2}$	-	In 5 P a flat rocky outcrop served as the harvest-ground
18. Collecting 'biri' and beating it.	$\Delta 1, 03x2$ $x \frac{1}{2}$ 03x2x $\frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 1x2x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 1 x 1$	$\Delta 2x2x \frac{1}{2}$	
19. Reaping 'Jatangi'	02x1x1 03x1x1	$\Delta 1, 01x2x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2 x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2x3x \frac{1}{2}$	In 12 M it followed operation No. 21
20. Beating 'Jatangi'	$\Delta 1x2x1$ 03x1x1	$\Delta 1 \frac{1}{2} x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2 x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 2x4x \frac{1}{2}$	In 12 M it followed operation No. 22. Regular watching ends.
21. Digging 'Kanduāni' taro	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	
22. Collecting 'dhunk' (and 'jhatuā') beans	01x2x $\frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 1 x \frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	
23. Beating 'dhunk'	02 x $\frac{1}{2}$	-	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	In 12 M the monkeys ate away 'dhunk' beans. There were no 'jhatua' beans planted
24. Collecting Castor	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	01 x $\frac{1}{2}$	It is collected in March-April
Total	$\Delta 20 \frac{1}{2} x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 20 \frac{1}{4} x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 26 x \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 41 x \frac{1}{2}$	
Man-Days and	$\Delta 9 x 1$	$\Delta 4 x 1$	$\Delta 6 x 1$	$\Delta 35 x 1$	In this calculation watching for about 90 days and harvesting
Woman-Days	054 x $\frac{1}{2}$	023 x $\frac{1}{2}$	016 x $\frac{1}{2}$	017 x $\frac{1}{2}$	vegetables and gourds are not
	024 x 1	03 x 1	02 x 1	05 x $\frac{1}{2}$	considered.

As all these statistics concern one swidden in each case, presumably of about 2-'bulāni' size, the variation in labour applied is very notable. Still more noteworthy is the relative distribution of man-days and woman-days in the same type of swidden-work. There is an increasing order of male labour from the first to the 4<sup>th</sup> household and correspondingly, a decreasing order of woman labour, if we consider the total labour-days expended. Labour may be correlated with productivity and with the size of the effective working unit. But in this case, the yield of swiddens except in case of the first household (No. 8 M) is largely unreliable, and incomplete.

Similar conditions will also limit the value of the next tables showing the labour-days in second-year-swidden and third-year swiddens. Unfortunately, some data were not collected due to lack of time on the part of the informants and could not be filled up later on.



Table V

Labour-days in First-Year Swidden (1953 March-April to January 1954)

Name of operations	Household No. (Working Unit)				Remarks 0Δ = male or female
	8 M (Δ1½, 03)	12 M (Δ1½, 02)	31 M (Δ2, 01)	5 P (Δ2½, 01)	
1. 'Jagharaā, and 'budāretā' - cutting the jungle	02x4x½ 03x3x½	03x2x½	1 x 4 x ½	Δ2 x 10x ½	BY household 8M swidden (a) was devoted to late paddy and (b) to early paddy and in attention (a) took precedence.
2. Firing	02x3x½	03x2x½	01 x ½		
3. Cleanign the shrubs	02x5x ½	03x03x ½	01x3x ½		
4. Sowing and	Δ1x7x ½	Δ1x5x ½	Δ1x4x ½	Δ2x6x ½	In 8 M (b) swidden was first sown, as it was early paddy
5. Ploughing					
6. Sowing millets	Δ1 x ½	Δ1x2x ½	01 x ½ Δ1 x ½	Not recorded	
7. Planting Maize and vegetable	01 x ½	-	-	-	Not recorded
8. Planting 'ruhmā' and 'suturi' beans (and taro)	02 x ½	010 x ½	01 x ½	01 x ½	
9. Weeding and curring shrubs	(i) 03x5x1 (ii) 03x4x1	03x4x ½	01x8x1	2 ½, 01x9x ½	
10. Watch-hut building & watching	Δ1 x 1	Δ1 x 1	Δ1 x 1	Δ2 x 1	Watching from about October to December, in day, at night
11. Preparing Harvesting Ground	Δ1 x ½	Δ1 x ½	Δ1 x ½	Δ1 x ½	A woman usually plasters the ground with codwung
12. Reaping early Paddy and treading it	-	03x3x1	01x4x ½ 01 x ½	Δ2x1x ½	Early paddy and 'Kāngu' millets not cultivated in swidden (a) by 8 M
13. Reaping 'Kāngu' millets and Treading	-	02x2x ½	01 x ½	-	'Kāngu' millet was reaped along with early paddy but later trodden upon.
14. Reaping late Paddy	03x4x1	-	0 No details	Δ2 ½ 01x 3x½	Late paddy and other millets not cultivated by 8M in (b)
15. Treading Late Paddy	Δ1x2x ½ Δ1½x1x ½	-	ΔNo details	Δ2 ½ 01x2c½	Treading in (a) in 8 M was done with cattle.
16. Reaping other Millets	03x1x1 02 x ½	-	0 No details	Δ2x2x ½ 01 x ½	Watching ends
17. Treading or Beating millets	No data	-	ΔNo details	No record	A woman helps in winnowing chaff away

18. Collecting 'suturi' and 'ruhmā' beans (and taro)	01 x ½	01 x ½	01 x ½	01 x ½	In January -February
19. Collecting Castor seeds	01 x ½	01 x ½	01 x ½	01 x ½	
Total	Δ1 x 1	Δ1 x 1	Incomplete	Incomplete	Under limitations of incomplete data excepting 8 M (b) the result is an understatement, especially so in case of 31M. Watching considered here, as also plucking vegetables and maize.
Man-Days	Δ14 x ½	Δ8 x ½	Δ1 x 1	Δ78 x ½	
And	042 x 1	09 x 1	Δ6 x ½	018 x ½	
Woman Days	037 x ½ (Partially incomplete)	047 x ½	08 x 1 014 x ½		

A comparison between the Table IV and V would give the impression that the second-year swiddens were attended relatively more by women-labour than in the first year swiddens. In the first-year swiddens there is more heavy work to be done exclusively by men, viz, the wood-cutting and girdling and firing. But in the second-year swiddens it is men and grown-up boys who have to keep watch at night against wild animals for about 3 months, besides doing the ploughing.

Table VI

Labour-days in Third-Year Swidden (1953) Household No.26 M

Name of Operations	Labour Unit	Remarks
1. Cutting Shurbs	Δ1 x ½ day	A labourer was hired on annual basis as halia
2. Sowing millets	Δ2 x ½ day	
3. Ploughing	Δ2 x ½ day	Wife with child, hence unable to reap
4. Reaping		
5. Preparing Harvest ground	Δ1	About 2 hours
6. Treading the millets (with cattle)	Δ1 x ½ day	
Total Labour - Days Δ6 x ½ day		

Table - VII

Labour-days in Terraced Field - 1953 - Household 35 M

1. Ploughing	Δ1 x 2 x ½ day
2. Sowing and	Δ1 x 1 x ½ day
3. Ploughing	
4. Thinning	Δ1 x ½ day
5. Weeding	Δ2 x ½ day
6. Reaping	Δ2 x ½ day
7. Treading with cattle	Δ1 x ½ day
Total-Labour-days : Δ9 x ½ day	



Table – VIII  
Labour-Days in Maize-garden (and Kitchen-Gardenn) 1953

Name of Operations	31 M ( $\Delta 2, 01$ )	5 P ( $\Delta 2 \frac{1}{2}, 01$ )	
1. Sowing Maize	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	$\Delta 1 \times 1$ day $\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	For killing 'gandhiri' undergrowth. Cow-dung manure ploughed up
2. Ploughing			gourds also planted
3. Cutting bush	$01 \times 2 \times \frac{1}{2}$	-	In 5 P it was not necessary
4. Making support for gourds	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	-	In 5P the gourd was guided to a tree
5. Planting banana	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	-	Not fully engaged
6. Sowing Mustard	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	$\Delta 1 \times 2 \times \frac{1}{2}$	Cowdung manure ploughed up
7. Ploughing			
8. Preparing Tobacco-bed	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	In 5P Kitchn Garden tobacco was raised
9. Transplanting Tobacco from first-year Swidden	$\Delta 1$	$\Delta 1$	About two house
10. Pulling mustard plants	$01 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	Not fully engaged
11. Beating Mustard	$01 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	$\Delta 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ day	Not fully engaged
Total Labour-days	$\Delta 7, 02 \times \frac{1}{2}$	$\Delta 6, 02 \times \frac{1}{2}$	Operation no.9 excluded

Thus we find that in third-year-swidden a woman may only cut the bush and reap the crop. Otherwise also little labour is required. In terraced agriculture a woman might weed or reap, but mainly it is man's job. However terrace agriculture is of very little significance in the life of Tasrā villagers as a whole, in the gardens the major work is done by the men.

It should be mentioned that often a man or woman utilizes the after-noon in a swidden or garden. Thus in the second first-year swidden of household 8 M both man and women worked in the afternoon, when also some labourers were hired, or were engaged on reciprocal cooperative basis.

#### (b) Food Collection

Collection of food materials from the forest and mountains is a very important supplementary means of livelihood. Its importance was many times impressed upon me by the women-folk of Tasrā, who are mainly responsible for it.

The most important items in food-collection are various roots, tubers, yams and arums available in the forest almost all the year round. But they cannot be dug up easily unless the earth is soaked by rain. The only difficulty then is to find them out, tracing by the dried vines as the plants are dead in the dry season of January to April-May. Whenever there is some rain, immediately thereafter girls and smaller boys drift to the forest with baskets and iron-diggers. Some poorer folk also try to get as much a reserve as possible. There are at least 8 species

or varieties of them available in Tasrā forests, namely, 'jhār kandā', 'mandei kendā' 'bañ Bahingā', 'pitālu' (bitter tuber), 'kantālu' (thorny tuber), 'saigā kandā' and 'surkiā kandā'. Of them the first two are available in plenty. But the villagers are provident and clever in their exploitation. So they dig for 'mandei kandā' between January and May, and dig out 'jhār kandā' in May to July, when the earth is also much easier to work into. 'Surkiā' arum is dug up in December-January, and the bitter tuber in August-September. Other varieties are available in Keonjhar, Pal Lahara and Bamra, which are sometimes got as presents. Another species, 'bantungā' is so fibrous that usually it is not collected unless in times of serious scarcity. Another season of digging up tubers and roots comes in the month of 'bhuda', August-September, when all the food resources are at an end, and the earliest maize is not sufficient to quench hunger. The women then go out, it is reported, even the whole village, in search of them. Apart from the roots, shoots of some arum like 'surkiā kandā' are also eaten, as also various mushrooms during the rainy season.

Various fruits between March and July ripen in the forest, important among whom are mango, 'kendu', 'cār', 'dumur', 'puḍhai', 'jāmu', 'siāri' sārļā and sargi (shorea robusta) and 'mahul'. The last-named fruit is used for making oil for cooking. Mango is very important as a source of food, so much so that its use is ritually sanctified, even when the mango tree is only in blossom; and it is used raw and ripe. Also after another ritual, the kernel of its stones are eaten. Mango is rather plenty, because of their wild growth along the big hill streams and in all former sites of habitation. Between April and June this is consumed as fruit, and between July and August as kernel. This is complementary to jack-fruits as staple food during the summer months.

Then there are various berries and plums ripending from February to May. There 7 tamarind trees in the village on the sites, grown from seeds casually thrown after use. Their sour-fruit is also consumed or stocked in April and May.

Before celebrating another important ceremony 'jhiliri phul' (flowers) and 'mahul' flowers cannot be collected. 'Jhiliri' and other leaves, 'māmūḍhi', 'kalialī', 'cākundā', 'tenegā', and 'beng sāg', the last growing near streams and tasting bitter, are also collected between January and April in most cases. The last-named leaves are available all through the year. The 'kanāsiri' leaves growing in gardens of themselves are consumed in August-October. Leave of 'sārļā' tree, whose fruits are however taken, are not consumed but the Mundāri tribes have no objection to them. Similarly though in Keonjhar in Singpur areas 'kakhaḍā' leaves are taken, in Bonai the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ does not use it. 'Nahengā', leaves grow wild in the nearby villages of Pal Lahara, where a visitor from Tasrā may collect and take some home.

Collection of honey, unlike that of other objects of food mentioned, is however an exciting business, exclusively undertaken by the men. It is observed from which direction the honey-bees come in early fore-noon and in which direction they fly back in late afternoon. The



beehives are then found out by individuals. Different species of bees have different places for building their hives. Bees are most common, and it is also most fruitful to collect honey, during the season of flowers. Thus from about March to early June, till it rains, it is the season for collecting honey. However it may be possible in other dry months, e.g. 'bāgh bhaaṛ' or 'tiger-bees' in October-November. In high rocks the dangerous 'tiger-bees' make their hive, the 'sāt pheniā' or seven hive bees yield the most and live in the hollows of 'sāl', 'mahul', and other trees near the Belsarāi rivulet, the 'biṇchinā' does bees almost everywhere in mango and 'sāl' trees, the 'lakuḍi' or 'nikiṭi' bees in 'mahul' and 'kendu' trees, yielding the sweetest, thickest, and redest honey, the 'cināṭi' bees in 'mahul', 'kusum' and 'sāl' trees, yielding little but slightly bitter honey, and the 'barudi' (hornet) bees having a basket-like hive are very aggressive. The honey from the lastnamed is collected usually in September-October.

The safest procedure in collecting honey is to climb up the tree or rock in the dark nightfall and suddenly brandish a torch, so that the bees are frightened away. Then one may dislodge the hive with a stick and it is collected on the ground. This is ordinarily undertaken by a group of villagers.

Women and children also collect eggs of jungle fowl, pea-fowl, and other birds like 'liṭi' and 'phikirila' from their nests. These are available from March to May and in case of the rare pea-fowl eggs in June-July, when there is full monsoon.

### (c) Collection of non-dietietic Objects

The fuel for the kitchen and sitting places, especially at the village meeting houses in winter, and the materials for house building thatch-grass for the room, posts and wattle and bamboo for the walls and doors, - are all collected from the forest. Fuel is mostly collected by women for the home, by the youngmen and the girl for their respective dormitories. A big tree however is felled by a man and smaller pieces chopped off by women. There are three varieties of 'chana' grass - 'daba', which begins to rot early, 'tina' of intermediate durability, and 'sānkuli', which withstand the rain the longest. The first two varieties are almost exhausted, and far to the southwest in Puidih site, above Kumudih village, the last-named grass is still available in good quantity. Still then the anxiety on the dwindling sources is quite perceptible. The village-meeting-houses-cum-bachelors' dormitories were not fully re-thatched in 1954 due to scarcity to thatch. But the thatch-grass is so important in the economy that its mowing is preceded by a ceremony and the village as a whole goes mowing on days determined by the meeting of the elders. Both men and women mow and carry the thatch, the woman on head, the men in two loads with the help of a carrying pole. When a swidden lies fallow for two years, it grows good thatch grass.

Bamboo for fencing the kitchen-garden and sometimes also the house-compound, and also for making some common baskets, and wicker-work mat for drying 'mahul' flowers, a variety

of jungle grass for making strings for the string-bed, and important date palm leaves, with which the women make mattresses for sleeping on and drying or beating corn and other things – all these are also collected from the forest. Similarly wood or bamboo used for making various tools and instruments of their daily life are obtained.

In recent times leaves of 'kendu' tree are exported thorough Agents for being used as wrapper for county-made cigarette or 'bidi'. Women collect the green leaves, dry them, and sell them in bundles of hundreds at the nearest out-post of the Agent, in Kumudih or at Mahulpadā. This has become a good source of side-income, paltry though it may be.

Another still more important, and also still more ancient, is the stick-lac culture on the trees. It is reported, lac has been being raised since the times of old ancestors, though the precise generation is not determined. In these days it was however not taken so seriously, as the price was not high. Once the lac worms moved away from the cultured trees, and the culture was lost. Then about 1945 seed-lac was obtained from Deurlā, the 'Kuṭumb' village of the 'Māṭiali' of Tasrā. Then the 'Baḍām' – Priest of Tasrā along with another important senior priest first set the lac on worshipping the ancestors, 'Dharam' or the Supreme God, and the God of lac, 'Rangarāj', (literally, the king of red-colour). The priests observed certain ritual restrictions like sexual abstention and taking of cold rice without any additional salt, and set the seed-lac in empty stomach after bath. From these 'seed' – trees then the other villagers later on set lac on their own.

There is an interesting story involving Ladumḍih-Khadkā in lac-culture. In very ancient days once, it is said, the lac-worms were so prolific that they invaded paddy fields. Hence the ancestors swore that they would not cultivate lac. In 1954 however the villagers broke the ancestral taboo by worshipping Rangarāj, ancestors and Dharam, sacrificing 3 fowls on the 31<sup>st</sup> January, when seed-lac was presented by successful lac raisers from Tasrā, mostly from the priestly families. Now it all depended on the ancestors, they said; if they were satisfied with the worship and accepted the situation, lac would be a success there.

People who are successful hands in raising lac are approached for setting the seed-lac to the new trees of the unsuccessful. Lac may be set on 'kusum', puḍhai', 'ḍumur' and rarely on 'barkuli' trees. Except the last the other trees are forest trees and 'kusum' is most common and popular.

Lac set in the winter months (December-January) does not thrive well, as the worms may die in summer months, but if set in May-June they grow well for the winter season. So there are two seasons of lac-harvest, in December-January and in May-June.

There are two contractors licensed by the Government of Orissa to buy up the stick-lac from Bonai and Pal Lahara ex-States. The contractor supplies the seed-lac at the purchasing rate. There is some competition between the contractors.



Women sometimes collect the wastes of stick under the tree and sell them as however the price of stick-lac varies between a half Rupee to 1 ½ Rupee, depending on the conditions of world Market, the income is very uncertain.

#### (d) Hunting and Fowling

Hunting does not contribute so much to the larder as to the ardour for life. It is considered a symbol of manly prowess. A successful hunter not only attains prestige for himself, but also brings good luck and festivity to the village. Hunting is considered of such importance that in the communal divination at the Village Foundation Day success in hunting is separate item of prediction. Hunting is mostly done in groups. There is one communal hunting day of ritual significance, when all able-bodied villagers cooperate.

There is a main hunting season between January and May, that is, after and before the main or heavy tasks of cultivation. Besides, it is undertaken on occasions certain festivals, like 'Raja' and 'Gahmā', and occasionally also in 'Bhuda' month (August-September) onwards during the watching period in swiddens. It is the youngmen and adults who take part in hunting animals, although boys in early 'teens may follow to increase the man-power in driving animals : On the other hand, it is mostly boys who take to fowling, although youngmen and even adults may hunt or spare birds. Small animals like squirrels, rats or mongoose may be hunted alone or in small groups of two or three. Procupines are caught in traps or killed with torches at night with bow and arrows during the swidden-watching. Watchers in near-by swiddens cooperate on such occasions.

But a hunting party is organized mostly with a view to bag big animals like bear, deer, 'sambar' etc. There is some specialization of tasks. The selected marksmen, formerly successful hunters, take up positions behind bushes or tree-trunks, sometimes artificially improvised, at a sufficient distance from one another, along the track or aside the water-point. In summer and dry months water-points become of vital importance for the big animals. Others act as 'beaters', under guidance of a leader with a few more experienced hunters along the sides, making noise, crashing the forest, and thus driving the animals from three directions converging towards the marksmen. The marksmen take care not to make any noise or movements and try to give no hint to the animals in panic that anything has changed in the surroundings.

When an animal is bagged its blood is offered to ancestral spirits, specially to 'Kamāl Budhā', the ancestral culture-hero of Tasrā founder-families. In the first success of the winter the head is offered to him as "firstfruit". In the ceremonial communal hunting 'Baḍām' and 'Gāeñsri', the pre-eminent village deities, are also offered the animal in thankfulness. The successful blood-smeared arrow-head is touched to other arrows in the belief that there will be success for others too. Then the animal is carried to big piece of flat rock near the hamlet and there it is divided.

At the beginning of hunting-excursion all the participants congregate with their weapons bows and arrows and axes for cutting the jungle. A man, ritually clean and versed in the proper spell, impregnates the bows and arrows, invoking the supreme god 'Dharam' with sundried-rice and turmeric powder, for success in hunting. An experienced and successful hunter, ritually clean, goes ahead as the 'initiator'. Before one sets out on hunting he straightens his arrows, sharpens the blades against suitable hard stones. Arrows are made from special reeds grown along the Belsarāi rivulet for the purpose communally. The proper length of an arrow-shaft from the shoulder-joint to the finger-tip of the full-arm and hand. The blade is a piece of beaten iron made by 'Khāti' smiths in Kumudih or Mahulpadā and have two inward barbs. But the best blades are made in the village Lunga, about 12 kilometers from Tasrā in the west, where many Tasrā men go to purchase the arrow-blades. These arrows are called 'ciāla-kānd'. There is a special arrow-blade called 'suti-Kānd', and it is a trident with three inward barbs for hunting hares with, as it has a bigger range of piercing than the ordinary blade in case of this small animal. There is bolt-head of bamboo-node instead of an arrow-head to kill by stunning birds and rats, squirrels etc. the shaft of arrows or bolts are always fitted with feathers for keeping a straight course in flight. Two things were very important in hunting, as they told me. A straight arrow and the right aim. The length of the blade is not so important as the muscular strength, it appears. Because it was told me that Tanugulā villagers cannot drive an arrow deeper into flesh in spite of their longer arrow-head than Tasrā hunters.

For catching 'kapatā' birds a spring-noose, called 'chīkāni phāsi' was set along the course of this bird moving near a harvest ground. The path was blocked with sticks and chaffs with the noose placed in the opening with grains as baits. There is another snare of nooses called 'ganthiā' or 'jhunjiā phāsi' spread on the ground to entangle the legs of birds. Another method, usually used by adults, is that of bird-lime or 'athā-kāndiā', set on the ground in a number, usually near a stream or near crops.

There are some birds like 'uḍai' hunted with 'biṭā' or bolts and bows at night with the help of a blazing torch, as the birds are presumably blind at night. There is another bird 'basanta' which loves 'khas' fruits. So some bird-lime is planted with baits of this fruit. Similarly 'pandukā' bird is hunted with bolt or with a trap called 'thong' attracting it with its beloved 'bandhari' fruit as bait. Sometimes some birds like 'dandāsā' or 'ketrā' are driven towards the bird-lime near water-course. For catching pea-fowl there is a special noose called 'majur-phās'. Bats may be killed with clubs at daytime when they are blindly resting on trees. Even arrows are used for killing a big bird, 'ghurm', near the streams. 'Murad' bird, which eats domestic fowl, is beaten up by a group in the bamboo clump where it nests. There are some clever birds like 'therkā', which must be approached stealthily and hunted with bolt. Even eight or ten people may cooperate in hunting clever 'dāhuk' bird in a circle, gradually stealthily closing upon it, and then at then at the same time raining bolts at it.



There are pigeons in good numbers in a rocky shelter in Kulhagar in the Belsarāi gorge, but this place is sacred to some demons and the pigeons are not touched. Similarly 'titikā' bird which feeds upon dead cattle are also tabooed. But the 'kumitiā' bird, feeding upon human nigh-soil, is taken, although some youngmen, conscious of the plainmen's abhorrence, tried to deny it. But 'nilgāi' or 'blue cow', *Portex pictus* is not only hunted but also eaten, though a Pāuri would never kill a cow.

When a man is on a hunting trip singly or collectively, he may bag not only an animal, but some birds or jungle-fowl. Fowling seems to be for the adults a side-gain while engaged primarily for other purposes, like watching or hunting. All hunting or fowling is not for the purposes of meat, but may occasionally be for obtaining alive a bird for keeping as a pet or young wild pigs for being raised and fattened for feasts at the close of harvest, namely, 'Pus Punein Parab'.

#### (e) Fishing

If the result of hunting is uncertain, partly due to scarcity of games, fishing on the other hand is a never-failing source of animal protein. There are 8 deep pools of water in the Belsarāi rivulet, where fishing can be done in the dry months till May-June from about January. With a new equipment, rod, line and hook, a few enterprising men are fishing in June-July or in October-November also in deep pools. Between July and October there is too much water in strong currents with also debris and other wash-aways. After October till January work in swidden and running of much water hinder fishing.

There are two main methods of fishing : (a) fishing by poisoning, (b) fishing by baling out water. Subsidiary methods may be : use of hands, use of cloth, diverting course of water, and use of bow and bolts, and even digging for fish and crabs.

Fishing with poison or 'man' requires a big cooperative group, working on separate tasks till the actual catching engage the whole group. There are at least 7 kinds of poisonous leaves, fruits, vines or roots of differing degrees of effect. The poison from 'kanti laha' vines stupefies the fish only partly. That from 'mānkad or kādi kend' fruits stupefies all fish but for an hour or so. With poison from 'gandei (dāl)', leaves and from 'pāt' 'ketek', paṭuā' fruits and 'guhāduni' roots however all the fish are killed, the latter 5 being very effective.

I shall narrate how such fishing with poisons was done once, when I joined the group as participant observer.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> February 1954 after the morning meal men and boys gradually collected near the dancing platform according to the decision taken previous night. At about 11 A.M. 7 adults, 4 youngmen and 4 boys and myself went to 'Daraguḍi dhara' pool in the Belsarāi rivulet, about 2 kilometers northwest of Tal Tasrā. There were one youngmen and one adult from Upar Tasrā

who had come down for some other business. The youngest boy was about 8 years old. Some bamboo baskets used for washing grains were taken along with us for keeping fish.

Two seniors of priestly families gave directions as well as worked with others. Firstly, youngmen and boys worked at new course of water, by removing rocks in the way. Then youngmen and adults began constructing a dam of stones and earth across the regular bed above shallow pool. Meanwhile a young man was shown the right place where he dug out two holes, 1 m x 1 ¼ m, so that the earth therefrom may be used in the dam. The boys and smaller youngmen under an adult went to fetch poisonous 'kādi kend' fruits.

A sickly adult, not able to do heavier work, was asked to pound the fruits in the holes in the rock with a heavy club as pestel. I also helped in this work. Two other adults also did this job,

By this time the water in the regular course had almost dried up except in the pools. Others took these poisonous pounded fruits and rubbed them with hand in water. The first time it was not sufficiently mixed with water; so the fish did not become stupefied. The second time it worked. The fish floated on water for some time and others hid in the rock-crevices. Now there was no time to be lost. Those who were smoking, gossiping or repairing the dam, were all called upon to collect the fish. All entered into the pools and tried to collect fish as much as possible with hand from water or from the rock-crevices by turning out rocks or extending the arms. After keeping the fish and crabs in the cloth or their body they deposited them from time to time in 2 big baskets brought from the village. There was not much fish to be seen. It was then explained that the poison was not sufficient and it was not well-pounded. Another handicap was that in winter the fish are not so much affected by the poison. Some agreed with my suggestion that it was also due to an opening down the regular course below the pools, which helped in washing away the poison to some extent. Later on two adults dammed up this opening and bailed out water in baskets from the smaller pools and caught the fish. Towards the end when the poison was losing its effect, small boys used their bolts and arrows at the fish. Searching for crabs in the rock crevices went on even when they lost hope of getting any more fish.

Many of them, half drenched, took their bath. The fish was washed and distributed equally among participants including myself. The participants, it must be noted, were not working silently, but were gossiping and smoking and making fun. It was another occasion for social intercourse.

The other method, that of bailing out water, was also subsidiarily used in the above case. This method requires not many – say two or three to six persons, according to my information in February 1954. Firstly, a dam has to be laid across the water course to divert the current. The shallow pools then are bailed out with baskets, so that the fish and crabs are exposed to a certain extent, when they are easily caught with hand.



There is a type of big snake-like fish, called by the valley people, 'neturā', about  $\frac{1}{2}$  meter long, living upon fish. It makes a water-tank for itself at the end of tunnel at about 10 meters from the bank inside the earth. It is very rarely met with. It may swallow even small kids. With pointed sticks driven at places into the ground above the suspected tunnel its resting place is determined and then a group of men dig up the earth and kill it.

Of the 8 pools in the Belsarāi in one, that of Kandākāna dhara, fishing cannot be undertaken unless the spirit of the pool is worshipped with a sacrifice of a fowl. There is another large gorge-pool in Kulhagaḍ, teeming with fish, which is not exploited due to a powerful demon there.

#### (f) Day Labour

It is called 'bhuti' by the Pāuri and regular wages are paid on basis of a full day's or a half-day's work. Wages are called 'bhutimula' or the price of labour. We shall not consider here reciprocal cooperative labour or exchange of services etc. But there is a type of annual labourer bound to a 'master'. The labourer is called 'haliā', literally, one who holds a plough. This annual labourer system does not appear to be an ancient one among the Pāuri and is much prevalent among the 'casā' cultivators in the plains. But the custom of paying wages seems to be somewhat old, especially to the widows and poorer families.

During transplanting, weeding and harveseting operations in the valley there is a large demand for labour. The Pāuri know the last two operations very well. But many women also know transplantation well enough – almost all women in Tal Tasrā. Most of the families of Tasrā, women and slightly less men, seek paid work during the respite from their work in swiddens and gardens. The present Pancāyat Member and his wife also go as almost all other 'Parjā' families. Slightly affluent 'Parjā' families and most of the priestly families say that they do not go to do day-labour except in emergencies, like crop-failure, or sickness in family and hence lower productivity. Day-labour carries the least prestige among the various means of livelihood. Moreover a 'Pāuri Bhunyān' does not like to do any earth work and does not know housebuilding in the plains way. But day-labour becomes a very important source of livelihood in years of severe crop-failure as in 1952 and 1957 or when insufficient land was cultivated due to rumoured Government restrictions in 1950-51.

Apart from day-labour in the valley, some Pāuri villagers also engage day-laboueres for harvesting and beating 'jaṭangi' and mustard oilseeds, or weeding or cutting the shrubs (pātikatā) or wood-cutting in the first-year-swiddens.

At least three villagers had kept 'haliā' or hired (annual) labouror and the Headman wanted to keep one 'haliā'. Two of the 'masters' were priestly families; in all they were 26 M in 1950, 32 P and 27 M in 1953, and the Headman (35M) potentially, while in case of 26 M, 32 P and 35

the purpose is clearly for surplus production, in case of 27 M it was primarily to help him in getting a sufficient out-turn, as the householder was an indifferent cultivator.

In day-labour were engaged a woman and her daughter for the brother, the Headman, as also old ladies of priestly families for him. When a poor villager was engaged to tend the cows in the absence of those on duty by turn, he was given regular wages.

It is interesting to note that the plains rate of wages in harvesting paddy was  $\frac{1}{2}$  kilo rice for midday meal besides about 4 kilo of paddy equivalent to 2 kilo of rice. For similar work of beating 'jatangi' and mustard the rate was 2 kilo of 'jatangi' which is equivalent to 2 Kilo of rice. Thus the plains rate was 25% higher. But there are some invisible payments constituting "real wages" among relatives in the hills, which will be discussed under "Distribution".

## 2. Sources of Capital

Capital in the classical economics stands for "produced means of production", and production, for "creation or addition of utilities". We shall retain the classical meanings, which will thus include not merely money-capital, but also capital-goods, like the seeds and domestic animal for breeding and all artefacts, weapons, implements, and tools used in hunting, fowling or fishing, collecting or cultivation of land, in preserving their products, and in "production" of cash-earning commodities. The only category of capital which will not be dealt with here is the "circulating" or "floating" capital in the sense of remuneration and food and other necessities for the workers, who are overwhelmingly the household members. These latter aspects will be found under Distribution and Remuneration on the one hand, and under Consumption on the other, where properly they belong. It remains to be pointed out that discussion of "capital" does not touch upon the profit-motive as such.

### (a) Natural Capital

Following R. Thurnwald (p.29) "unter Naturkapital solche objekte verstanden worden müssen, die in der Verfügungsgewalt der Menschen stehen und aus sich heraus ihre sustanz erhalten und vermehren". The main types of natural capital are Plant-Capital, or seed, shoots, tubers etc. for producing more by cultivation, and Animal-Capital or the domesticated animals for breeding and thus producing more. As the natural-capital multiplies "naturally", out of itself, under favourable circumstances created or supplied by man. It has a special place among capital goods. Thurnwald also rightly notes on p.30, "the yield of the capital here depends very strongly on the labour exerted", unlike in the case of other categories of capital.

#### (i) Plant-Capital

Seeds of paddy, corn and millets, of pulses and beans and oil seeds are carefully selected at the time of harvest and preserved separately. Similarly at the time of collecting tubers and roots in the jungle or in the garden the modified buds or pieces of stem are re-inserted in the



pits where they grew. The pits are covered with earth. Thus further production is ensured. As the swiddens change from place to place the planting of pieces of taro is done every year in the sowing and planting season, and not at the time of harvesting them.

The productivity of seed is well understood and consciously measured against harvest according to the size of land and quantity of seed sown or planted. More seed is used when a better yield is required. It seems hill-cultivation needs relatively a larger amount of seed than plains-cultivation, not merely because in the latter the land is cultivated more intensively, but also because there are more numerous risks in the hills, like washing away in the rains or by the water-course, or destruction by birds and insects.

Frequently because of lack of seed a crop of beans, castor, or some millets may be dropped, or a swidden may not be intensively cultivated. A needy man was noted to have reserved his wages in kind for seed purposes at the house where he worked. Because he feared, if he brought them home, he would someday eat them up. Indeed, men in want are known to have eaten up seed and all. Then they must beg from a relative, borrow or earn in kind. One clever man, in fact, the present Pancāyat Member, in Household 5 P, borrowed plains paddy at 50% rate of interest from the plains and got it husked into rice, and exchanged the rice for hill paddy in Tanugulā village for twice the amount of rice. If he borrowed seed-hill-paddy from the plains he would have to pay 100% interest.

## (ii) Domestic Animals

Cows, goats, and fowls are important possessions of a household. The cattle are the most important and are exchanged in marriage. Both cows and bullocks are used in ploughing, but never for carrying goods, unlike in the plains, where only bullocks are used for ploughing and transporting goods. Their dung-manure is the most important manure for gardens and a few terraced paddy-fields. Goats are used in sacrifices and feasts. Fowls are the most frequent sacrificial offer and for that reason eggs are rarely, if at all, eaten or sold.

Apart from these uses any of the animals may be sold or exchanged. Some untouchable Hindus from Sihiriā village in 1954 get in exchange a bullock for their cart for a calf and a heifer they brought. Cows or bullocks may be lent out at a fixed rate of yearly interest or consideration both among the Bhunyāñ and between a Bhunyāñ and a plainsman. Among the plainsmen the rate for bullocks from the hills is about 240 kilogram of only paddy. The system is called 'Kāndhi debā' or "lending a shoulder", that is, lending a cow or bullock as a partner for the yoke. Such cattle hiring, at least among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, requires not merely the payment of grains, but also treating the cattle-owner with country beer or wine and feasting him with fowl. There is another system called 'bāhan diā' or lending an "unyoked" cow or bullock, so that it is in mutual interest of the borrower and the owner.

The goats are sometimes tended by a borrower on the condition that the borrower and owner get half of the kids each. This arrangement was done between the household of two brothers.

Sometimes cocks are bred and well-fed, and encouraged to fight for being sold as "fighters". Cock-fighting is a great pastime among the Mundāri neighbours. Goats are bred in almost all households and fowls universally. Goats are tended by younger children.

Breeding of domestic animals is consciously and carefully practiced. There is at least one bull in the village belonging to an individual. Only the calves with some abnormality are presumably left uncastrated as bulls. This bull was left loose for 3 or 4 nights after one cow at a time. Similarly uncastrated he-goats are valued for breeding purposes but are also required for sacrifices. A hen of selected breed was bought by a villager from the plains.

There are great risks also involved in having domesticated animals, especially in the hills. Tiger and panther and even Jackals or wild dogs may kill the goats; hence they must be tended daily. Tiger may kill cattle and the cattle may destroy crops, and hence they must be herded. Fowls may be killed by sly jackals or chickens be pilfered by wild cats or kites. The most serious are epidemic diseases, against which there are rarely any known medicines among the Bhuiyān. Under such circumstances they mostly follow the advice of the cowherd caste people who live in the village Tasrā or in the plains. Cattle may eat castor leaves and fruits along with 'jadā-bherandā' worm. This is fatal for the cattle. When there are worms in a wound in cattle these days phenyl is used. In case of no effect juice of some roots (araca and purhai) is forced through the mouth or pounded 'bel' leaves are smeared on the wound.

Castration is done by Pān untouchable caste-men from Mahulpadā with an iron knife and blood flows freely. There was once even a case of death due to such bleeding. They know of the bloodless mechanical castration demonstrated once by a veterinary official. There was no such personnel in the neighbourhood in 1954 or in 1957.

As cattle are not owned by 16 households at all (5 M and 11 P), and some cannot afford to get one on payment of 'Kāndhi' consideration, and calves for being broken are obviously few, some other methods are employed. A man may be 'halaguriā' or a sharer of plough-bullocks by ploughing together with the owner in the swiddens of the owner as in that himself. He is under the obligation of feasting the owner with country-beer and food after the harvest. Secondly, it has been observed that at least two paddy-swiddens were cultivated by an owner of cattle and plough for the nominal consideration of feasting with fowl, food and country beer. The beneficiaries were a Headman's sister's son and wife's brother get the services of his cattle by bearing together half of the tending charges.

To tend the cattle for many years till 1953 there was a cowherd caste man from Rengāli village. He was given a daily ration of cereals from each house owning cattle and an annual



payment of cereals according to the number and categories of cattle-cow, bullock, calf. But because of his personal difficulties he left the job and both the hamlets tended their own cattle by turn. The representatives of 2 households, men, women, girl or boy, would take care of the cattle, take them to drinking places and bring them home. At least one adult was always in this herding partnership, as there was a fear of wild animal. A 'halaguriā' or co-sharer of plough-cattle is freed from the obligation of tending cattle only when he has stood the feasting to the owner. There were even two 'halaguriā' for a pair of cattle.

A brother may be helped with the cattle but the beneficiary has to send a representative to tend the cattle. This happened in case of Households Nos. 12M, 13M.

There is a strange mode of obtaining help in ploughing, which also exempts one from the obligations of tending cattle. The household No.17P had given one fowl to the Tal Tasrā community in some ceremony in early 1953. So ten ploughs of Tal Tasrā were used on the same day to cultivate his paddy-swidden. He in turn feasted the ploughmen with rice and fowl.

It must be remarked that in one Household No.14P, a bullock was given out 'Kāndhi' while an unyoked bullock was borrowed from 10M. This Household is from Bamra ex-State, where there is more intercourse with and take-over from the plains. This cleverness may be compared to that in case of procuring seed by Household No.5P who had also more contact with the plainsways.

#### (b) Tools, Implements and Crafts

Tools and implements contrast with the foregoing 'natural capital' in that they are fully man-made. These are very often made by the users out of materials available mostly as free gifts of nature. Some products of handicrafts are also sold, but an overwhelming quantity of them are used, more often as "production goods". Here as elsewhere, the distinction between "production goods" and "consumer goods" is very fluid.

Iron arrow-heads, ploughshares, axe-heads, bill-hook-heads, sickle-blades, heads of "battle"-axes, adzeheads, chisel-heads, rings for husking lover, diggerheads and pick (gardani) heads – all these are purchased for money and rarely exchanged for cereals from the blacksmiths at Tanugulā, Mahulpadā, Kumudhih, as far as Lungā. The men prepare the shafts or handles and fit them into the iron parts.

Among other things purchased are: coarse wicker-work baskets (gānduā) for carrying earth and manure from an untouchable caste, leaf-vessels for pressing oil-seeds in the tree-press from the Birhor tribals, bamboo brooms for cleaning cow-shed from the Ghāsi untouchables, palm-leaf umbrellas on bamboo-frame from the markets, as also winnowing fan and baskets.

Children from the age 7/8 know how to make their own bows and bolts, and arrows are made from a reed purposefully grown along the Belsarāi rivulet by boys from about 12. Various traps

and snares and spring-nooses for catching rats, porcupines and birds are also made by young men and adults. They also know how to twist straw-stalks of paddy into thick ropes with which a grain-store (oliā) in the form of a huge ball is made round grains or taro etc. for preservation. The art of making 'ḍuli' or grain-store of bamboo-work is known to very few and one relative from bamra had made in Tasrā for the senior Headman and others at the rate of Rs.1.0 each.

However, all men including young men make bamboo wicker-gencing and wicker-wall and bamboo-wicker-work like a big mat for drying 'mahula' flowers. Wooden troughs for keeping ripe mango flesh are also made by them. Only two however could do finer wood work with a smaller adze and chisel, like making of carrying poles, pestles of husking lover, legs of bedsteads etc. only 6 to 8 adult men know how to make ploughs and yokes and make them for villagers for the consideration of one pot of beer or rarely Rs.0.25.

At least two men make good bamboo combs, often with some crude designs, and another two, possibly more, may have been able to make good ones for selling among the villagers and outsiders.

At least 5 men and one women make big and small bamboo baskets, winnowing fans, bamboo baskets with hexagonal openings for carrying, and at least 3 men make carrying nets out of plant-fibres available in the jungle. Bamboo-brooms (pahirā), usually purchased from Ghāsi untouchables, are also made by one woman. However, all women and older girls make matteresses out of date-palm-leaves and some of the products are regularly sold in the markets. At least two men and two women make beautiful brooms of 'kāṇsa' reed-tufts and sell them.

For each hamlet there was one 'tree-press', made of heavy wooden planks for pressing oil. These were made by communal labour.

As remarked in the beginning, a winnowing fan may be used for fanning away chaff from grains before storing them or at the time of dehusking them. Similarly a basket for washing cereals may be used for catching and keeping fish.

We have to keep in mind the following apt remarks of Firth : "It is difficult to speak of capital in a primitive economy in a way which makes it comparable with the idea in our society. The mobility of "capital" is high in such primitive societies; diversion to other uses without loss is usually possible." (Human Types, p.68). In fact, there is technological non-specilization of instruments of production, so much so that an iron plough-share may be used for digging up the earth for planting a banana sucker or digging up deep-rooted yams.

### (c) 'Cash' – earning commodities and their role

The 'biri' pulses and mustard and 'jaṭangi' oil seeds are consumed in a small quantity as food; but they are very important for getting rice in exchange. Castor oil-seeds are similarly exchanged for rice. These oil-seeds are sometimes also sold for money, especially the mustard oil-



seeds. Castor oil extracted by boiling the seeds is mostly sold for money. Stick-lac is invariably sold for money, as also cakes of inspissated mango juice prepared by women. Dried 'mahul' flower, banana mostly as ripe fruit, vegetables grown, some beans, jack-fruits in the season, 'kendu' and other jungle fruits are also sold in the markets, where go also date-palm leaf mattresses, occasionally cups and platters of leaves, and surplus tobacco and turmeric. 'Kendu' leaves collected by girls and women specially for contractors for country cigarettes or 'bidi' are purchased according to a fixed rate; rarely also thatching grass may be sold to plainsmen.

Thus we find a great range of "cash"-earning commodities, though excepting castor oil-seeds, stick-lac and 'kendu' leaves, all are consumption-goods also. Naturally, when the yield is not sufficient, the commodities may be consumed rather than exchanged for money or goods. Rarely, some goods are exchanged for services catering to maintenance of capital goods, for instance, repairing instruments and tools or tending cattle, or to remuneration of owners for services of their cattle.

The money obtained by selling the commodities mentioned above is not necessarily invested in purchasing cattle, implements or seeds, but most often to satisfy some immediate needs requiring expenditure of money. Formost are the purchase of clothes and drinking wine in the markets and purchasing some sweets or prized fruits and vegetables or even some "luxuries" like a hurricane lantern or a cloth umbrella, more for prestige than for use, especially in the case of the lantern.

When money is saved after paying for all these, nominal governmental taxes and subscriptions raised in the village (rarely in money), the treasure may still be used to purchase some ornaments or bell-metal utensils or even meet certain crises in the family or among close relatives like funeral or marriage.

On the other hand, they are quite conscious of at least the minimal obligations of capital-building through saving, purchasing or maintaining capital goods. Seeds, fowl, and goats are sometimes purchased for cultivation or breedings.

### 3. Organization of Work

Here not only organization of labour, but of work in general is considered

#### (a) Basic Attitude towards work

In the plains the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, especially the men, are regarded as rather lazy. Indeed, they are considered the laziest among all the tribes and castes of the region. They are addicted to hunting, often fruitlessly, whenever they find leisure, and to feasting, whenever they can afford it. They would not like to do any earthwork as excavating tanks or building roads in the plains. Earth-work is considered the 'lowest' work in Orissa and is also one of the most

unspecilized, undertaken by Kuda low-caste for the most part. Moreover, it is a peculiarly plains work, not possible in the hills. From all these points of view it is obvious that earth-work is obnoxious to the "lord of the hills", what the Pāuri Bhuiyān is acknowledged to be.

But it will be great travesty to say that they do not value industry or that they are incapable of heavy exertion. In fact, unexpectedly the opposite is true. We have seen how they exert in the busiest seasons of sowing and ploughing, weeding and harvesting for about 10 to 12 hours. Lazy men are commented upon in pulic gossip. I know of one villager in Household 1P who is expressly of low prestige, because of his extreme laziness, which is the main reason of his indigent condition. This was the opinion of responsible elders of the village.

Enshrined in a beautiful proverb is this attitude towards work, "Jhāḍaku gale jhure, āḷaku gale pule, Dhāiñ degile majur māiñs, basi rahile picār māiñs." Literally translated; "One goes to the jungle, and obtains a basketful (by collecting), one goes to the stream and procures a handful (by fishing) one runs and jumps (exerts with alerthness) and secures pea-fowl meat (by hunting), but if one does nothing else than sitting, he consumes only the flesh of his buttocks."

#### (b) Divison of Work

Izikowitz remarks on the misleading character of tables of division of labour and concludes : "The thing to do is rather to begin with the various activities, and see how the division of work takes place in connection with them" (p.261). This approach we have already followed while describing the various operations of cultivation, and the activities in hunting and fowling, fishing and collecting, noting when possible the variations. We have also got an idea how the domestic animals are cared for and implements and weapons made.

Sexual division of labour is of fundamental importance. However, only a few activities are considered exclusively sex-bound. It is not necessarily so in the sense of being tabooed to a particular sex, but one is apt to be laughed at if one undertakes a piece of activity exclusively done by the other sex. Thus hunting and fowling, fishing by damming water or poisoning or with rod and line, collecting honey from beehives, tobacco cultivation, growing stick lac, watching swiddens at night, cultivation with plough, sowing paddy and 'biri' pulses and giving ridges of 'jatangi' oil-seeds, and millets, cutting trees in a new swidden, hauling logs from the forest, threshing paddy with cattle, carpentry, building roof of a house, making combs (and perhaps carrying nets), worshipping most deities and spirits in the interest of general welfare and cultivation – these are exclusively for men to do. Women on the other hand are exclusively entrusted with husking grains, planting seeds or pieces of taro in swiddens, cultivating turmeric in garden, cracking 'dhunk' beans, weaving mattresses, making inspissated mango-juice and collecting 'mahul' flowers and worshipping some spirits and deities. Overwhelmingly, however, the women prepare food, clean and keep the house, take care of children, fetch fuel and



water, weed and transplant, reap or collect millets, maize, vegetables and beans, tread the 'jatangi' and mustard oil seeds and millets, cut bushes, shrubs and undergrowth, collect roots, tubers, taro, fruits, leaves, flowers, clean cattle shed, and take care of goats and fowl and carry manure to the garden.

Conversely, the men have little to do overwhelmingly by themselves. Basketry is a new craft where only one woman is engaged while men dominate the scene. In house-building and repairing houses however men have the most to do, from preparing wicker work walls and door-panels to do the roofing.

Then there is a large area of cooperation by both sexes doing the same things together as in reaping, transporting, thatch-grass-mowing, or digging for roots and tubers in jungle. In the last case the men dig for roots deep in the ground with most often the plough-share, while the women reach easier depths with a light digger. Either turmeric, matteresses, inspissated mango cakes, by women.

In some cases where men and women may do the same thing, the way of doing is different. A woman carries water on her head, also against her waist, but a man only on his shoulder. Fuel may be brought by a man on his shoulder, by woman on her head. Following the same principle a load may be carried by a woman on her head and by man with a carrying pole balanced on his shoulder. But babies are carried by both sexes against the waist, which position is considered the best for carrying a baby; but on a distant trip it is slung in a cloth bag from the back of the mother, which mode will never be adopted by a father.

Thus we may conclude that heavier work tends to be done by men, routine and relatively lighter work by the women. Again it should be pointed out that this general principle is modified by so many social and moral factors. For example, shaving and hair-cutting, though a light work, would shame any woman. Production of 'cash' earning commodities outside swidden cultivation is a primary responsibility of the sex to which the advantages accrue. This does not shut doors to cooperation; tobacco may be dried by a woman, as turmeric is spread on the wickerwork mat and raised on to a platform constructed by men for drying 'mahul' flower.

Not only sex but also age determines to a large extent the division of work. Small girls begin helping their mother by running on errands or carying little pails of water from the age of 6 or 7. Boys and firls of 8 onwards are able to watch against birds and may accompany elder boys or girls in tending goats or digging for roots and tubers. Boys with elders may go on fishing expeditions. About 12 a boy or girl is able to herd cows along with an older men or woman. A boy by now hunts with arrow and weeding and reaping can be done by him or her, while the girl has come to gather much knowledge of household activities. By 15 or 16 a boy can plough and earn half wages; a girl of 14-15 can out bushes and begins doing heavier womanly activities, but still she is considered eligible for half-wages. When the boy is a full grown youth and girl a

grown-up woman of about 20 they are expected to be capable of the heaviest jobs. The old men and women may help in cultivation even beyond 60, the older, the lighter the work. It is two old men that have developed basketry to a high level.

### (c) Specialization and Differentiation

There are specialized techniques or activities or more skillful worker, but no full-time specialists. Thus, 'fine' carpentry was done by two men with specialized tools. Similarly, an efficient, durable and beautiful way of thatching roofs is known to a few individuals. A man has purchased a kit of shaving and hair-cutting instruments and he had learnt the plains mode and is reputed to be the best hair-cutter, although every grown-up man is expected to know this art. Similarly among all men 3 or 4 are reputed to be very good at beating tambourine ('cāngu') and two or three, 'madal' drum. Good hunters are also small in number. Similarly among women a few are reputed to be best at plaiting mattresses, a traditional art.

Another group of specialized activities lies in the magico-religious field. Here we have diviners ('sagunīā') who take the help of special thatch-grass, medicinemen-cum-shamans ('rāuliā') who prescribe cures after being possessed by spirits, and sorcerers and sorceresses ('pāngnā' and 'pāngni'). There are others who magically reinforce the effectivity of bows and arrows before a hunting expedition starts. Of course, there are regular priests (priestesses) specified for different deities.

While in specialization the focus lies on the quality of performance in an activity, differentiation deals with the segmentation of the activity. According to Firth there is very important distinction between what he calls "Simple combination of labour" and "complex combination of labour" (Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori, pp. 220. seq.). In weeding, cutting the bush, or reaping, there are several persons doing the same kind of work at the same time in the interest of the same party. This is an instance of "simple combination of Labour" with or without a leader giving directions. "The other type of work is characterized by a number of persons not performing the same kind of work, but each one contributing with a part of the processes or the work" (Izikowitz p. 276). House-building is definitely of this type as also the organization of big game-hunt, and fishing by poisoning. The leaders try to coordinate the activities of several groups of persons, even when they are themselves working. Izikowitz includes agriculture in this type, but agriculture is a large cluster of activities occurring in a long course of time, while the criterion should be simultaneity of, or very close succession of, part-activities. In certain big ceremonies like 'Dihabandhāni', 'Dhuliāni' and 'Debi Usā', as also on the occasion of funeral celebrations the complex differentiated type of activity is also typical. Men and women, priests and priestesses, affinal relatives and blood-kins all have assist duties as to part-activities. In case of marriage celebrations of negotiated type ('magā') the same type of complex combination of work takes place. However, economists may not



agree to include such ceremonial activities as properly belonging to discussion of the organization of labour.

#### (d) Communal Labour

When the menfolk of the whole hamlet go on ceremonial hunting an 'Ākhuli Pārdhi' Day or on 'Raja Parab' or 'Gahmā Punein' day, or on a fishing expedition for purpose of communal feasting, communal labour is obvious. In one case, a household (17P) had contributed a fowl for a ceremony in the hamlet, Tal Tasrā. So all those who had plough-cattle ploughed up his paddy-swidden. Similarly, the Headman was helped with communal labour of the menfolk of the village in honour of his services and status. In 1951 the only male member of 3M fell seriously ill and the Tal Tasrā men cut the trees in his new swidden for country beer and fowl. Swiddens were cut and fired for Pāuri immigrants who served the hamlets as cowherds.

When I was there the menfolk of the village cooperated in building me a house.

The women also organize communal work for ceremonially entertaining and thanking the menfolk with an offer of cakes.

With communal labour are also constructed the village tree-press (plank-press) for oil extraction, and the dormitories for young men and lately a temple for Bisri Debi.

