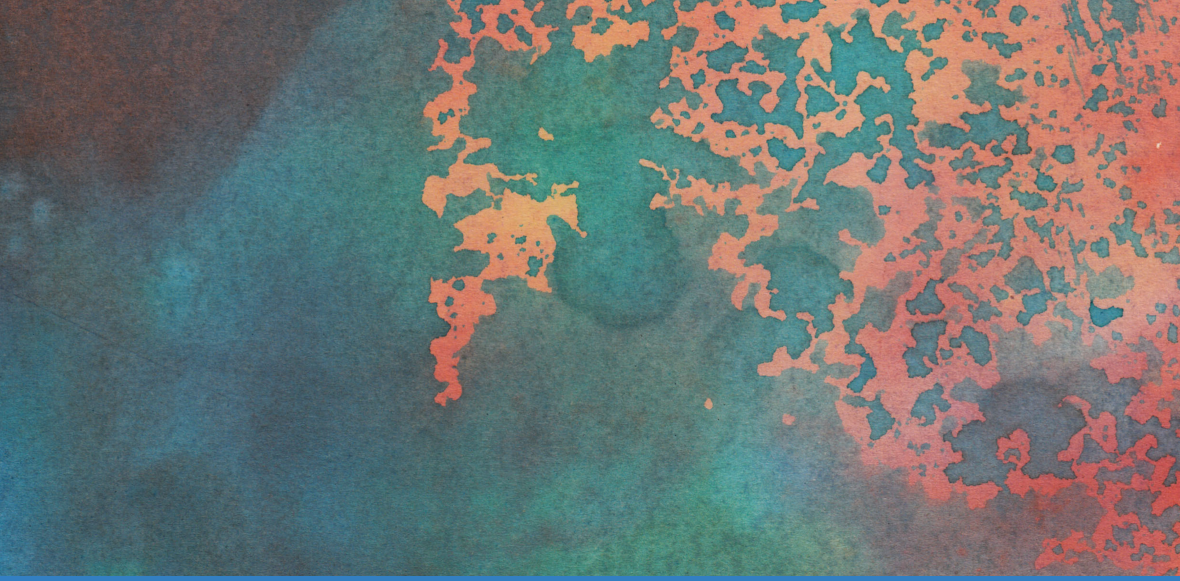
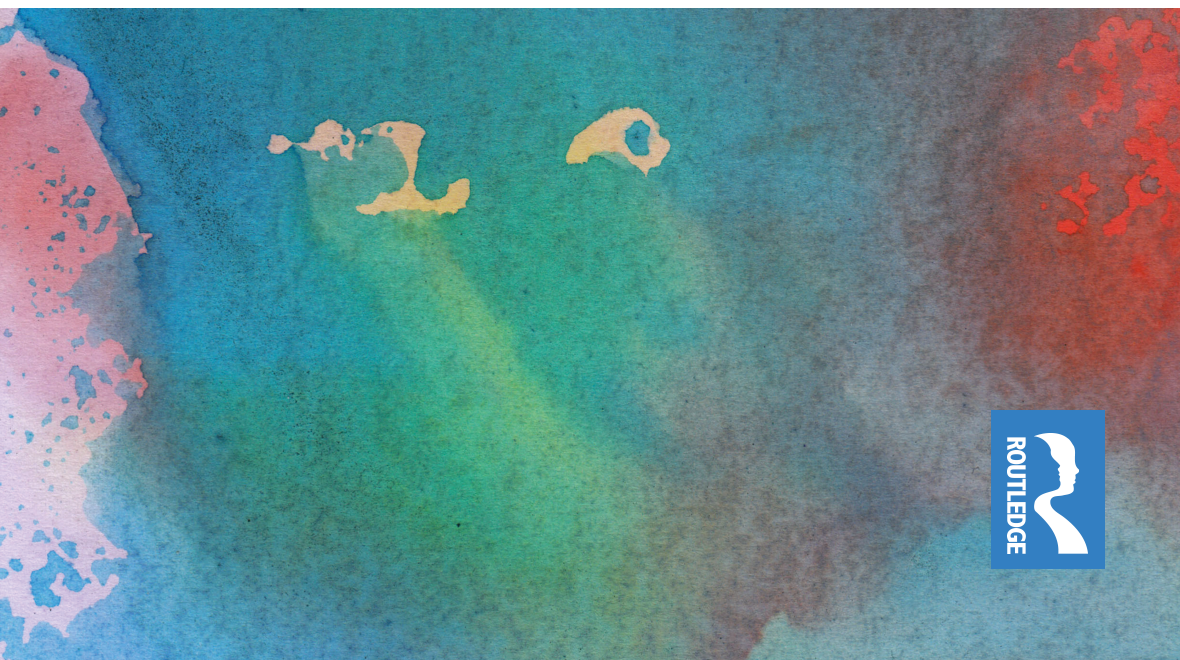


INDIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTHROPOLOGICAL DISCOURSE IN BOMBAY, 1886–1936

Edited by
Lancy Lobo and A.M. Shah



Indian Anthropology

Indian Anthropology: Anthropological Discourse in Bombay 1886–1936 is an important contribution to the history of Indian anthropology, focusing on its formative period. It looks at the political economy of knowledge production and the anthropological discourse in Bombay during the late 19th century. This seminal volume highlights the much forgotten and ignored contribution of the Bombay Presidency anthropologists, many of whom were Indians, from different backgrounds, such as lawyers, civil servants, and men of religion, much before professional anthropology was taught in India. The other contributions are by pioneers from Bengal, Punjab, and United Provinces – all British administrators turned scholars.

This volume is divided into three parts: Part I deals with the six contributions on the history of the development of anthropology in India; Part II deals with four contributions on the methodology and collecting ethnographic data; and Part III deals with four contributions on theoretical analysis of ethnographic facts. The roots of many contemporary conflicts and social issues can be traced to this formative period of anthropology in India.

This book will be useful to students and researchers of anthropology, sociology, public administration, modern history, and demography. It will also be of interest to civil servants, students of history, Indian culture and society, religions, colonial history, law, and South Asia studies.

Lancy Lobo is currently the Director, Centre for Culture and Development, Vadodara, India. He has earlier served as the Director, Centre for Social Studies, Surat. He has conducted extensive studies on dalits, tribals, OBCs, and minorities in rural and urban Gujarat. He has authored, co-authored and edited 22 books.

A.M. Shah is the former Professor of Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, India. He has been felicitated with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Indian Sociological Society, the Swami Pranavananda Award by the University Grants Commission, a National Fellowship by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, and the Distinguished Service Award by the University of Delhi. He has been a Visiting Fellow at several universities and institutes in India and abroad and has authored and edited many books on a variety of subjects. His books and papers on household and family in India are collected in an omnibus Delhi, 2006.

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Indian Anthropology

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Contents

Tables

Contributors

Jal Feerose Bulsara (details not available)

William Crooke (details not available)

S.M. Edwardes, C.V.O., C.S.I., Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.

R.E. Enthoven CIE (1869–1952) was an administrator in the Indian Civil Service of the British Raj and an author of publications related to India, including the three volumes entitled *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay* that formed a part of the Ethnographic Survey of India.

Denzil Ibbetson KCSI (30 August 1847 to 21 February 1908) was an administrator in British India and an author. He served as Chief-Commissioner of the Central Provinces and Berar from 1898 to 1899 and Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab in 1907.

Edward Tyrrell Leith was the first President of the Anthropological Society of Bombay in 1886. He was also a Freemason in whose name a Lodge has been named in Vadodara.

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi was an eminent scholar of the time. Born as a son of a Parsee *panthaki* (diocese) priest of Bombay in 1854, he received religious education at a Parsee *madressa* school, and secular primary education at a private school (see his biography by Bejan Desai, 1954). He went to Elphinstone High School and College and obtained B.A. from the University of Bombay in 1876. He then devoted himself to a life of scholar. With a sound background of knowledge of classical Parsee literature, he contributed to the disciplines of Indology, Orientalogy, History, and Linguistics, and then branched out to Anthropology. On account of his knowledge of classics, he often integrated textual and contextual views. He became a member of the ASB in 1886, worked as its Secretary for 30 years (1902–32) and as its President in 1914. He received many honours, including Honorary Doctorate from Heidelberg University, Shams-ul-Ulema, and C.I.E. from the Government of India, and President of the Anthropology Section of Indian Science Congress.

H.H. Risley was a British civil servant, anthropologist, and linguist who published widely on the customs and social structure of Indian society. He proposed a theory of the caste system as a racial hierarchy of classification, which was highly influential in colonial administrative policy.

L.J. Sedgwick (**April 1883 to 27 June 1925**) was an Indian civil servant who worked in the Bombay Presidency and collected and described plants as an amateur botanist. His collections are held in St Xavier's College, Bombay.

Preface

This volume is part of a project undertaken at the Centre for Culture and Development, Vadodara, to study the contributions of the Anthropological Society of Bombay and its journal that commenced in 1886. It took about 2 years to collect all the issues of the journal for the period 1886–1936 from various places in India and abroad. We thank the Indian Council of Social Science Research for supporting the project. A.M. Shah has provided an overview of the Society and its journal in an essay, 'Anthropology in Bombay, 1886–1936' (*Sociological Bulletin*, vol. 63, no. 3, 2014, pp. 355–67; reprinted in A.M. Shah, *Sociology and History*, Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2016).

Our plan was to bring out collections of essays on various themes taken from the *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*. The first volume, *Essays on Suicide and Self-Immolation*, was published in 2018. The volume, *Anthropological Explorations in East and South-East Asia* was the second one. The third volume was *An Ethnography of Parsees of India*. Professor A.M. Shah hours before he passed away handed over this manuscript to me. Prior to his death in September 2020, we had also selected papers for this fourth volume, on *Indian Anthropology: Anthropological Discourse in Bombay* and organized as contributions from two geographical areas: (1) Contributions of Pioneers from Bengal, Punjab, and United provinces, namely, Risley, Ibbetson and Crooke; and (2) Contributions from Anthropologists of Bombay, namely, Edwardes, Enthoven, Modi, and Sedgwick. However, thanks to the comments from the expert referee the material was reordered thematically and more logically to make it reader friendly. I missed Professor Shah's contribution to the Introduction to this volume.

We thank all friends and colleagues who have helped in collecting the issues of the journal. We also thank Kanchan Bharati, Dhananjay Kumar, Amba Gamit and others at the Centre for Culture and Development for their work in preparing the manuscript.

Vadodara

Glossary

Acacia concinna	the soapnut
Aegle marmelos	*bel*
almas	Diamond
arcana	secrets or mysteries.
avatars	a manifestation of a deity or released soul in bodily form on earth; an incarnate divine teacher.
balis	a Kanarese word corresponding an exogamous totemistic section
bari	*an* exogamous totemistic section in Tamil
batrisi	thirty-two
bedagu	an exogamous totemistic section in Telegu
Calotropis gigantea	the *rui*
chaddar	a sheet
chashm-i-bad	far be the evil eye
chirâgh	Lamp
dicta	spoken words that somebody else must write or type (dictation)
Eugenia jambolana	the neral
gotra	lineage
guru	a spiritual leader or teacher in the Hindu religion
karma	(in Hinduism and Buddhism) the sum of a person's good and bad actions in this and previous states of existence, viewed as affecting their future
kuls	family stock named after ancestors
kusá	grass
lever	to raise
Lever du soleil'	sunrise
Lingam	a symbol of divine generative energy, especially a phallus or phallic object as a symbol of Shiva

ma-bap	Mother–Father
mâyā	unreal
Nachnis	of the temples of India originated in the important part which dancing occupies in the ceremonial worship of the east
nágchampa (*Mesua ferrea*)	turmeric
Naobat	Persian word meaning time
paijamas	loose trousers
panchpálvi	consists ordinarily of the leaves of five trees: commonly the *pipal* and *banyan*
Pandamus odoratissimus	the screw pine
pipal	Ficus Tree
Prosopis spicigera	the *shami*
Pterocarpus marsupium	the bonne tree
Puranic	(of ancient times) are **Hindu** religious texts. They contain narratives about the history of the Universe from creation to destruction and the genealogies of kings, heroes, sages, and deities.
rishi	sage
sagái	the engagement
tokavun or *tokâvun*	to envy or to be envied.
Totems	a natural object or animal that is believed by a particular society to have spiritual significance and that is adopted by it as an emblem
vansh	ancestory

Introduction

Lancy Lobo

This volume is a contribution to the history of Indian anthropology, one might say to its formative period in the political economy of knowledge production. The term 'Indian Anthropology' may be used to refer to the study of society and culture in India by anthropologists irrespective of their nationality or to the study by Indian of anthropologists of society and culture in and outside India (Beteille 2010: 373). One is not engaging here with the debate on the nationalist anthropology in India (Guha 2020).

The 14 chapters in this volume have been selected from the *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay* 1886–1936. This volume has three parts. Part I deals with six contributions of history towards the development of anthropology in India, namely, Herbert Risley (3), Denzil Ibbetson (1), Jal Feerose Bulsara (1), and Jivanji Jamshedji Modi (1). Part II deals with four contributions of methodology and collecting ethnographical data, namely, Willaim Crooke (1), S.M. Edwardes (1), R.E. Enthoven (2). Part III deals with four contributions of theoretical analysis of ethnographic facts, namely, R.E. Enthoven (1), L.J. Sedgwick (1), L.J. Sedgwick and Jivanji Jamshedji Modi (1) and Jivanji Jamshedji Modi (1). Sedgwick and Modi have a joint paper (for more details on both British and Indian contributors see contributors list). Like several others who are now seen as contributors to anthropological knowledge such as J.H. Hutton, Risely, Enthoven, and others, mostly administrators of the British regime, they were not all professional anthropologists. The first post-graduate department of anthropology was established in the University of Calcutta in 1920, but ethnographical and cultural historical works had begun much earlier, mainly by enthusiastic administrators who took an avid interest in penning down their observations and thoughts about the continent they were governing.

I

In the inaugural speech of the Anthropological Society of Bombay (ASB) in 1886, the first president, Edward Tyrrell Leith outlining his vision for anthropology in India notes, 'It was, a matter of grave reproach, both to Natives

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and Europeans in that country that so little had been done in the way of investigating and recording anthropological facts. There was, probably, no country in the world which offered such an interesting field for anthropological research. In the first place, they should endeavour to systematize the knowledge at present existing with regard to the races of India' (Leith, *JASB*, 1886: 1). One must note that Leith was a Freemason and did not belong to the missionary – evangelical stream of anthropologists. In Vadodara, a building (Masonic Hall) has been named after E.T. Leith.

Anthropological Society of Bombay was a learned society formed by the English-educated literati of Bombay, both European and Indian. It published the *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay* (*JASB*) continuously from 1886 to 1936. (For an overview of ASB and *JASB*, see Shah 2010). The ASB held a meeting of its members and other interested scholars every month, where one or two papers were presented and discussed, and then published in *JASB,* sometimes with a comment or two made at the meeting.

The *JASB* is a valuable record of anthropology in South Asia during its formative period. It was a serious effort to promote anthropological scholarship by a voluntary association of interested scholars, as contrasted with the British government's effort to cultivate anthropology through the official Census of India and Ethnographic Survey of India, the latter becoming the Anthropological Survey of India. Also, ASB was established long before the Indian universities established their departments of anthropology, and publication of *JASB* began long before the well-known anthropological journal, *Man in India*, began to be published in 1920. *JASB* contradicts the usual image of Indian Anthropology as a discipline created by colonialism to study primitive tribes, as it published papers on tribal as well as non-tribal communities in India and in many other societies in the world. This journal thus gives a glimpse of the history of anthropology as well as of sociology in India, offering insights into the creativity of indigenous scholarship. But yet, as pointed out in Shah's essay (2010), *JASB* has been ignored in India for more than a century. It also finds no place in the global histories of anthropology and sociology. To say that *JASB* is practically an archival discovery would not be an exaggeration. To make up for this shortcoming, A.M. Shah and Lancy Lobo have browsed the entire volumes of *JASB* from 1886–1936 and edited so far three volumes from the *JASB* archives.

The first volume, '*Essays in Suicide and Self Immolation*' from this archival gold mine was published in 2018 edited by A.M. Shah and Lancy Lobo with a Foreword from Ashis Nandy. Part I includes 19 papers, analyzing statistics of suicides committed in Bombay (now Mumbai) from 1886 to 1907, classified by religion, gender, age, month, date, cause, and means of suicide. The data are presented in a number of tables, often with remarks on individual cases. Launched by Edward Rehatsek, a Hungarian scholar who had made Bombay his home, the papers on suicide, were continued after his death by the Parsee scholar, Bomanjee Byramjee Patell.

Part II includes seven general essays: one is on suicide and old age in a comparative perspective, and another on suicide in ancient India. The question of self-immolation of Hindu widows, commonly referred to as sati, is discussed in three of the essays. Of special interest is the essay on the Sati of Ramabai, widow of Madhavrao Peshwa. Two essays deal with the issues of self-immolation of persons in religious contexts.

While the European scholars carried out comparative studies between different European counties to arrive at generalizations about suicide, they, including Durkheim, did not include the Eastern countries in their comparisons. Twentieth-century scholarship on suicide also remained centred on the West. Three essays on suicide, one on its social aspects and two on its psychological aspects, in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* published in 1968, are concerned almost exclusively with suicide in the West. They included only a passing reference to one book on a tribe in India and one book on tribes in Africa. This volume is expected to update the data on suicide by bringing in data from South Asia.

The second volume, *Anthropological Explorations in East and South–East Asia 1886–1936* was published in 2021 (Shah and Lobo, 2021). The field of anthropology is often criticized as being India centric, showing little interest in studying other societies in the world. It is also denigrated as a tool created by colonial administration for studying primitive tribes, in fact as creating the label of 'primitive'. This book is a collection of ethnographical papers on *Anthropological Explorations in East and South–East Asia,* impacted by Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Hinduism. It also bears witness to indigenous scholarship of complex urban societies such as China, Burma, Tibet, and Japan.

Part I includes four papers on Japan; on their history, religion, and tea cult and the on the *Torii* and the *Torans* of India. Part II has one paper that deals with the veneration of the dead in China. Part III contains eight papers on Tibet: on its customs and a few thoughts on prayer beads or rosaries, devil driving processions, book procession of Lamas, Tibetan folklore in eastern Himalayas, and the method of computing distance by means of teacups. Part IV has one paper on Burma on the monastic institution of Burma and its Phongys, the Buddhist priests. Part V includes four papers on Malaysia dealing with the tiger in Malay folklore, folk medicine, etiological folktales, comparisons of Malay, Burma, and Indian folk beliefs about the man tiger and Malay version of two ancient Indian Apologues.

The third volume '*Ethnography of Parsees 1886–1936*' was published in 2021. Divided into two parts, Part I contains 14 chapters, largely highlighting the ceremonies, customs and rituals that Parsees followed during the *rites of passage,* that is, stages of life cycle from birth to death. The first four chapters are about the customs, ceremonies related to birth, initiation and expressions of mother's affection towards their baby in their cradle songs. Chapters 5–8 are on marriage rituals, depicting various customs related to weddings as well as marriage songs. Among chapters 9–13, two

chapters deal with funeral ceremonies; one is on funeral expenses, one on death register of Parsees, and one on a case of a Parsee priest martyr. Part II has seven chapters, of which three highlight the demographical statistics and larger social system of the Parsees, while the rest four are on Folklores. The essays in this volume are written mostly by Parsee scholars on their own society and culture providing a benchmark to study the changes that have occurred in India's numerically smallest and dwindling community. It is of interest to note that Parsees have always shown a commitment to recording their culture, probably as their miniscule numbers have created anxiety among them, that their heritage is in danger of getting lost.

II

Part I: History of the development of anthropology in India

Though identity politics has acquired sharp focus in today's politics in India, its origin can be traced to the mutiny (first war of independence) in 1857 which recognized the army on caste and ethnic lines. The colonial government realized that a clear anthropological knowledge of the composition of Indian society was necessary not only to extract revenue but also to control and govern it. This led to the codification of Indian society.

Of the six contributions in Part I, **Herbert Risley** (for brief CV of each author see Contributors) has three papers on (1) Anthropology in India (Chapter 1), (2) Progress of the Study of Indian Anthropology in Europe (Chapter 2), and (3) Development or Evolution of Anthropology in India (Chapter 3). Writing on the nature of anthropology as a science he states, that there are two divisions which are separately studied:

> (1) the internal structure of the human aggregates known as tribes and castes; and (2) the physical characteristics of representative or typical members of those aggregates (Risley, *JASB*, 1888: 345).

His observation on the physical characteristics of castes and race is as follows:

> The higher castes of Bengal seem to conform to a type which we are justified in describing as Aryan; the Mundas, Oraons and their congeners in Chota Nagpore show some of the marked characteristics of the Negrito races; while the castes popularly known as intermediate appear to represent a type compounded of the other two (Risley, *JASB*, 1888: 350).

Risley comments on an interesting socio-cultural phenomenon which much later was identified as Hindu method of absorption by N.K. Bose, and as Sanskritization or Hinduization by M.N. Srinivas.

> The tide of advancing Hinduism is daily sweeping away the relics of primitive customs which still survive in India, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that every fresh railway that is opened, besides giving new customers to Manchester, gives new clients to the Brahman. It may be that Hinduism does not openly seek proselytes, but it actually makes more proselytes than any religion now in working activity, and every proselyte it makes detracts so much from the value of that social record by the side of whose imperfection, as Sir Henry Maine has well said, 'the imperfection of the geological record is a mere trifle' (Risley, *JASB*, 1888: 352).

His comments on progress of the study of Indian anthropology in Europe are following:

> In India alone the native races have held their ground, and we find examples of almost all known stages of primitive culture existing and flourishing side by side with an administration of the most modern type (Risley, *JASB*, 1890: 253).

Regarding the progress of anthropology in India, he noted that:

> The Government of Bengal has sanctioned a grant of Rs. 2,000 a year to the Asiatic Society of Bengal for the encouragement of anthropology and ethnography. The Bombay Government has refused either to make a grant to the Asiatic Society, or to appoint a special officer to supervise ethnographic inquiries locally. They suggest that the work should be done through the agency of the Anthropological Society (Risley, *JASB*, 1892: 89).

Denzil Ibbetson's writing on the Study of Anthropology in India (Chapter 4) outlines what an anthropologist should ask himself, 'What am I to look for'? What are the points of importance or interest? He wrote:

> I propose, then, to consider, first, the subject-matter with the investigation of which an Anthropological Society is concerned, and the objects to which its investigations should be directed; secondly, the materials which are available, and the sources from which we may hope to derive assistance; thirdly, the methods by which we may best attack the problems before us; and fourthly, the utility of our study, and the advantages which flow from its prosecution (Ibbetson, *JASB*, 1890: 118).

A systematic effort was made by Ibbetson to procure:

> complete lists of the names of all the villages in every district in the Persian, Nagari and English characters and obtained maps of all the districts and states of the Punjab, showing for the owners of each

> village (1) their religion, (2) their caste or tribe, and (3) their clan, when they belonged to any one of some half dozen of the most important tribes (Ibbetson, *JASB*, 1890: 140).

Highlighting the use of anthropology for colonial administration, he wrote:

> A conviction is, I hope and believe, spreading that our Indian rule is too artificial, too complex, too costly; and that a simple people is best governed simply. Someday, if we are to stay in India at all, we shall have to reconsider our ways. At the best, the task will be a difficult one (Ibbetson, *JASB*, 1890: 145).

In this context he identified the great needs:

> Again, perhaps one of our greatest needs is a trained body of native inquirers. Why should not our Indian Universities found chairs of Anthropology, and include the subject in their courses for Degrees? No study is more calculated to widen the mind or to furnish the student with intelligent interests (Ibbetson, *JASB*, 1890: 141).

J.F. Bulsara in Chapter 5 of this volume, 'The Study of Anthropology in the West' is into critiquing anthropological theories of evolutionism, diffusionism, and functionalism. Thereafter, he notes that:

> It will be difficult to find a European or American University where the science of man is not studied and encouraged under various names like Social Anthropology, Ethnology, Sociology, or Human Geography, while the influence of such studies is to be noticed in the domain of social and biological sciences, on fiction and literature, and anthropology is even making its influence felt more strongly in colonial administration (Bulsara, *JASB*, 1930: 659).

However, he decries that anthropology is taught only in 2 of the 20 universities of the time. But in the west, the study of anthropology is taken very seriously with obvious practical results. He ends his paper emphasizing the need for the study of anthropology in India:

> Anthropology is thus creating a fresh outlook on social problems, whose solution is being largely sought by an appropriate educational policy and effective social organization, Russia and America taking the lead in this social experimentation, though on widely differing lines. It remains for us now to emphasize the need of a scientific study of anthropology in India, other than which there is hardly a country in the world richer in its material for cultural research (Ibid: 679).

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi in a paper, 'The retrospect and the prospect of the work of the anthropological society of Bombay' (Chapter 6), J.J. Modi on the occasion of the silver Jubilee of JASB he draws attention to a very significant phenomenon:

> The Society has an official Englishman as President, but the writers are nearly all natives of India, well-educated men who ought to be able to get at correct facts, which they certainly can present in good style… (Modi, *JASB*, 1915: 328).
>
> What I beg to suggest is, that some Indian scholars can well handle the subject from the point of view of Eastern classics. Anthropology of the Vedas, Anthropology of the *Puranas*, and such other papers or essays will be a valuable addition to our Anthropological literature (Ibid: 350).

Modi further touches on an important concept of race and nation:

> The investigations in the subject of races have shown that race is different from nation. Europe is not divided into races but in nations. It is not the principle of race that goes to the building up of a nation. As pointed out by a learned writer, a nation may be made up of many races (Ibid: 358).

He further refers to the concept of nation:

> The late M. Renan very properly said: 'A nation is a living soul, a spiritual principle, the result of the will of peoples united by a common consent in the interests of the community' (Ibid: 359).

Part II: Methodology and collecting ethnographical data

How the state views its people and their characteristics is part of the statecraft to maintain power. Census though appears scientific is often used as an instrument of the state in creating a contrived social reality unfolding identity politics suitable to the state. Census classifies people to divide into mutually exclusive religious, ethnic, racial, and caste groups. People have multiple identities but census puts people into straightjackets ignoring the pluralistic understanding of Indian society. To understand the colonial and post-colonial politics in India, one must go back in time

William Crooke in his Importance of Collecting Facts (Presidential Address) (Chapter 7) highlighted the use of anthropology for colonial administration:

> Judicial enquiries, for instance, daily bring us face to face with the inner life of the people. Our courts are constantly called on to decide the most

> intricate questions connected with the law of marriage, inheritance, and so forth, where the decision often depends on some obscure custom or usage peculiar to the caste or tribe from which the parties are drawn (Crooke, *JASB*, 1896: 152).

Comparing the British to another colonial power, Crooke wrote:

> The Dutch, who are an eminently practical people, have now, I understand, decided that no officer is qualified for service in their Eastern Island Empire until he has acquired a competent knowledge of the social and religious life of its inhabitants (Ibid: 154).

Interest in Hinduism at the village level interested Crooke:

> But happily for us, what we are now only beginning to understand is that Brâhmanism does not exhaust the religious beliefs of the Hindu race.
>
> These people are worshippers of a host of fetishes, nature god-lings of their own, which have little connection with those of the Aryan mythology; god-lings of disease, demons and devils; god-lings of rock, tree and waterfall, the snow peaks of the Himalaya, the Ganges and other sacred rivers, and so on (Ibid: 155).

S.M. Edwardes in his 'Collecting diverse social and cultural facts' (presidential address of 1906) (Chapter 8) goes a step beyond Tyrell Leith, Ibbetson, and Herbert Risley and calls for:

> Discarding the broad heads of Ethnology, Sociology, Philology, and Religion, we have the study of comparative religion and folklore, the religion of the pre-Aryan races, sorcery, witchcraft and necromancy, the constitution and practices of religious orders, animal and plant mythology, totemism, and demon-worship, all matters connected with the genetic development of Man, anthropometry, marriage rites, burial practices, death rites, rural ceremonies, and social customs and organization (*JASB*, 1906: 430).

R.E. Enthoven in his paper on the 'Study of ethnography in the Bombay Presidency' (Chapter 9) draws attention to:

> Since the days of those pioneers in ethnography, Buchanan and Dubois, down to the more recent articles in the Government Gazetteers and Census Reports, a mass of crude material that is only waiting for the student to be made the basis of interesting monographs on these divisions of our heterogeneous population (Enthoven, *JASB*, 1909: 434).

Further, he draws attention to totemism:

> The most primitive of the tribes and castes in the Bombay Presidency appear to be those which to the present day are organized on a system of totemistic divisions (Enthoven, *JASB*, 1909: 438).
> Ancestors, spirits, natural objects and animals are all inextricably connected in the minds of primitive people (Ibid: 443).

In another paper, 'The Ethnographic Survey of India' (Chapter 10), he notes that 'I would draw attention to the increasing volume of evidence which deals with the survival of a system of totemism in various parts of India. The Aryan-speaking invaders of India were not organized on any basis of animal or plant exogamous division'.

Part III: Theoretical analysis of ethnographic facts

R.E. Enthoven discusses totem theories (Chapter 11) in his third paper and he recalls the following:

> Professor Frazer bases his latest theory on this fact; according to him, primitive men and women have no conception of the connection between sexual union and pregnancy. When the woman becomes conscious of her condition, she assumes the entry of the totem spirit residing in the locality where she first becomes consciously pregnant (Enthoven, *JASB*, 1911: 63).

Sedgwick (Chapter 12) deals at length with the theme of animism, 'the presence on earth of a shadowy crowd of powerful and malevolent beings, who usually have a local habitation in a hill, stream, or patch of primaeval forest and who interest themselves in the affairs of men'.

He discusses the religion of tribes such as Bhils being recorded as animistic or Hindu. Census had labelled many tribes as Hindu but 'in 1911, Mr. Gait, the Census Commissioner when visiting this Presidency on tour, converted 70,000 Bhils in Reva Kantha from Hindus to Animists by a stroke of the pen' (Sedgwick, *JASB*, 1922: 391).

> The Jungle tribes being, as it were, non-*Puranised* Hindus, (one cannot use the term 'primitive Hindus', since Hinduism is not derived from the pre-Aryan cults, but has absorbed them), no justification for continuing to treat Animism as a distinct religion exists, *unless we can obtain figures which show rational changes from Census to Census* (Ibid: 393).

Further, he gives his firm opinion:

> In short, I suggest that our returns of Animists are *absolutely worthless*. They represent nothing, and are entirely a matter of chance. The vast

> decrease between 1891 and 1901 and the vast increase between 1901 and 1911 cannot be attributed to losses by and recovery from famine. Any such idea is completely disproved by the regional figures. The Bhils, who contribute most to the figures, are practically Hindus. I have therefore no hesitation in saying that Animism as a religion should be entirely abandoned, and that all those hitherto classed as Animists should be grouped with Hindus at the next Census, Hinduism being defined as including the religious or semi-religious beliefs of those jungle tribes who have not definitely embraced Islam or Christianity. In saying this, I am of course to be taken as discussing the conditions of this Presidency only. There may be regions such as Chota Nagpur where the boundary between Hinduism and Animism is clear and definite (Ibid: 400).

L.J. Sedgwick and J.J. Modi deal at length with the 'superstition of concealing one's proper age as shown by the Indian census statistics' (Chapter 13) by noting:

> The cause of the incorrectness of the age statistics of the Census, viz., deliberate mis-statement. As said above, the mis-statement may be the result of (a) superstition, or (b) vanity, or (c) self-interest (Sedgwick and Modi, *JASB*, 1921: 376).

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi gives a brilliant ethnographic description and analysis of 'Interpreting a Government House Reception from a Cultural Anthropology Perspective' (Chapter 14):

> First of all, the reception held by the royalty, or by a representative of the royalty like the governor of a country or province, supplies an instance of the influence of Church and its ritual on state and society and on their ritual, *i.e.*, on the etiquette, the manners and the customs observed in state and society (Modi, *JASB*, 1927: 793).

Some observations

The current volume contains papers that highlight the formative period of Indian anthropology. The colonial administrators turned scholars saw the need of classifying people according to religion, caste, tribe, race, and nation. This volume takes us back to the thought processes of a century and a half ago and gives us a firm bench mark to trace the evolution of anthropology in India. It deals not only with subjects such as race, colour, caste, tribe, nation and religion but also with the development of anthropometry, ethnology, and ethnography, in one word anthropology.

The first census of 1872, the colonial census called for religious and caste categories. The exclusive categorization and the size of the group became significant for the colonial power to control these groups. Then on, in the

post-independent census caste enumeration has been dropped and re-introduced for political exigencies. Indian politics has continued to use the axis of caste and religion intermittently. With the coming of Hindu Rashtra, the majoritarian Hindu state politics is firmly on the axis of religion.

Herbert Risley (1851-1911) was British India's leading anthropologist and William Crooke (1848-1923) both officials of the colonial government published two handbooks of tribes and castes in British India in the 1890s, each containing a lengthy glossary with entries for individual tribes and castes. Fuller has reassessed the contributions of these handbooks to anthropological knowledge (Fuller 2017). Denzil Ibbetson (1847-1923) alongside Risley and Crooke contributed the most to develop Indian ethnography and anthropology in the Victorian period. These were 'official anthropologists' or colonial anthropologists whose declared double purpose was to contribute to scientific knowledge and to strengthen and improve British rule. Fuller (Ibid: 4) writes:

> This anthropology reflected and reinforced British ideas that 'traditional' Indian society-the antithetical 'other' of modern European society- was made up of separate religious communities and separate castes, which were the most important social groups, together with a tribal periphery.