Moreover, youngmen and maidens provide much service in rituals and some funeral and marriage ceremonies, as also for entertaining guests. They act individually or in small groups fetching water, fuel, husking cereals and making leaf-vessels etc. These are all viewed as duties to the community and not to specific households.

#### (e) Cooperative Labour Groups

The first of importance obviously is a household whose members cooperate with one other in all economic activities.

But there is also what I have defined as "reciprocal cooperative labour groups". When a household requires more labour and has perhaps no resources to hire labourers on wage-basis it calls for such a group. There were at least six such cases in 1953. If it is for cutting trees in a new swidden, only men will turn up, regardless of relationship. If it is for weeding or harvesting, both women and men may come to work. Customarily nobody is turned away, even if there be too many hands. Somehow it becomes known how many are necessary or expected. This sort of help or work is called 'bājakāma'. Though the person calling for such a group generally directs the activities, everybody already knows what to do and where to begin, as such 'bājakāma' is mostly repetitive "simple combination of labour". The "employer" always works with others even when he hires labourers, as happens infrequently. They sing and make fun, especially in 'bājakāma' and there is a special type of song at the time of weeding.

## (f) Partnership Groups

When a wife's brother or son-in-law come to help, such activity is "helpfulness". When two or more individuals are associated regularly for fulfillment of common purpose it may be called a "partnership group". For tending cattle, the cattle-owing households along with their 'halgudiā' or users of plough cattle attached to them, are obliged to send two persons a day by turn. These households thus form partnership groups in twos. The groups remain unaltered throughout a year except when a 'halgudiā' frees himself by feasting his benefactors. Next year however there may be new alliances. But the chances are little except when a household acquires cattle of its own. Two households are assigned tending at a time. In case of a widow with one daughter (9M) her 'halgudiā' served the turn. Men or women of different ages may come to co-operate; the younger or junior is advised or directed how to manage the herd.

In the partnership group formed for using plough-cattle, the non-owner becoming a 'halgudiā' they cooperate in ploughing each other's swiddens or gardens.

## B. Distribution and Remuneration

We may profitably follow Firth here. "A primitive distributive system ...does not consist of finding exact equivalents for the services rendered by the different factors of production. It tends rather to follow the conception of reward for the social advantages conferred by participation in production, instead of a quantitative return for the material advantage obtained". (Human Types, p.69). Therefore, "...the system of distribution of the results of production tends to be a complex one, and not easily separated into a classical economist's scheme of rent, interest, wages, profits granted that this formal division is now breaking down in modern economic analysis" (Firth, 1951, p.136). "Moreover, the needs of the component members of the society are taken directly into account, so that the system is governed by principles of welfare and justice which vary according to the particular community". (Human Types, p.69). These preliminary observations give a proper perspective for examining the details below. We must also note that in cases of remuneration by feasting with food or drink, both the parties share, and considerations of ritual friendship or close kinship affect the actual payment.

Finally, it must be mentioned that a sick householder of priestly families was helped with communal labour for a consideration of only drinking and fowl-meat. Such communal help and help among kinsmen for almost "no consideration" show the social contextualization of the concepts of distribution and remuneration.

### 1. Consideration for use of land and trees

For making swiddens membership of a village community ensures land. When an immigrant is accepted into the community he or she stands a feast for the village elders. Every year at the Village Foundation Ceremony the 'Parjā' householders entertain the 'Mātiāli' menfolk with country beer. Such consideration is however not expressly for swidden land or use of village trees, common to both the hamlets, but generally for the rights of a villager at all.



Such consideration is however given expressly for use of land from another village under some scarcity circumstances. The Pāuri Bhuiyān in the old settlement of Derujā in the Kalā valley had entertained the villagers of Hātisuḷ up in the hills and begged for a concession to collect wood, bamboo etc. from a patch of forest adjacent to Derujā. This agreement has stood for several generations.

A temporary concession has been granted by the villagers of Tare, on the hills opposite to Tasrā, to 5 men to cut swiddens up the opposite bank of the Belsarāi. At Tare now there are a few households after a large-scale emigration to government colonies, and thus the land given is not a sacrifice for Tare people. Even then the customary consideration of feasting the villagers of Tare with fowl and rice and 12 pots of country beer will have to be borne by the grantees. This feasting, however, again cements the network of bonds between the two villages.

In contrast, the land for maize-gardens is limited and there is inheritable occupation-rights of the users. Therefore, very few older immigrant household 'owned' such land; but these gardens are used by others for apparently no consideration when the 'owing' household lived in another hamlet. Some plots can also be acquired by 'Parjā' by feasting the village elders.

Jack-fruit trees can be purchased for one Rupee for an individual who had planted, inherited, or purchased it, or by giving country beer to the village elders in case of a village tree.

## 2. Remuneration of Labour

### (a) Exchange of Services and Goods

When a son-in-law or brother-in-law or a sister comes from another village to help in cultivation or mowing thatch-grass etc., he or she is not paid any wages but is treated as a guest and given some presents at departure. Similar visits on the part of the beneficiary are the only compensation in services. Such reciprocity, however, strengthens the social ties rather than compensates the services. Similarly, brothers in the same village may help each other, as in households 12M and 13M.

Exchange of services is the only way of compensation in tending cattle, or in watching swiddens in case of temporary absence. Such is also the case when women husk the grains or press oil by helping each other.

### (b) Remunerating Cooperative Groups

For obvious reasons the household, albeit its being a cooperative group, will be excluded from our discussions here.

When there is fishing in cooperative groups the catch is shared equally among participants only. But when there is a big game bagged, there is an elaborate procedure of distribution. If it is the first game of the winter season, the head goes to the ancestral spirits, thrown into the

jungle. If not, it falls to the share of the marksman (*bindhāni bhāga*), who also gets flesh on the left scapula and one thigh. All members of the hunting group share the flesh on the right scapula, one side of the chest and 3 other thing. This share is called '*pārdhiā bhāga*' or hunters' share. Whatever is left becomes village share or '*gāuñriā bhāga*', and is distributed equally among all households, participating the hunting or not.

But a Tasrā man killed one '*gaya*' of the bos family at Raḍā, his wife's village, and as a guest he carried away only the horns and honour for himself and prestige for Tasrā. The horns were in turn presented to the Headman, his elder parallel cousin.

In reciprocal cooperative work or '*bājakāma*' only feasting with fowl(s) and rice is expected, and if it is full-day work, also a mid-day meal, may be with fowl, in the swidden. For each worker, irrespective of age, about 2 Kilo rice and for every 10 workers or so one big fowl and some '*biri*' pulses seem to be the rate. In 1954 24P household stood one '*bājabhāta*' or feasting to 20 workers, including one from the house and also some teenagers (eligible for half the rate in wages), with 50 Kilo of rice, 2 big fowls and 2 Kilo of '*biri*' pulses. All this was cooked by the workers after the harvest was over and equally distributed. Thus this household, considered to be the wealthiest, gave more than the priest of 30M who feasted 21 workers with 42 Kilo and 2 big fowls and also '*biri*' pulses. The latter was already praised as "generous" in contrast to the miserly treatment of 10M.

### (c) Wages Proper

This is called '*bhuti*' and is paid at the half-rate to grown-up boys and girls or for half a day's work, at the full-rate for a full day's work to grown up young people or adults.

Then there are nominal wages in cloths for '*haliā*' or year-long hired worker besides his food and wages for a cattle-herd given by those who benefit from his services besides his daily rations.

As pointed out earlier when wages are paid to a sister or such close relatives, there may be sometimes a present given. This happened when the sister of the Headman in Household 14P was presented one Rupee besides her wages. The "real wages" may thus be of much significance, especially in case of feeding workers in a full day's work (vide p. 10). In the valley at the time of harvest one man-day's rate is 4 kilo paddy and 1/2 kilo rice as rations in lieu of mid day meal. In the hill-village it is 4 kilo '*gangei*' millets or 2 Kilo '*biri*' pulses or 2 Kilo '*jaṭangi*' oilseeds, which are equivalent to 2 Kilo rice or 4 Kilo of paddy. However, it is not common at Tasrā to pay wages in rice or paddy. Once 3 workers were fed each 1 Kilo rice cooked, with '*biri*' pulses, and given about 4 Kilo paddy by the junior Headman in 1954 for full-day's work in cutting trees in a new swidden. But he paid women working half-day for cutting bushes only 2 Kilo of paddy and also for weeding 2 Kilo of paddy or '*gangei*' millets or '*dhunk*' beans without food. However, women got the same rate as men at harvesting.



### 3. Remuneration for Capital Goods

Money is not lent on large-scale, and if it is lent, no interest is demanded among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. The more important are capital-goods, that is, seed, cattle and implements.

Seed is borrowed at 50% or usually at 100% interest from the plains. It is always compound interest in this region. One or two paddy-lenders charge only 25% interest, but their stock is very soon lent out. Till 1953 the rate of interest among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ was 100% outside one's village but after a tribal conference it has been reduced to 50%.

Similar reduction was made in case of hiring charges of cattle. Formerly it was 5 'khandi' (200 Kilo) paddy for a bullock and 4 'khandi' (160 Kilo) for a cow, but since 1953 it should have been 160 Kilo for a bullock and 120 Kilo for a cow. This rule was valid only among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. But I found in 1954 that the old rate was still in force. Besides cereals the cattle-owner is feasted with one pot of country beer and a fowl.

The system of sharing the services of cattle by jointly ploughing with the cattle-owner and standing a drink of a pot of country beer at the end of cultivation season has already been referred to. The obligation to tend cattle by turn lapses only when the beer is served.

But in 12M the elder brother cultivated his swiddens with the help of cattle of his younger brother in 13M. He has to pay nothing, only that his daughter goes to tend cattle on many days along with somebody from 13M, when it is the latter's turn. In another case, the elder brother in Tal Tasrā (10M) helped his younger brother in Upar Tasrā in 27M for no consideration, not even sharing in tending cattle. 27M was however helped by affinal relatives in 24P with cattle only for a pot of country beer and this was not 'halaguriā' relationship. In 30M, where the head of the family was sick, his parallel senior cousin, the Headman, helped with plough and cattle for no consideration. The headman also helped his wife's brother for a pot of country beer. In cases of "no consideration", mentioned by the villagers as "by way of compassion" (bhāhare'), I strongly suspect that there was some entertainment with country-beer, but what is significant is that such cases were consciously set apart and the consideration not mentioned (see p.103 for another way of helping affinal relatives).

Similar considerations of sociality or compassion led no ritual friend to remit 20 Kilo of paddy due from a non-Bhuiyāñ as hiring charges for 'kāndhi' cattle.

In the system of hiring a cow or bullock for yoking for the first-time only one pot of country beer is offered in consideration. On the other hand, the animal has to be given fodder and the manure belongs to the care-taker, unlike in the case of 'halgudiā' relationship.

For borrowing a plough, plough-share, digger, or pick etc. nothing is given, but such help in return is however expected.

#### 4. Remuneration of Special Roles

The village Headman has the right to ask for communal labour for him. But in this case he had to entertain the villagers with a feast of rice and goat as in 1951 and 1953. This in fact cost him more than a 'bājakāma' would have, as in 1951 for ten ploughmen one fowl would have sufficed instead of a goat. This, therefore, seemed to be more a matter of privilege and prestige rather than of mere economic considerations.

To ensure good crops and to avert the crop failure due to 'gandhi' and 'muhāñ' pests, a special ritual was observed in 1953, and the priest got some presents from the villagers as a whole.

But priests in other ceremonies, observed every year in the interest of good crops, health of men and cattle and general welfare of the village, were not specifically rewarded. They usually got specified portions, usually the heads, of animals sacrificed and enough rice to have a good meal at the time of each ceremony.

Only in one case, however, an exception is made. At the time of the ceremonial hunting of 'Ākhuli Pārdhi' the priest who worships the ancestral spirits and also leads the communal hunting party for spiritually increasing the chances of success gets a special share, called, 'Dehuriā bhāga (priest's share).

#### C. Consumption

In the last section we have described how the resources are procured by collecting, cultivating, hunting, fishing or by day labour, how work is organized towards these ends and how much is thus produced. We shall now see in what manner the major needs of an individual, a family and the village are directly met out of these resources for the maintenance of routine life in the community.

##### 1. Nutrition System

###### (a) Food, Drink and Narcotics

Items of food change according to the seasonal supply of crops, vegetables, fruits and tubers, flowers and leaves. However, the staple food is preferably some cereal like rice or one of various millets, mostly 'gangei'. Rice is preferred highest and is never omitted on festive occasions. During the lean months of September to November, when early and late varieties of maize ripen, they form the major diet. Again in the mango and jack-fruit season, about April to July, these fruits form the staple in most families. Taro or yams from time to time are taken as the major article of food, especially in lean months during the rains and autumn. Yams are collected fresh and cultivated taro taken from the granary.

During the dry months of January to June occasional fishing, hunting and trapping birds, and meat on occasions of festivals or sacrifices at rituals, or of feasting for relatives or as a part



of payment, help to add chunks of animal-protein from time to time. However, the menfolk benefit much more than the women folk at ritual sacrifices or communal feasting. Eggs of domestic fowl are very rarely eaten, as a supply of chickens should always be kept ready for meeting unforeseen ritual demands or those arising out of afflictions in the household. And nobody knows how many chicks will after all survive. 'Biri' pulses consumed oftener, supplies some plant protein. However, this is cooked most often during visits of guests, and very often a mother foregoes her share for her son. On occasions of communal feasting after harvest 'biri' pulses are also distributed. Plant protein is, however, most commonly obtained from beans of various kinds. Stored-up 'dhunk' beans, especially prized, may sometimes form the major item of a meal, at any rate for the womenfolk in the family.

During the rainy and autumn seasons garden and swidden vegetables like cucumber, varieties of melons and gourds are consumed. During the winter and summer, however, only vegetables like the prized fruits of egg plant, sometimes tomatoes, oranges for children are purchased from markets. Papaya from a few privately-owned trees is not available to all. However extensively banana may be cultivated Tasrā very rarely do they eat it as cooked vegetables but more frequently, the ripe banana as fruit. Wild fruits, berries and flowers, and leaves and rarely cultivated ones, are consumed by all. Mangoes are common to all, and jackfruit trees are owned by all Māṭiālī and many 'Parjā' families, from whom the few have-nots get sufficient presents. 'Mahul' flowers, dried and stored, and cakes of inspissated mango juice are also taken. In the months of July-August after a first-fruits ceremony the kernel in stones of mango are consumed. Jackfruit seeds are also cooked or roasted as vegetables.

Apart from cooking with 'tula' oil or 'jaṭangi' oil, of course in little quantities, 'jaṭangi' oil seeds are pounded and taken as an appetizer with cereals.

Coming to appetizer, the most common and highly prized one is red chilly, especially a smaller, smarter variety. Tamarind with chillies plies a sour-sharp whip to appetite. Another is sour bamboo-shoot with chillies. Rice or 'gangel' – rice with only chillies and salt may be quite satisfying as a meal for the Bhuiyān. Wild honey largely falls to the share of the male collector. Girls and boys enjoy sucking honey from the flower or 'Dhātki' plant in the spring. Honeycombs with larvae are squeezed for honey. Brown tree-ants, yielding a sour juice, appear also to be eaten.

Ideally one takes food three times a day. Timing of meals is, however, not rigid, although a loose conception of hours according to the movement of the sun regulates the routine to some extent. Break-fast time is the most variable – early morning for the children, usually slightly later for the men before going to swidden or to work elsewhere, or to gossip at the village platform. A woman, if married, must take breakfast only after a bath, and usually most of her household chores are finished by that time. Little children will now have a second

helping with the mother. The lunch-time is similarly variable, but may be easily placed between 1-3 P.M. in the most common cases. Although a wife awaits arrival of her husband and usually takes after him, there is no hard and fast rule that all should take a family meal together. Soon after the nightfall the supper is taken; this time, however, the family can enjoy a hot meal together. This appears to be the major meal of the day and the least variable in timing. Both the lunch and supper are as a rule warm. The break-fast may be cold left-over from one's share of the night before, or it may be a warm meal of cereals, or roasted maize, boiled beans or taro or yam. Very frequently, however, the adults go without a break-fast, if not working hard or not going to some other place. Adult or child, barring the little ones, must offer a tiny part of the food to the ancestors before eating or drinking local beer of alcohol.

The most common and regular drink is water, collected from the pools in the village. From the time when 'tisriā' millets ripen in the month of October, beer is fermented off and on. There are some drinking bouts, often on the occasion of communal or family ceremonies or of fulfillment or initiation of contracts. Spirituous drink is invariably preferred to fermented beer, but the former has to be purchased with money. So it is not very frequently taken. Some villagers make a crude bamboo apparatus for distillation in hiding. Beer like beverage from 'mahul' flowers is made at home and is called 'sarlā'. During cold one may take 'rasi' or the clear exudation on the fermented stuff, also given to guests. That men indulge in distilled liquor during their visit to Kolā market is deeply suspected by their women. Although girls of 12-13 may take beer, it remains a rare treat for a Bhuiyāñ woman. One influential woman, sister of the Headman, takes a lot of beer and therefore is not appreciated for this particular laps by the older women of Tasrā. Boys begin taking local beer as early as 8 years of age, before their entry into the bachelors' dormitory. Drinking beer at home alone is, however, not hear of. It is always a social phenomenon, almost a small ceremony. During of date-palm or caryota palm wine has been of marginal importance.

If drinking brings along with it a touch of the ceremony, smoking is a quiet humdrum affair. A Bhuiyāñ man without tobacco in this form is simply unthinkable. While out fishing in the Beljhari rivulet, they went to the length of producing fire with a fire-drill for smoking.

Smoking of hemp is rare and taking of opium I have not heard of.

Sharing of food, drink and narcotics in equal quantities is a landmark of Bhuiyāñ social habits. As in the public feasting so at home even a child of six gets a share equal to that of an adult. On a trip any present or acquisition of this nature will be promptly distributed. In a communal feasting food is distributed equally among households.

Food and Drink have great ceremonial and social value. Good food is expected by and offered to friends and visiting relatives. A festival, a ritual, a contract is observed through offer of food and/or drink, in some way better than in daily life.



In the following Table will be seen the analysis of food in 9 households, 7 of Lower Tasrā and 2 of Upper Tasrā. Although the season of plenty and festivals, during which the food census was taken, gives the data a rather favourable colour, we may still discern a great range of variability among the household. In lower Tasrā there were two communal feasting (one with stemmed rice cakes) and two communal rituals. At one of them a male member of each household shared the sacrificial fowl-meat with an unusually heavy meal of 500 gram rice each, besides drinking. At the other ritual only a few of the menfolk went, as always, with 500 gram of rice each. On these middays the women very often took a heavier meal, but never so rich or heavy as that of their menfolk. On the whole, one may well conclude a preferential treatment of the menfolk in respect of food, drink and narcotics.

Table of Food Consumption (Approximate)

Household No.	Days recorded 1954	Total Man units	Times cooked (moring)	Cereals (millets) Average	Taro and Yam	Beans and Pulses	Fruits and Vegetables	Fish and Meat (Times cooked)	Oil Seeds
Tal Tasrā :									
15 M	29.1-2.2 +4.2	36	9 (1)	7905 g(1) Av.230g	2 times	200 g + 3 times +	+	300 g + (1 time)	170 g
8 M	29.1-4.2	83	14 (2)	1800 g(1) Av.217g	1 time	1650 g + 4 times	4 times	750 g + (3 times)	170 g
10 M	29.1-5.2	31	8 (0)	9200 g(1) Av.297g	1 time	100 g +	6 times	800 g + (2 times)	170 g
1 P	29.1-4.2	24	7 (1)	8650 g(1) Av.360g	-	+	-	300 g + (1 time)	170 g
17 P	29.1-5.2	47½	13 (2)	11310 g(1) Av.238g	-	700 g	3 times	300 g + (1 time)	170 g
4P + 5P	29.1-3.2	70	12 (3)	20350 g(1) Av.291g	1 time	4150 g	1 time	300 g + (1 time)	170 g
Upper Tasrā :									
18 P	7.2-13.2	92	16 (2)	14000 g(5) Av.152g	-	350 g	5 times	800 g + (2 times)	350 g
26 M	7.2-13.2	87½	15 (2)	13950 g(5) Av.160g	2 times	1670 g +	2 times	(2 times)	350 g

Note : oil used in cooking is not considered.

During the period of study at upper Tasrā also there were 2 communal rituals of similar nutritional effects. But as lower Tasrā had two communal feasting during the period of study there, the effect is quite evident in the per capita intake of cereals. Whereas in lower Tasrā this intake did not fall below ca.220 g in Upper Tasrā it did not go beyond ca.160 g. In this comparison,

however, the much smaller representation of Upper Tasrā households is not to be forgotten. Even then the trend is clear. It will also be seen that number of warm break-fasts is not significantly variable, which is uniformly infrequent, notably so even in this season of plenty. On the other hand, intake of beans and pulses and vegetables as also the frequency of cooking millets (significantly more in upper Tasrā) are greatly variable. The poorest, and allgeldly also the laziest, household 1 P, had the least balanced diet. Its highest per capita intake of cereal is partly explained by the illness of two adult members. Who could not eat up their shares of communal feastings as fast or as often as the households 4P + 5P and 8M with their larger membership. However, these variations should not cloth the fact that there is no wide difference in actual level of consuming food, drink, and narcotics. Mutual sharing, and above all, the communal and public feastings contribute largely towards raising this level on the part of the poorer or temporarily incapable sections in the community. Moreover, as shown by Dr. P.N. Sen Gupta (1953), the local millet beer of the Abor tribe – very similar to that the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ – contributes to the nutritive balance of food. It should be left to future investigation to ascertain how far the Pāuri food, often consisting of cereals, taro, yams and roots, is complemented by their millet beer, which is never consumed daily as among the Abor. However, the food constituents among the Hill Bhuiyāñ appear to be more balanced than among the urali in the Travancore Hills, who do not take animal protein and depend more regularly on tapioca, yams and wild roots and do not take such beer.

### (b) Preparation of Food and Drink

For preparing rice paddy is boiled and then dried, or for use in rituals, is merely dried in the sun, and then dehusked with a husking lever. This is a log of wood with a transverse pestle at the head and an axle at the other end. The axle rests on slits in two posts driven in the ground. The log extends slightly behind the axle and affords foot-rest for levering the pestle upward. When pressure is released the pestle runs into the grain-filled mortar, a hole in the ground. It requires a woman at the mortar, tending it and winnowing chaff from the grain and another woman, sometimes two, putting pressure on the foot-rest. Paddy or 'gangei' (slightly soaked) are thus dehusked into rice. 'Jāli' millet requires about 4 times of husking. 'Kada' or 'māndiā' millet, slightly soaked or halved on the curry-stone, is pounded with this lever to obtain powder. Rice is also similarly powdered for preparing cakes or for ritual purposes.

For a housewife next in importance to the husking lever is the so-called "curry-stone". A flat hard-stone and a "child" or cylindrical short piece of stone are necessary for halving pulses or making paste of rice, mustard, turmeric, or battering hard, 'dhunk' beans, mango stones etc. or powdering 'jatangi' oil seeds.

Rice or millet-rice is boiled in water. The substantive starchy water is not thrown away, but is added to vegetables, fish, meat or 'suturi' beans etc.



A singed fowl is cut into pieces, then fried in 'mahul' (tula) or rarely mustard oil with turmeric and salt, and later on the rice-starch is added. With a piece of wood or wooden ladel it is stirred and the meat is separated from water, so that both the gravy and the meat may be distributed in equal shares. Sometimes a small animal like squirrel, after being singed and cut into pieces, is just steamed with salt and turmeric in a packet of leaves in hot ashes. A whole goat, after being skinned, is also singed by rubbing the body on burning wood from side to side. Then it is cut up for distribution.

Medium-sized to small fish are cut into pieces, without the scales having been taken away, and mixed with salt and mustard and turmeric paste in rice starch. When heated 'tula' oil bursts out whole mustards in a pot the mixture is poured into it to boil to a thick gravy. A big snake-like 'gunjiā' fish is, however, first fried in oil with mustard; then freshwater with turmeric and mustard paste is added to it.

'Jhiliri' and 'Kānoan' flowers and leaves are first boiled to dry up their water contents, and then added to mustard in heated oil with fresh water. On the other hand, one taro (ula) flower is fried in oil with mustard and then rice starch is added. 'Mahul' flowers are boiled and eaten when necessary.

A slightly irritating taro called 'kanduāni sārū' is boiled, skinned off, and then eaten, as also 'pithā sārū' taro. Or they may be cut into pieces and cooked with oil, mustard and turmeric, in rice starch. Yams are similarly eaten after boiling. There is, however, a special variety, called bitter yam or 'pitā ālu', which must be boiled, cut into pieces and left in running water so that its poison may be washed away. Then again it is boiled, the water being thrown out. Then is it eatable.

Preparing the beloved 'dhunk' bean is also a strenuous affair. It is boiled, then parched, battered, and left in a big basket with large interstices in the stream overnight so that its hard skin and harmful juice are washed away. Next morning it is boiled and served. In another method, it is soaked for 2 nights in water, then battered, its skin taken out, again boiled before eating. In still another variant it is soaked, battered, boiled and then left the baskets in the stream overnight. Next morning it is again boiled for being eatable.

Maize-grains are pounded with the husking lever and boiled for food. Sometimes the whole cob is roasted. 'Gangei' millet is first boiled in water for 2 or 3 minutes, then roasted in a big-bellied pot so that the grains will burst out into white swollen fluffy stuff. Maize may be roasted similarly. Roasted millets may be powdered with the husking lever. 'Māndiā' and 'gangei' flour can easily be carried in a journey or when on duty of herding animals.

Local beer is called 'pācei' or 'kusunā', sometimes also 'hāndiā', 'Gangei' millet, rice, but specifically 'bājra' or 'tisriā' millet are the alternative bases. Rice-beer is considered the sweetest,

and 'tisriā' – beer the bitterest and strongest. Often a compound is made; 4 or 3 parts 'risriā' and one part rice or 'gangei', a total of about 2 Kilo is sufficient for "one" beer (khande pācei), two such pots making up 'bhāre pācei' (2 pots requiring a carrying pole). The cereals are cooked in water and stirred with a ladle with a flat squared end and sides till the boiled mixture does not drop when held high. Then the stuff is spread on banana leaves, left to cool. Two to three pellets of 'rānu' or fermenting ingredient are sprinkled over it and the whole thing placed in a beer-pot. The mouth of the pot is sealed off with banana leaves softened by heating and thus left to ferment for 3 days in summer and 4 days in winter. Then the fermented mess is thinned with water and served in gourd-vessels. Red 'Saraḷā' beer is made from 'mahul' flowers in a similar manner.

For ritual and festive purpose rice -cakes are made out of rice -flour mixed with salt and water, sometimes also with 'Jaṭangi' oilseed-powder. Either they are backed in leaf -packets or cooked in big pots by steaming on boiling water. In festivals sometimes cakes of pounded 'biri' pulses, fried in oil, are cooked in rice-starch with turmeric and salt.

On occasions of big festivities, when the whole hamlet or the village is to be feasted, men or women cook in a row of big pots set on a trench of fire. This method is called 'Khandā'. This is also resorted to in case of treating a big 'Bāja' labour party. For keeping water, brought from a distance, to serve numerous guests at funeral or marriage feasts, the straight trunk of a 'Simuli' (tree-cotton) tree is made into a "canoe" by the young men of the village.

Women and girls collect firewood for the kitchen and the fire-place in winter. Men usually bring in bigger logs for the fire-place. Fire is the main protection against winter cold.

## 2. Dress and equipments

### (a) Dress and Decoration

S.C. Roy deals with dress and ornaments in some details in his book (pp 66-69). His description is to this day valid. A short loin cloth reaching above the knee and another cloth as an upper garment covering the shoulders are the common male attire. I have seen only one old man and an elderly man using a strip of perineal cloth and they are not the poorest in the village. Only boys of upto 13-14, and not girls, may use such cloth. At dances and on festivals especially, the young men wear cloth reaching down the knee. Adults on a journey or respectable elders on official errands may wear a turban. But the cloth is not dyed yellow as Roy describes (p.67). What Roy does not mention is the fact that the men have left keeping their hairs long, tied in a bun, and have begun wearing close-fitting "banian" or tailored shirts. They also use wooden sandals during the rains in the village. specially youngmen and girls carry combs of bamboo or wood. Men help each other for having a hair-cut.



From about the age of 12-13 a girl leaves wearing "kabjā" skirt of about 4 cubits but wears a sari 7 to 12 cubits long, like an adult woman. Soon she will be wearing all the ornaments her family can afford. An especially prized sari comes from Keonjhar and is 12-24 cubits long with very broad deep red borders. No sari, however, reaches beyond the calf muscles. The hair is parted in the middle and is collected into a bun at the back. Especially, young girls use hair tussels. Hair on the head is cleaned from time to time with the juice of the bark of two creepers, 'Kerkee' and 'Kanti'.

Men wear silver, rarely gold earrings. There may be just piece of black string round the neck. Very few have an iron bangle on the right wrist or on both the wrists.

Ornaments of women capture the decorative impulse in the Pāuri Bhuiyān society. In the richer families a girl in her youth or a woman may have the following ornaments: ear-rings of brass or silver nose rings of silver or brass; a neck lace of beads of red 'Pohalā', 'tānger kanthi' or yellow stones, blue glass, or coins (Sukimāla) or of a combination of several materials; bangles of various types, some of them heavy - 'Kankan', 'makā manjā' or maize - grain beaded 'Kankan' rugudiā or pellety 'Kankan' of brass; heavy and thick armlets (tāra) of brass; a large number of rings of brass for the fingers and toes and lastly heavy brass anklets. On festive occasions as for dancing girls and even youngmen wear flowers on the hair or on the ear in case of the latter.

Men and women take a daily bath. The women clean their hair with a special earth or some plant juices. Before going on visits or to markets they put in cleaned clothes and oil the hair.

Ornaments are part and parcel of the status and personality of a married woman. When her husband is dead she takes off all her ornaments during the period of mourning which for this purpose extends over a few years.

The Government have since about 1945 presented red turbans and after 1948 green ones to each of the 'Sardārs' or regional Headmen in the Pāuri areas.

Men ordinarily carry a club but more often an axe (tāblā) on a battle-axe (tāngi) while on a journey. An umbrella of palm-leaves on a bamboo-frame and recently an ordinary cloth-umbrellas saves them from the rains.

#### (b) Recreational Equipments

'cāng' or 'cāngu' is the name for a tambourine - like musical instrument which forms the life-source of their main recreation, namely dancing. It is made of a strip of a somewhat pliable wood bent in a circle. On one side the treated hide of a goat is mounted taut. In the hollow thus created an iron string with some iron boards is strung from side to side of the wooden frame below the top. One holds the 'cāng' the hollow towards oneself with the left hand, and taps or strikes the hide with right hand fingers and also taps mildly with the fingers of the left hand. This simple instrument can produce a wide variety of tones with the interplay of jingling of the iron beads the tapping and the striking.

Another instruments, a light drum hung from the neck is used only in 'karmā' dance and music. It is called 'mādal' and is made of an earthen cylindrical frame one end being broader than the other. Both the ends are mounted taut with goat hide with a special coating in the middle for better sound the drum is played with fingertapping. It is owned by about two men in the whole village.

Roy mentions (p.62) bamboo-flutes as an instrument of music. But I learnt that it was rarely used by a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ.

One Tasrā villager was fond of 'khanjani' – a type of tambourine of small size with cymbals. It was a marginal case.

### 3. House – Establishment

#### Making a House

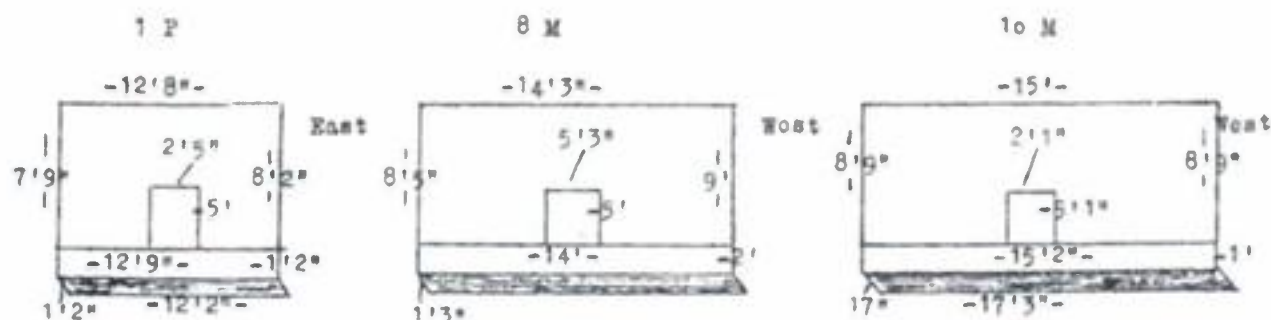
Every nuclear family have one sleeping hut-that seems to be the rule. The grown-up boys and girls go to sleep in dormitories. cattle are housed in separate sheds and goats in their sheds attached to the house. When a poor man owns one sleeping hut, cooking, storing and sheltering fowl have to be done there. When there are two huts the second hut is commonly used as a (basāghar) sitting room for entertaining guests, for cooking beer and use in other occasions when the kitchen may not be used or ever for housing goats and fowl. Though the main granary is always in the sleeping hut, some minor products may be stored in the second hut, where also may be the husking lever sheltered, if not in an annexe. The "sacred corner" (bhitar), when present, is usually walled off for housing the ancestral spirits and lies always in the hut with the main kitchen.

A pāuri hut is always oblong in shape and have ridged roof with two slopes and gabled walls with slight opening at the top for ventilation. There is always a narrow high verandah in front and may be on the sides or at the back. The house floor is always higher than the ground level on which it rests. The walls on the smaller sides are of vertical wooden posts plastered with mud and cow dung and on other sides of strong bamboo wickerwork with such plastering. The cow sheds have strong wooden-posts in the wall without plastering and their floor is made also of logs horizontally laid for easily letting their urine to the earth.

The living huts are low about 4 to 5 meters high. The sketches of ground plan of 3 houses are given below showing the length and breadth. It will be seen that the size of the one hut of a poor man in 1P is even smaller than the junior headman's (8M) or a village priest's (10m) main hut out of 4 and 3 huts respectively, besides their cattle sheds. The junior headman has even a separate shed for husking lever with very low solid walls of mud. The priest and his wife using 3 huts and the poor man and his wife and a child at breast living in one hut testifies to the difference in wealth status and comfort. Although the junior headman's family



is larger in size, his having so many huts only corroborates the above fact. The headman of the village in upper tasrā owns 3 big huts but he has two wives in two separate huts and his daughter's family in the third. Similarly in 24P there are 3 huts housing families of 2 brothers and a mother and a sister's family temporarily. As the headman and the 'Pariā' household in 24P and the priest in 10 M are considered richer than the junior headman the number of huts alone is not necessarily a criterion of corresponding grade of wealthiness.



If there is variation in number of huts between the poor and the richer there's hardly any difference in style of construction in materials used or in planning of the inside. All the materials are gathered from the jungle with own labour or with help from relatives. Even the huts for living are plastered with the red soil by all very rarely in a pattern of red and white.

An actual case of construction of a one-hut house of 4P household was recorded on a Sunday in February-march or Phagun month, 1953, the elder brother and head of the household, fasting after bath, plastered a piece of ground with cow dung and made three heaps of sun dried rice in the name of 'Badām' family ancestors and 'Dharma', and covered them with a new earthen pot. Next morning, fortunately for them, the heaps were not disturbed and so the site was divined to be auspicious. With his younger brother he collected poles of various sizes from the jungle for 4 days. In 4 days more they could assemble bamboo and thinner poles and creepers 'Siari' for being made into ropes.

The size of the hut would be 7 cubits by 12 cubits. On the next Sunday after early bath and fasting, the elder brother planted the "Shubha Khunta" or the "auspicious pole". A worship of the deities "Badām" family ancestors and "Dharam" was held in the north-east corner of the hut. A ritual pattern was drawn with emulsion of rice paste on the ground plastered with cow-dung. Turmeric powder and sun dried rice in 9 helpfuls and burning sal incense at 3 places for the deities invoked, sacrifice of 3 fowls to them, pouring of the blood from their trunks on the "auspicious pole" and offering of porridge of sun dried rice rice cakes baked in leaves and heads of the fowl fried in 'tula' oil and water, to the ancestors housed in 5P were the landmarks of the worship. Besides 7 mango leaves radiating from the same joint and 7 rounds of thread were necessary. It is remarkable that the ancestors were honoured with the sacrifice of fowl first then 'Badām' and lastly 'Dharam'.

It took 2 days again for the two brothers, father's brother, and a cousin from 5P to gather the thatching grass. After the worship, through which the construction of the house was ritually insured and the future house also blessed and protected, the construction proper began. It took them another 9 days to be ready with the main structure, roofing and construction of the door-frame and door-panel of bamboo wickerwork (dugal tat) turning on a socket. Another day the house floor was evened by sprinkling with water and hammering with just a curry-stone ! The wife of the elder brother plastered the floor with cow-dung. In two days a mixture of earth and cow dung was prepared by the elder brother with the help of his feet and he could raise two narrow verandahs. Another day took the two brothers to make and place 2 walls of bamboo wicker-work in position. The house wife plastered the red soil, brought by her husband from near kajakala market lying about 18 kilometers away. The elder brother also constructed the granary platform inside the house in one day. Thus it took at least 25 days, at least 45 man days of labour, out of which close relatives contributed perhaps only 4 man-days. It is necessary to point out that some materials like suitable bamboo for the wicker-work door-panel or the red soil for colouring the wall were procured before and the house wife helped more than sketched here.

A case of reconstructing a living hut in household 24P was also recorded. This was necessary as 'kara' rats had burrowed extensively into the foundation so that the poles supporting the walls and the roof were dangerously loosened. As a hut cannot be reconstructed in the front of the farmer hut, it had to be done at the back, in 1947 or 1948. This was a bigger hut divided into 3 apartments - kitchen consuming two thirds space, the "sacred corner" or 'bhitar' and kantail or anteroom. As the work was done in the month of Baisakh, April-May, in the thick of work in swiddens, more help was necessary and affinal relatives from the 'Matjiali' group come in to help. As it was a case of reconstruction no special worship or divination was necessary. The ridge-pole and two door-panels from the old house were used in the new, for their utility and presumably also for the symbolic purpose. Sometimes as in this house hold 24P, an extension in a old hut for sitting and guests is made to house even a couple.

#### (b) House hold articles

The most common house-hold articles may be grouped under those for the kitchen and preparation of food, for journey and transport, granary, bed and bedstead, for lighting, for cleaning, and for safe-custody.

A-part from the utensils of 'sal' or siari leaves leaf-platters, leaf-cups and bigger leaf vessels- there may be one or two brass vessels, small brass water jugs, an iron pan, earthen cooking pots storing jars and pots and bottle gourds for carrying water. Only a few richer families own one or two big brass vessels or big heavy jugs for carrying water. One or two aluminum pots or utensils may, however be seen in most house. Winnowing fan, curry-stones for grinding



etc. are also essential components in the kitchen paraphernalia. A wooden trough for keeping mango juice before it is made into inspissated cakes and bamboo baskets for washing or as containers are also invariably present. Wooden or infrequently iron ladles are also met with. For drying paddy or turmeric in the sun the date-palm mattresses are used while for drying 'mahul' – flowers big wicker-work boards of bamboo high on a platform in front of the house are characteristic. A cutting knife, specially a curved one of iron for vegetables, is indispensable. The axe is used for collecting firewood.

For the journey and transport one must have one or two carrying poles of thick bamboo and two four string-nets and a number of big baskets for carrying on the head, the latter for the women and the former for the men. A bamboo club, but more commonly an axe or battle-axe, are also essential to carry with in the jungle.

The granary of cereals, taro, turmeric, pulses, beans like "dhunk" etc. consists of globes of straw-rope wound round the preserved object. Surplus maize is hung in bunches of whole cobs. The main granary rests always on a raised platform constructed carefully to keep away mice and rats. Mahul flower, dried, are preserved in big earthen jars.

Many households have at least one cot of light wooden frame and string-net made of a type of jungle grass. When there is one cot in a family the male head or a male guest always uses it. The others sleep on date-plam mattresses on the floor. For lighting one has commonly a tin kerosene lamp; few have cheap hurricane lanterns, which are, however, rarely used. For movements between houses or between hamlets, even between villages in dark nights a torch of strips of resinous sāl wood is used.

For sweeping the house-floor and verandah a broom-stick of kans reed (phula badhuni) is ordinarily used, while for the courtyard and the surroundings one of bamboo slivers with which also the cattle and goat sheds are cleaned.

For storing away valuables like ornaments, money or good dress there is often a big box of bamboo basketry without, however, any arrangement for locking.

The houses are mostly locked when there is no house mate in the hamlet.

Besides these objects, a house contains or shelters implements of cultivation, of collection of food, weapons, dress ornament and other equipments of individuals or of the house hold.

#### 4. Magico-religious obligations

These meet the need to secure good crops, health of men and animals, sufficient rain, protection against disease- spirits, rats and mice and demons of evil intention by invoking or manipulating the supernatural world. The animals sacrificed, food offered, other articles presented and rituals organized- all come under this category. Most often a householder cooperates with others in

the community by subscribing a parts of the expenses. The village also sends men every year with one goat and some other offerings to bonaigarh for the goddesses under the Raja's custody. Most of the festivals and rituals come under this category.

### 5. Fighting diseases and Afflictions

A part from striving to secure general well-being through supernatural manipulation along with other villagers, a householder has to arrange for treatment of the sick often in several ways and for remedy against particular cases of serious mishap like heavy pest in the crop or cattle-epidemic etc. As such diseases and afflictions are rather frequent, they cause a serious drain on his resources .

### 6. Social obligations

A pauṛī bhuiyan is very sociable and is famous for hospitality. Moreover, he has a wide variety of kinship and friendship obligations to help with food services or other objects. This getting and giving of help is very vital in the society. There are a few festivals and some occasions of village feasting traditional or and hoc, which are only social in character and have nothing to do with magico-religious rituals.

These are occasions to invite and treat relatives and friends or to communally cooperate and rejoice and thus make village solidarity still stronger.

The 'parjā' group in "Tasṛā" as in other Hill Bhuiyān villages have the further obligation to treat the 'Māṭiālī' group to pācei beer by way of yearly tribute

### 7. Governmental obligations

A nominal tax of 5 Rupees is paid at the rate of one rupee per plough (a pair of bullocks). This is an old assessment but the money has to be paid directly into the treasury at Bonaigarh. So two men were deputed at the expense of the village to submit the tax contributed equally by all households . After their return they were feasted by the village.

Further when a government servant like a policeman forest guard or village watchman or an officer visits the village by convention they are to provide food and shelter if he stays for a day or two. For that purpose the village collects and keeps in reserve rice and 'biri' pulses in a fund called 'gāuñriā cāula' (village rice)

### 8. Motivations to production

A word may be added on this aspect of consumption. The villagers are quite conscious that unless they produce, that is cultivate/collect, hunt games and birds, fish, and engage in daylabour and handwork, or raise lac etc., they cannot feed their families, or purchase their dress and ornament, or meet the obligations to the government, cannot discharge their social



responsibilities, or satisfy the supernatural claimants or fight out diseases and afflictions. They don't ordinarily have a safe margin above the satisfaction of all these needs, and very often run far short of it, while the needs are insistent, stable, and unavoidable. Moreover, almost all families have contracted some loans or even in rare cases inherited them from father. Repayment of these loans or at least their high interest remains a very strong incentive to production. Similarly, people who are incapacitated this year will try to cultivate better and more next year, so that their loans and deferred obligations may be made good.

#### D. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

A part from the data being affected slightly by understatement on the part of the informants under conditions described in the introductory section, they are unfortunately not quite complete.

I shall, therefore, here endeavour to tabulate information on 3 households as an approximate picture of their income and expenditure.

From the tables it will be obvious how overwhelmingly the income of a Pāuri Bhuiyān household consists of goods produced in the field, gardens or at home. Secondly, a great variation in income the same Māṭiaḷi group may also be observed, though the gross size of the households is the same, there are 2 adult men and 3 women in the headman's households 35M, 1 adult man and two women in the junior headman's households 8M, and only one adult man and one woman in the poorer household 12M. Taking aside the boys and girls above 10, who help in cultivation to a large extent, and "children" below 10, who help nominally if at all, the table thus clearly shows a positive correlation of income with number of adult working hands. The same holds good as for income in goods as in money receipt. The household 35M had Rs 63.00 the household 8M, Rs 55.75 and the last, Rs 20.25. The table also clearly corroborates the relative economic status of the three households, household 12M being one of the average who struggles hard to make both ends meet. It is also important to note that raising stick lac seems to be the main cash earner, banana coming in the next place.

Handwork forms a marginal source of income today. However, a small number of men and women are engaged in arts and crafts of basketry, comb-making etc. and this opens a new avenue for earning cash, even dealing among the villagers themselves.

In one of the poorest households 1P, both husband and wife go to do day-labour and sell jungle produce including thatch grass and 'Kendu' leaves 'kendu' leaves for making country cigarettes (bidi) are collected by contractors in the early summer, and girls as also old women make a good job of it, although they earn a mere pittance. It might be noted the poorer household 12M had taken to day-labour and the richer ones not except in bājākāma.

In spite of the limitations of inexhaustive information the data may still point to certain broad tendencies. Clothing is the main need requiring the bulk of cash earning. It stands for Rs

Table of Expenditure  
(partly inexhaustive, approximate)  
Period: 1953 March to 1954 February

Categories	Items	Household 35m	Household 8m	Household 12m
Clothing and Ornaments	Shirt, Banyan cloth for men	Rs. 3.00	Rs. 6.00	Rs. 3.88
	Cloth for women	Rs. 12.00	Rs. 7.25	Rs. 13.50
		Rs. 28.00	Rs. 7.00	Rs. 15.25
		-	Bairtassel= 1kg	-
Magico religious Rituals and Festivities	Rice	6 kg	6 kg	6 kg
	Chicken	6	6	4
	Beer (Cereal Base)	40 kg	28 kg	15 kg
			SIM 2 kg	
	Money	Rs. 1.00	Rs. 1.00	Rs. 1.00
Remedies against Diseases and Afflictions	cloth	Rs. 3.00	Rs. 4.00	-
	Rice	4 kg	10 kg	-
	Fowl/Goat	3 fowls	11 (4 for Rs. 3.88)	1 goat 2 fowl
	Beer (Cereal Base)	amulet Rs 06 4 1/2 kg	6 kg	2 kg
Social Obligations and Social Festivals	Rice	2 kg	2 kg	2 kg
	Meat	own fowls and boar	2 fowls	Rs. 0.37 meat (+)
		8 kg beer	sarla-2 kg	spirit Rs. 0.37
		spirit from 2 kg	beer-2 1/2 kg	date-palm juice Rs. 0.25
	Gifts (a) Cloth	Rs. 6.00	-	Beer-1 1/2 kg
	(b) money	Rs. 3.00	-	not recorded
	(c) other goods	+	Millet 4 kg (+)	+
Governmental obligations	Money	Rs. 0.50	Rs. 0.50	Rs. 0.50
	Rice	2 kg	2 kg	2 kg
	Beer	1 1/2 kg	1 1/2 kg	1 1/2 kg
	Pulses	+	+	+
Loans repaid	Paddy	125 kg	200 kg	25 kg
	Rice	75 kg	24 kg	15 kg
	Money	Rs. 5.00	-	-
Corporate For outlivation and Livestock Miscellaneous	Paddy	4 kg	2 kg	2 kg
	Implements	axe-blade Rs. 1.25	Ts Rs. 0.25	Impl. rep. Rs. 0.66
	Seeds	-	Cah Rs. 2.00	-
	Harding Charges	Millet/Paddy 10 kg	M/P 10 kg	- (no cattle)
	Utensills, Pots	brass jug Rs. 5.00	bv Rs. 5.00	Ep Rs. 0.31
		Ep Rs. 0.50	Ep Rs. 0.94	'Bidi' Rs. 0.22
	Lighting Materials etc	Mb Rs. 0.44	Lantern Rs. 3.00	Tobacco Rs. 0.25
		Molasses Rs. 0.75	K Rs. 0.31	Mb Rs. 0.06
			Castor oil Rs. 0.25	
			ghc Rs. 0.50	
	Junngi Contribution	Rs. 0.12, 1/2 kg R	Rs. 0.12, 1/2 kg R	Rs. 0.12, 1/2 kg R

Note : Food consumed at home is not shown, of Table of Income

Key to signs : =means 'bartered for', + means "most probably positive".

(+) means "most probably also something else of the kind".

Impl.rep = Implement repaired

SIM = 'Sarla' from 'Mahul'

ghc = goat-hide for 'Cangu'

Ts = Turmeric seed

M = Millet

P= Paddy

K = Kerosene oil

Mb = Matchbox

Cah = Cock and hen

bv = brass vessel

Ep = Earthen pot

R = Rice



**Table of Income**  
(Approximate, under-stated)  
Period: 1953 March to 1954 February

Sources of Income	Items	Household 35m (2. 03 0child)	Household 8m (2 03 0baby)	Household 12m (2. 02 child 0baby)
Cultivation in Swidden, rarely in settled plots (Households 35m, 8m)	Paddy	640 kg	960 kg	120 kg
	Millets	320 kg	120 kg	60 kg
	'Bin' pulses	200 kg	160 kg	40 kg
	'Jatangi' oilseeds	240 kg	80 kg	40 kg
	Beans	62 kg	+	5 kg ('dhunk' destroyed)
	Castor oilseeds	100 kg	20 kg=Rice 25 kg	+
	Melon, Cucumber	= Paddy 80 kg	+	+
	Taro	+ (at least 40 kg)	80 kg	+
	'Kulthi' pulses	-	3 kg	-
	(M. vegetable, etc)	+	+	+
		B 80 kg=R 80 kg	B 20 kg=R 20 kg	B 30 kg=R 45 kg
		J 80 kg=p 160 kg	J 50 kg=Rs. 12.50	J 10 kg=P 20 kg
		J 25 kg=R 25 kg	J 12 kg=S 12 kg	J 4 kg=Rs. 1.00
		C 100 kg=R 150 kg		
Gardening	Mustard oilseeds	80 kg	13 kg	2-3 kg
	Banana	Rs. 16.00	Rs. 2.00	Rs. 2.50
	Tobacco	(for the year)	(for the year)	+ (slightly less than
	(M. Vegetables)	-	+	+ a year)
Jungle		Mu 70 kg = R 70 kg		
	Stick lac	18 kg Rs. 13.50	50 kg Rs. 40.25	15 kg Rs. 11.25
				10 kg Rs. 10.00
	Mahul flower	-	Rs. 2.00	Rs. 2.00
Handwork	Insp. Mango Juice	Rs. 5.00	Rs. 3.00	Rs. 1.50
		-	Combs 16 Rs. 1.0	-
		(Baja Labour)	Baja Labour	P 22 kg (also
			3 times for food	Baja Labour)
Loans	see Table of Expenditure	Rs. 4.00, R 50 kg P 100 kg	P 180 kg, R 12 kg	P 60 kg, R 10 kg
Mis-	Paddy	Bangles from Grandma	60 kg debt realized	not recorded
	Money	Rs. 11.50 for wild boar		
	Others	Debt realized Rs. 13.00	H, P 105 kg.	
		Gift 3 kg 'muga' pulses	G 35 kg, beer	
			1 pot, R 2 kg, 1 tow 1	

Note : Mean "bartered for", + means quantity unstated.

kg = kilogramm

Mu=Mustard

R=Rice

M=Maize

B='bin'

P=Paddy

S=Salt

G='Gangei'

Insp=Inspissated

H=Hire-Charges for Plough cattle

J='Jatangi'

43.00 out of the total spending in cash Rs 68.56 in Household 35M, for Rs 20.25 out of Rs 41.99 in Household 8M, and for Rs 32.63 out of Rs 36.14 in Household 12M. Though the relative position between the households in total income in cash is the same in order as in the case of total expenditure and total expenditure in cash, the relatively much higher amount spent on clothing in the household 12M remains to be explained. Household 8M had spent in the previous year Rs 30.00 on clothing, and therefore did not purchase more clothing the next year. This is evident, as no cloth was purchased for the housemother this year. The relatively much poorer condition of Household 12M in contrast with the others is also obvious from the fact that all the loans could not be paid back by it.

There is a large number of occasions when subscriptions are raised in equal amounts from each of the households. That explains the equal amount of outlay in fulfilling governmental obligations or on magico-religious rituals and festivities or even in social obligations and festivals excepting the consumption of beverage and gifts. Consumption of beverage may be said to reflect the relative status and income level of the households. Gifts to brothers and sisters of the village headman are very prominent. Petty gifts are always given to visiting relatives, which people do not consider worth mentioning.

It is important to note that a significant amount is spent in fighting diseases and afflictions through magico-religious methods.

One curious contribution is for the pacification of junngi, presumably a gipsy group, who annually visit the area for exactions of fowl and rice. The villagers were in panic, apprehending their visit also in 1954, when I was there. Men did not leave the villages on two days, when it was rumoured they would come. They raised subscription in money and rice in advance. Fortunately they did not appear.