The controversy raging now about who is indigenous and who is not in India has its roots in early history of anthropology (see Channa 2020). The Aryan question, viz., the invading Aryans with superior technology conquering the indigenous has been a hot debate especially in the political context of Hindu nationalism. Hindu nationalists do not believe in Aryan migration to India but claim to be indigenous. The Indian government also has refused to concede the indigenous status to Scheduled Tribes in India. However, a recent book *Early Indians* by Tony Joseph (2018) relying heavily on path-breaking DNA research, archeological and linguistic evidence puts to rest ugly debates on the ancestry of modern Indians. His conclusion is, 'We are all migrants, and we are all mixed'.

Social and cultural change is another theme that early anthropology attended to as it is clear from the following note from Ibbetson:

> The railway has done more in twenty years to loosen the bonds of caste than all other influences put together in centuries. We have heard much of the stability of the village community, which has survived unshaken the crash of Empires and the din of arms (Ibbetson, *JASB*, 1890: 143).

Coming to the contributions from the anthropologists of Bombay considered in this volume, namely, Edwardes, Enthoven, Sedgwick, Modi, and Bulsara one may make the following observation. To that extent anthropometry was used for such classification with reference to identifying the race, caste, and tribe, Enthoven opines:

> Thus, a cursory study of these results seems to suggest that they amount to an admission of the bankruptcy of anthropometrical data in affording evidence of the origin of the tribes and castes of this Presidency. If the Kátkari and the higher Maráthás are to be found in company, and the Mahar is to jostle the Konkanasth Bráhman, obviously race has become strikingly severed from social standing, or else anthropometrical observations are no adequate test of racial origin. I think we may assume that they give us little assistance in tracing the units back to their earliest formation in India (Enthoven, *JASB*, 1909: 438).

Many anthropology departments come under science faculties in India. Anthropology, the science of man takes into account different aspects and attempts to give an integrated picture. It combines natural science of man beginning from biology, genetics, pre-history, archeology as well as social or cultural aspects of man through sociology, economics, politics, and other social sciences. The emphasis on cultural and social anthropology has now placed anthropology under social sciences.

This volume contains good discussion of the times on the belief system of the peoples especially the tribals who were classed as animists and as also as believers in totemism. It also discusses the nature of Hinduism prevailing in the history of early anthropology which continues even today. What is Hinduism and who is a Hindu troubles this country especially during these days in the context of political Hinduism or Hindu *rashtra*. Are tribes Hindus? Are they backward Hindus as G. S. Ghurye (1943) or are they so-called tribals as (Shah 2003: 95–97) would later on would refer.

Sedgwick notes the following:

> As to their conformity to the main points in Hinduism it is sufficient to mention that they (1) observe caste, (2) celebrate the Hindu festivals, and (3) worship Hindu gods and goddesses (*JASB*, 1922: 401).

As mentioned earlier, two major concepts have arisen in the post-independent period in anthropology to engage in the above debate, namely, *The Hindu method of Absorption* by N.K. Bose (1953) and *Sanskritisation* by M.N. Srinivas (1956).

Bulsara has shown how the study of anthropology is essential to India:

> Not only do we require wide sociological studies for the sake of pure science but also because most of India's problems are sociological problems and they would not be solved so easily unless we know the function of cult and culture and the motives of human behaviour and understand what solutions would be most suitable (Bulsara, *JASB,* 1930: 680).

> Man wants to progress more quickly with purposive planning, but planning to a goal of objective requires comprehensive knowledge of the probable laws and reliable methods of social evolution, and hence the great need for anthropology or a scientific study of man (Ibid: 681).

It is a matter of great pride for Indian anthropology to highlight the contribution of anthropological discourse in Bombay which had a large number of native anthropologists even before this subject was taught in Indian universities. They were a mix of academicians and amateurs, administrators, explorers, surveyors, jurists, military men, medical practitioners, and philanthropists. The ethnography by these stalwarts though self-taught was of a quality, which current generation of anthropologists may strain to produce. They also paved in a seminal way an opening for national anthropology way back in colonial times.

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Inauguration of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, 1886: A vision for anthropology in India

Edward Tyrrell Leith

The Chairman stated that the business before the Meeting was to establish an Anthropological Society in Bombay. It was not intended to be a merely local Society, but one that should embrace the whole of the Indian Empire. No institution whose labours were specially devoted to Anthropology had hitherto been established in India, although daily experience showed the pressing need of it. It was, in his opinion, a matter of grave reproach, both to Natives and Europeans in that country that so little had been done in the way of investigating and recording anthropological facts. There was, probably, no country in the world which offered so interesting a field for anthropological research.[1,2]

It might be asked what the subjects were, to which the Society ought to direct its attention. They were so numerous that it was impossible to give them in detail; but the following might be referred to as examples. In the first place, they should endeavour to systematize the knowledge at present existing with regard to the races of India. Such facts, as had already been published, were, for the most part, to be found scattered among various scientific periodicals and Government reports; and that had made the study of the Indian races a question of great difficulty. He ventured, therefore, to suggest that the Society would be doing a work of immense public benefit by indexing the subjects and cataloguing works relating to Indian anthropology.

India, again, as the home of Vedism and Buddhism in the past, and of Hinduism Jainism, Mazdeism, and Islámism in the present, offered most valuable materials for enquiry by the student of comparative religion. It was of great importance, for example, that complete accounts should be published of the daily, annual, and other ceremonies of the Bráhman caste at the present day. Up to that time, no such work had been accomplished.

He now wished to call attention to a variety of subjects belonging to a class which was, at least, of equal importance to the anthropologist. He referred to the religion of the pre-Áryan races of India. At the bottom of the scale, they found the black-skinned jungle-tribes of the hills, who were hardly higher in culture than the aborigines of Australia. The Śudra castes, who were of the same origin, had, it was true, been greatly improved by admixture with the higher castes; but the pre-Áryan element still prevailed

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among the great mass of the population and formed the basis of popular Hinduism. He believed that the mother-worship, practiced in every Hindu village, represented the primitive religion of India. Closely allied to it was the secret Sákta sect. Both systems were deserving of the closest investigation. The religion of the great body of the people appeared to have remained at the stage of development known as Shamanism, which marked the period before the establishment of a regular priesthood when the priestly functions were mostly exercised by the sorcerer or medicine-man. The whole question of sorcery, witchcraft, and necromancy among the lower castes of India was of the greatest interest and importance. Connected with it was religious ecstasy or frenzy, under the influence of which a person was seized with a fib of trembling and spoke while possessed by a deity, demon, or departed spirit. Next came the constitution and practices of the religious orders, of which the Gosáins and Bairágis formed the most important sections. Among those practices might be mentioned the extraordinary one of religious anthropophagy, which he had made the subject of special enquiry. There were other points worthy of investigation with respect to the sacred shrines, idols, pilgrimages, and fasts of the Hindus. He was sorry to say that very little was known with respect to the places of pilgrimage. For example, regarding Hingláj, which although situated in Baluchistan was a very sacred Hindu shrine, there only existed a general description, published by Captain Hart in the *Journal of the Bombay Geographical Society* many years ago. The primitive custom of human sacrifice had once very generally obtained in India, more especially among the pre-Áryan tribes, and was even now more frequently practised in that country than was commonly supposed. The mythology of animals and plants next claimed their attention. Related to the former were totemism and animal-worship. The earliest objects of worship appeared to have been the dog, tiger, jackal, and other carrion-eaters; but the subject was too vast to allow of more than passing mention. It might be stated, however, that it stood in intimate relation to the primitive method of disposing of the dead by exposure. Among some of the rude tribes inhabiting the Himálaya range of mountains, lakes, and rivers were adored. That was a very primitive form of religion, which had not, as yet, attracted the attention it deserved. He had recently obtained, from a member of the Bengal Civil Service, a curious account of an invitation, which that gentleman had once received from certain jungle-people in the neighbourhood of Dárjiling to dine with Kanchanjanga, the great mountain-god, and his wife, a mountain lake. The Englishman had seated himself in front of the rude images representing those deities, and had gravely partaken of his share of the feast. Kanchanjanga and his spouse, on the other hand, were supposed by the simple hill-men to consume merely the spiritual essence of the portions set before them.

The serpent-worship and lingam-worship of the Śaivas were remarkable phenomena in the primitive religion of India. The former had been dealt

with very elaborately by the late Mr. James Fergusson, but the latter still awaited adequate treatment. Another phase of the cult of Śiva was the adoration paid to him under the form of Bhairava, and to his spouse Kálí, both of whom were conceived of as blood-thirsty and cruel deities delighting in the slaughter of countless buffaloes and goats. Such sacrifices were still annually performed on a large scale at Kálíghát in Calcutta, and instances of a similar nature had recently been recorded as having occurred at Khatmandu in Nepál, and at Kalyán in the Tauna district. Those animals were now unquestionably offered up in substitution of human victims.

Another very important subject for enquiry was the influence of Buddhism on modern Hinduism, to which Dr. Stevenson had called attention some years ago. Next, came demon-worship, on which Dr. Caldwell, Bishop of Tinnevelly, was the greatest authority. It still flourished among the Dravidian races of Southern India, but was by no means confined to them, for it was also to be found throughout the Deccan, the Konkan, and the Gujarat.

Among the myriad objects of superstitious belief, iron and salt played very prominent parts. As regards iron, its magical virtues might easily be explained by the wonderful revolution its discovery had wrought among the races of the stone-age. The importance attached to salt was probably due, in a great measure, to its antiseptic property. The food, clothing, ornaments, musical instruments, and implements of the jungle-tribes were also matters which required to be more carefully studied.

Gesture-language was another important subject for scientific investigation. It had recently excited a large amount of attention among anthropological students, more especially in the United States. He understood that enquiries into its various forms were being pursued under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution. It was, no doubt, the chief means employed by the alalus or speechless man in communicating with his fellows in the infancy of the human race. In that connection, he suggested that the secret signs employed by the Bráhmans and members of the Hindu religious orders of India in their daily rites were possibly a survival of the gesture-language of primeval times. A Hindu, who had left his service some years ago and had embraced the calling of a Bairági belonging to the Rámánandi sect, had recently shown him nearly 20 secret signs in common use among them. The Society, he thought, should endeavour to obtain photographs illustrating the various positions of the hands while making those signs.

There were, also, numerous popular customs and superstitions connected with the three most important incidents in human life, namely, birth, marriage, and death. Those, it would be found, reflected the crude conceptions of savage man, more especially with regard to the nature of the human soul and the doctrine of a future life. He referred, by way of illustration, to the fear lest the ghost should return to injure the living, and to the belief in the efficacy of water as a means of preventing such return. The use of water in religious rites, for the purpose of banning spirits, was

traceable to this source; so also the almost universal idea of a river of death. Spirits, it was believed, could not cross running water, hence the Tipperahs of Chittagong, on the death of a man belonging to their tribe, who might chance to die away from his kindred, stretched threads across the streams flowing between his grave and his native village, in order that his spirit might be enabled to return to its old haunts.

The Society had, furthermore, to explore the region of comparative law, in which so little had hitherto been accomplished. To this branch of enquiry belonged, amongst other matters, mother-law, or the system of descent through the female line, which had found its chief exponents in Messrs. McLennan and Morgan. That system still existed among the Nairs of the western coast, and traces of the same were also observable in other parts of India. Belonging to the same branch were caste rules, as well as the various forms prescribed for oaths and ordeals. With regard to oaths, he had been particularly struck by a curious custom, which obtained among the Mahárs and Mángs of the Central Provinces, of swearing a man on the tail of a dog. That animal, he believed, was the death-hound, the Kerberos of the Greeks, which occupied so conspicuous a place in all mythologies. He hoped, at some future time, to submit to the Society his views regarding the dog in myth and custom.

The Society might also direct its attention to the institutions connected with the genetic development of man. He referred especially to the rites of the Wáma-márga in Śakti-worship, and to the dedication of dancing-girls to the service of the temple, for example, the Murlís at Jejuri in the Deccan; a shrine which had not yet been described. He considered they were bound, as a scientific body, to publish in their Journal the results of all their investigations, having due regard to the form in which the same ought properly to appear. As regards anatomical relations, it would be the duty of the Society to collect statistics regarding the capacity of the human skull, and other measurements of the human frame, among the various castes and races of the Indian Empire. Attention should, also, be paid to their physiological and psychological characteristics, especially with reference to the effects of climatic influences and crossing. He looked to the medical Members of the Society to carry out this important work, as being one which lay peculiarly within their province.

He concluded by apologizing to the Meeting for having detained them so long. He had not been prepared to deliver a formal address on that occasion. The field of investigation was so vast that it was impossible to do more than touch lightly on a few of the most important questions, to which the Society might profitably direct its attention.

On starting, the Society had met with an amount of support, which was as surprising as it was gratifying. This was, doubtless, owing to the fact that the educated public believed it would supply what they considered to be an important want. The Society had started with more than 70 members. He hoped that it would ere long number some hundreds on its rolls. Its success,

he believed, would be secured if those of the members who were able to do so, and would assist in scientific research. He looked, above all, to support and co-operation from the educated natives of the country. In diplomacy, the well-known saying, '*Surtout point de zèle*', doubtless often served as a useful warning. The motto of their Society, however, should be: '*Surtout de zèle*'.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, I (1), April 1886: 1–7.
2 This chapter is a part of the record of the proceedings of the first Ordinary General Meeting of the Anthropological Society of Bombay held on 7th April, 1886, published in the Society's journal, Vol. I, No. 1, April 1886, pp. 1–7. Edward Tyrrell Leith was elected as Chairman of the Society. The title of the chapter is provided by the Editors of this book. – Editors.

Part I

History of the development of anthropology in India

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1 Anthropology in India

H. H. Risley

I

I thank the Anthropological Society of Bombay for the honour they have rendered by electing me as one of the Vice Presidents of the year [1887], I would like to say a few words on some of the functions which an Anthropological Society can most profitably discharge in India at present. I say advisedly '*some* of the functions', because the object which the Society proposes to itself – the furtherance of anthropological knowledge – is a very large one, and covers almost the entire range of human interests. *Quidquid agunt homines*, considered as a statement of the aims of a scientific Society, is no doubt a formula of most engaging simplicity. But when we come to translate it into practice, and to ask what our Society should do this year and the next towards the attainment of our general object, we find a difficulty in knowing where to begin. Owing to this difficulty, owing also to the very vastness and complexity of the subject, the researches of the Society – unless they are carefully directed, and at any rate in starting concentrated upon a limited number of points – run the risk of becoming what Browning calls 'patchy and scrappy', and of thus missing the scientific interest which they might otherwise possess. If we are to do any good and to produce results which will command the approval of our critics in Europe, we must attempt to work on some regular system, and to collect facts which will lend themselves to that comparative method of treatment which in anthropology, as in other sciences, is most likely to lead us to conclusions of permanent value.[1]

I do not propose to attempt to lay down for the Society a complete programme of anthropological enquiry. That would be a very large undertaking, and would be open in some measure to the very objections which I have endeavoured to indicate. I wish, however, to recommend to the Society the systematic investigation of two branches of our general subject, which promise to yield immediate results, and to clear the ground for more minute enquiry in future. These divisions of the subject, which admit, as I shall show, of being separately studied, are as follows: (1) the internal structure of the human aggregates known as tribes and castes; and (2) the

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physical characteristics of representative or typical members of those aggregates.

The members of this Society are probably aware that a somewhat elaborate enquiry into the ethnography of the territories under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal has been going on for the past 2 years on lines laid down at a conference held at Lahore in March 1885, between Mr. Denzil Ibbetson, Mr. John C. Nesfield, and myself. A very large mass of facts have been collected; and are now being put together in the form of an Ethnographic Glossary for Bengal, which I hope may be ready for publication towards the end of this year. Among all these facts, collected on a definite system by an agency working in every district in Bengal, by far the most valuable from the ethnological point of view, are those which relate to the internal structure of the castes and tribes of those Provinces. They show us, in the first place, what manner of organization these groups really possess, and thus bring out the fact that a caste at the present time, whatever it may have been in the past, is an infinitely more complicated affair than is popularly supposed to be the case. We find, indeed, as a rule, that instead of being a single homogeneous group, all the members of which may intermarry and eat with each other, the caste is composed of a number of sub-castes, the members of which can never intermarry, and very frequently do not even eat together. Each of these sub-castes, again, is divided into a number of sections or exogamous groups, the rule of which is that a man belonging to anyone group may not marry a woman belonging to that group and *vice versa*. By analysing the names of the sub-castes and sections, and by various kinds of enquiries regarding their origin, we are enabled to distinguish certain main classes of either kind of group.

II

In illustration of what is meant, I may quote from the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for July 1886, the following classification of the sub-castes and sections now present in Bengal:

Sub-castes (endogamous)

I. *Ethnic* groups, composed of non-Aryan tribes like the Rajbansi-Kocch, who have attorned to Hinduism, and transformed themselves into a caste.
II. *Linguistic* or *Provincial* groups, such as Bengali, Uriya, and Pachima, or Bechari Brahmans, Kayasths, Kumhars, and so on. These classes are very large, and include whole castes, which in their turn are broken up into endogamous sub-castes.
III. *Geographical* or *Local* groups, not corresponding to any distinction of language, such as the Uttariya and Dakshini (north and south), Doms

of Behar, the Tamaria and Sikharbhumi Bhumij of Manbhum, and numerous others.

IV. *Functional* or *Occupational* groups, such as the Mecho and Helo sub-castes of Kaibarttas, of whom the former sell fish, while the latter confine themselves to cultivation.

V. *Sectarian* groups, like the Kherwar or Safahor revivalists among the Sonthals and the Vaishnava divisions of some of the Orissa castes.

VI. *Social* groups marked off by abstaining from or practising some particular social or ceremonial usage. Thus, the Sagahut sub-caste of Sunris (traders and liquor-sellers) of Behar allow their widows to re-marry by the maimed rite of *sagái*, while another sub-caste of Sunris forbid widow marriage and designate themselves Biyáhut, 'the married ones', from *biyáh*, the full-blown wedding ceremony which no woman can go through twice.

Sections (exogamous)

I. *Totemistic*. Confined to non-Aryan tribes and castes of non-Aryan descent.

II. *Eponymous*. The eponym being either a Puranic saint (as with the Brahmans and the castes who imitate them) or a chief of comparatively modern date, as with the Rajputs and others.

III. *Territorial*. Referring either to some very early settlement of a section, or to the birthplace of its founder, prevalent among the Rajputs and the trading castes supposed to be allied with them.

IV. *Family* sections of small size and comparatively of recent origin.

V. *Local* or *Communal* sections also comparatively small and recently evolved.

III

The following statement, which forms the part of the appendix to the Glossary, analyses the internal structure of the Bagdi caste, numbering 756,870 in the Census of 1881.

BAGDI, Bagtit

Titles: Bágh, Dhárá, Khán, Mánjhi, Masálchi, Mudi, Palankhái, Parámanik, Pherká, Puilá, Rái, Sántrá, Sardár.

Sub-castes: (1) Bájándáriá, found in Jessore; (2) Dandamánjhi; (3) Darátiá, found in Nuddea; (4) Duliá, a palanquin-bearing sub-caste; (5) Gulimánji, (6) Kasái Kuliá, said to live along the banks of the Kasái river in Mánbhum and Midnapore; (7) Kusmetia, Kusmátiá or Kusputra, said to be named after the *kusá sagái* and apparently totemistic; (8) Let, found in Murshidabad, (9) Máchhuá, Mechhuá or Mecho, a fishing sub-caste; (10)

Malla Metiá, Mátiá or Matial, fishermen, and earth-workers; (11) Nodá, found in the 24-Pergunnahs, said to have come from Bánkura; (12) Tentuliá, named after the tamarind tree, and apparently totemistic; (13) Trayodás, found in the 24-Pergnnnahs, said to have come from Bánkura; and (14) Ujha or Ojha, probably descended from the priests of the tribal gods, who would naturally tend to form themselves into a sub-caste.

For a parallel case, see MALLIK Sections: (*a*) *Totemistic*: Ardi (fish); Bághrishi (the tiger); Kachchhap (the tortoise); Kásbak (heron); Pákbasanta (bird); Patrishi (the bean); Ponkrishi (jungle cock); Sálrishi or Salmachh (the *sál* fish). (*b*) *Eponymous*: Alamyán; Kásyapa. (*c*) *Uncertain*: Bágri; Dásya; Gadibharat; Kál; Ráncho.

Now, even if the matter stopped here and led to no general conclusions whatever, we should still have the satisfaction of knowing what manner of aggregate the Bágdi caste really is, and in what respects it differs from a number of apparently similar aggregates. And it is easy to imagine political and administrative situations in which this knowledge might be of practical use. Besides this, however, the comparison of the internal structure of a number of different castes and tribes enables us in many cases to say with an approach to certainty to what larger groups they formerly belonged, and thus to some extent to resolve the population of a particular tract of country into its primitive elements. Finally, the same method pursued on a larger scale and helped out by deductions established independently suggests certain general conclusions, such as that intra-tribal exogamy, not inter-tribal exogamy as described by Mr. McLennan, may be the original form of that remarkable usage; that neither totemism nor exogamy have any necessary connection with female kinship; that castes with well-defined exogamous groups are probably homogeneous off-shoots from single tribes; and that castes which have no exogamous groups have probably been formed on the nucleus of a common occupation from heterogeneous fragments of different tribes or castes.

Seeing, that these structural groups, of whatever type, preserve for us so many curious survivals, and throw so much light on the sources from which the population of India has been drawn, it has struck me that our Society could do very useful work at the present time by devoting itself to the elucidation of the internal structure of the castes and tribes of the Bombay Presidency, and of any other part of India where members of the Society can be found willing to help in the task. The Madras Presidency would, I should think, furnish a very rich and comparatively unworked field for research of this kind. The detailed measures necessary to work this out would be the following:

a. A list of the chief castes of the Presidency with their local distribution should be drawn up from the Census of 1881.
b. Members resident in the districts should be invited to take up the castes

of their immediate neighbourhood, and to obtain for each caste answers to a certain set of questions.

c. The replies should be published in the Journal of the Society.

With proper organization it ought to be possible to dispose of all the castes and tribes of Bombay on this system within a year. Care should of course be taken to get several reports for each caste from different parts of the country, as the original organization may have in some cases been modified by the influence of other castes or even of Islam, which in India, as in early Arabia, has been a great solvent of primitive usage even among castes which have resisted actual conversion. The questions necessary to elucidate the material points are very few and very simple. I can supply a set which have worked well in Bengal, and which would probably need only slight modifications to fit them for use in Bombay.

IV

Turning now to the second branch of enquiry, which I have ventured to commend to the notice of the Society – the physical characteristics of selected castes and tribes – I may state that elaborate physical measurements are now being taken of a very large number of castes and tribes in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, and of a few representative castes and tribes in the Panjab and the Central Provinces. The scheme on which these operations are being conducted has been approved by Professor Flower, F.R.S., of the British Museum, and Professor Topinard of the Anthropological School of Paris. It is hoped that, by combining the statistics thus obtained with the ethnographic data independently collected, we may be able to distinguish the chief types which are represented in the population of Bengal and Upper India, to determine what castes of the present day have the largest proportion of Aryan blood, and to define the prevalence of the aboriginal or non-Aryan element. How far these hopes are well founded, I am at present hardly in a position to say; but the statistics certainly promise to show that there is no material physical difference between the so-called Dravidian and Kolarian races of Bengal, and that neither of them contains any appreciable admixture of Mongolian blood. The higher castes of Bengal seem to conform to a type which we are justified in describing as Aryan; the Mundas, Oraons and their congeners in Chota Nagpore show some of the marked characteristics of the Negrito races; while the castes popularly known as intermediate appear to represent a type compounded of the other two. Should these provisional conclusions be borne out by the complete statistics, something will have been done towards clearing up the process by which the present population has been evolved. Here again, I would submit, is an excellent opening for the Society. Nothing, I imagine, would be easier than to initiate through the agency of those members who may have a little time to spare, a regular scheme for

measuring selected castes and tribes in the Bombay Presidency. Minute instructions illustrated by diagrams and pictures have already been drawn up, and are in use in the Provinces I have mentioned; the instruments are cheap, portable, simple to understand, and easy to manipulate. We only want observers to carry on the work. In this, as in the ethnographic branch of the subject, the figures of the Census of 1881 would tell us what castes should be selected for measurement either for their numerical importance, or as being specially interesting from the ethnological point of view. It would then remain to allot these castes among those members of the Society who might be willing to undertake the work of measurement. Officers in charge of jails, Civil Surgeons of districts, and Civilians when on tour, have special facilities for getting suitable subjects. As soon as a sufficiently large group had been measured to yield statistics of value, they might be published in the *Journal of the Society*.

V

Looking to the numerical strength of the Society, it would seem that there should be no difficulty in carrying on at the same time both the lines of research which I have mentioned. Both will appeal strongly to ethnologists in Europe, and the record of internal structure when completed will be of great assistance to the local Government in taking the next census. Much, if not most, of the difficulty in carrying out a census in India arises from our ignorance of the numerous groups into which the population is divided. Almost every caste, in addition to its sub-castes and sections, has a host of titles and synonyms. A man who is asked in the course of the census what caste he belongs to, is just as likely to give the name of his sub-caste, section or title as the better known name of the entire aggregate. The result is that the census statistics of castes contain many hundreds – I might almost say thousands – of obscure names which the central Census office can make nothing of, and which have to be referred back to the district for explanation. By this time many of them have been mis-printed, mis-written and mis-transliterated out of all recognition, and go to swell the column of 'unspecified'. In any case, the work of compilation is greatly delayed, and the cost of the census proportionately increased by the lengthy correspondence which passes between the central office and the districts regarding these names, and by the special enquiries which have to be undertaken to elucidate them. This must continue to be the case until the subject has been thoroughly worked out in the manner I have suggested earlier.

On administrative, therefore, as well as scientific grounds, I would urge the Society to lose no time in taking up the line of research I have suggested. The tide of advancing Hinduism is daily sweeping away the relics of primitive customs which still survive in India, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that every fresh railway that is opened, besides giving new customers to Manchester, gives new clients to the Brahman. It may be that Hinduism

does not openly seek proselytes, but it actually makes more proselytes than any religion now in working activity, and every proselyte it makes detracts so much from the value of that social record by the side of whose imperfection, as Sir Henry Maine has well said, 'the imperfection of the geological record is a mere trifle'.

Note

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, I (6), June 1888: 343–52.

2 Progress of the study of Indian anthropology in Europe, and cognate matters

H. H. Risley

Mr. H.H. Risley delivered an address on the methods and progress of Anthropology in Europe and in India. After showing that the science, including as it does the study of folklore and all forms of primitive culture, is gaining ground rapidly in the estimation of European men of science, so that two of the most notable books of the year, Professor Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites* and Mr. J.G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough* are based in the main on anthropological data. Mr. Risley laid stress on the peculiar advantages which India possesses for the study of early custom and tradition. India is, in fact, the only country in the world where really primitive institutions, religion, and ritual still survive in full vigour unimpaired by contact with a foreign civilization. Everywhere else the material superiority of the European colonist or conqueror has exercised a most destructive effect on indigenous institutions. In America, Australia, and Polynesia ancient religions and primitive customs have faded away on contact with the European, like the frescoes in Pompean villas perish when exposed to the open air. In India alone, the native races have held their ground, and we find examples of almost all known stages of primitive culture existing and flourishing side by side with an administration of the most modern type. This fact, though peculiarly favourable to the prosecution of anthropological studies, has, however, been rather lost sight of by European men of science, who have paid undue attention to the moribund races of Australia and Polynesia, and have neglected the far more important and interesting people of India.[1]

During his stay in Europe, Mr. Risley appears to have set himself to convince the leading English anthropologists of the necessity of paying more attention to Indian phenomena, and his efforts have met with a certain measure of success. The British Association have formed a Standing Committee, consisting of Sir William Turner, Professor Flower, Dr. E.B. Tylor, Dr. Garson, Mr. Bloxam, and Mr. Risley, to promote the study of the 'habits, customs, physical characteristics, and religions of the Natives of India'. In pursuance of this object, the Secretary of State has been addressed by the British Association in a letter which was published in the Indian papers some months ago. A fresh movement has now been started in

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Cambridge under the auspices of Professor Robertson Smith and Mr. J.G. Frazer in furtherance of a larger scheme for observing Indian custom, ritual, and folklore. Mr. Frazer, who holds a 'Research Fellowship' at the Trinity College, Cambridge, has undertaken to visit India in the next cold weather for the purpose of prosecuting inquiries on the spot, and there seems to be every prospect that a great stimulus will be given to the study of Indian ethnology. In conclusion, Mr. Risley pointed out that the examination of living tradition and existing usage, so far from conflicting with the study of ancient books, tends to supplement and illustrate the information which is derived from that source. He showed how the result of his inquiries in Bengal, instead of, as was at first supposed, subverting the ancient theory of caste, go strongly to confirm it, and on this ground anthropology may be commended to the notice of orthodox Hindus and students of Sanskrit literature.

Note

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, II (5), December 1890: 253–54.

3 Development or evolution of anthropology in India

H. H. Risley

After much consideration, I have come to the conclusion that the address which it devolves on me to deliver as President of this Society [for 1892] can most properly be devoted to review the progress that has been made during the past 2 years in anthropological work in India and to indicate the lines of research which can most profitably be pursued in the future.[1,2]

The scientific study of anthropology is of comparatively recent growth, and has only been introduced into India within the last 10 years. Hodgson and Dalton, the earliest labourers in this field, were quite unacquainted with the method of research followed in Europe, and were to some extent hampered in their own inquiries by their ignorance of the line that European ethnologists were taking. A conspicuous illustration of this is afforded by their treatment of the important subject of exogamy. Hodgson does not refer to it at all, while Dalton only mentions casually that certain groups are 'what Mr McLennan calls exogamous'. Had Dalton realized the extreme scientific importance of the subject, it can hardly be doubted that he would have given more attention to the subject and collected more extensive data than the meagre lists of exogamous groups given in the Ethnology of Bengal.

Within the past few years, all this has been changed. The necessity of working in concert with European ethnologists has been fully recognized; a special Sub-Committee of the British Association has been appointed to look after Indian anthropology; and all recent inquiries in India have followed the instructions laid down by the Committee of the Anthropological Institute which sat in 1874 and drew up a set of instructions for inquirers.

Working on these lines, we have now got for Bengal a fairly complete account of the tribes and castes found in the census of 1881. For the North-West Provinces, Mr Nesfield's interesting sketch and Mr Crooke's valuable ethnography give as much information as can be looked for without special inquiries being instituted. It is to be hoped that the extensions recently undertaken will result in similar works being published for other Provinces. I will state briefly what extensions of anthropological work I refer to.

The Government of Bengal has sanctioned a grant of Rs. 2,000 a year to the Asiatic Society of Bengal for the encouragement of anthropology and

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ethnography. The Society has started a special branch to deal with these subjects, and proposes shortly to publish a third section of its journal dealing exclusively with anthropology and ethnography. Arrangements have also been made for prosecuting systematic inquiries under the supervision of the Anthropological Secretary. Under the head of 'Anthropology', it is proposed to work on the lines approved by Professors Flower, Turner, and Topinard, and to measure representative specimens of the chief tribes and castes in India. Mr Kitts of the Civil Service has undertaken this work in the North-West Provinces; Surgeon-Captain Roberts proposes to measure the very interesting tribes subject to the Gilgit Political Agency; Dr Saise, of Giridih, is engaged in measuring the tribes of the Hazaribagh district; and it is hoped that no difficulty may be found in getting similar assistance in the Panjab and in other Provinces of India. Our anthropological data will then be fairly complete, and we shall be in a position to attempt to draw the conclusions which the statistics indicate. Under this branch of the subject, I should mention that Dr D.D. Cunningham, F.R.S., has undertaken to make a microscopic examination of any specimens of hair that may be sent in. The microscopic structure of the hair is regarded by European ethnologists as a very important racial character, and Dr Cunningham's inquiries will fill a gap in the anthropological record.

Turning now to ethnography, I have to report that the Government of the North–West Provinces have adopted certain proposals, put forward by me 2 years ago in a letter addressed to the Government of Bengal, for the systematic prosecution of ethnographic inquiries. A Standing Committee, with Mr W. Crooke as President and Messrs. Nesfield, Kitts, and V. Smith as members, has been appointed to deal with the subject in Northern India, and they are understood to have a regular plan under preparation. The Provincial Government gives a grant of Rs. 1,000, and the Committee hare agreed to work in concert with the Asiatic Society of Bengal and to follow the same methods of research. In Madras, the Government has given the Asiatic Society a grant of Rs. 500 a year, and has told of a Special Officer, Mr F. C. Mullaly of the Police, the author of an excellent book on Criminal Tribes, to be Provincial Director of Ethnography. During a recent visit to Madras, I had an opportunity of conferring with Mr Mullaly on the subject of ethnography and arranged with him the system on which operations should be carried on. The field opened in Madras is virtually untouched and promises to yield results of great interest; the caste system has developed there on peculiar lines, and there seems to be a rich growth of survivals of archaic usage. In Bombay, my attempts to secure the co-operation of Government, without which no scientific inquiries can be expected to make much progress in India, have been less successful than in Madras. The Bombay Government has refused either to make a grant to the Asiatic Society, or to appoint a special officer to supervise ethnographic inquiries locally. They suggest that the work should be done through the agency of the Anthropological Society. No doubt, it will be possible to effect

something in this manner. I can supply the Society with copies of my Anthropometric Instructions and Manual of Ethnographic Research, and they must then endeavour to induce members of the Society and others resident in the districts to take the subject up on those lines and to send me their replies to the questions. Those replies I should then work up into monographs on the castes concerned. In this way, we should by degrees get together a complete account of the chief tribes and castes in the Presidency. The Chief Commissioner of Assam has sanctioned a grant of Rs. 1,000 a year for ethnographic purposes, and has appointed Mr Gait, C.S., the officer who had charge of the census, to be Provincial Director of Ethnography.