## E. INDEBTEDNESS

On account of my illness I could not complete the statistics of loans contracted by Tasra villagers. Out of 30 households on whom I have information there are 3 poorer households 1P, 9M and 16P and 20 households of average economic status, and 7 households of an economic level above the average, 8M 10M, 24P, 26M, 32P, 33M, and 35M. commonly the households 24P and 10M are believed to be the richest, especially the former, which had allegedly contracted rather high amounts of loans. On the other hand, 10M and 33M, and 17P from the middle level and even poor 9M did not contract any loan bigger than some petty amounts of rice for two social festivals, for which the villagers borrowed as a body. So far as I came to know there are three other poorer households 2P, 19P and 30M; in the last the housefather is somewhat invalid due to diseases. Except 9M and 30M all the other poorer families have no cattle. In 19P lives a widow and in 9M, a widow and her daughter.



Converting the loans of 'biri' pulses, oilseeds, millet and money into paddy, considering only the principal as standing in 1953, and separating also the long-term loans, the average amount of loan among the three economic levels was as follows: Paddy 66 kilo among the poorer households, 86 kilo among the middle-level households, and that among the well-to-do section 96 kilo paddy. The poorer, who also have smaller household, seem to live more from hand to mouth rather than risk the crisis of a heavy loan being a drag for years. The highest loans of 244 kilo paddy occurs in household 4P, which immigrated only a year ago and could not work on a full share of paddy-swidden. The village headman had the next highest, 240 kilo paddy. It may, however be remarked that 24P, 35M, 33M, 8M had advanced petty loans up to 80 kilo paddy to villagers, and 10M also often does, as even 17P does sometimes.

The long-term loan as in households 13M, 16P, and 3M was always contracted at the time of marriage ceremony. About 40 years ago the father of the head of household 10M had taken paddy (800 kilo) on loan on occasion of the latter's marriage by purchase. He had to go on repaying the debt for 7 years from the third year. After giving 6 times the principal when still the debt was unpaid, and the creditor was sending an untouchable Messenger from pān caste, grievously humiliating to a Pauri Bhuiyāñ, the debtor in his fury gave away a young bullock, in value far in excess of the outstanding debt. Similarly the young father in 3M had to sell a bullock for paying off a large part of his debt in 1953. Similarly long-term debts are also contracted on the occasion of costly funerals.

Short-term debts with the intention of repaying after the next harvest are almost a habit with Tasrā Bhuiyāñ. From about the month of Baisākh (April-May), when trees are felled in swiddens the lean and loan season begins. At other stretches of heavy work like cutting bushes and sowing 'biri' 'jaṭangi' etc. in June-July or weeding in swiddens in September-October, as also for celebrating certain social festivals like 'Raja' and 'Gahmā' or village festivities like banabhujni in April-May borrowing becomes for the most unavoidable. Apart from the need for food the demand for seed is one of the most significant cause of borrowing. In years of bad harvest the loan cannot be repaid and may swell on for 4 years as in household 5P or 13M.

The rate of interest is greatly variable from one individual creditor to another, from one occasion to another (for example for seed or for food), from the individual standing and creditworthiness of one debtor to another, and lastly from community to community. Moreover, the rate of interest varies between commodities and money. Money carries usually 25% interest, but in one case the loan for 2 months interest at 75% was charged. Among the Pauri Bhuiyāñ themselves money-loans are interest-free, even when money is due as price of tobacco leaves or salt. But in case of commodity like cereals, oilseeds, and pulses the interest-rate among the pauri Bhuiyāñ is 50%, till 1953 great assembly or 'Mahādesa' it was mostly 100%. There are individually-owned granaries of paddy at Dhaneswarpur in pal Lahara, and jagati which charge always 25% interest, besides a commission for the man administering and

measuring. A semi-public granary at kumuḍih requires some real security in land or cattle, which the Pauri Bhuiyāñ cannot produce and hence cannot utilize this rather cheap source. However, all other creditors have great faith on the word and integrity of the pauri Bhuiyāñ. For the sake of 'Gahmā' festival in July-Augusts always the village contracts a loan with one of the influential men – like Headman or junior headman – as a personal surety usually at 25% interest. But in 1953 the village watchman of Tasra of paṇ caste from kumuḍhi charged 100%. In the same month the same creditor may charge 25% to one and 100% to another villager for the same commodity. Usually, however, for seed purposes the rate is 100%. As the plains paddy is not suitable for swidden one has to exchange the borrowed paddy again with hill paddy, presumably without any further loss. Sometimes one cleverly borrows paddy ostensibly for the kitchen at 50%, then makes it into rice and exchanges the rice for hill-paddy.

It must be emphasized here that always without exception compound interest is charged. Simple interest simply does not exist in Mahulpadā region, at least for the pauri Bhuiyāñ. At some granaries one has to pay ½ kilo for 10 kilo paddy as principal towards measuring charges, 1 kilo for 20 kilo, but 20 kilo for 200 kilo or 1 'puḍug' paddy. Besides, there is the horror of facing the lowest indignity, when a paṇ caste messenger is sent for realizing debts along with his rations.

Among creditors the most frequented seem to be from kumuḍih, the nearest village in the kalā valley. At kumuḍih are creditors of Gour caste, Gond, oilman caste and paṇ caste. At jagti they are from among Gond, Gour and Casa. Gour creditor from Rengali and Derulā, pauri Bhuiyāñ creditors from Badbil, a hamlet of Derulā, and Cerengā kolha creditors of Barocuā are also frequented. Outside Bonai, however, borrowing is less frequent. Gond of Dalsuāñ and casā of kalā-saiḍā villages in Bamra, casā of Ganeswarpur and pauri Bhuiyāñ of khaḍka in pal lahara are among the few creditors outside Bonai.

Among the villagers of Tasda there is some amount of petty borrowing. One or two households, since 1951 in Guhābandhā colony, had advanced bigger loans, of 80 kilo paddy, and 24P and 8M had also given paddy or rice to the village for celebration of 'Raja' festival or 'Banabhuji' "picnic" about 80 kilo paddy (40 kilo rice) in each case. Loan of paddy from the village granary, contributed every year by every household, 2 kilo late paddy each, known as 'Dehuriā Dhāna' is, however, not of much importance. I did not come across an amount higher than 20 kilo paddy lent out in 1953 to 4 household in 1953 or in 1954. In Upar Tasrā 80 kilo were lent out in 1953 to 4 households, who were excused the interest by common consent. In 1954 108 kilo were borrowed by 9 households, significantly enough, in Māgh (January-February), hardly 2 months after contributing to the fund. As the havoc of rats inflicts a heavy loss, of which they complained, this might well be the reason for early action.



However, there are other functions of 'Dehuriā Dhān'. In 1951 to each household was returned its 2 kilo paddy contribution, as the new swidden was restricted in 1950 for fear of severe penalties. In 1954 the Māṭiālī group enjoyed beer made out of 20 kilo paddy from the village fund, of course with the parja men. I presume this was also done in the past.

I questioned in Derula, Burhabhuin, Hatisul and in the recently established government colonies. They all said such granary was an old institution, at present also prevalent in pal Lahara and Keonjhar, among the pauri. It is also reported from Saraikala, Ranta and Rāisuān villages of Bonai. According to reports from badbil this village granary system functions in colonies, like kunuṭola, jhinkargahira, originally from kunu and kundla village respectively. Badbil had Dehuriā Dhana till about 1953-54, when it was distributed among the villagers and feasted with.

Similar fate has overtaken the Tasra granary. Till 1950 this was functioning very well and had amassed about 1600 kilo paddy-by no means a mean achievement. When the splitting of the village was effected due to pressure from the Government in 1950-51, the villagers decided to distribute the paddy and feast with it. So 8 households of Māṭiālī group in Upar Tasrā, 9 in Tal Tasrā and 2 in Guhālbandhā, got each 40 kilo of paddy and the rest was used for a grand feast of the whole village for 2 meals with meat. They had fully realized that this was going to be the funeral feast of their past, their good old days". Since after the feast Tal Tasrā and upar Tasrā had two separate Granaries and the yearly contribution in the former was 2 kilo paddy and in the latter 4 kilo. In 1957 I was informed that this institutions was totally given up; they only thus followed the foot-steps of many other villages.

'Dehuriā Dhāna' means "paddy in the name of priests" and indeed, there was some differential advantage for the priestly or the 'māṭiālī' group but even then the fund functioned as a communal bank as a stand-by of the last resort, and in the days of 100% interest even among the pauri Bhuiyān it helped the villagers albeit for petty amounts with loans at 50% interest. Even this interest was often excused to poorer villagers.

## F. EXCHANGE AND MARKET

We have already seen under distribution and remuneratiuon and under indebtendness how goods and services are exchanged. In this section gift exchange and ceremonial exchange on the one hand barter and the market system on the other will be described.

### Gifts

A visit by a relative or ritual friend is often concluded with some petty present of cereals, 'dhunk' beans or some seeds of one or another kind on the part of the host. Sometimes clothes and money are also presented as is recorded in the expenditure table in housegold 35M. Such gifts are irregular but mostly given after the harvest in the visiting season. Among villagers who are more closely related to each other gifts of seed are very common. Though a

return is not expected the receiving party usually serves his turn. Food materials figure most in gift-giving as in ceremonial exchange.

### Ceremonial Exchange

This is most prominent at the life-crisis situations namely marriages and funeral and at the establishment of ritual friendships. On the latter ceremony the exchange is at a short interval and may be of different goods or in unequal value. Relatives and ritual friends present goods and services also at the time of marriage and funeral. But it is customary to return them in the same kind and quantity or at least in equal value at the time of a marriage or funeral on the other side. In these cases the exchange is however long deferred. This system apart from bestowing prestige on the giver and furthering bonds between the parties helps one against contracting bigger loans to be paid back with interest and secures a large quantity of goods and services at critical moments.

Bride-price in cattle, cereals and cloth and a small amount of dowry also should here be considered, as also the obligatory services of affinal relatives at the time of funeral and in marriage negotiation, if there are two heads of cattle in bride-price, one head for the bride's mother's brother is always given. The dowry usually includes the cow meant for the bride's father, who now gives it back. After marriage also visits and exchanges are continued especially on festive occasions.

### Barter

Direct exchange of services and goods for goods and services is the key-note of the economy. Money is used rather sparingly, for purchasing ornaments and clothes iron implements, lighting materials, liquor, fowl or goat brass utensils pots vegetables, tobacco or bidi, combs basketry sometimes salt and some food-articles like sweets or fruits or a goat-hide for the cāngu, tambourine, and a few other minor objects. They sell stick lac, bidi leaves, inspissated mango juice, date-plum muttons, turmeric, banana mahul flower a few combs and sometimes fruits, 'jatangi mustard' and castor oil seeds etc. for money. Apart from stick lac and bidi leaves which are delivered at the place of contractors, agents the other objects are mostly transacted in the weekly markets in the region. Meat of wild boar goats, fowls or combs may be sold in the village or some articles of basketry or some seed exchanged for goods in the village. But even a goat for the village purpose may be bartered against communal labour for the owner. Labour in any form in the village or outside Tasrā is paid in goods or in food to a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ even the washerman or sometimes the blacksmith for repairing implements and the cowherd are paid in kind by the Pāuri the importance of barter will be apparent from the fact that in 1954 a bullock belonging to a villager of Tasrā was exchanged for a calf-bull and a heifer from a plains village Sihiriā.

Sometimes villagers, even Pāuri Bhuiyāñ from bamra and pal lahara and bonai come to the village for exchange of rice for 'biri' pulses or mustard or jatangi oilseeds from keonjhar come



the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ with their big earthen pots bartered or earned as wages from the potters to exchange them for prized dhunk beans or gangei millets which do not grow there well. Of course this trading expedition is most often a social visit to some relatives and is an occasion for longer dancing sessions. Similarly Pāuri Bhuiyāñ from Tasrā and other villages of bonai and pall lahara go to Keonjhar market to purchase the much-longed for sari. Some pāuri middlemen from keonjhar or pal lahara areas also come to sell these sari or some ornaments. These visits are however not purely commercial when the visitors come to stay with some relatives a pedlar cum money lender of oilman caste from kumudih visits the village in the winter to sell cloth tobacco and salt. He sold in 1954 about Rs-45.00 worth of cloth mostly sari and Rs- 10.00 remained to be paid in terms of "Jatāngi" oilseed, the imported tobacco does not cause cough as the native one does say the villagers. Both tobacco and salt were also paid for in kind. A Pāuri Bhuiyāñ middleman once sold an imitation gold locket attached to black tape for a necklace for half a kilo "Jatāngi" oilseed equivalent to Rs-0.12. He said he purchase them at keonjhar for Rs-0.06. However the margin of profit is not much when one calculates the time and energy he had spent on walking about 100 kilometer back and forth uphill and downhill.

More amazing is the margin of loss through barter, at least in case of salt. The rate of exchange is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 kilo salt for 1 kilo rice or 'biri' pulses or 'jatāngi' oilseed, which thus come to cost Rs 0.16 to Rs 0.25 per kilo. At the Kalā market often the rate was Rs. 0.12 per kilo of salt when purchased in money. So when the oilman caste pedlar offered  $1\frac{1}{2}$  kilo salt for 1 kilo Jatāngi oilseeds or Rs 0.25 he was charging a reasonable price. However, if the Tasrā Bhuiyāñ purchased salt with money at kalā market which they almost regularly visit in the winter, they would have get it 50 to 25% cheaper. Any way, it is therefore no wonder that some Bhumij from the valley went to Radā and beyond for exchanging salt for jatāngi. Along with barter goes the convention of exchanging goods according to volume rather than to net weight. All the grains and oilseeds have not the same specific gravity. Much more scandalous is the customary rate of exchanging muḍhi or roasted (inflated) rice, one corn-measure-ful of it for an equal volume of mustard, which is equivalent to one kilo of rice. Because from a kilo rice 5 or 6 corn-measure-fuls of 'muḍhi' are produced.

Besides paddy or rice, 'gange' millet and mustard, castor and 'jatāngi' oilseeds and 'biri' pulses are the common denominators of value in barter. As, however, these themselves are exchanged for rice or paddy, the latter seem to be the dominant denominator of value. However, its price change between the harvest time, when it is cheapest, and the time before harvesting the

early paddy, when it is dearest. This variation in its price does, however, somewhat affect its relative value in the barter system as against the oil seeds, or 'biri' pulses. Paddy is always equivalent to gangli millet, though in payment paddy or rice is preferred. Two kilo of paddy are always equivalent to 1 kilo rice. In the following table there is most often a range of variation in value, according to forces of supply and demand operating at the time of exchange.

Table of Barter-Equivalence  
January – February 1954

Commodity	Rice	Price at harvest
Paddy 1 kilo	½ kilo	Re 0.10 –Rs 0.12
Biri pulses 1 kilo	1 to 1,50 kilo	(not known)
Gangei millet 1 kilo	½ kilo	Rs 0.10 – 0.12
Mustard oilseed 1 kilo	1 to 1,25 kilo	(not known)
Jatangi oilseed 1 kilo	1 to 1,50 kilo	(not known)
Castor oilseed 1 kilo	1 to 1,50 kilo	(not known)
(1953 March-April)		

Note: Gangei millet is ordinarily restricted to payment in kind for certain services and labour.

Rice or paddy, however, has not such a dominant position as to enable the system of exchange to be designated "money-barter". Currency is ubiquitous and well understood in its calculation. When goods were accepted in place of money the equivalent was always determined in terms of money-value. Coins are preferred to paper notes, which are not easy to preserve or carry; moreover, coins may be made into an ornament. One clever villager wanted to get old Rupee coins in exchange for the new ones, because the silver-content in the old coins would be more in value than a Rupee today. Before leaving barter it must be noted, that it benefits the exchanger insofar as he obtains directly what he needs without the added trouble of getting money and again purchasing the things needed. I have seen sellers refusing to exchange for other goods or money that what they really wanted, and with reason. A similar argument is advanced by Dopsch in favour of the principle of remuneration of services in kind. (Dopsch, p.254).

### The weekly Markets

There are a number of weekly, which are attended by Tasrā villages. The biggest and most important one is at Kolā or Kālā in Bamrā, held on every Tuesday, named after the Kolā rivell, at about 22 kilometer. The nearest one is at Mahulpadā, 6 kilometer away in the Kola valley,



held every Monday. Tarmākānth in kenojhar holds a market on every Saturday. Daleisarā colonies have recently a market every Wednesday, which is visited mostly in the winter. Kola is an old trading centre and the market serves people of various castes and tribes from Bamra, Bonai and pal Lahara. Mahulapadā market was started in 1930 by the police Sub-Inspector Debrāj, who is alleged to have sprinkled coppers to attract people to the new market. About 1940 another with market was started at Nagaria village to the north of Mahulpadā by a contractor with approval of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. It is held every Friday. It is ordinarily not visited by a Tasrā villager. It will be seen that the markets are held on different days of the week, so that both merchants and customers may visit more than one in the same week.

The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ visit the market not merely for bartering or selling or purchasing things, but also for the fun of it, for the colorful vaster novelty away from the limited routine life; also because the markets attract people from other villages with whom they may come in easy contact, to meet relatives, friends, or to learn the latest news about them. Moreover, the free access to spirituous liquor and date-palm toddy is a great attraction. It is well-known that Mahulpadā had distillery, greatly ruining the Pāuri men, till a few years ago, when Bhuiyan women came in a crowd and compelled the contractor to close down the business, allegedly for the dread of being bewitched by Bhuiyāñ women, who are supposed to be murderous sorceress. At Kolā, and on the way, at Dalsuāñ, there is this alluring opportunity. Tasrā men and women usually leave for Kolā market on Monday morning after a heavy meal and carrying some cooked food and something also uncooked, for the journey. At the village Kolā, where they spend the night, they meet other pāuri Bhuiyāñ from many village and the young people sing and develop mutual attachments which may ultimately flower into marriage. They return in the evening of Tuesday. In winter months after harvest Kolā is most frequented for business and social purposes. In the months of March-April for bartering of caster seeds for rice and thereafter, with fruits like mango and jackfruit the visits thin down. During the swidden season Mahulpadā attracts them more, it seems. Repairing of implements is done there. Kolā again becomes prominent when melons and cuumbers or the maize are ready in about September.

Kolā being a bigger and older market, attracts all sorts of merchants, several castes with their specific products and some tribes like the food-gathering birhor, who sell (?) ropes and surely, the special leaf-vessels for pressing oil about the months of march-April.

Here the Ghāsi untouchables bring their basketry, especially strong wicker-work basket for transporting manure or their rigid bamboo broomstick for cleaning the cattle-shed and the compound. Earthen pots by 'rania' kumhār caste or by Mundari tribal potters, brass pots and utensils by brazier caste men, fermenting material made by Mundāri tribals or Cerengā kolha or pāuri Bhuiyāñ, iron implements made by black smiths, as also cloths woven in handlooms by pañ caste are invariably there.

At mahulpada the market is held under a small grove at the eastern end of the village, on a much smaller scale, although all the above-mentioned products are sold or exchanged. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 1954 the market lasted, as usual, for about 2 hours from 8 to A.M. About 200 people attended and about 25 sellers were there, some of them becoming customers as soon as their meager ware is exchanged or sold out, women customers seemed to be slightly more than a half, women sellers definitely more than a half. The wares offered were as follows:

1. Pottery – 2 women sellers.
2. Glass bangles – 1 Muslim woman from kolā side.
3. Bamboo shoot – 3 Gond women.
4. Handloom Cloth – 1 pañ from Manulpadā.
5. Cloth, spices, salt, tobacco – 1 shop-keeper from kumudih, the oilman who visits Tasrā.
6. Looking Glasses, Plastic Combs, vermilion (used by Hindu women) and receptacle, tin boxes for keeping hemp, paper (for the few literate and policemen round Mahulpada), spices, and mustard oil – 1 shop run by a kisan and his wife from Burhābhuiñ (west) – selling for money.
7. Leaves for cooking – 2 women from jagti.
8. Brinjal – 2 sellers.
9. Broomsticks of bamboo and kañsā reed – 2 women.
10. Roasted (inflated) rice or muḍhi – 4-5 women sellers, mostly Gond.
11. Guava fruit – 1 kolha seller.
12. Tamarind – 1 seller.
13. Rice – 2 sellers (for the officials, mainly).

The barter-system was over-whelmingly important but all were money-conscious. Curiously enough, bamboo shoots, tamarind or leaves when sold in money, naturally to officials and others who earn money, cost more than their barter-value. There were only 3 permanent improvised selling booths for shops Nos. 4 to 6 in the above list. At Kolā market such booths are a regular feature, arranged in rows, according to the kind of wares offered.

Five Bhuiyāñ men came for purchasing rice from Uskula hill-village in the north. They had got money wages working in the Sārkundā mines. They were not prepared to purchase rice at the rate of 3½ kilo per Rupee, which was offered both at Nagariā market on previous Friday and at



Mahulpadā this Monday. They would go to Kolā market (Tuesday) to try their luck. They must have thus lost 3 days (Friday, Monday and Tuesday) for purchasing rice only. Rice is rarely purchased with money by Tasrā village.

## G. PROPERTY, USUFRUCT AND INHERITANCE

Not only property is variously defined, but also it is, in the wise words of Hobhouse, "a principle which admits of variation in several distinct directions". (Horskovits, p. 325). Enlarging upon Hobhouse's concept of property Herskovits mentions three "privileges that accrue to an owner over his goods" "which more than the objective fact of possession often determine whether or not a given object may be considered as property." In the broadest terms, these are: "... the privilege of use, the privilege of disposal, and the privilege of destruction. In the strictest sense, ownership is conferred only when all three of these forms of privilege are enjoyed with regard to something owned, though in most societies ownership on these terms is seldom countenanced." (ibid, p.325). However complete or partial, exclusive or shared, more or less permanent these privileges may be, they are "always socially conferred and socially limited" (Fairchild, "ownership"). Armed with this perspective we may now divide properties of Tasdā village into the conventional categories: Natural Resources Livestock and Material Goods.

### Natural Resources

Cerengā kolha and juānga tribals were probably living in Tasda hills when the present Matiali group occupied the area. The former occupants moved away leaving the new-comers as masters of the land. Viewed from this historical and legal standpoint the land area of Tasrā village belong to the Matiali section of the community by way of *jus primi occupantis* or right of first finding and occupation. Later on immigrants from other villages came to stay in the village as *parjā* or subjects" on formal application and formal and ritual incorporation as one clearly observes today in the ceremony of village Foundation how the "subjects" pay nominal but yearly "tribute" of native beer.

By being born or incorporated in the village one has the right to get swiddens as good as any other, to hunt, fish, or collect food and other materials. Although the villagers say one may cultivate where one pleases, it is observed that the older households have often occupied the same swiddens when patches of forest were taken up one after another. They remembered well who had cultivated this swidden or that rather regularly, but his heirs have no absolute right to cultivate there. In 1954 I saw many new occupants of such "ancestral" swiddens. This happens so, because every year the village Assembly decides, under the guidance of the Headman and elderly priests accompany the villagers to show the proper size or boundaries of the swiddens. Swiddens are always marked out with natural or artificial boundary signs. These are parceled out to households, whose size and composition ordinarily determine the size and location of the swiddens.



While theoretically swidden land is unlimited within the well-known village boundaries, in 1951 and 1953 it was distributed according to a rough measure, as suitable forest a limited area only. On the other hand, residential area on the flattened habitation sites and land for gardens are scarce. However, each household has the right to have its own huts, and as the village is split into two hamlets there is no problem at present. The house-site is like the swidden patch, not inheritable, although there is a marked preference to occupy one's old place. One does not have a right to it, if already occupied. But if one's house is standing on it, it is technically occupied. So the junior headman, who has shifted to Upar Tasrā, may reoccupy his house and house-site in Tal Tasrā. Land for kitchen garden is very scarce and so it is inheritable, so long as the heirs are resident of the village, where or not they are actual occupants. However, they do not get any rent for letting others land for maize-gardens or bakhudi is also scarce, but it is said, a parjā might feast (with native beer) the village Assembly for enjoying an inheritable patch. But others can use the gardens with the permission of the "legal" occupant. Here also there is no question of paying rent.

The water – holes, streams, grave yards, fishing pools and forests are "public properties" in the sense that everybody in the village may freely use them, but one may not destroy or otherwise waste the resources. For example, one must fell certain trees even in the swidden.

Honeycombs and wild trees for raising sticklac are scarce; therefore, who ever locates the former and occupies the latter has the first right. In the latter cases one may use trees during his life – time and pass them on to his heirs or allow another villager to use them, may be, over some native beer. Such rights are not possible in case of honeycombs as bees are mobile. Moreover, usually two or three men cooperate in getting a big honeycomb down and share between each other. Right of first hitting a game animal similarly confers the privilege of enjoying special parts by the marksman; all those who cooperate in hunting have an assured share. If it is a squirrel, mongoose, or hare, or another small game the hunter gets no special share. We have noted these facts under Distribution and Remuneration and seen also how equal shares accrue to those who cooperate in fishing. When solitarily one digs up roots and tubers, or collects fruits, flowers or leaves one keeps them to oneself.

Fruit trees when planted and tended by an individual he or she is the exclusive owner of them. If it is planted by one and tended by another as in one case I know they become joint-owners. Jackfruit orange and custard apple trees and banana plants wherever they grow become the property of the planter in the sense these are inheritable and the owner can dedicate them to the village or sell them to a villager for a rupee. He may even give them to a friend and not to a kinsman. But if a jackfruit tree is purchased from among the village trees by paying a fee of native beer to the village assembly I am not sure if one can destroy the tree. The jack fruit trees inheritable even when one leaves the village. Thus 24p and 32p have come from khadkā village outcasted for sorcery, yet they enjoy the fruits of their jackfruit trees there. Mango trees, even if planted by some one become village property for public use, although it most



often well-known who planted which tree, if its not too old and forgotten. Some banana clumps, which were planted by emigrants, have become village property. The jackfruits from the village trees are shared equally among the villagers, but mango and tamarind one can have as much as one collects. The fuel in swiddn belongs to the cultivator as a date-palm tree wildly growing in ones garden. But I am not sure, if the trees for raising stick-lac standing on a particular swidden is to be used by the new cultivator or the older user of the tree.

Land can be leased out to another village for an indefinite period or temporarily. Thus a number of Tasda villagers have got a temporary lease for making swidden on the land of taro village on payment of a feast to tare village Assembly. Hatisul village assembly was feasted for garnting a long-term leaves of a big tract of land for hunting and collecting food and fuel to derulā village there is at least ine occasion ceremonial hunting of Ākhuḷi when village boundaries may easily be trespassed without previous permission.

A few agricultural plots for settled cultivation are inheritable by the households who had constructed them or by their heirs. This inheritable use however does not cover cmigration outside the village and those who are allowed to cultivate them do not have to pay rent to anybody.

On basis of this survery we may agree with Herskovits that as among the Hopi attention and interest focus on the produce of the fields (here of swiddens forests etc.) rather than on the ownership of land as an end in itself (p.364) as regards the limited property rights in the searce land for gardens we may accept his remarks on the Bantu system that there are private rights which means that such land is not private to property (p.365). inherited use ownership a phrase recommended by him (p.370), clarifies the practices in regard to natural resources among the pāuṛi bhuiyāñ. The apparent exception of individually owning trees may be easily explained as a case of extreme extension of this principle. As the land yield annually and this annual yield is owned by the producing group the household similarly the fruits of a permanent tree might be owned by the individual who produced it as long as it yield fruits. However these may not be sold out to non-villagers or conceptually they might have been equated with material objects produced by one's personal labour and care(of Horskovits pp.377-79).

Coming lastly to the oft-raised question of communal ownership in land or natural resources (excepting individually owned and other trees like sal and a few others "reserved" by the government we may easly agree that it was the pattern of ownership when the māṭiālī section of tasdā and other hill village were the only occupants of the village. At that time the village meant themselves only. But after colonization of subject households in the village in a substantial proportion as full-fledged members of the village Assemble, the pattern may be expected to remain the same, but actually there appeared a significant difference. Now the

Mātiāli section as a whole become the "senior" partner in this "corporate" ownership" and the parjā the junior partner. To me it is clear that the Mātiāli section is not just the stewards or trustees administering this "communal ownership". They have more substantial say in the matter of admitting new immigrants or of leasing out land to outsiders. The parjā group every year binds itself formally to obey the village Headman and priests, who are always from among the Matiali section. Thus if there was "communal ownership", it has been watered down by the right of first occupation so much so, that from historical, legal, and sociological points of view this may rather be called, for want of a better term, corporate village ownership". "Communal Ownership" may be reserved to cannot equal right of all members of the community. Rights of "inheritable use" to some plots of land do not basically conflict with the "corporate village ownership" or even the "communal ownership".

### Live stock

Cows and bullock are property of a household, as they are very vital for the subsistence system. Both men and women look after them and tend them. When grains and/or a feasting are given as hire-charges for a cow or bullock, the male head, of course, enjoys the native beer; this only validates his headship of the household.

Similarly, goats and chickens, vital for sacrifices for health and well-being, are the property of the household. The women take care of them and tend the goats. When once some representatives of the village Assembly wanted to purchase a goat, even though the male head was willing, the proposal was not accepted by the housemother and the question was dropped there.

It is possible that on the cow or bullock "given back" as dowry by the bride's father a woman had more say, but it is not individually "owned" by her. I have not been informed of individuals, men or women, owing goats or fowls exclusively for one-self, though in principle one can.

This situation supports a fundamental principle, that when land for swiddens is so vital for the whole community or livestock for the whole household, property rights are vested in the group and not in the individual units (households and individuals, respectively). However, there is a big difference. Livestock can be sold and cattle may be hired out to even a non-Bhuiyāñ, while land can not be sold at all. A household can kill goats and fowls but never cattle, which are sacred; neither can it neglect them to die for fear of "sin" and its costly atonement. However, with this limit, we may conclude that the livestock is the exclusive property of the household, which devotes personal labour and attention to them.

### Material Goods

A man makes his bows and arrows, a carrying pole or 'Cāngu' tambourine, a cot, or comb etc. for selling and he "owns" them and keeps the money for himself. Similarly, a women weaves



date-palm mattresses or makes inspissated mango juice, grows turmeric, banana, or even jackfruit and collects 'bidi' leaves and 'mahul' flower all mostly for sale, and she uses the money primarily for herself. Personal clothes used by her and ornaments, and utensils, purchased by self or got as dowry similarly belong to her. At the time of divorce, however, she has to make over the ornaments and new clothes given by her husband, if she is guilty. Further, she can not use her ornaments for a few years after her husband's death. Similarly, personal dress and equipments, date-palm-mattress presented by the wife, and tobacco grown in the kitchen garden are personal properties of a man. On the other hand, certain implements like axes, ploughs, sickles, iron digger or pick (gardani) are properties of the household, as are the utensils. Of course, a wife does not get a share of them in case of divorce or bereavement, but the housefather can not dispose them of as he likes, for the sons have a claim to them. Only money can he give as he likes, if he has earned it. Toys belong to the children exclusively.

Unlike in the case of natural resources here the ownership rights are more exclusive and one may destroy or dispose of personally owned goods as one likes, of course, there is much of mutual borrowing or sharing.

Besides, there are some village properties, requiring big cash outlay or capitalization of much labour in the interest of the community. These are a few brass water-jugs and iron pans for treating the guests and logs of tree-press for pressing oil in both hamlets.

### Inheritance Customs

Some basic principles may here be briefly outlined.

It was always stressed that cattle and bell-metal or brass utensils were the most important forms of wealth for purposes of inheritance or separation. In actual cases of inheritance, however, iron implements, money, paddy and other crops stored, goats, fowls, and jack-fruit trees also figured. Personal properties buried, or rarely burnt, with the dead body remain out of such consideration. A brass utensil used constantly by the dead is usually given to the washer man. But valuable ornaments are not thus given away or destroyed.

1. It is always male issues or their male descendants who inherit the house-site, kitchen garden, maize-garden, agriculture terraces if any, jackfruit and other trees if not already given away, cattle, utensils, iron implements, goats, fowls, money, crops etc. correspondingly, the male heirs have the obligation of celebrating the funeral ceremony and looking after the soul of the ancestor.
2. A daughter is given some ornaments, and may be, cattle during her father's time at her marriage. The male heirs are obliged to arrange for a maiden daughter and to maintain her by turn till that period or on the break-up of her marriage.

3. The widow is to be maintained by the male heirs till she dies or remarries. She usually stays with each of the heirs by turn for about an equal length of period. Sometimes she is given some brass utensils to dispose of as she likes, as the mother of the heads of households 12m and 13m was.
4. The eldest son (or his male descendants) gets one head cattle as his seniority share, over and above his usual share as a son. All other property is shared equally among the sons (or their descendants). If a son had already got one head cattle for paying his bride-price, this will be debited from his share at the actual partition. The eldest son bears a heavier burden of funeral expenses.
5. In a polygynous family, the eldest son of the first wife will get the seniority share, even if he is younger than the second wife's son(s).
6. In case there is no surviving male issue, the property is distributed among the brothers or their male descendants.
7. If there be no brothers or their male descendants, to inherit the property of a man without male issues, it will be divided among the male descendants of his grandfather, if necessary, of his great-grandfather. Thus, property is always held by the patrilineal lineage (bamsa), wherever its members may be living.
8. If however, the brothers of a man without male issue be away from the village, and a father's brother's son arranges the funeral and supports the widow and/or her daughters, he will get all the property of the deceased.
9. If there is nobody in the bamsa to inherit, the village Assembly may defray the expenses of a funeral out of the property and appropriate the rest for village purpose.

I have come across cases when a younger son has separated from his father during the latter's life-time. The property, however, was divided after his death among all the brothers. Though the tendency is for the youngest son to inherit the house and house-site, as he lives with the parents longest, I am not convinced if that always happens. This is, however, certain that at least in mahulpada region, the eldest son gets merely one head of cattle more. He has, however, corresponding obligations.

#### H. NATURAL AND SOCIAL INSURANCE

It has been noted in connection with shifting cultivation, that a large variety of crops is harvested one after another and there is a rotation of crops among the first-year, and third-year swiddens. As the crops are of various nature, varyingly dependent on rainfall and soil-type, a cultivator does not lose all his crops in a year of bad drought or heavy rainfall. Such variations in rainfall being almost cyclic in this monsoon land, the system of multiple corporation is an admirable



ecological adjustment. This adjustment moreover works somewhat like a natural insurance against total crop-failure. From another angle there is also another aspect of natural insurance against starvations, as the forest supplies a rich variety of fruit, tubers and yams.

Apart from such natural security, the Hill Bhuiyāñ enjoys a great deal of unorganized social security. Kinsmen and friends are always there to help one with labour, food, seeds, and even services of cattle. There is also something like "endowment insurance, when a relative borrows paddy, goats or even cattle under the stipulation, that the loan would be made good at the time of similar need in the creditor's case.

The volume of this help may be of appreciable quantity. At Guhāibandhā colony a Tasrā māṭiālī man had received the following goods on occasion of his son's magā marriage in 1956, what he now "borrowed" or what he got as repayment for his credits, at par in kind, never more or less, is at the least astounding, even allowing for a certain possible exaggeration.

Amount advanced	Amount recovered or to be returned
1. 1949-40 kilo rice given to household 16p, at the time of incorporation of the bride of the classificatory the bride of the sister's son, Tasrā.	20 kilo rice ritual (20 kilo due) classificatory
2. 1948 - 120 kilo rice, 5 kilo 'biri' pulses to 24p, at the time of sister's husband's brother, Tasrā	120 kilo rice 5 marriage of kilo biri pulses
3. 1946 - 100 kilo rice to 34p. at the time of marriage of sister's husband's brother, Tasrā	100 kilo rice
4. From mother's sister's son, co-villager	30 kilo
5. From younger brother, co-villager	
6. From mother's sister's younger son, covillager	
7. From elder brother, Tasrā, 35m (headman)	
8. From sister's son, 14p, Tasrā	
9. From son fathers ritual mita friend, raḍā	
10. From elder brother's wife's father's sister's son, co-villager	
11. From father's brother's son, 8m, Tasrā	
12. From a classificatory Māṭiālī brother in 10m, Tasrā	
13. From sister's son, 37p, Tasrā	

Total: 580 kilo rice, 7 kilo biri, 7 goats, 2 cloths, one pot beer.

The combined effect of natural and social insurance is that an average household can normally make its both ends meet. When shifting cultivation was severely retracted in 1950, the resulting economic unbalance could only be met through bigger loans and more day-labour in the valley.

## 6. RITUALS and RECREATION

In this section we shall correlate work with rituals and describe some recreational activities of adults. For an understanding of rituals an examination of magico-religious ideas and beliefs is necessary. Work and recreation and festivals and rituals upon the important fact of a seasonal cycle, which has already been noted under subsistence system.

### A. IMPORTANCE OF SEASONS

There are three main seasons in the pāuri country: the winter summer and the rains. The winter extends from November to February, the summer from March to June and rainy season from July to October. As it is a land subject to the southwest monsoon most rains fall in the months July to September and there may be a sprinkling in the winter. In this cultivating economy with no artificial irrigation, rainfall has utmost importance for productivity. The available food supply matures to an overwhelming degree just after the rains and the people must save provisions for the lean months. The lean season assumes the worst shape during the periods of heavy work from June to September, when at long last the earliest maize ripens in the kitchen garden. On the October hand, the winter, after the harvesting work is done, offers the best season for festivities, marriage, social visits and hunting and also for gossiping and some crafts. During summer, however, the swiddens must be cut and left to dry in the hot sun before they are burnt and sown or planted before it rains heavily.

Fiddington, while appreciating the influence of seasonal cycle on various economic, notes (vol.ii, p.464), "But it is among agriculturists (and cultivators) that the seasonal cycle is of greatest importance, since their whole ecology rests upon a regular, sequence of activities from planting to harvesting and storing." Characteristic of the lives of peasant societies, and of primitive communities, he further remarks (p. 465), "work, recreation and social activities follow a seasonal rather than a daily and weekly rhythm, as among ourselves (Westerner)" (Explanations between brackets are mine).

### B. MAGICO-RELIGIOUS IDEAS and BELIEFS

In chapter X (pp.206-61) Roy deals with Religion and magic. We have neither the time nor the need to go over all the details or facets and I am not fully equipped to contradict or correct some of his interetations.

The pāuri themselves set the tone to their beliefs and ideas in this sphere. Āmar khuntā-tiedu Deutā-tie, "they say; "we have a deity or spirit at each corner, on each pole or stone," they mean.

Among supernatural beings one may easily distinguish three major grades: gods and deities, known as Deotā; or Deutā Spirits having no general names; Demons or 'Rākās'. The demons



are invariably evil and must be appeased to keep them away. The 'Deutā' and the spirits may be good or evil. However, sacrilege or neglect always makes the good spirits and Deutā angry and evil.

#### (a) Gods and Deities

All are agreed that 'Dharam Deotā' is the highest god, equated with the sun, who sees and hears all and knows who is what, but does not harm the people. In many important worships he is offered something, rice or white fowl, but probably never a goat. He is also made witness at taking oaths and is expected to see that justice is carried out. He holds the world still and is equated sometimes with "Bāsuki" or "Basumātā" or Basundharā. Bāsuki" In Hindu Mythology is a great serpent on whose head the world rests. Even in some recent Hindu rituals like 'Debi Usā', Dharam is sacrificed a chicken. Without 'Dharam' the world will fall to pieces. Dharam is most often invoked along with 'Basundharā', and the latter never alone. Dharam is invoked in building a new house, in hunting, and even for curing serious illnesses. He is perfectly benevolent.

Next in importance for the Tasaṛā villagers is 'Bharāli pāt', the greatest God of the 'Baṭisbār' organization in which Tasaṛā falls. 'Bharāli pāt' is the younger brother of 'kanta kuānri or virgin-Goddess kanta, who is taken in the month procession to be worshipped by the raja and various castes and tribes in the month of September-October every year (Roy pp. 105 – 117). A goat is presented by Tasaṛā village to the Raja every year at time, but this customary present of one goat from each pāuṛi village was to be used in sacrifices to various goddesses in the palace temples. This goddess seems to be of greater importance than the Gods of the 'Bār' for the villagers falling on her circuit yearly visit.

'Bharāli pāt' was once sought to be shifted to Bonaigarh palace. He announced through a human medium (possessed) that he would not move to the west or be roaming like his sister 'kanta kuānri'. Moreover, he said that he would not stand listening to people's woes, because he could not do much for them.

Many generations ago 'Bharāli pāt' was born in the priest-lineage ('Dehuribaṁsa') in the form of a 'tiger' earlier than his twin-brother, a fully human child. About 4 generations back he was sometimes seen sleeping at the door-step just like a tame dog ! He was protecting all the swiddens at day-time against monkeys and birds and at night against the wild animals, but was sleeping only in the swidden of his own household.

Once his younger brother's wife, with whom he had a relation of avoidance and thus did not know her by face, brought him food and kept it at the back of the swidden. Then she entered the hut and took out some rice. While she was on her way back, without a word to her husband's elder brother, the tiger, she was killed by him in the suspicion of stealing. He explained what happened to the parents on their return. He was scolded and blamed for killing his younger

brother's wife, without any fault. So he was crying out of deep remorse and said that he would henceforward live in a mountain cave. Thus he was left in the mountain called Bāghaghara or "house of the tiger", known alternately as belmarā near Lungā villagā. Even then some days he would return to the village and sit on the front verandah or protect the swiddens as in the past. He was being given food or worshipped regularly at his mountain abode. One day the priest forgot his water-jug at the place of worship and returned there to fetch it. At that time the god was distributing the offered food to the tigers. The God was very angry at him and told him, "you are saved, as you belong to my ancestral Lineage. Otherwise I would have eaten you to-day." He flung the metal water-jug and announced that where the jug would land he must be worshipped there in the future.

Sacrilege or neglect of religious duties led to immediate punishment of the wrong-doers. Thus before the god was ceremonially established at the new place of worship on the bank of the Kalā river, known as Añlāgoṭh, lying between Mahulpadā and Kumudih village, a drunken Gond man trod on the holy circle of worship in spite of being forewarned by the god. He was killed by a tiger before the man reached home. Another time, the main hut of his priest at Tasrā with the sacred corner or 'bhitar' was being repaired and men of various ritual status were on the roof. As the worship of the ancestors, with sacrifice of two fowls and thus re-establishing the ancestors in their own place, was delayed the god punished his own lineage people (Household 26M) by sending a tiger which killed 4 goats that day.

It is believed that this tiger is in Belmarā mountain and whenever there is dereliction in religious duties or sacrilege he chastises the people.

It was 'Bharāli Pāt' again who has announced to a medium in household 12M that if they came down to settle he would "eat" all the people in the area – Pauri Bhuiyāñ and non-Bhuiyāñ.

'Bharāli Pāt' is worshipped at the time of receiving the bride is 'Magā' mode of marriage, and at a funeral of a man of priestly lineage he was also offered a fowl.

He is also invoked in cases of serious illness when the normal procedures fail and is offered sacrifices on fulfillment of the prayer.

In his honour every year in November-December an important ritual on behalf of all the villages in 'Batishbār' is held. He was formerly sacrificed a buffalo, now goats. If 'Dharam -Deotā' be regarded partly as a guardian of justice, 'Bharāli Pāt' is a guardian of morals.

'Bisri Thākurañi' or the goddess 'Bisri Debi' is being worshipped in Tasrā only since 1957, though her worship was much in vogue already in the region. Simultaneously two or three men dreamed of her and she asked the villagers to worship her, otherwise cattle and men would be lost. This goddess was already popular during Roy's visit in early 1930's in Kuirā and Keonjhar.



Recently it was known to have spread from Bamra, into Mahulpadā region. One of the first villages to adopt this goddess was Derulā about 1926, after cholera had taken a heavy toll. This is a Hindu goddess, particularly patronized by the Gour caste and it is not perhaps insignificant that Derulā is a valley village with an old Gour family.

However, the picture of the goddess is not painted the same. At Burhābhuiñ (South) the goddess was represented as an old woman with flying grey hairs, clad in silk sari and a cane-stick in hand. At Derulā, however, I was informed that she appears in dreams as a beautiful young woman with a big circular ear-ornament 'Kāpa', characteristic of some Hindu castes, of whom also her nose-ornament 'bhesni dandī' is typical. Her image is made of clay by 'Raniā Kumhār' (potter) of Dālsuāñ in Bamra, showing 7 hoods of a divine serpent on the head. The image consists of only the head and face. Dealing with these images is considered so dangerous that he and his family have to shave and bathe and change their cooking pots after the season is over.

Nowadays the Pān and the Gond are the most important votaries in the valley. Her worship is held in the month of December-January. She may cause, and protect against, epidemics of livestock and men and serious illnesses, as even stoppage of the laying of eggs by domestic fowl.

#### 'Hingulāi Thākurañi'

This Hindu goddess is a sister of 'Bisri' and is located in kumudih village on the west of the village jungle. Every year on the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight in the month of 'Cait' (March-April) a festival is held there and people from pāuri and valley village come there together with offerings of fowl and food in fulfillment of promises at the time of illness. A Gond priest, at present Sarna by name, worships her. She is the goddess of cholera, measles, pox and also of severe constipation ('shulā maidān'). She is also invoked in cases of fever and cough etc.

#### 'Lachmi (Lakhmi) Thākurañi'

She is the Hindu Goddess of wealth and Fertility, Lakshmi. The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ worship her just before the ceremonial sowing in the month of Baisākh or April-May.

#### 'Gāenshri'

She (or he?) is the foremost among the village deities and protects the village on all occasions. At the establishment of a village, or offering of first fruits and at the year-ending ritual 'Pus Parab' she gets the major attention. She sometimes appears in dreams and forewarns the villagers of calamities or speaks through a medium. 'Birdā' is 'Bahan' or subordinate companion to her (him).

**'Barām' or 'Baḍām'**

This male deity's priest is the most important one. He is the most powerful village deity and is offered major sacrifices at the ceremonies before felling the forest for swiddens and before sowing 'Biri' pulses in the new swidden. 'Barām' is conceived as an old man and his wife is called 'Barām Budhi'. They appear to be the first human pair and a long mythological chant including the marriage of their son and daughter is recited at the first ceremony. 'Bhim' is considered as 'Bāhan' or subordinate companion to 'Barām'. 'Barām' comes nearest to being a tribal ancestral deity.

**'Serani or Saharani –Pāt'**

This is a deity of the former occupants of the area, the juāng. Before first weeding in the first-year swidden she is offered sacrifices and every ten years a pig to which she was used as a Juāng deity, although pig is not reared by any Pāuri Bhuiyāñ.

**'Bābhuṇi or Bābhuṇi Pāt'**

This name suggests that it is the deity of the Brahmani river, as also Roy in forms (p.215). But m Tasḍā informants pointed to the Bābhuṇi hill that towers above Upar Tasrā. He is known as the 'Āgacalā Deotā' or the deity who is worshipped first independently.

**'Mahā Pāt', 'Sār Pāṭ', 'Kalā Pāṭ', 'Mā Bhaer'**

These deities are worshipped with fowl sacrifices and count among village doities, 'Gāenshri' and 'Birdā', 'Barām' and 'Bhim', 'Bābhuṇi Pāt', as also these are all small and big stones placed under trees, which are inviolable. Their locale, especially that of 'Barām', 'Gāenshri' or 'Bābhuṇi Pāt' is known as 'Sāla' or sacred grove, and always lie outside the habitation site.

**'Nishār'**

This deity, represented by a stone, lies inside the village, near the 'Maṇḍa Darabār'. He is considered as the Headman of the village and is quite harmless. In the words of Tasḍā men, he accepts all the dirt (literally, night soil and urine) and does not mind. He is worshipped in some important ceremonies of eating first mango fruits or mango kernels. It is probable that the name 'Nishār' is due to his getting worship in the night (nishā).

**'Shubha Khunṭa'**

This is the auspicious wooden pillar planted a year before shifting to a new site. At Tasrā it was a regular ten-yearly affair till 1950-51, and a big worship was organized and a goat sacrificed to the pillar. Every year the pillar gets an offering of rice – flour in 'Pus Puneñ' or when girls visit another village on a dancing excursion.



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### 'Maṇḍa Darabār'

The Dancing and Assembly Platform is also conceived as a 'Deutā' and is worshipped at the time of marriage and in 'Pus Puneih' (the year-ending festival).

### 'Baghiā' or 'Dagar Baghiā'

The 'Bāhan' or subordinate companion of 'Bharāli Pāt' and 'Bābhuni Pāt' is very much feared. A person killed by tiger becomes 'Baghiā' and has a ready inclination to kill other men unless driven out after such a mishap out of the village and also unless periodically appeased as a collective body, it appears. It is 'Baghiā' who is sent by 'Bharāli Pāt' and other deities to punish the people for breach of taboos and sacrilege. Though 'Baghiā' is also a spirit, it is mostly associated with deities in the form of 'Dagar Baghiā'.

### 'Kamāl Buḍhā'

He is acclaimed as the first inhabitant of Tasdā, who also constructed the sites of habitation. He is the first ancestor belonging to the priestly maximal lineage of the 'Maṭiāli' section. This hero-ancestor is reputed to have lived in a hut with a rocky roof with walls of earth, now covered in an anthill. Similar hero-ancestor of Tare village to the north is 'Sāunt', whose beautiful hut, three-roomed, of stone (a cave shelter), is reported to be still preserved.

'Kamāl Buḍhā' was named as the most important 'Deutā' in hunting and the head of the first game is the year (beginning with māgh or January – February) is offered to him if in fresh condition. In case of unsuccessful hunting repeated for three times or so a sacrifice is offered to him. He is also worshipped on the day of Foundation of the Site. But in Derujā, where 'Sāunt' is regarded as the hero-ancestor, 'Dagar Baghiā' was named as the main deity of hunting.

However, it is to be noted that 'Baghiā' and 'Kamāl Buḍhā' are both regarded as deities, although they are consciously acknowledged as spirits of human beings. More-over, in sharp contrast to the other deities, they do not have a fixed seat or a stone or wooden pillar to represent them. Thus we may conclude that these two spirits of men have been deified, without, however, being fully institutionalized.

Disease-causing malignant deities, like 'Sandhi-Bindhā', 'Bāuti', 'Paghurā' and 'Deurā-Kācunī' have already been dealt with under the topic "Diseases and Afflictions- Remedies and Sanitation".

### (b) Spirits of Men

#### 'Pitru' or 'Pitrapurus'

This is how the ancestral spirits, housed in the sacred corner or 'bhitar' in an earthen pot, are known. A separate earthen pot is used for cooking offerings to them at various ceremonies.



and especially on eating the first fruits or crops. Often they are housed jointly in a brother's or paternal cousin's house. These ancestral spirits are benevolent but may cause diseases or inflict punishment on transgression of duties towards them. They are the most immediate aspect of the supernatural world and hence unavoidably important. At every meal or drink a pāuri has to offer the first bits or drops to them. If a child of six to eight omits this offering, he must beg apology and offer to them afterwards. 'Pitrapurus' include the men born in the lineage and the women married into it, who have been given full funeral honour.

### Evil Spirits

The spirit of Death or 'Masāni Bhut', 'Curuṇi' and 'Tunuā', causing diseases and death have already been mentioned under topic "Diseases and Afflictions – Remedies and Sanitation". 'Curuṇi' and 'Juguṇi' are offered a whole egg and chickens before some jungle flowers could be collected.

### Demons or 'Rākās' or 'Rākhas'

There are 'Rākās' at various places in the forest, hill, water-holes, or Beljhari stream which are worshipped at the Foundation of the Site ceremony or at special ceremonies in their honour. Lankuṛi Pāṇi Rākās', Bhālughar Rākās' and 'Lakesar Rākās' in Tal Tasrā and 'Kumutha Rākās', 'Musāghar Rākās', 'Sirabuḍhā Tunguru Rākhas', and 'Jardebi Rākās' in upar Tasrā were offered fowl-sacrifice at the Foundation of the Site ceremony in 1954. 'Jardebi Rākās' is the demon in a Jarī tree near the water-hole of Upar Tasrā. The demon, who guards over the sanctity of the waterhole, is thus baited not to endanger the very scanty water-supply. 'Lakesar Rākhas' renders the benevolent service of protecting the swiddens from elephants (by obstructing their advance). Similarly the demons of the forest are appeased for better rains, when a drought threatens.

In the Beljhari stream there is one deep pool called Kanḍākāṇa Dhara, abounding in fish. The myth runs that a 'Shabar' and 'Shabarūṇi' (his wife) – perhaps Juāṅg-had gone on a hunting trip. A sudden hill-flood threatened to engulf them. Golden plough and yoke came floating and carried away both of them, at least depositing them at Kanḍā Kāṇa. Their spirits have to be pacified, before fishing there, by worshipping them with fowl-sacrifice.

These demons are spirits seated at definite places and have their votaries' regular attention. If the swiddens were in other parts of the forests other sets of 'Rākās' would have been worshipped.

It must be noted that potentially more dangerous demons are given better attention. Thus a relatively weakly weaker demon at Tal Tasrā drinking water-hole is not worshipped, and it is interesting to point out that the water-supply there does not dry up as at Upar Tasrā. Similarly the harmless spirits of unmarried young persons are not worshipped, but the dangerous spirit of a maiden dying of blood-vomitting 'Kācuṇi', is, because she brings illness.