I am still in communication with the Governments of the Punjab and the Central Provinces on the subject of extending ethnographic researches to those areas, and am not without hope that favourable replies may be received. The Chief Commissioner of Burma has not yet been addressed; but Major Temple, who is a recognized authority on these subjects, has expressed his willingness to supervise any inquiries that may be started, and in the last resort we could therefore commence operations in that Province without asking for may assistance from Government.

This completes my sketch of the work actually done at present in the way of extending ethnographic and anthropological operations throughout India. It remains to indicate lines of inquiry which might with advantage be taken up in addition to those already in operation.

The first is the formation of an Ethnographic Museum, such as exists in a high state of perfection in the Museum fur Volker-Kunde in Berlin, which owes its existence to the exertions of Dr Adolf Bastian. Here, the student may watch the gradual evolution of all the objects that have exercised the ingenuity and taxed the resources of primitive man and can see how steady the progress has been from the simpler to the more complex. It is easy, I may here remark, to over-estimate the value to Ethnographic science of collections of material objects, such as tools, weapons, means of locomotion, and the like. All these things are the products of many forces. The material surroundings of a person, the materials available, the climate, the fauna and flora, and a variety of factors which it would be tedious to enumerate, have played a part in shaping the wants which have eventually found an expression in some instrument or invention: and here one may remark that similarity of circumstances rather than affinity of race seem to have contributed in the most marked degree to the development of these activities. External conditions have in this connection a stronger influence than inherited tendencies. Nevertheless, after all allowance has been made for these limitations, there remains a large field within which the work of collection might profitably be carried on, and India, containing as it does so many tribes in very various grades of material progress, offers special facilities for forming a representative collection.

Another object which ethnologists would do well to bear in mind is the formation of a good collection of photographs of the different castes and

tribes of India. Such a collection was made many years ago, with brief letter-press notices, by Dr Forbes Watson and Sir John Kayo, under the title of 'The People of India'. But permanent processes had not then come into vogue, and the book, which is extremely rare and costly, has now lost much of its value by reason of the photographs having faded. There is believed to be no prospect of Government undertaking a new edition, and the only chance of anything of the kind getting done is for private inquirers to lose no opportunity that presents itself of taking characteristic photographs. Such photographs should always include one view directly front face and one exactly in profile. It is of course not suggested that any precise scientific value attaches to photographs of people; but they serve to illustrate dress and peculiarities and help to render intelligible the verbal description which the Manual of Ethnography provides for.

A more precise value belongs to accurately made casts of typical representatives of particular tribes and castes, especially if they are coloured and made of some durable material like plaster of Paris. Some casts, prepared under my supervision for the Paris Exhibition of 1889, attracted considerable notice there, and were admitted to possess a definite scientific value, as they were made to measure. The difficulty about casts is that they are very expensive, especially when made life-size, and no other agency but Government is ordinarily in a position to undertake them.

Finally, I wish to invite attention to the desirability of making a representative collection of skulls and skeletons of the chief castes. This sounds simple enough; but it is really beset with very special difficulties, which cast the gravest doubt on the collections of Asiatic skulls which are found in European Museums. Skulls and bones must be cleaned by somebody; in India, work of this kind is done by low class people, and there is no security against their mixing the skulls while being cleaned. Special care must, therefore, be taken to attach some sort of label on the skull before it is given out to be cleaned, and to see that this is securely attached, so that it cannot be removed in the process of cleaning. Neglect of this simple precaution has rendered worthless many specimens now preserved in museums. It should be added that, if it is desired to make a craniological examination of any skull, they had better be sent to Dr Paul Topinard of Paris, Professor Flower of the British Museum, or Dr Gerson of the Anthropological Institute. These gentlemen have the requisite laboratories and instruments at hand, and can work with a degree of accuracy to which hardly anyone in India can hope to attain.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, III (2), December 1892: 88–93.
2 Editors have changed the title of this paper: original title was 'Progress of Anthropology in India'.

4 Study of anthropology in India

Denzil Ibbetson

When you [members of Anthropological Society of Bombay] did me the honour of selecting me to be your President, you imposed on me the very responsible task of addressing you this evening on some branch or aspect of the study of Anthropology. In my choice of a subject, I have been greatly restricted by the consciousness that many of my hearers will be possessed of a width of scholarship and a depth of research to which I myself can make no pretension. It has seemed to me that in this early stage of the life of our Society, it will be profitable for us to consider what our corporate object is, and how we shall best attain it; and that on such a subject I may best hope to be helpful by suggestion. I have, therefore, chosen as the title of my address tonight, 'The Study of Anthropology in India'. I shall not, however address you on that subject; but will, with your permission, take one small portion of India, the only portion of which I have any knowledge, and consider the question with references to that portion only, or at any rate mainly. In discussing such a question, no man can pretend to deal with India as a whole; he must perforce select some province or other as his text; and that the province I have perforce selected is not the one from which our Society takes its name, is the penalty which you must be content to pay for the liberal-mindedness, which led you to go outside Bombay for your president.[1]

I propose, then, to consider, first, the subject-matter with the investigation of which an Anthropological Society is concerned, and the objects to which its investigations should be directed; second, the materials which are available, and the sources from which we may hope to derive assistance; third, the methods by which we may best attack the problems before us; and fourth, the utility of our study, and the advantages which flow from its prosecution.

I

I suppose that the study of Anthropology, in its broadest sense, includes all that relates to man as a social animal. Taken in this broadest sense, it embraces many subordinate studies: ethnology, or the study of the different

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races into which mankind is divided, their present distribution on the face of earth, and the steps by which that distribution has been arrived at; sociology, or the study of the social group and its organization; philology, or study of the languages spoken by man; the study of his religious beliefs and superstitions, for which I know no general name; history, or the study of his past doings; and the residual study of all such of his habits and ideas as do not fall under any of the above heads, of which the group so much investigated under the name of folklore is a good example.

But the mere enumeration of these several studies, each of them covering a vast field which has too often been as yet hardly trenched upon by the spade of inquiry, shows that some limitation is needed to our first attempt at the definition. And I think that this limitation may be expressed somewhat as follows. Wherever the immediate interest of any special branch of our subject and the wealth of material available for its study have resulted in its exploration being pursued with great energy and minuteness, that particular branch becomes a separate science with the results of which we as Anthropologists are concerned only in so far as they throw light on the more general problems presented by the study of mankind. Where, on the hand, material is scanty, or has not been collected or digested, it lies within our province to collect it and make it generally available to the scientific world. Thus, we leave the political history of England to Mr Froude and Lord Macaulay, its constitutional history to Professor Stubbs, the niceties of the Sanskrit language to Professor Max Müller, and the authorship of the four Gospels to – shall we say – Dr Wace or Professor Huxley? But a paper on the migrations of the Kolarian tribes, a discussion of the law of adoption as existing amongst the Mongols, a glossary of familiar terms in the language of the Karens of Burmah, or a dissertation on the religion of gipsy tribes of Northern India, would be most welcome contributions to an Anthropological journal. In other words, wherever we can find a historian, a philologist, and a theologian, to undertake the minute description of any one organ of the social organism, as it now exists, or as it existed at some former time, we stand aside and leave the task to him; and when he has completed it, we use its results to compare with others, as aids to a general view of the evolution and structure of the organism as a whole, and to the study of its obscurer parts. Where, however, owing to distance or remoteness of interest, or difficulty of inquiry and scantiness of material, no full investigation has hitherto been made, the anthropologist is forced to collect for himself the material for his study.

II

So that we may perhaps define the subject-matter of Anthropology as being the comparative study of man as a social animal, together with the positive study of the same subject, so far as is necessary to supplement the material available for the former and more immediate object researches.

In an Indian province, we have the field very much to ourselves. Except, perhaps, in the matter of language, and of recent political history, we are seldom embarrassed by a too great abundance of recorded material; and we have in almost all cases still to collect the information which alone can make any general conclusions possible. We have, then, to inquire into the ethnic constitution of the population of our province, its distribution, the sources whence its various constituents were derived, the routes which they followed and the time of their arrival, and the manner and degree in which the several elements have blended. We have, for each of the organic units into which the population is divided, to examine into the framework of rules and customs which supports society, and into the body of belief which regulates its religious practice and lends sanction to its rules of conduct. And we have to investigate its languages, inquire into its tribal traditions, and collect its folklore and superstitions, in the hope that they may throw light upon its origin and ethnic affinities.

Here is a task sufficiently vast to satisfy the ambition of the most ardent inquirer. Let us see what materials are or can be made available, on which to base our conclusions. First, and in some respects most valuable of all, because most trust-worthy, we have the actual physical conformation of the individuals composing any tribal or caste unit. I speak with hesitation on the subject, as it is one of which I have no personal knowledge or experience. But it seems to me that measurements, such as Mr Risley has been making our causing to be made in Bengal, must, if made with sufficient care, possess a very special value, as being statements of actual undoubted fact. No one who has not made the attempt can well realize how difficult it is to secure a full and accurate statement of custom on any given point by verbal inquiry from Orientals, and still more from semi-savages. They do not clearly understand what you want; they are apt to fabricate information which they think that you wish for, but which they do not possess; you cannot always be certain that you fully understand their meaning; they omit to mention all sorts of limitations, exceptions, and explanations, which they either neglect as unimportant, or take for granted as understood, but which very materially modify the real facts; and, above all, you are always in danger of stating as the custom general to a caste or tribe, a custom which obtains only among a certain small section, or in a certain limited locality. Cranial measurements, on the other have, are probably almost absolutely free from the personal equation of the observer, and are effected only by the irreducible minimum of error which is inherent in all human observations. And it is probable that the skull is not the only portion of the human frame, measurements of which will afford valuable indications of racial affinity. There is, however, an important point, which cannot be too strongly insisted upon; and that is, that, for the figures to possess any value whatever, the number of instances must be large. The differences which form the basis of our conclusions are small; and it is only when sufficiently large numbers of observations are grouped together, that the element of variation from the

standard type can be so far eliminated that it ceases appreciably to affect the results. A distinguished English observer have only recently furnished us with an instance of the danger of basing inductions of this nature on an insufficiently large number of instances.

III

There is another aspect of the physical conformation of the natives of India, from which it is possible that valuable information may someday be gathered; and that is the physiognomical aspect. The great races of mankind have certain physiognomical characteristics which mark them off very distinctly one from another; and it is probable that a trained eye would detect the prevalence of one or another of these characteristics in the several groups into which our population is decided. But here, we ourselves are at disadvantage. It is notorious that a European, on first landing in the country, can with difficulty distinguish one native from another; the type is so new that the details are lost in the general impression; and it is probable that this inability is present with us in some measure to the last. This is one of the matters in which we may expect valuable aid from native investigators, when sufficiently trained for the inquiry.

The second point to which I would direct your attention is language. I am aware that language alone is a very untrustworthy indication of ethnic origin. And this is probably especially true where a fusion of widely different races has been going on for so many generations as is in all probability the case in India. But it is not to the general form of speech that I would mainly look for information, but rather to local differences of dialect, and especially to local variations in the names of familiar objects. The Punjabi proverb says that the dialect changes every fifteen miles; and this is only an exaggeration of the truth. And we constantly find that for such a common object as, say, a village rest-house, a very well-defined line may be drawn across a tract, on the two sides of which two different terms are used. Now it seems to me almost certain that a fact of this sort denotes difference of origin; and that the peoples who use the respective terms, or rather, perhaps, the dominant tribes in the localities where the respective terms are used, have approached the dividing line from opposite directions. Again, certain words for objects of household use are peculiar to certain castes or tribes. Here we have, in all probability, survivals from an original language, which has in the main become merged in the general speech of the tract. I believe that a careful collection and comparison of dialects and local terms, and a tracing back of the differences it discovered would throw much light on the routes by which the component parts of the existing population travelled to their present locations.

A third and most important point to be considered in unraveling the numerous threads which have been woven into the fabric of Indian Society as it exists to-day, is the physical conformation of the country. Those of you

who have read Professor Green's 'Making of England' will remember the vivid manner in which he demonstrates the decisive influence that the natural features of the country exercised on the lines of advance and the position of the settlements of the various invading clans. Thus, the fens and morasses that fringed the estuaries of the English rivers, the marshy swamps that occupied the central portions of their basins, and the great forests that filled the low country with impenetrable thickets, confined the invaders to the great open downs and minor ranges that alone offered to them practicable lines of advance. In the great plains of the Punjab, as they stand at present, precisely the converse conditions have operated. The arid steppes that lie between the great rivers have opposed obstacles to the advancing tide of immigration, or have at least offered no inducement to encroachment; while the gradual onward spread of later settlers can be clearly traced along the broad and fertile riverine which lie on either side of the courses of the streams. Even the religious distribution of the people has been affected by the natural lie of the country, the more recent Mahomedan colonists having, during the dominance of Islam, driven the earlier Hindu inhabitants from the lower to the higher and less fertile tracts. So again, in the west the inflow of population has during recent times been almost entirely confined to the river valleys of the Indus system; while in the east, where a more plentiful rainfall renders cultivation everywhere possible, two distinct tides of immigration have apparently advanced, one along the Jumna, and the other from the direction Rajputana, and have spread over the face of the country. But it is certain that, at no very remote period, the physical conditions that influenced the course of migrations were vastly different from, if not directly the reverse of, those now obtaining. The ruins of considerable towns and numerous villages, and the remains of abandoned wells scattered over the face of what are now inhospitable steppes, occupied only by nomad graziers, speak of a time when they supported a teeming population; it is said that Babar hunted the rhinoceros in the now fertile valley of Bannu; and indications are not absent from the pages of the earlier Mahomedan historians that, even in their time, the river valleys were occupied by impenetrable jungle and that population was chiefly confined to the open country.

To anyone who has followed of late years the gradual working out in detail of the earlier history of our own country, the immense assistance which has been derived from names of places and families will be familiar. I am told by Professor Skeat that much that has been done in England in this direction has recently been found to have been based upon untrustworthy foundations, and will have to be done again. But of the value and importance of the indications afforded there can be no doubt. In the hilly portions of the Punjab, the names of the salient physical features are probably often of great antiquity, having been handed down from one to another by successive occupants of the territory in which they occur. But in the plain country, which constitutes the greater portion of the province, the

physical features are for the most part ephemeral. A tree, a river channel, a marsh, or a piece of scrub, has given its name to a village, and the name is as recent as the feature from which it is derived. So, villages are often named after the person who founded them, or the caste or tribe of the people who occupy them; and, worst of all, the Munshi, in his ignorant conceit of his Persian education, has often transformed the original names beyond all possibility of recognition. Still, it is probable that full and accurate lists of the names of villages, and still more of physical features, would tell a story to a competent student. The names of individuals in India unfortunately correspond with our Christian names; their number is limited, and they probably will not tell us much; though I have certainly found, on moving from one part of the province to another, that I am introduced to an entirely new group of names among the peasantry. But the name that corresponds in the Punjab with the English surname, and is indeed not infrequently used as such to distinguish individuals, is the name of the tribe or clan. The number of these is enormous; and in the case of some of the smaller septs, it is often doubtful whether the sept is named from the village or the village from the sept. But I suspect that a complete list of tribes and castes and their sub-divisions would, quite apart from the light that it would throw upon the constitution of native society, tell a story of its history to the competent philologist, the value of which could hardly be exaggerated. It is probable, however, that we have yet to wait for an Indian Grimm, and that the laws of degradation of our vernaculars have not yet been properly formulated.

The next source of information to which I would direct attention is the works of native authors; and here we are perhaps more unfortunate in India than in any other civilized country. From the time of the earliest Mahomedan invasion, we have, for North-Western India at least, a fairly complete and continuous record of political history. But before that we have nothing but the religious, legal, and scientific writings of the Pandits, the occasional travels of Buddhist pilgrims, the vague notes of Greek and Arabic geographers, and epics by native bards. And what we have is concealed from the greater number of us, not only under a foreign language, which might be conquered, but also by characters which are often little more than systems of mnemonics, and intolerably irksome to the European students. Much has been done by such men as Muir, Elliott, Blochmann, and St Julien to render the ancient texts available to us; thought that much is but little compared with the far more that remains to do. But I think that nobody has yet attacked this source from the point of view of the Anthropologist: no one has attempted to reconstruct early Hindu society as revealed to us by contemporary writers; while those who have selected portions of the Mahomedan historians for translation, have apparently chosen only those books or passages that throw light on the history of a dynasty. For our purposes, the rejected portions would probably be more valuable. But indeed, at any rate as regards the Hindu epics, a study of such a work as the English translation of the *Mahabharata* that is now being

published makes the reader's heart sink within him, as he realizes what an intolerable deal of chaff must be carefully winnowed away before he is rewarded by the discovery of a single grain of wheat.

A more interesting, and in many respects a more valuable source of historical information is the tribal traditions of the people. Every tribe, every caste, every clan has its traditions of origin, can tell the name of its alleged founder, whence he came, when he settled, how his offspring spread, and often the limits of the tract in which they were at one time dominant. Often these traditions are recorded in the books of the hereditary genealogists of the tribe, whose records go back, in some cases, for scores of generations. So much of all these traditions is obviously false, that there is a tendency to discredit them altogether as mere vain fables. This is, I think, to be regretted. I believe that all of them have a substratum of fact, sometimes of greater and sometimes of less value. And I believe that a patient study of these traditions, and above all, a comparison of their various forms as related by the different sections of a widely spread caste, or the stories told by different castes occupying the same territory, will enable the student to sift out from them information which will often be most valuable, and which can be obtained in no other way in the same degree of local detail.

Last, and perhaps most important of all, come the social and religious customs of the people. And here the subject is so vast that I shall say but little about it. No one who has not studied with some minuteness the customs of a small and well defined tract in this country can conceive the wealth and variety of material that awaits the inquirer. Of the great gods, we know something – more, in fact, than do the people themselves. Of the chief religions of India, of Hinduism, of Islam, of Buddhism, as they should be, as they are in their scriptures and in the works of the doctors, there are books and enough to tell us. But these are not the religions of the *people* of India. They are as foreign and unfamiliar to their minds as are the doctrines of Dr Newman to the good woman who finds comfort in 'that blessed word Mesopotamia'. The godlings who watch over the homestead, who bring or avert pestilence, who fill the udder of the kine and bring forth the fruits of the earth in due season; the saints who grant and withhold a son, who strike the first-born with fever, or watch over the goodman on a distant journey, the fairies who vex women, and the *revenants* who possess men: these are the powers that the peasant knows and fears. It is for them that he lights his lamp on Thursday evening and sets it afloat on the village pond; it is at their shrine that he erects five nodding plumes of grass and ties a bit of red rag on the tree, in their name that he feeds a donkey, or lets loose a white cock by the river bank; it is from fear of them that he brings to the wise man his tobacco, waved over the body of the patient, and watches in superstitious awe while the Jogi wags his head and dances to the sound of the drum, till he falls to the ground in a frenzy of inspiration, and pants out the name of the power who must be propitiated. What do we know of these? What do we know of the semi-religious ceremonies that are so

closely interwoven into the fabric of everyday life in India; of the superstitions that form full half the peasant's worldly lore; of the secret rites of the womenfolk; of the hidden orgies of the left-handed castes?

The social customs are no less complicated and no better known to us than the religious. The veil of inscrutability that has for so long shrouded the great caste system, at once the wonder as the despair of the Western mind, is but now beginning to lift before patient study. The ceremonies that attend birth, puberty, betrothal, marriage, and death, the limits of the tribe and its sub-divisions, and the conditions and manner of admission into it, the place of the Levite in the social system, the fasts that should be and the festivals that are observed by the villager – all these and a thousand kindred matters must be studied before we can hope to understand the organic structure of the society in whose midst we live. And if we turn to the superstitions and ceremonies connected with cattle and agriculture, the two sources from which, perhaps, 200 of the 250 millions of India earn their bread, to the stories and beliefs which we include under the head of folklore, and to the minor doings and sayings of the people, we are simply overwhelmed with the infinite variety and abundance of our ignorance. Yet, all these thing have a very special value of their own; for they show us the man, not only as he is, but also as he was, or his forefathers, in generations long gone by; for probably nothing is so permanent and so slow to change as social custom, especially among an ignorant and credulous people, and when the use in which it took its rise is forgotten.

But above all, in studying the customs of the people, what we should look for is local or tribal variation in custom. A difference in a belief or in a ritual may be merely accidental; but it more often springs from a corresponding difference in origin or history. One more point before I conclude this branch of my subject. Our study of the manners and customs of the people, to be complete, must not be confined within the limits of India. It is, I suppose, almost beyond dispute that a large proportion of the present population of the country is descended from ancestors who have within historic times entered it from the opposite ends of the great Himalayan wall. And it seems to me that when we know something of the history of the peoples that live beyond that barrier and of their religious and social organization, when we can sort out into groups the customs and beliefs which we find obtaining in India, and say with some confidence, that is Mongol, that is Turki, that is Kol, and so forth – then, and not till then, shall we be able to trace back to their source, with any real success, the streams of immigration that have flowed for so many centuries into this great meeting-place of peoples.

IV

And now, how shall we best avail ourselves of the sources of information which I have just enumerated; how best set to work to collect and digest the

material which they offer. One thing is sufficiently clear; that the diversity of that material is so infinite as to afford the fullest scope for every variety of taste, capacity, and opportunity. The work before us may be primarily divided under two broad heads – that of collecting and that of digesting. It is seldom that one and the same person is happy as to combine the two successfully. The collector is perhaps too near his material to take a broad view of its teachings; he cannot see the forest for the trees; and often he has neither the scholarly leisure nor the literary aptitude to enable him to discuss it profitably. But at least, he can observe and record. To do so, demands of necessity no previous knowledge, no special training. In some ways, indeed, it is a positive advantage to be without such knowledge; for so, we escape a tendency to find what we look for rather than what is, and avoid the danger of rejecting as useless matter which may be invaluable. There are few of us who have not opportunities of collecting information. Our forest officers, the officials engaged in telegraph construction, and the mighty hunters of whom we have so many in India, are constantly brought into contact with aboriginal and gipsy tribes, of which we know next to nothing, and a really reliable record of whose customs is one of the first essentials to the identification and evaluation of the aboriginal element present in the general population. Our Revenue and Settlement Officers enjoy in their long cold-weather tours opportunities of familiar communication with the people, and learn to know a side of them, and that the best and pleasantest, which never reveals itself to those who judge them only by the rabble of a city or the scum that fills a Police Court: it is easy for them to gain their confidence by kindly sympathy, and so to open stores of information which are closely shut against the stranger. The Magistrate of the Judge is constantly coming across curious and interesting customs that crop up in the course of his enquiries, and an anthropological note-book might be filled with valuable matter in the course of 20 years' judicial experience. Our professors, our doctors, and other professional men have special training and often special leisure which many of us are without. And if any of us are denied the opportunity of penetrating beneath the surface of native society, at least they may assist in rendering generally available the information which is locked up in the books of native authors, or may arrange and digest the material collected by others, to whose labours their own will be postponed in time only, and not in value. I have said that one may be too near his material to draw broad conclusions from it. And it is probable that this is in some sense true of all of us here in India, and that we must be content to leave it to the European scholar to teach us the lesson for which we have provided the text. But in some ways, a student on the spot has many advantages over him at a distance. He knows more than he puts on record; he is infected by the *genius loci*; he feels by a sort of intuition what is and what is not in keeping with the spirit of the people he is studying; and his conclusions, if not so wide, are more likely to be just. This consideration obviously possesses special force in the case of native

inquirers. But that is not the only advantage they possess. I have already suggested that they will probably be able to pursue the physiognomic branch of the subject with greater hope of success than ourselves. And far more important than this, sources of information are freely opened to them to which we gain access but with difficulty. It is through their agency alone that we can hope to learn the rites and customs particular to women, rites and customs which I believe to possess a very special significance, as being in many cases handed down directly from the aboriginal women of the country, with whom the subsequent immigrants intermarried. And their facilities of communication with the masses are so infinitely greater than our own that I look forward to the most valuable results so soon as we have a body of native gentlemen intelligently studying the Anthropology of India. At present, in Upper India at any rate, a native who is sufficiently educated to understand the nature and object of our inquires is too often hampered by his religious education, which causes him to describe the religion of the peasantry as it should be rather than as it is, and by his pride of caste, which prevents him from interesting himself in those, whom he considers beneath his notice.

Above all things I would say, and more especially to the younger men among us, choose some particular line of inquiry and make that your specialty. Do not be in a hurry to choose. Study the subject generally, make yourself acquainted with the broad outlines upon which all human society, all human customs and beliefs are framed, as set forth in some of the more general works on Anthropology; and presently taste or opportunity will show you the particular direction in which you may hope to be most useful. In its prosecution you will learn something of many branches of the science; and the more you know of them, the wider and firmer will be your grasp of your particular subject. But devote your main energies to some definite line of inquiry, if you would exercise them to the greatest advantage. Every man can help if he will. Let each among us select that line for which he is best fitted, and follow it with his might. Above all record and publish. It does not matter how roughly: the facts are what we want. It is grievous to see men whose lives have been spent in familiar intercourse with the people, and whose memories teem with information which would be invaluable to the Anthropologist, retiring to Europe with their knowledge unpublished, to bury it with them in the grave.

V

I propose next to offer for your consideration some definite suggestions as to the actual work which it seems to me might be most profitably undertaken at once under each of the headings which I have already enumerated. Physical measurements I am not competent to discuss; and doubtless Mr Risley will give us before long the results of his experience. I therefore pass on to my second source of Anthropological information, which is language.

It seems to me nothing less than a scandal and a reproach to ourselves, and in a less degree to Government, that so little should have been done towards an intelligent study of Indian dialects. I do not know how it is with you in the South. But in the Bengal Presidency, while Messrs. Beames and Hörnle have done invaluable work on the general subject of the Prakrit group of languages, literally nothing exists in print, to my knowledge, on the subject of the innumerable dialects of Northern India except a work by Mr Grierson on the Behári dialect, which I believe to be admirable, and a valuable glossary of Multáni by Mr O'Brien. Even for Panjábi itself, the student has to content himself with text book published by some American missionaries only 2 years after our annexation of the province. One reason for this neglect doubtless is that officers can seldom be sure of staying sufficiently long in the same part of the country, to make it worth their while to acquire more than a colloquial knowledge of the local speech. But there are many officials to whom this does not apply. And if Government found that the officer was really making a serious study on the subject, it would gladly arrange to leave him undisturbed. But, there is much good work to be done, short of such a serious undertaking as a comparative study of dialects. We have some glossaries, thanks to Sir Henry Elliott, Mr Beames, Mr Crooks, and others; and very valuable they are. But we want more; and, above all, we want *comparative* glossaries, which will tell us the different terms used for the same familiar object, and the limits within which each of these terms obtains. For such a purpose, occasional transfers would be a positive advantages. I believe that if a competent man would let it be known that he was prepared to undertake the preparation of such a glossary, he would find ready helpers in all directions to supply him with material.

Next, as to the works of native authors. For the present, at any rate, the scholar who edits and translates, or the society who publishes such works or portions of them, will naturally direct its attention more especially towards such treatises as are likely to find favour in the sight of European scholars – to Sanskrit grammars, to Hindu philosophies, to archaic hymns or medieval codes. For our purpose, no such treatise is without value; but there are many others which would be more valuable. But collation and translation are so laborious if done in a scholarly manner, and publication, hampered by the English tradition which forbids a publisher to produce raw material in a cheap form to be read, marked, cut up, and thrown away when done with, is so costly, that we may wait for ever before any substantial portion of the existing material is made available in this manner. What I should like to see published would be, digests, abstracts, analyses, or what you will, something like very full tables of contents, with ample indices at their back. Any one who would be content to gut a book in this manner, and publish the results, would make it practically available to his fellows; for students who have no leisure to wade through endless folios in a foreign language and character on the chance of finding something worth

reading, would gladly decipher a chapter, if they could be assured beforehand that they would there find matter bearing on the subject of their study. And as an ounce of example is worth a pound of precept, I will show how I would analyse a chapter of St Julien's translation of Hwen Tsang's *Memoirs on Western Countries*. I take the chapter on the kingdom of Thanesar, a tract which I know well, for my example (pages 211–215, Vol. I., Edn. 1857).

> P. 211: Leaves the kingdom of *Mathura*, proceeds five hundred li to the N. E., and reaches the kingdom of *Sthänesvara* (*Thánesar*). Describes it and its society, commerce, magic, Buddhist convents, and temples or *Devãlayas*. Describes the *Happy Land* (? *Nardak* = *Nirdukh*? = *Kurukshetra*). Relates an unusual from of the legend, apparently, of the *Kurus* and *Pandas*. Refers to the enormous size of their remains (*cf. Naugazas*). Four to five li to the N. W. was a stupa of Asokas, with relics of one *Tathâgata* which emitted light. A hundred li to the S. was the convent of *Gominda Saughârâma*.

Now these few lines of print give all of the contents of four octavo pages that is necessary to enable the reader to decide whether those four pages are worth referring to for his purpose. And an index showing all the words I have marked in italics would make the analysis complete.

All this work can be done by the student in the closet, if we can find one sufficiently unselfish. The next step is for the observer in the field to examine the passages which the student's labours have rendered accessible to him. Nothing is more interesting than reading the records of bygone ages on the spot to which they refer; nothing more valuable than the light which local knowledge throws upon them; nothing more curious than the manner in which various reading, corrupt texts, doubtful passages, and unsuspected errors, yield to the searching test of that light. A man who would take the travels of the Buddhist pilgrims, Babar's Memoirs, the 'Ain-i-Akbari', Jehangir's Autobiography, Ferishtah's History, the 'Nadir Namah', and the 'Siyár ul Mutaakharin' (I only mention, in my ignorance, books that have been translated), and, being able, with the help of digests such as I have already described, to at once refer to the passages which relate to his district, would follow the writer step by step on the spot, and by the help of his local knowledge identify the places and peoples, and trace the limits of the territories mentioned by him, and point out how far the old description is no longer applicable, would contribute a chapter which would be no less interesting than valuable to the detailed history of his province. It is by research of this sort, combined with the intelligent use of the map and the careful study of local indications, that we can best investigate past changes in the configuration of the country, the Anthropological significance of which I have already alluded to. Mr Beames is, or was, writing a geographical history of Bengal. Such a work, by such a man, will be invaluable.

But it would have been ten times more valuable, and a hundred times more easy to write, if more of the sort of work which I am now discussing had been done, and its results published.

As for names, the local names of fixed physical features, such as mountains, rivers, or lakes, would appropriately find a place in the glossaries that I have spoken of. So, too, would the names of territorial divisions or tracts. The names of villages I shall allude to later: the modern names, at any rate, are easily available. Earlier names, which now survive only in tradition, are always invaluable for purposes of identification, and should be carefully collected and recorded. Of castes and tribes, and sub-divisions, the number is infinite. But even bare lists of them, if accurate and accurately spelt, are valuable for other purposes than the results which they may yield to philological scrutiny; for the recurrence of the same subdivisions in different tribes, which is so frequent and apparently so inexplicable, almost invariably indicates some connection between them, in the past, if not in the present. For census purposes such lists are perhaps the things of all others that are just now most needed. As for names of individuals, the schedules of the census of 1891 will contain the names of every weaned male and of 90% of the female inhabitants of the presidency, and will, I am sure, be very much at the service of anybody who is disposed to make use of them, as Captain Temple did of sample schedules taken at random in 1881, for certain inquiries which he was then engaged upon.

Our next head of information is tribal traditions. These can only be collected from the mouths of the people; and should be taken down again and again from various persons at different places, till the prevailing form is arrived at, local variations, however, being carefully given as a gloss. But there is one form of tribal tradition – and that a very important one – which can, in North-Western India at any rate, be collected with a minimum of trouble. In the temporarily settled portions of the Bengal Presidency, the Settlement Records of each village contain a genealogical tree tracing the present owners back to their common ancestor or ancestors, who are supposed first to have settled on the spot. And with this tree is a memorandum showing whence these ancestors came, and when. If a District Officer would make his village accountants prepare for him in the dull season, when the sun forbids even native humanity to work in the fields, a note showing for each group of owners in each village, the name of the tribe, the area held, the number of generations, counting back to the first settlers, and the place where these settlers came from, the leisure of the ensuing rains would enable him to compile the results, and the tour of the next cold weather to check them; and the outcome would be a most valuable synopsis of the traditional course of migration into and within the district, so far at least as regards its existing land-owning population.

Last of all come the customs of the people. Here, nothing can be safely neglected; everything is of value; and I can only throw out some suggestions as to the best method of inquiry. I have already said something as to the

difficulty of extracting a really accurate and complete statement of a custom from an Indian peasant. And the first difficulty, and often not a small one, is to get any statement at all from him. I would strongly recommend the inquirer to take up one custom at a time. Let him by no means neglect any other information that may fall in his way; but let him choose some one custom or group of customs and work chiefly at that, say, throughout one cold weather. Suppose, he takes the customs regarding marriage. He will find that when he first notes down these customs, as described by the men of a particular tribe and place, he will get the most scanty information – how scanty he will not realize at the time. At his next attempt, his previous information will enable him to ask questions, to point out differences, to seek for greater detail. The interest of his hearers will at once be aroused; they will see that he is not laughing at them and their ways, that he already knows something of them and wants to know more, and they will expand in this knowledge, and will pour out information, often too copiously for convenience. By the time that the inquirer has taken down the marriage customs of a dozen tribes, he will tear up his first few sets of notes as worthless, and make them over again. This method of inquiry has another great advantage. It ensures differences being noticed, and I have already commented on the importance of this point. Each ceremonial, such as that of marriage, falls naturally into stages; and, having once recorded one complete set of stages, and omission or change which may mark the practice of another tribe or place is at once noticed and inquired into. I shall presently suggest a manner in which this principle may be practically utilized, so as very materially to lighten the labour of collecting information.

VI

And now, having suggested work that may be done by individual members, I will briefly notice certain matters in which I think that our Society, in its corporate capacity, might usefully interest itself. When a would-be Anthropologist sets to work to study the people around him, the first question he asks himself naturally is, 'What am I to look for? What are the points of importance or of interest?' I think the Society might do something towards supplying him with an answer. Some years ago, I made a rough collection of hints on the subject which was printed under the title of a 'Memorandum on Ethnological Inquiry in the Punjab'. I have asked our Secretary to lay a copy on the table to-night. It seems to have been useful, for 2,000 copies have been distributed, and a third edition is in the press. Some years after this, Mr Risley, Mr Nesfield, and myself met at Lahore and compiled two series of questions, one elementary and the other more complete, to be answered by those officials to whom Mr Risley applied for information. These papers will serve to illustrate what I think is wanted. I should be glad to see two separate handbooks published under the auspices of the Society: one as simple as possible, to meet the case of those who will

be glad to help as occasion offers, and need some guide to make their help intelligent; and another and more elaborate one, based on the general plan of the valuable 'Admiralty Manual of Scientific Inquiry', or of the similar handbook published by the Royal Geographical Society.

Another scheme suggested itself to me some years ago, and met with the approval of Sir Charles Elliott, which would, I think, greatly simplify and lighten the labour of recording customs, but which I unfortunately never found leisure to carry out. It was, to publish typical custom-sheets printed with a wide margin. The printed portion would give a typical set of, say, marriage ceremonies, divided into short paragraphs, one for each stage. The inquirer would note opposite each paragraph the departures from the typical ceremonial which he found to obtain among the people and in the locality under inquiry. The main lines of these and similar ceremonies are common to many tribes over a considerable area; and the system, which is of course capable of indefinite expansion, would save a deal of writing, would suggest inquiry, would be a safeguard against omissions, and above all, would bring differences of custom into prominence.

The next duty that a Society such as ours has to fulfil, is to enable those who have collected information to publish it, and so to render it available to others. I hope our Honorary Secretary will not think me unkind if I suggest that, so far, our journal strikes me as scanty. But I fully expect him to retort that this is due solely to the paucity of papers sent in by members; and that the remedy lies, in some small measure, in my own hands. I do not think, however, that we have fulfilled the whole duty of a journal when we profess ourselves ready to publish any paper sent in to be read at our meetings that may reach a reasonable standard of value. Something more than this is wanted. There are many among us who would be only too glad to contribute their mites, or indeed doles of far greater value, if it was known that small change would not be rejected; but who, while able to write a clear note of a fact or facts, are without the leisure or the literary habit necessary to produce a formal article. A section of the journal devoted to the publication of Anthropological scraps would, I think, if carefully, be extensively utilized, and would in time form a very valuable collection.[2] I have for many years felt the want of some such medium. Indeed, I once went so far as to conceive and bear a child, which saw the light under the name of 'Punjab Notes and Queries'. But I had no leisure to attend to it, I put it out to nurse, and it died. The editor of such a journal would have a delicate task to perform; for, while he must not offend his contributors by too wholesale rejection, it is easy to overdo the folklore business typified by the old saying: 'On Friday, it is unlucky to tread on a beetle: especially for the beetle'.

There is another respect in which I think the Society might do good work. I can best illustrate it by a concrete example. Some years ago, I induced, – I fear I am growing very egotistical; but I know more about my own work than I do about anybody else's, and you must try to bear with me, – some years ago I induced the Punjab Government to publish blank small scale

maps of every district, showing village boundaries, without names, but accompanied by a numbered index map with a list of the villages on the margin. These are now available, not only for administrative purposes, for which they are valuable, but also as a foundation upon which any sort of Anthropological or other information can be displayed graphically with the greatest ease arid readiness. At the same time, I procured complete lists of the names of all the villages in every district in the Persian, Nagari, and English characters and obtained maps of all the districts and states of the Punjab, showing for the owners of each village (1) their religion, (2) their caste or tribe, and (3) their clan, when they belonged to any one of some half dozen of the most important tribes. This was some 8 years ago. To this day, these lists and these maps lie in the Secretariat record room. I believe that Government would be ready enough to publish them, so far as paying the cost of publication goes. But nobody has the leisure necessary to correct the proofs of the lists, and to transfer the colours which show religion and caste from the large rough maps to the blank small scale maps so as to prepare them for the lithographer. If we had an Anthropological Society of the Punjab, it might do good work by superintending the publication of these records, which seem to me, perhaps too partial, to be of great and lasting value.

And, finally, I think that our Society may do much to increase the number of workers in the field which it proposes to make its own. There are many men, of course, who will never under any circumstances become Anthropologists. They have 'no turn for that sort of thing'. But there are many more who might turn their attention to the science, but who never do so, simply because no one has ever led them over the border-line within which lies knowledge. The interest of the study is so absorbing, so human, more especially in India, and the material so abundant, so varied, so strange, and so easy of access, the study concerns itself so intimately with one's everyday life in this country and with the people in whose company we have to spend long years of exile, that to many it only needs that their eyes should once be opened to the meaning of what goes on around them, to ensure their yielding to the fascination. And there is one way in which we might secure that at least a considerable proportion of those who come to this country in the service of Government should have so much general acquaintance with the elements of Anthropology as would open their eyes to the significance of their surroundings, and leave them to choose whether they will go further or no. I should like to see the outlines of Anthropology made an optional subject at the periodical examinations of the Civil Service, the Forests, the Telegraph, and the Public Works Department, – of all those services, in short, whose members undergo training in England. I would force no man to study it. But I would offer prizes for it, and let the marks count in the total. Again, perhaps one of our greatest needs is a trained body of native inquirers. Why should not our Indian Universities found chairs of Anthropology, and include the subject in their courses for

Degrees? No study is more calculated to widen the mind or to furnish the student with intelligent interests. As yet we are young. But as our position becomes more assured, our Society might address the Government at Home and the Universities in India with some certainty that its suggestions would be considered.

VII

And now I have come to the fourth and last head of my discourse; and you will, I am sure, be relieved to know that I shall be brief. What is the use of it all? I must promise that no true student ever asks himself such a question. To some of you, I fear, I shall appear profane; but I take it that the spirit which animates the true scholar is the same in essence as that which possesses the coin-collector or the postage stamp maniac. He yearns for more knowledge, not because he proposes to put it to any definite use when he has possessed himself of it, but because he has not got it, and hates to be without it. Nevertheless, it is a question which, if we do not ask ourselves, others will ask for us; and it behoves us to have our answer ready. In the first place, it is impossible to assert of any addition, however apparently insignificant, to the sum of human knowledge, that it will not turn out to be of primary importance. The whole fabric of the universe is so closely interwoven, mesh-by-mesh, that at whatever out-of-the-way corner we may begin unravelling, we may presently assist in the loosening of some knot which has barred the progress of science. What Philistine would look with other than contempt upon the study of the shapes of fancy pigeons, of the markings of caterpillars and butterflies, and of the respective colourings of cock and hen birds. Yet from these three sources have been drawn the most vivid illustrations and the strongest proofs of a theory the epoch-making nature of which we are hardly able to appreciate, because it has already become an integral part of the intellectual equipment of every thinking man. But we need not trust to the vagueness of the future for evidence of the value of our studies in India. They have already cast a flood of light upon the origin and nature of European tenures; and they have even modified the course of British legislation. I do not think it is too much to say that, had we known nothing of land tenures in India, the recognition of tenant right in Ulster would have been indefinitely postponed.

But, all this is far short of the truth. The truth is that the scientific world of Europe is panting for information which we alone can give them. Nothing has struck me more forcibly, in reading the works of European Anthropologists, than the manner in which they have gone to the uttermost ends of the earth and raked out forgotten descriptions of unknown tribes, for instances of habits and customs which may be seen in full play in the daily life of every village in India. Most of you will remember, the sensation which the publication of MacLennan's 'Primitive Marriage' produced. Now, the ordinary marriage ceremonial of Northern India literally teems

with survivals from marriage by capture. The wedding procession, formed only of males; and those the bridegroom's tribesmen, mounted on horses, and forced to encamp outside the bride's village; the mock armour worn by the bridegroom; the prohibition against choosing a bride, of however foreign a tribe, save at a distance from the village; the marks which lead the way to the bride's house and speak of a later stage in which the capture had become fictitious; the bloody hand on the bridegroom's clothing; and the custom which compels the bride, when leaving her village, to cry aloud and bewail some recently deceased male relative: all these facts, which would have made MacLennan's heart leap for joy, were familiar to hundreds of educated Englishmen, who thought them too trivial to be worth recording. We live in the midst of a complex community, whose origins march with our own. Their customs and our own spring from the same stock, and the study of the one will throw light upon the history of the other, as the study of their language has already thrown light upon the history of ours. Facts are wanted, and we – and we alone – can supply them.

VIII

But, we must make haste about it, for they are already disappearing before our very eyes. I have said that nothing is so permanent as the social customs of a semi-civilized people. But not even they can survive a cataclysm; and it is in the midst of a cataclysm that we stand, although, because we stand in the midst of it, we are hardly conscious of it. The East has met the West; and like a country and a city maiden, they stand face to face, regarding each other with open eyes, half shyly, half curiously. The Western lass is centuries in advance of her sister in experience and knowledge of the world, and will probably go her own gait. But she of the East while shocked at the license which the other allows herself, and at the contempt in which she holds the traditions of the elders, is already dimly conscious that her clothes are old-fashioned, and her hair not dressed becomingly. Stays and a bustle would not suit her figure, and I do not think that she will adopt them. But change she will; and that with a terrible rapidity. The railway has done more in 20 years to loosen the bonds of caste than all other influences put together in centuries. We have heard much of the stability of the village community, which has survived unshaken the crash of Empires and the din of arms. Now that Empires no longer crash, and that the din of arms is quieted, the village community, deprived of the external pressure which alone held it together, is falling to pieces from within. The change may be slow, as individuals count their lives: but in the life of a nation it is a transformation, the result of which remains to be seen.

But, it is not only on unselfish grounds that we need advocate the study of Anthropology. The absorbing interest of the study is in itself a rich reward to the student. Moreover, no one who has not experience can realize the enormous hold which even a very slight acquaintance with the ways and

customs of the people gives its possessor over their sympathies and affections. A proverb happily quoted will send away even a disappointed suitor grinning; a little knowledge of their customs and folklore will open the hearts and loosen the tongues of the peasantry in a way which must be seen to be appreciated.

Finally, we may even hope to ameliorate the condition of the people and to remove some of the worst blots, actual or threatened, upon our administration, by extending our knowledge of the natives of the country. I lay it down unhesitatingly as an axiom, that there is no assertion that can be truthfully made regarding the people of one part of India, the converse of which may not be affirmed with equal truth of the inhabitants of some other part. The more we study them, the more we know of them, the more deeply we shall be impressed with the infinite variety they present. It is perhaps too much to hope that even the Anthropological Society of Bombay will ever succeed in purging the mind of Mr Paget, M.P., of his belief in that Frankenstein which he has created for himself, and christened the People of India. But the more fully their variety is appreciated, the more hopeful becomes the task of curing Indian Governments of that mania, that craze for uniformity, which so often turns their best planned schemes into a curse instead of a blessing. And there is a still higher and greater work to be done, in which even the Anthropologist may help. British rule has conferred untold benefits upon India. But with the good is mingled much of evil. We are essentially a peculiar people. Sprung from many stocks, and confined within narrow physical limits, we have worked out for ourselves a set of institutions with which we are satisfied, and a system of maladministration which, while it rightly makes us the laughing stock of Europe, we are content, equally rightly, to endure in exchange for the privilege of misgoverning ourselves. So long as we keep ourselves to ourselves, no harm is done. But when, in the narrow conceit of our insular ignorance, we look upon the results which have sprung from our own very special circumstances in the light of necessary truths, which must be applicable to all mankind, and attempt to force them down the throats of a race whom Fortune has given into our hands, but with whose stomachs they woefully disagree, our presence becomes, in many respects, a curse rather than a blessing. For our fathers there was some excuse; they were brought up in the doctrines of the Encyclopoedists, and believed in the Social Contract. For us, there is none. In our own day, the conception of evolution has been extended from animals to man, and from man as an animal to man in his social aspect; and we now know that human institutions and human customs and beliefs have grown and been developed, and are still growing and developing; that there are stages in the lives of nations; and that not all are at the same stage, nor does the growth of all follow the same course. We know, or should know, that humanity as a whole can adapt itself to no Procrustean bed, and that nations cannot be governed by rule of thumb. A conviction is, I hope and believe, spreading that our Indian rule is too artificial, too complex, too

costly; and that a simple people is best governed simply. Someday, if we are to stay in India at all, we shall have to reconsider our ways. At the best, the task will be a difficult one. But when that day comes, the wider our knowledge of the customs of the people and of those fundamental principles upon which they are based, the greater will be the hope of our successfully pouring the new wine of Western civilization into the old and primitive bottles of the East, without too irrevocably spilling the one or too irremediably bursting the other.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, II (3), February 1890: 117–46.
2 This suggestion was accepted, and Anthropological Scraps were published in the Journal from time to time. [Editors.]

5 The study of anthropology in the West

Jal Feerose Bulsara

Introduction

While giving an account of the study of anthropology in the West one has to take into consideration various centres of anthropological study, the chief of which are Great Britain, the United States, France, Germany, West and South Africa, and Australia, with notable anthropologists in each country, like Sir James Frazer, Professors B. Malinowski, E. Westermarck, G. Elliot-Smith, C. Seligman, Sidney Hartland, and Dr R. Marett in Great Britain; Prof. E. Boas, Lowie, Kröeber, Goldenweiser, and Clark Wissler in the United States; M. Mauss, Hubert, and van Gennep in France; Frobenius and Thurnwald in Germany; Smith, Rattray and Prof. Radcliffe-Brown in Africa; Pater Schmidt and Rev. H. Junod in Italy and Switzerland; not to mention a host of other distinguished workers in the field in these as well as other smaller countries of Europe. For the study of anthropology is given such significance in Europe, Africa, America, and Australia as will be difficult to realize in a country like India, where two Universities out of 20 have a post-graduate course in anthropology or sociology and where the Government proves itself progressive by doing something contrary to what other civilized governments do, namely, to discontinue a munificent annual grant of £75 to the first anthropological society of the country. It will be difficult to find a European or American University where the science of man is not studied and encouraged under various names like Social Anthropology, Ethnology, Sociology, or Human Geography, while the influence of such studies is to be noticed in the domain of social and biological sciences, on fiction and literature, and anthropology is even making its influence felt more strongly in colonial administration. In fact, one can hardly exaggerate the importance of anthropology or sociology in post-matriculate studies in Western countries, where an increasing number of chairs and lecturerships are being established to meet the demand of a growing number of earnest students of social sciences.[1]

I must mention at the start that I speak from first-hand knowledge only of the British Schools of Anthropology; as regards others, it must be said to the credit of the Functional School in Great Britain led by Prof. B. Malinowski,

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under whom I had the privilege to work for a long time, that they occasionally invite anthropologists of note from other countries to speak on their work. It was thus that we had occasion to hear courses of lectures from Professor Radcliffe-Brown of the Cape Town University, of Professors R. Thurnwald and Oppenheimer of Germany, Professor Mauss of Paris, Rev. J. Smith, Dr. Gunar Lundtman, and others from Africa and America.

I shall now give a brief account of the thought of some of the more important schools, though it must be said that despite their protestations, they are not mutually exclusive in their thought and work. Like all good or important schools, as even in ancient India, they at times indulge in the healthy hobby of villifying each other, yet they all acknowledge, as most wise school men do, that there is a semblance of truth in the thought and theories of their opponents.

Evolutionary School

To take the Evolutionary School, one of the earliest and still going strong in certain quarters, we may note that Lyell's 'Principles of Geology', Spencer's biological speculations, and Darwin's 'Descent of Man' gave great impetus to the study of anthropology, whose first approach began through archaeology and the study of pre-historic man. Particularly after Darwin elaborated the evolution theory, vaguely felt and surmized by several thinkers long before him, every science and pseudo-science began by postulating that its subject matter had an evolutionary history, or that it had passed through various developmental stages, each stage being one higher, different or more complicated than the one preceding. Anthropologists thought that human culture and man as a species of animals did not escape this universal process of development, and several minds set themselves to trace these stages in various spheres of human activity and social structure. They began with an evolutionary study of social institutions like law (as by Sir Henry Maine), property (already studied long before Darwin by Karl Marx), slavery and serfdoms (Letourneau), kingship and government, marriage, and economic activities, and further carried that study into man's intellectual and moral development of which the books of the late Professor L.T. Hobhouse, Prof. Westermarck, Prof. Patrick Geddes, and Henry-Irving King such as Mind in Evolution, Morals in Evolution, Origin and Development of Moral Ideas, Cities in Evolution, and Development of Religion, as well as the writings of Lecky[2] and Buckle,[3] are some specialized well-known examples. It must be said to the credit of the Evolutionary School that it has contributed immensely to our understanding of the cultural development of the human race, for the evolutionary perspective, wherever it is borne out by reliable evidence, leads us not only to a closer understanding of human institutions and their actual working, but also it acquaints us with the essential nature of every institution which is perpetually in flux, changing according to time, clime, and circumstances, to

satisfy the changing needs of a developing society. Thus, an evolutionary outlook makes one an observant student of every human institution, which he does not regard as final, but as one steeped in an extensive and variegated past and pregnant with future possibilities of change, making him less dogmatic about its proposed continuance, amendment, or abolition.

Naturally, the Evolutionary School is not confined to a few of its exclusive devotees. Its importance is recognized by most anthropologists calling themselves by different names. Even those who will have nothing to do with biological or elemental evolution do consider it necessary to view a particular social institution in its changing history, and with all their zeal for man's primaeval perfection they often find it difficult to assert that all modern institutions have been handed down to us in their pristine form unsullied by historical changes of environment. For that would be to credit social institutions with a monotonous perfection, which modern savants are too proud to allow to their primitive forefathers.

One may venture to suggest that even if the evolution of inert matter and of life as held by physicists and biologists be denied, which by the way is no happy position to take up in face of overwhelming evidence, one can safely rely on the evolution of human culture as a whole, comprising man's material equipment, his aesthetic and intellectual development including arts and literature, his moral and spiritual values and a social organization to realize them.

But as happens with most theories and schools, from humble beginnings they soon claim to be the one light that dispels all darkness, the one master-key that opens all doors of knowledge. And though, Darwin and Wallace, the founders, were humble, the disciples like most disciples of history, have been so over-enthusiastic about the newly found clue to the interpretation of cultural development that they have applied the evolutionary method ruthlessly to all phases of culture, with the result that they have been unreasonable as most victims of dogma tend to be. Thus, some anthropologists not only postulate fanciful origins and stages in the development of various social institutions and cultural factors but even claim to know what cultural and structural phases the whole human race has passed through. Students of anthropology are aware of theories which evolve the king from a primeval priest, language from onomatopaeic or imitative sounds, science from primitive magic, and gods from chiefs, ancestor-spirits, or personified powers behind natural phenomena. Students of comparative religion once gave us a self-evident scheme of a unilinear religious development, starting with animatism, passing through animism, totemism, and polytheism, and culminating into monotheism. They often forgot that if evolution was a universal fact, absolute beginnings and ends could have no meaning, while even if relative or chronological starting points of institutions could be unearthed, in the case of cultural factors we have often no historical or archaeological evidence to substantiate our theories of origin, which, therefore, must remain in the

sphere of speculation. Thus Morgan,[4] MacLennan, Cunow, and their disciples postulated a universal matriarchate to precede father-right and father-rule, and then proceeded to reach further back into herd-life, group-marriage, and promiscuity in sex-relations – stages supposed to have been common to all humanity. When asked for evidence they pointed to stray examples of matriarchal societies, really meaning matrilineal descent and inheritance, which did not prove strict mother-rule in any case. They further stated that various survivals like mock-resistance and the hiding of the bride at marriage pointed to the previous common prevalence of marriage by capture and the pre-nuptial and post-marital laxity, lending of wives at festivals, the customs of levirate and sororate, and others, were sure signs of class-marriage and even promiscuity. The speculations of this school, which have been revived by Robert Briffault in his recent work, in three volumes, called The Mothers, have been opposed by most anthropologists who declare that the family is an institution coterminous with human groupings, and that even animals have the semblance of a family where the male parent takes its share in the protection and feeding of the child and mother, even though for a short time. They naturally interpret the so-called survivals in a different way.

We shall not enter here into the controversy but pass on to another theory of a French philosopher, M. Lucien Levy-Brühl, as expounded in his two works, Primitive Mentality and How Natives Think. Following the evolutionary lead, he postulates a primitive stage of the human mind called the pre-logical preceding the logical or rational stage, which he considers the enviable privilege of the civilized man. He finds the pre-logical stage in the child of the civilized man, and vaguely following the racial recapitulation theory, he reveals that the mind of our primitive ancestors and the contemporary savage is pre-logical and that their categories of thought are different from those of civilized man, that the mind of the child and the savage works mostly by association and similarity, and others. Unfortunately, Levy-Brühl has had no experience of actual field-work and has hardly seen any savage beyond the show specimens in fairs and exhibitions. Not only do his fellow arm-chair anthropologists, therefore, differ from him, but also most field-anthropologists, the chief of whom is F. Boas,[5] emphatically declare that in his own domain of experience and activity the savage is as logical as the civilized man and that neither among savages nor among children is there any such chronological development in which a distinct pre-logical stage precedes the logical. A slight observation of any primitive or civilized community will show that either there are individuals at various levels of intellectual development, and even in the so-called civilized European or Indian societies one will often find large numbers of people living at a very low level of mental development and logical reasoning. In fact, what Levy-Brühl calls a pre-logical mentality is not the exclusive monopoly of the savage or the child, among whom we find a large degree of rational behaviour in the domain of activities to satisfy fundamental biological and social needs. To my mind, the real distinction in mental development lies in the relative

proportion in the individual of the magical and the scientific attitudes which both obtain together in the preponderant majority of the human race. Intellectual advance is proportional to the extrication of man from the magical to the scientific attitude. Wide generalizations are always dangerous particularly in the realm of social sciences which deal with active, willing, changing human beings, and it can be said only roughly that the magical attitude is more prevalent in an illiterate society than in a literate one, more in a primitive society than in a developed one, and that it is at present more dominant in the Eastern than in the Western peoples.

But the Evolutionary School carries its highly useful and illuminating principle too far when it claims a vertical or unilinear evolution of all human institutions in an imaginary uniform manner. There are staunch students of culture who refuse to accept such an inevitable upward march of human development and rightly maintain that social organization or cultural institutions have not evolved everywhere in a uniform manner nor have they all passed through the same stages. Man being a willing agent, a uniform chronological gradation of his ideas and institutions in different parts of the world, is a misleading notion. Others, like Rousseau, maintain that mankind has not always evolved progressively but often degraded and deteriorated from a higher, happier, and more natural to a lower stage. In fact, some anthropologists are so swayed by the plausible theory and are so disturbed by the aimlessly sprawling complications of a mechanistic culture that they half-heartedly support the back-to-nature doctrinaires and solemnly announce that the savages are a better, happier, and more moral people.

Pater W. Schmidt, the editor of the Anthropos and the keeper of the Vatican Museum, though not an adherent of either of these views, maintains like Andrew Lang in his Myth, Ritual and Religion, that primitive society began with the idea of the Almighty and that all contemporary savages possess the idea of an all-father or supreme being who resembles the Christian Father of Heaven in essentials, demonology or polytheism being a degradation from this pure belief. Pater Schmidt does not command a big following outside the theological fraternity, and though biased by their creed, it must be said to his credit and to that of his school that they are doing good work both of a practical and theoretical nature and giving their share in advancing the science of anthropology.

The Diffusionist School

The Diffusionist School numbering Tylor, Rivers, Gräbner, Frobenius, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, W.J. Perry,[6] and A.M. Hocart[7] among its protagonists, does not go all the way with the evolutionists, though they too often indulge in the harmless because unauthenticated search of origins of human institutions. The school may be divided into two sections which we may name as the uni-central and the poly-central diffusionists. The uni-

central diffusionist postulates one centre where various cultural factors were supposed to have arisen and whence they spread to different parts of the world. Thus the British School led by Professor G. Elliot Smith and Perry, the former of whom worked for some years as an anatomist to archaeological expedition in Egypt, affirm that the ancient Egyptians, the children of the Sun or Ra, were the pioneers of culture and invented the wheel, the diadem, the hand-loom, agriculture, mummification, snake-worship, kingship, dual organization, and even war. Relying on the Egyptian archaeology they tell us that in Egypt alone we find a continuity of paleolithic, neolithic and metal cultures that is to be found nowhere else, that culture is oldest in Egypt, and she was therefore the pioneer. Later on in the metal age, 'the children of the sun'[8] particularly the sons of the nobility and royal families led expeditions to neighbouring and distant lands in search of metal and precious stones, and that wherever they went they diffused their own culture amongst the barbarians, the children of the sun at times remaining in the newly discovered territory to rule the land, thus introducing religious kingship in unknown parts of the world. They trace the origin of various customs and ceremonies in Scotland, Scandinavia, India and the Eastern Archipelago to the land of Amon-Ra; they claim that the Scottish coronation stone can be traced to the Pharaoh; they liken the Vedic Prajapati to Osiris, and contend that centuries before Columbus discovered America, Indian and Malayasian canoes sailed along the Mississipi and the Amazon. They conduct the famous cockatoo-elephant controversy with ardent zeal, basing their theory about uni-central cultural diffusion or Egypt's civilizing influence on the New World, on pictures which can be deciphered as the mouth of a tapir, half the trunk of an elephant, or the body of a cockatoo with an aquiline beak, or neither of these according to the mood of the connoisseur. Tylor supported the general idea of diffusion and the late Dr. Rivers was dramatically converted to the doctrine at a British Association meeting, but it can be said that the theory of uni-central diffusion of culture does not find much favour with anthropologists or Egyptologists. Not only have the excavations in Ur, Babylon and other parts of Mesopotamia but also those at Mohenjodaro upset the chronological calculations of the greatest antiquity of Egyptian culture, but the theory when probed deeper does not appear even plausible. The protagonists of the theory do not tell us what life the peoples of the world were leading when the centre of culture was sending out pioneers to spread their own highly evolved culture among other human races. How can we imagine a world peopled by various races where only one chosen community made all the inventions while the others waited to borrow and assimilate them? We are not, moreover, told what the nature and duration of the contact was and what linguistic or other evidence assures us of such a contact. The uni-central diffusionists often jump to the conclusion of contact and cultural diffusion from superficial similarities in objects, ideas, myths, and social organization which

can more easily be understood on the ground of the general sameness of human nature among all races of the world. In my opinion the theory of uni-central diffusion has received more attention than it deserved, thanks to its sensational character.

Outside Britain, however, it has not much support, and Gräbner in Germany and some American anthropologists like Boas propound a similar but more elaborate theory of poly-central diffusion of culture, proposing about six or seven cultural areas, mostly fertile valleys in Mesopotamia, Central Asia, the Eastern Archipelago, America, and others, from which, according to them, culture spread in the surrounding countries, through conquest, migration, peaceful contact, or trade. This theory sounds more plausible though it needs wide research and collaboration before it can give us valuable information about the growth and expansion of culture on our globe from early beginnings up to modern times.

Whenever there is no corroborative historical evidence, it must be admitted that our findings are only within bounds of probability and not conclusive. In such studies therefore, where direct or verifiable evidence is largely lacking, it is a better plan to proceed from the more known to the less known, thus drawing on data and methods found useful in concrete research. Thus, anybody who is reflectively observant of his surroundings will notice that culture is being daily diffused from one person, community, and organization to another, while history gives ample proof of the cultural influence of contact of peoples, races, and religions. The Greek and Roman influence in Europe, the Egyptian, and Phoenician influence on Greece, the successive contact of the Hindus, Parsees, and Moslems in India, of the Indians on the Eastern Archipelago, of the Semites and Hamites on Negroes in Africa, of Indian Buddhism on China, of the Chinese on Japan and Korea and further up on Mongolia, amply illustrate the fact of cultural diffusion from one people to another. Further, historically unknown contacts may have taken place in the past in several parts of our globe; but to my mind, the fact of the diffusion of culture is not so significant as the method of its diffusion or assimilation.

The diffusion of culture does not occur on such a uniform or extensive scale as people suppose. The nature of diffusion depends on several factors, such as the peaceful and friendly or inimical and violent nature of contact between two peoples, their relative intellectual and cultural development, the duration of such contact, and the utility and prestige of the borrowed culture itself. We cannot elaborate this interesting subject in greater detail for lack of time, but to give only a few examples, we may note how the Fire-god Agni of the Aryans, very important to a northern people of the colder regions, gradually gives the prime of place to Indra, the god of rain, still more important to an agricultural community among whom the rivers naturally assume such a sacred role. This was at a very early stage of intellectual and cultural development of the invading Aryans, but when their ancient brethren from Persia migrate to India at a much later date with a

fully grown fire-cult, rain does not assume in their cult or worship the prominent position of fire, and they retain among other things their fire-temples. On account of this exaggerated respect for the sanctity of fire, I believe, the Parsecs in India have not been known to be blacksmiths, copper-smiths, silver-smiths, or gold-smiths, though in ancient Iran the Zoroastrians pursued all these professions and the black-smith in fact was highly respected. The offer of shelter by a Hindu king and the subsequent friendly contact actually led to an extensive borrowing of customs, ritual and costume by the Parsees from the Hindus, as can be witnessed even to-day among other things, in the Parsee sāri, the vanishing āshirvād at the marriage ceremony, the sanctity of the cow, and the prohibition of partaking beef. On the contrary, the initial unfriendly contact of the Moslems antagonized both the communities to such an extent that although the majority of the Moslems are converted Hindus, the phenomenon of cultural diffusion seems to have been very one-sided, tinging Indian Islām with a large element of Hindu beliefs and customs, while Hinduism and Zoroastrianism remain almost uninfluenced by Moslem culture except by way of fine arts and literature, the universal heritage of mankind. But while most of the marriage, pre- and post-marital and seasonal customs of the Parsees have been largely influenced by or borrowed from the Hindu contact, the initiation and mortuary customs have been the least affected, obviously because the ceremonies all these two solemn occasions form a part of the most sacred creed and ritual of the Parsees.

Thus, a concrete study as to how diffusion of culture takes place is far more interesting, instructive and useful than a conjectural speculation of origins. And while we are witnessing an epoch-making change in the history of the whole human race, namely, the gradual westernization of the world, such a study is of great importance as it may incidentally show us what are the vital elements in a complex whole of culture, and how with the knowledge of the growth of an alien culture we may be enabled to control and guide its spread or assimilation while retaining what is of value in our own.

We may even ask whether what we call culture is a uniform social phenomenon or whether it spreads unevenly in bits and parts, and thus presenting to us a problem as in India or Russia, where there appears such a wide gulf between the cultural level of the rural and town populations and such divergent levels among different classes and sects.

The Functional School

Thus, we feel the need of a synthetic study of human culture which is largely filled by another, recent school of anthropology in the West, which calls itself the Functional School led by Prof. B. Malinowski of London, Prof. Radcliffe-Brown of Cape Town and Sydney, Thurnwald in Germany, and A.L. Kroeber and R.H. Lowie in America. The importance

of this school lies in the fact that almost all its champions have been experienced field-workers and therefore possess a first-hand knowledge of their subject. Their main thesis is to understand culture from its functional aspect, that is, first to observe a cultural phenomenon like garden-magic, ceremonial dancing, weapon-making, story-telling, and others, and by a close study to find out how it influences individuals and their relations with one another, and what role that particular cultural trait or institution plays in the maintenance of the vitality, order and solidarity of the community. Thus, they believe in the dynamic nature of culture which maintains the human society as a going or moribund concern; they say that culture is one whole and that the different factors of culture are inter-related and therefore should be studied in their proper context of situation. They maintain that every belief, trait, or institution has its function in the cultural whole which it fulfils in accordance with the status of the particular society, and to disturb any of these is to do untold harm to the society by breaking the harmony of the inter-related institutions. An institution like the Toda classificatory marriage, the Thonga or Trobriand pre-nuptial laxity, Australian exogamy and wife-lending, Papuan head-hunting, or Amerindian pot-latch (ceremonial display of food) can be understood only in its proper physical and social environmental setting, and the strong protest against the wanton disturbance of such primitive or savage culture, in short against their de-tribalization. They point out that de-tribalization has definitely led to the wholesale destruction of native cultures and even to the complete annihilation of communities. That the gradual assimilation of an alien culture may be good or bad, but a sudden and unadjustable breach with current and traditional life of a tribe is dangerous, if not to its existence, certainly to its integrity and harmonious working. They illustrate their argument by pointing to the lost Tasmanians, and the fast vanishing Australians, Melanesians, Pacific Islanders and Amerindians and to the extensive disintegration and demoralization of African societies, owing to the loss of tribal authority, the violation of traditional sanctions and the unnatural conditions of a new but dehumanizing economic and industrial change, following in the wake of the white trader and administrator.

They maintain that every culture is important in its own way and that it is the resultant of the tribal need and intelligence thus satisfactorily fulfilling tribal ends. One fine scientific trait of this school is to approach the savage with respect for his personality and intelligence and to try with sympathetic insight to understand the native mind and culture. Like some enthusiastic reformers, they do not treat the native as a rude savage or barbarian, to be initiated into the amenities of Western civilization, nor, like most missionaries, as a heathen to be converted from demonology into God's righteous ways, nor as a strange specimen of humanity to be treated as a curiosity as most anthropologists did up to recent times. These latter only

hunted for the queer, striking or extraordinary, altogether neglecting what was common and of every-day occurrence or what was similar to the Western culture, forgetting that the common, ordinary and matter-of-fact made the most persistent constituent of the tribal life and was therefore more important for a truer understanding of the native's life and mind.