The supernatural beings, it must have been observed, are thoroughly anthropomorphic and / or they behave like men. The belief in human soul is present, and it seems all these supernatural entities are animistic. Many of these animistic beings are ultimately derived from human spirits. The cults of the ancestors and the village deities are at the centre of the rituals and the magico-religious belief system.

Religion and Magic were once rigidly differentiated, but their blend is too complex to be isolated, especially so among the Pāuri Bhiyañ. Taking the classical approach, primarily magical are the exorcism rites or sorcery. But in other cases, say on the occasion of ceremonial sowing, on an 'Añlā' tree, which bears numerous fruits, seed-paddy in a pot is kept overnight to magically induce fertility in the seeds mixed with the magically "charged" seeds are then sown symbolically in a small area. When at another ceremony the woman bring some straw thatch from their huts and burn it at the stream after sacrifice to evil spirits, it is believed the diseases are also burnt away. Success may be considered as a contagious quality of an entity. This is inferred from cases when a blood-smeared successful arrow-head is touched by others, or when a successful stick lac grower sets lac for others relatively unlucky.

Just a word about the evil-eye. It is not an inborn quality, but acquired. A sorcerer can inflict evil-eye (Najar) by uttering some spell or even by desiring the good thing eaten or just by vocally praising a healthy child.

Besides, there are beliefs in days, auspicious and inauspicious. Auspicious ones are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Good Omens are: seeing a monkey black on the neck or if a monkey hoots in the way, an animal crossing one's path from the left to the right, etc. Ill Omens are : an animal crossing from the right to the left, or a crow or a kite leaving droppings on oneself or in front, etc. Such ill Omens foredoom a mission to failure and a party on some mission to another village turns back.

Divination is practiced on a wide scale. We shall see later on how divination to foretell success in coming year's crops, hunting, and well-being of the village and of men in the village is done. Divination at the time of house-building has already been described, by invoking 'Baḍām', ancestral spirits, and 'Dharam'. Before one takes the risk of a costly marriage by 'Magā' mode a similar divination is undertaken by invoking 'Dharam' and placing two heapfuls of rice after 'Dharam' and the bride-elect under cover of a n earthen pot. If the heapful of the bride-elect is disturbed except by ants (which are very common) the important step of sending go-between will not be taken.

### C. The CYCLE of RITUALS and FESTIVALS

In this section we shall describe the rituals festivals, that are observed by all the households of the village or hamlet, individually or collectively, at the same time. The rituals and festivals may be divided into Annual, Decennial, and Occasional festivities.



## 1. Annual Rituals and Festivals

### (a) 'Diha-bandhāni' or Foundation of the Site or Establishing the Site

The year begins with this important ceremony. The date of holding it is decided by the village Assembly before a week or so, and the nearby villages come to know of it, as also the relatives outside Tasrā. The houses are newly plastered, clothes washed, and sufficient rice de-husked in every house. It is customary that the 'Parjā' stand the native beer consumed on this occasion, though some 'Mātiāli' households may set a few for their private needs. It is now a season of plenty and the relatives visit in large numbers. In case of Tasrā, specially a party from the daughter-village Guhāibandhā colony always visits Tasrā at big ceremonies.

As there was death in Tasrā, the celebration of 'Dihabandhāni' was postponed till after the funeral ceremony. In Tal Tasrā this was observed on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 1954 and in Upar Tasrā, the following day.

In the early morning at Tal Tasrā subscription of one chicken and some sun-dried rice from each house and a half Kilo of rice for communal feasting by one male representative of each household was raised. Then there was a formal meeting of the heads of household in the hamlet with the senior Headman, some elders from the other hamlet and some youngmen. The Headman formally addressed them prefacing that the new year had started and it was to be decided who would stay and who else emigrate. Some elderly 'Parjā' assured the Headman and the priests that they had managed to live well with them and under their care, and unless the Headman drove them away they would stay on here. Because, he added, wherever, they went, they had to "serve" or obey the Headman and the Raja. Then the priest of the day gave each of the householders a piece of fire holding which everyone took a solemn oath that he would live along with others in the village in amity and observe the duties of a villager. Then the priest sprinkled water on all of them, probably to disengage them from the solemn atmosphere of oath-taking.

### Worship and Divination on 'Maṇḍa Darabār'

The priest sat on his haunches (hānthu gāri) facing the east and made a pattern like with emulsion of rice-flour and placed 25 heapfuls of sun-dried rice and turmeric powder at each point of intersection. The deities 'Gāenshri' and 'Dharam Deotā' were sacrificed two fowls by cutting. Firstly, as always before sacrifice, the fowls were induced to take rice from the heapfuls and only when they took, they were sacrificed. This behavior shows that the deity or spirit concerned accepts the offer. The heads, as always, were placed on the heapfuls with the beak eastward, and the blood was poured on the heapfuls or 'Punji'. The worship was now concluded by the priest sprinkling water round the ritual pattern and thus extinguished the burning 'sāl' incense on the east, which invariably accompanies a worship.

Divination with 2 pieces of 'sāl' stick and 2 halves of one 'kendu' stick is called 'Pānjipakā', after the astrological book of foretelling consulted in the valley, known as 'Pānji'. The priest took the 2 'sāl' pieces in his hand and placed them on the ground in the name of the village (hamlet). As only one stick showed its split-face upward it was joyously acclaimed as prosperity

or 'subidhā' for the village in the coming year. Against the well-being of men or villagers the result came out to be also identically good. However, for 'Gurās' or hunting with 'kendu' sticks, both the split-faces showed upward and the prospect was 'mukar' or bad in part. But cultivation was foretold as 'subidhā' or all-well. The divination was held clearly under the supervision of the deities worshipped. Now that it was finished, the pattern was crossed, thus symbolically abolished.

The priest and others with the materials of further worship went up to the flat bank of a stream to the south. A ritual pattern was now made and the fowls were sacrificed; first to 'Kamālbudhā' and then 'Kāla Budhā' or Ancestors of the priests, 2 fowls; 'Bandhu-Kulīā' or Ancestors of Affinal Relatives of Tasrā 'Māṭiāli' thus including that of the 'Parjā', and in particular to Ancestor of priests of iti village, who are most important among the 'Parjā' households, 2 chicks; then 3 fowls to 3 'Rākās', the biggest one to 'Lakesar Rākās' who guards the swiddens from elephants from pal Lahara side; lastly one fowl, ideally black, but in lack of it at that moment, a darkish brown (pithāliā) one was sacrificed to 'Baghiā'. A few fowls were killed by beating for those who were not ritually clean and who could not partake of the meat of the sacrificial fowls or chicks. These were men whose wife had menstrual pollution or was not yet ritually incorporated after marriage or whose household was tainted with birth and death pollution. The rest of the chicks were sacrificed to the deities, spirits or demons who were forgotten ('pashurā-saṅrā') or who might feel neglected. This practice shows how unpredictable the supernatural world may be, and moreover, how the Pāuri Bhuiyān cleverly tries to manipulate the unknown but touchy powers that be.

The priest cooked in new pots the sun-dried rice collected into porridge and the heads of fowls sacrificed except to 'Baghiā' and offered them at the ritual pattern to the deities, spirits and demons. Now the worship was finished. He ate all the rest of the offering alone, as no one else should share it.

The fowl sacrificed to 'Baghiā' was baked in leaves and taken by an old priest, whose ritual status might not be affected by the dangerous power of 'Baghiā', especially as he did not worship at Tasrā.

Before equal sharing of the food among the guests, expected and unexpected, and the villagers including the Headman and others from Upar Tasrā, native beer was served by the junior 'Parjā' men. The ancestors and 'Dharam' were first offered before eating. Before celebrating this ceremony no one can build a new house or eat the wild fruit of Bauhinia Vahlia or 'siāri'. According to some a wild flower called 'jhilri phul' is also allowed to eat after this. If this ceremony is not observed people will die, cattle will be lost to leopards and people could not safely roam through the jungle.



## (b) 'Pankhirā Piṭhā' or offering of Cakes to men

This was a social festivity, organized by the womenfolk. In Tal Tasrā they observed it on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 1954. About 4¼ Kilo paddy and about 170 gm 'Jatangi' oilseed and a pinch of salt were collected from all the 17 households one day before. The ritually clean elderly women, both 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā', took the leading part in cooking and directing the younger women and girls who helped them and ran on errand. Maidens were asked to bring 'Kundru' flower in white bunches that were already blooming. Rice-flour was made from the paddy by a number of households cooperating together.

Big-sized cakes of rice-flour and oilseed powder were made by steaming process. Before the sun-set the oldest priestess of the hamlet led the womenfolk and maidens, offered the cakes, and formally addressed the menfolk, "O Dehuri (priest), Padhān (Headman), wo women searched everywhere in your threshing grounds and in the jungle for 'bāḍhuṇi' (broom-stick) grass and 'bāiṇsa' (bamboo) flower, but could not find any. The swidden harvesting grounds are empty. We have collected from 'Gandhiri' (a weed in abandoned swidden) bushes what we are offering now".

A middle-aged priest, leading all the menfolk including elderly 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā' replied, "O Mābhaṇimāne (mothers and sisters), we know the 'bāḍhuṇi' grass and 'bāiṇsa' branches have dried up, land is no longer very productive. Still, what ever you have given us is very worthy. You womenfolk have always given us food and sustained us – we do not know anything about this (mystery). You have somehow managed to maintain us and have offered this every year. So we would gladly accept this." The old lady then offered the flowers saying, "we have got only 'Kundru' flowers, which you may accept and wear, or may throw to the Beljhari rivulet if you like." To this the elders replied with laughter and enthusiastically said that, of course, they would accept this gladly also.

When the maidens with much 'Kundru' flowers in their hair-buns bowed down on their knees to the menfolk, some elders stood up and expressed satisfaction and asked the girls to rise up. Now 'Kundru' flower was worn by all men, old, young and child, on the ears, as is the custom.

The 'Shubha Khunṭa' deity was given some rice-flour earlier.

That night some married men and elderly women joined the young persons at a longer dance session than usual.

At Upar Tasrā on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January this festivity was already held before 'Dihabandhāni' ceremony was celebrated. That day from about 3 p.m. the dancing continued till late at night.

## (c) 'Āgacalā Puja' or Worship of the Advance Deity

'Bahmuṇi Pāt' and 'Baghiā' were worshipped 'Bāhmuṇi Pāt' and by some even 'Kamālbudhā' was named as the 'Āgealā' deity. Before thatch-grass is sown, or bamboos, bushes are cut

and collected, or swiddens occupied, this ceremony must be observed. Otherwise tigers will destroy men or cattle or both.

At Tal Tasrā this was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 1954. Ordinarily the 'Agealā Deotā' is given a he-goat in alternate years, but this year they could not arrange although the Upar Tasrā did sacrifice a he-goat on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February. At Tal Tasrā on subscription two fowls were purchased and some sun-dried paddy collected from each household. The priest, a member of the 'Padhān' or Headman's lineage, in place of a ritually unclean, and of another sick, priests took his bath as usually a worshipper must do. An assistant or 'Pithibāhan' an 'Itiāla' 'Parjā' elder, helped in arranging materials and dehusked the paddy.

Some 'Parjā' and 'Māṭiāli' elders followed the priests with rice ½ Kilo each. Near the stream a ritual pattern was drawn with heapfuls of sun-dried rice, as usual. First the bigger fowl for 'Bāhmūṇi Pāt' and then the other one for 'Baghiā' were sacrificed by cutting. The heads were placed on heapfuls, and pouring the blood on the heapfuls the trucks were thrown to the bush, as is usually done. The priest sprinkle water round the pattern. The blood-soaked rice was put on the head by others, as is the custom.

Then the priest cooked rice-porridge and the heads with the beaks were first singed and then cooked. He offered this food on all the heapfuls for the deities and sprinkled water round the pattern and on the incense- thus completing the worship.

He must finish the rice and meat cooked by himself or he could share it with some others of his priestly 'Kuṭumb'. Whatever he could not eat was thrown into the jungle.

The others cooked the singed trunks of the fowls and rice, and gave one share of meat to the priest also. Others also could not take any surplus home or give to somebody else who was already not there. Thus at Upar Tasrā the men had to leave the surplus food and after two hours or so again returned to finish it. As the deities are very powerful this cannot be done, unlike on the occasion of 'Dihabandhāni'.

#### (d) 'Dēhuriā Madakhiā' or Drinking with the Priests

It was an impressive sight to see the menfolk of the village assemble in a sunny maize garden on the 5<sup>th</sup> February to partake of the native beer and sumptuous side dishes including vegetables and fowl-meat, supplied by the priestly (Māṭiāli) families. The 'Māṭiāli' men sat in a line away from the 'Parjā', and the 'Bandhu' or affinal relatives (and guests) away from both of them – in a discontinuous circle. Boys down to 8 years took part in it.

#### (e) 'Uḍhuṇi Bhasnā' Ceremony

This ritual is held before the important 'Mahul' flower, and according to some, also 'Jhilri' flower are collected from the jungle and eaten. At Tal Tasrā this was observed on the 7<sup>th</sup> February, and in Upar Tasrā, on the 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1954 on the day of 'Dihabandhāni' ceremony.



Every household contributed  $\frac{1}{2}$  Kilo sun-dried paddy and some sun-dried rice, made later into emulsion. Some households gave chicks for this ceremony and others would be giving them, one each, for the complementary ceremony, called 'Rahani Bhasnā' in April. An egg was also needed for the first ceremony.

It is a ritual observed by the women, as it is they who collect these flowers and run the risk of meeting dangers from spirits and demons in the jungle. The priestess was an old lady or married woman, ritually clean of the priestly lineage.

After an early morning bath the usual type of ritual pattern was made on the other bank (Tare Village) of the Beljhari rivulet. It is never done at a place inside the village border. Under a 'Mahul' (Bassia Latifolia) tree this worship was held.

A chick's left eye was sewn with a needle and thread and the egg and the chick were left 'ragha' or live scape-goat to the 'Curuni' and 'Juguni' Spirits. Two chicks were also sacrificed by cutting to the 'Mahul' tree. The usual procedure of offering the beads on the rice heapfuls was followed. Then all fled with the sacrificed chicks and rice etc. to Tasrā side of the stream without looking behind. On this side she roasted the heads and other women cooked the trunks. The priestess offered the heads and cakes prepared by baking and then others shared the food including the heads. None may however bring the food to the village only women, ritually clean and whose male babies do not yet take cakes, may take part in the ceremony.

A piece of thatch grass from each house and a pellet of earth from the front verandah of each house was floated down the hill-stream after the worship on the other side was over. At Derulā, however, I came to know the thatchgrass was burnt. This act magically transfers or destroys diseases of the household.

#### (f) 'Mālgujāri Madakhiā'

This drinking bout was organized especially to drink to the health of two representatives of the village, one 'Mātiāli' from Upar Tasrā and another 'Māṭāli' from ower Tasrā, who went to Bonaigarh to deposit the revenue of Rs. 5.00 in the treasury. Though all menfolk drank native beer together a pot of beer was reserved for drinking by a selected few with special treatment to the persons in question. This came off on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February, 1954.

#### (g) and (h) 'Dhuliāni Pujā' and Ām Nuā Ceremonies

In the month of February-March 'Phagun' or early next month 'Cait' 'Dhuliāni' ceremony is held to worship 'Baḍām' and 'Bhim' before cutting bushes and felling trees and firing in new swiddens. According to another view, at Derulā, 'Āgealā' worship goes before cutting a new swidden and 'Dhuliāni' ceremony before firing a new swidden. But Tasrā villagers were adamant that, because of my presence they could not hold this 'Dhuliāni' worship and hence could not clear new swiddens. It is also said that clearing of Jungle in the second year swidden follows the ritual.

In the worship, one of the most important, there are two sets of priests and priestesses. The priest must be fasting the whole day, eating only once at the sun-set and will not take water or smoke at other times. After such restrictions including continence for two days, will they be in the proper condition to worship the dangerous and powerful deity, 'Baḍām'. In 1953 the priests were two unmarried youngmen. The two priestesses were old widows of priestly lineage in Tal Tasrā. Thus both the priests and the priestesses were either below or beyond the condition of being ritually unclean.

In the morning the priests and two cooks go to the sacred grove enshrining 'Baḍām' and his 'Bāhan' or subordinate companion called 'Bhim'. The priests sacrificed in 1953 a he-goat to 'Baḍām', 2 chicks to 'Bhim', and one chick also to Ganeshri and Birda. In 1954, as in other alternate years 2 fowls instead of a goat were sacrificed to 'Baḍām'. The priests cook the heads with rice porridge and the cooks prepare the trunks and rice. They then leave the place of worship and return without ever looking back.

The priestesses and the ritually clean women and girls, fasting after bath, now go there and chant the long myth of 'Baḍām Buḍhā' and 'Baḍām Buḍhi', probably the first human pair, and of the marriage of their children. The priestesses offer the food cooked by the priests to the deities and eat it themselves, without sharing it with others. The other womenfolk eat the food prepared by the cooks. The women must not bring any remains of their food back to the village. Indeed, they have a great day !

The menfolk in their households offer rice-porridge cooked by their women with mango blossoms in a new pot to the ancestral spirits. This is called 'Ām Nuā' ceremony. This makes eating of mango fruits of blossoms harmless. If anybody eats mango fruit (or the blossom) before this offering, surely there will be some mishap due to tigers or leopards. This ceremony may be held next day.

The menfolk eat at the communal kitchen in the village and ordinarily go on a hunting expedition. Till today in Ḍerulā village in the valley, and until about 15 years in Tasrā (which information may be doubted), the women also organized a mock hunting trip. A few of them dress like men with turbans to hide their buns of hair, and go to the outskirts of the village with bow, arrow and axes with great show.

They bring a banana plant out of the garden, cut it into pieces and distribute them among the households as their hunters' share of "flesh".

Upon the return of the men the senior priest of the day is presented the "head" of the 'sambar', a favourite big game animal, which he offers to the deities. Five women led by the 'Māṭiāli' old ones offer a bow and arrow and a piece of 'Flesh' to five men, both 'Māṭiāli' and 'Parjā'. Thus ends the tense atmosphere of the worship with an air of joviality.



In the evening the senior priest of the day offers fowl-sacrifice to 'Nishār' deity in the village as the last rite of 'Ām Nuā'.

In the morning at Tasrā on 'Ām Nuā' day the cattle—sheds are also worshipped with the prayer that the cattle may roam freely in the wood without the danger of tiger or bear, or thorn.

(i) 'Hengulāi Jātrā' or Fair in honour of 'Hengulāi'

This fair comes off on the full-moon day of Cait month (march-April). The goddess 'Hengulāi' attracts a large number of people from villages who bring fowls for sacrifice in fulfillment of vows on occasions of sickness. They come in clean dress with native beer and have a good time in the sweet shops also. The goddess is worshipped by a Gond priest and Tasrā send some sundried paddy and incense for offering to her. This is the only ritual, which Pāūrī Bhuiyāñ attend as participators and the priest is an outsider. In the other case of bringing goats Bonaigarh in Dasarā month (t), the Tasrā Bhuiyāñ representatives are merely visitors, as also Pāūrī Bhuiyāñ in general at the palace.

(j) 'Rahani Bhasnā' Ceremony

This is complementary to 'Udhuni Bhasnā' ceremony and is again a worship exclusively by the womenfolk. In 1953 it was held in April-May. Only after this ceremony can they cut the bushes ('Jagharā') in the second year paddy swidden.

Near the dancing platform 'Kendu', 'Mahul' and 'Ānlā' saplings are planted and worshipped by sacrificing chicks. Sun-dried rice and the feathers of the chicks sacrificed are made into a leaf-packet and is hung from 'Mahul' sapling. Another leaf packet of sun-dried rice is hung from the 'Kendu' sapling.

The heads and cakes made from sun-dried rice are eaten after offering to the deities by the priestesses. The trunks are cooked with rice known as 'Shubha Cāula'. This rice was already set apart after the threshing ground ceremony of the previous year. At this communal cooking the women distribute rice and meat to each household. Outsiders may not be given any share out of this. Also round cakes are made and offered, at Derulā, to the youngmen and boys one basketful and to the "old" or elders another basketful. It is also said at Derulā that the worship is meant for 'Baḍām', the ancestral spirits and 'Gāenshri' deities.

That night at the first crow of the cock, before daybreak, two women, who had planted the 'Kendu' and 'Mahul' saplings, bring them to the hill-stream naked, and leave them in the current to float down. Some cakes are also left with the saplings. The 'Ānlā' sapling is not taken away till after 7 days. At Derulā 'sāl' sapling was mentioned in place of 'Kendu'.

This worship is held so that there may be abundance of fruits, tubers, roots, flowers etc. and no harm may come from exploiting them. Besides, discuses of men and livestock are also meant to be averted.

(k) 'Ākhuḷi Pārdhi' or ceremonial Hunting

In the month of April or May, sometimes before 'Rahani Bhasnā', this hunting by the whole village is a ritual necessity. An elderly priest leads the party and the bows and arrows are magically charged with spells for success. Boys of ten or so also accompany. In 1953 the party composed of both the hamlets and Guhālbandhā colony, the daughter village. As the game has become scarce they could not hurt any better than a small spotted deer which escaped. If an animal were killed, the blood would have been offered to 'Barām', 'Gāenshri', 'Kamālbudhā' and ancestors and to 'Baghiā' by the priest. The head of the animal would have been carried to the village Headman's house, where his wife would have greeted the successful marksman and the carriers of the head by 'washing' their feet and putting turmeric powder on the forehead. The Headman was to be presented two scapular muscles and in return he was to entertain the village men with native beer. But this has been discontinued. However, the priest even today gets a special share.

As there was no animal bagged, the priest offered only cakes baked on fire by him-self to the ancestors and all others prepared similar cakes and offered to 'Dharam', 'Kamālbudhā' and ancestors. In 1957 Guhālbandhā colony organized their 'Ākhuli' alone.

(l) 'Baṇabhujni' or "Picnic"

In the month of April – May menfolk go fishing to the Beljhari rivulet by poisoning the pools. Then there is a communal kitchen of the whole hamlet. and children of the age of taking rice and women all get equal share. For children and women rice-contribution is on a par as for the men- ½ Kilo each. Thus all the village enjoys a good meal of cereals and fish as almost a happy ending of a season of plenty drawing to its close.

(m) 'Tithiā Pujā' or Ceremonial Sowing of Paddy

In the month of May, before the rains start, a worship is held for 'Lachmi', the Hindu goddess of wealth and fertility and for 'Dharam'. Before this nobody may sow paddy.

The day before the worship a new earthen –pot is spotted with rice-emulsion. Paddy late or sometimes early variety, is obtained from all the households and kept there. Under the 'añlā' tree near the hamlet-site 'Lachmi' is worshipped with heapfuls of rice on a ritual pattern. At Derulā one chick is sacrificed at this time. The closed earthen pot is now tied to a branch of the tree.

Next morning the priest brings the pot down and distributes the paddy to all households. Every household sends some seedpaddy which the priest mixes with the "charged" seeds. At Derulā one white fowl was sacrificed on 'Manoadarabār' probably to 'Dharam'.



The householder after bath goes to his second year swidden with the paddy seeds and some rice flour. He washes the ground, makes a ritual pattern with the usual heapfuls of rice and burning incense. He bakes a cake and offers it to 'Dharam Deotā'. Then he sows the seeds on a small area by broadcasting the seeds. It is believed, this ceremonial sowing will ensure a bumper harvest. If it be omitted, the harvest will be poor.

#### (n) 'Raja Parab' or Raja Festival

For two days this purely social festivity in the month of May-June or 'Jeth' throws the whole routine out of gear. There is much visiting between relatives and friends. 'Raja' is observed among the valley Hindus. In the latter's case the dates are fixed and determined according to the astronomical almanac. But among the Pāuri mostly functional considerations, like death pollution or arrangement of a loan of paddy for the occasion etc. weigh heavy.

The youngmen and maidens enjoy it the most. A swing is hung from a tree they take turns in swinging and singing. Singing contest is very hearty as voice, memory and improvisation combine to gain the favour of maidens. There is much 'Cāngu' dances also. Songs of a special type of metric arrangement are used in the song contest. They are directly or indirectly erotic, for the most part.

The whole hamlet usually organizes a communal kitchen for rice and fowl with equal contributions and shares. In stead of native beer made from rice or millets, beer of 'mahul' flowers or 'sarlā' is now preferred. At home they make rice-cakes baked in fire and native beer. Menfolk also organize hunting and if an animal be bagged, so much the better.

This festival, coming as it does after the heavy swidden firing operations with the sowing of paddy a few days ahead, affords the much needed rest and recreation.

Other ritualistic behavior commonly found among the Hindus in Orissa because of the belief that the earth-mother is in her menses and so one must not walk on the ground bare-foot or must not cut wood etc. are not taken seriously. They acknowledge that in Keonjhar areas "Raja" is more colorful and ritualistic.

#### (o) 'Āsadhi Pujā'

This is named so as the 'Pujā' or worship is held in the month of Asādh, or June-July, usually in the bright fortnight. This must be observed before 'biri' pulses are sown in the first year swidden.

This also requires very stringent observances on the part of two priests, who must be eating only once at dusk on the day before the worship. On the days of worship the priests also will be fasting till the end of worship when they eat only once. The deities worshipped are 'Bāhmuni Pāt' 'Mahāpāt', and 'Sār Pāt'. At Derulā they worship also the 'Saharani or Sarani Pāt' the

Juāṅg deity, on the second day and, 'Barām', 'Bhim', 'Sār Pāt', 'Gāenshri' and 'Birdā' and some local Rākas (Rakat Mahābali) on the third day. On the first day they worship 'Bāhmuni Pāt' in place of 'Mahāpāt' of Tasrā. For three days the village menfolk at Derulā visit the sacred grove and share the trunks of the sacrificial fowls and goats. My data on Tasrā are, however, not complete.

Native beer is also taken to the place of worship; there the men cook together, eat and drink. Nobody may bring any remains of the food eaten at the place of worship. Subscription of one chick, and in alternate years money for purchasing a goat, and sundried rice for worship besides rice for communal cooking are contributed by each household.

(p) 'Tānk Nuā' or Eating the first Mango Kernel

In Derulā this was continuous with the 'Asādhi Puja' on the fourth day. It is mainly a household worship of the ancestors. The ritually clean women cook in a now pot rice-porridge mixed with the kernel of the stones of mangos. This kernel, by the way becomes important food article in the lean season that already set in. The male head of the household offers to the ancestors this food and all the household shares it.

On behalf of the village 'Nishār' is worshipped by a priest with a sacrifice of fowl and rice porridge with kernel after the evening.

If this worship is not held before eating mango kernel, tigers will destroy men and livestock, as recently happened in one case of breach of the taboo.

(q) 'Gahmā Puneiñ' of Gahmā Festival

This is a Hindu festival, held on the full-moonday of Gahmā month or July-August. But as in the case of 'Raja Parab' other considerations may shift the date.

It is observed in all the households individually. The village or hamlet comes into the picture in two ways. Invariably the village or hamlet borrows paddy as a body under the surety of the Headman or junior Headman, and usually a goat is purchased and shared equally. Cakes baked in fire, native beer, meat and rice present a good occasion for merrymaking and inviting friends and relatives. Yet this festival is not without some ritualistic tinge. As among the Hindus the cattle are worshipped with sun-dried rice and turmeric powder, a lamp burning in the cattle-shed. They are also fed salt.

(r) 'Sarani Pujā'

The Juāṅg deity, 'Sarani' or 'Saharaṇi' is worshipped every Bhuda month (August-September), before weeding is done in the new swiddins. An unmarried priest goes to the sacred grove before day-break and worships the deity by sacrificing a black fowl on behalf of the whole village. One or two men also accompany him who share the trunk.



At Kunu village on the hill 'Sarani Pat' is said to be a phallus-like eminence in the rock. An unmarried priest with two assistants go there before day-break to worship. The priest remains naked. Others may accompany them to take shares in the trunk of the goat offered. They return after day-break. Visitors from other villages are not allowed to stay in the village at the time.

(s) 'Budā Jankāni' or 'Budājantāni'

In the month of Bhuda or August – September after the 'Asāḍhi Pujā' (o) a priest goes to a first-year swidden and takes with him from each household a chick and one half of a cake made from rice of burnt paddy. The priest worships on the way to the new swiddens and sacrifices the chicks to the demons of the swiddens, and of the jungle, the hills and the hill streams near the swiddens. Then he eats the cakes and drinks a jugful of water and cuts two bushes symbolically in a nearly swidden and puts them under stones. This inaugurates the heavy operations of weeding.

At Derulā I was reported that ancestral spirits of the 'Mātiāli' group, and those of their affinal relatives, of other Bhuiyān sections (Bārabhāi Budhā) and of the Juāng first-settlers were also worshipped. However, at Tasrā, before weeding operations in new swiddens start, 'Mā Bhaer' deity is worshipped in the morning by sacrificing her two fowls, and 'Kalā Pat' deity is offered after the evening a black fowl.

(t) 'Dhān Nuā' or offering the First Paddy

Towards the end of Bhuda or Inda month (August – September) the earliest paddy, called in the hills 'Pārdhān' or the valley 'Sāriā' or 'Sāthiā Dhān' growing in the 'gurā' upland fields, is first offered to 'Gāenshri' (and in Derulā also to 'Barām') only two ears of new paddy are left by a priest as offering after worshipping the deity on the ritual pattern.

After this ritual new early paddy may be eaten without any harm.

(u) Worshipping demons at the flowering of late paddy

This is done in the month of 'Dasarā' or September-October just before the late paddy ('Kīmā Dhān') flowers in the second – year paddy swidden. Either the worship is held by immediate sacrificing of fowls according to the capacity of the household, the number of paddy swiddens, and the number of demons to be appeased in the neighbourhood of individual swiddens, or the sacrifices are simply promised to be effected at the ceremony of threshing ground (x). the former was done at Derulā and the latter at Tasrā, though I am not sure which is the more regular practice at Tasrā.

This is done to ensure the safe ripening of the late paddy, which is the main paddy crop.

Their great anxiety is reflected also in a sacrifice to the demon (or deity?) 'Katāmuliā Baghiā', without whose appeasement the field rate may work havoc by cutting the paddy plants at the roots.

(v) 'Dasarāgunḍā' Festivity

In the month or 'Kuāṇr' or September – October usually 2 men are sent with a goat to the Raja's palace at Bonaigarh as the usual village contribution for sacrifices for the deities. After their return a feast is given in their honour. The rice which is consumed at the feasting and on the way to Bonaigarh and back is met from the 'gāuñriā cāula' or 'village rice', specially stored on equal contribution from each household after the previous harvest.

(w) 'Nanga Khiā' or Offering the Late Paddy and Beans

Before this important ceremonial offering of the first fruits to 'Gāenshri', ancestral spirits and 'Nishār', nobody in the village including the Gour Caste settler may eat the specified products. Late paddy ('Kimā dhān') is made into rice and is cooked with 'ruhmā' and 'suturi' beans and 'biri' pulses and is offered with fowl-sacrifice by the priest to 'Gāenshri'. At home a similar porridge of new rice and 'ruhmā' beans etc, is offered to the ancestral spirits in the sacred corner ('bhitar'). In the evening a priest offered to the ancestral spirits in the sacred corner ('bhitar'). In the evening a priest offers similar porridge to 'Nishār' deity in the village.

If one takes any of these crops before the worship is held, tigers may harm man and animals. Most dreadful breach of the taboo seems to centre round 'ruhmā' beans.

This ceremony is observed in Kārtik or October – November.

(x) 'Gundāmanḍā' or 'Khaḷa Puja' or Threshing Ground Ceremony

When the late paddy is reaped and threshing with the help of cattle on the threshing ground in the paddy swidden, this worship is held there in the month of Magisir (November – December). The householder himself worships 'Gāenshri', ancestral spirits, and the demons (the last in fulfillment of vow at the flowering of late paddy plants) by sacrificing fowls to them. The ancestors and 'Gāenshri' are asked to give better crops next year and to protect the swiddens from the elephants and other animals. The demons when thus appeased, may not frighten by breaking tree-branches at night.

After worship paddy is kept separately for 'Shubha Cāula', 'Dehuriā' Dhāna', and for the ceremonial sowing ('tithiā'). Only after that loans may be repaid. Before observing this worship no outsider may be given the new paddy.

(y) 'Karmā Parab' or Karmā Festival

This is the first great festival in the season of plenty. It is, however, not without some ritual significance. It is usually celebrated in the month Magisir (November – December) in the bright fortnight.



The main devotees are the youngmen and maidens. Two branches of 'Karam' tree (*Nauclea parvifolia*) are planted in 'Manda Darabār' and represent 'Karam Raja' and 'Karam Rāni' (karam king and queen). 'Karam Rajā' gets a garland of 7 baked rice-cakes 'Karam Rāni' is decorated with a garland of 'mandāphul' or merrygolds. On the first day the devotees do not take rice but break their fast at dusk with 'gangei' millet cakes, arum, gourd etc. The myth of 'Karam' festival must have been recited before their breakfast. In the evening the deities are worshipped by fasting youngman with molasses and sun-dried rice. Dancing vigorously with 'Mādal' drum, in a special 'Karmā' stepping, the menfolk of the village enjoy much. Visitors come for dancing at this time and the moonlit night enhances the romance and native beer keeps up merrymaking throughout the night. Next day morning the young persons go round the houses, dancing with 'Karam' Rajā' and 'Karam Rāni', who are "received" in the ceremonial manner and given some offering for the benefit of the young devotees. The deities are then taken to the Belsarāi and floated away in the current. The young persons then bake some rice cakes and eat there.

This worship takes a more gala form in the seventh year of fasting by the same batch of youngmen-priests. There is an impression that this festival, allegedly Hindu in origin, has been well-integrated into the life of the youth. In the farewell song for the deities ('melāni gita') a prayer is made to arrange a maiden for a youngman.

In another song it is explained how a seed grows into a plant and yields fruit, which again gets dried up and is stored away, thus bringing into focus the whole cycle of production of food and of fertility.

'Karmā Parab' is observed to honour the deities so that there may be a bumper crop next year, or at least there may not be any loss of the harvest already in store, as happened in the myth on account of sacrilege. It is asserted, however, that through this worship also there may be better health of children.

#### (z) 'Jaṭāḷa Pujā' or Worshipping 'Bharāli Pāt'

In the month of magisir (November – December) the all Important ritual of 'Batis Bār' organization is held and devotees from all the village of 'Batis Bār' come together on the first Thursday in the bright fortnight. It is of especial importance to Tasrā, as the priest comes from its priestly lineage. The assistant priest ('Bāhuka' or one who sacrifices) from Kundālā, a 'Kuṭumb' to Tasrā 'Mātiāli' group, comes to Tasrā, where he and his companions rest on Tuesday night. Next day the priest is greeted and welcomed and brought to Kumudih village in great pomp under the beat of drums. The priest and the assistant fast till the dusk when they break their fast. They are forbidden to take anything more till they finish the worship.

At first a white fowl contributed by Derulā village is sacrificed to the god of 'Batis Bār'. Then follow two goats given yearly by two villages by turn. The goats are sacrificed with a sword presented by the former Ruler Dayānidhi Rajā for the purpose to the assistant of Kundālā

village. Then fowls and goats are sacrificed in fulfillment of vows at the time of sickness. A black fowl is sacrificed to 'Baghiā'. Some men may be possessed by the deity and announce the desires of the deity and answer anxious questions put by the public.

Each village sends some representatives with some village contribution. Derulā gives not only a white fowl but 10 kilo sun-dried paddy and 2 ½ kilo rice and a new earthen pot. The heads of the sacrificed animals belong to the priests, who eat them after offering them to the deity. The trunks are feasted upon by all assembled with rice. Native beer is taken in liberal quantities.

This ceremony thus binds the people of 'Batis Bār', Pāuri Bhuiyān cerengā Kolha, Gond, Kissān, Mundā Kolha, and Castes like Pān and Casā etc. But I do not know whether the non-Bhuiyān population cook separately or do not cook at all.

#### (za) 'Bisri or Debi Usā' or Worshipping 'Bisri' or Debi'

Tasrā and its daughter-colony Guhābandhā are perhaps the last Pāuri villages to take up this worship in this region. Only since 1957 have they observed the ceremony, as some villagers were asked to worship the goddess on the same night in dream.

In 1953 it was observed at Dāleisarā colony from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup>. December, Thursday to Thursday in pus month (December-January). I observed the last rites on the 31<sup>st</sup> December and the next morning to a large extent. I observed the last rites on the 31<sup>st</sup>. December and the next morning to a large extent. My information on the worship was supplemented at Derulā and Burhābhuiñ.

The devotees were mainly unmarried girls, who went to a 'Raniā Kumhār' potter caste man in Dālsuāñ, Bamra, to bring the image of the goddess. It was installed in a permanent temple-hut with new enclosures of bamboo trelliswork. A wattle canopy was constructed for the visitors and devotees. The temple walls and the floor were imprinted with rice – emulsion with finger tips.

A special priest is selected for the goddess and he cannot take food before late afternoon for eight days. The goddess was everyday worshipped with offering of sundried rice, flower, incense and molasses etc. A Gour caste recitor was specially commissioned from Tal Giniā village (in Dāleisarā; in Derulā and Burhābhuiñ locally resident). He recited the longdrawn mythology of the goddess and the rationale of the worship every evening. While the damsels held the refrain to each line. The deep chant dropped and rose and droned continuously through the night on the last Thursday. In fact, on the last night it continued till about 7 a.m. on Friday. Only those who had taken a bath and not taken anything could touch the image or go inside the temple.



On the last Thursday at about 7 p.m. all the boys and a few adult men, who were possessed by the goddess or 'Hanumān', the monkey-deity of the Hindu epics, or were under the vow of fire-walk were shaking and dancing convulsively to the drum-beats of a Dom or Ghāsi caste man. The devotees held bunches of peacock feather aloft. They moved in rows, in a single line or in circle. Two of them, possessed by 'Hanumān', climbed a thorny tree ('simulī' or tree-cotton) and brought down some green vegetables from the top, unharmed, thus confirming the fact of their being possessed. I was told that once a man possessed by 'Hanu' climbed up a very thorny 'Bel' tree. But the deity left him suddenly and so he could not come down and succumbed to the thorns.

Meanwhile two goats and a number of fowls had been sacrificed to the goddess in the temple. When the deity was carried from her seat to a decorated enclosure for being viewed by the public or during the sacrifices, a conch shell was being sounded by blowing it, as usual in Hindu ceremonies.

### Fire-walk

Next day morning at about 8 o'clock the devotees who were to walk over the ritual fire came into the enclosure with all the "possessed" one shaking. After bowing to the goddess they went to 'Khundā' or the 'Trench for fire-walk'. First, worship was offered to 'Dharam Deytā' with sun-dried rice, honey, and one fowl; was then sacrificed a goat and lastly the Agni Kuānri or the fire goddess was worshipped with sundried rice and honey.

The burning oblong trench was winnowed to raw redness and milk and water were pored at both the ends of the length. The head devotees went round the trench with one child after another whose parents wanted to vow on holding a fire-walk in honour of the goddess when the child grows up. This vow is made against the prayer for good health of the child concerned. The head devotee first entered the trench went to cast, and walked out with feet unburnt. Two or three women with child, some men with child and boys- in all about 25 persons made the ritual fire-walk unscathed. The fire was occasionally being fanned and revitalized with sprinkling of 'Sāl' resin as incense. The unmarried girl devotees were not allowed to do the fire-work. After the fire-walk the goddess was to be worshipped for the last time before being led in a procession to the stream or pond to be drowned.

For six years the worship is held without a fire-walk ceremony, unless it is specially asked for by a devotee. In Daleisarā a Pāuri Bhuiyān had borne the expenses of this fire walk in 1953 in fulfillment of a serious vow, although the normal fire-walk ceremony was going to be held in the seventh year in 1954. After the climax of the seventh year of worship with fire-walk there is one year as 'bishrām' or rest-period, when a goat is sacrificed to the goddess inside the temple-hut. There is no worship of an image during this period. However, on a Thursday every month she is offered sun-dried rice and molasses by her priest.

This worship is a heavy strain on the households, each of which contributed 5 kilo of rice plus some money in a big village like Daleisarā colony, and paddy 5 kilo, rice 5 kilo and Rs. 1.25 in a small village like Burhābhuiñ. At Daleisarā a ring of households contributed 2 goats in 1953, other two rings contributing in other years by turn. In the small village, Burhābhuiñ, however, one goat is contributed by the whole village. However, in 1953 other 10 goats were sacrificed to the goddess in fulfillment of individual vows at Burhābhuiñ. The money contribution is used to purchase the image and the silk cloth for the goddess and remunerating the recitor. The contribution is greater in the seventh year.

Men and livestock will be destroyed if a village discontinues the worship.

#### (zb) 'Pus Puneñ Parab' or Festivals of Pus Full-moon

This is the biggest festival of Tasrā, as of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in the region. This can be called the harvest festival, but the Pāuri himself mentions it as the year closing festival. Pus or December-January is the last month of the year and all economic transactions as hiring of men as 'haliā' or cattle or taking of loans etc. are governed by this concept. 'Pus Parab', as it is called in short, is observed according to convenience. Tasrā observed it on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> January 1954, Ladumdiñ on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> January while the full-moon was to appear on the 19<sup>th</sup> January. Though the festival is theoretically observed for two days the festivities go on through the third day.

Preparation for the festival is already set in motion on the day of ceremonial hunting when the young of wild pig are captured and entrusted to the care of usually the captors for 'Pus Parab' purposes. These are fed and literally fattened in a pigsty. It is said one might starve but must not deprive these wild wards of food. On the first day of the festival these are killed and shared. At Derulā I was told that the captor rearer got the head and 4 feet and shins as his exclusive share. But this was used as side-dish for native beer by all male villagers. The rest of the meat was divided into two halves, one half belonging to the rearer who might and did sell to others while the other half was shared by all the households. In Ladumdiñ a wild pig was bought from tanugulā village for Rs. 26.00, 'Biri' pulses and pork were the alluring dishes. Sun-dried rice, molasses and 'biri'-cakes are offered by the householder to the ancestors in the sacred corner. In this year closing festival as at the time of first eating of mango ('Ām Nuā') the cooking pot for ancestors must be changed for a new one. The ancestors are invoked to keep the descendants from dangers, sickness, and bad crops.

There was much drinking and dancing. Women had a hard day pounding rice into flour for being made into round cakes by steaming. 'Bandhu' (affinal relatives) from Tare, Raḍā, Ladumdiñ, Khaḍkā, Kadaḷiḍiñ and 'Kutumb' men from Guhālbādhā colony and mahulpadā had a nice time with their hosts, feasting, drinking and dancing. On the second day it was a poor sight with drunkards prowling about, their women taking care of them at times. In the morning at



Laḍumdih (I have no comparable data for Tasrā) 'Gāenshri and 'Birdā' were worshipped in the sacred grove with sun-dried rice, molasses and 'biri' cakes baked and then cooked in rice-starch. On the first day they had already worshipped 'Pāt' deities in the sacred groves on 'Manda Darabār' at Laḍumdih, while at Derulā 'Manda Darabār' or the assembly and dancing platform itself was worshipped with sun-dried rice so that it might not trouble the village. The 'Shubha-Khunṭa' also got some rice-flour as offering in all the villages. Old log-fires were also cleared away in the bachelors' dormitory and new fires made.

Apart from these ritual activities youngmen and boys disfigured themselves with black soot and white rice-emulsion and went round the households begging for cakes etc. This is known as 'chereherā'. Afterwards they enjoyed a feast. At Laḍumdih I observed some adults also participating in the fun and beating a small conical drum. The second day is passed dancing through day and night, eating cakes and rice and drinking both native beer and self-distilled liquor.

Hilarity, drunkenness, and in the eyes of some plains Pāuri Bhuiyān of Pal Lahara, also obscene remarks and songs set the tone of the festival. It may be said that 'Pus Parab' is the most orgiastic festival among the Pāuri Bhuiyān of the region. The season of plenty comes to a colourful climax before the villagers set out repaying the loans of what now becomes the previous year.

## 2. Decennial Rituals

### (a) 'Shubha Khunṭa Dasandhi'

Every ten years this ritual was to be observed in the month Māgha, a year before shifting the site. As villagers came down to settle in Tal Tasrā before the normal period, they had also to offer such worship. A goat is sacrificed to the deity 'auspicious pillar'. At Derulā 'Gāenshri', 'Badām', 'Nishār', 'Bharāli Pāt' and locally important 'Padili Pāt' were also offered fowl-sacrifice at this time. A male representative from each house must be coming to participate in the ceremony and to share the meat. Only after this worship could they cut new swiddens in the area to be covered from the new site. When next year they would shift to the latter site, the swiddens would have been second year paddy swiddens requiring more labour, vigilance and watch-huts.

### (b) 'Saraṇi Dasandhi'

'Saraṇi Pāt' the Juāng deity, requires sacrifice of a pig and sheep every ten years. A pig is purchased in the valley from the Cerengā Kolha who keep them. A hairy caterpillar ('ledāpoka') is offered in lieu of a sheep and is buried in earth.

### 3. Occasional Rituals

#### (a) 'Shitaladegun'

In the month of Māgha (January – February) 1953, villagers of Tasrā were suffering from fever, cough and cold, almost as if in an epidemic. A village priest was then commissioned to pacify stray evil female spirits ('Dākṇi Juguni'). He offered a pot of molasses and water at an end of the village and bade them to leave the village.

#### (b) 'Danaṭekā'

In 1952 a great havoc was caused by virulent 'gandhi' pests of paddy. A special priest, perhaps a 'Rāuliā', from Sibṛā in Pal Lahara, offered worship to 'Dharam Deotā and 'Lakhmi' goddess with fowl –sacrifice and another fowl was sacrificed to the unknown evil agents and still another left as a scape –goat for the 'Rākṇi Juguni' evil spirits. In a new earthen pot seed-paddy from each household was collected and the blood from the trunks of the sacrificed fowls was poured. A piece of turmeric and another piece of 'Kanduāni' taro grown in the swidden were also put inside. This pot was formally offered to the village elders by the priest. The householders sowed the auspicious paddy seeds at first in the swiddens on the next ceremonial sowing day for a better harvest free from 'gandhi' pests.

#### (c) Worship for Rain

In case of prolonged drought the demons of the jungle, the swiddens, and the streams are worshipped with fowl –sacrifice, as in 1959 August in Guhābandhā. I am not sure if 'Gāenshri' was also invoked in the worship. There is no ritual way of dealing with ceaseless raining. There is also no evidence of any magical practices for inducing rainfall by imitating its effects.

In the above cursory survey of rituals and festivities it must have been obvious to what extent these on the one hand, and the economic –technological life on the other, are interdependent and intertwined. It is difficult to judge how far the rituals and festivities are uneconomical in the sense that they hinder efficient carrying out of economic activities. In the short sowing season of suitable weather before or in-between the monsoon bursts the intervening rituals might be affecting the application of right and timely decisions of individual cultivators. But there is nothing to be gained by a priest or the Headman by purposeful delay or miscalculation as he himself suffers no less as a cultivator. Except in the case of leaving a few fowls as scape goats wastage of food does not hold true of the Pāuri Bhuiyān rituals, either.

Only about 6 festivities are without any ritual significance for the villagers: 'Raja Parab' (m), 'Banabhujni' (k), 'Pankhira Pathā' (b), 'Dehuriā Madakhiā' (d), 'Mālgujāri Madakhiā' (f) and 'Dasarāgnḍā' (u). That is, about four-fifths of the total (28) annual festivities are ritualistic, and 19 out of them have direct involvement in subsistence system affecting crops and cultivation, hunting, collecting or cattle.



In any case it cannot be denied that the observance of rituals and other festivities contributes greatly to the feeling of solidarity among the villagers and with the relatives and keeps up the morale for economic activities through some sort of self assurance on completion of the rituals in particular. For, "ritual is an immediate expression of an anxiety or a need" (Redfield, 1934).

#### D. RECREATION and PASTIMES

The festivities including the rituals bring the much-needed rest, diversion, and offer occasions of recreation activities like some games of social visits. As there is no Sabbath day the role of these festivities is obvious. Hunting in winter and summer affords much more recreation than contribution to food procurement. In fact I was greatly impressed with the sport aspect of hunting at Tasrā. Between January and the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1954 Upar Tasrā had organized at least 12 hunting trips and Taḷa Tasrā slightly less, many times both hamlets together. Only two times had they success in bagging game.

The annual festivities give them respite from work at least for 35 days. As these are distributed throughout the year and come before, after, or during heavy operations they must be very welcome. The longest break of work is for 7 days in connection with 'Debi Usā' (za). In the calculation of rest-days the festivities of 'Pankhirā Pithā' (b), 'Uḍhuṇi Bhasnā' (e) and 'Saraṇi Pujā' (r) are not considered. Both (b) and (e) engage the women only at day-time when men may go hunting or fishing or do other chores and the last-named one does not require break of work as observed before day break, 'Rahani Bhasnā' (j), another ritual carried out by women, is however a more serious occasion for the whole village calling for a work ban. From 'Gundāmandā' (x) in November – December just at the close of harvesting late paddy to the "Picnic" (1) in April-May we may consider the period a season of plenty. During this period 17 out of the total 28 festivities (thus about 61%) are observed. But it must be noted that this is not merely a season of plenty but also a season of lighter work (except for clearing and firing new swiddens) and a season of social visits and much recreation including dancing and singing and feasting. Even women, always burdened with a heavy daily routine, have time for gossiping in this period. Men spend many hours gossiping in the dormitory outside smoking away time. Thus we see, not only work is seasonal but also the opportunity for recreation. Marriages also have the tendency to fall in this season of plenty. The share of social visits in recreation is also significant in this season.

Dancing is a great entertainment, although it may mean more for the women than men, as most often only women dance and men sing and beat 'cāngu' tambourine. It is surely a romantic occasion and great fun for the younger men women, while the older ones only occasionally join dancing and singing except in big festivities. The range of dances is big but perhaps not so big as that of the Juāṅg. I was informed that Juāṅg women dance more

vigorously and in a quicker tempo, so that some Tasrā men while singing and beating 'Cāngu' were trodden upon by the "hopping" Juāng women. Dance enters into drama when killing of a bear or hunting of deer or tiger etc. and ways of other animals and birds are mimetically demonstrated.

Apart from the games and toys of children, the adults also play at certain games requiring physical exertion. Wrestling is almost restricted to youngmen. 'Dāndiā' and 'Chinā' games are popular. In 'Dāndiā' four or five men on either side try by turn, one by one, to touch ("kill") a man on the other side beyond a dividing line. The aggressor utters a fixed sound while on the enemy side of the line. If he is caught there and cannot touch the dividing line while still uttering the sound, he is taken to be "dead" and lost. This is played in June and July on a sandy or softer ground when it is not raining. A similar game with one or two more men on either side, but everyone holding some burnt leaves in hand is known as 'Chinā'. This is played also about the same time when men return from ploughing. Whirling rolling tops is a great pastime for the young and adult men.

Apart from these some men had kept pets. Dogs and cats are more usual. But the excitingly interesting pet, 'Rāikā' bird, can imitate human voice faithfully. The best imitator is recognized to be 'Bhemrāj' bird, which even goads the loaded bullocks of 'Thuriā' merchants on the way. 'Sāri', still another imitator, has however a delicate constitution and survives in the Pāuri hands but rarely. The common imitating pet bird seems to be 'Rāikā'. It is carefully reared since it is young and is trained patiently. However, keeping of pets is not universal.

Festivities or no festivities, dances or no dances, women have to get up at about day-break, and if going somewhere out, even earlier. Paddy has to be dehusked almost everyday. Water must be brought and the house and utensils be cleaned and food cooked. Men usually get up half an hour later or so, and if not going anywhere early in the morning come to the assembly platform to smoke and gossip. They of course, have to go ploughing by the day-break in the hot season or fire swiddens in the hot sun. After returning from work in the evening the men have another round of smoking and gossiping before they go to sleep. With hunting, fishing, gossiping, and drinking and varied games and festivities besides resting, men seem to have a more varied routine and to enjoy more recreation. Women are acknowledged to be working longer. Their recreational activities are lighter tasks like weaving date –palm mattress while gossiping, a few exclusive festivities and visiting relatives. When visiting relatives they are expected to help in the womanly activities even as men are expected to help the relatives in suitable spheres. Therefore, dancing and going to the markets must be meaning to them much more than to men.



## 7. SOCIO – POLITICAL LIFE

### A. BASIC UNITS and their FUNCTIONS

In the village we may distinguish three orders of social units; kin-groups units based on territorial relations, and sex and age group. Of these the most important appear to be relations based on kinship, if one examines the course of life of an individual at one glance. In the daily and corporate life of the village, however, territorial relations may not be weaker than the kinship ones. Units of sex and age are formed on the basis of village or hamlet both territorial units, but in their inner structure they lean also on kinship to some extent.

#### 1. Kinship Groups

Dominating in kinship relations is the unilinear principle. Family, lineage, sib-and-clan-phratry all fall in the line and are exogamous units of increasing dimension. The patrilineal principle of descent is all-important, but it is modified in case of women, thus making it logically more consistent with the patrilocal marriage. The women after marriage merge completely with the unilinear kinship groups of their husbands. Besides these unilinear kinship groups there are also the affinal relatives on the side of the mother, the spouse, or the children's spouses. Lastly, are to be considered some ritual friendships which are channelized along the kinship structure and are therefore merely extended forms of kinship groups.

##### (a) Unilinear Kinship Groups

##### (i) 'Ghar' or Family

'Ghar' literally means house or household and stands for the family group, how ever complex it may be, which works together for the joint livelihood and cooks and consumes food jointly. This is the most important social group in which a man is born, is reared and taught the arts of life, and inherits the social status of 'Parjā' or 'Māṭiālī' section. Thus it is a producing and consuming unit, residential group, and a biological body of reproducing individuals and their issues, through which skills and values are transmitted and social status is ascribed, and property inherited by sons. Although from about the age of 9-11 the young sleep in dormitories and keep to one another of the same sex much till marriage, the ties with home become never tenuous and the authority of the parents is not touched. They have to work for the home, eat at home, and sometimes may even sleep at home when there are more guests at the dormitories than space allows. The menfolk always eat and sleep at home except in a rare case when a married young son had to sleep in the dormitory due to lack of space at home.

The family is always partilineal, and wife (wives), sons, and till marriage daughters belong to a man's line of descent. This is reinforced by worship of ancestors, male and female, of the man. Worship of the ancestors and observance of certain rituals at home thus makes the family group a ritual or religious unit. The male head of the family is automatically an elder in

the village assembly and represent the family (including dependent families, if any) in village rituals and other ceremonial occasions. True to the partilineal principle the head of the family is a man; even the eldest son of 15 was regarded head of the broken Household no. 15M with a widow mother. The father, however old, is always the head of the family till he is incapable, and still no important steps are taken without consulting him. The head of the family has the last say in disposal of the resources produced in joint labour of the family group. In household matters however, the mother or in her absence the senior wife has day-to-day authority. An older sister, if she is being supported by her brother as in household 26 M, has to obey the brothers wife. Otherwise seniority in age carries along with it authority and respect between siblings and between parents and children.

There is one case of polygyny with two co-wives (in 1957 another case was found). The senior wife has more authority than the junior one, although the former is barren and the wife bearing children is more valued in the family. In this household 35M, that of the Headman, there is also another rare phenomenon of adopting a son-in-law for the daughter who lives with her parents in the same family group. In this overwhelmingly patrilocal society this last practice is considered derogatory for the son-in-law and is accepted only on economic necessity. However, it must be noted that ancestors of many of the 'Parjā' families had shifted to Tasrā sometimes after marrying daughters of Tasrā. There are three cases when this shifting took place in this generation. Again there are a few cases where later on the families having only classificatory distant relatives on either side have come to Tasrā. Under these conditions one may not be wrong to say that many families of 'Paraja' group later establish avunculocal (not however living with maternal uncle) and even neolocal households. This necessitates and results in stronger ties with affinal or maternal relatives and strangers than with one's agnates who live in another village.

The following table will present an analysis of composition of the families at Tasrā in 1954. It will be noted that the families are overwhelmingly of the nuclear type (29 or 78.4% out of 37) and have an average size of 3.9 individuals, while 6 families extended on the partilineal and patrilocal principles have an average of 5.8 persons. As the tendency of the married sons and brothers is to set up separate households of their own, such extended families are transitional phenomena. The polygynous family is extended to adopt a son-in-law. The lonely widow is looked after by her daughter and son-in-law who live in Tasrā. In 9 families of supporting and broken nuclear ones the mother and in one case a divorced sister are being maintained by the grown-up children. The mother has evidently more authority over the children in a broken family than in case of supporting families of her married sons. In the table below two families of the ordinary nuclear type also support the mother of the male head by turn along with the families of elder brother. A mother usually spends a few days with each of the two married sons, but she usually lives with an unmarried son all the time. In the last case and where a mother lives always with a son or sons she seems to enjoy greater authority in household affairs than in cases when she has to shift between two sons' households.



## Analysis of family composition and average size (unm=unmarried)

Composition	Family-Type	Sub-Type	Frequency	Average/Size
1. Man, wife with/without children (unm)	Nuclear	Ordinary	18 (-2)	3.7
2. Man, wife, with children (unm) supporting mother (and divorced sister)	Nuclear	Supporting	4 (+2)	6.0
3. Man, wife, with child (unm) and brother (unm) or co-children (unm)	Nuclear	Complex	2	4.5
4. Mother with children (unm)	Nuclear	Broken	5	2.6
5. Man with/without wife, children (unm) and married son, daughter-in-law and grand-child, in any (unm)	Extended	Paternal	4	5.5
6. Two brothers with wives and children (unm) with/without mother	Extended	Fraternal	2	6.5
7. Man, two wives, children (unm), and daughter and her husband	Polygynous	Extended	1	(7)
8. Single widow	-	-	1 (1)	
Total families			37	4.2

Lastly, it must be emphasized that the patrilineal family has the important function of taking care of and supporting older members and deserted ones (as in case of the divorced sister).

## (ii) 'Bamsa' or Lineage

This includes all the male descendants of an ancestral pair and their wives and children except daughters after marriage and all the members of a lineage are traceable on a big genealogical chart. This 'bamsa' may be taken to be a 'maximal lineage'. Members of a 'bamsa' may live in different villages, but at least the male members come together on the occasion of a funeral, especially if living in nearby villages. A 'bamsa' may be named as Naika or Padhana 'bamsa' or the lineage supplying the village headman, Dehuri or Girhi 'bamsa' or lineages supplying village priests from among their members. From Keonjhar Kuānr village a 'bamsa' called 'Danakiā', or these who supplied leaf-cup-fuls of honey to the Raja reared by Pāuri Bhuiyān for the Keonjhar throne, is represented in Tasrā.

Among the 'Maṭiālī' people of Tasrā two 'bamsa', that of 'Nāika' or village Headman and of 'Dehuri' or priests, are distinguished. The Dehuri 'bamsa' is regarded as descended from the

elder brother and the Nāika 'bamsa' from the younger brother. Because there is no demonstrable genealogical connections between two 'bamsa' as far as the memory goes, and yet they believe to be descended from the same ancestors, these lineages together constitute a "sib" (Murdock p. 47). However, it must have been clear that the unilinear categories "sib" and "lineage" etc. here always include the wives of male members, which is not the normal case in ethnology. This practice is more parallel to the social grouping in Hindu exogamic "gotra" in which the women merge in the unilinear group of their husbands. But I could not find any term designating the group like "gotra". The term 'Khil' or 'Khila', allied to Mundari 'Kil' or Roy's 'Khill' (p.148) is equivocal in its application. One of my informants used it to denote 'bamsa' or maximal lineage and another term 'bāgaḍ' was always mentioned as equivalent to 'Khilla'. Though 'bāgaḍ' seems to be an indigeneous Pāuri word, it has to be ascertained precisely what sort of group is thereby denoted. On basis of another informant's view, 'bāgaḍ' or 'Khilla' is a unilinear group consisting of father's father and mother and their male descendants with their wives and children (unmarried). If this be correct, 'bāgaḍ' is a lineage of intermediate size and the 'Khila' on this evidence will be nothing like Mundāri 'Kil' or sib. The functions of this 'bāgaḍ' can be described with some certainty. In a funeral I attended the deceased's father's brother's sons were expected to contribute to the funeral expenses and the father's eldest brother's sons did contribute something. Also they were not to cut their hair or shave their beards till the death-pollution was removed. It is they who were worried on the problem of repaying the debts of the dead man. 'Bāgaḍ' is thus an important segment of the 'bamsa' and has next claims on inheritance in case there are no sons or father's brothers' sons to inherit the property of a man.

The minimal lineage, without a name, consists of one's father and mother and all their male descendants and their wives and children including female issues till they marry. This is the most intimate group, if living in the same village, for one's own family in the daily life. This group takes the brunt of funeral expenses and debts left by the deceased and must observe the death-pollution, and from their hands no outsider may take water, food, or fire till they are ritually clean. The eldest brother of the deceased had even the duty of first putting fire and earth on the corpse, although the eldest son was present.

The ancestors of a family are really the deceased members of the 'bamsa' who had been given a funeral, and it is therefore not necessary that every family should have a sacred corner. In fact three or four families descended from the same grand-parents were keeping a common sacred corner or 'bhitar'.

The exogamy of the lineage is secondary to that of the next higher group 'Kutumb'. However, in the case of inheritance of widows the deceased's younger brother, actual, failing that, one of the same classificatory status within the lineage, is always preferred, and has the first right. Thus it may be said that the lineage has responsibility of maintaining the widows of its



male members and finding them mates, if the widows do not want to re-marry outside. Inheritance of property is restricted to the maximal lineage; if there be no claimants from the 'bamsa' the property belongs to the village community or to one who defrays the expenses of funeral under the approval of the village assembly.

### (iii) 'Kuṭumb'

This is very difficult to define. The pāuri use it in all following senses: a sib group including the wives as constituted of two lineages claiming common descent, for example, Tasrā Nāika and Dehuri 'bamsa'; a phratry of 3 separate lineages or 'bamsa' forming an exogamic group as the 'Māṭiāli' section of Derulā village (the lineages do not claim common descent unlike in Tasrā); the Dehuri 'bamsa' of Tasrā from Bamra, the Girhi 'bamsa' of Derulā from the west and Dehuri 'bamsa' from Bamra (from the close Neighbourhood of each other according to the eldest informant I have ever met), and the Kāla (Dehuri) 'bamsa' of priests of Kundlā village coming originally from Nagirā village in Pal Lahara have formed 'Kuṭumb' relationship with one another involving obligations of payment of a share in the bride-price to one another; again the 'Māṭiāli' section composed of Dehuri, Nāika and other 'bamsa' resident in these three village are recognized as 'Kuṭumb' to one another lastly, the son of a 'Parjā' from Iti priests' 'bamsa' and a Nāika 'bamsa' widow of Tasrā was ritually incorporated to be a 'Kuṭumb' to Tasrā 'Māṭiāli' section, and he thus becomes 'Kuṭumb' to the 'Māṭiāli' sections of the above-mentioned three villages. There was another family at Taro village which was acknowledged to be a 'Kuṭumb' to the 'Māṭiāli' section of tasrā though no genealogical connection with any 'bamsa' of Tasrā could be traced.

Involved in so very different meanings as a sib, a localized phratry of lineages,

A localized sib or "clan" in Murdock's sense (p.66 and p.68, of Gehlen p.25) and a phratry of dispersed clans, the "kuṭumb" group is nonetheless a very significant social group. It is the widest circle within which endogamy is strictly prohibited and even sexual liaison is considered as incest, making the offenders liable to excommunication from the tribe. That bride-price is shared between the "kuṭumb" of three villages, although restricted to the "Māṭiāli" sections, does show that there was long standing contact in some vital aspects which bound them as "brothers" in a phratry, however conventional the bonds might have been. In this connection it is not accidental, that the priest of the supreme deity of 'Batis Bār' organization to which all the three villages belong comes from Tasrā Dehuri "bamsa" and the assistant priest from kāla "bamsa" of kundlā and the first sacrifice at the deity will have to be a fowl given by Derulā village (by obvious inference, originally by the first settlers of Derulā, that is, the "Māṭiāli" section). Thus seen it is not impossible that the ritual bond developed some further social extensions into 'Kuṭumb' relationship. However, fuller investigation into this alliance is necessary.

So far as the 'Māṭiālī' section of Tasrā is concerned the local 'Kuṭumb' group there is a sib-cum-clan. This "compromise kin group" (Murdock p.66) based upon both a rule of residence and a rule of descent may be called a "patri-clan" (Murdock p.69). But as it does not constitute the whole village community it cannot be named a "clan community", while as it does not form a ward or segregated quarter of the village or the hamlets, the designation of "clan-barrio" is also not applicable here (Murdock p.74). A term "clan-section" is here suggested, concentrating on the character of being a "part of community having separate interests or characteristics" as a section is (concise Oxford Dictionary, 1954), while being free from any sense of spatial clustering. In this sense the 'Māṭiālī' section of any Pāuri village forming. In this sense the "Māṭiālī" section of any Pāuri village forming a local 'Kuṭumb' group may be termed a "clan-section".

Thus viewed the 'Kuṭumb' group may be considered as a phratry of "clan-section" of two or more villages. Though not claiming common descent from the same ancestors. Nonetheless they regard themselves as "brothers" and prohibit marriage among them. Under present conditions this description applies more pointedly to the crystallized 'Matiali' sections of the hill bhuiyan villages. The 'Parjā' are, however, recent or old immigrants from their ancestral villages, without whom the "clan-sections" would have taken the shape of "clan-communities". This approach may also throw light on how the lineage came to include the women married by its male members. As Murdock notes (p.68), the clan being a residential kin group necessarily includes also the wives of men. Similarly, a lineage including the wives of its male members, as we have among the Pauri, might have arisen by localizing the lineage on basis of a strict patrilocality and merging the wives into the lineage, thus severing the patrilineal connections with their sibs, especially on the occasion of their funeral. This also thus points out how a typical "sib" organization counting the daughters throughout their lives as members and reinforcing this claim at the time of their funeral, might have been side-tracked. But however typical sibs one might find among the mundāri neighbours to whom the Pāuri Bhuiyān appear to be allied, it must be noted that there are no totemic sibs among the Pāuri as among the Mundāri. Only in Keonjhar some 'bamsa', like Nāika 'bamsa' of Kamatai village abstaining from pigeons, or Girhi 'bamsa' of Kuānr village refraining from eating or hunting deer (horned), or Girhi "bamsa' of Tal Bardā similarly viewing the pea-fowls, show some attitude parallel to totemism, if not totemic. However, such abstention is local and is restricted to particular lineages, not to the whole 'Kuṭumb' group even in the same village. The significance of these facts must await fuller investigation. If the modified lineages ('bamsa') grew in importance at the cost of the totemic sib organization and locally took over even the totemic functions these facts might hold a cue in that direction.



## (b) Affinal Relatives or 'Bandhu'

This is a complementary or counter-concept to 'Kutumb' relationship, and in all reference is juxtaposed to the other, so that it gives an impression of being a dualistic organization. As the pāuri Bhuiyāñ are related to one another in a wide region through marital ties, direct or indirect, it is quite appropriate to designate one 'Bandu' or affinal relative (actual or potential) when he or she is known to be not a 'Kutumb'. Such dualism extends easily beyond mere marital ties, as will be evident soon (cf Gehlen p.26).

Of course, all affinal relatives are not potential mates. The mother's and father's sister's children or mother's brother's children, even mother's brother's daughter's children, that is, second cross-cousins, are excluded from marriage. A cross cousin is considered equivalent to a brother or sister. Though among Mundāri and Kissān tribes and some plains castes like Casā marrying them is said to be prevalent, the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ are against it. However, some otherwise close relation, even with a difference of generation is not countenanced. For example, I came across one marriage with father's mother's younger brother's daughter in Pattāmund village of Bonai, now settled in Tasrā.

We have already seen how important are the roles of certain actually related 'Bandhu' in the life of a child, at the time of marriage and funeral as also in helping in economic activities. A son-in-law comes to lend a helping hand to his father-in-law and a brother-in-law or sister-in-law has similar expectations to fulfill and services to render. The most important relationship exists between the sister's children and the mother's brother. If father wields authority and is feared, loved, and respected, the mother's brother doles out love and is almost indulgent to his sister's children. I have observed that there is a sort of joking relationship between them. The mother's brother often cut jokes openly at the cost of his sister's son and daughter, and in instances I was present the mother's brother was however not made the butt of the other's joking. I am not sure if it is one-sided joking relationship. Mother's brother gives pet names like "horse". He most often rears orphaned children of the widowed sister and the later are greatly attached to him and his wife. He also worries for, and helps in, their marriage and gets some handsome share in bride-price. He cuts the natal hair of his sister's children. His wife also has some function at the latter's marriage. Sisters husbands have also some responsibility at the time of marriage, especially in carrying the bride and bridegroom. When actual relatives are not present classificatory ones are substituted.

There is in some cases joking relationship and elsewhere strict avoidance between in-laws. However, joking a mother's brother may be with his sister's son, he will not even utter the name of the latter's wife. Though a girl's elder sister's husband is in a joking relationship (and potential marital relationship), the younger sister's husband or husband's elder brother is strictly to be avoided as also the wife's elder sister. Mother-in-law and father-in-law are in all cases treated with respect and the mother-in-law is somewhat avoided by a man, as the father-in-

law is somewhat avoided by a woman. Grandparents stand in a joking relationship with their grandchildren in all cases including the in-law relations. While discussing this topic both inside and outside the family, it must be noted that some inevitable adjustments take place. Thus in one case the younger brother's wife tackled the situation of Strict avoidance by talking over things without ever addressing the husband's elder brother. In another case, however, the former directly spoke to him without taking his name.

I need not repeat here that on occasions of marriage and funeral the generality of 'Bandhu' people in the village as also actual close affinal relatives from outside the village come to help in cooking and running on errands etc. Dependence on 'Bandhu' is a ritual necessity at the time of funeral ceremonies and employing 'Bandhu' as go between at the time of marriage is a question of decency as much as of privilege. The affinal relatives when living in the same or adjacent village develop as much intimacy and cooperation as is possible among near agnates.

The dominant 'Mātiālī' group forms a "Clan-section" in Tasrā, while the 'Parjā' group of diverse origins cannot form such a sizable hard core of agnatic relationship for each 'bamsa'. For the 'Parjā' all the Mātiālī group is 'Bandhu'. Moreover, the 'Parjā' have 'Bandhu' among themselves. Under these conditions it is but natural that for the 'Parjā' families affinal relations within the village are more within the village are more widespread and of much greater economic and social significance than for the 'Mātiālī' section.

### (c) Ritual Friendship

Friendship among the Pāuri grows between boys and boys, or boys and girls, or girls and girls, as they play, dance, visit markets etc. together. This friendship may take roots among adult persons of different tribal or caste groups and may come to be established, even between a money-lender or merchant and the customer Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. It appears that long-standing friendships with persons outside the village have a natural tendency to have been ritually enforced. However, ritual friendships also occur within the same village. Some friendships may not grow out of mutual attractions but are grafted on to the accident of having the same name under the encouragement of elders. Thus a boy of 16 had become 'mita' (ritual friend) to a man of over 30 in another village, both having the same name, Ghāsi.

The ritual friends may be divided into 3 categories : Flower friends, name-sake friends, & sangata friends.

#### Flower-Friends

Girls and boys or girls and girls become flower friends by one of them putting a particular flower in the bun of hair of a girl or ear of a boy and the other party reciprocating the action. Then they both bow to each other. The relationship is then known after the particular flower



used. Thus 'Campā-phula' after 'Campā-' flower or 'Kundru-Phula' after 'Kundru' flower. Other examples are 'mandā-phul' or marigold-flower, 'mali-phula' or jasmine flower, 'Kamalā-phula' or orange-flower, 'simili-phula' or tree- cotton-flower, 'bāsanga'- flower, 'Kākudijuāri-phula' or cucumber-maize- flower etc. This is usually entered into at the age of 10 or so and especially during the period as a member of the dormitories. Girls enter into 'phula' relations rather frequently with their village companions, boys or girls, not necessarily of the same age.

Though this flower- friendship is most common among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ themselves it is rarely established between a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ and a valley caste or tribe. Thus a Tasrā woman had the last mentioned 'phula' relationship with a Gond woman of Kumudin. The latter's household had for long been creditor to Tasrā Bhuiyāñ. Some rice and fish was given by the Pāuri woman and similarly the ritual friend offered some other food. Besides a big reduction in the loans to be repaid (20 Kilo paddy in place of 38 Kilo was accepted) another loan of 10 Kilo rice was cancelled.

Of similar nature is the friendship formed during the festival of 'Karmā Parab' by offering a pice of 'Karmā' twig to each other. The relationship between boys and girls is known as 'Karamdāla' or "Karam-twig-friendship".

'Makara' relationship is similarly established by mutually offering 7 sun-dried rice.

### Name-sake Friends

Having the same or identical name, not a pet name or nick name, also leads to ritual friendship among the acquaintances. It may be that villagers as far as Nagariā in Bonai and Jajāng near Suākāṭi in Keonjhar- about 80 Kilometers away, (nearly 100 years ago) came to be ritual friends to each other. When men contact this relationship by ceremonially bowing and offering clothes and food to each other and swearing to the abiding friendship, they are 'mita' to each other. I have not heard of women establishing such relationship with other women, or men, allowing for the different sex-endings of the same name.

This 'mita' relationship is almost confined to the Pāuri Bhuyāñ, though my claim to this friendship with a Tasrā boy was accepted heartily.

### 'Sangāta'-Friends

A man become 'sangāta' to another of a separate tribe or caste, when the names are not identical, yet they want to strengthen the friendship through ceremonial offer of raw food and bowing and swearing to the relationship. Thus a Tasrā-man was 'sangāta' to a Cerengā Kolha or Barcuā village and a Gond tribal of Jagati village- both being occasional creditors to Tasrā men including the 'sangāta' friend.

The flower-friendships and relationships of that category seem to be the weakest and do not involve large-scale ceremonial exchange of food, or other things. The flower-friends do not even offer presents at the time of marriage, and it is doubted whether the relationship survives long after marriage in frequent interactions or ceremonial visits. However, 'Makara' and 'Karam dāla' relationships seem to be of a stabler nature. The 'mita' and 'sangāta' friendships, especially the latter, involve large-scale exchanges of food, goats, or cattle or even land. About 100 years ago the first settlers got a part of Nagariā village lands and colonized at Hātisua. This land-gift was made possible, because the leader of the first colonists was a 'mita' to the 'Māṭiālī' leader of Nagariā. A 'mita' friend of the son of a deceased man brought some valuable presents for the funeral of his 'mitbua' or mita's father. Another Tasrā man had given his 'mita' a head of cattle besides other return presents. It appears, the 'mita' friends try to give more than what they have received and thus secure deeper friendship. Visits and presents are more frequent and more lavish than in the case of flower-friends. In 'sangāta' relationship also similarly costlier presents are given. Thus the Cerengā Kolha was given a cow and a bullock by Tasrā 'sangāta's father and 'sangāta' himself, respectively, besides other presents in return. At the funeral of the 'sangāta' the friends were duly expected to bear a share of the expense equivalent to what was already given them. It was clearly remembered that one head of cattle was given to the Cerengā Kolha for no return present whatsoever.

What is sociologically more interesting is the fact that these ritual friends are considered as brothers and sisters and their parents and other relatives are classificatorily and automatically projected on the relationship. Respect, joking relationship or avoidance and terms of address and other behavior are strictly patterned after this ritual extension of Kinship. Though these friends do not count as 'Kuṭumb' or agnates, no marriage relationship can be contracted between them, even when the friends are Pāuri Bhuiyāñ on both the sides. As the ritual friends among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ are between those who are 'Bandhu' to each other, such ritual extension of exogamous relationship means that so many potential mates or affinal relatives are excluded from marital chances. I am not sure, however, if all those with whom the ritual friends stand in joking relationship are thus affected.

## 2. Territorial units

### (a) The Village and Hamlets

The village Tasrā consists of two hamlets: (1) Tal Tasrā or Lower Tasrā, (ii) Upar Tasrā or Upper Tasrā. The daughter-colony Guhābandhā in the valley is regarded by Tasrā men as another 'tulā' or 'tolā' (hamlet) of Tasrā, but that is more for sentimental reasons than practical significance. Guhābandhā colony lies far away, is a part of the governmental colonies, has settlers from three or four villages and includes also some Cerengā Kolha tribals. Besides, it has no ritual or political ties with Tasrā as exist between Tal and Upar Tasrā.



The village Tasrā is a territorial unit in the sense that as a corporate body the village owns the lands within definite boundaries and the community lives within these boundaries and ekes out its existence. The village, though only since 1950-51 split into two hamlets, is still administratively a single unit paying land-tax Rs.5.00 jointly (Rs.3/- from Upper Tasrā, and Rs.2/- from Lower Tasrā), politically under one Headman (though a junior Headman was responsible for day-to-day affairs as a internal arrangement for Tal Tasrā), and is on some occasions of rituals and festivals a unit (ceremonial hunting, 'Sarani Pāt' Pujā, 'Jatāla Pujā' 'Dehuriā Madkhiā', 'Mālgujāri Madkhiā', 'Dasaharā Gundā', 'Bisri Usā', 'Pus Puneñ, marriage and funeral ceremonies, and the 'Sarani' decennial and occasional ceremonies etc), and also economically a corporate body on certain occasions (utilizing land for collecting, hunting, and thatch-grass mowing, taking joint loans, 'bāja' or reciprocal cooperative labour, co-operative labour for the Headman, village fruit trees etc.). In questions of law and order and police vigilance and lately in "Grām Pancāyat" (Council of villages), forest and welfare activities of the government, the village is always considered as an integral entity. For all social purposes and ceremonial occasions when outsiders have anything to do with Tasrā the village as a whole comes up in considerations. The hamlets are considered as internal secondary divisions of the village.

Yet the hamlets are territorial units by their own right; they are separate entities in so far as they have a great deal of autonomy in observing rituals and festivals and pursuing economic activities on their own and in having priests of the hamlet and deciding on preliminary steps in marriage and funeral, even having a junior Headman for internal affairs of Tal Tasrā. Although for preserving village harmony Tasrā is considered a unit, in a case of drunken indiscipline involving a fine of native beer a special portion was reserved for the leading elders of the hamlet to which the offender belonged. More important, the hamlet, especially Upar Tasrā under the direct supervision of the Headman, has come to incorporate even some undesirable element like a sorceress' family against the known but not mobilized opposition of the other hamlet. The hamlets have separate dormitories for young persons of both sexes and even the youngmen were formally invited to the other hamlet like a dancing party from another village. When we add to this the fact that swiddens are made in different halves of the village lands by the hamlets, it will show to what great extent the autonomy of the hamlets has been pushed.

That the villagers themselves view Tasrā and the hamlets as territorial unit is given clear expression in the divinatory practices on the day of Foundation of the site ceremony. The 'village', apart from the inhabitants and their activities, is a separate item or prediction in both the hamlets.

The hamlets are face-to-face primary groups, but there is so much going and coming and meeting on different occasions between a large section of inhabitants of both the hamlets on

every day of the year, that except during the watching period of about 3 months the village as a whole may be considered to be one primary group of 156 persons.

(b) The village Community and 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā' sections

Firth defines a human community as "a body of people sharing in common activities and bound by multiple relationship in such a way that the aims of any individual can be achieved only by participation in action with others" (p.41 1951). Besides the aspect of living together, the term involves a recognition, derived from experience and observation, that there must be minimum conditions of agreement on common aims, and inevitably some common ways of behaving, thinking, and feeling" (p.27, 1951). Obviously Tasrā village is a community, into which people are born, in which they live, work, marry and die. Besides its territorial integrity, ritual and economic unity, social and political solidarity and general behavioural conformity, the community has also some local pride and distinctiveness in many ways as against the adjacent villages. The hamlets may be taken as sub-communities.

But this should not cover up certain fundamental divergence of status and roles, power and wealth, in general, or interests between the two segments of the community, the 'Mātiāli', and the 'Parjā'. The 'Mātiāli' are descended from the first settlers of Tasrā and formally incorporate the immigrant families of 'Parjā' on the oath that the latter would recognize the former's authority and obey the "Law of the land" including the local rituals and other customs. The very term 'Parjā' means "subjects" and 'Mātiāli' stands for "children of the soil", who have right as 'Khuntkātidār' or first settlers who cleared the forest.

As these groups ultimately derive their character from their divergent relations to the village territory, in this sense these are here viewed as territorial groups. The 'Mātiāli' group forms a clan-section as described above, while the 'Parjā' group is an amorphous body of immigrant families. The latter's "group" character is understandable in contradistinction to the 'Mātiāli' group, especially at the time of the ceremony of founding the village (hamlet) site, at drinking of beer with the priests and at the funeral ceremony which I had attended. At the first one an immigrant family is formally awarded the status of a villager, or if already living at Tasrā, is required formally to re-affirm his loyalty to the 'Mātiāli' section in the name of the Headman and the priests and is to prepare some native beer for the ceremony. In new cases of incorporation the incumbent has to feed the village (hamlet) in a ceremony of 'Uburā-Saburā' or ritual purification. In the other two cases the 'Parjā' as a group were entertained apart from the 'Mātiāli' and the 'Bandhu' (affinal relatives from outside). At the funeral ceremony the 'Parjā' were first greeted and welcomed and then the 'Bandhu', the 'Mātiāli' group playing the host. This latter occasion demonstrated the precedence of specific territorial ties with the 'Parjā' (who are also 'Bandhu' or affinal relatives) over the 'Bandhu' which is a pure kingroup.



Formerly, the 'Parjā' had no claim to any important official functions except being assistants to priest. The opening of the "Grām Pancāyat" or council of villages has created a new avenue for good orators among the senior members of 'Parjā'.

### 3. Groups of Sex and Age

#### (a) The Dormitories

We have already dealt at some length with the dormitories for maidens young man in the section "The course of Life".

The dormitories work as a safety valve between the life of a child and that of an adult. Dormitory life prepares one for the adult roles, which are learnt seriously and often discussed. It gives the young persons the equivalent of what is known as "youth culture" strictly in the framework of village and hamlet loyalties and services on the one hand, and of the 'Kuṭumb' exogamy on the other. This does not mean that they are weaned completely from their parents or home. On the contrary, they form the main working power in a family with no father or married brother. The young men take part sometimes actively in deliberations or gossips of the elders who meet in the dormitory, as Tasrā has no longer a meeting house or 'Darabāra' for about 30 years. The senior young men and maidens also exercise certain leadership over the younger ones, thus reinforcing the seniority principle. In Tal Tasrā a 'Parjā' young man was informally recognized as leader, and he was the best singer.

Besides affording space for the young people sleep the dormitories have educative and some economic functions. The inmates are a reserve labour force for the village festivals or marriage and funeral ceremonies and look after the guests of the village. Also they have a system of cultivating a swidden in cooperation of both the sexes and utilizing the fruits of labour for picnics and for feeding dancing parties from other villages. There is no tradition of warring villages in the Pāuri country, otherwise the youngman could have had the function of guarding the village. No small part is played, however, by the sense of belonging together; the esprit de corps and keeping of their secrets are strongly marked. In fact they are the only permanently organized groups in the village life, the youngman being the more organized.

There are, however, only a few opportunities, besides dancing and singing at night, of working together between the sexes. They organize some picnics notably on the 'Founding the Village-Site' day or other occasions, or cooperate in worshipping 'Karam' god and goddess in 'Karmā' festival. 'Raja Parab' is another festival when young persons have opportunities for expressing themselves by exchanging 'Raja' couplets, charged with emotion and erotic allusion.

#### (b) Men and Women

Men of the village or hamlet act as a group as participants in the village (hamlet) assembly, on hunting and fishing trips, in village (hamlet) rituals when a male representative from each

household is required to partake of the offerings, in general drinking of beer or feasting on other communal occasions. They also cook and serve all the assembled men and women in funeral and marriage ceremonies. They meet daily in the bachelors' dormitory or on 'Manda Darabāra' outside round the fire to gossip and deliberate. The men act and interact as a group almost daily round the year. Of course, here the children are excepted.

The women however come together as a group on only a few occasions. The rituals 'Udhuni Bhasnā' and 'Rahani Bhasnā' are organized and executed exclusively by the women, when they partake of the offerings. On the day of 'Dhuliāni' the women play the most important roles in the worshipping of 'Barām' deity and reciting what appears to be origin-myths, besides staging a mock hunting in men's dress. On the occasion of 'Pankhira Pithā' day they as a body cook and offer the cakes and flowers to the men folk in general. Similarly, they also offer cakes to older men and youngman on the occasion of 'Rahani Bhasnā' ceremony. Occasionally they cook food together out of some village funds and distribute the food household-wise. As the men work under the guidance and leadership of priests and Headman, the women also are guided by older women of the priestly families, who alone worship in the rituals.

Although the women act as a group on much fewer occasions, they nonetheless fulfill important functions in the rituals and festivities of the hamlet as a whole. However, they never come together from all the households in the whole village as a group unlike in the case of men, except at the time of funeral and marriage ceremonies when they eat together the food cooked and served by men.

In fairness to the women it must be remarked that collecting of tubers and yams, fruits or flowers etc. does not yield to organized exploitation as hunting or fishing by men, and participation in political life of the village is denied to them. These facts together shut them off from a great many opportunities for corporate action. However, in comparison with Hindu villages the participation of women as a body in the village rituals and festivities should be remarkable.

## B. STATUS and STRATIFICATION

### 1. The Priests

The Dehuri 'barṇsa' or maximal lineage is the seniormost in the 'Mātiāli' section, and supplies the priests. On rare occasions however some senior members of the Nāika 'barṇsa' may officiate when the regular priests are ill or involved in ritual pollution.

The priest (Dehuri) for 'Barām' deity is of the highest rank, that of Gāenshri', and he 'Pāi' deities and 'Nishār' comes in the second position, while the priest for the 'Sarani Pāi' occupies the third rank.



Strangely enough, the priest of 'Bharāli Pāt', the highest deity of the "Batis Bār" organization, is relegated to a lower rank than that of the priests for the village deities. This might be due to the fact that the village deities have much more important roles in the rituals touching upon the economic life and security system than 'Bharāli Pāt' has. For the later the junior most sub-lineage had always provided the priests, as a rule.

The priesthood is usually hereditary in the sub-lineage, but not strictly so. 'Barām' priest has come not from the senior most sub-lineage, which had however taken care of 'Gāenshari' and the other 'Pāt' deities. The eldest son usually takes over the duties; if he is young or incapable, then the next brother has the privilege to serve. The division of the village into hamlets has loosened the succession to priesthood.

The priestesses are usually older members of the priestly lineage and there seems to be no rule of succession of these offices.

The priests of priestesses do not have any emoluments except a sumptuous meal with meat and social prestige. A village priest, that of 'Gāenshari' and 'Bāhmuni Pāt' was once helped by the men of the hamlet in cutting of his new swidden, and had to stand only native beer. Besides this a priest who worships on the ceremonial hunting days gets a special share of the game.

However, the Tasrā priests serving in three valley villages, Kumudih, Barcuā, and Rengāli, get handsome presents including cloth, and the priest of Kumudih had even a few agricultural plots on service tenure. As the Tasrā 'Mātiāli' had lived in these villages in the valley, only they could worship and appease the deities and demons of the neighbourhood.

## 2. The Village Headman

The village Headman or 'Nāika' comes from the Nāika 'barṁsa' or maximal lineage. The eldest son always has the right to this office. But when the would-be 'Nāika' is a minor the next younger brother of the former 'Nāika' may manage the affairs. In Derulā because the father was quite old (about 90), the elderest son was handed over the office.

The Headman takes active interest in the well-being of the village, its cultivation and law and order situation. He is formally recognized by the local police station at Mahulpadā and thus by the Government. All transactions of the Government officials were formerly directed to him alone and at present divided in some minor respects with the "Pancāyat" Member.

But he is far from being an autocrat. He is the most powerful spokesman of the village and the first among equals, though these "equals" are the 'Mātiāli' people of the village. He first introduces a topic to be decided upon by mentioning the gravity, the urgency of simply the import of the occasion, and then listens to the opinions offered by senior elders, 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā'. From time to time he sums up the discussion and puts some critical points of decision for further

ratification or clarification. Though he is implicitly obeyed his approach in commanding people is courteous and cautious in being often an indirect instruction. However, we have noted already how the Headman reinforces his authority with sorcery, of which he and his wife are suspected.

Apart from the social precedence shared with senior priests he enjoys no emoluments of any significance. Sometimes the villages may work for him and get sumptuously fed for that. Formally he had a special share on the day of successful ceremonial hunting. But he was also to give a suitable counter-present.

A junior Headman was responsible for internal day-to-day affairs in Tal Tasrā. After his shifting to Upar Tasrā I found nobody working as such in 1957.

### 3. The Pancāyat' Member

This new office has been introduced in 1953 when the "Grām Pancāyat" (Council of Villages) Act of the Orissa Government came into effect in Mahulpadā region. Every village was to send an elected Member to the council which sat at least once a month. In a village assembly composed of elders of both the hamlets, a senior intelligent man of the priestly lineage, a good speaker, was elected unanimously for Tasrā. One 'Parjā' elder, known to be a good speaker and a right-hand man of the Headman was also selected as an assistant or 'Sipāi' to the Member.

After the death of the Member a senior 'Parjā' from old Iti lineage, an experienced speaker, having some experience with plains ways, was elected as his successor. The other 'Parjā' elder and another good speaker, a 'Kuṭumb' of the 'Māṭiālī' group, both from Upar Tasrā, were appointed as 'Sipāi' or assistants. In both cases the Members were from Tal Tasrā. As the power and authority of the Member might directly clash with that of the Headman, it was advisable that the new locus of power was kept at a distance in Tal Tasrā. We have also noted that many in Tal Tasrā and some in Upar Tasrā also suspected sorcery inflicted by the Headman causing death to the former Member. This happened allegedly because of the latter's popularity and rising prospects of his emerging a rival to the Headman's power. Such motivations might have goaded the Headman to provide for some handy safeguards in nominating assistant(s) faithful to him and under the direct control in Upar Tasrā. That his fears are not ill-founded is now somewhat clear. After the junior Headman's shifting to Upar Tasrā and as there was nobody from the 'Nāika' lineage in Tal Tasrā, the Member had been managing the day-to-day affairs in the capacity of a junior Headman.

### 4. Diviners, Medicine man and Sorcerers

Ordinary diviners are known as 'Saguṇiā'. They not only divine but also exercise disease-spirits of deities. Diviners of higher order, especially dealing with suspicion of sorcery, are



'Rāuliā' or medicineman. The later can work against sorcery and may also prescribe certain herbal medicines. All the 'Rāuliā' in Tasrā are 'cheduniā' or those who may counteract sorcery but cannot inflict. A 'Rāuliā' also gets possessed by spirits or deities and may be compared to shamans. Shamanism is very widespread in the region, even the Casā, a Hindu caste, employ shamans on serious occasions like difficult labour. Sorcerers are known as 'Pāngnā' and sorceresses as 'Pāngni'. Diviners, medicine men and sorcerers (sorceresses) learn their trade from 'Guru' or teacher-experts and their specialized education is the nearest approach to formal instruction.

A medicine man enjoys high prestige in the village because of his capacity to save lives and cure diseases. A diviner is resorted to for smaller ailments and is the person of first call and has the tendency to function like a "family doctor". There are about 2 medicine men as against 4 or 5 diviners. It is perhaps not without significance that both the Members of Tasrā were either 'Rāuliā' or 'Saguniā'.

However, sorcery is discredited and considered a crime, but the sorcerers and sorceresses are feared and one dare not anger them for nothing. Thus potential threat of sorcery becomes a good weapon for maintaining power as in the Headman's case. But in extreme cases of sorcery one might be expelled from the village.

##### 5. Status, ascribed and achieved

Firth regards the social status of a person as 'his position in a social system, represented by the rights and privileges he enjoys and the obligations or duties he should perform' (Human Types, p.103). Status may be "ascribed", that is, given by virtue of birth or "achieved", that is attained by virtue of individual merits. The fact that ascribed status may be denied because of ritual, physical or mental deficiencies does not invalidate this important distinction.

We have seen above that the priests because of their vital roles in the economic life and physical well-being of the villagers enjoy high social status, as does the Headman for his socio-political leadership in corporate activities of the village. These are the most highly prized positions in the society which are open only to the 'Māṭiālī' section as a whole. Others who are not born in this group are debarred from these offices and privileges.

Against these cases of ascribed status are available a wide range of opportunities for achieved social status. Through acquisition of proper knowledge one might attain the very important status of medicine man-cum-shaman, or at least a lower position of diviner-cum-exorcize. The social status of the witches is not now, perhaps primarily because they come from the wealthiest households, but they also enjoy certain circumspect consideration through fear, which impels villagers to be on good term with them. As we have seen, the offices of Member of "Grām Pancāyat" and his assistants have tended to be attained by 'Parjā' men. Assistants

to the priests and priestesses are selected ad hoc and the senior 'Parjā' are usually welcome because of their experience. The messengers of the village Assembly are junior, 'Parjā' elders. Proficiency in singing, beating drums or tambourines, dancing, handicrafts, hunting or other skills, especially in making good speeches, brings prestige and thus contributes to the social status of a person.

Apart from such achieved status but closely allied to it is the higher status accorded to a married individual, especially to a family having its own household, the head of the household being automatically an elder of the village Assembly.

Women are accorded a lower social status than that of men in general. They are however far from being chattels or repressed. Their contribution in the economic life is indispensable and vital, they may accumulate property of their own and bequeath it as they think fit, have almost as much say in house affairs and especially on the question of marriage of children, and they worship village deities and demons, and hold festivities of their own and sometimes act as a group. On the other hand, there is male precedence in rituals and festivities and exclusive male control of sociopolitical affairs of the village, easier divorce for the men and denial to the woman of inheritance of important forms of wealth. In day today life however they appear to be brave & independent and not at all complaining, and they do not have any trace of purdah system, which in rural west-Orissa is not so prominent as in the east. However, we have noted that even in food consumption they appear to be under-privileged as in other aspects of life in this patrilineal and markedly patrilocal society. But the women proudly referred either to the high status of their parents of 'Māṭiāli' lineages of their ancestral villages or to their present incorporation in the 'Māṭiāli' clan-section.

The all-important distinction of sex, and the fundamental division of the 'Māṭiāli' and the 'Parjā' based on birth in or outside the clan-section of the first-settlers, supplemented by differences of age, hold the key to social status in the village. Added to this are the position in the lineage and even the length of time a lineage from outside has settled in Tasrā. The former factor is very important in succession of traditional offices and inheritance and the latter, in the delegation of an important office ('Member') to the senior most elder of the oldest immigrant lineage from Iti in Pal Lahara. Thus viewed ascribed status is of paramount importance in the socio-political life of the village. However, it must be noted that opportunities for achieving status are increasing in the "unreserved" spheres of handicrafts or of new offices like Member and his assistants or even of wealth.

## 6. Wealth and Power

While dealing with indebtedness we have already noted that there are about 7 households which are considered well-to-do in the sense that they do not go hungry in the lean months. Only one family, a recent immigrant from Khadkā where they have agricultural land and fruit-



trees, can claim to be wealthy with about 200 Kilo paddy as a saving. There is another well-to-do 'Parjā' household, also recent immigrant from Khadkā with landed property, from which some share in the proceeds comes yearly, as in the other case. Along with 5 'Māṭiālī' households they also save some money. One well to-do, 'Māṭiālī' household has some paddy saved, because there are only two souls in the family and as a priest at Kumudih the remuneration is of some good amount. Moreover the household is a bit miserly.

The 'Māṭiālī' section claims 18 households and the 'Parjā' 19. Living houses excluding the livestock sheds and including the sheds for husking lever where it is separately constructed, we find the 'Māṭiālī' have 37 huts between them and the 'Parjā' 29. The difference become more marked when we come to consider cattle and maize-gardens. Thirteen households of the 'Māṭiālī' have one or more cattle as against only 7 households among the 'Parjā'. Similarly, all the 18 'Māṭiālī' households have one and in some cases two plots of maize-gardens while only 6 'Parjā' households "own" a plot. Of course, a few more 'Parjā' could obtain a plot by standing drinks for the village elders. Kitchen garden is similarly scarce and almost monopolized by the 'Māṭiālī' section. One might argue: first come, first served. But the fact is that there is a number of have-nots. Even there are some plots cultivated by the 'Parjā' with permission of their legal "owners". If we take the wooden husking lever as an instance of capitalization of effort, there are 6 among the 'Māṭiālī' and 3 among the 'Parjā'. Hurricane lanterns purchased more for show than for use were found with 5 'Māṭiālī' households and those 3 'Pārjā' households who had or have intimate associations with plains people in Pal Lahara and Bamra. Out of 10 plots or agriculture-terraces 8 belong to the 'Māṭiālī' group. They also own the great majority of jackfruit trees.

We have seen before how production is correlated with working hands and industry; therefore wealth increases social status. Wealth by itself hardly leads to power. Of the two 'Parjā' well-to-do household, the one wealthiest has little power. Power is shared now only with the oldest and nearest immigrant lineage in the village. Partly the motivation may be to keep the centre of new power at a safe distance in a hamlet where the Headman does not reside.

It remains just to be pointed out that 'Parjā' owe loyalty to the 'Māṭiālī' section as a whole, and to the priests and the Headman in particular, and to the deities and demons of the village territory. They have to stand some native beer as something like a yearly tribute. Besides all the households had been contributing paddy for the 'Dehuriā Dhāna' or "Priestly Granary", collected and managed by the priests and the Headman. At the time of its dissolution in 1950-51 as an institution of the total village, the paddy was distributed among the 'Māṭiālī' families, though a half of the cereals was used in feasting the village. On the occasion of occupying swiddens senior priest and the Headman demarcate the shares on the spot.

Thus the 'Māṭiālī' group, deriving power ultimately from their descent from the first settlers of the village, are on the whole better off, own greater wealth, and exercise power over the 'Parjā'

as a whole to the material advantage of their group interests. the leadership, however, lies in the hands of senior priests and the Headman, and of late is shared in a secondary non-traditional sphere with a 'Parjā' of an influential lineage. Among the women the older priestesses exercise leadership assisted by elderly 'Parjā' ladies.

## 7. A Stratified Society?

Firth notes: "When a graded system of statuses is of general operation in a society, affecting many spheres of social activity, it is termed a system of social stratification. Here, each stratum or layer in the grading scheme is composed of people who fill much the same position in the social structure." (Human Types, p.103). Obviously, there must be two horizontal layers at the least. We have seen how and to what extent the 'Mātiāli' section has social precedence, economic advantages, political power and ritual control over the 'Parjā' who are led and guided by the other. The latter's higher social status is always acknowledged by the 'Parjā'. The lowest occupation, that of day labour, is also resorted to by the 'Parjā' in great numbers and shunned by the 'Mātiāli' except for the two or three helpless widows. When it comes to carrying something for a visiting official it is the poorer 'Parjā' who are ultimately prevailed upon to do; when erecting my house even old 'Parjā' men were working while younger senior priests and the Headman were just directing most of the time. Costlier marriages and funeral (cremation) also fall largely to the 'Mātiāli'.

All these and other details described above to show that there is some sharp break between the 'Mātiāli' and the 'Parjā', however relative it may appear in day-to-day life. The 'Mātiāli' section resembles in many ways a landholding aristocracy and the 'Parjā', commoners or second-class citizens. The designations even as analogy must be sharply trimmed to have real meaning in the actual situation. Though the 'Mātiāli' were descended from the first settlers they do not expressly claim that all land belongs to them and them alone. On the other hand, they emphasize that every villager has right to get land according to his needs for making swiddens, and for other purposes when there is suitable land. Under these circumstances I have defined the land tenure as "corporate village ownership". Moreover, both the 'Mātiāli' and the 'Parjā' must work hard for their subsistence, and there is no 'leisure' class. As for the rank of the 'Parjā' (literally, "Subjects"), to compare them with commoners is to disregard the fact that in the recent, or back in the remote, past each of these 'Parjā' ancestors belonged to the 'Mātiāli' section of the ancestral villages. Even today they cherish the memory of their higher social rank in ancestral villages.

Even under such limitations and with free intermarriage between the 'Parjā' and 'Mātiāli', it appears there is some sort of loose social stratification between the compact, powerful, numerous, 'Mātiāli' section and the 'Parjā' from diverse lineages and villages, and odd assortment of affinal relatives owing individually and collectively the overall loyalty to the 'Mātiāli'. That it



is a legitimate right of the 'Māijāli' to be the traditional leaders and loci of power in the village is accepted by all parties.

If the image of such a loose nascent stratification does not conform strictly to the classical models of "estate" ("Stand" in German) or "class", that is not of fundamental importance. The more significant point of observation is, that in an apparently "egalitarian" society may lie hidden a strong tendency to formation of something like classes of estates, in whatever rudimentary form it may be. Dr. Elwin has already discovered a clearer formation of social classes among the Hill Saorā, where the aristocracy prefer their sons to marry within the aristocracy and may accept girls from, but never marry their own into, the commoners, named "proletariat" by him (pp.50-52).

### c. AD HOC GROUPING

The groups to be mentioned below are semi-permanent or temporary formations and serve not merely the interests or purpose which gave rise to them individually, but also other interests which arise from time to time. As these were not studies in details not more than an outline can be presented here.

#### 1. Gossip Groups

It is found both among men and women who keep to their sex. As the men gather in the bachelors' dormitory in the evening, or in the morning when possible, the spontaneous groups composed of elders and young men enter into topics centering round the village affairs or the relations of the villagers with outsiders. Much comment and advice and some untried ideas come forth, while the men leisurely smoke away the time round a fire.

This gossip group, changing its members at any time, feels like a group because of the familiar contents of the topics, and as familiarity of the participants to each other do not call for a break in the intimacy and frankness. This is the most important gossip group in a hamlet for forming the public opinion leading to, or behind, the decision of a more formal meeting of the hamlet or village. The latter sits when a messenger calls on each householder to take part in the discussions.

The women form small clusters not expressly for gossiping, but mostly on occasions of some real work, say, washing utensils and fetching water, basking and bathing a child in the sun, plaiting date-plam mattresses, or husking grains etc. The group is evidently much smaller than in the case of the dormitory gossip group of men- 2 to 5 or so in size. While in the dormitory the whole hamlet may assemble, in the women's groups mostly neighbours and some visiting relative from the other hamlet or from outside may join. In these groups they pass comments and discuss village affairs as much as their own.

## 2. Labour Groups

We may distinguish three types of them: (a) hired labour (b) reciprocal cooperative labour (c) communal labour.

In the first two cases there is an employer, whose household members also work with the helping hands, and there is much fun and singing especially in reciprocal cooperative labour groups. In the latter as big group of both sexes usually work together and this presents a social occasion of high romantic spirits. Not infrequently some competitive spirit also imbues the workers, as a better platform for demonstrating superior skill is rarely available. In these two groups the leadership is not necessary with the "employer" but may be shared with elder and more experienced hands.

In communal labour for a villager the beneficiary cannot undertake the job if he or she is sick or has no cattle in case of ploughing a swidden. But in other cases or in constructing planks for the oil press, or "canol" for big festivities or in constructing me a hut the traditional leadership hardly does any manual work except when it is absolutely necessary.

## 3. Partnership Groups

There are two major kinds of partnership groups, the one for herding cattle and the other for contributions for ceremonies etc.

About the first we have already mentioned on page 110 some details. The two households sending men or women to tend together may not always be adjacent but may be connected through sharing services of cattle of one of them or of a third party. Either two men or two women cooperation in this tending in a fixed rotation.

While this sort of partnership may end of change, when for example, a non-owner of cattle frees himself from the obligation by giving native beer to the benefactor, the other is more or less permanent. This is called 'Paliā Dala' or "Partnership group by turn". In undivided Tasrā there were three such groups, the core of which were the 'Mātiāli' households. The descendants of the same 'Mātiāli' grand parents were usually together in such a partnership group. Thus there were two groups I Dehuri 'bamsa' and one of the Nāika 'bamsa'. The responsibility of these groups was to provide for the articles of worship including the goats, from year to year by turn. After splitting of the village these were discontinued and the hamlet behaved as one contributing unit.

Since 1957 these groups have become important again on a village basis, as 'Bisri Usā' worship has been introduced. The partnership groups have been charged to arrange for the goats, cloth, cost of the image and other articles of worship from year to year by turn.

Another type of partnership group was formed during the rule of the Raja or Bonai when villages were expected to supply free labour usually on daily rations to work in catching



elephants, hunting, working on the roads or carrying rations or loads of the officials. In this both 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā' men were drafted by turn.

#### 4. Faction and Friction

That division of Tasrā into two hamlets was not merely a territorial division was hinted to me on more than one occasion. But this very interesting and valuable aspect of their social life could not be studied in my first trip, as they had all sorts of apprehensions about my official intentions. Later on I did not get an opportunity, mainly due to lack of time on both sides.

I was informed that there was a great rift in the 'Mātiāli' section just when the Government was putting pressure on them to come down to settle in colonies. Two members of Nāika 'bāmsa' and 9 'Parjā' went to Guhābandhā colony. One of Nāika 'bāmsa' (in 1953-54 the junior Headman) and 9 other 'Mātiāli' household and some 'Parjā' came to settle in Tal Tasrā. Brothers were thus divided from each other and a son from the father in one case, though they did not belong to opposing factions. I had no trace of any ill-feeling or lack of cooperation between these close kins in the two hamlets of Tasrā. But a few other facts tend to show that the hamlets sometimes functioned as two factions in rivalry or jealousy.

In a joint hunting expedition with both hamlets some Tal Tasrā man struck a big animal and Tal tasrā men claimed the head all for themselves, as a matter of traditional right of the marksman and prestige of the hamlet. But Upar Tasrā men led by the Headman objected to this and pressed for joint sharing by both parties, as they were sure it was also struck by one Upar Tasrā man. Meanwhile the animal was on flight and as the Tal Tasrā men were adamant, it was alleged, the Headman caused by his sorcery the blood to stop oozing, thus making the track unrecognizable. In this instance the Headman, it was alleged, acted in behalf of Upar Tasrā.