It seems to me that the Functional School might have actually arisen as a protest and reaction against this wonder-searching and vague generalizing tendency of the average ethnographer who thus provided a very distorted and almost unnatural perspective of native life and character. The functionalist tries to make as comprehensive a study of the life and culture of a tribe and of its individual members as possible, and tries to assign to each belief and institution its proper place in the social setting, thereby making use of various methods of study and branches of knowledge like biology, psychology, psycho-analysis, linguistics and phonetics, regionalism, economic and political sciences; and considering their objective and catholic approach towards their science, a better name for them would be the Synthetic Sociological School.

One might digress a little, here, to ask the respective boundaries of anthropology and sociology. One sees no valid distinction between the two names further than for providing the possibility of maintaining two Chairs instead of one. However, at present, in Western universities anthropology largely, but not exclusively, confines itself to the study of the savage or primitive man, while sociology deals with institutions of civilized society though it has to approach them from an evolutionary and comparative standpoint thus obliging it to use the findings of the anthropologist.

Thus, the Functional School is at present one of the most important schools of anthropological thought and study but it would no longer retain its human touch and origin if it were unimprovably perfect. At one time, some functional anthropologists carried their praise of the savage and his culture as far as to maintain that not only did the savage dislike all that we understood by civilization but also that he did not need civilizing. They said that they were not progressivists and that the savage in every land was much happier than the civilized man, and his culture was eminently fitted to give him all happiness that human craving eternally demanded. Hence, their advice to the administrator and colonizer not to detribalize the native, who, they said, may be exploited, but who must not be civilized. But perhaps, this enthusiasm for the happy savage was the usual outburst of a pioneer who wants to attract the world's attention towards him. For, in the West, it seems to be a characteristic to found one's own school to be known or talked about, and to found a school the founder must indulge in violent declamations of his opponent's methods and doctrine while cunningly using them himself, and to state his thesis in as extreme a form as the argumentative skill of his opponents will allow.

Anthropology, Sociology, and Changing Man

Having established their School, the functionalists now realize that change is the unchangeable law of human society and that progress is inevitable whether the ascetic or the orthodox like it or not. They are therefore now applying themselves to the intensive study of 'changing man' so as to understand the methods and laws of cultural change in order that they may be able to help and guide social change and reconstruction by means of knowledge accumulated from the study of the past and primitive civilizations and contemporary cultures.

Thus, social anthropology or sociology has entrenched itself as a vital human study in Western universities and administrative departments, and its influence is extending to schools and popular social movements. Government anthropologists are appointed by almost all the colonizing European and American countries to study the customs, habits and social organization of the colonial tribes so as to help the government to administer their affairs more intelligently and not come into unwanted trouble by an unintentional violation of tribal rules and taboos. Administrators are, moreover, now advised to take courses in anthropology at University institutions, and the English, French, and Belgian governments have been instrumental in establishing an international institute for the study of African languages and Negro cultures. Several students of anthropology are sent out every year to carry out field-work in North and South America, Melanesia, the South Seas, Pacific Islands, and Africa. They have been made to recognize the fact that the native culture is in a transitional stage and that it is the duty of the rulers to help them through this critical period so that their society may continue to function normally without involving the suffering of a violent breach with the past.

They are, however, opposed by a school of biologists, anthropologists and eugenists who maintain that the variety of cultures in the world is due to innate racial differences so that there is no possibility of their radical alteration. They put the Negro on the lowest rung of the ladder and consider him congenitally incapable of higher culture, while to some the Jew is racially different from the Christian who is superior to the former in all desirable ways. This supposed organic inferiority of the Negro is a matter of solace alike to white colonial settler and the American of the Southern States who are delighted to believe it, for it obviates their political difficulties and eases their conscience. To the South African Boer too, this theory is a source of comfort, and General Smuts in his Rhodes lectures was self-complacent in the suggestion that the native problem in Africa was solved because nature had made and meant the Negro to be the white man's drudge, incapable of assimilating White or Nordic civilization, of whose spiritual value, curiously enough, many White thinkers themselves are becoming doubtful.

But the majority of sound opinion is against this view of divine racial preference, and biologically, there is no evidence so far to prove the point

either for or against. Yet, the theme has appealed to many pseudo-scientists and particularly after the War a large amount of literature has been published on the study of racial and national characteristics of which Prof. Franz Boas gives a good resume and critique in his recent book, Anthropology and the Modern World.[9] Jung, the one-time pupil and colleague of Freud, and his adherents propound a similar but less obnoxious theory of nations being divided into extroverts and introverts with definite psychological characteristics native to each type. Those who know a little sound psychology and have understood how the psychological behaviour of the individual members of even a small roughly homogeneous group differs widely, will readily see the futility of maintaining that a whole nation can be described as possessing its special, innate mental characteristics which completely mark it out from another.

Physical anthropologists, like Sir Arthur Keith, hold a different view on the subject. Keeping an open mind about racial evaluation, they suggest that there are slight pigmentary, anatomical, glandular, and cerebral differences peculiar to various marked races like the Australoid, Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucassoid, but in the present stage of our knowledge they do not seem to produce specific cultural differences, nor are they linked with man's congenital capacity to assimilate higher culture. They point out that the human organism is affected by the complex of climatic conditions, dietary, physical, and social habits which in turn affect the glandular secretions. These hormic currents again largely determine mental and physical activity and hence the external, superficial racial differences, which are not innate but merely environmental and cultural. This interesting problem needs much intensive and collaborative work before we can come to more practical results.

Freud, the much-maligned prophet of psychoanalysis, has tried to establish the significance of his science by endeavouring to demonstrate it as a master-key to understand all social phenomena. He finds the origin of Totemism and Taboo, the title of his book, in the almighty libido and the Oedipus complex universal to humanity. The cult of totemism mysteriously arose out of the selfish father's antagonism to his grown-up sons, their revolt against him for monopolizing all or at least all young women and his consequent murder and the mysterious connection of the totem with, and its substitution for, the father. This fantasy apart, like most reasonable pioneers, Freud has opened up unexpected vistas of thought and his and Havelock Ellis's suggestive writings are employed with good results by various anthropologists, notably Prof. Malinowski[10] and Prof. Fügel,[11] to interpret hitherto inexplicable tabooed facts of life, particularly the social regulation of sex. I believe the findings of Freud, Jung, and Adler, if reasonably employed, will greatly help anthropologists to understand various aspects of sex-life, erotic mythology, and other like phases of social institutions. Their use in understanding the results of the inconsiderate suppression and repression of sex and personality in Indian society will be very

helpful and may reveal surprising facts. We may find that the social consequences of our marriage customs, sex-regulations, and curious religious developments may be far from desirable, or contrary to what we intend; while the continuous prostrations before deities, priests and other religious dignitaries, the hierarchy of castes and classes, the unmitigated belief in the power of a myriad mighty gods and the super-importance and fear of the next world may be found not only to create a sort of paralysing fatalism and parasitic dependence but an unconscious servile mentality enhanced by long ages of poverty, misery and subordination. This may or may not be true, but I venture to submit it as a problem worthy of serious sociological consideration.

No doubt, society, with its rules, customs, and laws, makes a deep mark on the individual, who is often found to be a creature of his social milieu, though never so completely as we can witness from pioneers, leaders, rebels and reformers who leave their mark on every society. The French Durkheimian school lays special emphasis on this collective authority of society, which, they say, creates the whole culture in its own image: the supreme deity for example being the expression of the supreme authority of the society. They, however, go too far when they begin to talk of the Group-Mind or the Collective Soul, for there is none such in reality or individual imagination; after all, individuals form the society and are not completely the pawns of the collective authority expressed in tribal customs, much less so in a progressive society, wherein social rules and taboos are often the expression rather of a part than of the whole of society. The French school has to its credit the publication of the valuable work, L'Anee Sociologiquè, founded by Durkheim, and is doing useful work, particularly with its emphasis on the objective treatment of social phenomena like any other scientific data.[12]

The above account, though very incomplete, may be sufficient to convince us that the study of anthropology is taken very seriously in the West with obvious practical results. Anthropologists and sociologists are studying past and present societies in a fairly comprehensive manner with the help of enthusiastic co-workers, especially in the fields of biology, psychology, history, and archaeology, and in turn influencing these studies. How wide this correlation is may be realized from the fact that the new school of psychology called Behaviourism has partly influenced the equally new science of phonetics, and both are helping through scientific data and methodology in the investigation of anthropological problems. Anthropology is thus creating a fresh outlook on social problems, whose solution is being largely sought by an appropriate educational policy and effective social organization, Russia and America taking the lead in this social experimentation, though on widely differing lines.

It remains for us now to emphasize the need of a scientific study of anthropology in India, other than which there is hardly a country in the world richer in its material for cultural research. India, with her wealth and

variety of ancient and modern cultures, and her peoples at all levels of intellectual development, offers an unparalleled field for sociological studies. Her ancient literature has not been fully searched, much less has it been studied from an anthropological standpoint with a view to obtain a proper perspective of the life and manners of her ancient peoples throughout long centuries, except for rare attempts like those of Sir Romesh Dutt, Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarker, R. Muckerji, Nandlal Law, Bhagvan Das, and others. The European students have literally ransacked the whole of the Biblical and Talmudic literature bit-by-bit, minutely annotated and critically examined Greek and Latin literatures, and have studied their social, religious, and economic history up to modern times, so that they know the life and thought of their forefathers from generation to generation; we, however, still delight very much in the ascetic and eastern attitude of the Moslem king, who, when asked by his European friend about the past history of his kingdom, replied: 'My son, why should you worry as to how much dirt the infidels might have eaten before the coming of the sword of Islam?'

Not only do we require wide sociological studies for the sake of pure science but also because most of India's problems are sociological problems and they would not be solved so easily unless we know the function of cult and culture and the motives of human behaviour and understand what solutions would be most suitable. For, to repeat what has been said above, society is eternally in flux, motion or change being the universal cosmic law.

There is no stagnation in society; it is either progress, degeneration, or death, whereas the apparent stationary aspect is only relative, transient and limited to only a part of social activity, like the church, ritual, mythology, and tradition. Change being the essence of life, there are two ways in which it is brought about – first, man outgrows his traditional beliefs and institutions and is then compelled by circumstances, which are fortunately often mightier than man, to make the necessary change. He does this consciously, in part, but more unconsciously, which satisfies his organic inertia and creates an illusion that he is not changing but adhering fast to tradition. The other method attempted all throughout history, though partially and in face of fierce persecution, is a conscious and deliberate modification of ancestral institutions, but not understood and planned as sociologists are now beginning to do in the West. Drift has been the rule of social change in the past, and drift has landed men in a state with which no society on earth is at present content. Man wants to progress more quickly with purposive planning, but planning to a goal of objective requires comprehensive knowledge of the probable laws and reliable methods of social evolution, and hence the great need for anthropology or a scientific study of man. The scholarly zeal of disinterested workers like Dr. J. J. Modi[13] and Rao Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy[14] for the furtherance of anthropology will have to be multiplied a hundredfold before we can give the

world an account of our scientific sociological research worthy of the excellent material available in India.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, XIV (5), April 1930: 658–81.
2 Rise of Rationalism in Europe.
3 Introduction to the History of Civilization in England.
4 Ancient Society, 1877.
5 The Mind of the Primitive Man.
6 The Growth of Civilization, 1926.
7 Kingship.
8 Cf. W. J. Perry: 'The Children of the Sun', 1923.
9 Also see Prof. E. Barker's recent book on the subject.
10 The Sexual Life of Savages, 1929.
11 Psycho analytic Study of the Family, 1922.
12 Cf. E. Durkheim: Les Formes Elementaires de la Vie Religieuse and Les Règles de la Methode Sociologique.
13 Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsecs, 1922, and Anthropological Papers (3 parts).
14 Oraon Religion and Customs. 1928. The Birhors, 1925. The Mundas and their Country.

6 The retrospect and the prospect of the work of the Anthropological Society of Bombay

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi

Associated as I am with the work of this Society from well-nigh its very foundation about 29 years ago, I feel special pleasure in delivering this Presidential Address. I propose to give you in this address an idea of the work, or of the line of work, which we have done, and of the work that still lies before us. In short, 'The Retrospect and the Prospect of the Work of the Society' may be taken as the theme of my address this evening.[1,2]

Our past work and its appreciation

The *Academy*, while noticing our Silver Jubilee Memorial Volume, thus spoke of the Society's work:

> *The Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay* for 1910 and the Silver Jubilee Memorial Number for 1911 reach us together. If Government officials in India are sometimes caught napping through want of knowledge of the people of the country, their manners, customs, peculiarities, etc., this voluntary Society is at hand to supply information of a miscellaneous and searching character. The Society has an official Englishman as President, but the writers are nearly all natives of India, well-educated men who ought to be able to get at correct facts, which they certainly can present in good style…. The Silver Jubilee Number contains special contributions. The history of the Society shows good work done for twenty-five years. The index of the papers read during the period of 'Anthropological Scraps' ranges over the whole field of anthropology, though from a perusal of the titles the merits of the papers cannot be gauged. The specimens in this number are varied and excellent, whether they deal with legal matters, ethnography, ancient engineering, superstitions, Hindu rites and marriage, or Totem theories. In such Societies all classes of the community can meet freely, and inter-change ideas to their mutual advantage.[3]

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Again, while noticing one of the numbers of our Journal, it said:

> *The Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay* for 1911 and 1912 contains, as usual, various excellent papers. As an Indian Judge said, speaking on the study of Anthropology, 'Our philologists, our anthropologists, our antiquarians are doing us practical service.... We must understand the past a right to guide us now and build for the hereafter'. Folklore, part of this subject, is 'the science which treats of the survival of archaic beliefs and customs in modern ages.'... The papers of this Society should be more widely known.[4]

The *Academy* under the heading of 'Interesting Folklore' said:

> Such associations, as the Anthropological Society of Bombay, justify their existence and perform a public service when their members add to the stock of common knowledge by such papers as are to be found collected in this volume. They supply a deficiency which undoubtedly exists. In these days of pressure, few officials have time or strength for more than the disposal of current work; their knowledge, therefore, of the natives among whom they live and work is of a very superficial character; native customs, their origins and effects, the motives which sway them, in a word, their life are a sealed book, and the ignorance may lead to administrative failures in such matters as famine, plague, sanitation, medical relief, education, etc., where the beliefs and sentiments of the masses cannot be altogether disregarded. In such papers, experts and specialists can write freely and fully. Mr. Modi, an educated Parsee gentleman, and a prolific writer, has recorded in his essays such that would not otherwise be published of his countrymen, whose ancestors emigrated from Persia, fleeing from the Arab conquest in the eighth century, and settled in the Bombay Presidency. There is much to learn of Indian life from these papers which Mr. Modi should continue to write and publish.[5]

Thanks to the tact, zeal, and energy of our founder, the late Mr Tyrrel Leith, and to the good sense of our people, however conservative, that our Society met no opposition either from the State or the Church. We find that, as far as our Society is concerned, both the State and the Church have latterly attempted to help it. Since 1912, the Government of Bombay, as representing the State, have begun to give us an annual grant of Rs. 500. We require no official recognition from any church, but we had several churchmen, both of the church of the West and of the East on our roll, and one distinguished churchman of the West, Rev. Dr. Machickan, was our President for 1 year.

Prof. Huxley is said to have predicted, about 47 year ago, in his Anthropological Address,[6] that some of the teachings and discoveries of Anthropology, though thought to be shaking 'the foundations of the world' at the time, would be taught in schools 30 years thence. His prediction has turned out to be true, and Anthropology is now taught in the Universities. Forty-seven years after the time of his Address, we find that even in our country hopes are being entertained to introduce the study of Anthropology in our Universities. Sir Alfred Hopkins, the learned Vice-Chancellor of the Manchester University, who had been amidst us last year, as an expert to advise our local University, has referred to Anthropology in one of his Reports,[7] as one of the 'important subjects' to be taught hereafter. Even our present Prime Minister is reported to have said that a knowledge of Anthropology 'must form part of the normal equipment of those who in the Consular, Indian, and Colonial services, have to carry on the work of the Empire, especially in its outlying parts'.[8]

The representation of the Royal Anthropological Institute of England

Last year, we had before us for consideration, a letter of the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute, dated 18 April 1913, to the Secretary of State for India, giving an expression to their views, on the subject of the Oriental Research Institute, which the Government of India proposes to found. In that letter, the Council thus speaks of the importance of the study of Anthropology in that Institute.

> In the first place we have to represent that anthropology, not in the restricted sense of physical anthropology alone, but in the broader significance of the science of the evolution of human culture and social organization, should be an integral feature of the studies of the Oriental Research Institute. My Council desire… to refer in passing to the importance of anthropological study from an administrative or political point of view, and to its bearings on the difficult and peculiar problems which confront the Government of India at every turn. To discover, to discuss, and to decide the nature and origin of the deep-seated differences of thought and mental perspective between Eastern and Western societies is a task of high importance and of great complexity, which seems possible of achievement only by the wide synthetic methods of modern Anthropological science by which the results won by workers in the domains of religion, archaeology, history, art, linguistics and sociology are unified, classified and coordinated. As the writings of men like Sir Herbert Risley, sometime President of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Sir George Grierson demonstrate, beyond a doubt, a comprehensive examination of present-day Indian conditions, reveals the working of social ideas

> and ideals which have their origin in a low level of culture. Among the people of India to-day are preserved beliefs, customs, and institutions which testify to the vital intimacy of the relations between the higher and the lower forms of culture, and to the special importance of India as a field for anthropological research.

The movement was anticipated by the late Sir Herbert Risley in his Presidential Address before the Royal Anthropological Institute, wherein he said that the Treasury had appointed a Committee in 1907 to consider the organization of Oriental Studies in London. The Committee had then 'laid stress on the importance of studying the character, the religion, the customs and the social organization of the various people who came under British rule'. This was then a right step in the direction of 'the recognition of the direct bearing of Anthropology in the widest sense on the administrative problems of the Empire'. By virtue of the Resolution of the Government of Bombay No. 3596, dated 4 December 1913, the subject was sent to us for opinion and we approved of the recommendation of the Royal Anthropological Institute for a systematic study of Anthropology in our country.

Our Society's past work in cultural anthropology

Our Society has worked pretty well in the field of cultural anthropology. For details, I would refer our members and students interested in the subject to my paper, 'A Short History of the Anthropological Society of Bombay', published in our Silver Jubilee Volume (1911, pp. 1–60), wherein, with the assistance of my then assistant, Mr Furdunji Manekji Pavri, I have given a rather exhaustive Index of the subjects treated in our Journal during its existence of 25 years.

As mentioned earlier, it is in the branch of Cultural Anthropology that our Society has worked much, and has, as said by the *Academy* in one of its issues, 'done well'. For those who may be in the 'nebulous state' of mind about our work, I beg to say, that though we aim at the scientific knowledge of man, both physical and cultural, past and present, our work is more in the line of comparatively the less technical branch, namely, the cultural branch, which, as said by Mr Rudler, presents, 'a popular, fascinating, and readily-approachable study'.[9]

As said by Camper, 'next to the pleasure of discovering a truth was the pleasure of spreading it abroad'.[10] So, next to the pleasure of acquiring knowledge, we must have the pleasure of spreading that knowledge. We want therefore more members, if not as actual workers and contributors, at least as hearers of our papers and as readers of our journals. The knowledge acquired by them in the Society and spread by them outside it, will not be without its advantage.

Some subjects requiring further work and inquiry

After a look into the past, one may have a look out, or an outlook, for some work in the future. I beg to submit a few subjects for such an outlook with a few remarks here and there, so as to what is already done in the matter in the Anthropological world. The following are some of such subjects: (1) further collection of Anthropological materials; (2) mythology; (3) the Âryan question; (4) the setting of customs and beliefs in their proper position and light; (5) the question of what is a nation; (6) colour and culture; (7) the non-transmissibility of acquired character; (8) the knowledge of Physical Anthropology and Cultural Anthropology mutually helping each other; and (9) question of the handicrafts, food, and others of man.

Importance of an early collection of materials

The most important branch of Cultural Anthropology, that appeals most to us here, is what is known as Social Anthropology. In India, there is a wide field for us for a collection of materials for this branch. Some regard Anthropology 'as an incoherent assemblage of odds and ends of knowledge, not yet sufficiently systematized to rank as a distinct science'. Well, that view was partially true at one time, and is, even now, true to a certain extent. As a matter of course, that must be so. Some must collect materials from which others may systematize. From the very nature of present state of the science, the collectors of materials must form a large number and the systematizers a small number. A careful collection of materials, made after a good deal of inquiry, examination, and even cross-examination, is not an easy task and is not without its adequate value. Well-sifted materials supply good basis to the systematizer for his theories.

A good deal of the work of our Society has been in the direction of the collection of Anthropological materials or data, but our Journals show many an attempt to systematize and to theorize. In a vast country like India, which is being very rapidly revolutionized in the matter of its customs, manners, and beliefs by the spread of the railway and the telegraph, and of motor cars and motor cycles in its distant corners, the necessity of soon collecting the materials, before they are destroyed by the above and other agencies, is great and urgent. Even if our Society has done nothing else, and even if it does nothing else for some time, still its work of collection will be considered to be 'good work'. Mr Rudler in his Presidential Address of 1899 before the Anthropological Society of England said, 'The pressing necessity of instituting careful anthropological researches among uncultured peoples is every day becoming more evident. By contact with the missionary, the merchant and the miner, these peoples are rapidly losing their primitive condition, and our opportunities of observation are consequently becoming more and more contracted. While rejoicing at the progress of civilization, the anthropologist feels that the dark places of the

earth are precisely those places most likely to throw light on many problems of the prehistoric past'.[11] What Mr Rudler says of the uncultured tribes of Africa and America is also true of the uncultured tribes and even of some of the semi-cultured and fully cultured tribes and communities of India. Even a cultured community is not free from some kinds of superstitions. These must be collected and examined. It is their customs which require greater attention. The study of their origin and evolution helps to shed a good deal of light on many a problem of the past.

In a country like India, a country of several creeds and castes, a country ruled by an alien race, the study and knowledge of the customs of the people are to a certain extent essential for the rulers. Some of their customs, however crude, they may appear to the eye of a Westerner, have, for generations, worked for good government, parental discipline, fraternal feelings, sanitary ordinances, and others. We will not, and cannot, keep away the civilizing influences of the Missionary, the Merchant and the Miner from our country, but before they destroy we must collect, group, and register a good deal of what they destroy. Otherwise, we will be losing a good deal of the materials for Cultural Anthropology of the kind which Sir James Frazer has grouped and systematized and of which a good deal still remains to be grouped and systematized. Far be it from me to say anything against the Missionaries who have done a good deal, for the good of India, but it may be said for the guidance of some of them who are over-zealous, and over-anxious, that they may do nothing in the line of destruction before they replace it by construction. A hasty and careless removal of good old beliefs with a view to replace them by unsuitable brand new movements or ideas gives a shock to the foundation of faith and brings the followers between the two stools to the ground.

Prof. Frazer, the great Collector-general of anthropological materials

The subject of the collection of materials reminds us of that well-known Anthropologist, who may very properly be called the great Collector-general of Anthropological materials. One of the events in the Anthropological world of the last year was the Knighthood conferred on Prof. Frazer, the renowned author of the monumental work of *The Golden Bough*. Among the number of congratulations received by that learned Anthropologist, there was one sent by our Society as resolved at its meeting of 24 June 1914. Our Society has also enrolled him as an Honorary Member and subscribed its small mite to the Memorial Fund started in his honour. The work of Sir James Frazer is such as should appeal to us, as most of our work should appeal to him. His lifelong work is in the line of Cultural Anthropology, the branch in which we are principally working.

The question of superstitions, suggested by Sir James Frazer's works

Anthropological theories vary. Some theories are overthrown and others replace them. Anthropologists differ in their conclusions. So, some may differ from Sir James Frazer's conclusions. But his chief merit lies in his giving to posterity a rich collection and grouping of materials, the result of a life-long patient work. What the Athenaeum has said of a line of thoughts suggested by his 'Psyche's task, a discourse concerning the influence of superstitions on the growth of institutions' suggests to us one of the lines in which our Society may work still more and more, namely, the collection of Indian superstitions. It is said that the point of his book was: 'Absurd as the superstitions of the savage may be when considered in themselves, they have in many ways wrought useful service for mankind. Utterly fantastic as they are from the stand point of theory, they have often proved in practice to be highly beneflcial'.[12] For example, 'the doctrine of the divine right of kings has made for good government in the past'.[13] Some social institutions of several tribes are based on superstitions, which so far have their advantages.

The civilization and advancement of mankind has rested on: (a) respect for government; (b) respect for private property; (c) respect for marriage; (d) respect for human life.

a. As pointed out by Prof. Frazer, in some of the uncivilized tribes of Africa the respect of the people for all these is based on their superstitious beliefs. For example, the Melanasian tribe believes that their chiefs possess some power derived from the supernatural power of some spirits or ghosts. It is this superstitious belief that leads them to respect the authority of the government of their chiefs. The belief of some English men in the last century that scrofula, which was called the 'king's disease', could be cured by the touch of the king, is a remnant of a similar belief. It is believed that Johnson was cured by this remedy. The belief of the Scots during the past century that the arrival of the Chief of the Macleods in Dunuegal was accompanied by a 'plentiful catch of the herring' was also a remnant of a similar belief.
b. In the case of respect for private property, the superstitious belief of the uncultured tribes associated a kind of curse with property. One who misappropriated another's property was sure to meet with the dire results of the curse. That belief led him to look with respect towards others' properties. The Achaemenian king Darius, in one of his inscriptions, implores a curse on those who meddled with his property – his inscriptions – and destroyed them. The curse included that of being childless which was one of the worst curses among the ancient Iranians, the next being that of being horseless.[14] The superstitious fear of such curses may be taken to have served in those times the purpose of a modern

Monument Act. None dared to meddle with his inscriptions, as long as he understood the curse.

c. It was not an Act of Legislature which considered adultery as a crime, that made some of the rude uncultured tribes respect the bond of marriage, but it was the belief of a religious sin that made them respect it.
d. It was the belief in the ghost of the murdered man revenging the murder, that made some uncultured tribesmen respect the life of others and not the fear of a punishment according to any Penal Code.

The collection and the systematization of superstitions present a good field of work. While travelling in Europe in 1888, I was struck with the similarity of some of our Indian superstitions with those of Europe, and I have embodied my notes in a paper before our Society.[15]

Anthropology and the Indian classics

While speaking of Anthropological materials existing in India, I am reminded of Prof. W. Ridgeway's first Presidential address[16] from the chair of the Anthropological Institute, wherein he took as his theme, 'The Relation of Anthropology with the Classical Studies'. Scholars in the West have attended in various ways to the subject from the point of view of the Western classics. For example, we have excellent recent books like, *Anthropology and the Classics,* edited by Mr R.R. Marett, containing six papers by different scholars, and *The Anthropology of the Greeks,* by Mr E.E. Sykes. Again, *The Anthropological History of Europe,* by Dr John Beddoe, which begins with the Aryan question and the question of the variation of type is an interesting book, though not mainly connected with the ancient classics. We have now a Classical Association in our city, and I hope its members would occasionally give us papers on Anthropological materials gathered by them in their study of the classics. What I beg to suggest is, that some Indian scholars can well handle the subject from the point of view of Eastern classics. Anthropology of the Vedas, Anthropology of the *Puranas*, and such other papers or essays will be a valuable addition to our Anthropological literature. A Parsee can well take up subjects like the Anthropology of the Avesta, the Anthropology of the Ancient Iranians, and the Anthropology of Firdousi. Rev. Dr Casartelli has a section on Iranian Anthropogeny[17] in his book, *The Religious Philosophy of the Sassanian Time*, but the whole subject can be well amplified and worked out for an exhaustive paper.

The study of mythology

All countries and nations have their mythology. Our country is replete with it and our Society may have this subject as a good field for further work and inquiry. Prof. Max-Muller said that 'what we call mythology, even in its

religious aspect, so far from being irrational, was originally the most rational view of the world, was in fact the only possible philosophy, though clothed as yet in very helpless language'.[18] In their religious aspect, myths, as religious symbols, have appealed for good to millions of people for hundreds of ages.

Mr Dill says on this subject: 'Plato sought an image of the Infinite Godin the Sun (*Republic,* Bk. VI, p. 508; cf. Hellenica, p. 176). Common worshippers adore it under the names of Jupiter, Apollo, Isis of Mithra. The Great Reality can by any human soul be only dimly conceived, and expressed only in a rude fragmentary way. We see the Divine One in the religious myths as through a glass darkly. Yet, if we purge mythology of the gross fancies of rude ages, the myths may be used as a consecrated language of devotion. They are only faint shadows of the Infinite One, from which we are separated by an impassable gulf; yet they represent the collective thought and feeling of the past about God. They are only symbols; but a religious symbol is doubly sacred when it has ministered to the devotion of many generations'.[19]

As to the source of mythology, there are two classes of mythologists, the Anthropological Mythologists and the Philological Mythologists. Max-Muller, who was a Philological Mythologist, said that language is that source; but his opponents, the Anthropologists, say that mythology represents the survival of an old stage of thought and it is not caused by language. They believe that human nature is the source of myth. According to their view, they study myths '*in situ',* that is, in its original situation, but the Philological Mythologists study them *hortus siccus*, that is, as a collection of dried plants. The Anthropologists claim to study them 'in the unrestrained utterances of the people'. Both agree that myths are a product of thought almost extinct in civilized races. Max-Muller said that language caused that kind of thought, but the other side said that language merely gave it one means of expressing it. Our country, which is full of myths, presents for our members a vast field of inquiry into this matter of myths. The cultural branch of Anthropology, wherein we work most, will help the cause of Anthropological Mythologists.

The great Aryan question

The question of the work and influence of Philology reminds us, people of the Âryâvrat, of the great Aryan question, because, at first, it was merely a philological question. As said by Dr. Beddoe, out of several important Anthropological questions, often discussed at present, two are principal ones, namely, (1) the Âryan question, and (2) the question of 'the degree of permanence of types, of the stability or permanence of form and colour, of the influence on physical character of media, of surroundings and external agencies'.[20]

Of these two principal questions, the first, the Aryan question concerns us most. It was philology that gave birth to it. The discovery of Sanskrit and Avesta, thanks to the efforts in these directions of Sir William Jones and Auquetil Du Perron in our country, and the inquiry of the relation existing between the two and of their relation to the principal languages of Europe, led to this Âryan question. The question, as succinctly presented by Dr Beddoe, may be thus summed up in its different stages.

1. At first, 'there was no difficulty in believing that all people who spoke Âryan (or Indo-Germanic) languages were of one blood'.[21]
2. The subsequent knowledge of the Vedas of the Hindus and of the Avesta of the Parsees brought on the field the Hindu Âryas and the Persian Iranians. The Vedas introduced the Hindu Âryas from the North-West, and the Vendidad[22] the Iranians from a cold country where there were 2 months of summer and ten of winter.
3. So, the old Airyana-vaêja, the old Âryavrat was located in the regions of the Pamirs, the Roof of the World.[23] The modern Galchas living in the Oxus and Zarafshan valleys, in towns like Shignan and Wakhan, who are all short-headed, and their Badakhshani neighbours and others were taken as representing our Âryan ancestors. They 'were the rear-guard of the old Persian migration', while the Kâfirs, Shiahposhis, Chitralis, Dards, and others were the rear-guards of the Aryo-Hindu migration. The first off-shot from the ancestors of the Gilchas was towards Europe. The next one was that of the high-class Hindu. Then the Persians, Kurds, and others. The name of the late Prof. Max-Muller is associated to a great extent with this orthodox theory.
4. Then came in, what is called, 'the modern heresy', which said, that the cradle of the Âryans must be looked at in Europe and not in Asia. Dr Robert Gordon Latham first opposed the theory of the Asiatic cradle, on the ground 'that there were far more Âryan-speaking men in Europe than in Asia',[24] and so instead of deriving the greater from the less, one must derive the less from the great. So Europe, the home of the greater, must be the cradle of the Aryans.
5. Of the European theory or the view that Europe was the cradle of the Aryans, there are several varieties. Some like Cannon Isaac Taylor look for the cradle in Central or Alpine Europe. Some like Prof. Rendell look to Scandinavia. Some German Anthropologists like Poesche point to Lithuania as the cradle, on the ground that the Lithuania language has a greater affinity with the Sanskrit.

In our country, many are still of the old orthodox view of Max-Muller, pointing to Central Asia, somewhere near the Pamirs, as the cradle. Mr Tilak has lately treated the question in another interesting way, pointing to the polar regions as the cradle.

Philology and the two great divisions of the Aryan race, the Hindus, and the Iranians

The great Aryan race, the locality of the cradle of which is great question, gradually divided itself into several branches or offshoots and dispersed. One of the principal, if not the principal, cause of dispersion was the search for food. This is, what is called by Huttington,[25] the Bread and Butter theory of movement. Among the different divisions or dispersions, the principal was that of the ancestors of the Hindus and of those of the Iranians. One of the causes of their separation was a schism caused by a difference in the views of some points of religion. Philology has been called to the help of this question of schism.

At one time, the pre-Zoroastrian times, when the ancestor of the Hindus and the Parsees lived together in one place as one race, they had a number of words, mostly religious names, that were common. For example, one of such words, very often referred to, was Daêva, the word for God, which is still used by the Hindus. Another word was Ahura, another name of God. When they separated for religious differences, the words were, as it were, boycotted by one or the other party. The Iranians took it, that the other branch began to use the word Daêva originally applied to one God, for Divine powers or agencies which ought to be otherwise distinguished. So, taking that the use of the word was abused, they condemned it, and the word Daêva came to be used among them for powers other than those of the one God whom they called Ahura of Ahura Mazda. The ancient Hindus, on the other hand, similarly condemned the word Ahura, which was at first commonly used in a good sense. Thus, the use of the words Daêva and Ahura and of a few other words leads to show the existence of the *schism*, and of the separation of these two great branches of the ancient Âryans.