Tal Tasrā people were happy that they did not welcome proved sorceresses into their midst unlike in Upar Tasrā. They did not even attend the ritual purification ceremony in a case of incorporation in 1954. On the other hand, Tal Tasrā men grumbled and blamed the other hamlet for drinking most of the native beer alone and not giving them their proper share. In another instance also such blame was laid at the door of Upar Tasrā.

Thus we find on some occasions the hamlets behaved as if they were two factions. But the real core of the factions is composed of the 'Mātiāli' household. It was also clear that the Headman belonged to one faction, the more powerful one, and the late Member of the priestly lineage to the other, against whom the former employed sorcery and "killed" him. It may be because the bereaved faction was without its popular leader, who was also powerful having a semi-official position as Member of the Government-sponsored "Grām Pancāyat", that no action could be taken against the Headman whose sorcery was "proved" to have caused the death of the Member. In at least one case the Headman charged 100% interest on a loan of

grains taken by a member of the opposite faction, a 'Māṭiālī' man also living in the same hamlet. The usual rate in the village was 50%. Thus it seems factional ill-feeling was many-sided.

#### D. SECURING VILLAGE HARMONY

The villagers of Tasrā and of adjacent Pāuri villages cannot recall any instance of fighting between one village and another. There had been a few rebellions in Keonjhar and perhaps in Bonai against the unjust rule of the local Raja or his officers. In these cases the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ fought against outsiders. This indirectly shows how much value they put on peaceful living and this may be a result of the crisscrossing of the network of interrelatedness of the Pāuri to one another in their far flung homeland. If they have maintained peaceful relations outside they are no less keen on preserving harmony within the village. Free gossiping aided with possibility of public ridicule and fear of witchcraft help towards social control, besides certain norms of social intercourse. But the villagers do not leave it at that.

##### 1. The Village Assembly or 'Desa'

The most effective and important organizational instrument for securing harmony in the village as also in inter-village relations is the village Assembly or 'Desa', composed of all the elders of households. Theoretically everyone is equal and has equal rights to an opinion and to a hearing. Impartial justice is expected and the judgement is accepted by both the parties in good grace. Its importance is stressed on the day of Founding the Village Site when the 'Parjā' are made to swear allegiance to 'Desa' also as an institution of the "law of the land".

Besides hearing disputes and sitting on judgement over them, which are not frequent, the Assembly or its local counterpart in a hamlet discusses and decides on the date of holding village rituals and festivals, and of initiating economic activities like mowing thatchgrass, or repayment of corporate loans, and other communal undertakings, and deliberates with the go-betweens in settling marriage claims. The Village Assembly composed of both the hamlets sits on the problem of incorporation of new members, holding of funeral and marriage ceremonies, out casting of a household or member, or sending representatives to deliver the land revenue or the sacrificial goat at Bonaigarh or to the "Grām Pancāyat" and other serious matters. The Village Assembly may sit when villagers have assembled for other purposes; in two cases it happened so.

Though the Headman guides the discussion and presides over the sitting of 'Desa', he does not ordinarily impose his views, rather he becomes a spokesman of the majority opinion which he again refers to the group for final ratification or objections. If there be objections, the discussion rolls on further till large measure of unanimity is reached. There is no show of hands or no uttering of 'ayes' and "nos". The procedure of a village assembly is formal but inherently democratic, stressing on unanimity rather than majority rule. That sometimes the



unanimity might be formal, as in the instance of incorporating a sorceress, cannot be denied. But the minority interests or fears are always given sufficient consideration in arriving at decisions. However, at times the Headman may give the right of speech-making to one whom he favoured.

The fines, usually consisting of native beer, and at the maximum, of public feasting, are enjoyed by the elders. The punishment to be inflicted is carried into effect by the senior elders including the Headman and older priests, with the assistance of an official crier, 'Dakuā', who also calls on elders for a sitting.

## 2. Witness, Oaths and ordeals

In a small clustered community like a hamlet of Tasrā it is very difficult to conceal any crime or dispute. Witnesses are always ready at hand. If a dispute or crime did not take place in the isolation of jungle. Circumstantial evidence is also taken into consideration. In case of sorcery the divinatory finding of 'Rāuliā' or medicine man-cum-shaman, if possible two or more such findings, is accepted as decisive evidence.

In the trial a formal iteration of the charge against the offender and marshalling of evidence and statements of eye-witnesses, correcting each other on the details all these are gone through. If the offender accepts the guilt the punishment is decreed in the same session. If the offender claims "not guilty", an oath may be taken or an ordeal administered. In the oath the supreme deity 'Dharam' is invoked. If during and soon after the oath-taking a cat mewed or a dog barked, a branch fell, or even a man passed winds or coughed, or anything abnormal happened, this would be interpreted as supernatural betrayal of the falsity of the oath and the offender would be punished both by the 'Desa' and later on by supernatural agencies in reprisal against the sacrilege.

Ordeals are of two types. In one ordeal the culprit is asked to fetch a rupee coin out of a pot of boiling cow-dung. A sorceress, after being identified by three independent medicinemen-cum-shamans was asked by 'Desa' of Laḍumḍih to go through this ordeal. She refused to do so. This refusal finally "proved" that she was the sorceress responsible for causing the wound of a villagers go to gangrene. If she would have brought the coin out with her arm unscathed, she would have been declared innocent.

In the other ordeal by heated iron the offender has to hold a red-hot iron ploughshare in both palms and to slide it along the forearms till the Knuckle-joint and then again to bring it back sliding into the palm. If there be no blisters even after this, the suspect will be declared innocent, besides perhaps being a hero. But the very prospect of having to go through this ordeal may be sufficiently nerve-breaking as to elicit a prompt confession of guilt.

Thus about 30-25 years ago there were two men of the same name at Tasrā. A rather dumb unmarried damsel was made clandestinely pregnant by one of them. This serious situation

called for a 'Desa' meeting. The woman identified the man by signs. Both the men refused that they had any part in it. As the iron was being heated the offender acknowledged his role and was immediately forced to take the woman as his wife.

In both the ordeals the materials are supernaturally 'charged' to ensure justice, but I am not sure by whom, a medicineman or a priest.

### 3. Crimes and Punishments

Only a few recent cases, which happened during my stay in 1954, will be considered here. It may however be noted from the outset that thefts are very rare and murder never heard of among Tasrā villagers. Petty quarrellings with beating between brothers or other villagers under the influence of drunkenness or severe beating of wives are also rare. During the months of January and February, when much is drunk in and between the festivities only two cases of beating and quarrelling of brothers and two other cases of severe beating of wives took place, besides a quarrel between the wife of the Headman and her son-in-law who lives his wife's parents.

The sister's son of the Headman under the influence of heavy drinking raised a quarrel in his household (14P), beat his wife severely, broke pots, wanted to beat his mother, was checked, and fled to Ladumdi. Then he returned the next day and departed to his wife's father's place with his wife. The villagers were enraged. The fellow had not only quarreled with his parents, but also challenged the authority of the community by disturbing peace and then flying away from the village. This was also not the first time that he had created such scenes under drunkenness. If his intransigence were not properly dealt with, there would be no harmony and no authority in the village, so argued the elders in exasperation.

On the day of the Founding the village Site ceremony, when 'Desa' had assembled for the purpose of formal pledging of loyalty to the Headman, Priests, and 'Desa', the matter was discussed fully. The disturber of the peace was publicly reprimanded for his unruly behavior. He was then solemnly asked either to give up drinking or to leave the village. After much persuasion by friends he promised that he would give up drinks. Then he was fined by 'Desa' to stand native beer for the entertainment of 'Desa'. No witnesses were called as his activities were known without doubt by all the elders. After a week the fine of native beer made from 4 kilo millets was enjoyed by 'Desa' elders with an additional side-dish of fried-meat. After this one speaker pointed out that the offender had left drinking as he promised and had now given much, judging his capacity, towards the fine. He was then warned by the Headman on behalf of 'Desa' not to engage in such behaviour afterwards. Then his father and he himself bowed to 'Desa' in thankfulness. He, however, later on specially entertained the elders-mostly 'Mātiāli' ones- of his hamlet with beer made from 2 ½ Kilo millets. The fact remains that he took beer along with them on the same day when the case was closed by 'Desa'. Nobody seriously



expected a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ to leave native beer for the rest of his life, but the real objection was to the disrupting behavior. As the culprit had made sufficiently amends for his misbehaviour and promised not to indulge in it again, the threat to village harmony and authority of 'Desa' was thus successfully fought back. The rehabilitation of the culprit was, therefore, complete.

In the second case two brothers quarreled under the influence of drunkenness. The bride of the younger brother was not yet ritually incorporated into the family, and because of that the husband had been long debarred from full ritual participation. The elder brother staying with the father was not serious about this problem which required his cooperation. The immediate cause of the trouble was something else. The elder brother asked for native beer allegedly set by the younger. On refusal the latter was accused that he always entertained his father-in-law and never cared for his elder brother. Then they came to exchange hot words including the very abusive 'salā' or "wife's brother" and came beating each other to 'Manda Darabār' or Assembly Platform. Had the quarrel been confined to their homesteads it would not have mattered for the community, unless it was of highly violent nature. As however thus and ugly scene took place on the public platform, which after all is a very special and sacred seat of 'Desa', the matter was taken up by 'Desa' and the offenders fined, this time also native beer. The alternative to such fine is taking an oath which is acknowledged to be much harder on the youngmen, who might easily transgress it and thus bring supernatural vengeance upon themselves.

Quarrels in the wake of general drinking are always feared, and therefore on every such occasion of drinking the Headman always reminds the villagers that they should not quarrel but behave properly. The womenfolk try their utmost to help their men to behave themselves, but they cannot dissuade them from drinking more, if for the fear of being beaten. It is really surprising that more disorders and quarrels do not occur when the Headman is himself rolling drunk on the village lane.

The other case which were not tried by 'Desa' took place in the respective homesteads and were not of serious nature and hence out of the jurisdiction of 'Desa'.

In one case a man beat his wife, a mother of about 10 days, for cooking and eating some millets reserved for the future use. He confessed later that he did not know that she had kept a share for him. Men and women, especially the latter, were extremely critical of his brutal behaviour towards his weak wife. The cause of the beating and beating itself were never questioned, though the villagers had come to check the beating.

After being drunk on another festivity this same man and his younger brother quarreled. The younger one did not obey his orders to run on a trivial errand. In rage the elder brother abused the other as 'salā' or "wife's brother" and then they came to blows. Their co-father and some others intervened, and as in the other case I had to use my weight also. Even on 'Manda

Darabār' the man and his co-father, the present Member of Tasrā were on the point of coming to blows as the latter defended the younger co-son. Other villagers took the offending co-son away.

In the last case there was a quarrel between the son-in-law and the mother-in-law in which the former abused her as 'Sālī' or "wife's sister", a hard abuse for any mother-in-law who is usually to be respected and avoided. But this was allowed to die down as a purely private matter- "confined to household".

#### 4. The local Police Organization

There is a Police Station at Mahulpadā, 6 Kilometers down the valley. Every village of about 30 under it is visited by a constable from time to time to check on the proper preservation of law and order- about once in a month or two. More frequently however a petty official of Pān caste, called 'Mahānāek', from Rengālī village, visits the village Tasrā, for which he is responsible, to collect the vital statistics of birth, death, serious crimes like murder or bloody quarrels, epidemics etc. The duty of the 'Mahānāek' is to report this information every week at the Police Station. The 'Mahānāek' is paid so low, in many cases an annual honorarium of only Rs. 12.00, that it becomes irresistible for him to demand food and other presents from Tasrā from time to time. Anyway, through this ramshackle organization the Police manages to keep law and order in villages. Fortunately for them the Pāūrī villages present almost no problems to the police, who testify to the remarkably peaceful nature of the Pāūrī Bhuiyān of the region.

#### 8. The PATTERN of SOCIO- ECONOMIC LIFE

In discussing this over-all view of the socio-economic life shall be examining how far life is imbued with communal spirit and reciprocity, how we might define the economy, rather describe it in terms of certain well-known models, and lastly, how far such an assertion, "shifting cultivation is a way of life-not a mere means of livelihood", is valid in Tasrā today.

##### A. COMMUNAL SPIRIT and RECIPROCITY

Under reciprocity I understand not only the situation in helpfulness and partnership groups (excepting "communal partnership") but also the situation in some remotely reciprocal acts. The last-named may be obvious from one example. A noted hunter was handicapped by having to take care of the baby, as his wife was sick. A woman from another end of the hamlet took the baby, so that he could accompany a hunting expedition. If he or in his cooperation others could bag a big game a share would accrue to her household also. As usually they were unsuccessful at bagging the scarce game, this consideration was quite natural for her. If he bagged a big game she might even expect of extra bit from his exclusive share in gratitude. Having time to attend to the baby, as she was aided by her daughter-in-law and daughter in household activities, in the hamlet only she was in a position to relieve him and free him for



the communal undertaking, that is, hunting. But as she or any other woman did not help him in this manner on another occasion of a communal festivity, "drinking with the priests", this gesture on her part cannot be taken as due to her communal spirit per se. Acts of reciprocity, however remote and indirect as in the case of reciprocal cooperative labour and in the last example it may be, are very important in the socio-economic life of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. The relatives and ritual friends form a permanent circle of reciprocity during the life-time of an individual. In fact ritual friendship ends when friendly acts and presents are not reciprocated. This attitude of reciprocity is also extended to officials and strangers. When the womenfolk greet the latter in their traditional manner they expect some present of money. They may go to the length of even bargaining for presents for showing a stranger their dances, but this seems to be a later development. Consistently enough they hesitated to accept a gift of money from me for purpose of a funeral ceremony. Their problem was what they could give me in return, as a stranger or outsider must be given.

This does not mean that they have no conception of pure gift. They often refer to a relative rendering some services or giving something 'bhābare' or "by way of compassion or affection". But as their transactions are never-ending in this life such acts of helpfulness may be returned in other forms or occasions. Thus wife's brother had given a whole crop of banana and the sister's husband excused the repayment of a loan of rice taken by the former. Though the values of the materials involved were not exactly equivalent but not far apart, the transactions did not relieve them of their obligations to each other, but rather helped to strengthen the bonds existing between them. We have seen already in the case of a marriage and a funeral how much food and other materials could be arranged only through the existing channels of helpfulness.

Unlike in the case of reciprocity, which may extend to other villages as well to the past and the future, communal activities are circumscribed by both space and time, in as much as they take place in the village or hamlet among the inhabitants who are living in any particular year. The communal activities are almost fixed in their nature and cycle of succession, but the membership of the village (hamlet) may change from year to year. The new members are readily integrated and the community as a whole comes closer through these almost regular communal activities. The village rituals and festivals, celebration of marriage and funeral ceremonies, observation of birth and death taboos on work, joint economic undertakings, the youngmen and maidens rendering communal services, and communal partnership groups arranging for the rituals or services for the government by turn- all this go to show how great and strong is the communal spirit or the spirit of belonging to the same community (or sub-community) as expressed in communal activities. The overwhelming majority of communal activities are both collective and cooperative on the basis of a hamlet or the village. As all households have to sacrifice almost in the same manner each of them gains also almost an

equal quantity or quality, distributed according to accepted tradition, in certain cases higher skill being rewarded.

Whether reciprocity or communal spirit is the more important is hard to decide. It must be remembered that acts of reciprocity are not so regular, and in any particular year may be in terms of frequency more numerous for this household and less for that as compared to communal activities. If there be a marriage or funeral ceremony the weight of help received through channels of reciprocity seems to be much greater. But in case of serious sickness of the householder either communal help or help of relatives may save his swidden. But it appears there is more recourse to communal help, when a large number of men may be required, as in wood-cutting in a new swidden weeding paddy swidden. However, for a relatively helpless immigrant with his relatives far away and himself having no time for cutting a swidden as a full-time cowherd for a hamlet or Tasrā, communal help was all-important. When bonds of reciprocity and communal spirit come to clash it largely depends on the individuals concerned in actual cases, at least at present. With a funeral ceremony just two days ahead the youngman were expected to be busy helping in this communal activity. Three senior youngman out of a total of six youngman in Tal Tasrā went to another village at this critical time on the pretext that one of them, officiating as priest in some rituals, had to help his 'mita' or name-sake ritual friend in the other village for beating the latter's mustard. The elders were criticizing their conduct severely for neglecting communal duties. I am not sure whether the youngman and two of his friends would have gone to help his 'mita', if a girl of his choice, who was at that time in the village of his 'mita', were not the real deciding factor. Lastly, it must be noted that the principle of reciprocity, even in a material sense, extends to their relationship with the deities, spirits, and demons (cf. Firth, 1951, p.234 235).

Coming to other type of activities, competitive spirit is least demonstrated in the economic life, though producing more or better handwork or collecting more at greater speed, and higher efficiency in weeding, reaping or cutting wood etc. in co-operative labour are always admired. Competition however seems to be relegated more to the field of games, sports, song-contests and the skill in beating 'Cāngu' and 'Mānda' drums, and perhaps also in the capacities of a medicineman. In Tasrā, however, the medicineman cooperated in a case of illness of the son of one of them. Similarly, collective activities are overwhelmingly more important and more frequent than solitary ones.

## **B. CHARACTERIZATION of the ECONOMY**

We may now examine and sum up some other aspects of the economy.

It will be easily agreed that Tasrā has a food-producing economy. But this does not clarify to what extent collecting food through gathering, hunting, fowling and fishing methods does supplement food production. It appears, to a great extent, especially through gathering. Although



cattle and goats are kept their milk is not taken, thus to that extent not utilizing in full the opportunities of food-production.

Similarly, it would be readily recognized that it is not a fully self-sufficient economy, at least insofar as the villagers do not produce their clothing and iron implements and have to depend on a market for exchanging or selling some of their products. As every household produces almost the same materials in almost the same relative proportions, the household is economically autonomous to a large extent. This also explains why there is virtually no internal trade but trade with outside villages or regions through the markets. Even in producing food they are not completely self-sufficient, as they have to incur loans of grains every year from outside the village. Only recently there is some move in some households to become more self-reliant by producing some handicrafts formerly purchased.

To the question whether it is a subsistence economy there is unfortunately no clear statement or definition on this aspect in anthropological studies of primitive economy. Sol Tax note in Guatemala highlands; "The Indians already live above a subsistence level (by their standards); they are certainly working for the luxury of meat as well as for corn, for their church as well as for their food" (p.204). Earlier he notes that the community is able at least to indulge in luxuries beyond needs of food, clothing, and shelter, and that it supports a rather elaborate ritual organization and observance of festivals and stopping of work on these days as also on Sabbath days (p.12). From this approach Tasrā villagers may appear above the "subsistence-level". However, they have their months of semi-privation and dependence upon fruits, roots and tubers. But they have about two months of leisure time, mid-January to mid March, which a Sema shifting cultivator hardly gets in his 12-months cycle of production (Hutton, p.26). The Pāuri Bhuiyān have intelligently added "cash"-earning commodities to the production of food. Living in close proximity to markets they have tried to augment the food supply by exchanging or selling the surplus products, which are however mainly used for these purposes and not primarily for direct consumption. On the other hand, except stick-lac and 'bidi'-leaves other objects grown or collected are all consumption goods, used by the Pāuri themselves.

We may here consider another approach with profit. T. Lynn Smith defines a subsistence or self-sufficing farm as one " .. in the operation of which the primary objective is the production of goods and services that will satisfy the wants of the operator and the members of his family. In the management of such a farm production for the market occupies a secondary position, the products sold consisting mainly of surpluses that cannot be utilized by the family.." (Fairchild, p.116). As the products exchanged are mostly to obtain more of the grains already grown to some extent for consumption and very few things are sold for money, it may not be unjustified to call it a subsistence economy from this definition of "subsistence farm". In *Heritage of Conquest* Sol Tax propounds a principle of wide significance for the problem here: "The less self-sufficient a community is, the more money it uses and the more important



trade and markets are" (p.51). Conversely, Tasrā community may be more self-sufficient than a valley village, which on all fair probability uses more money. We may therefore reasonably conclude, that the community has a largely self-sufficient economy and a subsistence economy in Smith's sense, living a life somewhat above the "bare subsistence level". They however, do not produce enough to be completely self-sufficient in food-supply and can never at this stage provide for a non-producing class of rulers, priests or handicraftsmen, although a few men may be wealthy enough to advance petty loans of money or grains.

Withholding of stock for better profits in a scarcity market of the rainy season is not practised. In fact, profit as a whole is never an incentive to production, though in individual transactions villagers may bargain for a better value for his products. However, when raising of stick-lac became grossly uneconomic because of falling prices the practice was totally given up. On the other hand, the crops grown, their rotation and the amount of attention paid to different crops and to preoccupation with secondary sources of income are largely fixed and unvarying. However, the division of labour, even along the sex-lines, is very flexible, the only traditional (not religious) restriction on the women being not to plough, to make a roof of a house or to practise carpentry. Few occupations are tabooed, though a man of Tanugulā who had learnt weaving in the prison was not allowed to practise the art after ritual purification. Moreover, the Pauri Bhuiyān traditionally do not like to do any earthwork and would like to grow their own food rather than be bound as a day-labourer to any outsider in the mines etc. From purely economical point of view the wages of a day-labourer, more so that of a mine worker, may be bringing more money and a higher level of living, but he would not like to leave their socially more satisfying and economically more independent shifting cultivation and other ways of their forest home. In fact, when in 1928-29 Deer & Co. was giving rather handsome wages for felling wood and sawing in Tasrā hills and a cart-track was constructed to connect Ladumdih with Mahulpadā via 'Tasrā', Tasrā villagers did not take advantage of this opportunity to earn more money than they could ever hope to derive by selling all their products. Things were unbelievably cheap at that time in terms of money. Judged from this angle an economist might argue that the economy is traditional and inflexible. The large number of rituals which must be performed before undertaking many economic operations may only thus corroborate his view of the traditional character of the economy. But individual experiments with some new crops, resumption of stick-lac culture as the prices steadily rose during the last world war, taking to some handicrafts turned out by low castes or tribes, cultivation in terraces, and even growing other crops in a first-year swidden has the usual ones- all this goes to show that there is a great room for adjustments even within the framework of an apparently traditional economy. Their technology and related ideas are traditional and primitive, but not very far apart from what obtains in the valley. On the contrary, they have improved upon the plough by attaching ropes to lengthen the distance between the cattle and the man behind so that any



rocky outcrop may be side-tracked. Thus, if the economy is traditional, it is nonetheless a crystallized form of past experimentation in some spheres.

Another aspect of the economy remains only to be mentioned. We have already seen how frequently they undertake reciprocal, cooperative and communal activities in economic life. Besides these, land and other natural resources, so vital for the cultivation and collecting economy, are not privately owned, though the principle of inheritable use and right of first occupation in scarcer types of land are recognized and valuable jack-fruit trees are privately owned. Other lands and natural resources are held by the village community within the boundaries as a corporate body, though the 'Parjā' have less say in the matter of disposal of these resources and the 'Mātiāli' have an upper hand by way of *jus primi occupantis*. Such holding has been called "cooperated village ownership". The system makes possible a reasonably equitable distribution of resources and in case of scarce garden lands there is a good deal of sharing or using with permission. Thus economically, almost an egalitarian society with reasonably equal basic economic opportunity for all has emerged, although at least in theory there is a dominant and compact clan-section as a ruling stratum in the village.

Thus we find the economy which the Pāuri as a ruling stratum in the village with evidently much experimentation and ingenuity has stood them in good stead in a tolerably adequate adjustment with forces social, natural, and supernatural.

### C. SHIFTING CULTIVATION: A WAY OF LIFE?

Dr. Elwin comments on the attachment of the Hill Saora to their cultivation thus: "For the Saoras cultivation is something more than just a means of getting food to eat. It is a whole way of Life" (p.315). though it is not clear from the context he perhaps means both shifting cultivation and terrace-agriculture by the word "cultivation". Earlier he notes: "The Saoras, unlike the Baigas, are rather inarticulate about their axe-cultivation; my impression is that it has become an economic rather than a cultural activity" (p.313). Dr. Elwin is famous for his assertion that shifting cultivation is a way of life, especially among the Baiga. If he means now as in the last quotation that among the Baiga it is rather a "cultural activity" and among the Hill Saora rather than economic activity, it does not clarify what he actually stresses in a "way of life" or a "cultural activity".

In a trial definition of the phrase "way of life" in the Internal Social Science Bulletin (pp.334-6), 1956, it is noted, "when the meaning becomes almost identical with 'cultural', the term 'whole way of life' or 'total way of life' is frequently used". It is not clear whether Dr. Elwin really means total culture by the phrase "a whole way of life" in the first quotation. To quote the Bulletin further, "The term 'way of life', by itself, is used most often in anthropology, when the distinctive, coherent and viable qualities of the culture of a particular society are meant to be emphasized. It expresses these qualities more distinctly than the variously used culture' and this, presumably,

is why it has gained favour." However these definitions and Dr. Elwin's assertion have not yet pointed out what is exactly meant when one says, "Shifting cultivation is a way of life among this tribe." This I have attempted to do in my trial definition (see p.12).

Taking first the settlement pattern in Tasrā we do find certain direct correlation with shifting cultivation. Thus, menfolk living in swiddens for about 3 months in watch-huts, women usually joining them at day-time, and shifting the village- site every ten years until recently, were customs born of the necessity to meet the requirements of shifting cultivation. But the clustered type of settlement in a village is not, however, traceable to influence of shifting cultivation. The latter seems to impose a pattern of dispersed settlement with houses in swiddens as among the Lamet (Izikowitz, p.83) and the Miji (Mahapatra and Mahapatra, 1956). It might, however, be argued that the need for cooperation at the time of weeding or wood-cutting or harvesting, when a large labour force is necessary, has a lot to do with the Bhuiyāñ habit of living in clustered villages. But we do not find any regular communal help on these occasions in swidden-work, rather each household fends for itself with occasional recourse to ad hoc cooperation via "reciprocal cooperative labour". Having the latter mode and not a fixed group of labour exchange may be explained rather due to shifting of households from village to village, especially in case of the 'Parjā', than due to shifting cultivation as such.

In the socio- economic life the most significant influence of shifting cultivation is in the field of land-tenure. As land has no value except through rotational use and through the employment of man-power of a household resident in the village, there is no private property in land, but "corporate village ownership" in all lands besides private rights and "inheritable use" in scarcer types of land, which are not used or swiddens. As shifting cultivation is not productive enough to support a class of specialists like non- producing craftsmen or ruling priestly families, the society is rather egalitarian. Similarly, hazards of shifting cultivation does not help building a wealthy class. The wealth saved may be swept away by a bad harvest next year. But the basic units of the society like families, lineages, sibs or clans, the dormitories etc. are however not structurally affected in any conceivable way by shifting cultivation. Similarly, however important shifting cultivation might have been as the principal means of livelihood the principles of distribution and exchange are not in any way decided by it, though the products from the main items of exchange and distribution. Some products like prized 'dhunk' and 'suturi' beans, 'jālī' millets etc. may be exchanged between those villages where they grow well and those others not so blessed. However, that pulses and oilseeds are grown to be exchanged into paddy or rice in the main, shows how the contents of exchange have been determined by the particular type of rotation of crops in swiddens. Similarly, because of the predominant position of shifting cultivation in the subsistence system and as 'Pāuri' religion is much influenced by economic considerations, the priests dealing with the deities in the village, directly concerned with shifting cultivation, are ranked higher than the priest for 'Bharālī Pāt', the god of the 'Batisbār' organization.



This brings us to considering the role of shifting cultivation in the village rituals and festivals. But of a total of 28 annual festivities 14 are more or less implicated in shifting cultivation, and the village Foundation Day, 'Dhuliāni', 'Asādhī Pujā' and 'Nangakhīā' – the most important rituals, are connected directly with it. Besides two of the occasional rituals, for rains and against the pests of paddy, are also observed for better swidden cultivation. The major first fruits to be offered to the village deities are all products of swidden. The late paddy grown in a few terraces are not offered to deities as first-fruits, nor the ritual of threshing-ground is observed in a terrace-plot, but in a paddy swidden.

The most important crops in shifting cultivation being cereals there is a clear harvest-season from October to December, the predominating late paddy ripening in December. This short harvest-season is the peak-hour of cultivation, something like a climax in a drama of the nature, the deities and demons, and the villagers (of among the Maya, Red-field, 1955, p.28). After the harvest comes the season of recreation and rest for about 2 months before taking up swidden clearing again. If shifting cultivation fixes the rhythm of work, it sets the pace of leisure. Themes of swidden cultivation inform many songs, certain operations in a swidden motivate some mimetic dances; on the other hand, so far as I know, no games are played touching on the theme of shifting cultivation. Needs of this mode of livelihood, however, restrict the season of marriage, which as a rule comes after the harvest and before sowing and ploughing.

In the above-mentioned analysis the economically rather egalitarian character of the society does not directly follow from the "corporate village ownership" of land alone, but also from their subsistence economy with rather self-sufficient households, which cannot afford to neglect collecting food-materials, because of rather poor productivity of shifting cultivations.

It seems there can be no unequivocal answer to our question whether shifting cultivation is a way of life in terms of my definition in village Tasrā, until a valley village like Derulā, depending on both shifting cultivation and settled agriculture, is brought into the picture, or still better, a Pāuri village with only agriculture and no swiddens is comparatively studied. As I am not equipped to go into this question in such details, which I hope to take up on another occasion, I may be content to point out here that in some respects shifting cultivation may be regarded as a way of life in Tasrā village. This is obvious so far as shifting cultivation is the principal means of livelihood in the village and the chief concern in the rituals.

## PART – II

### THE VILLAGE FACES THE REGION

So long we have described affairs of the village with little reference to the wider region of which it forms a part, and to its multifarious ties with similar units within the region. This region, however, is not an easily demarcated geographical or even administrative area. It changes its boundaries according to the context, as will be obvious in the discussion below. At its widest it comprises of the whole Pāuri Bhuiyān habitat along with the village which attend the markets within or on the fringe of the region; at its least spread it consist of the villages of Kumudih Parganā. The nature of bonds with villages in these regional unit will be discussed one by one.

#### 1. A UNIT OF 'BAR' ORGANIZATION

'Bār' is a traditional inter-village organization in Bonai for social and ritual purposes. Even today it is important, and sits occasionally to re-admit ex-communicated Pāuri individuals after ritual purification into the society. There is a god or goddess sacred to each 'Bār'.

At the time of Roys's visit in early 1930's he was reported that in 'Bāro-Khanda Bār' 12 villages, Tasarā, Keosarā, Bhutṛa, Rāotā, Simuā, Barabhuiñ, Julu, Fuljhar etc, were included, worshipping 'Bhairi-Pāt' (Roy p.98). the smallest 'Bār' he found was 'Tin-Khanda-Bār' consisting of only 3 villages; Derulā, Kunu and Kundlā (p.93). His information seems to be incorrect in so far as he associated Tasarā, our village under discussion, with some villages like Rāotā or Rantā, and Bhutṛa far away to the north. However, he mentioned rightly that Tasarā worshipped 'Bhairi-Pāt', actually, 'Bharālī Pāt', along with other village. The fact that in his time there were two 'Bār' organization known as 'Bārakhanda Bār' might have induced some confusion on his part. To-day Rantā, Bhuturā and Kendsarā etc. are in a new 'Bār' called 'Parbat Bār' or 'Hill Bār'.

The southern 'Bārakhanda Bār' including Tasrā was originally composed of 12 villages. One village, Ḍālsuāñ, was given to the ex-State of Bamra about a generation ago in border adjustments. That is why in a reorganization some new villages were brought into the 'Bār' on Bonai side. Kuṇu, Kundlā, Derulā, who were formerly in 'Palmarā Bār' were prevailed upon to join 'Bārakhanda Bār' for worshipping 'Bharālī Pāt' and both Kundlā and Derulā got some privileges in this worship. The 'Palmarā Bār' today consists of 12 villages, 6 of them being hill-villages.

The southern 'Bārkhanda Bār' underwent another change when in 1948-49 in a regional tribal meeting at Kumudih it was decided to come down and settle in colonies started at Daleisarā and Dhokāmudā and also to enlarge 'Bārakhanda Bār' (with already more than 12 villages) and give the new 'Bār' the name of 'Batisbār'. In this 'Batisbār' are grouped Tasra, Burhābhuiñ (south), Burhākhaman, Kuṇu, Kundlā, Derulā, Keta, Tungādhuā, Mādālādarah, Maṭikhani,



Barcuā, Jagatī, Mahulpadā, Kumudih, Rengālī, Jinkaḷā, Dīmirimundā, and the colonies started from 1949-50, even when the parent-village may be included in another 'Bār' as in the cases of colonies from Tal Giniā in 'Palmarā Bār'.

Thus, we find that the 'Bār' organization far from disintegrating was reshaped from time to time to take cognizance of new social, ritual and administrative realities. It is also noteworthy that not merely the villages inhabited exclusively by the Pāuri but also other villages like Mahulpadā, Rengālī, Kumudih, Jinkaḷā, Mātikhani, and Barcuā were also associated in the 'Bār' organization for specified purposes. The Pāuri Bhuiyān residing in most of these composite village could associate themselves both ritually and socially, while the non-Pāuri population could easily take part only in the annual worship of 'Bharālī Pāt' called Jātāḷa puḷā every Magisira (November- December) month. Two villages by turn supply two goats for the sacrifice every year.

Occasions in which the 'Bār' may sit to readmit a man and his family out-casted for

- (i) cows somehow killed in the shed or under the yoke, during house-fire, or even accidentally in a swidden in the dark being mistaken for a wild animal;
- (ii) death of a pregnant woman;
- (iii) Killing a woman by over beating or otherwise;
- (iv) for keeping a woman of a tribe or case (a Gour Woman in 17p, Tasrā), from whom water may be accepted;
- (v) for keeping an elder brother (even elder male cousin)'s widow; and lastly,
- (vi) on the occasion of a person's return from the prison.

Being outcasted is a great social, ritual, and above all mental deprivation. Nobody would take even water or fire from the persons out casted, who are debarred from attending the rituals or sharing the public water-source, and nobody would come to help in removing a corpse in the family. When he is socio-ritually readmitted into the community by undergoing ritual purification and feeding the members of the 'Bār' organization, then only is he restored full status of a Pāuri man, friend, relative, of course, he is aided by his friends and relatives for the outlay on this occasion.

The functionaries of 'Batisbar' are: 'Jāti Beherā' (Barber of the Caste), 'Dehuri' or Priests, 'Dandāsī' (Cook for the public Kitchen), 'Bābhūṇa' (Cook of the 'Bābhūṇa' Kitchen), 'Dākua' or Messenger, and the 'Dhubā-Beherā, or Washerman. The first three posts are hereditary in the sense that a capable son or brother always takes over the function. Most risky is the post of 'Jāti Beherā', as it is believed, the sin or 'pātak' attaches itself to him when ritually washed off from the condemned. Sara Beherā from the Beherā 'barnsa' from Burhābhuiṇ (south) at present discharges this function. Though Pathāni, the Tasrā priest of 'Bharālī Pāt', is reported to be the

priest of 'Batisbār' on the occasion of socio-ritual purification, there appears to be another special priest in 'Palmarā Bār' for the latter purpose. The 'Dandāsi' is from the Dehuri 'bamsa' of Kundlā, Budulā by name. The villages and the lineages supplying these functionaries are fixed for many generations and are a carry-over from the older 'Bārakhandā Bār'. The post of 'Bābhūṇa', so called after the custom of wearing a sacred thread like the Brahman priests of the Hindu, may be selected from any village of the 'Bār' and a senior man may be given the job on the spot. In 'Palmarā Bār' the 'Bābhūṇa' post, however, has been hereditary at least for 2 generations from a priestly 'bamsa'. The 'Dākua' or messenger for conveying the information on the date and venue of holding 'Bār' meeting is similarly an ad hoc selection, usually from among senior men of the village on account of which or at which the 'Bār' meeting is to take place. The washerman is from Mahulpadā, Dayā by name, of the Hindu washerman caste. All these functionaries get some money as their dues besides the communal meal. The washerman gets the old clothes of the outcasted man. The priest gets the fowls sacrificed, perhaps in addition to money.

### 'Udhrā' or Socio-ritual Restoration Ceremony

The village Assembly of the condemned helps him in contacting the officials of the 'Bār' and the constituent villages. On the appointed day the priest sacrifices fowls to 'Dharam' and some other (not recorded) deities praying for remission of all sin ('Pātak'). The 'Jāti Beherā' functions like a barber and shaves the head of the condemned bald. The outcaste then takes bath; in case of death of pregnant wife this shaving and bathing goes on for eight times. He leaves his clothes and other articles worn in the water. For 7 times the "barber" sprinkles water on him from a pot with copper coin, leaves of sacred 'tulsi' and 'bel' plants, and cow-dung; 'añlā' and 'gandhā' aromatic roots must be rubbed on his body before he takes a bath. The urine of cow is also to be drunk a little. A silver coin may be put in the pot of water with copper coin.

Meanwhile, the 'Dandāsi' with help of the assembled participants, at least two or three sent by the Village Assembly of each constituent village, arrange fuels, water, leaf-vessels, pots, and cooks the food given by the condemned for the public or 'Desa'. This kitchen is called 'Desa-Khandā'. The 'Bābhūṇa' cooks for 'Bābhūṇa-Khandā', and he must wear a sacred thread while cooking and serving. Usually a goat or two and at least 40-60 Kilo rice are prepared in these two kitchens. Only the older men and those who do not conduct any worship or rituals in their villages may take the food from 'Desa Khandā' and this food, known as 'Udhrāni Bhāta' or "the rice for ritual restoration", is touched in a heap by the condemned. Those who worship in their villages take food only from 'Bābhūṇa Khandā', the condemned man himself taking this 'Bābhūṇa Bhāta' at first. Partaking of 'Udhrāni Bhāta' means sharing in sin or 'Pātak' of the condemned so that he becomes ritually of an equal status with the public. But the functioning priests are carefully spared the risk of defiling them and thus rendering them less effective, even revolting, to the deities they worship.



After this afternoon feeding the most important symbolic ritual of readmission takes place. All the elders sit in a circle. The restored man takes a 'Kāhālī' or 'pikā' or native cigar made with leaf-cover and sends it round for the others to smoke from it. This 'Kāhālikhiā' establishes the social equality of the individual and his family concerned.

In the evening he cooks and served what is known as 'Desa-Bhāta' or food for the public, and all, irrespective of ritual status, share in this feasting. It is needless to add that much native beer, contributed by the affected household, is consumed on the occasion. Usually some members of adjoining 'Bār' are present as witness as also guests from villages nearby.

## 2. A UNIT OF BONAI PĀURI KINDREDNESS

Though they refer to Bamra as their ancestral place, Tasrā 'Mātiālī' section and the villagers in general count themselves as Bonai Bhuiyāñ. They have certain politico ritual responsibilities as any other Pāuri Bhuiyāñ village in Bonai to supply goats every year to the deities in the Raja's palace at Bonaigarh; he administrative and political decisions of bonai, say for restricting shifting cultivation or other forest freedom, stick-lac contracts, or contracts for 'bidī' leaves, impinge on them equally as Pāuri Bhuiyāñ living in the forests, and these are different from what obtains in Pal Lahara, Bamra and Keonjhar, even during the days of the Rajas till the 1948 'Merger'. Underneath these important but superficial bonds imparting them a sense of belonging together as Bonai Bhuiyāñ are some historical, cultural and institutional facts of great significance. For example, Bonai Bhuiyāñ had helped establish the present dynasty of ruling chiefs and they claim that formerly the land belonged to them under the Lord 'Sāuñta' of Kulipos. Water was taken from their hands by all higher castes since the installation of the dynasty. According to others this has been in vogue since about 110 years when Dayānidhi Deo was ruling. Afterwards the Bhuiyāñ of Keonjhar and other areas were promoted to this ritual status. The Bonai Pāuri also distinguish themselves in many cultural details, especially from Keonjhar Pāuri, as Roy has often noted and as my informants sometimes pointed out. Unlike in Keonjhar there are 6 'Pirha', into which political-cum-administrative divisions the Pāuri villages are assigned, each under a feudal lord or 'Sardār', unlike Pāuri villages in Pal Lahara also divided into 2 'Pirha' similarly under 'Sardār' or feudal lords, and unlike in Bamra where no multi-village organization of permanence obtains, the Pāuri villages of Bonai alone are organized into 'Bār' units for social ritual purposes. No political interests are evident in the 'Bār' organization contrary to Roy's unfounded assertion (p.93, 98). His comparison of 'Bār' to the 'Pārha' organization of the Mundā and Ho (p.93 f.n.) will be therefore more correct if applied to the 'Pirha' organization of Keonjhar and Pal Lahara. But it is strange that he missed mentioning an important socio-political regional council, called 'Mahādesa' or "great assembly". He, however, hints that such a development was already taking place when he mentions (p.98) "... the Bār Pancāyat also assemble to devise means for the redress of any public grievances of the Bār or of the tribe ". This 'Mahādesa' is alleged to be an old institution in Pal Lahara and Bamra also.

I have come across two sittings of 'Mahādesa', once in 148-49, another time in 1953.

In 1948-49 the 'Mahādesa' sat at Kumudih, 2 kilometers south of Mahulpadā. The all-important question of governmental insistence on stopping shifting cultivation and on settlement in the colonies started in the neighbourhood at Daleisarā-Dhokāmundā was to be decided. It touched on the Pauri Bhuiyān of Bonai in particular, and all Pauri Bhuiyān in general, who has a great stake in shifting cultivation. Especially as it was since long restricted in the neighbouring ex-States of Pal Lahara, Keonjhar and Bamra, Bonai had been till then a refuge for landless shifting cultivators from the other ex-States. So there came important representatives from all Pauri areas of Bonai including the Kuirā Parganā in the northeast Bonai, where also similar plans of the Government were maturing. Moreover, representatives from Keonjhar, Pal Lahara and Bamra came to attend this 'Mahādesa' being invited by the Bonai Bhuiyān. In this meeting the decision is reported to be in favour of setting in the colonies, although the actual timing of coming down was left to the responsibility of each village. Also the formation of 'Batisbār' including Tasrā and the colonies to be started was also decided upon.

At 'Badbil' a hamlet of Derulā village, the 'Mahādesa' sat in 1953 with 2 or 3 elders from each of the villages of 'Palmarā Bār' and 'Batisbār' and other 'Bār' of Bonai along with representatives from Bamra, Pal Lahara and Keonjhar Pauri Bhuiyān. At this 'Mahādesa' many important decisions of social economic life were taken. Many of the decisions were already current practice in Keonjhar, Bamra and Pal Lahara.

- (i) The hiring charges for a bullock of cow were now reduced from 5 'Khandi' (200 Kilo) and 4 'Khandi' (160 Kilo) paddy to 4 'Khandi' and 3 'Khandi' (120 Kilo) paddy, respectively.
- (ii) Formerly the rate of interest on grains was 50% (compound) within the village and 100% (compound) outside the village. It was made everywhere a flat rate of 50% (compound).
- (iii) Formerly in the "negotiated" or 'magā' marriage the bride-price consisted of 3 heads of cattle (one for bride's father, another for her mother's brother and the third for her father's younger brother) and rice 10-12 'Khandi' (400-480 Kilo) besides clothes, goats etc. From now on it should be only 2 heads of cattle, 200 Kilo rice, 2 clothes, and a castrated he-goat, besides 30-40 Kilo rice and one he goat for feasting by both parties.
- (iv) In a marriage by capture, if the parents of the girl have given their consent, there will be no fines. In other cases the fine will be 40 Kilo rice and one he goat, and 30-40 Kilo rice and one he-goat for feasting both the parties. The fine will also have to be shared by both the villages in food.
- (v) In the marriage by elopement or 'dharipalā' only native beer 4 and 10-20 Kilo rice for feasting the parents of the girl are to be given.



However, in case of (iv) and (v) the practice in Tasrā and possibly other villages was already before 1953 conforming to these recommendations. 'Palmarā Bār' villages did not agree to some of the recommendations. They were directly concerned in a marriage affair of a son from Uskulā village in 'Palmar Bār' and a girl from Deri in Keonjhar.

The 'Mahādesa' continued its deliberations at Phuljhar, an important village of 'Palmarā Bār'. Many villages from Keonjhar had sent representatives to this 'Mahādesa'. A school teacher, Sāma of Jātra village in Keonjhar sent a letter for deciding on only Rs. 12.00 as bride-price and on abstaining from 'Cāngu'-dance and marriage by capture. Althroughout Kuirā Pāuri Bhuiyāñ did not come to attend this 'Mahādesa' at Badbil or at Phuljhar. The reason given by my informants is that the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ of Mahulpadā region wanted to follow the ways of Kuirā Bhuiyāñ through decisions at this 'Mahādesa' and hence their attending it was unnecessary. The results of the 'Mahādesa' sitting at Phuljhar are not known to me.

We must note here the following two important points; firstly, the 'Bār' organization is something like a federation of villages in Bonai for social and ritual purposes, while the 'Mahādesa' is a loose confederation of the villages of Bonai for arriving at decisions on social, economic and political matters as they arise from time to time, though the villages of a 'Bār' may function like a unit directly under the 'Mahādesa', either in attendance (Palmarā) or in absence (Kuirā); secondly, the association of representative elders from Keonjhar, Bamra and Pal Lahara, thus comprehending almost the whole habitat of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, approaches the size and the significance of inter-state tribal assemblies of the Plains Bhuiyāñ (of. Roy. Pp.101-102).

### 3. A UNIT OF PĀURI BHUIYĀÑ SOCIETY

The village Tasrā is known as a Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, shortly Pāuri, village. Although one or two families of cattleherd 'Gour' caste lived in the village at one time or another the village is by type an exclusive one. They observe various ritual and social distance from all the castes and tribes residing in the region, believe in the superiority of their religion, as the Hindu and others living in the valley have to worship their village deities, -all except 'Sarañi Pāt' being Bhuiyāñ, with the help of Pāuri priests, believe themselves to be the real "lord of the hills" in the whole Pāuri habitat, the other tribes and castes being their 'Parjā' or "subjects", though now infinitely more powerful. As they have very wide marriage ties among the Pāuri of the ex-States of Keonjhar, Pal Lahara, Bamra and of course, Bonai, and as they have oftener contacts through markets as well as closer contacts through receiving immigrants from all these ex-States, this consciousness of Pāuri unity is not born of imaginative realization but of living contact and sharing experiences. Moreover 'Mahādesa' sessions bring together representatives from most areas of the Pāuri habitat and thus strengthens Pāuri solidarity. Through this consciousness of Pāuri unity they distinguish themselves not only from other castes and tribes but also from other section of the Bhuiyāñ population, of which they know.

#### 4. A UNIT OF 'PARGANĀ' ORGANIZATION

During the Raja's regime for several generations there were 3 'Parganā' or administrative circles in Bonai covering the Pāuri habitat. These were Kuirā Parganā, Pāuri Parganā and Kumudih Parganā, the last one being the smallest. Tasrā belongs to Kumudih Parganā, which composed of 9 old villages: Kumudih, Jagati, Mahulpadā, Derulā, Rengāli, Jinkalā, bārki, Lungā and Tasrā. The other villages like Burhabhuiñ, Burhākhaman, Mātikhani, Barcuā, and Tare were surely administered by the head of the 'Parganā', called "Sardār" or Lord. As this Kumudih Parganā was composed of composite village of various castes and tribes and the Gond were one of the earliest occupants of the valley, an influential Gond of Kumudih was made "Sardār" by the Raja. It became a hereditary office in the same 'bamsa'.

It was Sardār's responsibility to supply rations when the Raja or big officers came hunting or on tours, to arrange for compulsory labour for roads, forestry or hunting expeditions etc., to realize and deposit the land revenue of settled villages at Bahaigarh, and to hear disputes among the villages and in general to preserve law and order. I am not sure whether Tasrā villagers and other Pāuri villages in Bonai had to send their plough-tax as nominal rent to the Raja direct or through the "Sardār". At any rate, the "Sardār" levied men for compulsory labour and rations on villages under his jurisdiction and Tasrā had to deliver its share.

'Parganā' in Bonai and 'Pirha' in Keonjhar and Pal Lahara may be likened to feudal domains in some respects, though there was no class of serfs.

'Bharāli Pāt', though a tribal god, has since long been worshipped by all villages in Kumudih Parganā, and not merely by the Pāuri belonging to the local 'Bār' organization.

#### 5. A UNIT OF "GRĀM PANCĀYAT" ORGANIZATION

The "Grām Pancāyat" or council of villages at Mahulpadā has 42 villages including 11 colonies under its jurisdiction. It has been started in the hope of extending representative forms of local self-government into the rural areas of Orissa. The Organization started to function in late 1953 when elections were held to elect one Member from each village and the "Sarpanc" or the Head of "Pancāyat" from among the Members. Then there was another election in 1957, when I heard the electors were bribed and given drinks for supporting candidates in some "Pancāyat" especially for the post of "Sarpanc". All Members and the "Sarpanc" are voluntary office-holders and are in some cases, at least among the Pāuri, illiterate. There is literate secretary of the organization appointed by the Government to keep the records and advise the "Pancāyat" on procedural matters. The "Sarpanc" at Mahulpadā was the village Headman of Mahulpadā, the wealthiest and also the most influential man in Mahulpadā area. He comes of the industrious, clever Casā caste. Tasrā men regarded the call for participation as another requirement of the Government but with a difference. This time it was going to be an association



not with big officials but with men of similar status from other villages, Pāuri and non-Pāuri, in the neighbourhood. They were convinced that they must send some influential speaker to this "Pancāyat" where their interests could at least be safeguarded in cooperation with other Bhuiyān Members, if nothing extraordinary good was going to happen.

Nobody could foretell how the "Pancāyat" would function. An examination of the proceedings of the "Pancāyat" sittings between 5.3.1954 and 13.11.1955 produced the following broad outline of its activities. The meetings were held at least once and often twice a month. Only 3 sittings on 1.5.1955, 29.5.1955 and 19.6.1955, were not held due to lack of quorum. This is one of the busiest season of ploughing and sowing both in the hills (add also burning swiddens) and in the valley.

The matters discussed during the period are noted here only to give an idea of the range of interest of the 'Pancāyat' however guided, gooded and ever coerced by official memorandand visits from Bonaigarh it might have been.

**Social Matters:** It heard and took decision on disputes arising out of divorce and bride-price. These cases came from non-Bhuiyān villages in the "Pancāyat".

**Economic Matters:** These were the most frequent and most important disputes ever tried in the "Pancāyat". Disputes arising out of debts, leasing of agricultural land, irrigation channels etc. There were two disputes in which Derulā valley-village the Pāuri Bhuiyān were involved. In one case between Pāuri parties the conflict was resolved by the "Pancāyat", while in the other case between Pāuri and a Gour caste man the dispute was sent up the governmental Court at Bonaigarh after being unsuccessful in arriving at a compromise.

**Welfare Matters:** The Members of the "Pancāyat" were explained and exhorted to propagate the use of better seeds, chemical fertilizers and new crops. The village Level Worker, working under the National Extension Service Block of Lahuniparā, and the governmental pamphlets supplied the initiative. Similarly discussed were the need for more roads, wells and irrigation-dams, the cheaper loans offered by 'Dhāngolā' or Paddy-Granary under the Government. A water-pump was made available by the Government and the appointment of a Mechanic at the cost of the "Pancāyat" to serve the interests of a few sugar-cane growers in Jagati-Mahulpadā was also discussed. A dispute arising out of the need for reclaiming fallow land by making it into terraces could not be solved by the village Assembly of Derulā. The disputants, both Pāuri, came before the "Pancāyat". Gift of labour ("Shramadan") for 4 days in a year was also demanded of all the villages. There was even a proposal on record to purchase a radio to be stationed at Mahulpadā. I heard also lighting arrangement for Mahulpadā, a small village of 202 souls (in 1951), were considered by the "Sarpanc" as a possible undertaking of the "Pancāyat".

**Educational Matters:** For enforcing regular attendance by school students some fines were imposed and villagers were again and again asked to come to work for the school. The fines could not be realized and volunteers for school work did not turn up. A school at Dhokāmunda colony was granted Rs. 100.00 for fencing the compound and for planting fruit



trees. Taking care of educational matters is one of the most important duties of the "Pancāyat". Urged by the authorities political education especially on the procedure of voting at state and Federal elections was inculcated into the Members.

**Managerial Matters:** The "Pancāyat" manages a fruit garden at Phuljhar, mainly with orange groves, and a member, Pāuri Bhuiyān, was alleged to have misappropriated funds raised from the garden. The weekly market at Mahulpadā was under the direct charge of the "Sarpanc" and every man or woman who brought anything had to pay a copper or two, in case of permanent booths, more, as tax to the "Pancāyat". Similarly a contractor at Nagariā market raises the tax for an annual consideration for the "Pancāyat".

**Miscellaneous :** The "Pancāyat" also urged the Members to send data on birth and death in their respective villages. We have seen how rarely a dispute or problem of a Pāuri village or of the Pāuri Bhuiyān were handled by the "Pancāyat". Only 3 disputes from the valley village Đeruġā involved the Pāuri Bhuiyān and arose out of conditions of settled agriculture. A Pāuri Bhuiyān in the valley at Phuljhar, a Member of the "Pancāyat" at that, was involved in a case of misappropriation of funds. The Pāuri Bhuiyān, especially in the hills, have rather few serious disputes and have a tendency to decide them there, even to cover them up especially from the Police and outsiders. Only in the case of Đeruġā village with settled agricultural lands as private property and having to contend against the land-snatchers of Gour, Casā, Gond and others through easy leasing were the disputes brought before the "Pancāyat".

However, the "Pancāyat" offers the Pāuri Bhuiyān the unique opportunity to sit on judgement over matters of the other castes of settling in the region and thereby to learn the problems and the prospects of settling in the valley. If it brings them out of their parochial hill-fastnesses it also threatens to interfere with their village autonomy and their leisure or work by increasing the obligations for free labour. The Members are already losing some working days due to frequent sittings. However, the "Sarpanc" obtaining some contracts from the Government for making roads or wells may not be feeling the pinch. Moreover, the "Pancāyat" has already shown tendency to be utilized for meeting sectional interests of agriculturists of Mahulpadā and Jagati.

## 6. A UNIT OF ADAMANT SHIFTING CULTIVATORS

Since 1945 the Government of Bonai ex-State was determined to stop shifting cultivation in the hills and settle the shifting cultivators in colonies in the forest clearings in the nearby valleys. Towards that end (besides perhaps to keep the Pāuri loyal to the Raja as against the nationalist anti-Raja movement of the time) the Raja appointed 'Sardār' or regional Headman over a number of Pāuri villages to coax and convince the Pāuri Bhuiyān of the prospects of settled villages in the valley. Towards that end the 'Sardār' and Pāuri elders were called to Bonaigarh for attending a celebration called 'Darabār', when presents were given to the Raja



and were received from the Raja. The Raja and his officer exhorted them to come down and engage in settled agriculture. At that time dances and sports and exhibition of jungle and agricultural products were also held and the Pāuri were feasted. After the merging of the ex-State in Orissa the efforts were intensified. By 1949-50 some hill-villagers were brought down and 4 colonies started (Patnaik, GRI, 1957, p.7). It will be remembered that at this time there was great alarm in the hills and the rumour of one's being imprisoned in the event of cutting swidden was in the air. In 1951-52 only 11 Tasrā families came down and settled in Guhālabandhā colony. Still when I came in 1953 the forest officials pointed out to Tasrā as one of the most adamant villages in sticking to shifting cultivation and not coming down.

Meanwhile they held an oracle and men, one of them from Tasrā, possessed by the god or 'Batisbār' and Kumudih 'Pargaṇā', namely 'Bharāli Pāt', announced that in the event of Tasrā people leaving the hills the god would eat" (that is, tigers would kill) all in Mahulpadā region, both Pāuri Bhuiyān and other castes and tribes. At the time of my visit in 1954 the fear of this doom was often expressed before me. Nevertheless, by allowing a small section of the villagers with only 2 junior 'Māṭiāli' families they not only wanted to have a foretaste of the fate of the colonists and to reap the advantage of making extensive swiddens in the first years of settlement, but also to be able to blunt off the government's pressure on them while the main body stuck to the hills. The hills remained a secure reserve for the exigency of unsatisfactory conditions in the colonies. That the latter assumption was not far from their thoughts is evident from the fact that in 1954 a swidden was ear-marked for one 'Māṭiāli' household from Guhālabandhā daughter-colony. Similarly, in 1957 two other colonies had cut swiddens in Kuṇu and Kundlā, their ancestral hill-villages, but they could not cultivate there because of governmental threats.

Tasrā was, however, not alone in its adamant sticking to shifting cultivation. Uskulā, Sasa (Soso), Hātisul, Tirjāng, Kiri, Rugudih, Tilkulā, Rantā, Raṇḍā, Nasi, Kendsarā, Sareikālā, Rāisuān, Naḍāpāni, Naḍiādh, Bātgān and a few houses in Tare, and perhaps a few other Pāuri villages of Bonai, were still in their hill fastnesses in 1954 and most, even in 1957. At any opportunity of coming together at 'Mahādesa' meetings or at markets etc. the common problems and new developments were discussed. These villages did not work as a body, but if any of these villages were coming down to settle, the Tasrā Bhuiyān as also others felt as much concerned about the imminent fate of their own. This consciousness of a common imminent danger and exchange of anxious thoughts made them feel and act as so many bastions of shifting cultivation, fighting, as they knew by 1954, a lost battle.

## 7. INTERDEPENDENCE through MARRIAGE and MARKETS

While discussing migration (pp.24-27) we have seen already how many men and women have come to settle in Tasrā as a result of marriage and such marital relationship have spread up to

distant Kuāñr in Keonjhar in the south-east, Saḍung (Keonjhar) in the north, Saiḍā near Kalā (Kolā) in Bamra in the south-west and Paṭṭāmunda in Bonai in the north-west. Similarly, interdependence with castes and tribes in a wide region is reflected through frequenting markets at Mahulpadā in Bonai, Kalā in Bamra, Tarmākānth in Keonjhar and occasionally visiting Kājakalā (Kadokala) and even at Keonjhargarh. These last two markets being far-off necessitate spending nights on the way with distant relatives, thus reinforcing social contacts. Small parties of women from Keonjhar and Bamra also come to Tasrā for exchange of surplus products. Thus the ties of marriage are sustained by contacts at, or on the way to, markets and lead to further marriage-alliances. The net result is something like what Oscar Lewis very aptly describes a "rural cosmopolitanism" (p.320), which is characteristic of Indian villages in contrast to the endogamous Mexican municipio. Ties through markets and taking loans from other castes and tribes, with whom ritual friendships are not rare, or "jajmāni" or fixed patronage relationship with the washerman at Mahulpadā somewhat broadens the ethnic basis of this "rural cosmopolitanism". But as within the village so inside the region the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ have hitherto communicated overwhelmingly between themselves and only casually with outsiders.

The above survey of the place of the village in the region around it must have clearly shown how the village feels and often acts as a unit in various organized and unorganized groups of villages. In the 'Bār', 'Mahādesa' and Bonai Pāuri consciousness, and lastly, in the general Pāuri society the village forms a centre in concentric circles of increasing dimensions. Other sections of Bhuiyāñ and other castes and tribes remain outside the circles. Then came the 'Parganā' organization enclosing both Pāuri and non-Pāuri communities and the recent "Grām Pancāyat" of a still bigger scale, covering functions greater in number and variety of impact. The schematic representation shows the relative position of Tasrā in the region. The relationship based on adamant sticking to the hills and interdependence through markets and marriage are not demonstrated here for the fear of complicating the model, adapted from those of Hanssen and Evans-Pritchard in Redfield's *The Little Community* (p.117). bonaigarh, the headquarters of Bonai Subdivision in Sundargarh District of Orissa, lies outside the region. But Mahulpadā, being an administrative centre, and the seat of "Grām Pancāyat", has frequent and multifarious ties with the administrative town, Bonaigarh. Tasrā, however, sends the plough tax, equivalent to land-tax, to the Government treasury there, and also the religious tribute of a sacrificial goat to the Raja every year.

[The smallest circles represent non-Pāuri villages]



## PART – III

### THE VILLAGE FACES THE FUTURE

#### Recent changes and Modern Trends in South-Eastern Bonai

Unless we take the whole region as reference of our discussion, including in its scope the government colonies, other tribes and caste, activities of the Government, and the possible impact of extensive mining operations spreading from the north, we may not be able to estimate the volume, or discern the directions, of change which are going to toss the villagers off their hill seclusion. In the middle of 1959 the villagers were reported to be already suggesting to the Government suitable localities for their colonization in the valley, countering the Government's original intentions to settle them at Bijāgurā. The Tasrā villagers allege, at Bijāgurā there is not much (good) land and many men are dying; thus it cannot be a good place to settle down. I suspect their complaint about land is on the insufficiency of swidden-worthy forests. They are suggesting Majurnācuni, alternatively Bāndujor, where sidens may be cut extensively for the first three or four years. Thus by 1960 they are expected to come down. Let us pursue their unfolding fate beginning with a glimpse into the changes in the village through about two or three generations.

#### 1. CHANGES in TASRĀ

Perhaps the most significant economic change that occurred in about two or three generations under review was the stopping of growing 'thurki' cotton, a crop of two years, in rocky places in swiddens. Formerly they would collect this cotton and give them to the Pān weaver caste at Mahulpada or Kumudih who made cloths in their handlooms and returned the cloth for some consideration. This was also the system in Kumudih and other valley village, not only in the hills. But the fierce competition of cheap mill-cloth at last broke this whole system of interdependence between the Pān and other castes and tribes. To the extent Tasrā grew cotton for as much cloth as it needed it was more self-sufficient than today and needed much less money. As we have seen under Income and Expenditure the biggest outlay in money is on clothes today.

About 10 terrace-plots of settled agriculture outlay in money is on clothes today. Village and stick-lac has been recently reintroduced as a cash-earner. Selling of 'bidi' leaves is also a post-war source of side-income. After 1948 the compulsory labour exacted by the Raja and his officials was no longer demanded and to that extent they could attend to their leisure or work more. The material demands on their resources from that side similarly are no longer made, though the villagers are loyally sending a goat every year for sacrifices at Bonaigarh. Recently some enterprising men at Tasrā tried to grow a little tapioca, ginger, 'muga' pulses, as others for about 2 generations turned out finer carpentry and basketry and even one is doing haircutting with a whole set of instruments with great skill. These skills were new departures in attainment.

Some new material equipments like cloth umbrellas, hurricane lanterns and aluminium utensils and even soap in rare cases, plastic combs and a few glittering cheap ornaments have found their way up the hill, as also the locks for the door.

Another important change was caused by immigration of two well-to-do families from Khadkā. It must be remembered that these two families were the only 'Parjā' families who were well-to-do at Tasrā. As these families were close relatives of the Headman, the latter's faction got at least material backing. The factions of course came to a split very recently, probably 1949-50.

Apart from the open development of factions another social change was in the disappearance of Maiden's Dormitory as a unified residence unit. The apathy of the villagers to let 'Darabār Bhāḍī' or platform of Assembly Meeting disappear during the last 30 years may point to its lessening importance or impact. In fact, the elders of Tal Tasrā were complaining that the youngmen were not obeying them, and in a particular case the rash youngman was threatened to be brought before the Police at Mahulpadā. Neglect of communal village duties by youngmen and to some extent also by maidens was similarly complained of. But the most important socio-political change was the emergence of a new post, that of Member for Tasrā in Mahulpadā "Grām Pancāyat". Though the post might have been considered as a rival one in authority and official responsibilities to that of the Headman a senior 'Parjā' was recently chosen by the village Assembly. This was the first instance when an important village office was given to a non-'Māṭiālī' man. New opportunity, out of the traditional rut, could bring about this remarkable new step towards sharing of power with 'Parjā'.

In the field of religion and rituals two events have happened. About two generations ago the villagers began celebrating 'Karmā' Festival in Bhuda month (August-September) as among some Mundāri tribes. After 7 years of observance they discontinued it on sacrificing a goat to the deities. The 'Karmā Parab' of Magisir (November-December) was always there, though my informant said the earlier 'Karmā' is the 'real' one. Secondly, since 1957 Tasrā has followed other Pāuri Bhuiyān villages in worshipping 'Bisri Debi', a Hindu goddess, thus has come to depend on Gour caste recite of the myth of the goddess.

In their dress and ornaments there have been also a few changes. Wearing a loanstrip of cloth ('Kaupuni') is very rare, and keeping of long hairs collected in a tuft on the head while the forehead was scraped is a matter of history. Strangely, I met only two men, Pāuri Bhuiyān and local Gour elderly men, with such old-fashioned hair at a valley village, Derulā, and not at Tasrā.

The village also came to be exclusively inhabited by the Pāuri Bhuiyān after the Bentkār tribals left it about a generation ago. A Gour was for years tending their cattle at Tasrā till 1953 and giving them loans. And for about 15 years another Gour is keeping his buffaloes in the Tasrā forests and living in the dry season at Tasrā and growing crops in a piece of garden land.



But the most serious change which as threatened them since 1948 is to settle in the valley down, leaving the hills, swiddens, groves of fruit trees, opportunities for hunting and fishing in Belhari rivulet and the jungle resources in stick lac, roots, fruits and tubers. Already a section has been wrenched from them and settled at Guhābandhā colony since 1951-52. In 1951 the village split into two hamlets to exploit forest resources the better. These hamlets grew autonomous to a large extent socially, economically, and ritually and even a junior Headman managed the internal affairs of one hamlet, while the Headman lived in the other. This splitting of the village ultimately made imperative that power be shared between two hamlets (also largely two factions) in the name of the village community. Therefore, the Member for Tasrā in "Grām Pancāyat" was to come from the hamlet without the Headman. After the death of the first Member another man of this hamlet, the most suitable man available being a senior 'Parjā' (not accidentally belonging to the same faction as the dead member), was selected as the successor. Thus again and again external stimulus worked upon the internal structure and tendencies to result in socio-cultural changes.

We may regard the starting of "Grām Pancāyat" and settling of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, the Cerengā Kolha and a few Bentkār shifting cultivators in government colonies, besides the opening of Bārsuāñ iron-ore mines in the north, among the most important changes affecting the whole region at present. The formatin of 'Batisbār' organization, much larger than the old 'Bārakhanda Bār' of which Tasrā was a member, was only a change of proportions. Tribes and castes other than Pāuri Bhuiyāñ continued to associate themselves in the worship of 'Bharālī Pāt', the god of 'Batisbār', which was also the vogue when there was Kumudih 'Pargañā' organization functioning.

That there was no change in technology both in Tasrā and the region as a whole may safely be assumed. In Tasrā, however, more iron hoes made in factories and sold in markets appear to have come into use during this period, besides rod and line for fishing.

## 2. THE PAURI BHUIYAN in a VALLEY VILLAGE

The data are mostly based on Deruḷā, supplemented by information on Burhābhuiñ (south) which I had visited only once in 1954. Deruḷā lies just on the left bank of the Kalā (Kolā) river, about 5 kilometers north-north-east from Mahulpadā. The main village has now 3 hamlets. Baḍabil composed of colonists from Kunu hill-village in the main, Manakhunṭā, similarly, or colonists from Kamaḷācuā hill-village, and Sagadiā Sāhi composed of Mundā Kolha immigrants. The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ colonists had come down voluntarily, at the earliest, 30 years ago.

Deruḷā village is famous for its settled agriculture in low terraces, constructed since 3 generations or thereabouts, and for irrigation channels by damming up the Kalā river at two places. This irrigation helps watering the seed-beds of late paddy for transplanting later on and

to meet the threat of drought when the river is rather full. There are now three main types of land for use: swidden land free to all and held by the tenure of 'corporate village ownership' as village land and forests, and private ownership in terrace plots, and in the flat upland or 'gurā' land. Swidden cultivation is done as in Tasrā, and terrace plots yield only one crop, paddy. But in 'gurā' cultivation both plots and crops are changed in rotation to grow 'Kulthi' pulse (leguminous) in the first year, paddy in the second year and sesamum in the third year; then for 2 years a plot is kept fallow, followed by burning the bush before cultivating. Mustard and maize are grown as in the hills in gardens, which are now private property to all intents and purposes.

All 'Māṭiāli' families have privately owned agricultural plots while almost all 'Parjā' have to depend on swiddens as their main source of livelihood. In 1952 the present Headman's household reaped 1200 kilo paddy from agriculture and 400 kilo from swidden, thus making the contribution of swidden secondary, though substantial especially in supplying vegetables, millets, oilseeds, pulses and tare. Besides, watching swiddens up the hillside makes the job of watching lowland agricultural fields easier, as otherwise the onslaught of the wild animals on lowland agriculture would be too much. Similar halting function of swidden watching was also referred to by peasants at Mahulpadā. As to the question the Pāuri of Derulā would not raise vegetables or other crops in the plots could be irrigated come the problems of fencing and manuring. Moreover, my Bhuiyāñ informants asserted that all were not agreed on starting such cultivation. If only a few cultivate others will be jealous and will surely work sorcery against good crop, as the few growers cannot possibly satisfy the demands of so many relatives and neighbours. The Gour family who lives in Derulā and owns and holds on lease a good number of plots blamed not so much the type of soil, as the Pāuri did, but strangely, the black magic of the Bhuiyāñ. However, the Bhuiyāñ cited the relatively not better crop harvested by the Gour with all his ample cattle-dung manure as the sure proof of the unsuitability of the soil.

On the security of land and cattle one could get loans of paddy at 25% interest (probably simple interest) from the government paddy granary of 'Dhangolā' at Kumudih. But as most did not have either land or cattle they could not take advantage of this blessed facility. However, private granaries in the valley charged 25% or 50% compound interest and Derulā men were never willing to pay 100% compound interest as often Tasrā men had to pay. Derulā men impressed me as quite aware of the opportunities about them and not slow in exploiting them.

Yet most of the landowners have leased outland at one time or the other on petty loans. In one case for Rs.10.00 of loan some terrace plots leased out for 10 years. In another a "name-sake" ritual friend of Gour caste was cultivating a Plot belonging to a Pāuri, and by giving some bribe got his rights of ownership established during the next settlement operation. A Gond of Jagati village advanced Rs.25.00 to a Bhuiyāñ for rights of cultivating a big terrace



for only 5 years, but even after 10 years the land was not recovered in 1954. In such underhand processes some lands are already lost to the Derulā Bhuiyāñ.

This alienation of land was however deliberate in case of certain other villages further north. In "Khesrā" forests for use of the villagers at Paṭāmunda and Phuljhar the Pāuri had made their swiddens for two years and then gave away the cleared land to Mundāri immigrants for money, grains and goats for feasting the whole village. At Nagariā village it was reported Bhuiyāñ lands were cultivated by Mundāri, Cerengā Kolha and Gond for a nominal tax of Rs. 1.00 per "plough" (land cultivated with a pair of cattle, a conventional measure). In Derulā the Mundāri Kolha were given the lands round an old site 'Sagdā di', where, the Pāuri alleged, tigers took a heavy toll of Bhuiyāñ whenever they lived there.

Alarmed at the specter of land-alienation especially by the local Gour and Gond rather than by Mundā immigrants, and understanding the value of literacy, especially in calculation of interest, execution of deeds and knowing the law, Derulā men had approached me forgetting a school at Derulā through my recommendation. It might be that by having a school they wanted also to gain in prestige among other Pāuri villages or to attract visiting officers who ordinarily ended their circuit at Mahulpadā. But they were quite clear about their need to check this process of surreptitious land-alienation. The opening of "Grām Pañcāyat" at Mahulpadā gave very handy opportunities for ventilating their grievances against the exploiters in this manner. On the other hand, the power of composing disputes arising out of land-rights shifted to 'Grām Pañcāyat' from the village Assembly, which became less effective in disputes between the Bhuiyāñ and even lessor in cases between a Pāuri and Gond or Gour.

Living in the valley and having greater contacts with outsiders some villagers have worked in Calcutta and Assam, and some still go to Sārkundā and Rantā mines to work in the winter and early summer. A few caught and sold 'Sāri' speaking birds travelling upto Chaibasa in Singhbhum and even Midnapore District in West Bengal for about 3 generations, and one or two traded in iron axe-blades from Khajuri Khaman in Bamra.

As at Derulā similarly at another valley village Khadkā in Pal Lahara, as also in Budhābhuiñ (south) in Bonai, almost all the agricultural plots are owned by 'Māṭiālī' sections. As at Tasrā so at Raḍā in Pal Lahara the few terraces made also belonged mostly to this dominant section. At Burhābhuiñ (south) in the narrow valley of a hill stream the difference in wealth was extreme. The 'Sardār' or regional Headman since 1945 or slightly later in this village had owned much of the well-constructed terraces and buffaloes, much more costly and productive than cows, and had himself made 10 terraces in his life-time. Similar concentration of wealth was evidenced at Derulā in one Pāuri house and in one or the Gour families.

Apart from a tendency to extreme of wealth in a valley village there are some necessary modifications in the rituals. At Tasrā those who have terraces nonetheless make ceremonial

sowing only in the swidden, while at Derulā it was just the reverse. Before transplanting paddy seedlings the worship of 'Kādabali' is observed along with the Pāuri ceremony of 'Asādhī Pujā'. 'Dhān Nuā' or "Eating First Paddy" is observed here slightly more elaborately than at Tasrā, but much less elaborately than in other mixed village, say Kumudih. 'Bisri Usā' was introduced into Derulā about 1925-26 as perhaps the first Pāuri Bhuiyān village in Mahulpadā region of Bonai. The householders celebrate 2 ceremonies of threshing ground, once for swidden paddy known as 'Gundāmundā' and the other time for paddy from low land agriculture called 'Khaḷā Pujā', the latter being more elaborate. At the latter ceremony, 'Lachmi', the Hindu goddess of wealth, and in popular cult, is worshipped with a sacrifice of white chicken and 'Baṛām', the tribal deity, with another chicken.

As land has now permanent value through its permanent productivity in settled agriculture it was just another step from rights of "inheritable use" and "private rights" in scarce lands as it Tasrā to completely private ownership in agricultural land as in all settled villages. The lands for making gardens for maize and mustard have however not yet become private property at least in law. The preferential share of the eldest son has, however, not been allowed to extend to inheriting one more plot of agricultural land at Derulā. The brothers get equal shares in terraces, and I have no information if the eldest one gets preferential treatment in upland or 'guṛā' plots. However, the women are as usual disinherited from land.

The development and tendencies evident at Derulā and a few other villages in the valley with settled agriculture should be borne in mind for comprehending the changes that may lie in wait for Tasrā villagers when they come down. But more obvious, binding, and imminent are the changes that have already occurred in some of the colonies started by the Government in the valley forests.

### 3. The PĀURĪ BHUIYĀN in GOVERNMENT COLONIES

In this I shall be often referring to Guhālabandha colony which started in 1951-52 as an off-shoot from Tasrā. But much data will also be added from other colonies as occasion arises. Much information on the evolving life in the colonies is given by N. Patnaik (GRI, 1952, 1957) and most of his interpretations meet mine and my observations.

In 1949-50 the first colony was started with Pāuri families from Tal and Upar Giniā, many of whom had some settled agriculture but still cutting swiddens. As Patnaik noted in 1950, some of them had "actually left their wives and others their sons and brothers to look after the Komān fields and orchards of banana, jack fruit and mango" (1952, GRI, p.23). At Guhālabandhā only 11 families of Pāuri from Tasrā in 1951 and in 1952 some Cerengā Kolha and Pāuri families from Rengāli came to settle there. By 1957 another Bentkār family patrilineally related to Tasrā 'Mājiāli' had come from Burhābhuiñ (south), though living somewhat off from the Pāuri. Similarly, the few Cerengā Kolha families live in a separate ward of their own. Settlers



from Tasrā were given some paddy (9 kilo per individual) and one bullock already in 1950 before coming down. The paddy was meant to be seed but was readily consumed. Next year after taking divinatory precautions as to the suitability of the colony-site families came down and were given about 20 kilo seed-paddy in April-May family. The Bhuiyāñ Headman of Guhālbādhā colony as in other colonies was presented a gun to keep away wild beasts, but more as a symbol of prestige and allurements for the others still in the hills. After occupying the colony housebuilding and extensive shifting cultivation in rotation of plots and crops as in Tasrā were the main activities. Those who had money and some surplus paddy made some lower land into agricultural terrace by raising embankments. Thus the Bhuiyāñ Headman of Guhālbādhā with Rs.200.00, saved and borrowed, and about 200 kilo paddy engaging some Cerengā Kolha and Bhuiyāñ labourers could make 2 terraces ready in one year. A somewhat well-to-do 'Parjā' from Tasrā had invested, as reported, about Rs.412.50 and 1400 Kilo paddy between 1951 and 1954 for constructing embankments and terraces in Guhālbādhā. This family owned 15 heads of cattle in 1954. As the Government had given one bullock per family and the virgin land required heavy and repeated ploughing only those who had one or more heads of cattle of their own could hope to carve out some terraces while fully attending to shifting cultivation. When some bullocks from Talcher areas, not adapted to the cooler climate and less sturdy than the shorter Pāuri cattle succumbed to diseases, and water facilities were worse than at Tasrā (where Beljharī rivulet was a perennial source) disappointment and criticism ran high. With more Government subsidy in grains and a little money and another bullock, by borrowing and saving surplus from extensive swiddens and gardens the colonists were on the way to meet the challenge of the new life.

Upto 1956 they could cut new swiddens, besides raising new crops like sesamum ('tilā') and 'Kulthi' pulses along with paddy and 'gangei' millets in 'gurā' or upland maize, mustard, 'muga' pulses and turmeric in 'bākhurī' or maize garden, and tobacco and gourds in the kitchen garden. In 1957 many had used their third-year swiddens to cultivate 'biri' pulses and 'ruhmā' beans, used in an important ritual called 'Nangakhiā' (Eating First Fruits), as there was no forest to make new swiddens. Similar reasons had driven colonists from Kuṇu and Kuṇḍlā to out swiddens in their ancestral hill-villages, but they could not cultivate there on governmental pressure. This shows how attached the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ indeed were to their shifting cultivation, and not a little due to some magico-religious requirements. If they cannot grow certain early millets like 'Kāngu' and 'gundli' or the earliest hill maize ripening as early as mid August to allay their privation, they can now fall back upon the earliest paddy ripening near about the same time on 'gurā' land requires periodical fallowing for 2-3 years and the jungle is burnt into ashes before being put into use. The cattle dung manure, formerly given only in the gardens, will now be required in the gardens as well as in agricultural plots. As this dung is still the main manure used by the Bhuiyāñ colonists one wonders how a family with only two heads of cattle



could manage to meet the manuring needs. The natural way to the increase of cattle is somewhat blocked by the bias of Hindu officials against giving cows as draught cattle. The local shifting cultivators used cows and not only bullocks in swiddens, and later also in agriculture.

The Cerengā Kolha colonists in general depend on their own labour and governmental subsidies and have no reluctance like the Pāuri Bhuiyān towards the inevitable heavy earthwork involved in reclaiming land for terraces. So they have fared better than those Pāuri who had not much capital or cattle. But evidently they could not construct more terraces than those who had money and cattle. Moreover the poorer, both Pāuri and Cerengā Kolha, most often could not occupy the lowest and wettest terraces, as they required greater outlay of labour and money for constructing high embankments. Some well-to-do men, much more among the Pāuri than among the Cerengā Kolha, have been able to keep one and even 2 'haliā' or "hired labourer for a year" and thereby occupy and utilize more land and thus have grown richer. The number of families keeping such 'haliā' has of course increased but rather slowly. Some of these greedy agriculturists will now have to give up their not-so-good plots when distribution is made on an basis of 5 acres (2 hectare) of wet land and 3 acres of upland ('gurā') per family. Because of such unregulated land-grabbing and lack of more forests for shifting cultivation that many Bhuiyān did not believe as early as 1954 the official assertion that there was still more land for colonists in Daleisarā forest clearing.

Thus we find the original government intention to give equal amount of aid and to allot equal amount of land, and thus to give an equal start to each colonist-family has been belied simply because in conditions of wealth and skills they were not equal. The Cerengā Kolha were on the whole poorer but had learnt better skills in agriculture besides being free from the sentiment against earthwork. We have already noted in Derulā and Burhābhuiñ (south) as elsewhere that settled cultivation had created a class of have-nots inland not given to swiddens, and the concentration of wealth in a few hands was remarkable when compared to conditions in Tasrā, where differences in holding wealth were never so extreme. Similarly, a few among the Cerengā Kolha, like the Headman of Barsuā village with settled agriculture, had amassed wealth in land, grains, cows, buffaloes, and pigs. Now by 1957 this process of concentration of wealth and of widening the economic rift between the poorer and the richer was not merely continued but also appears to have been accelerated in the colonies. While in the hills the basis of differentiation in wealth was based both on working hands and a few inherited economic opportunities, in the colony it was primarily based on the accumulated wealth which a colonist brought with him. After the redistribution of lands this process may be checked but not reversed, as the Government policy is to extend equal (not equitable) opportunities for all families in the colonies. The process will be checked also because the hired labourers, either Pāuri Bhuiyān or Cerengā Kolha will be getting lands on their own rights as colonists somewhere. It remains



to be seen how far the present differences in wealth, no longer of territorial and political status as between 'Mātiāli' and 'Parjā' sections in the hills, may be crystallized and ramified into other aspects of life to create something like social classes. But at present there are two economical classes in the colonies, obvious also to the colonists themselves.

We may now follow other developments one by one.

In the field of technology of agriculture a few skills, like ploughing in the round instead of along the contour and downwards as in the hills, or thinning out of paddy and transplanting, had to be learnt. As many of the Pāuri Bhuiyān colonists and all Cerengā Kolha had known them it was not a great handicap. The real handicap, even in 1957, appeared to be the stumps of trees and the infinite number of small rocks that were to be seen everywhere in the reclaimed plots. The plough now lost its string arrangement with the yoke for coping with the intervening boulders in the hill swiddens, and the pick or 'gardani' used in rocky places, inaccessible to the plough, has little use in agriculture. The hoe is now used in the corners where the plough does not reach.

In house-building the tendency is to construct stronger houses with door-panels made of wooden planks instead of bamboo wickerwork as in the hills. This is consonant with more private property and larger stores to be securely locked. The Bachelors' Dormitory was the best and spacious building in Guhālabandhā in marked contrast to its dilapidated condition in Tasrā in 1957. The front verandah of houses tends to be wider. Only a few Pāuri outside Guhālabandhā have constructed roofs with 'Khaprā' or country made tiles learnt from Cerengā Kolha neighbours.

In settlement pattern there has been the most significant change in having a linear pattern with houses on both sides of a wide and often straight street. The village deities have been already installed in a sacred grove. Villagers had begun planting jackfruit and mango trees right since their occupation. The streets are kept daily clean, though garbage be scattered in the back yard of the houses. The colonies are inter-connected with roads.

Coming to other aspects of material culture lighting arrangements seem to be universal with tin kerosene lamps and at least 8 hurricane lanterns in Guhālabandhā colony, although away from the main road running between Mahulpadā and Bonaigarh. Cloth umbrellas are owned by almost all households. In Guhālabandhā the said well-to-do, 'Parjā' from Tasrā even boasts of a pair of shoes. A few others like the Headman of Daleisarā colony also wear shoes. Except a few older men all wear ready-made shirts and the cloth of men most often reaches beyond the knees. Soaps and 'bidi' or small leaf-cigarettes purchased rather than home-made 'Kāhāli' cigars are coming into greater use.

The food has become less balanced than in the hills, because there is more rice, a little vegetables, but more pluse, and much less meat or fish. After the swidden phase is over not

much millet is available for beer, which will now be made more from rice and the men more dependent on distilled liquor. Similarly, the varieties of vegetables grown in swidden will no longer be available and only a few households have papaya or banana. Hunting is rather infrequent and mostly restricted to the ceremonial hunting and is rarely successful. For fishing there is no nearby big streams. Vegetables and dried fish will have to be purchased. Collection of jungle fruits, leaves and tubers, flowers, and honey will be progressively more difficult as the jungle is shrinking away. However, it is an exaggeration to say, "Tubers were available in abundance and they were living on this food", without the qualification that tubers were the primary food in privation months only (Patnaik, GRI, 1957, p.12). On the other hand, the observation, "Meals are cooked two times daily" in the colonies, which was not always possible in the hills, is correct. "No difficulty of water" in hill villages is not borne out by examples of Tasrā and Hātisul, where villagers had to descend a long way down in the summer for drinking water.

In the economic life there has been the net result of a production of rice surplus, and a sharp decrease in quantity and variety of cash crops including stick lac. This has been partly compensated by recourse to day-labour and working at the mines at Bārsuān in the winter and early summer. This has the tendency to increase as the colonists require more and more money as their needs swell and as they get more leisure after the swidden-cum-reclamation phase is over. We have already seen at Tasrā that lending paddy was not a dream and that there was some surplus of paddy, however insecure this surplus may be, supported as it was partly on dependence of fruits, taro and yams. Also contrary to Patnaik's information (GRI, 1957, p.12) it was sometimes possible to hire annual labourers (halīā) at Tasrā. This was possible under two conditions; firstly, the household had some surplus the previous year to feed the extra hand, and secondly, this extra hand always produced more than he got by way of food and a pair or more of cloths. But in a colony he got food, a pair of cloths and paddy upto 100 Kilo. Even then this rate seems to be much less than what the same labourer would have got from a plainsman (non-Bhuiyān or non-Cerengā Kolha). The rate according to my information in the plains consists of daily rations, a pair of cloths, and paddy from 300 to 400 Kilo. Judged from this rate it looks as if it were exploitation in the colonies and in the hills. However, in the hills one household of average economic standing had taken one annual labourer to help in shifting cultivation while in other cases sometimes a youngman earning half-wages only is spared for the job. What is of great importance in the hills or even in the colonies is that the annual labourer is as a rule of the same ethnic group as the employer and in many ways socially connected with the latter and lives as a member of the household. The more thoroughly economic relations between a plainsman employer and an ethnically outsider 'halīā' is simply not possible in the hills, and to a large extent in the colonies. Another change in economic life may be the use of surplus rice as a cash-earning Commodity, which was



never possible in the hills. Already some rice has been sold to the officials at Daleisara. It looks as if a cowherd caste man, appointed by colonists to tend the cattle, is going to be permanent village servant, unlike in the hills. Moreover, "reciprocal cooperative labour" or 'bājakāma' was used scarcely in the phase of shifting cultivation and has, it is alleged, stopped completely now. In its place day-labour at the usual rates in the plains is being taken to. It is probable that the reluctant attitude towards day labour and work at mines will change in the near future. Day labour may become indifferent in prestige-value as the avocation of the majority. The womenfolk seem to be contributing less to the economy, as collecting has lost its importance, and also have much fewer opportunities to earn on their own here as contrasted with the hills. This means that they are going to be more dependent on their menfolk economically. As it is men who hold individual rights on land lone widows have no longer a household of their own.

It is too early to discern changes in the socio-political life. Yet some trends are clear. In the beginning of colonization a family with more working hands was in an advantageous position to attend to shifting cultivation and land reclamation. In 1957 when records of land were going to be made and every family was to get a fixed quota of lands the married brothers and sons and even unmarried but grown up sons tried to set up their own households. Among them were some 'haliā' or annual labourers. Thus in 1957 there were at least 20 youngmen, married and unmarried, clamouring for land and of them only 4 had some lands below their quota. As the opportunity for getting a fixed quota of private land comes only once at the time of colonization, and there is no shifting cultivation as a flexible source of livelihood, the tendency seems to be premature separation of dependent families or adults. Lone widows have to live with their daughters' husbands or other male relatives, instead of having their own households as at Tasra.

As all the colonists have come together to an unoccupied area there are no 'Mātiāli' rights in socio-political status. But the 'Mātiāli' section of the mother-village retains the posts of Headman and Priests as usual. Although 'Dihabandhāni' ceremony (Village Site Foundation day) is still observed one of the main purposes, that is, admission of new 'Parjā' and reassurance of loyalty of the old 'Parjā' has lost its meaning. But the Pāuri as a whole have gained some political power over the Cerengā Kolha and the few Benṭkār colonists. The Pāuri are in the majority, the whole scheme was mainly to bring them down and the visiting officers and permanent officials give more weight to the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in all affairs of colony life. The Cerengā Kolha are untouchable and of lower status. At Guhābandhā colony, where they live away from the Bhuiyāñ, the domination of the latter is more obvious than in the exclusively Cerengā colonies with their own headman and priests. At Guhābandhā they are asked to contribute for 'Debi Usā' and perhaps many other festivities of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in the name of the village, while the Pāuri do not contribute anything in their rituals. This has been so for



three reasons. Firstly, the Cerengā had come to settle one year or more later than the Bhuiyān of Tasrā who all came in a group, which is numerically the majority and dominant group, supplying the headman and the priests. Secondly, the Cerengā has always acknowledged the Bhuiyān as the lords of the land and themselves as their 'Parjā' rather figuratively, so much so that in the Mahulpadā valley they won't collect thatch-grass before the Bhuiyān do, where the interests clash. Thirdly, the Pāuri Bhuiyān have always worshipped the village deities in the valley village of Jagati, Mahulpadā, Barcuā, Rengāli and Kumudih, where formerly the Cerengā Kolha lived. I suspect the Pāuri Bhuiyān of Deleisarā colony have similar status of dominance over the Cerengā Kolha of Ratā Khandi colony. Incidentally, Patnaik has always referred to the Cerengā Kolha of the colonies as "Mundā", as they speak a Mundāri language (GRI, 1957).

Patnaik has rightly pointed to the weakening position of the Headman and senior priests in the colonies (GRI, 1957, p.13). But he does not fully explain the situation when he says, "The causes of their ineffectiveness in the village are obviously due to contacts with outside people and the gradual breakdown of the village solidarity after wet cultivation has been introduced" (ibid. p.13). In the next sentence, he implies, village solidarity is impaired, as in "wet cultivation (agriculture) economic interdependence and constant (frequent) need for cooperation are not necessary as they are in the cultivation of 'biringā' ('Kamān' or shifting cultivation)." (Brackets enclose the terms preferred). Sharing cattle and implements and much cooperative labour are not necessary or possible in the colony as the governmental help and the insistent need for reclaiming land by each household for its private exploitation have made a household autonomous and acquisitive to that extent. On the other hand, the older pattern of celebrating village rituals and festivals, communal partnership groups for arranging them, collective hunting expeditions, however few, and the bachelors' dormitories on the colony basis and even having the institution of Priests' Granary or 'Dehuriā Dhāna' in Kunutolā and Jhinkar Gahirā colonies (from Kuṇu ad Kundlā hill-villages) show that the old village solidarity is still much preserved. However, the custom of joint cultivation of a swidden by the youngmen and maidens of a colony for their own common interests, as in hill villages, was preserved till forests were available to make swiddens. As the land was reduced into agricultural plots, privately owned, this automatically stopped. In this instance the village or colony solidarity of the young persons suffered heavy economic and social deprivation due to conditions of agriculture. The threat to village solidarity came also from two other sources. Firstly, some colonies, Guhābandhā and Ekpādi, are composed of colonists from two or three or even more villages. Moreover, a few colonies like Guhābandhā maybe composed of two or more tribes, Pāuri, Cerengā and Bentkār. In this condition colonies present different physical composition from the old exclusive Pāuri villages. When Pāuri colonists from a hill village have stayed in an exclusive colony together they have preserved even 'Dehuriā Dhāna', pointing to the solidarity of, and surviving allegiance



to, the 'Māṭiālī' section of those villages. Secondly, unlike in a hill village the colonists are not bound to pay allegiance to any definite section in the colony for the rights in land and other facilities. All are given equal chances, theoretically of course, and all owe loyalty directly to the Government, represented by their big visiting officers. There is no solid dominant 'Māṭiālī' section having first rights and no clustering of the 'Parjā' round it, and hence the political composition of the old village solidarity will be lacking. Where the fiction of this old 'Māṭiālī-Parjā' relationship persists, because of a total transplantation of the village, in that case the village solidarity of the old type appears to hold on in the colony. Thus, both the decrease in old village solidarity and the weakening of the position of former Headman of Pāuri village, in fact the spokesman and leader of the 'Māṭiālī' section, among the colonists may be rather explained in terms of the altered political and economical status derived wholly from outside authority and outside traditional territory, and not merely in terms of settled agriculture and "contacts with outside people" as such. Fundamentally for this reason, reinforced by direct and daily contacts with the authority of government officers and officials, visiting or stationed at Daleisarā colony, the old village solidarity and the old position of the Headman and Priests in the colony will be impaired still more. That my interpretation of the dynamics of this change is basically sound is supported by Patnaik's following observation in 1950, when shifting cultivation was in full swing at Daleisarā colony, "The position of Nāek (Headman) is already being lowered and his voice is becoming less and less effective in the management of village affairs." (GRI, 1952, p.24)

Coming to the ritual life we find the colonists prone to observe the ceremonial sowing preferably in the low land (terrace) plots, as at Deruḷā, and only if they do not have any, then in a 'guṛā' or upland plot, the last choice being the swidden. Thus agriculture (lowland or upland) has been given the highest ritual importance even when a swidden was there. At Tasrā we have seen always this ceremony was observed in a swidden even when a man cultivated a terrace plot. At Tasrā 'Makar' or the first day of solar Māgh (January-February) was not celebrated in any way. But at Guhālbādhā (and in other colonies) on this Hindu festival day work was stopped and the colony went out hunting.

For meeting the colonists needs a government shop stocks all sorts of things from clothes, utensils to luxury articles and maintains a free Dispensary with a Compounder. The patients at the dispensary are not only the Pāuri Bhuiyān and other colonists, but the officials stationed at places upto Mahulpadā and the people of nearby villages. Even if no proportion of the Pāuri Bhuiyān patients is given I may accept Patnaik's assumption that the main body of the invariably high number of patients of digestive diseases come from the Pāuri Bhuiyān population. But this Pāuri population then is from among the colonists and only rarely from the hills, as I know from my personal experiences as also from the Compounder. If the digestive patients be mainly from among the colonists, both Pāuri and Cerengā Kolha, as is more

probable, the reason seems to be not far. Patnaik has already noted that the colonists did not grow vegetables (GRI, 1957, p.8). I was told at Đerulā that without shifting cultivation they might not have enough vegetables, and this is confirmed from Tasrā evidences. Without vegetables and fruits and with a rather exclusively rice diet it is quite possible that the colonists suffer from digestive troubles. That a change from shifting cultivating to settled low land or terrace cultivation is at the cost of growing vegetables is also evident from the Abor Hills, Assam according to Dr. B.S. Guha.

Lastly, not to leave a very important change in the field of education, it must be pointed out that colonization has opened the gate to literacy and a wider mental horizon for the younger generation. A Sevāshram school of Lower Primary Standard was established soon after the starting of the colony on 24.1.1950. Another Sevāshram school, now extended to a higher standard, was opened on 19.3.1952 at Dhokāmundā. Mostly boys attend. Children are spared reluctantly by parents for studies, more so in the case of girls. It appears not only that the Paur Bhuiyāñ and the Cerengā Kolha are not convinced of the benefits of literacy and school education especially for the girls, but also that the economic demands of the family on the school-age children are as yet heavy.

#### 4. The PĀURI BHUIYĀÑ VIS-A-VIS LOCAL TRIBES AND CASTES

In the Kolā valley round Mahulpadā the Gond and Pāñ untouchables count along with the Pauri Bhuiyāñ as the earliest settlers. Cerengā Kolha and later on Kissāñ came before the various Hindu castes and Mundāri and Mundā Kolha immigrants. The present Headman of Mahulpadā, whose grandfather came from Sihiriā in the north-west, belongs to the oldest Casā cultivator family in this area. The village servant castes, washer-men and cowherds, blacksmiths, oilmen, watermen, liquor-sellers etc. came to join the thriving villages. A Brahman priest comes from a far-away village to serve the Casā, Gour and Gond castes. The Gond, calling themselves as Rāj Gond, are here completely Hinduized, and count as a clean Hindu caste employing Brahman priest, washerman and barber, although the watermen do not serve them water in rituals of festivities and water from them is not accepted by higher castes like Casā, Gour (watermen and cowherd), Barber, Brahman. The barber family at Mahulpadā was brought in 1954 expressly to serve the higher caste people of Mahulpadā region.

The Hill Bhuiyāñ, though not yet served by Brahman and only occasionally by a Barber, required washermen at all important rituals and water is accepted from them by all castes and tribes. In the latter aspect they are in a higher ritual status than the Gond and the Mundāri from whom the higher castes do not take water. The Pauri on their part take water only from Casā, watermen and cowherds, and Brahman. However, they will not accept cooked rice from even Brahman, not to speak of other castes and tribes. As in actual life some adjustment has to be made with the numerous Gond clients in Kumudih and Rengāji, and other villages where



Pāuri priests worship village deities, they accept rice-cakes fried in oil, but not boiled in an earthen pot. From the Gond, Gour and Casā Tasrā women had begged and brought some boiled rice-cakes from perhaps the last two castes only in 1954. For the Pāuri-Bhuiyāñ the basketmaker and musician Ghāsi. Pān and Cerengā Kolha are untouchable, as also Kamār blacksmiths who use bellows of cow-hide. In this bias they identify themselves with all clean castes. The Pān have left eating buffaloes, while the other untouchables have not yet done that. In the schools at Daleisarā and Dhokāmundā teachers take into consideration this bias of Pāuri colonies against Cerengā Kolha ones. The Bentkār tribals are not untouchable, though water is not accepted from them by their co-brethren, the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. The Mundāri who have left eating cattle are sitting by side with the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ at Mahulpadā or Derulā schools.

The Gond and Pān castes and the Kissān are at present striving hard to raise their social and ritual status. The Gond demand to get their menstruating women's clothes washed by the washermen, who do this only in case of Casā and Gour in the locality. But the washermen did not agree to this demand in their caste council. The Pān have now taken to worshipping 'Bisri Debi', a locally popular Hindu goddess, separately on their own and are trying to stop their practice of removing dead cattle from the village including that of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ colonies. This function will in all probability be taken over by Ghāsi untouchables. Some Kissān have gone so far as to engage good Brahman in their marriage ceremonies, and a Gour man serves water at these ceremonies to the Brahman priest, as he would not accept water from the Kissān. It may be foreseen with all probability that the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ in colonies will try to engage Barber and later on even Brahman priests at their marriage, besides accepting cooked rice from the Brahman. The last practices may not come soon, as the Bāthudi in Keonjhar, since long Hinduized, would not accept such food from any outsider caste even in 1950.

Of especial importance is the relation of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ with Magadhā Gour, who often live with the latter. Marriage with a Gour man or woman is not rare, and as early as 1896 D.A. Mac Millan had already noted them. At Tasrā an old man had married a Gour woman (in 17p.), who was socio-ritually accepted into the Pāuri society at a 'Bār' celebration. Similarly, a Gour of Pattamund village in Bonai married a Pāuri woman, who was assimilated into the Gour caste in 1957.

We have already seen how the Pāuri borrow seed and grains, sometimes even money, from Gour, Gond, Casā, Pān, Teli (oilmen) or Shundi (liquor-seller) and even a Cerengā Kolha. After coming to the colony some Tasrā Bhuiyāñ had taken loans from Khuntgāñ in the north-west. Their credit-worthiness, not only the area of credit operations, seem to have increased. When they would be able to get loans at 25% interest in the valley, and from the government granary at Kumudih, the bitter feeling against the money-lenders and their castes might disappear.

There is "jajmāni" system of fixed patronage for washermen, cowherds, barbers, and blacksmiths in the valley. A washerman or blacksmith served a few village and no other man conventionally enters into competition by offering the same services. The Barber and the Brahman have the same system. A Gour cowherd has been kept in some colonies to tend cows on payment of grains and rations as a fixed rate per cow, bullock or calf. The Pāuri already had such relation with washerman and Gour in Tasrā for some time. Thus, there is great probability that the Pāuri in the colony will be drawn into the "jajmāni" system of some services as in the valley.

The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ traditional priests or village deities in Rengāli, Kumudih, Jagati, Mahulpadā, Barcuā, and perhaps a few other non-Pāuri villages, and they are considered as the oldest occupants of land and hills (excepting specific case of Tasrā, where the Bhuiyāñ came later on). Also their ritual status in the Hindu eyes is the highest among all the tribal groups in the region. For all these reasons their social status is the highest among all tribals perhaps excluding the Hinduized Gond in Mahulpadā region.

However, the Hindus hold the Pāuri in contempt for certain of their practices, also found among some other local tribes. They do not wash with water after defecation. They yoke cows to plough, which is considered sacrilegious. The institution of dormitories, dancing of women, premarital sexual laxity, ignorance and illiteracy, general dirtiness of habits and of person, eating certain rats and birds including one which takes human night-soil, taking rotten meat of dead animals, and native beer, burying the dead, and perhaps a few other qualities and practices are looked down upon. Nonetheless, they highly appreciate their love of truth, steadfastness in friendship and promises, engaging hospitality, courage and endurance. However, the people of the valley are also afraid of Pāuri Bhuiyāñ sorcery.

## 5. The PĀURI BHUIYĀÑ and the WELFARE AGENCIES.

The welfare agencies working in South-East Bonai are mainly governmental organs, some fixed and others peripatetic.

The Forest Department has a great stake in reserving forests and their resources and has made the rehabilitation of shifting cultivators in settled colonies its main programme in the area. The Tribal and Rural Welfare Department coming later on the scene has taken up school education and to some extent communication and in general the welfare of the tribals in the region. Since 1956-57 the Community Development Department has started a National Extension Service (N.E.S.) Block covering the tribals and non-tribals to the east of the Brahmani river in the south-east section of Bonai with headquarters at Lahuniaparā. Welfare activities of the semi-official "Grām Pancāyat" have already been dealt with.

There are two Foresters and Forest Guards to look after the colonies, undertake minor construction works including irrigation dams, manage a Government store catering to the



needs of the colonists and officials, and distribute governmental subsidies among colonists. There is a free Dispensary with a Compounder to fight the local diseases. It is a bit odd that the very personnel who have recently restricted the forest freedoms including cutting of swiddens should be called upon to look after the uprooted. As the Dispensary is stationed at Daleisarā and the local tribals have some native system of treatment at hand to fall back upon, the response has not been as good as might have been expected from a peripatetic one. When some years ago a mobile squad for treating yaws visited Mahulpadā many Pāuri Bhuiyān took advantage of the opportunity. However, the dispensary serves the colonies and the officials in the main, according to its alleged aim.

The schools started for the tribals at Derulā, Dhokāmundā and Daleisarā have attracted a good number of pupils. At Daleisarā an attempt was made at teaching cloth weaving by means of hand-loom. Though some Pāuri Bhuiyān came for it, they did not make use of the skill after the teacher was transferred. It seems carpentry, bee-keeping and weaving etc. might better be taught to the generality and not restricted to school students only. Though the Pāuri have little inhibition to take up any clean avocation, including smithy and pottery-making, it is not surprising that several years ago one who learnt weaving in his prison days was not allowed to practice it after his socio-ritual readmission into the society. But the recent experience at Daleisarā as also at Tasrā in case of basketry and bamboo broomsticks show that the Pāuri Bhuiyān may take to certain skills traditionally wielded by untouchable castes like Pān and Ghāsi. Some new fruit trees like cashew nut at Dhokāmundā school may interest the local tribals who love growing fruits. A social worker stationed in the colonies and responsible to safeguard the interests of the tribals and scheduled (untouchable) castes has, it appears, not made his presence felt. The cases of land-alienation and occasional intimidation of the Pāuri Bhuiyān at Derulā by their moneylenders, the high rate of interest, and the difficulties of obtaining paddy loan from the government granary at Kumudih in case of the landless etc. seem never to have attracted his attention. On the other hand, there are patent difficulties in the way of social reform especially regarding untouchability. At Rengālī a well was constructed with government help and hence was open to all, irrespective of castes and tribes. As the Pān untouchables could not be disallowed its use, the higher castes would not use the well and the main purpose of providing hygienic drinking water for the village was thus negated.

The N.E.S. Block has one Village Level worker (V.L.W.) at Mahulpadā to look after a huge area including the colonies and villages on the hill and in the valley round Mahulpadā. He goes from village to village preaching on good seeds, chemical manure, new crops, giving some patent medicines for men and livestock if approached for that, and asking for voluntary labour for constructing wells, small dams etc. with government help. His ideas appeal mainly to the agriculturists, especially those who may benefit from his help. The Gond and Casa growers of sugar cane with irrigation facilities from a perennial hill-stream at Jagatī-Mahulpada and other



who might boldly experiment with growing potato are in the minority, noted for good husbandry. The appeal to grow vegetables has succeeded partly with them, but not with the Pauri Bhuiyān at Derulā in spite of irrigation facilities. While the other welfare agencies concentrate on the interests of the tribals, and of the Pauri Bhuiyān in particular, the N.E.s. Block concentrates on the rather conscious section of agriculturists for arriving at pre-fixed targets rather than for overhauling the attitudes towards standards of living, medicine and hygiene, or even soil utilization. The specific felt needs of the tribals are not in the main given any weight.

A few years ago there was a Veterinary official at Mahulpadā treating livestock, though the Pauri of hills did not perhaps use his help beyond taking some phenyle. They preferred to rely more on the intimate knowledge of the Gour cowherd caste in treating the hill cattle. In epidemics they turned to deities and local medicine. The mechanical castration as opposed to the crude and bloody, sometimes fatal, operations by the Pān caste is known, but its benefits are not handy. Moreover, some unconnected sequences threaten their confidence. One moneylender of Jagati was relating at Tasrā that his cattle suffering from loose motions after getting vaccinated against cattle epidemics.

In the end I must mention the role of certain welfare personnel and policy which work against the good intentions of the Government, in 1957 I visited a Pauri Bhuiyān ward of 5 houses at the back of Mahulpadā village, called Nuādih. They were landless shifting cultivators from Pāceripāni in Bamra and Sarāikalā, Tilkulā and Silgudā in Bonai. One of these settlers had paid in 1955-56 Rs.6.00 and a fowl costing Rs.1.25 to a Casā teacher at Daleisarā who was to intercede in their favour for giving them land in the colony. This teacher was alleged to have been given several hectares of land in the colony with a view to instilling better cultivating habits by his example. Instead I heard, he never paid much attention to his Daleisarā lands and on the other hand, used the government subsidy in cultivating his ancestral lands in his own village. Apart from this he took such bribe as described above, giving a false impression that land was scarce and could be available only by approaching people like him with bribe. The real difficulty is that the Government are either not aware of, or not yet attentive to, the needs of the landless shifting cultivators at Derulā and other settled village and the solitary families settling here and there in the valley. Unless these are rehabilitated in the colonies the threat to the forests will not be totally met.