What happens, or what seems or threatens to happen, now seems to me to present a parallel, though not on all fours, and to illustrate what happened in olden times. It is the use of the words Culture and Kultur after the commencement of the present war. The English word Culture is an equivalent for the German word Kultur. Up to the middle of the year 1914, both were used in a good sense. But, since then, the German word Kultur has begun to be condemned by the English on the ground that under the name of Kultur, the Germans did a number of things which are opposed to good real Culture. To call a person a 'man of Kultur' is somewhat resented now, though that person would like to be called a 'man of culture'. Through want of communication with the Germans, at present, we are not in a position to say what they now think of the English word *culture*. It would not be surprising if they retaliate. I would not be surprised if some future English lexicographer would include the word 'Kultur' in his work, and that in rather a depraved sense, while he would continue to use the word 'Culture' in a good sense. If that state of view continues, it is possible

that the word Culture may be condemned by the Germans and used by German lexicographers in a bad sense.

Setting customs and beliefs in their proper position and light

One may say that the study of some branch or branches of Cultural Anthropology looks like old women's stories and beliefs. At times, some simple folks are misled into the belief that some of the authors of papers on particular customs and beliefs believe in those customs and beliefs. For example, I remember that when I read a paper before our Society on 'Charms or amulets for some Diseases of the Eye',[26] a Parsee wrote to me asking for the amulet to cure an eye-disease in his family. But the fact is, that an inquiry into the origin of customs and beliefs sets them in their proper position and light. For example, take the case of the old Indian belief in the Râkshasas or giants of enormous size.

The study of Anthropology with the help of anthropometry has blown up the belief in human giants. Now-a-days, it is taken as proved that, at no time, there ever existed men of a size exceeding 8 feet and 3 inches. That size also was that of an inordinate growth resulting from a morbid process. So, some old beliefs of the existence of a race attaining a stature of the height of 20 feet have been blown up.

Again, take the case of the belief in the stories about new kinds of men. In our country, we, now and then, hear wild stories of strange men of new types. They are at times looked at with reverential fear, and those who exhibit them make money from that kind of fear. Even scientific men had at one time a belief in such a class of persons. The story[27] of the boy known as 'Wild Peter' is known in this connection. He was found in 1724, as a naked brown boy in a village near Hanover. 'He could not speak and he showed savage and brutish habits and only a feeble degree of intelligence'. His discovery was believed to be 'more important than that of Uranus or the discovery of 30,000 new stars'. He was taken to be the specimen of the 'Original man of nature'. It was an Anthropologist, Blumenbach (1752–1840) who took the trouble of tracing the history of this wild boy and of showing 'how absolutely futile all these philosophic theories and vapourings had been'. He was merely a dumb boy driven away from his father's house by a step-mother and it were the surroundings of a wild wandering life that had given him all the appearance of which some made much.

Nations and races: Indian nation

Now it is not only the customs, beliefs, and myths of the *masses* of the people that anthropology sets right and shows them in their proper light but also, what may be termed the political myths of the higher *classes*. For example, take the question of Races and Nations.

The Anthropological Society of England was preceded by an Ethnologist Society which was founded in 1843. But in the process of time, Ethnology was taken as a branch of the larger science of Anthropology. Some of those early scientific men, who may be taken now as anthropologists, were ethnologists. Blumenbach was such a one. His classification divided men under five varieties, namely, the Caucasian, the Mongolian, the Ethiopian, the American, and the Malay. The Caucasian, he took to be the highest type, the Mongolian and the Ethiopian being at the bottom, and the American and the Malay intermediate. This classification has varied now and then.

The Ethnographical Survey of India inaugurated by one of our past Presidents, Sir Herbert Risley has shown us the existence of many races and tribes. The work of the survey was helped on our side by the number of monographs prepared under the editorship of another of our past Presidents, Mr Enthoven. The Journals of our Society contain several monographs on several tribes. I have contributed my quota in that work by five or six monographs prepared in the line of ethnographical questions prepared by Sir Herbert Risley.[28] The investigations in the subject of races have shown that race is different from nation. Europe is not divided into races but in nations. It is not the principle of race that goes to the building up of a nation. As pointed out by a learned writer, a nation may be made up of many races. It is the spirit that makes a people a nation and contributes to its patriotism. A nation may come out of 'intermingled blood and race'. We speak of the English nation but it is not the Anglo-Saxon race that has formed the English nation. It is erroneous to speak of the Italians as a Latin race. The French form a nation but that nation is of people who are Iberian and Celtic and even have a mixture of the Teutonic and Scandinavian races. The once celebrated Spanish nation was made up of people of seven races. The Greeks, the Carthaginians, the Teutons and even the Moors together with the Celtic Iberians built up the Spanish nation. Germany, though spoken as Teutonic, is not a nation of the Teutons alone. It contains people of the Gaulish race in the South and the Slavonic in the East. The Austro-Hungarians form at present a nation but they have among then Slavs, Magyars, and others also.

We remember that at one time, when criticizing the attempts of the educated classes of this country to rise in the matter of their higher political aspirations, the critics said that India, as it is divided into a number of people of different races and creeds, could never be a nation. We see from the mentioned earlier view of races and nations, that that view cannot hold good. The modern view of the Anthropologists or the Ethnologists supports the view of the educated classes of the country that, despite of its numerous races, India can be a nation. We have now seen, from the very commencement of the present war, how India, despite of its numerous creeds and races, has risen as a nation to stand by the side of its British rulers. The late M. Renan very properly said: 'A nation is a living

soul, a spiritual principle, the result of the will of peoples united by a common consent in the interests of the community'. India has, at this time, risen as a 'living soul'. One may, perhaps, safely say that old India was never a nation, but he cannot as safely say that modern India, the hearts of whose people throb like a 'living soul', is not a nation. If he says so, he does a great injustice, not to the people only, not to the ruled only, but to the Government also, to the rulers also, as if the paramount power of the British, uniting the people under one rule and inspiring them with some common aspirations, was, after its Pax Britannica of a number of years, not able to raise the mixed races of the people to the rank of an united nation.

The question of the Indian nation and the want of history in Indian literature

Mr Macdonell attributes the want of history in Indian literature to two causes. First, India never made any history. 'The ancient Indians never went through a struggle for life, like the Greeks in the Persian and the Romans in the Punic wars, such as would have welded their tribes into a nation and developed political greatness. Second, the Brahmans, whose task it would naturally have been to record great deeds, had already embraced the doctrine that all action and existence are a positive evil, and could therefore have felt but little inclination to chronical historical events'.[29] Mr M'crindle gives well-nigh the same as the second reason given by Mr Macdonell, when he says: 'Absorbed in devout meditation in the Divine Nature, etc., they regarded with indifference the concerns of the transitory world which they accounted as *mâyā* (unreal).'

As to the validity of the first cause it may now safely be said that, though, even now, there is no 'struggle for life' in the warlike or military sense, there is a kind of struggle for life to rise higher in all kinds of aspiration for greatness. As the result of a comparatively long period of peace and advancement under the rule of the British, one 'living soul' inspires them to advance and rise higher, not only in political matters but also in all walks of life or spheres of activity. This is what makes the modern Indians a nation despite there being numerous tribes and castes.

We see, from what is said earlier, that a common 'struggle for life' leads, to a certain extent, to the formation of a nation and its history. We are now in the midst of a great war unprecedented in the known history of the world, wherein more than one belligerent power has said that it is a 'struggle of life' for it. From this point of view, what Ruskin says on the subject of the influence of war on the progress of art among nations is interesting. He says: 'All the great and noble arts of peace are founded on war; no great art was ever yet born on earth but amongst a nation of soldiers'.

Intermixture of races

For another example of the influence of questions of cultural anthropology on those of physical anthropology, take the case of the large question of races which is studied by Ethnography and Ethnology. Different groups of races have their broad distinguishing characteristics, both physical and mental. But a knowledge of the history – both traditional or unwritten and written – of the group or its divisions is necessary to come to proper conclusions. For example, take the great Hindu community. It is generally a non-proselitysing community at present. Some of the orthodox part of the community even object to re-admission of converted Hindus who want to return to the fold of their fathers. Though that is the fact at present, it is shown by some scholars, from historical materials, that the Hindu community at one time, and that not very remote, had a large admixture of aliens, not only Indians but also Greeks and even some Iranians. The late Sir James Campbell advanced that view, and Mr R. Bhandarkar has supported him by his several learned articles, which have gained him the Campbell gold medal in 1911.

Among the Hindus, the Brahmins are generally believed to have preserved the pure old blood of their forefathers, and they are very particular about caste distinctions. But, in some of the old ceremonies, the ancient Rajas requisitioned lacs of Brahmins. When that number was not procurable, non-Brahmins were made Brahmins for the time being. In times of emergency, class-distinctions are forgotten even now.

Questions of Man's handicrafts, food, dress, habitation, and others

The question of the differentiation of the different races of Man follows that of the question of differentiating Man from animals. It is handicrafts of Man, his habits of food, dress, habitation, and others, that differentiate him from other animals. So these different questions are important questions of cultural Anthropology. This leads us to speak of his (a) food, (b) dress, (c) habitation, and of (d) his relations with fellowmen, among which relations even war has an important bearing. For all these, India presents to us a vast field for further inquiry.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, X (5), February 1915: 327–76.

2 This chapter is based on Jivanji Modi's Presidential Address delivered on 25th February 1915. The published script of the address comprised as many as 17490 words. A large part of it was concerned with many matters not directly concerned with the theme of the address – such matters as thanks giving, management of the Anthropological Society, and general discussion of anthropological ideas. We present here excerpts relevant to the basic theme of the address. – Editors.

3 The *Academy* of 6th April 1912, pp. 429–30.
4 The *Academy* of 19th October 1912, pp. 519–16.
5 The *Academy* of 14th September 1913.
6 Address before the British Association at Dublin, 1878. *Vide Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, New Series, Vol. XI, p. 11.
7 Report, dated London, 1st May 1914. Appendix IV, p. 3.
8 Presidential address of Prof. William Ridgeway (*Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, New Series, Vol. XIII, p. 10.)
9 *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, New Series, Vol. XI. p. 19. Dr. Cunnungham's Presidential Address.
10 *Ibid*.
11 *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, New Series, Vol. I, p. 321.
12 The Athenæum of 17th January 1914, No. 4499, p. 84.
13 *Ibid*.
14 Cf. Yaçna XI, 1–2.
15 *Vide* my Paper on "A Few Superstitions common to Europe and India," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. II, No. 3, pp. 161–71. *Vide* my Anthropological Papers, pp. 23–33.
16 *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, New Series, Vol. XII, pp. 10 *et seq*.
17 *La Philosophie religieuse du Mazdéisme sous les Sassanides*, Chap. V, Sec. 1. For its translation *vide*, "The Philosophy of the Mazdayasanian Religion under the Sassanids" by Firoz Jamaspji Dastur Jamasp Asa (1889), p. 129.
18 "Contributions to the Science of Mythology," (1897) Chap. II, Vol. I, p. 137.
19 "Roman Society in the last century of the Western Empire" by Samuel Dill (1898) p. 8.
20 "The Anthropological History of Europe" by Dr. J. Beddoe, p. 10.
21 *Ibid*.
22 *Vendidad*, Chapt. I, 3–4.
23 For an account of the Pamirs, I would refer my Gujarati readers to my Gujarati "Dnyân Prasârak Essays," Part I, pp. 150–65.
24 The Anthropological History of Europe by Dr. John Beddoe, p. 10.
25 "*The Pulse of Asia*" by Ellsworth Hullington (1907). For the details of Hullington's Theory, I would refer my Gujarati readers to my lecture, published in my "Lectures and sermons on Zoroastrian Subjects, Part IV. (જરથોસ્તી ધર્મ સંબંધી ભાષણો અને વાએજો. ભાગ ચોથો) pp. 195–207".
26 *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. III, No. 6, pp. 338–45.
27 *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, New Series, Vol. XI, (1908) pp. 24–25.
28 *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. III, No. 8, pp. 471–83. Vol. V, No. 8, pp. 458–65. Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 68–82, Vol. VII, No. 8, pp. 521–25. *Vide* my "Anthropological Papers, Vol. I, pp. 66–80, 158–66, 208–24, 263–67. Vol. II, (In the press) p. 1 *et seq*.
29 A History of Sanskrit Literature by Arthur A Macdonell (1900) p. 11.

Part II

Methodology and collecting ethnographic data

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7 Importance of collecting facts (Presidential Address)

William Crooke

I must commence by expressing my grateful thanks for the honour you have conferred on me by electing me as President of your Society for the current year [1895], a post which has been held by many distinguished ethnologists with whom I have no claim to rank. I regret that unavoidable circumstances prevent me from expressing in person my acknowledgments for the distinction which you have been kind enough to confer on me. If I may be permitted to say so, I think that the election to the office of President of your Society of a student of anthropology, who has never served in the Bombay Presidency, may be regarded as an expression of your desire to widen the influence of your work by associating with you all who throughout the Peninsula are in sympathy with its aim.[1,2]

The members of all the Indian Services and all non-official residents in this country are, it is unnecessary to say, thrown into peculiarly intimate relations with the people among whom their lot in life is cast. Many of us know what it is to be for weeks or even months debarred from European society, and dependent for social intercourse on the natives of the country whom we meet in our wanderings. Our work among the people compels us to gain an acquaintance with their manners and customs more intimate than that of most residents in foreign lands. Judicial enquiries, for instance, daily bring us face to face with the inner life of the people. Our courts are constantly called on to decide the most intricate questions connected with the law of marriage, inheritance, and so forth, where the decision often depends on some obscure custom or usage peculiar to the caste or tribe from which the parties are drawn. As we march through the country, as we control great fairs and pilgrimages, as we superintend some of the chief centres of religious thought in the country, we are thrown into intimate relations with all sorts and conditions of men – the priest and the ascetic, the husbandman and the vagrant, the jungle-dweller and the city artisan.

Every Englishman in India is, in fact, an anthropologist in his own way, and cannot, even if he wished, help being so. Though few of us can even pretend to possess the wide knowledge of the scientific ethnologist of Europe, still we stand in his position of great advantage as compared with him that we have ample materials at first hand, a vast store of interesting

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facts ready to be garnered, if only the workers were available to reap the luxuriant harvest. Few of us are in a position to theorize on the interpretation of these facts; few of us can attempt the study of anthropology from the comparative point of view; but all of us can note down facts as they come before us and garner the scrape of legend and folklore, which, if we are not to learn, we must deliberately close our eyes and ears.

And it can only be because it is still such a secret, confined to a comparatively limited circle of inquirers, how interesting, nay fascinating, the study of anthropology in this country can become, that Societies such as ours are not more widely supported. As is the case with all sciences, it needs some preliminary training, if the student is in a position to collect anything of value. The entomological collector must know, for instance, what variety of butterfly is rare, which is possibly unique. So, the paleontologist is sure to fill his bag with rubbish if he cannot recognize a fossil when he sees it, and hits some idea, when he finds one, whether it is worth taking home. But now-a-days the tyro in anthropology has no excuse for this lack of knowledge. Mr Risley in Bengal, Mr Ibbetson in the Punjab, Colonel Dalton in Chota Nagpur, and last but not least, Mr Campbell in your own city, have pointed out the road which leads to success. And to name only a few English writers, Mr Herbert Spencer, Dr Tylor, Mr Balfour, Mr Frazer, Sir John Lubbock, Dr Westermark, and Mr Andrew Lang have created, by a patient collection and analysis of facts, the new science of comparative anthropology which has solved so many difficulties and suggested so many fascinating lines of investigation.

From a Government in a normal condition of retrenchment, we can at present hope for little practical aid. But I think the experience of the past few years is sufficient to prove that the idea has begun to dawn on the minds of Secretaries that a condition of the successful administration of India and its teeming populations is a wider knowledge of the relations of the various races, their customs and institutions. Recent events have shown that a District Officer, if he is to hold the scales evenly between discordant creeds, must possess more than an empirical knowledge of their tenets and practices. He cannot now-a-days help devoting himself to a wider study of the races among whom he works. Not alone must he concern himself with the old established creeds, Brâhmanism and Islam, and the usages of the Jaina and the Buddhist, but he must watch the myriad sects which are ever rising and floating away on the turbid stream of Indian religious life. When he meets, as our frontier officers do, new and almost unknown races, the Kâfirs of the Northern Hills, the Chin and Karen of Burma, a fresh tribe of savages on the Assam border, or a colony of so-called Buddhists in some sequestered valley who have almost forgotten the order of the Master, he cannot conciliate and rule such people with any chance of success unless he comes prepared to observe and study their religion. The Dutch, who are an eminently practical people, have now, I understand, decided that no officer is qualified for service in their Eastern Island Empire until he has acquired a

competent knowledge of the social and religious life of its inhabitants. I look forward to the time when not only the Indian Government, but also every merchant who sends a representative to this country, will prescribe a similar course of study.

Much of the want of interest in anthropological inquiries in this country up to the past few years is the result of, I venture to think, a want of acquaintance with our objects. The anthropologists of the last generation failed, I believe, to attract a larger number of followers on account of what were, perhaps, the inevitable limitations of their studies. There is not much to interest anyone but a specialist in long lists of names of sub-castes or exogamous groups. With races, lignin, which possess a great literature there comes a time when we must know as much about them as can be gathered by a study of their sacred writings. With Brâhmanism and Islam this stage has been practically reached. We have now English translations of most of what is really valuable. And so some people are inclined to say: 'What is the use of grubbing any further into these rites and ceremonies? This work has been all done already and nothing remains to be investigated'.

And indeed it is true that if anthropology in India began and ended with these two religions, there would be little reason for the existence of a Society such as ours. But happily for us, what we are now only beginning to understand is that Brâhmanism does not exhaust the religious beliefs of the Hindu race. There are millions of people who never employ a Brâhman, who do not worship the Brâhmanical pantheon, but believe in a collection of faiths which have been roughly grouped together under the name of 'Animistic'. Of this great branch of religion, we can hardly be said to know more than the very elements. This is the faith, not only of the jungle-dwellers of the Central Hills – Gonds, Bhîls, Kharwârs, Santâls and their kinsfolk – but this or something like it is, to a great extent, the belief of the under-stratum of the people of Northern India, whom the early Hindus called Sûdras and we, for lack of a better name, provisionally know as Dravidians. These people are worshippers of a host of fetishes, nature god-lings of their own, which have little connection with those of the Aryan mythology; god-lings of disease, demons and devils; god-lings of rock, tree, and waterfall, the snow peaks of the Himalaya, the Ganges and other sacred rivers, and so on. These people are not Hindus in the sense that they follow the teaching of the early Rishis. Of course, at least in the plains, they have been for centuries under Brâhmanical influence; and, as they rise in the social scale, they imbibe many of the religious ideas of this one of the most active of missionary faiths. So, as he rises in wealth and importance, the jungle-man employs a Brahman priest and allies himself to some well-known respectable caste – the Rajput for preference. But what is of more importance even than this is the fact that modern Brâhmanism is perhaps under equally great obligations to these primitive indigenous beliefs and has adopted most of its demonology and a large part of its ruder theology from these non-Aryan races.

If we are ever, then, to reach some knowledge, not only of the religion of the denizen of the jungle, but also of the elements of modern Hinduism, we must begin with the investigation of the faiths of some of the lowest orders of the people. Even at the risk of some inevitable misapprehension, we must go on, as is being done in the Ethnological Survey now in progress, piling together all we can learn of the secrets of the faith of the most shy and reticent tribes, many of whom have hardly risen above the grade of savage. Mistakes we are certain to make, for such people are most jealous and suspicious, and can hardly believe, when we encounter them – note-book in hands – that we have not some fiscal object. Many years ago a traveller collected a copious vocabulary of some people in the Southern Ocean, which proved on revision to consist mainly of a choice collection of abusive epithets. The same fate may be in store for some of us; but this is a risk which we cannot help running.

In this direction, a good deal has already been done. Mr Risley and Colonel Dalton for Chota Nâgpur, and Mr Gait in Assam, have collected much information about them. Captain Wolsely Haig is now engaged in the same work in the Berârs – an almost unknown land to the ethnologist, save for the labours of Mr Hislop, whose untimely death was one of the greatest losses to the science of man in India. I was myself fortunate enough to encounter in Mirzapur some isolated fragments of these Kols, Korwas, and their kinsfolk; and, in a work on the Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh now in the press, I have, I hope, succeeded in increasing our knowledge of these interesting people.

In the Punjab, again, Mr Longworth Dames is at work among the Biloch and Pathân tribes, of whom he possesses such an intimate knowledge, and the results of his survey cannot fail to be of special interest. Madras, again, has set Mr Thurston on the same kind of investigation.

All this is, to a certain extent, satisfactory. But you must remember that all – or nearly all – these officers have undertaken this duty in addition to their ordinary work, and such a survey conducted in this way must necessarily be, to some extent, inadequate. You need have no reason to fear that they will leave nothing to be learnt of the races of India.

One reproach they will, perhaps, do something to remove. If you look down the lists of references in standard works on religion and ethnology – books for instance like Dr Tylor's 'Primitive Culture', Mr Frazer's 'Golden Bough', Mr Herbert Spencer's 'Principles of Sociology' – you will notice that, while numerous quotations are from all sorts of casual sources, the amount of information drawn from the Indian Empire is of very limited extent. The Ethnological Survey will, I hope, supply European scholars with something better than what they have hitherto used as authorities for Indian social life.

As far as I am aware, the two Governments, within whose boundaries lie certainly the most primitive and consequently the most interesting tribes, have as yet organized no special survey. In one of these, Bombay, you

already possess, scattered through the volumes of the *Provincial Gazetteer*, a great quantity of most valuable notes on castes. But they are disconnected; and the book, of which they form a part, is such as it, to a great extent, not to make them readily available. If the Bombay Government find themselves unable to institute a special survey, they might, perhaps, be induced to reprint these notes on castes as an Ethnographical Handbook for the Presidency. If Mr Campbell could be induced to act as editor, the materials for a very useful work lie ready to hand.

It may be hoped, too, that the Government of the Central Provinces may be induced to republish Mr Hislop's Notes with extracts from the Settlement Reports, and similar sources of information. This would have the additional advantage of giving an account of these jungle races at a time before they became so fully exposed to Brâhmanical influence, as is the case at present.

But what we, as a Society, ought really to press on the attention of these two Governments is, if possible, to undertake a complete survey of the hill tract, thus linking the Bhîls, Kolis, Gonds, and Korkus of the West with the Santâls, Kols, Orâons, and Korwas further East. In the interests of scientific ethnology there is, perhaps, no work so urgent as this. All these tribes are becoming very rapidly Brâhmanized, and in a generation or two will have shed off most of the customs and forms of religion which now make them of special interest.

In the same way, it would be a very valuable contribution to Ethnological Science if a complete survey could be carried out of the races along the lower slopes of the Himalaya. This would link the tribes of Kashmir and the hill country around the sources of the great rivers with the Hajis, Doms, Khasiyas, and Tharus of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and so on towards the east until we reach the Assamese tribes Lepchas, Garos, Nâgas, and their kinsmen.

Another urgent work which it appears to me such a Society as ours might well direct attention is the preparation of a complete set of photographs of the more primitive races with their industries and handicrafts. In the tools, appliances and methods of these primitive craftsmen we shall probably find much of the origin of the arts and manufactures of civilized lands. In the valuable series, which have been classified by Mr Balfour at the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford we are already able to trace the evolution of many of what we are pleased to call the distinctive inventions of this age of ours. But as a matter of fact in the history of human progress there is no such thing as a real invention. All the mechanical triumphs of these later days are but the gradual development step by step of existing types. The repeating rifle has been developed from the bow; the lucifer match from the fire-drill which is to this day used by forest tribes like the Korwas; the double-burner lamp from the *chirâgh* of India. Something has been done in this direction by the preparation of a series of photographs of the ruder races of the Gangetic valley and the northern and southern hills, which it is to be hoped the Local

Government will consent to publish with the reports of the Ethnographical Survey. But here, again, we must depend on individual efforts for a complete realization of the project; and with improved appliances and the army of amateur artists in this country it should not be difficult to complete it if the scientific interest of such an undertaking could be brought home to those in a position to co-operate.

More important even than this for the determination of the ethnological affinities of the Indian peoples are craniometry and anthropometry. The wide-spread habit of cremation and the deep-rooted prejudice against any interference with the remains of the dead present almost insurmountable difficulties to the formation of a complete collection of skulls. But with anthropometry, the case is different. The large collection of measurements made under the superintendence of Mr Risley will now be supplemented by similar data for the North-Western Provinces. The deductions to be based on these facts must be left to the experts of Europe. You are of course familiar with the theories which Mr Risley has formulated regarding his measurements. These have been subjected to all elaborate criticism by Mr O'Donnell in the last census report of Bengal. The result of the figures collected in the North-Western provinces and Oudh by Surgeon-Captain Drake-Brockman and myself, so far as it has been possible to analyse them, appears to prove the substantial unity of the population of Northern India. There is not, in short, that distinctive difference between the higher and lower castes which would infer that they are the result of successive invasions of large bodies of foreigners.

We are all familiar with the popular theory of the origin of the Indian peoples. We are told that the Kolarians 'seem to have entered Bengal by the north-eastern passes', while 'some of the Dravidians appear to have found their way into the Punjab by the north-western passes' (*Imperial Gazetteer*, 1st Edition, IV, 184). More recent investigations seem to show that the distinction between Kolarian and Dravidian must be abandoned, and that from the ethnological point of view they constitute one people. In the same way, the theory of a great so-called Aryan invasion from the north-west will probably require modification. Most people seem to believe that successive waves of invaders passed over the mountain barriers much in the same way as, within historical times, Mahmûd of Ghazni or Nâdir Shâh led immense hordes of wild Central Asian horsemen to conquer and destroy the indigenous civilization. On the contrary, it rather seems likely that the so-called 'Aryan invasion' was more social than ethnic: that the new-comers, scanty in numbers, but intellectually superior to the pre-existing races, while they enforced their culture and religious beliefs on the darker peoples whom they called Dasyus or Sudras, were themselves absorbed by them, a process which in the hill tracts is still going on before our eyes. On this hypothesis, the extensive absorption of the indigenous faiths by Brahmanism becomes intelligible.

Nothing has yet been said of folklore and the folktale which may, it is to be hoped, be matters not too frivolous for a sober Society like yours. It is

curiously difficult to induce most people to look seriously on the investigation of what are popularly called fairy Tales. They are at the best pretty stories, perhaps the best reading for little folk in the nursery; but for superior people these Jinns and Râkshasas, speaking animals, forbidden rooms and swan maidens are not considered worth a moment's serious thought. But whatever they may be, they are doubtless the earliest literature of the human race, and their origin and diffusion furnish a whole series of most engrossing problems. Every one now admits that all folk-tales are built up out of a limited set of incidents, most of which are found all the world over. If we find 'Cinderella' in Bombay and Zululand, as well as in German and English nurseries, if 'Bluebeard' is told round smoky fires in the huts in Northern India, it is surely worth considering how this world-wide diffusion came about. Are they independent inventions wherever they are found? Did they all start from Egypt, that mother-land of knowledge? Were they brought to India by wanderers like the modern Gipsies or old world traders, the Phoenicians and their sea brethren? Were many of them real Indian tales, such as those which possibly formed a great part of the basis of the 'Arabian Nights?' Did wanderers to Syria in old times carry them with them, and were they conveyed thence to Europe by the returning Crusaders? Whether any of these theories of the origin and diffusion of these tales will hold water or not, this is not the time for such discussion. At any rate, it seems quite certain that India had much to say to the development of the folktale. Its Epics and early literature are crammed full with folktales. Now-a-days, like all people who read little and cherish their treasures of traditional knowledge, the Indian peasant could not well get along without them. Our modern children are beginning to shy at the Peri, the Ogre and the giant; but to the Indian peasant every tree holds a Deva or a Râkshasa; every pond contains a creature which may grip the unwary bather; the Bhût and the Pisâche, the demon horseman and the mart who catches fat boys find distills an unguent from their brains everywhere prowl in the darkness. Many of these current tales have been garnered by Miss Stokes, Mrs Steel, Major Temple, Pandits Natesa Shastri, and Ganga Datt Upreti. During the Ethnographical Survey of the North-Western Provinces, I induced the Director of Public Instruction to enlist the lad of the village school masters as Collectors and this appeal brought them in by hundreds. What has been garnered is not a tithe of the harvest which awaits the reaper.

But what I desire now especially to consider is the anthropological value of the folk tale. Worn away and debased as many of them are, the sport of one reciter after another since the world was young, we find here and there among them traces of primitive ideas for which we may look elsewhere in vain. The motif, for instance, of many of them is human sacrifice which now only occasionally appears in some secluded corner of the Empire. A story told me by a jungle-man in Mirzapur, not long ago, is based on cannibalism. Everywhere, we meet with that belief in kinship with animals,

which is at least one source of Totemism. We have the metamorphosis of men into animals or inanimate things; the taboo of naming husband or wife; the successful youngest son, which, in the western tales, implies polygamy; and the separable soul which wanders about in sleep. All these, and many others, are about the most primitive beliefs of our race. Some day or other we shall have an Indian Folklore Society, which will devote to these questions the attention which they deserve.

And here I may perhaps say that the increasing interest felt by the educated native class in the exploration of the history and legends of their forefathers is a decidedly encouraging feature in the recent Ethnographical Survey of Northern India. Much energy, of course, has been and is still being devoted to what is comparatively useless work, the groping and rummaging among the dry bones of what are collectively known as the Shâstras, in the search for some mouldy text which may be interpreted to prove that some caste on the borderland of respectability ought to rank among the Dwijas or twice born. All this is obviously misdirected energy and will, it may be hoped, be soon replaced by saner methods of enquiry. But it is something to awaken interest in matters of this kind, and though the task of the pioneer is always thankless and often irritating, there is no reason to despair of success. Our own records abound in valuable contributions from our native friends, and these, it may be hoped, will largely increase in future years.

I fear that I have already unduly trespassed on your attention with these desultory remarks. It would be easy to go on to discuss some points which have arisen out of our recent enquiries. With the origin of caste, for instance, we have naturally been much concerned. It is quite certain, at least, that it is not of divine origin; that it is of comparatively modern growth; that it is not peculiar to India; that it is based more on social needs than on religions principles. If we assume the essential unity of the Northern Indian races to be established by the anthropometrical evidence, we are forced to believe that caste, as we observe it, is for the most part of occupational origin. This is not only with those castes which are obviously guilds, such as the washerman or the blacksmith or dyer. Even the Râjputs, we know to be a collection of septs of very different origin and status. Some are of blood bluer than any nobleman of Europe; others, as in Oudh, have been made up of recruits from other and lower tribes. Others, as some of the Gonds and Kharwârs of the Central Hills, are still in process of formation.

It is less generally recognized that the same is probably the case with the great Levite corporation of the Brâhmans. That it is made up of various sub-divisions which take their names from different parts of the country – Gaudas, Drâviras, Kanaujiyas, Sarwariyas, and so on – is admitted. But it is almost certain too that it has drawn recruits from the Shaman or mystery man, the Ojha, Baiga and the like, the devil priest and ghost layer of the jungle peoples. The Jyoteshi or astrologer, the Mahâbrâhman or funeral priest; the beggar, like the Dakaut or Husaini, are no doubt drawn from less

respectable sources than their so-called brethren, the keen, high-bred pandits of Mathnra or Benares.

The same is more obviously the case with the industrial aggregates or guilds which we call, castes: the men who work in wood or iron, in brass or leather, the green-grocer and the pipestem-maker. Such organizations are in a constant state of flux, and each decennial census sees half a score of them disappear to be replaced by others or re-distributed as the requirements of a potent civilization demand from time to time. Every year, fresh endogamous groups are being formed due to some squabble over eating or precedence, some new feeling of scrupulousness as regards eating flesh or drinking wine, marrying widows, or permitting the marriage of infants. In fact, it is hardly too much to say that the best chance of the survival of a system which to us appears so repressive and opposed to social progress lies in its extreme elasticity and adaptability to the ever-changing requirements of modern life.

Then we come to the question of the origin of exogamy. It now seems certain that the current explanations of the practice – that it arises from marriage by capture; that it was enforced by a recognition of the evils of interbreeding; that it was a device of new settlers to strengthen their position by alliances with their neighbours – do not explain all the facts. In other words, it is hardly possible that an institution which we find among the very rudest tribes could be based on any physiological considerations. Nor indeed is it likely that it was ever introduced after discussion and reflection by any tribes in this stage of social culture. We must go very much deeper than this to explain a rule of the kind. Man, like every creature on the face of this earth, is the result of the struggle for existence. If then a small group cling to endogamy, nature which never forgets, is sure to disqualify it for the contest with other groups which rule their lives more in accordance with her laws. Such a group is undoubtedly liable to succumb before another which, it may be by elm nee, stumbling on the rule prohibiting marriage between near kin and conscious of its advantages, enforces it by the sanction of tribal law.

It is here that an analysis of the customs of the vagrant gipsy-like tribes becomes so important. In Northern India, they appear to practise what may be called group exogamy. The requirements of their wandering life tend to break them up into small gangs to whom a definite area is allotted. It appears to be an established rule that, though these gangs are very loosely organized, a man must seek his bride in a gang other than his own. This looks like tribal exogamy in the making, and further enquiry will possibly show that we have here the institution in one of its most primitive forms.

These are some of the many interesting problems of anthropology on which Indian enquiries may be reasonably expected to throw fresh light. It is, I conceive, one of the most important functions of a Society such as this to strive to organize the efforts of individual workers; to suggest useful lines of future enquiry; to act as the intermediary between all who have the will

and the opportunity of assisting in such investigations. It is too much to expect that with a body of European residents constantly changing, with members most of whom who are engrossed with official or private duties of their own, we should find uniformity of organized effort and educate a body of specialists like those of Europe who have ample leisure, great libraries and collections at their disposal. Our work is of another nature altogether; we are collectors of facts on which we have no business to theorize. Once when we come to appreciate the possibilities and obvious limitation of the study of ethnology in India, our efforts are likely to lead to more satisfactory results.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, IV (3), February 1896: 152–65.
2 Editors have changed the title of this paper: original title was 'Presidential Address'.