The "Grām Pancāyat" (Council of Village) has already entered into the field of welfare activities but seems to be handicapped by the lack of power and wise leadership. The hereditary leaders, the Headman, in both Pauri and Cerengā Kolha villages have not been brought into this organization. Rather some less influential persons instead have been sent from these villages as Members. Also very important to note that due to heterogeneous interests of the villages in the valley and hills programmes with equitable distribution of basic advantages among all the villages are yet to be devised.



## 6. The PĀURI BHUIYĀN in the SHADOW of INDUSTRIALIZATION

Already some Pāuri Bhuiyān had been working in mineral quarries at Dengulā and Sārkundā in the Kuirā region. The Pāuri from Phuljhar, Patāmund, Uskulā, Sasa, Tilkulā, Sarāikalā etc. go to work there in the winter, though Pān, Tāmḍiā, Mundāri, Kolha, and Kurā come in greater numbers. After the starting of Rourkela Steel Plant quarrying operations have been extended to Bārsuān and its neighbourhood. It is said, Tilkulā, Silgudā, Sarāikalā and a few other villages have already been affected by the extended quarries right into their swiddens. Upto Bārsuān comes a railway track for transporting the iron ore. The labourers mostly do "piece-work", that is, payment is tied to the volume of work. This is different from the old pattern of daylabour. The former is based on contract, the latter much more on common understanding and traditional expectations. Further, some emergency, like heavy rain, did not deprive a man of his wages, but at the mines it would.

Bārsuān being nearer than Dengulā and Sārkundā, and as the colonists have more free time than in the hills, there is a regular stream of workers during the winter from Pus (December-January) till Jeth (May-June). As the reclamation of land for agriculture will be soon finished quarrying at Bārsuān mines may become a major avocation in the immediate future and the major source of money income in place of cash-earning commodities. This seasonal labour is not new for the Pāuri Bhuiyān, especially of more northern villages. If the landless shifting cultivators in settled villages are not colonized, but debarred from shifting cultivation, they will have no other alternative than to work as full-time miners all the year round.

It was sometimes heard that Bārsuān would be connected to Talcher by railway. Till this opportunity comes villages and their products in Kalā valley cannot form the "hinterland" of Rourkela and Bārsuān, simply because of transport difficulties. Any surplus grains, pulse, oilseeds and vegetables will be till then drawing towards Kalā market as before. However, if there be some (semi-) permanent settlement of Pāuri Bhuiyān and other round the mines, only then arises the question of some fundamental break with the past. Otherwise, in seasonal labour the younger generation will be richer and freer, away from the restraining hand of the village elders, and thus slowly a process of detribalization may set in. How far the Pāuri Bhuiyān will take part in running the machines at far-off Rourkela is yet a matter to guess. On the other hand, taking to contractual labour at mines seasonally may pervade to other activities in the valley.

## 7. DIRECTIONS and MOTIVATIONS of SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE

Whatever their original language might have been, speaking Oriya has distinguished the Pāuri Bhuiyān from most of the tribes of the region and has thus brought them nearer to Oriya folk literature of the Hindu neighbours. Since long the Pāuri have accepted, even brought about, the rule of Hindu Rajas and were in turn accorded high ritual status in their communication

with the Hindus. The incorporation of some popular Hindu goddesses and rituals speaks of their definite inclination towards Hinduism. This was facilitated by their traditional reverence for cows and no rearing of pigs, as also by their attitude towards untouchable castes and tribes. Ritual considerations are also extended to govern their communication with strangers as well as other sections of the Bhuiyān population. The washermen have already become essential in their life crises. Of course, they are yet far from being Hindu, not even as much as the Gond may claim to be Hindu. Their story presents some close parallel to the story of the Gond, who have gradually transformed themselves from a Dravidian-speaking tribe to an Oriya speaking cultivating clean caste in North Orissa as a whole. The Gond, more literate and ambitious, now organize operas on mythological Hindu themes or even some patent social problems like an old man marrying a young girl. The Pāuri Bhuiyān in South-east Bonai have not yet come to that degree of Hinduization. At Ladumdih I found some men of the village Tanugulā very anxious to parade their knowledge by reading 'Purān' or Hindu mythological poetry books and sing songs taken from the cheap compilations of folk poetry, often mythological in contents. The same preoccupation with mythological heroes and themes was also observed at Tasrā. Here an old man, who had learnt Oriya folk poetry, was respected as a good singer, for he not only know Pāuri songs but also could augment his stock from another, and in their view, richer source, it must be noted that no Pāuri Bhuiyān, it is alleged also no Plains Bhuiyān, had ever been coaxed into conversion into Christianity or Islam. The fact that the Pāuri Bhuiyān and Gour assimilate women from each other through ritual purification does point to the social and ritual status the Pāuri have in mind in the hierarchy of Hindu caste system for a long time. Barbers have lately shown no objection in shaving them at markets.

Their attitude towards Hinduization will be still clearer from their reference to the Pāuri of Kuirā Parganā of Bonai and to Kanti Bhuiyān section. The Kanti Bhuiyān section, more Hinduized, engaging Brahman priests, are openly acknowledged to be higher than 'Māla Bhuiyān or Pāuri Bhuiyān. In 1953 the sitting of 'Mahādesa' at Badbil was held expressly to go along the way of the Pāuri of Kuirā Parganā, who are known to be more Hinduized, also engaging Brahman priests. There is already a movement brewing in Keonjhar, started by some educated Pāuri, to leave 'Cāngu' dance, marriage by capture, and high bride-price. Curiously enough, no mention is made of stopping early marriage, prevalent among Gour, Teli and a few other castes as among the Pāuri Bhuiyān. Though wearing of "sacred thread" is of importance only for the Brahman today, there has been a rage among the Pāuri Bhuiyān, which is yet to be adopted by their brethren in South-east-Bonai.

Thus it would seem the wind has been blowing, and is blowing hard now in the direction of Hinduization, aided by conscious choice as at 'Mahādesa' meetings and by social reformers or enthusiasts thrown out by school education. Living in the valley on taking to settled agriculture, dressing as the higher castes do, building houses of mud wall and wooden doors as among



the average plains dwellers, gradually leaving the custom of sleeping in dormitories as in two colonies, Ekpādi and Jhinkar Gahirā, and in villages, Phuljhar and Biḍāpāni Jala, gradually taking to washing after defecation, etc. will pave the way for greater similarities in socio-cultural habits with the clean castes of the region. They have already begun cremating their illustrious dead for 2 generations at least. This may be more frequent in the colonies due to greater wealth. Thus a great difference with the Hindus may gradually disappear. As in the region there is no purdah system or taboo on women to work in the field, the Pāuri will not be handicapped.

Hinduism as a religion and a social system is not a mystery to the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, especially in the popular form practised locally. The most prosperous are among the Hindus, who are dominant politically, socially and economically. The Pāuri Bhuiyāñ are already assured of a high ritual status and also good social status in the valley and dominant political status in the colonies. By ultimately becoming Hindu they are not going to lose in any way. If they may not be able to do any basketry (or weaving if ever learnt), for fear of losing caste, they are not going to be economically hard hit, as the handicrafts are more for self-sufficiency than for sale and as money will be better earned at the mines. By becoming Hindu they may hope to further their social status even higher than that of the Gonḍ, thus lower only to the Casā and the Brahman. Though the advantages may not yet be clearly foreseen their resolution to go ahead towards Hinduzation as in Kuirā and Keonjhar shows that they are convinced of not losing in the process.

While the total society is heading towards identification with Hinduzed Bhuiyāñ there are some other changes going on within the society. Social status has a tendency, in the colonies, to be based rather on wealth than on heredity, as the prerogatives of 'Māṭiālī' section have no sanction in the changed circumstances. Power has tended to be shared with the 'Parjā' especially in "Grām Pancāyat" organization.

The 'Māṭiālī' sections of Deruḷā, Tasrā, and Kundlā are 'Kuṭumb' to each other. But since about 1954-55 the custom of sharing bride-price in case of 'magā' marriage has been discontinued between Deruḷā and Kundlā, the latter then in a government colony. This shows that the 'Kuṭumb' relationship may loosen as a result of settling in the valley colonies. Thus, narrowing of kinship ties may perhaps not be ruled out as a future gradual development.

As the occasions of communal cooperation have decreased, except in the ritual sphere, among the owners of agricultural land, and as the colonists have become on the whole more self-sufficient with regard to means of production through government subsidy, the tendency towards a growing emphasis on self-interest and individualistic enterprise is already evident. On the other hand, the women folk tend to be more dependent on their menfolk under conditions of settled agriculture in the colonies.

Quarrels in respect of settled lands have already begun to be brought before the "Grām Pancāyat", even to be dragged to the courts, rather than being settled by the village Assembly. Some personal quarrels from Derulā have also come up before the "Pancāyat". The threat of elders to take some cases before the police show that the village Assembly is losing power both to the "Pancāyat" and the police.

That the younger generation has not much nostalgia for the past is partly inferred from the following unconscious experiment. I was requested to give them some songs, as they loved songs from outside sources to dangle them as novelties before the dazed damsels of other villages. And in their experience all literate men knew so many songs. As I did not know I had to compose four songs and they selected two of them, one was based on the difference in economic condition and certain difficulties and the other took romantic love as the theme—both in their specific Pāuri context. The rejected ones were: firstly, an exhortation showing 'Cāngu', native beer, hunting, native cigar, swidden cultivation, fruit tree growing, bachelors' dormitory, etc. as worthy of Pāuri Bhuiyāñ; secondly, on 'Raja Parab' swing with which the young persons play. Although patterned after a 'Cāngu' dance song of similar nature, taken from Plainsmen, the first one was rejected rather for the unsuitability of the theme for the youngmen than for the familiarity of its images. If the latter were the deciding factor the love-song would not have been accepted.

Motivations towards literacy or school education show rather pointedly the depth of change between a hill village and a settled valley village. At Tasrā an old man with others of his or a previous generation had learnt the 3 R's from another Pāuri Bhuiyāñ of Bargulā village, Keonjhar. This was about 50-45 years ago. The teacher had died at Tasrā after teaching some 8 or 10 boys for 3 years. The old man had preserved "books" in plam leaf (namely, 'Bhuta Keli', 'Bhāgabata', 'Keshaba Khulli', arithmetic and Almanac). Later on he lost several children and suspected some evil spirit in the "books" and threw them on the floor. The books were eaten away by white ants in no time. To this day he remembers many songs these books and others he had read. Youngmen, both married and unmarried, evinced interest in learning the alphabet expressly to record songs when hearing dancing parties from other villages and thereby to keep them for all time without the risk of forgetting. As I and my work-assistant helped them in this they surprised us by proposing that they were prepared to bear the costs of supporting my work-assistant for teaching them after my departure. During the course of teaching their interest was first focused on writing their own and father's names and some of them had very sharp memory in picking up the letters. But their interest soon flagged as they were more busy and especially as they were anxious about the time of my departure, only after which they had decided to cut swiddens. However, the attempts at literacy may also be interpreted as an effort to be not lagging behind the neighbours at Tanugulā, Radā and Ladumdih.



At Derulā in the valley, however, the picture was completely different. The old and elderly men approached me for getting a school for tribals started at Derulā. Their goal was to procure some men among themselves who would understand the intricacies of and forest laws, calculate rates of interest, execute deeds of lease and mortgage properly, and speak and write to officers on the difficulties of the villagers, (besides, of course, reading 'Purān' or mythological Hindu poetry, which was not upper most in their mind). Thus they wanted school education as a defensive weapon against the subtle money-lenders and ruinous land-alienation. I do not know if these motivations, apart from gaining social status, were at the back of school attendance in the colonies. As the teachers say, only a small proportion of children of school-going age attend the schools and most are deterred by agricultural demands on their help. Girls are not at all favoured to be educated, as they say, no useful, foreseeable purpose could be served by that. In this both the colonies and the settled village Derulā agree. Thus it seems in the colonies school education is taken rather as a part of the official compulsive situation, in which the colonies themselves were established.

In the sphere of world view also some other changes may soon be evident. In 1954 at Tasrā a young priests seriously doubted the wisdom of offering 'Paṇā' (sweet water) to demons, as the paddy pests increased even after the fourth offering. Readily available medical, veterinary, and plant protection, and school education, as also general well-being, may gradually weaken the hold of demons and deities as also weed out sorcery. Such secularization may not however come true, till the other local tribes and castes are not equally affected.

Lastly, it is clear that the inauguration of "Grām Pancāyat" and extention of adult franchise for State and Union Parliaments, as also the opening of roads, schools, post offices, N.E.S. Block, etc. are drawing the Pāuri Bhuiyān into the national life more and more.

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In the end we may examine, following Redfield, whether Tasrā represents a folk or peasant society. Further, we may also discuss to what extent it is an solable unit of socio-economic study.

### 1. FOLK or PEASANT SOCIETY ?

Tasrā consisting of 156 souls is, indeed, a small community. It maintains a distinctiveness in defined physical boundary and in consciousness of belonging together to a community. It is homogeneous, that is, "Activities and states of mind are much alike for all persons in corresponding sex and age position; and the career of one generation repeats that of the preceding." (Redfield, 1955, p.4). It is a "cradle-to-the-grave arrangement" for most of the population and "provides for all or most of the activities and needs of the people in it." It is obviously a "Little community" of Redfield's specifications (ibid).

Tasrā is, however, a little community of Pāuri Bhuiyān tribals. This immediately raises the question whether it represents a primitive, a folk, or a peasant society in Redfield's conceptions (ibid, p.131).

Taking the Siriono hunting and food-collecting bands in the harsh Bolivian forests as an example he notes, " ... such a society will be more individualistic, less communalistic than other societies; or that the moral norms of the society will be less altruistic than they will be in societies better provided with food, shelter, and physical security. The most complete approximation of the imagined folk society will not be found among such peoples as the Siriono" (1955, pp.144-45). In India the Daflā of Subansiri Frontier Division in the Eastern Cis-Himalayan tract conform substantially to this portrait of primitive life (Furer-Haimendorf, 1956, pp.120-122, 201). However, the Daflā are a tribe of shifting cultivators. On the other hand, among the Birhor and Hill Khariā food-collectors, as depicted by S.C. Roy, communalistic and altruistic activities are highly developed. At any rate, Tasrā, with its institutionalized pattern of sharing and caring, of reciprocity and communal activities, is still farther away from a primitive life of the Siriono, who are, furthermore, exceptionally isolated (Redfield, 1955, p.114).

We may now systematically point out in what manner and in which aspects of life Tasrā represents a folk society or a peasant society. We may take Derulā, a settled Pāuri village in the Kalā valley, and Mahulpadā, another settled village in the valley, for the sake of comparison and contrast. The composition of the latter villages may be seen on page 17. It will also be remembered that Mahulpadā has a Police Station, a Post-Office, a weekly market, a small grocery shop, a school, and is the seat of the local "Grām Pancāyat". For about a generation a motorable road has connected Mahulpadā with Bonaigarh, and since 1957 it has been extended to Derulā, where a school was established in 1954. Mahulpadā and Derulā had a population of 202 and 289, respectively, in 1951 Census. The statements on Mahulpadā and Derulā are only tentative in nature, awaiting intensive studies.

It must be noted from the outset that the two hamlets of Tasrā constitute one face-to-face group in as much as most of the inhabitants of either hamlet meet most members of the other hamlet daily. The small size, proximity, and numerous ties besides historical unity lie behind this situation. Derulā and Mahulpadā are both bigger villages with hamlets of other ethnic groups. Though the core of Derulā village, consisting of the Pāuri Bhuiyān, behaves like one primary group, two other Pāuri hamlets of immigrants and another of the Mundā Kolha present a situation of secondary group formation, alien to Tasrā. Similar is the case of Mahulpadā with the untouchable Pān and the Pāuri in separate hamlets. This is primarily because of the ethnic and cultural homogeneity and historical unity of Tasrā, which is lacking in Derulā and Mahulpadā in respect of their hamlets. Besides, ritual and social distance are added factors between the ethnic groups in the latter.



Tasrā lying in its hill fastness is much more isolated physically than Derulā and Mahulpadā. Tasrā's isolation is intensified by illiteracy, which shuts them off from communication with other times, peoples and cultures, not to mention the resulting felt impoverishment in songs. Some literacy had penetrated into Tasrā in the last generation, and it was partly for keeping the face among the neighbouring villages of Ladumdih, Tanugulā, Raḍā, and partly for being able to record songs or recite Oriya religious literature. This last use is similar to recording of the sacred lore by the "literati". But in Derulā the demand for a school was based on the need for an "intelligentsia" in Toynbee's sense, "who mediate between the society out of which they arose and some other and alien civilization which is impinging upon it" (Redfield, 1953, p.43). This use of literacy characterizes a peasant society rather than a folk society (ibid, p.44). Although Tasrā Bhuiyāñ prized literacy for reasons of status, somewhat like the Yucatecar peasants (ibid, p.37), it cannot be said of him, (unlike in case of Derulā, more so of Mahulpadā), that "... the existence of the art of writing has become an element in his mode of life, although he himself perhaps cannot read and write" (ibid, p.36). However, notices concerning "Grām Pancāyat" matters and election have begun to come to Tasrā and he cannot possibly ignore them much longer.

In spite of frequent visits to the markets and relatives in other villages Tasrā men are much less travelled than Derulā or Mahulpadā men. Very few of the former have visited Bonaigarh or Keonjargarh, the administrative seat of Keonjhar District (ex-state) lying at the eastern end of the Pāuri habitat. Also very few strangers or officials visit Tasrā, more go to Derulā, and most frequently their destination is Mahulpadā. A few own bicycles at Mahulpadā and visit Bonaigarh often. At Derulā bullock carts are not yet used by the Pāuri.

While land-and revenue disputes from Derulā, and more so from Mahulpadā, go to Bonaigarh courts, only serious violent cases from Tasrā reach Mahulpadā Police-Station, but not yet the new "Pancāyat". Village solidarity and distrust of outsiders, and above all, a lack of tradition of outsiders sitting on judgement on village affairs, are marked in Tasrā in contrast with Derulā and Mahulpadā, where people run to officials for redress. Moreover, Tasrā has barest ties with Bonaigarh for paying the nominal plough-tax and the religious tribute. Derulā men are charged land-tax according to the size of holdings, as in other settled villages, and receive written official documents of rights in their land. In this connection we may note Redfield's dictum: "... When tribute is regularized into taxation, a tribal people is on the way to becoming peasantry" (ibid, p.32). The plough-tax is levied on Tasrā as a whole and is shared equally by every household, whether owning cattle or not. When compared to the land tax realized from only the land-holding section in the valley according to the size of property, this plough-tax is obviously in the nature of a tribute, fixed as it may be.

Though all the three villages depend on Kalā market-town in Bamra and form its productive hinterland, their dependence is of different order and is internally differentiated. Shifting

cultivators of Tasrā and Derulā have a largely self-sufficient economy and exchange some of their products for rice and a little money. The landowning agriculturists of Derulā, supplementing their resources from shifting cultivation, are perhaps the most self-sufficient in the region. But they and other agriculturists of Mahulpadā mostly sell their surplus products for money. The cash crops, sugar cane, oilseeds, pulses, vegetables, wheat, and lately potato, bring more cash and contribute more substantially to the income of Mahulpadā agriculturists. Moreover, households are least self-sufficient at Mahulpadā, as certain activities are here done by specialized castes. The people of Mahulpadā have to buy more things from the markets than in Derulā and Tasrā. A few engage in trading and peddling things from the outside at the former village, and earn money also as petty officials, contractor's agents, or wages from outsiders. There is not only more money in circulation at Mahulpadā but also the households are functionally interdependent due to the operation of caste system. By contrast, the households are largely autonomous with little internal trade or exchange at Tasrā. While at Mahulpadā economic relations tend to be impersonal due to ethnic heterogeneity and ritual and social distance and presence of a fluctuating number of outsiders, at Tasrā all intra-village economic relations are personal and primarily social relations. Derulā appears to hold an intermediate position.

Mahulpadā manifests what Redfield calls "pecuniary spirit" to some extent in the calculation of advantages of cultivating this or that crop. Derulā is not averse to growing vegetables or even sugar cane, if all the land-holders do it, thus minimizing chances of sorcery. Although money has recently entered into Tasrā economy firmly but in meagre quantity the pecuniary interest is not obvious, except perhaps in stick-lac raising as at Derulā. However, the motive of commercial gain in bargaining with outsiders is not foreign to Tasrā villagers.

Redfield notes, "In the ideal folk society all the tools and ways of production are shared by everybody" (1947). At Tasrā means of production are on the whole equitably shared, especially land and cattle, for nominal or no consideration. At Derulā there is a class of have-nots who do not own any landed property or cattle. At Mahulpadā concentration of wealth and means of production is still more noticeable among the agriculturists and there is much greater economic differentiation than at Tasrā or Derulā. Thus, economic stratification, a typical feature of Indian peasant villages (or Mukherjee, 1957) has crystallized at Mahulpadā and to a large extent at Derulā, is barely visible at Tasrā. Tasrā is however, the most egalitarian of the three.

At Tasrā all villagers (the Gour family residing seasonally excepted) are kinsmen, at Derulā most are kinsmen (the Pāuri being the majority), while at Mahulpadā most of the population are not kinsmen to each other. While kinship including ritual friendship may be most important and all-pervading at Tasrā it is least so at Mahulpadā. The village solidarity seems to be least pronounced at Mahulpadā, while Tasrā's communal bonds seem the strongest. This will be apparent also from Wolf's remark for Latin America, that "... community controls tend to be



strongest where land is owned in common and reallocated among members every year" (1955, p.457). Diverse economic and social interests, intensified by caste and ritual seclusion, inequality in economic opportunities and presence of outsiders, have tended to weaken the community bonds at Mahulpadā, only less so at Derulā. On the other hand, the whole of Tasrā community is after all a kin group with a rather egalitarian sharing of resources among near or distant kinsmen. Typically of Tasrā the relationship with outsiders tends to be patterned on Kinship in ritual friendships, rather than on economical or political-administrative basis, as at Mahulpadā, and less so at Derulā. But unlike in an ideal folk society, outsiders are no enemies at Tasrā (of Redfield, 1953, p.33), however "inward looking" it may be.

In accommodating strangers in the community the three villagers also show fundamental divergences. Only the Gour caste from the valley has been allowed to settle at Tasrā or even admitted into the society as a wife. This is a traditional allowance. Similarly, ritual friendships even with the untouchable Cerengā Kolha show the need of the Pāuri to come to some good understanding with the outsiders. These "institutionalized forms for admitting strangers" (ibid, p.33) are a feature of the peasant society. However, the Mundā Kolha were accepted as 'Parjā' at Derulā with whom the Pāuri had no traditional relations. Derulā also lately welcomed a school-teacher. At Mahulpadā most outsiders are imposed and some were even courted. Characteristically, the strangers participate in the local life the most at Tasrā and the least at Mahulpadā, and at Derulā the Mundā Kolha keep largely aloof.

Further, Mahulpadā depends on the outside world, on the towns for its inspirations and values, and in the terms of Redfield, shares in the same "moral world" as towns. "It does not follow that the peasant looks upward to the city in everything" (ibid, p.38). Redfield means by city both "town and city" (ibid, p.30). At Tasrā only in dress (including hair-cutting) and some rituals the plainsways, largely reflected from the local market-town Kalā, are consciously cultivated. Sharp practices at the market, meanness and selfishness as also the slighting attitude of the towns people rather scare them from the townways. Derulā since long conversant with them and committed to agriculture in the valley has chosen to share increasingly with the outside world in order to get on in its march. Their clamour for school education is a sign of that. Thereby the younger generation may ultimately come to be more and more conforming to the townways of Bonaigarh and Kalā. Compared to Tasrā Derulā is more open to, and more prepared for, change, and Mahulpadā, the most.

Redfield notes "... an important, perhaps the important, aspect of the folk society..." in the following manner. "The ways in which the members of the society meet the recurrent problems of life are conventionalized ways; they are the results of long intercommunication within the group in the face of these problems; ..." (1947). Without doubt it is true of Tasrā so long as they have little to do with the unpredictable forces or demands of the outside world. The "common understandings as to the ends given" are most apparent at Tasrā and the least so at Mahulpadā.

where there are more individualization and a greater range of choices. It is only partly true of Mahulpadā, however fully applicable to Tasrā it may be, that an "... individual's status is... in a large part fixed at birth; it changes as he lives, but it changes in ways which were 'foreordained' by the nature of his particular society" (Redfield, 1947). Thus, as in the folk society, at Tasrā the behavior is overwhelmingly traditional, spontaneous (notwithstanding formal expressions on ceremonial occasions), personal. It is also uncritical in the following sense. "The Indians decide how to go on a hunt; but it is not a matter of debate whether or not one should, from time to time hunt" (ibid). The hamlets of Derulā safely be described by these characteristics to a large extent. But at Mahulpada things have tended to change, mostly because of school education, diverse economic interests, and constant presence of, and interference by, outsiders. Moreover, Tasrā forms a part of what Redfield speaks of as "sacred society", as the uncritical attitude merges with a "... disposition to regard objects as sacred (which) extends, characteristically, even into the subsistence activities and into the foodstuffs of the people" (bracket added, 1947). However, in this characteristic Mahulpadā and Derulā do not seem to differ much from Tasrā, if the resident outsiders are excepted.

Coming thus far we may sum up that among the three villages Tasrā approaches nearest to a community of the "folk society" rather than to that of the "peasant society". But as we have seen, Tasrā has been striving along with other Pāūrī villages of the region to adopt the plainsways like their Kuirā Parganā brethren, and already in some aspects of life plainsways have been accepted as the norm and pattern. With their economic dependence on the markets, and through stick-lac on the world market, and political and administrative subordination to Mahulpadā and Bonaigarh town, formerly also to Kumudih as the seat of the 'Parganā', they have come to form intimate relations of give and take with the larger society around them over hundreds of years. Taking Redfield's typology of the transformed "folk" communities on the way to "peasant" society (1953, pp.41-47), we may characterize Tasrā as a community of the "enclaved folk" (ibid, pp.44-5). The Pāūrī Bhuiyāñ in similar hill villages are not only enclaved physically by their Hindu neighbours, but also socially and morally by the Hindu social and religious systems. They are "politically and morally independent" only in so far as the village affairs as such are concerned. But already in the circumstances of their settling in valley colonies the pace towards peasantry has quickened. Derulā had long taken the definite step towards becoming a peasant village when it took to settled agriculture in the valley. Its progress on this line has recently been aided by opening of the school and the road. Mahulpadā was almost from the start a peasant village; in its modern shape and prospective acquisition of a motor-driven water-pump, a radio, and imminent practice of intensive agriculture with chemical fertilizers and growing of cash crops on a large scale, it may come to house some commercial-minded farmers on the one hand, and to evolve into a small interior town. Already it shows some features of a pre-industrial town, as depicted by Sjöberg (1955) for pre-industrial cities.



On the lines of contrasting concepts of Maine, - "status" versus "contract", of Morgan, - "societas" versus "civitas", of Tonnies, - "Gemeinschaft" versus "Gesellschaft", of Durkheim, - "Social judgement" versus "social organ", and of Odum, - "folkways" versus "technicways" or state way "Redfield develops an "Ideal-typical folk society" in contrast to "urbansociety" or "civilization" (Redfield, 1955, pp.140-44). He became "interested in the characterization of the over-all transformations of human living from precivilized to modern times, as guided by the conception of the folk society and in the examination of the types of urban societies as they affect the folk societies and give rise to new forms of society.." (ibid, p.143). In order to avoid further misunderstanding he emphasized, "In every isolated little community there is civilization; in every city there is the folk society" (ibid, p.146).

I have tentatively accepted Redfield's analysis mainly to show the process of socio-cultural change in Mahulpadā region with particular reference to the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ. Unfortunately, instead of pointing out which aspects of a particular society or community are folk-like and which others urban, Redfield has designated whole communities or societies as folk, thus going against his own valuable approach quoted above. Therefore, it has resulted in an unrealistic lumping together, in the concept of folk society, of primitive tribes who are just marginal to civilization with other tribes like the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, the Bhumij, the Gond, the Bhill, etc., who like the Yucatecan or Tepoztlan villagers, have developed relations of give and take with the larger society over hundreds of years (cf. Foster, 1953, p.162-6). The folk society of Foster (1953), on the other hand, is really a "half-society" as an integral part of a larger society including cities and centres of "intellectual thought and development". Redfield rightly equates his peasant society with Foster's folk society (Redfield, 1956, p.69). The apparent contradiction between their approaches has been resolved by Mintz thus: "Redfield is primarily interested in the delineation of processes of change, *qua* change" (1954, p.87), while "Foster... is apparently interested in trying to establish a classification of societal, subcultural or community types in terms of structure" (ibid, p.88). Redfield himself has tried to offer a typology of transformed folk societies on way to peasanthood (1953, pp.41-47) to meet the need for classification. However, we may not neglect consideration of structure in favour of process of transformation, for both approaches have significant contributions to our understanding of the social realities under flux.

Moreover, the popular meaning of "folk culture" (as easily read in "folk-lore", "folk-costume") as equivalent to the "little tradition" in rural areas (as opposed to the "great tradition" emanating from cities and centres of learning) creates difficulties for a new technical use of the term "folk". On the other hand, Mintz rightly observes (1954, p.92), "Neither of these scholars, however has dealt with the interrelationships of concepts of the folk and the phenomenon of class. Until this interrelationship is clear, the folk culture concept may prove to be stumbling block to the creation of a more detailed and discriminating typology of societies, subcultures, and communities."

But the difficulty of terminology may be faced by citing the gap in meaning of "culture" between its popular and literary use and its anthropological sophistication. The other criticism is not easy to meet, especially at the present state of research. If, however, a continuum be constructed on the plane of interaction with civilization, and the stratified societies be conceived as constituting single cultures, the following tentative, simple, scheme may be considered in the light of modern political and cultural developments.

Those ethnic groups or tribes, which have occasional trade and barter while maintaining their moral, social, economic, religious and internal political autonomy, may be designated "marginal societies" in preference to "primitive societies". Those ethnical minorities, tribes, or caste-like groups, who, living in largely exclusive villages or hamlets, yet in contact with the larger society over hundreds of years, have accepted some social, moral, religious and economic values, have become partly economically dependent in a regular exchange of their products for their subsistence, without however displaying "pecuniary spirit" may be called, for want of a better term, "associative societies". The "Associative societies", it must be remembered, are not yet parts of the larger society around them, though more or less they may tend towards that status. "Minority Peoples" are more of a "partner" than of an associate, "yet retaining for a long time... cultural distinctiveness" (Redfield, 1953, p.45). The examples are: Scottish Highlanders, Maoris of New Zealand, the Plains Bhuiyāñ, the Bhil, and the Gond who have recently become assimilated in part in the caste structure of India as whole societies. Redfield notes, "... they make an adjustment which retains their own traditional moral order in considerable degree while yet they take a part in the engulfing society" (ibid). The "peasant", the "rural farmer", and the "suburbanite", may still be other types conforming to Redfield's conceptions (ibid, p.53), which interpose between "minority peoples" and the "urban societies". Due to rapid acculturation the Lushāi and the Khāsi of Assam have become very much like "minority peoples", without having been "associative societies". Therefore, no succession of stage is here propounded. Similarly, the "marginal" and "associative" societies, as also the "minority peoples" or even the peasants, may be socially stratified, but this stratification is based primarily on hereditary privileges, and not economic advantages.

One advantage of such a scheme is that it leaves the Redfieldian concepts of "folkness" and "civilization" free to be applied to various societies on the scale of interaction. Under modern conditions of rapid communication and expanding civilization it will be hard to find an ideal folk society of Redfield's specifications. But, nonetheless, it would be a valuable aspect of holistic studies to ascertain to what extent a particular community exhibits "folkness" and "civilization", or, as Redfield himself expresses, "folkways" and "stateways" or "city ways" (1955, p.131). Moreover, as Miner suggests, one should also observe the degree of differentiation of communities of the same society on the scale of folk-urban continuum (Miner, 1956), which aspect has also been neglected hitherto.



## 2. AN ISOLABLE UNIT of STUDY ?

We have seen how Tasrā has marital and economic ties with a good number of villages and markets, political dependence on administrative centres and ritual dependence on the washerman caste. The 'Bār' organization and the 'Mahādesa' or regional assembly are institutionalized forms of socio-ritual and socio-political dependence of Tasrā on other villages. In Redfield's typology it is a community of "enclaved folk" society, equivalent to the more inclusive "associative society" on the continuum suggested by me. Its relations are not restricted to the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ of other villages, but are extended to various castes and tribes of the region. Thus viewed Tasrā is not only not isolated, but also is not fully "inward looking" as a folk society ideally is. Tasrā simply cannot be thought of alone, to the exclusion of its vital ties with the outside world, as a Siriono band may be.

Redfield is conscious of such limitations in Indian conditions. He notes candidly, "Those who have recently been studying rural India tell us that in parts of that country the village is plainly an insufficient unit of study; it is no isolate but rather a focus for understanding wide and complex communities. One village may have traditional relationships through marriage and caste with scores of or even with several hundred other villages. There the village is a unit in some sense; in others the unit is rural network or lattice." (1955, p.128). Lewis similarly speaks of Rampur peasant village near Delhi, "... this relatively small village of 150 households becomes the locus of affinal kinship ties with over four hundred other villages. This makes for a kind of rural cosmopolitanism which is in sharpest contrast to the village isolation in Mexico" (1958, p.320). Tasrā, not yet a peasant village, shows to a large extent this "rural cosmopolitanism", and is almost unthinkable without its "rural lattice", which we have already examined in the last two parts of this work. On the other hand, it will be our endeavour to show to what extent villages like Tasrā falling in the "associative society" may still be studied with profit as an isolable unit of socio-economic study, if not an isolate. For doing this let us survey briefly the various features of Tasrā community where it shows isolable qualities, following the valuable cue given by Srinivas (1955, pp.22-24).

Firstly, Tasrā has a physical unity, as its boundaries are well-defined, and the villagers live in a nucleated settlement and feel like a united group as against other villages. Except for the trees "reserved" by the Government they have absolute rights of exploitation in the village territory.

Secondly, the political-jural unity of the village is also pronounced, only in cases of murder, suicide or similar serious violent crimes are they subject to the police station. They decide other disputes among themselves, incorporate new members and even expel undesirable ones. Payment of land-tax to the Government by the village as a collective unit only expresses this unity.



Thirdly, the village is a ritual unity in the sense that the boundary has ritual significance, as also that the village celebrates so many rituals and festivals as a group in the interest of common well-being, bumper crops, and better health. Moreover, rituals and festivals may differ from village to village even within the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ society. Thus, Derujā and Laḍumḍih worship some other 'Pāi' deities, Burhābhiñ (south) does not celebrate any 'Āgcalā' worship or 'Karmā Parab', and till 1957 Tasrā had no 'Bisri Usā'. However, the 'Bār' organization have separate patron deities, which are also worshipped by the local non-Pāuri. When a man is to be socio-ritually readmitted into the Pāuri society a villager has to call upon the 'Bār' organization. To that extent Tasrā is not a completely closed unit, though it is an autonomous ritual unit in other respects.

Fourthly, the village is characterized by an economy which makes each household and the village as a whole self-sufficient to a large extent. They consume most of what they produce and the few crops or commodities exchanges for other goods are for consumption purposes. Though they have entered into the world market by way of stick lac, its importance in the economy has only recently increased due to stoppage of growing cotton in the swideen and the resulting greater demand for money to buy cloth with. The markets and money have entered into their lives firmly though in restricted spheres. However, we must agree with Dr. Marian W. Smith (Srinivas, 1955, p. 154) in the following relevant observation, "As long as we mean by self-sufficiency in Indian an earlier condition under which few manufactured items were introduced into the village from outside, we are treading on fairly safe ground." This picture is largely true of Tasrā today also.

Fifthly, the village may be said to have also moral unity. Once it characterized the neighbouring Raḍā village as greedy over bride-price, and Tanugulā villagers as inefficient in hunting, Tasrā villagers have local pride, when they try to excel others in dancing or singing or even in occasional games when relatives visit. When away from the village they are conscious about keeping the good name of the village untarnished. Within the village hospitality and similar norms of behavior serve the same end.

Lastly, but not the least, the village has a cultural unity, which is pronounced in contrast with Mahulpadā. In the words of Srinivas (1955, p. 2), "Each caste has a culture of its own which is to some extent different from the culture of the others." Even if we substitute the term "culture" with "sub-culture" in respect of castes, Mahulpadā cannot be said to be culturally homogeneous. There is no cultural difference between the 'mātiālī' and the 'Parjā' sections of Tasrā, as there is between Pān and Casā, or Gond and Gour in Mahulpadā. This cultural unity may be assumed in those communities of "marginal", "associative" societies, and "minority peoples", among whom social stratification is loose, as among the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ.



Thus we find that villages like Tasrā, mostly isolated, homogeneous, having physical, ritual, political- jural, moral and cultural unity, and limited self- sufficiency have a measure of autonomy and individually that merits specific study. Srinivas, speaking mainly of peasant villages of India notes, "Each village has a pattern and mode of life which is to some extent unique." (ibid. p.2). If this be true of peasant villages it is still truer of communities of "associative societies" like the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ villages. Not only there are economical and cultural differences as between Keonjhar, Bonai, PalLahara and Bamara Pāuri Bhuiyāñ and even between villages in the same ex-State, but also there are various grades of association of individual Pāuri villages with the dominant and engulfing society. Daylabour may be important side-occupation near the mines, or petty trading near markets, and sharing of religion and literature of the larger society may differ from village to village. Besides, an intensive study of a particular village, like Tasrā, in a largely homogeneous culture, like that of the Pāuri Bhuiyāñ, shows to what extent the structure of society and economy may be clearly understood, and even to some extent unearthed. The important distinction between the 'Māṭiālī' and the 'Paṇḍā' has been possible to grasp through such an intensive socio-economic village study rather than through a general ethnographic survey, as by S.C. Roy.

Therefore, we may conclude, that however limited the self-sufficiency and the autonomy of a village community like Tasrā may be, it is imperative to study it as a whole, as a unit, as Redfield has tried to depict in his little community. But on the other hand, this study must have to be supplemented with nay, integrated into, an analysis of its relations and interactions with the outside towns and villages. This approach is unavoidable for studying communities of "associative" and other societies, if not of "marginal societies."

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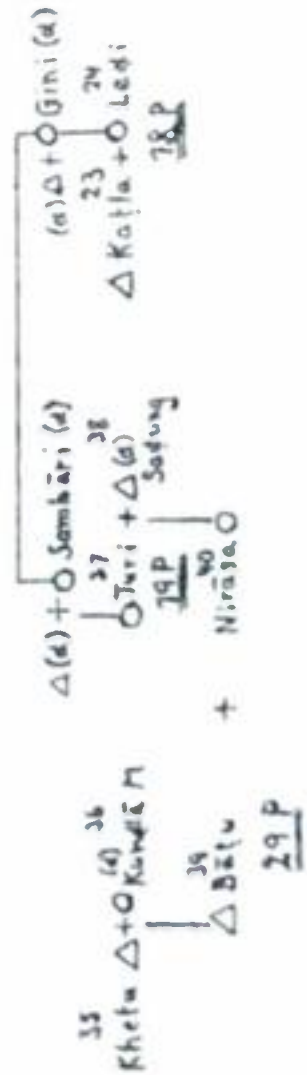
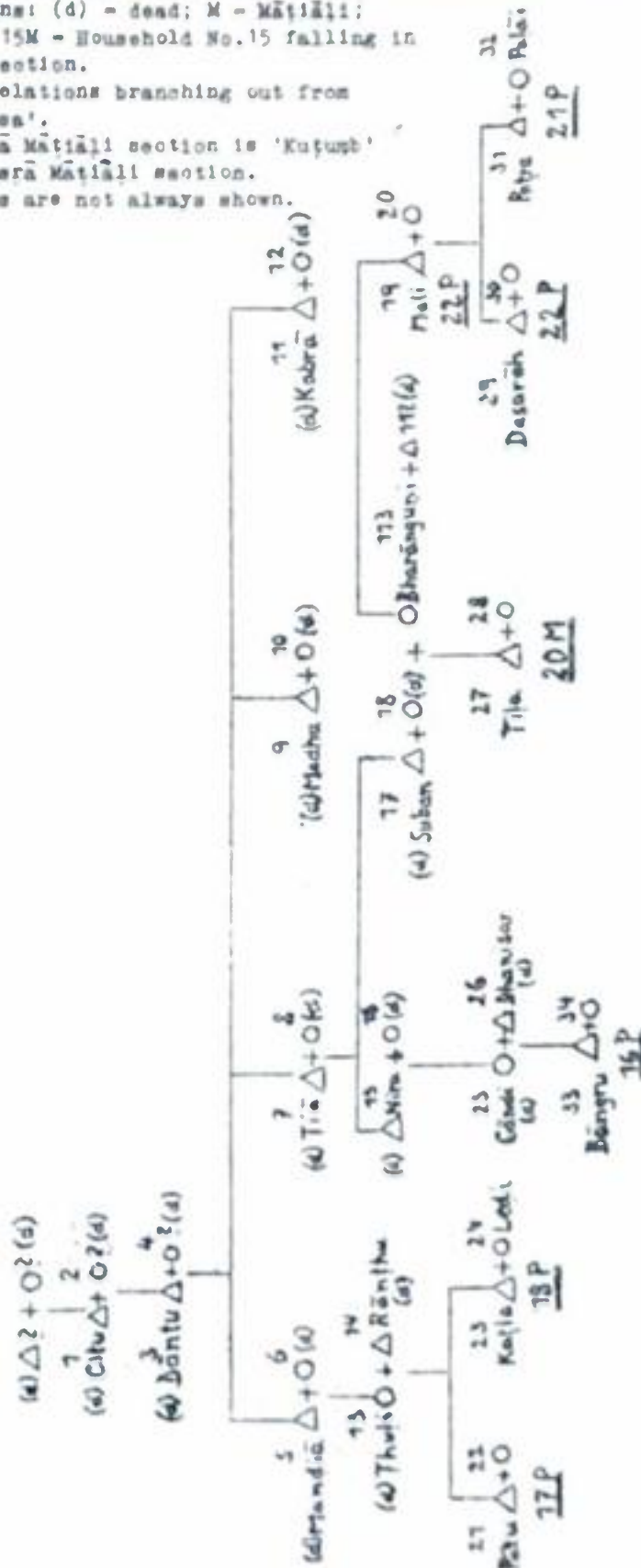
# Appendix

## The Genealogical Network of Taarā (shortened and simplified)

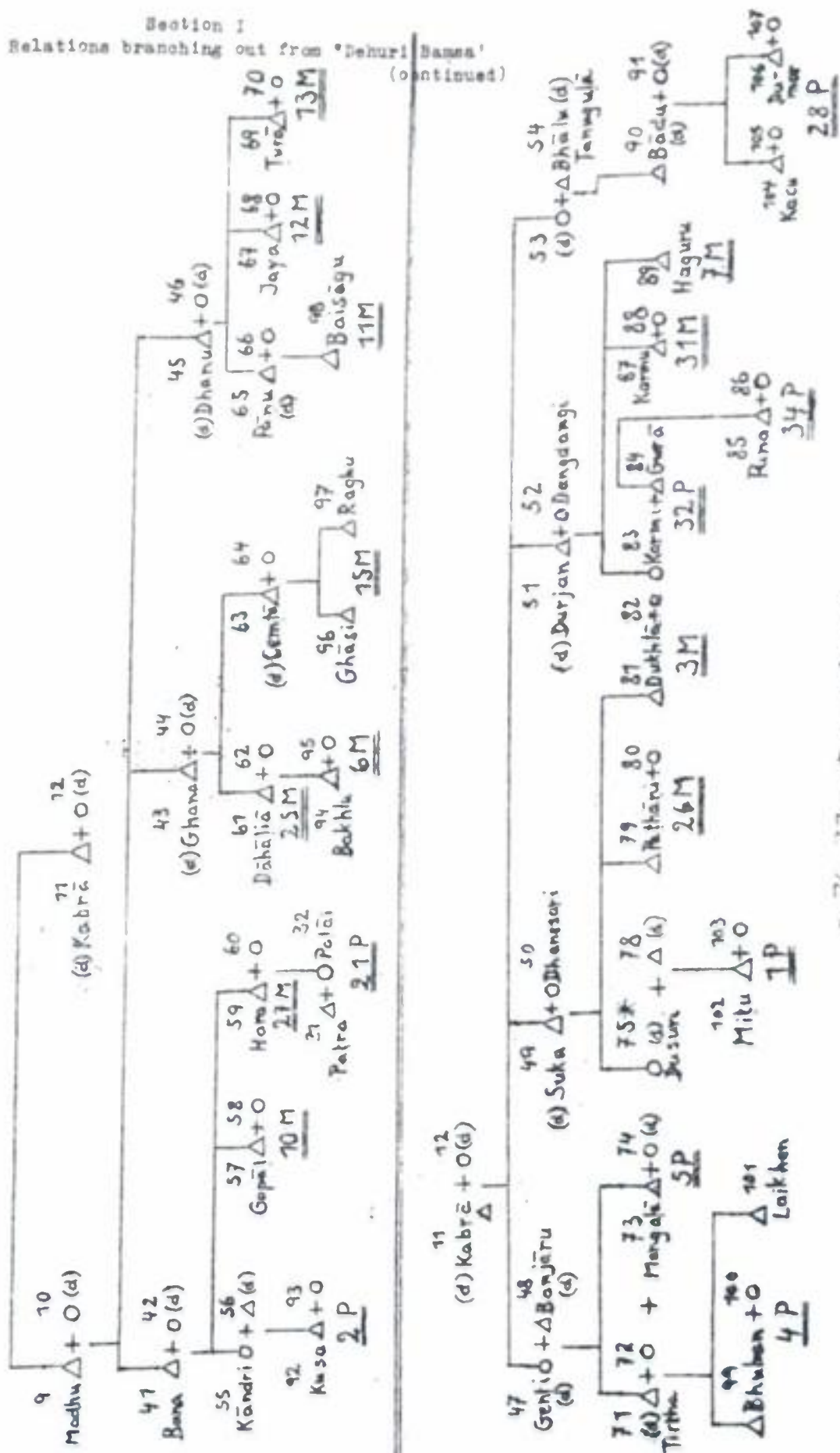
Abbreviations: (d) = dead; M = Mātālī;  
P = Parjā; 15M = Household No. 15 falling in  
'Mātālī' section.

Section I Relations branching out from  
'Dehuri Bagan'.

Note: Kundlā Mātālī section is 'Kutumb'  
to Taarā Mātālī section.  
Issues are not always shown.

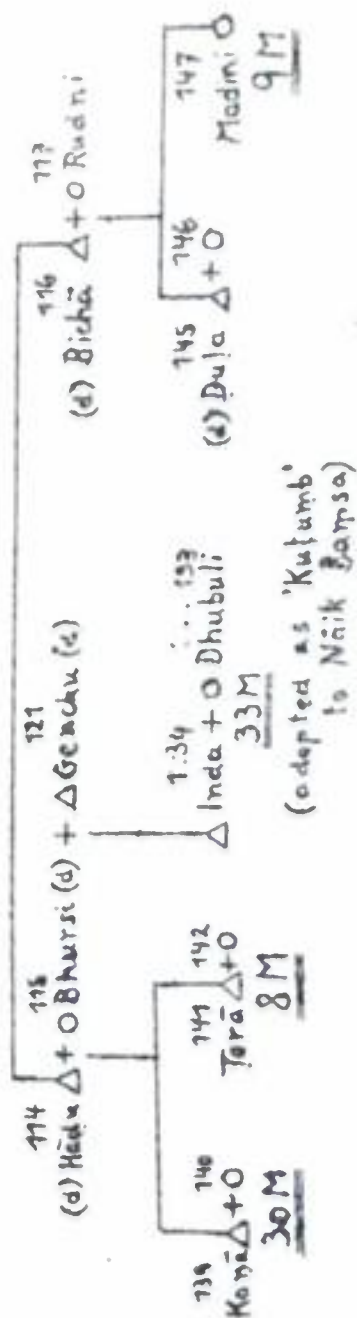
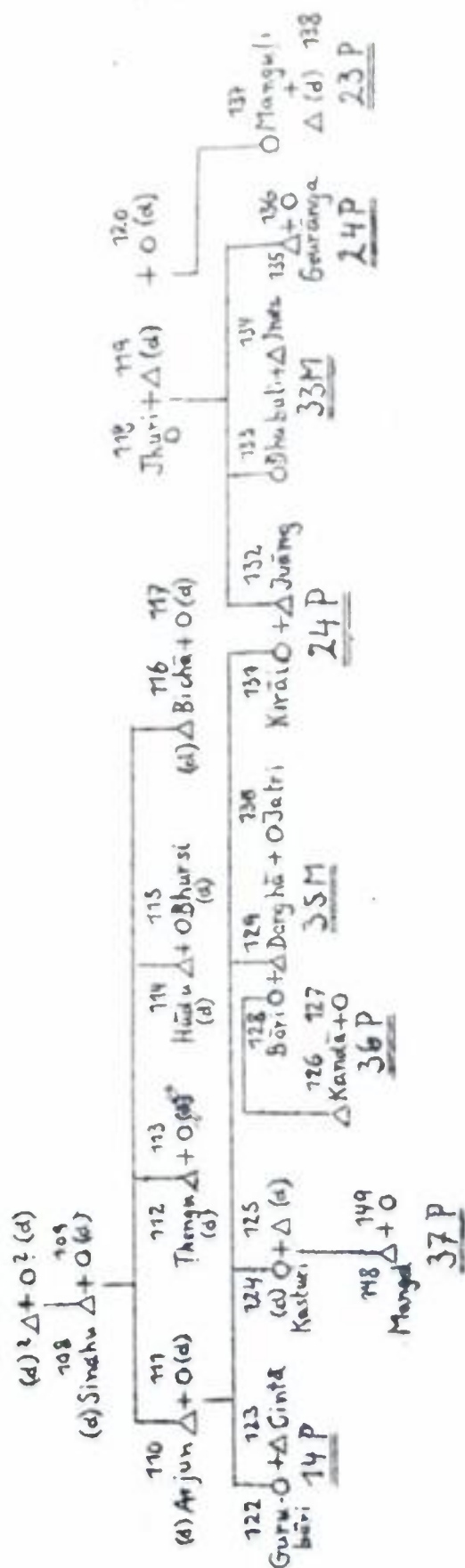






# 76-77 not numbered.

Section II - Relations branching out from Naik Bansa



\* 143-144 not numbered.



## ABOUT THE BOOK

The 'Tribal Peasantry in Bonai Hills' is a pioneering classic anthropological research work undertaken by Prof. L. K. Mahapatra, an anthropologist of eminence with a difference, for his doctoral degree in early fifties. He stayed on the hill among the Pauri Bhuiyans, the shifting cultivators of north Odisha during the period when post independent rural India was in the age of bullock carts and one had to reach the tribal villages on foot crossing along snaky mountainous paths bisecting the thick woods obstructing the sunbeams to strike the ground, often echoing the roaring sound of the tiger through hill cliffs and trumpeting of the wild elephants. One would be lost in the book depicting the image of tribal Odisha six decades ago as he/she reads the pages that proffer detailed ethnography of the Paudi Bhuiyans through holistic approach - a work of *tour-de-force*. The study of shifting cultivation practised in Bonai Hills with a comparative dimension offers significant insights on ecological adaptation of people, whose forest and land dependency was their lifeline. As a monumental piece in the field of practical anthropology, this work epitomizes the hill society *in situ* on shifting cultivation, which is indispensable to the planners and developers and students of social sciences.

**Professor L.K. Mahapatra**, (b. 1929) Dr. Phil. (Hamburg), has had a long academic career since 1953 in research institutions and at five Universities in India (Lucknow and Utkal Universities being the first and last ones), and as Visiting Professor at Hamburg University. A National Fellow of the Indian Council of Social Science Research and Ford Foundation Fellow in Indonesia for researches, he was Vice-Chancellor of Utkal and Sambalpur Universities, Director, and later on Chairman, of Nabakrushna Coudhury Centre for Development Studies under ICSSR, and Emeritus Professor under U.G.C. at Utkal University.

Senior most Professor in Social Anthropology, Social Historian and Folklorist, Professor Mahapatra had been a Consultant to the UNESCO and, for several years, to the WORLD BANK. Pioneering teaching and research on a world area (Southeast Asia) among anthropologists, he had undertaken field work in three Indonesian islands in the field of state-community interactions in rural development, besides researches on kingship, caste society, religion and tribal affairs in precolonial, colonial and presentday Southeast Asia.

He has contributed to the "Encyclopaedia of World Cultures" and to the "World Survey of Muslim Peoples" as also to the Asiatic Society's "Encyclopaedia Asiatic" on all the Southeast Asian countries. His 11th World Congress of Anthropology Symposium at Vancouver, Canada on "Development for Whom" launched him on a career of research on the Displaced and Deprived People of the World, because of development projects.