8 Collecting diverse social and cultural facts

S. M. Edwardes

I observe that on three occasions since our Anthropological Society was first organized in 1886, addresses have been read by your Presidents for the time being, detailing the lines of research on which the activities of our Society should be concentrated. I refer to the addresses of our first President Mr Tyrrell Leith,[1] of Mr Denzil Ibbertson,[2] and of Mr H.H. Risley.[3] These are names well known in the history of Anthropological and Ethnological research; and it would be the merest waste of time for me to repeat or attempt to improve on their *dicta*. On the other hand, in a review of the past year's work, which is, I believe, supposed to constitute the bed-rock of the annual presidential address, it will not perhaps be out of place to ask ourselves in what manner and to what extent we have carried out the suggestions and acted on the schemes formulated by those scholars in past years.[4,5,6]

Anthropology, I need hardly remark, is a term of very wide signification, for it embraces every subject connected with the study of mankind from Craniology and Anthropometry to comparative Folklore, and the significance of sorcery and witchcraft. Its extraordinary range and variety was aptly commented on by the learned President of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland in 1903:

> 'A peculiarity of the study of Anthropology', he remarked, 'is its lack of demarcations; sooner or later the student of Anthropology finds himself wandering into fields that are occupied by other sciences. The practical difficulty of drawing a dividing line between the legitimate scope of Anthropology and that of other studies is so great that we have often been told there is no science of Anthropology.
>
> This lack of definiteness adds a charm to the subject and is fertile in the production of new ideas, for it is at the fringe of a science that originality has its greatest scope'.[7]

As an example of this statement of Mr Haddon, I may recall to your memory the various heads of research categorized by former Presidents of this Society. Discarding the broad heads of Ethnology, Sociology, Philology,

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and Religion, we have the study of comparative religion and folklore, the religion of the pre-Aryan races, sorcery, witchcraft and necromancy, the constitution and practices of religious orders, animal and plant mythology, totemism, and demon-worship, all matters connected with the genetic development of Man, anthropometry, marriage rites, burial practices, death rites, rural ceremonies, and social customs and organization. To these may be added such subjects as Anatomy, Embryology, and Physiology, which lie rather within the domain of the professor of medicine.

Now, with regard to the papers which have been read by our members during the past year, I observe that the majority, 8 out of 11 – excluding Mr Bomanji Patell's valuable statistics on suicides in Bombay[8] – deal with religion and its sub-heads, folklore, sorcery, and witchcraft, while the remaining three deal with social customs and characteristics. In other words, we have to some extent probed the *arcana* of religion at the expense of allied subjects of no less importance, and have, to a certain degree, supplanted fact by theory. Ethnology, Totemism, Psychopathy, Anthropometry, and facts dealing with what Mr Leith called 'the genetic development of Man' have for the time being fallen into the shade.

So far as Ethnology is concerned, our work must in future be somewhat superfluous, in view of the great Ethnographical Survey which is at present being conducted by the orders of the Government of India. But I see no reason why we should not, as a Society, help that work by submitting papers read by our members here and framed on the lines laid down by the local Superintendent of the Survey. As you are doubtless aware, the little green-covered Ethnographical bulletins which we from time to time receive are based primarily on answers compiled by school masters and members of the educational department up-country to questions framed by the officer in charge of the Survey. Might it not be a good plan for our members to take that list of questions (any number of copies can doubtless be obtained), then choose some particular caste or class other than those already in the collection, and by inquiry and observation work out the answers? We should in time thus gather together in our records a fine collection of scientific facts regarding the numerous castes of this Presidency, and we should simultaneously be aiding a work of magnitude and importance. We might perhaps make a start with the classes whom we meet in the neighbourhood of Bombay; for example, the Kolis of Danda, the Palshikar Brahmans, the Bhois, the Thakurs, the Vadvals, the Bhandaris, and such classes as the Phadgis of whom Mr P.B. Joshi[9] gave us recently an interesting account and of whose existence some of us, including myself, were up till that time unaware.

Another subject to which we might devote our attention and which lies partly within the domain of Religion and partly within that of Ethnology is the constitution and practice of religious or semi-religious bodies like the Gosavis and Bairagis. Mr Oman has of course gone far towards elucidating the mystery of these men's lives in his 'Mystics, Ascetics, and Saints of India',[10] but from my

own experience at Walkeshwar [in Bombay city], I can say that there is still much to be written about them, and particularly about those who sit in meditation by the Ban Ganga, or those who, smeared with ashes or clad in ochre-coloured robes, marked either with the *Trifala* or *Tripundra*, wander down the Walkeshwar road every morning to solicit alms in the city. It would be most interesting to have a paper describing the life of one of these men, showing to which of the sects of Gosavis he belongs, the Giri, Puri, Bharati, or Saraswati; how he first came to enter the fellowship of peripatetic saints, of what his daily occupation consists, to what shrines he has journeyed, and at what times; what symbols he bears and what those symbols indicate. I feel convinced that the field of research into the life and customs of the many different sects of so-called ascetics is by no means fully harvested – a fact which in large measure arises from the notorious disinclination of such people to satisfy the enquirer whose objects they do not comprehend. Another point worthy of notice in connection with them is the extent to which the professed Shaivites have amalgamated with professed Vaishnavas, and the extent to which each main division has adopted the tenets and symbols of the other. Such intermittent enquiries as I have been able to make tend to the belief that the followers of Vishnu have become considerably intermingled with the devotees of Shiva, and that even in the matter of frontal sect marks, once so rigidly distinct, the Vaishnava ascetic is not always distinguishable from his Shaiva brother. The effect on them of the gradual spread of education would form the subject matter of no worthless article, and in the end the various contributions from members on the same subject might be cast into a single volume of permanent interest, published by and under the authority of the Society.

Another class to which we have paid but little attention in the past is that which we know under the several titles – of Devadasi, Murli, Bhavin, and Basivi. So far as I am aware, only one paper has been read before us on this subject since the Society was first constituted, namely, that on the 'Basivis' of Madras by Mr Fawcett.[11] And yet very little is known of these women, save the fact that their manner of living does not commend itself to the virtuous. Our ignorance of their exact position towards religion and the social fabric is indeed proved by the comparatively large number of theories advanced in respect of their origin. It is generally understood that the custom under which they occupy a special niche in the society of India is of non-Aryan origin; but admitting that, can we say that the custom was of spontaneous growth, or must we conclude that it was borrowed from Egypt, Babylon, Armenia, Phrygia, Carthage, or Palestine? It would be interesting to know if there are any historical grounds for connecting the Murli of Khandoba with the priestess of Mylitta, with the *Almas* of Isis, with the *Kadeshoth* of Venus Erycina or Astarte, with the women whom Josiah found in the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, and with the women to whom Hosea referred when he said that Samaria loved a reward at every corn-floor. Can we definitely say with Mr Fawcett that the system arose

from the imperative need, where no male offspring existed, for at least one daughter of the family to take the son's place in the performance of funeral rites and in the inheritance of property, and to raise up a progeny? Or can we assert with the late Dr Dymock that the dedication of female children is merely a survival of the human sacrifices formerly practised by the Dravidian or Kolarian colonists of India?[12] Or, again, can we agree with Mr Wake that the custom arose solely from the recognized idea of hospitality to strangers and pilgrims to an honoured shrine, in days when roads were few and bad, transport was difficult, and men for the most part travelled alone?[13] Or again, may we take it, as other writers allege, that the *nachnis* of the temples of India originated in the important part which dancing occupies in the ceremonial worship of the east, that their presence was obviously necessary for the pecuniary security of the various fairs and shrines, and that they were symbolical of the Apsaras or nymphs of heaven? Or, lastly, may we adopt the view propounded by Monsieur Charles Vellay in the 'Annales du Musée Guimet' that the whole Indian system is traceable to the influence of the cult of Adonis-Thammuz in Byblos, Athens, and Alexandria, which rested on the primitive idea of a deity sacrificed either by destiny or his own will for the happiness of men, coupled with the belief in the absolute domination of nature and life over destiny. He traces with remarkable perspicacity the growth of the desire to glorify this divine type, which ultimately ended in the moral abandonment of the women of Babylon, Byblos, and Paphos, and in the strange religious rites of Bubastis, Phœnicia, and Syria. Amid these conflicting theories, we cannot choose one more than another; for we know comparatively nothing of these people. Only recently, there was placed in my hands a remarkably able account of the Bhawins of Ratnagiri by a gentleman following the profession of education, which suggests that the custom is intrinsically non-Aryan, being simply a legacy of primeval ghost-worship, and second, that it was first introduced into that portion of the Bombay Presidency by the old Deshmukhs of Savantvadi. It also recorded an interesting movement among these people, which I attribute to the gradual infiltration of western ideas, namely, a movement to introduce marriage into the community, coupled with the establishment of a school for the male offspring of these women. But the Bhavins are only one small offshoot of the large community of women who spend their lives as the brides of Khandoba, Yellappa, and the ancient village-gods and even village-goddesses. We might reasonably follow the same line of research in regard to them as bas been suggested with regard to the Gosavis and Bairagis; and when we had collated the formal papers or notes of our members and contributors, we might be able to form an opinion on the social or religious origin of the custom, on the country in which it had its birth, and on its growth or decline during the period of British supremacy.

As regards Anthropometry, I do not think we can under present conditions hope to advance this branch of the science of Anthropology to any

appreciable extent, as it is so specialized a subject and requires for its prosecution an authority and apparatus which we do not possess. But when we turn to other branches of this all-embracing subject, it is obvious that our field is unlimited and that hitherto we have merely troubled the surface of the pool. There are still vast depths to be plumbed, the secrets of which can only be disclosed by a united effort and by a determination to make our labours worthy of those of our predecessors. And in this connection I feel bound to say, first, that our activities have of late somewhat diminished, and second, that our European contributors are somewhat lacking in number. For example, during the past 12 months, only three individuals have contributed the major portion of the formal papers read in this room, one member having supplied three, another two, and the third two; while there has been an entire absence of those 'Anthropological Scraps' which were formerly received in considerable numbers and which were designedly started for the benefit or rather the convenience of such as had not the leisure to prepare a lengthy treatise on any of the subjects with which our Society deals. I cannot regard this circumstance with a light heart. When one remembers the splendid work which the Society has done in the past find the enormous amount of scientific and deeply interesting knowledge which lies within the covers of its seven volumes of records, one feels that more papers and more notes ought to be forthcoming at our monthly meetings. For, Gentlemen, notwithstanding the truism that 'old customs die hard', it is nevertheless a fact that they do die out, and that here in India they are daily disappearing. The tide of western culture and western thought has set towards the shore; it is creeping forward slowly but none the less surely; and each fresh ripple deletes some print, some symbol of ancient custom and primordial belief. It is our duty to make a note of those symbols, to take an impression of those prints ere they disappear wholly from our sight. I trust that during the current year, we shall all endeavour to add something, albeit only a brief statement of fact, to our common store of knowledge regarding human life, human belief or human fear in India. It is often difficult for us, resident in a highly civilized city, to attain knowledge of customs and beliefs surviving in the heart of the forest or on the broad plains; but we all of us, I suppose, have personal friends living in the very centre of such beliefs and customs, who would probably be only too glad to supply us with a brief note of matters of Anthropological interest which have come within their purview. Can we not write to them and ask them to let us have the benefit of their experience, no matter whether it be a lengthy paper on a particular caste or the briefest possible note on some strange superstition?

As regards the paucity of European contributors, I confess that I cannot see very clearly in what way we can immediately improve the present conditions of things. There is no shadow of doubt that the finest opportunity for delving into matters anthropological is afforded to the men of all services and classes who occupy positions of trust up-country. The chance

word of a Sheristadar, a new birth in some small village, or the commission of a criminal offence may severally open up a long vista of interesting thought or call attention to some hitherto unnoticed fact of anthropology. I look down our list of former members and contributors, and from it I pick out such names as those of Sir James Campbell, Sir Lepel Griffin, Sir Arthur Lyall, Sir William Wedderburn, Messrs. Forbes Adam, Acworth, Forrest, Jardine, Mulock, Parsons, Petersen, Silcock, West, Whitworth, Wilkinson, Athelstan, Baines, Elliot, Lely, Ozanne, Reid, and Woodward; and I wonder how it happens that so little is contributed to our store of knowledge by their successors in the task of administration. Official work has doubtlessly increased in the recent years and will continue to increase; and yet, I am convinced that several or the members of my own and other services find occasional leisure for delving in the furrows of Ethnology and Anthropology. Three are certainly known to me, of whom one has more than a speaking acquaintance with Bhil customs, the second has been the '*ma-bap*' of the Naikdas, and the third possesses a decided *penchant* for investigating place-names. Could they and such as they be persuaded to send us from time to time the results of their experience and enquiry, if only in the form of rough notes, then we might look out on the future, of Anthropological Research in Western India with less apprehension. It should be our duty during the current year, to rouse their interest in a society which includes in the list of its honorary members such names as those of Dr Adolf Bastian, Francis Galton, Count Angelo, de Gubernatis, Paulo Montegazaa, Paul Topinard, and Rudolf Virchow.

Finally, gentlemen, I would again impress on you that we are living in the very midst of Anthropological data and are surrounded at every step by evidence of ancient customs, and that it is our duty to record those data and proofs before it is too late. If Dr Macdonald will pardon a Welshmen for employing the language of *his* fatherland, I would say that we should each of us try to be 'the chief' who is always 'taking notes'. If each of us contributed during the year only five lines regarding some fact which had come under his observation, we should by the end of the 12 months have ample material for one or more short papers to be read at the last monthly meeting of the year. Take for example the subject of 'Dwarfs'. I confess to never having seen one in India till the other day when, looking over the barrier of my compound, I discovered a perfectly formed person of middle age, measuring about 2½ feet in height, displaying himself for the edification of my princely neighbour next door. It would be interesting to record other cases of this physical phenomenon and to know what the uneducated classes think about them, and whether they are recognized as possessing unusual powers in one direction or another. The ancient Greeks had some extraordinary notions on the subject of dwarfs, and enquiry here might perhaps prove that the uneducated people of India preserve similar ideas. Again, I remember, reading at the time of Their Royal Highnesses visit to Bombay, a query by a press correspondent as to the meaning of the legend

of welcome erected by the Bombay Kolis. You probably noticed the silver fish hanging from the bunting and realized that they were a truly appropriate symbol of the Kolis of Mandvi. But there was something deeper in the legend which welcomed the Prince and Princess 'under the sacred fish-banner'. 'We suppose', wrote the journalist, 'that the Sacred Fish Banner means something; but we confess to being quite ignorant about it'. Our Society, gentlemen, ought to be able to enlighten him. We can take him back to Oannes and Dagon, the fish-gods of Assyria, to the fish of Manu, to the fish which was adopted by the early Christians as a symbol of their Redeemer and was carved by them on the catacombs of Rome, to the Mitre of the Roman Catholic Archbishops, to the Fish Banner of Tipu Sultan and other Indian princes, and in modern days to the sacred fish which live between Alandi and the birth-place of Tukaram, the poet, and which are universally regarded by the villagers of that region as 'Matsyavatar', the incarnation of God. What an interesting paper that would be which traced from the dim past to the present day, the inviolable connection between the fish and sovereignty, both spiritual and temporal?

It behoves us also to keep a watchful eye on the daily and monthly journals for reports of cases or incidents suitable as a subject of discussion at our monthly meetings. At one time, it may be five lines on a case of human sacrifice which meet the eye, at another an account of a dagger-marriage in some distant village; but all such reports are of interest to us and to Anthropologists in Europe, and might be suitably noticed and included in our published reports, and in many cases, it will be possible to subsequently obtain more detailed information through the proper channels.

I fear, gentlemen, that I may have wearied you with the tale of our duties. But I am sure you realize that my one and only object is to render the present and future work of our Society worthy of its past and of the erudite men who founded it, and I will therefore conclude with a repetition of the words spoken by our first President at the first general meeting in April 1886. 'In diplomacy', said he, 'the well-known saying' 'Surtout point de Zèle' doubtless served often as a useful warning; but the motto of this Society must ever be 'Surtout de Zèle'.

Notes

1 Leith, Tyrrell.
2 Ibbetson, Denzil C.J., Presidential Address, Vol. II, No. 3, pp. 123–46.
3 Risley, H.H. On Anthropology in India, Vol. I, No. 6, pp. 343–52.
4 Reprinted from *JASB*, VII (6), February 1906: 429–38.
5 These Notes and References are provided by the Editors of this book.
6 Editors have changed the title of this paper: original title was 'Presidential Address'.
7 Alfred Haddon, 1903, (Title). The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. XXXIII, pp. (not found).

8 Patell, Bomanjee Byramjee, Suicides amongst the Parsees of Bombay, Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 14–21.
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10 John Campbell Oman, 1905, The Mystics, Ascetics and Saints of India, London: T. Fisher Unwin.
11 Fawcett, Fred, 1891, Women, who, through Dedication to a Deity, assume Masculine Privileges, Vol. II, No. 6, pp. 322–53.
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13 Wake.

9 The study of ethnography in the Bombay Presidency

R. E. Enthoven

It is now some years since I had the honour of addressing the Bombay Anthropological Society on the subject of the study of ethnology in the Presidency of Bombay. Since then, the small pile of green books that I then took the opportunity of laying before you has grown to considerable dimensions, and with their increase has come a considerable addition to our knowledge of the extremely divergent elements that form the population of this Province.[1] With your permission, I propose to touch this evening on one or two subjects of general interest which are intimately connected with the progress of the Ethnographic Survey of the Province.[2]

I would pause on the threshold of my remarks to refer briefly to the mass of unworked materials that are lying ready for the student in connection with the ethnology of this part of the Indian Empire. A few weeks ago, a professor of economics in a London University, in the course of an address to the public, had occasion to comment on the apathy of Indian students shown in their neglect of the vast mass of raw material available for the preparation of an original study of Indian economics. It occurred to me at the time that a similar charge would seem to lie in connection with the less material for, but to my mind infinitely more interesting, study of Indian ethnology. You have in this Presidency a variety of castes and tribes such as is unrivalled in any area of similar dimensions in the length and breadth of India. Earnest students have placed on record, since the days of those pioneers in ethnography, Buchanan and Dubois, down to the more recent articles in the Government Gazetteers and Census Reports, a mass of crude material that is only waiting for the student to be made the basis of interesting monographs on these divisions of our heterogeneous population. A short tour of enquiry in the area where the caste or tribe is represented would afford the means of verifying and adding to the information available in published records.

I would refer also in this connection, in particular, to the valuable notes on popular superstition which were accumulated in the course of a lengthy period of service in this Presidency by one of our most distinguished scholars, the late Sir James Campbell.[3] These notes await the merely mechanical labour of an intelligent volunteer who would undertake to

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index them adequately, and to supply a careful summary, to render them of use to European scholars. This work, indeed, would be one of special value inasmuch as many well-known writers in Europe on folklore and primitive custom are inclined to ignore our Indian experience in dealing with the questions of popular superstition. It would, to me, be a source of no little gratification if the coming year's record of the Bombay Anthropological Society were to include the production of a work on the folklore of the Presidency, based on these valuable materials hitherto neglected, if not entirely forgotten.

To those of you who are tempted to essay the task of dealing with our Indian ethnology, I would offer two words of advice. Avoid, as far as possible, the pitfall of a specialized terminology. The study of human actions and human beliefs should be one of general interest for the reading public. It should not therefore be made repulsive by the adoption of a special language. I refer for instance to certain writers of repute who are responsible for the coinage of such atrocities as 'asororgamy' or an 'anadelphogamous phratry'. Further, if you desire to interest the general reader, do not overload your writings with a mass of crude material gathered from all quarters of the habitable regions of the globe. A distinguished writer on anthropology has been accused of 'voiding the contents of his note books on the public', in giving us from his studies three volumes of primitive practice and superstition. A recent author of a work on the evolution of moral ideas, I refer, I need hardly explain, to Professor Westermarck, has similarly so overwhelmed us with instances of popular aversion to immoral practices that we rise from a perusal of his work in Borne doubt whether a writer who can so distress his readers can have any clear notion of morality at all.

I propose in the course of my remarks this afternoon to discuss, in so far as the limits of time and of your patience permit, some broad aspects of our local ethnology in the light of the experience gained during the past few years.

In the first place, I would like to refer briefly to certain attempts that have been made to deal with the castes and tribes of this Presidency on a racial basis. I refer in particular to the last Report on the Census of India and to a subsequent work by the same distinguished author on the Indian People. Leisure does not permit of my doing justice in the space of this address to the mass of material that has been marshaled in those two productions bearing on the alleged racial origin of the people of this Presidency. I may, however, be permitted to summarize the results as an attempt to trace, by anthropometry in which special weight is assigned to the cephalic and nasal index, the origin of the tribes and castes of Bombay. Sir Herbert Risley, you may remember, has put forward the novel conclusion that the Maráthás are of Scythian origin. He has labelled the greater part of our Presidency in his Ethnological Map of India as Scytho-Dravidian, meaning that the Scythians penetrated, presumably through Khándesh, to the Deccan and Southern

Marátha Country, where to some extent they mingled, with the local Dravidian population; but not sufficiently to lose their special characteristic of bracchy-cephalicism or round-heads. It does not appear to me certain that the Scythians were of a sufficiently homogeneous type to be given an identifying cephalic index; nor, if they were, that they can be said to have been bracchy-cephalic or round-headed. I am under the impression, from a close study of the Maráthás, including the allied occupational castes of similar origin, and from a comparison drawn between these and the admittedly aboriginal tribes of the Presidency, that the Maráthás are to a far larger extent indigenous than has been commonly supposed. Were there a Scythian element in their numbers, it seems hardly possible that it could be identified by anthropometrical observations at the present day. But I am further in doubt whether, if judged by the results, much weight can be attached to Sir Herbert Risley's measurements. These results are of so startling a description that I cannot, at present, admit their value as evidence of the racial origin of the tribes and castes of this Presidency. I will endeavour to illustrate this as briefly as possible by reading for your information the gradation of these castes and tribes, plated first by the test of the cephalic index, and next by that of nasal measurements.

Cephalic Index

1. Bhil	11. Támbat
2. Kátkari	12. Koli
3. High caste Maráthá	13. Shímpi
4. Lohár	14. Thákar
5. Bene-Israel	15. Maráthá
6. Jain Pancham	16. Vanjári
7. Deshasth Bráhman	17. Baniya
8. Mahár	18. Shenvi Bráhman
9. Konkanasth Bráhman	19. Nagar Bráhman
10. Kunbi	20. Parbhu

Nasal Index

1. Bhil	1. Jain Pancham
2. Thákar	2. Konkanasth Bráhman
3. Kátkari	3. Koli
4. Mahár	4. Parbhu
5. Támbat	5. Banya
6. Shímpi	6. Lohár
7. Maráthá	7. Shenvi Bráhman
8. Vanjári	8. Nagar Bráhman
9. Deshasth Bráhman	9. Bene-Israel
10. Kunbi	10. High caste Maráthá

Taking, in the first place, the order by cephalic index, we find the Bhil, Kátkari, Mahár, Koli, and Thákar, who are undoubtedly kindred types of aboriginal tribes, occupying places from the lowest in the scale to very near the top. The high caste Marátha, by which is presumably meant members of the superior Marátha families claiming Kshatriya rank, occupies the further end of the scale to the Maráthás, while the Deshasth and Chitpávan Brahmans form a sandwich with the Mahar just about the centre of the scale of measurement.

In regard to nasal index, to which Sir Herbert Risley attaches great importance, to the extent of asserting that in certain parts of India a man's social standing varies according to the breadth of his nose, the results seem little more promising. The proximity of the Koli to the Konkanasth Bráhman is as disconcerting as it is unexpected; nor can we understand how the Deshasth Bráhman should be next in standing to the Vanjári, a wandering tribe of very early origin. By the test of nasal index alone, the Maratha of the leading families stands at the top of the social scale, far ahead of the Deshasth Bráhman, who ranks with the Kunbi below the Lohár and the Koli.

Thus, a cursory study of these results seems to suggest that they amount to an admission of the bankruptcy of anthropometrical data in affording evidence of the origin of the tribes and castes of this Presidency. If the Kátkari and the higher Maráthás are to be found in company, and the Mahar is to jostle the Konkanasth Bráhman, obviously race has become strikingly severed from social standing, or else anthropometrical observations are no adequate test of racial origin. I think we may assume that they give us little assistance in tracing the units back to their earliest formation in India.

The experience gained in the course of carrying out the survey of the Presidency, apart from these anthropometric tests, seems to indicate that the mass of the population is in origin more homogeneous than is generally assumed, and that the tribes and castes differ mainly in the extent to which they have evolved from a primitive social organization which still characterizes the lower units, and of which traces are still visible, as survivals, in the higher.

I will endeavour to illustrate this process in some detail; the most primitive of the tribes and castes in the Bombay Presidency appear to be those which to the present day are organized on a system of totemistic divisions. The divisions are known as *balis* in the Kánarese portions of the provinces, where they are most common.

The term *bali*, a Kanarese word corresponding to *bari* in Tamil and *bedagu* in Telegu, means an exogamous totemistic section, that is to say, a section of a caste or tribe worshipping a totem and strictly prohibiting marriage between those who have the same totem. The word is also used to designate the totem. The term is derived from an old Kánarese word meaning (1) way, road; (2) place, spot; (3) vicinity, nearness, company;

(4) way, order; and (5) race or lineage. It also means the navel. It is in use among the cultivating, fishing, and forest tribes and castes of the Kánarese tracts of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies and of the Mysore State. A *bali* is thus the name of an exogamous section. It may be named after some well-known animal, fish, bird, tree, fruit, or flower. The following are common names of *balis* in the districts referred to: elephant, elk, spotted deer, hog deer, mouse deer, wolf, pig, monkey, goat, porcupine, tortoise, scorpion, the *nágchampa* (*Mesua ferrea*), turmeric, the screw pine (*Pandamus odoratissimus*), the bonne tree (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), the neral (*Eugenia jambolana*), the soapnut (*Acacia concinna*), and many other local trees and shrubs.

It is noteworthy that the section named after one of these *balis*, not only worships the animal or object after which it is named, but also obeys strict rules framed to protect the animal or object from injury. Thus, a member of the elephant section may not wear ornaments of ivory, a woman of the *nágchampa* section must never wear the flowers of the *Mesua ferrea*, and turmeric must not be used in the marriage ceremonies of the turmeric section, though commonly applied to the bride and bridegroom in the weddings of many Indian castes. The mouse deer section will not kill the mouse deer, and the screw pine section will not cut the branches, pluck the leaves, or even sit in the shade of the screw pine. The *bali*, or totem, of these primitive people, or an image of the same in stone or wood, is usually to be found installed in a rude temple near the village site. Ordinarily, the temple is a mere thatched shed of mud walls surrounded by small mud wall enclosure. Here will be found the image of an elk or a branch of the tree representing the object from which the *bali* takes its name. To this, coconuts and other suitable offerings are constantly brought, with the object of securing its favours and protection. At certain seasons the members of the section assemble from the surrounding villages, and make special offerings under the guidance of the caste priest. It is not easy to induce these primitive people to describe their *balis* in reply to enquiries. The offspring of parents who, under the system described earlier, must be members of different *balis*, is sometimes allotted to the *bali* of the father, in other cases, of the mother. The practice varies with different tribes. It is probable that the earliest practice was to trace the *bali* through the mother, and that this system is gradually being supplanted by the later custom of tracing descent through the father.

It is not my intention to discuss this afternoon the various theories that have been advanced regarding the probable origin of a totemistic system of this description. Much time and labour have been devoted to observing the Australian aborigines in this connection. A German Missionary among the Arunta, Herr Strehlow, has discovered an interesting belief among the women of that tribe that the totem, as a spirit power, is the real father of the infant that she bears, thus to some extent confirming a theory of this description put forward by the well-known writer on folklore and primitive

custom, Mr. Frazer. For my purpose today, I merely ask you to accept the fact that our most primitive people for the most part are organized on a totemistic basis.

Next to these tribes and castes worshipping trees, plants, animals and other natural objects as the progenitors of their numerous family stocks, we find a large number of tribes and castes who worship the *panchpálvi* in circumstances that indicate its intimate connection with their marriage system. The *panchpálvi* consists ordinarily of the leaves of five trees: commonly the *pipal*, *banyan, bel* (*Aegle marmelos*), the *rui* (*Calotropis gigantean*) and the *shami* (*Prosopis spicigera*). It is frequently found that one of these five trees is regarded with special reverence by a family stock, who will not injure it, or make use of it, in any way, thus suggesting that the *panchpálvi* is a combination of five originally separate totems. The *panchpálvi* is known as a *devak*.

Now for a long time, I have been puzzled at the constant recurrence of this precise number of' five in the composite *devak* or totem. The evolution of composite totems would be a natural and obvious process in the progress of primitive tribes towards greater social unity. But some reason is required for the fusion of totems to be invariably fixed at the number five. Recent research seems to throw some light on the probable origin of these *panchpálvi*. In the course of enquiries, made in the southern portion of this Presidency, I have found it a common practice to keep and worship in the village temples the *vansh* or five ancestors of the village community depicted on a carved tablet. You will see some excellent specimens of these tablets in the Sávantvádi Museum. I have observed them in the temples of the forest villages in North Kánara. The parallel between the five figures in these tablets and the five leaves in the *panchpálvi* is, at least, suggestive. I advance as a purely tentative theory to be corroborated, I trust, by the results of further research, that the worship of the five ancestors or *vansh* is similar to the worship of the *panchpálvi* or five totems and that the origin is identical, that is, the worship and propitiation of the progenitor of family stocks in human or totemistic form. Five, no doubt, with very primitive people who cannot count, is merely an equivalent, for many, the fingers of the hand representing the limit of their power of enumeration. Thus, in their early history, tribes emerging from a nomadic life in the forest may secure the continued propitiation of their ancestors which plays so large a part in primitive religion, by the practice of worshipping the *vansh* or the *panchpálvi*. If this is correct, the existence in a caste or tribe of the worship of the *panchpálvi* may be taken as an indication of the previous existence of totemistic divisions, such as I have just described to you in my account of *balis*.

Now, both the combined totems and the *vansh* are a step forward on the plane of social evolution, the *vansh* being of greater significance than the former was, inasmuch as it substitutes human beings for the mythical totem progenitors. Proceeding along the line of development we find that more

advanced tribes base their organization on the lines of *kuls* of family stock named after men. The 96 *kuls* of the Maráthás are well known to you. With the adoption of clan names, the totems slide into oblivion, and we should not know in the majority of cases that they had ever existed were it not for the constant occurrence of a *devak* ceremony in the marriage rites of so many social units. This *devak* has frequently long ceased to regulate the selection of brides by excluding those of the totem division. It is more frequently a *panchpálvi* than a single object. It seems, however, to indicate in no faint outline the progress of evolution that the tribe has undergone. The *devak,* that is, a tree, plant or natural object, such as the peacock's feather or a sword, or several of these together, is worshipped at the time of marriage, and often on entering a newly built residence for the first time. It is most obviously accounted for as a survival from a time when each family stock possessed its separate *devak* and refused intermarriage with those owning the same one, just as later they will not permit intermarriage between members of the same family or *kul*.

Looking further, we shall find the *kul* or family stock named after ancestors, combining with a single *gotra* of a Bráhmanic origin which curiously enough seems to take the name of Káshyapa on each occasion. Why this *rishi* has been so honoured I do not profess to understand. He stands at the gate of the highest social levels where the orthodox system of *gotras* is as indispensable as the sacred thread. Ancestors, spirits, natural objects, and animals are all inextricably connected in the minds of primitive people. We must be careful to avoid the common error of attributing to their thoughts the logical processes and consistency of more developed intelligences. But it is not difficult to trace throughout the history of social evolution in this Presidency the progress from ancestor worship in the guise of plants, trees, and animals to a system of family stocks where the human progenitor has displaced the totem of the earlier stages, to be himself replaced in time by the eponymous *rishi* of a *gotra*. The key, therefore, to much that we require to know in an ethnographical enquiry, is frequently to be found in the nature of the marriage groups which form our social unit.

The unit itself presents a different problem. Caste and tribe are elusive expressions, which seem incapable of accurate delimitation. We know as a matter of everyday observance that occupation, language, religion, and domicile tend to form the boundaries to an equal degree. A classification so formed must inevitably tend to cross-divisions of a confusing nature such as I have drawn attention to in the chapter on caste and tribe in the last Census Report of this Presidency. Cases are not rare of social units based on a system of marriage only into families with which marriages have been contracted during the last seven generations. It is very difficult to deal clearly in descriptive articles with amorphous entities of this description. Clearly, the chief task of the ethnographical survey is to exhibit with as much defined an outline as circumstances will permit the castes and tribes

under their double aspect of groups marrying outside their section but contained in a broader group within which marriage is compulsory.

The question why society is contained within these limits, that is to say, why in almost all cases men make for themselves small units with which they may not intermarry and combine these into larger units within which they must marry, opens up too wide a field of speculation for me to enter on this afternoon. I would like, however, to invite your attention to a conclusion of Charles Darwin's that, in the animal kingdom, too great a similarity on the one hand, and too great a variety on the other, are equally a bar to fertile unions. There appears to me here a striking parallel between these limits of fertile union and the constitution of the smaller and the larger units that make up our castes and tribes. It may be possible that the natural limitations which Darwin has indicated as governing fertile unions in the animal kingdom, express themselves in the human race in the laws of exogamy and endogamy that our ethnographical records are classifying in the search for an ultimate explanation. The fundamental natural tendencies of the human race vary but little wherever we look for them; but the form in which they express themselves varies greatly. The worship, largely with the object of propitiation, of some power or powers superior to the human will takes the form of many religions and an endlessly varying ritual. But in essence it is merely a symptom of the need of human beings for extraneous guidance and support, of the origin of which they are but dimly conscious.

The laws of exogamy and endogamy, that is, of marrying without the group of kindred, real or fictitious, and within the group of same common interest, whether occupation, language, race, domicile, or religion, are dictated by influences of which the origin is not traced; but in their varying forms they may be only an expression of a fundamental law of generation and survival.

Here, gentlemen, I must conclude these general remarks on the subject which I have chosen. If they have no further value, they may help to convince you of the scope and the necessity that exists for the labours of voluntary workers in the field of Indian ethnography. A Persian poet, little known to fame, a precursor of the great Omar Khayyam, has described mankind happily as the 'crooked alphabet of God'. In attempting to decipher that alphabet in some of its less common combinations, there is to be found a prospect of results worthy of the best efforts which this Society can devote to such a task.

Notes

1 In this context, see Enthoven, R. E. "Introductory Note on Ethnographic Survey", *JASB*, VI (7): 330-46. 364–65. [Editors]
2 Reprinted from *JASB*, VIII (6) February 1909: 433–45.
3 In this context, see Enthoven, R. E. "Campbell's Notes on the Spirit Basis of Beliefs and Customs", *JASB*, IX (3): 188–98. [Editors]

10 The Ethnographical Survey of India

R. E. Enthoven

A recent event of interest to all students of Indian ethnography, that is, the publication of Volume I of the *Tribes and Castes of Mysore* by Diwan Bahadur L.K. Ananta Krishna Iyer, seems to bring to its termination the great work planned by the late Sir Herbert Risley as Census Commissioner for India in 1901. This consisted of a systematic investigation, on the lines of a questionnaire drawn up by experts, of the tribes and castes of eight major provinces of India, to which were added certain Indian States.[1]

Tribes and castes volumes

It will be recalled that so long ago as 1901 there were already available works on the tribes and castes of Bengal by Risley himself and of the United Provinces by Dr Crooke, each in four volumes; and that these were reinforced not long after by Thurston's seven volumes on the tribes and castes of Mysore. In the case of Bombay, the distinguished compiler of the Bombay District Gazetteer, the late Sir James Campbell, had included in each district volume a very full study of the local population; so that it remained only for the writer of this article, as Superintendent of the Ethnographic Survey of Bombay, to republish these accounts of a Presidency, instead of a District basis; and to add such additional material as had become later available in the course of supplementary enquiries. Census statistics based on the 1901 enumeration were added, and the complete work in these volumes was available by 1920. Another ex-Census Superintendent, H.A. Rose, published in one volume an account of the Punjab population. During the War, a Central Province Indian Civilian, R.V. Russell, assisted by Rai Bahadur Hira Lal, completed an admirable study of the Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, in four volumes. The tragic death of Russell in a submarine disaster on his way to India added one more to the deplorable tale of valuable lives lost during the Great War; though fortunately Russell's excellent work was completed and published before his untimely end.

The lines on which these comprehensive works were drawn up being not entirely adaptable to the conditions of the North Eastern frontier

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tribes, it was found preferable to deal with these in the form of separate works or monographs; and in this way, we have from experts such as Hutton, Mills, and others, a number of admirable studies of the Nagas, Meithis, Shans, and others who offer specially interesting materials to the ethnographer owing to their fondness for head hunting and other such primitive practices. Among the Indian States, Hyderabad, Cochin, and Mysore have produced works drawn up on the lines originally laid down by Risley. The first of these states was entrusted to the able hands of Syed Suraj al Hassan, with certain expert assistants. Cochin and Mysore were particularly fortunate in falling to Diwan Bahadur L.K. Ananta Krishna Iyer. After completing an interesting volume on the population of the State of Cochin, this expert was called on to take over the materials which the late Mr. H.V. Nanjundaya had collected in Mysore before his untimely death left the work of publication to be undertaken by others. They could not have fallen into more capable hands. Commencing in 1925, Mr. Ananta Krishna Iyer has issued three volumes giving the tribes and castes in alphabetical order, following these up with Vol. I, which has only recently appeared. This contains a summary of the information in the preceding volumes, with a few additional caste entries. It is also furnished with short introductions written by Dr. Marret and the late Professor Sylvain Lévi, as well as an important contribution by Baron von Eickstedt.

It will be seen that students are now happily in the position to benefit by the perusal of a very considerable mass of information from all parts of India, enabling them to pursue their enquiries into tribal and caste custom over a very wide area. Broadly speaking, in each case they may expect to find the name of the tribe or caste with its synonyms, the sub-divisions, both endogamous and exogamous, the birth, marriage, and funeral customs, the distribution by area, the common occupation, and the traditional origin. Some authors have rather overlooked the importance of giving synonyms for each entry, thus creating a risk of confusion such as arose in 1891, in the Bombay Presidency, when the Census Report showed Chitpavan and Konkanasth Brahmans as separate castes. In these works synonyms, with cross-references, are essential. Thus, for example, a student of Southern India interested in the Washerman caste requires guiding from Agasa to Asaga and thence to Madival, or he may fail to find what he is in search of. The omission of cross-references to synonyms deprives a book of much of its value.

It is not my purpose, in this brief notice of the Ethnographical Survey results, to attempt to give a picture of the population of India drawn from the admirable records which are now available for that purpose, owing to Risley's insight, interest, and initiative. Such a summary would far exceed the possible limits of an article of this description. It is clear, however, that the time has arrived when an effort should be made to combine those results into a work dealing with India *as a whole*. British administration

and the course of history has divided India into Provinces and States; but these are obviously not by any means co-terminous with tribe and caste limits. An abridged work on all tribes and castes which have been dealt with in the pages of the Survey, showing the distribution by Province and State, but dealing with the people in each of the largest endogamous divisions as a whole, would be of the greatest value. Is it too much to trust that one of the numerous Societies in India concerned with matters of anthropological interest should take this work in hand, and endeavour to secure both a suitable editor and the necessary financial assistance? It is surely a task well worthy of the attention of Indian scholars, who are now more numerous, better trained in such studies, and more abundantly furnished with the necessary materials than at any previous period in history.

For such an enterprise the guidance and advice of a Risley, a Crooke, a Thurston or a Russell is unfortunately no longer available. One or two directors of the Ethnographical Survey are, however, still accessible. They would doubtless be ready to assist in such an undertaking to the best of their capacity.

Anthropometrical observations

There are two specially interesting features of the Survey results on which I desire to make some brief comments. In the first place, it is important to note the extent to which anthropometrical observations have so far been able to throw light on the racial origins of Indian tribes and castes; and second, it seems desirable to invite attention to the valuable additions to the previous evidence of the existence of an early widespread system of totemism which are furnished by a study of the more recent survey records.

To deal first with anthropometrical observations: much ground has been covered since Risley issued his classification of the population of India based on a series of measurements recorded for the most part by his assistant, the late Rai Bahadur B.A. Gupte and one or two others working with him. The results will be found in *The People of India*. They have unfortunately signally failed to carry conviction. Probably a want of adequate technical training in the measuring staff, as combined with the very inadequate number of subjects selected for measurement in the case of each type examined, were the chief causes of the unsatisfactory nature of Risley's elaborate and novel conclusions. It is not possible to accept the discovery of the Scythian invaders (who are held to be the Maratha population of the Deccan) as established either by the anthropometrical data or the general comparison of Scythian and Maratha peculiarities offered by Risley in support of his original and very striking assertions. In Vol. I of *Tribes and Castes of Bombay* (*vide* Introduction, pp. XIV, XV) it is shown that Risley's classification by Cephalic and Nasal index brings the Mahar and the

Brahman into such close contact that the basis of the classification must obviously remain highly suspect.

There is a certain element of truth in the generalization of this bold theorist who once committed himself to the statement that in India a man's social status varies inversely with his nasal index; but scholars have generally condemned the results of Risley's work in this direction as being neither scientifically accurate nor in accordance with obvious facts.

Thurston, in his work on Madras, has contributed some very useful measurements for the population of that area. The results are clearly exposed in graphic form, and offer a summary of the leading types in Southern India, the value of which has not so far been questioned.

In the Census of India for 1931, Vol. I, Part III, Dr Hutton presents a mass of anthropometrical data gathered by Dr. Guha. This certainly deserves very careful study and is still engaging the attention of experts. Unfortunately, Dr. Guha's method presents considerable difficulty to the ordinary reader, owing to its very intricate mathematical form of presentation. We are given to understand, at the beginning of Dr. Guha's report that 'racial discrimination must be based on the entire somatic constitution of peoples, especially when the data are limited to a few characters… A simple numerical measure of all the differences is therefore required to show the degree of resemblance or divergence of two races or tribes compared'.

The learned anthropologist then proceeds to give us his formula for this 'co-efficient of racial resemblance' which is as[2]:

$$50 \times \frac{\bar{n}_s + \bar{n}^1{}_s}{\bar{n}_s \times \bar{n}^1{}_s} \times S\left\{ \frac{1}{M} \cdot \frac{n_s\, n^1{}_s}{n_s + n^1{}_s} \times \frac{(m_s - m^1{}_s)^2}{\sigma^2{}_s} \right\} - 1 + \frac{1}{M}$$

$$\pm 50 \times \frac{\bar{n}_s \quad \bar{n}^1{}_s}{\bar{n}_s \quad \bar{n}^1{}_s} \times .67449 \sqrt{\frac{2}{M}\left(1 - \frac{1}{M}\right)}$$

This is not exactly a simple formula for those who are not expert mathematicians; and is not likely to encourage observers to check the results of Dr Guha's numerous anthropometric data.

Those who are brave enough to face this new method of presenting the results of investigation must deal with Dr Guha's pages as best they can. It is noteworthy that he dismisses somewhat summarily the work and conclusions of a rival investigator, Professor von Eickstedt, which are published in Vol. I of *Mysore Tribes and Castes*, and which, though novel in their terminology and classification, seem to be worthy of more respectful treatment. Baron von Eickstedt, dealing in some detail with the racial invasions of India in the past, and after allotting due consideration to the effects of occupation and environment, presents the reader with an entirely new classification of the population for which he provides some anthropological data. It is contended by Professor Eickstedt that the use of the terms Aryan, Dravidian, and Kolarian by previous writers on

Indian racial elements is apt to confuse the not necessarily co-extensive elements of language and race. He therefore introduces the new terms of Veddid, Melanid, and Indid for his own classification, and adds certain sub-heads to each of these, that is, Gondid, Malid, Kolid, and so on. With certain reservations, it may be said that there seems to be very little difference between Veddid and Kolarian, Melanid and Dravidian, or Indid and Aryan, so far as the types intended to be designated by these terms are concerned.

Veddid, according to the Professor, is a racial type found in the Ceylon Yedda, which is linked up with the Veddans of Southern India, the Bedar or Berad, and so, of course, ultimately with the Ramoshi of the Deccan, who is easily identifiable as the Bedar by the results of recent research. The new term Indid clearly stands for the early invaders of India through the North-West passes, which have hitherto been known conveniently, if not scientifically, as the Aryans. Whether the Melanid or black people, who seem to suggest the Dravidians, as until recently this type was called, should really be held to be entirely distinct in origin from the Veddid is a point on which much more evidence is required than has hitherto been forthcoming. If we once eliminate the conceptions based on the distinction between the Dravidian and Kolarian languages, we find an undercurrent of suggestion that the racial types differing from the Aryan invaders are not necessarily of different origin.

It may, however, be frankly admitted that the results of anthropometrical observations recorded in India up to date have been on the whole disappointing; Dr Guha has endeavoured to secure fresh light on racial origins by confining his researches to the upper and lower strata of society where racial mixture has presumably been less common than in the intermediate groups. The conclusion which many scholars are apt to arrive at, after considering the data recorded in this connection, is that, on the whole, more progress is likely to be made in tracing racial origins in India from a careful comparison and examination of the contents of heads rather than by measuring their outsides.

Totemism

Thus, as an illustration, I would draw attention to the increasing volume of evidence which deals with the survival of a system of totemism in various parts of India. The Aryan-speaking invaders of India were not organized on any basis of animal or plant exogamous division. We should be justified in attributing to the Australasian connection such indications as are still available of a former totem system; and the evidence of such survivals is steadily being added to. On pp. 106–11 of Vol. LXI of the *Indian Antiquary*, students of this subject will find a detailed list of 226 animals, plants, fruits, and other objects which exist as totems among the various divisions of the Marathas. So far as I am aware, no such complete

information is available in the case of any other tribe or caste, but the records of the Ethnographical Survey do contain many valuable lists of totems selected as examples in the case of numerous divisions of the population. The Madras and Mysore records are notably rich in such references. These, however, would be of greater value for purposes of comparison, if care were taken to give the botanical equivalent in all cases of the vernacular names, usually local, recorded for trees, plants and fruits. A very cursory study yields abundant evidence of the striking similarity between widely distant parts of India in respect to the articles and objects selected for totem worship.

Such as they are, these totems, known in the south of the peninsula as *devaks, balis*, or *bedagus,* in many cases now merely furnish a name for a tribal or caste division without in any way necessarily regulating the intermarriage of the section to which they are attached. But again, very frequently the system is found in full vigour, in which case the following features are invariably noticeable:

1. The tree, plant, fruit, animal, or other object is held in special reverence by the section members.
2. It may not be cut, injured in any way, or used for non-religious purposes.
3. It attains special importance on the occasions of (a) marriage; (b) the occupation of a new house; (c) the annual setting up of the threshing floor, and the section is strictly exogamous.

It has been noted as a special significance that, generally speaking, trees held in reverence as totems are those capable of yielding good timber, fruit or products of medicinal value. It was this aspect of totems which led the late Sir James Campbell to class them as 'marriage guardians' on the assumption that they derived their importance from their power to ward off evil influences. More systematic investigation of this subject promises results of great value.

The object of this paper – which has necessarily only skimmed over the surface of the interesting matter with which it endeavours to deal, owing to reasons of space – is therefore to press for the undertaking, in some reasonably concise form, of a compilation dealing with the results now available in the volumes of the Ethnographical Survey. Risley's band of workers is much reduced by losses; but the advice of some who remain, if not their active assistance, is still available. The cost of such a work should not be too formidable for a country with India's history and traditions of scholarship. Short of a work of this description, valuable results could be anticipated from a compilation of all the data available in regard to the prevalence of totemistic survivals. Here, perhaps, some additional research of a supplementary nature might be needed; but the compilation, in coordination with the anthropometrical data now on record, should prove a

safer guide to racial origin than mere measurements not so collated with primitive custom.

I trust that somewhere these suggestions may bear valuable fruit.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, Golden Jubilee, January 1937: 54–63.
2 See *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Part III, p. vii.

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Part III

Theoretical analysis of ethnographic facts

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11 Totem theories

R. E. Enthoven

The literature on the subject of the origin and nature of totems grows apace. Tylor, Crawley, Lang, and McLennan, to mention only a few of the well-known writers who have dealt with this subject, have given us theories; Spencer and Gillan, have compiled an immense mass of materials illustrating present day practices in Australia; and lately, we have had four volumes from the pen of Professor J.G. Frazer, dealing exhaustively with the whole subject. Professor Frazer has held several theories from time to time regarding the probable nature and origin of totem worship, all of which he has now discarded in favour of a new explanation, which is described and criticized by the writer of an article in a recent number of the *Quarterly Review*.[1,2]

In my Presidential Address for 1909, I referred[3] to an interesting belief discovered by a German Missionary, Herr Strehlow, among the women of the Arunta tribe in Australia that the totem, as a spirit power, is the real father of the spirit that is born of the body. Further enquiries by Messrs. Spender Bud Gillan appear to have borne out the correctness of this observation. Professor Frazer bases his latest theory on this fact; according to him, primitive men and women have no conception of the connection between sexual union and pregnancy. When the woman becomes conscious of her condition, she assumes the entry of the totem spirit residing in the locality where she first becomes consciously pregnant. The child, when born, is therefore held to be of the totem concerned. At this stage, the totem of the offspring would not, except by mere coincidence, be the same as that of either parent; and the children of the same mother would have different totems.

I propose to discuss briefly how far our knowledge of totems in the Bombay Presidency will tend to show that Professor Frazer's theory is also of local application. I have described, in my article mentioned earlier, the totem divisions of certain tribes and castes in North Kanara. My notes have been recently amplified by the results of Mr. J.A. Saldanha's research.[4]

Clearly, the stage of belief attained by these tribes and castes is considerably in advance of that which forms the basis of Professor Frazer's conclusions. In Kanara, the children take their totem either from their

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mother or their father. There is not much in this practice to suggest that the offspring was originally attributed to the totem, though it is of course quite conceivable that such a belief developed into a knowledge of the reality of motherhood, and later to the recognition of paternity. Sir James Campbell, who in his notes on the Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom classes the Mārathā *devaks* with the *balis* of Kanara, considered that these were both guardian spirits, commonly regarded as the ancestor or head of the house. The inclusion of such articles as gold, lime, and the common axe among totems seems to make the ancestor theory somewhat improbable, though not impossible. It must however be admitted in its favour that it closely follows the conclusions of Herbert Spenser in his *Principles of Sociology*.

A distinction must be drawn between the description of a *devaks* as an ancestor, meaning, as Campbell certainly meant, the disembodied spirit of a member of the family, and the most recent explanation of a totem as a spirit which becomes incarnate as the offspring of a pregnant woman. The process connecting human lives with totems seems strangely enough to have become inverted in the two cases. The Campbell-Spenser explanation starts with human being who on death becomes a disembodied spirit and a 'guardian', in spirit form, of the descendants whom he, or maybe she, leaves behind. On the other hand, Professor Frazer's totem is in the first instance a disembodied spirit, or at least a spirit animating some animal, plant, and so on, and subsequently, by passing into the woman at pregnancy, becomes the cause of a new life, that is, the totem of the infant. If we are careful in dealing with the processes of primitive thought, we should be prepared to admit that both ideas might well be held simultaneously. In primitive man, we should not look for either consistency or any orderly progress from cause to effect. Inconsistent and illogical notions should in reality be the hall-mark of primitive beliefs. It is at the same time a striking fact that a totem has been explained by one school of students to be a disembodied ancestor or spirit-guardian, and by another and later body of investigators to be the cause of life in the embryo.

Turning once more to the results of our local investigations into totems, in the shape of *balis* and *devaks*, it is noteworthy that the object which constitutes the *bali* or *devak*, be it a tree, plant, animal, or other object, has a special significance, apart from its connection with marriage as illustrated by the prohibition of unions between those owning a common *devaks*. I have referred in my Presidential address of 1909[5] to the fact that the totem is worshipped at the time of a wedding celebration and on entering a new dwelling house for the first time. The evidence on this point is convincing. It seems reasonable to infer from this practice that our Bombay tribes and castes look on the totem primarily as a guardian spirit, as suggested by Campbell. Further, since totems regulate marriage, there is much reason for holding them to stand in the elation of ancestors to their respective worshippers. Certainly where totem worship is found in full vigour in Bombay, it is invariably connected with a system of exogamy based thereon. In its

decay, as I have endeavoured to show, the connection with marriage becomes less marked, and the five-membered 'group-totem' supersedes the individual totem, to be itself replaced in due course by a human ancestor as the regulator of marriage unions.

There are two points connected with totems in this Presidency that would probably richly repay further investigation. In certain parts of North Kanara, the white ant heap or cathedral-shaped earthen structure is worshipped by the village people, who have erected temples over these ant heaps, and make them regular offerings. The temples and mode of worship resemble those found in connection with well-known *balis*, such as that of the elk or *kadve* near Karwar. It would be of great interest if careful enquiries disclosed evidence that the white ant heap is a common *bali* in North Kanara, as seems probable from the information already forthcoming.

Again, it has been reported from South Kanara that members of different local tribes and castes who worship the same *bali*, consider that a close connection exists between them. This is *prima facie* an entirely new feature of the *bali* or totem system, and its full significance cannot be gauged without further detailed investigation, I would sum up these remarks in the statement that research into the totem systems of the Bombay Presidency has hitherto revealed no indication that totems are due to ignorance of the part played by sexual union in child-bearing. On the contrary, the totem seems to partake more of the nature of an ancestor or guardian spirit, as supposed by Campbell, than to be the source of life in the human embryo. Much scope for enquiry and research undoubtedly remains; and it would be imprudent to hold any theory disproved on the results of our investigations up to the present. But clearly, there is so far no confirmation forthcoming, in the field open to local investigations, of the theory which Professor Frazer would now adopt as an explanation of the origin of totems and totem worship.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, SJ, August 1911: 63–66.
2 "Primitive Man", by Cloud. *Quarterly Review*, July 1911.
3 *Journal* of the Anthropol. Society of Bombay, Vol. viii, No. 6, p. 440.
4 *Journal* of Anthropo. Society of Bombay, Vol. viii, No. 5, p. 382.
5 *Journal* of Anthropo. Society of Bombay, Vol. viii, Part 6, p. 442.

12 Is the retention of the term 'Animism' as a main religion head in our census tables justified?

L. J. Sedgwick

The following paper is an extract from the Census Report, now in draft form. As the subject dealt with in the extract is a question in Comparative Religion, I thought that the Anthropological Society would perhaps care to hear the extract and discuss the views stated therein. The paper is enriched by a contribution from the pen of the Rev. Enok Hedberg, D. Litt., of Dhanora, West Khandesh, who has probably a more intimate knowledge of the Bhils than any other European now in India.[1]

Extract from draft of census report

The term Animism was invented by Tylor as a general term suitable to the primitive religions of all savage peoples, and was chosen on the assumption that (in the words of a later writer) all such peoples believed in 'the presence on earth of a shadowy crowd of powerful and malevolent beings, who usually have a local habitation in a hill, stream, or patch of primeval forest and who interest themselves in the affairs of men'.[2] Since the time of Tylor, much research has been done among savage and primitive peoples, and it has been found that belief in spirits or entities dwelling in natural objects is by no means the most primitive of beliefs. The most primitive savage does not distinguish between spirit and matter. The danger from the tree is not danger from the tree-spirit, but simply from the tree itself, which, as an object that sways about and makes a noise, is necessarily possessed of a vague potency, a 'mana' (to use a Polynesian word that has become the technical term among Anthropologists for the primitive idea outlined earlier). Nor does he distinguish natural from artificial objects. The attitude of such peoples is that of the child, who, when it knocks its leg against a chair, exclaims 'naughty chair!' and kicks it. When we hang up over our door a horse-shoe to bring luck, we are unconsciously reverting to the most primitive savage beliefs. The belief in 'mana' of natural and artificial objects has been called by some writers 'Animatism', though this word is perhaps not generally accepted. This Animatism can and does, in the case of some peoples, continue to exist side by side with a belief in spirits and even Gods. The extent to which it exists among the jungle tribes of this Presidency,

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either by itself or in combination with Animism or other forms of primitive religion is possibly not fully known. A description of some of the beliefs and practices of the Bhils was given by Mr. Enthoven on pp. 63–5 of the Report of 1901.

The condition of the religious mentality of the Bhils as presented by Mr. Enthoven reveals a stage of religious development considerably beyond Animatism. Thus, 'They worship female deities known as Mátás, represented by symbols rather than images, by wooden posts, earthen pots, toy horses, wicker baskets, and winnowing fans'. Originally, perhaps the wicker basket was an animated and potent object, possessed of 'mana'. Now, it has become the symbol of one of the Earth Mothers, a form of worship common to many and various peoples, and particularly a feature of Dravidian cults. Ancestor worship also plays a conspicuous part; and various large and formidable objects, such as the tiger, big trees, large and irregular-shaped stones, are treated as godlings.

Now, it will be noticed that whereas in almost all other returns the enumerator is bound to accept the reply of the individual, except in so far that he may explain to him what is wanted, should he think that the question has been misunderstood, in the case of Animism, however, the enumerator is left to decide whether any member of a jungle tribe is a Hindu or an Animist. It is necessarily a matter of doubt whether a Bhil is accepted as a Hindu by the villagers, and it would be quite impossible for any enumerator to call the villagers together and question them as to the religious status of every Bhil. Consequently, it is almost a matter of luck what the numbers returned as Animists will be. To the chance of being returned or not returned as such by an enumerator is to be added the chance of being classified or not classified as such on the ground of caste by the head of the Abstraction office. In 1911, Mr. Gait, the Census Commissioner when visiting this Presidency on tour, converted 70,000 Bhils in Reva Kantha from Hindus to Animists by a stroke of the pen. At this Census, it was my intention that the Schedules themselves should decide; that is to say, that the caprice of the enumerator should not be further complicated by idiosyncrasies of the Abstraction officers. But this was not always fully understood by the latter, and in some cases classification was carried out irrespective of what was entered on the schedules.

But even, if we eliminate the opinion of the Abstraction officer and rely on the opinions of the enumerators alone, there is little hope of consistency, Census to Census, in our statistics. Mr. Enthoven well pointed out that when the Bhil worships a big tree or a stone, he is only doing what the Hindu of the plains does, when he girds the *pipal* tree with the sacred thread or paints red lead on a *Lingam* stone. Moreover, Hinduism of to-day is not the Vedic religion; nor is it the Puranic religion; nor is it the philosophical pantheism of the highly educated Brahman. It is a vast mixture, in which the Vedic worship of the great forces of nature, the Puranic *avatars*, the philosophical doctrine of *karma*, and – be it noted – the pre-Aryan's

reverence of trees, stones, animals, and tribal *totems* are inextricably intermingled. Consequently, most enumerators would regard the Bhil, whose personal objects of worship are his ancestors, a particular tree, a particular stone, the boundary god, the small-pox mother, and a winnowing fan, as no less a Hindu than the Kunbi of his own village, who worships his ancestors, the *pipal* tree, the circle of stones known as *Vetala* the boundary deity, the small-pox mother, and a plough, even though the latter may he told *Puranic* stories a few times a year by his *guru*, have some vague ideas of the doctrine of *karma*, and employ a Brahman to perform his ceremonies. The old question 'What is a Hindu?' is one which has been discussed in full many times, and the reader is referred in particular to Mr. Gait's discussion on pp. 115–7 of the Indian Census report of 1911. The latest definition is given by Mr Farquhar,[3] who makes Hinduism depend on 'birth and conformity'. By birth, he means birth into one of the recognized Hindu castes. But if some Bhils are Hindus, then Bhil is a recognized Hindu caste. It is particularly to be noted that a Bhil does not enter any new caste when he gradually passes into a Hindu and worships *Puranic* gods.

In pointing out, as has been hinted earlier, that the Hinduism of the highly educated Brahman is something totally distinct from the Hinduism of the lower strata of Hindu society, it is not intended to imply that this variation is confined to this one religion. The Christianity, and especially the eschatology, of a Browning is equally far removed from the Christianity of a devout old agricultural labourer; and the reverence paid to the Virgin by a high class French lady is equally far removed from the Mariolatry of the Marseilles fish-woman. In some parts of the world, and particularly in South America, there are Christian cults which are only by the laxest use of the term classifiable as Christian at all. This being so, and the Jungle tribes being, as it were, non-*Puranised* Hindus, (one cannot use the term 'primitive Hindus', since Hinduism is not derived from the pre-Aryan cults, but has absorbed them), no justification for continuing to treat Animism as a distinct religion exists, *unless we can obtain figures which show rational changes from Census to Census*. How far this is from being the case is shown by the following Table, in which are shown the numbers recorded as Animists from the chief Animistic tracts during four successive Censuses (Table 12.1).

But the above figures do not tell us all that we require to know. Throughout the whole of the discussion, I have referred exclusively to Bhils. That is because the Animist figures are mainly composed of that caste. It is important, however, for a full consideration of the question to know exactly what other castes are included and to what extent. The following table shows the castes included (Table 12.2).

One of the interesting points brought out by the Table 12.2 is the great divergence between different districts in the variety of castes brought under the term Animist. Thus, Reva Kantha and the Panch Mahals between them return Animists under 19 different castes, Surat and Surat Agency 14,

Table 12.1 Recorded Numbers of Animists in Certain Areas – 1891 to 1921

Area	*1891*	*1901*	*1911*	*1921*	
Broach	17,805	25,294	38,860	2,432	
Panch Mahals	11,086	26,523	22,475	9,793	
Surat District	...	6,394	4,051	34,397	
{Khandesh East †Khandesh West}	86,688	11,600	92,535	66,962	†Including 'Khandesh Agency' of past Censuses
Nasik	12,612	32	1,486	22	
† Sind	78,621	...	9,224	8,022	†Including Khairpur State.
Mahi Kantha	...	6,367	4,211	4,341	
Reva Kantha	64,856	18,148	143,653	51,605	
† Surat Agency	11,402	...	70	8,901	†Sachin, Bansda, Dharampur and the Dangs

Satara 7, Cutch 4, Palanpur and Broach 3 each, and no other district more than 2. In the case of the 19 names from the Panch Mahals and Reva Kantha, only 3 are common to each. Seven districts and a number of States returned no Animists at all.

Another point is the trivial number of persons classed as Animists out of certain castes. The occurrence of an Animist entry at all would often seem attributable to a single energetic enumerator of pronounced views. The following table gives the numbers of each caste as compared with the number of Animists returned. Where possible the 1921 figures are given, and failing that the 1901 figures. A few of the caste names in the previous table are not known, and are therefore not entered (Table 12.3).

It may be argued that there are castes or tribes more primitive than the Bhils, and that, even though the latter are classed in future as Hindus, other castes should be kept under Animists. This argument is not without force.

It will be seen that after the Bhils the Chodras contribute most to the Animist figures. An account of their religion will be found on p. 292 of the 'Tribes and Castes of the Bombay Presidency' by Mr R.E. Enthoven, C.I.E. From that passage, it seems that they worship Nature deities as well as the usual Boundary Gods, and ancestors. It is stated that they do not worship the regular Hindu deities. This is at variance with the Bombay District Gazetteer, Vol. IX, Part I, Gujarat Population - Hindus, where it is stated that they worship Rama.

Of the Naikadas, who contribute largely to the Animist figures, the Draft Monograph of the Ethnographic Survey states that they follow the Hindu law of inheritance,[4] and are Animists by religion. The two statements are somewhat contradictory. The District Gazetteer (loc. cit., p. 327) says, 'except that they sometimes pour oil over Hanuman; and, though they are not allowed to enter her temple, they worship the mother or *mata* on

Table 12.2 Animists by Castes – 1921

Caste	*Number of Animists returned*	*Region*
Bhils		
Bhil	148,809	West Khandesh (65,846), Reva Kantha (47,570), Panch Mahals (7,961), Surat District (5,372) Surat Agency (8,882), Mahi Kantha (4,341), Thar and Parkar (3,895), Broach (2,389), and similar numbers from other districts.
Marwari Bhil	35	Ahmedabad. These should have been included in Bhil.
Vasava	899	Surat. These are probably Bhils. See note on Vasava in the Glossary of obscure language names in the Census Report.
Dhanka	139	Reva Kantha (except 1 form Surat). This is probably a tribal name of Bhils. See the glossary of obscure language names in the Census Report.
Vagadia	16	Panch Mahals. Probably a name for Bhils from further west.
Dhori	53	Reva Kantha. Probably a tribal name of Bhils. See glossary of obscure language names in the Census Report.
Jamrala	36	Reva Kantha. Probably another tribal name of Bhils.
Caste Allied to Bhils		
Chodhra	23,462	Surat
Naikada	5,583	Reva Kantha, Panch Mahals, and Surat.
Gamit	4,251	Surat
Dhodia	202	Surat and Panch Mahals.
Kokna	24	Surat
Dubla	40	Surat
Talavia	90	Kaira and Broach. These are considered by the Ethnographic Survey to be identical with Dublas.
Kotvalia and Vitolia	528	Surat District with a few from the Surat Agency and Reva Kantha. These people have a tradition of Khandesh origin, and are probably racially Bhil.
Vaghri	96	Larkana (67) and the rest from Gujarat.
Konkan Aboriginal Tribals		
Katkari	2	Kolaba
Varli	3	Surat Agency
Wandering Tribes.		
Phanse Parshi	6	Satara
Vaidu	4	Satara
Waddar	10	Poona
Charan	836	East Khandesh (except 2 from Nasik.)
Wandering Mendicants and Musicians.		
Turi	6	Palanpur Agency

(*Continued*)

Table 12.2 (Continued)

Caste	*Number of Animists returned*	*Region*
Nandivale	7	Satara
Dankin	8	Savantvadi. Probably an occupational name of some wandering musicians.
Pingle Joshi	9	Satara
Trimali	9	Satara
Bajania	120	Palanpur Agency (105), Reva Kantha (15)
Vadi	17	Reva Kantha
Recognized Castes.		
Koli	435	Cutch (377), Reva Kantha (56), and Surat (2).
Bhoi	7	Reva Kantha.
Chambhar	13	Panch Mahals and Surat Agency.
Gowli	11	Satara District and Agency.
Raval	26	Reva Kantha and Panch Mahals.
Me	638	Cutch
Menghwar	3,406	Thar and Parkar (2,183), and the rest in small numbers from other Sind Districts.
Chamtha	2	Panch Mahals
Ravat	5	Panch Mahals
Obscure Names		
Valuda	13	Surat. Nothing known of this.
Mayala	7	Cutch. Possibly a misspelling for Miana.
Dongri	1	Thana. The word means simply the 'hills'.
Naga	2	Panch Mahals
Caste not returned	9	Kathiawar

Pavgadh Hill; and at other local fairs their objects of worship are spirits and ghosts'.

Gamta or Gamit is not given in *The Tribes and Castes of Bombay*. The District Gazetteer (loc. cit., p. 319) simply says, 'They worship Vagh Dev, Samla Dev, and Devli Mata'.

No other castes contribute large numbers to the figures. The Kolis are certainly Hindus. The Mes are followers of a mixed Hindu-Musalman cult, like several other castes in West Gujarat (for which see below).

Of all the tribes, the Katkaris are probably[5] the least Hinduized. Reports from Jesuit Missionaries who work among them near Khandala speak of a state of religious mentality exceedingly primitive. But it would not be justifiable to retain a main religion head for the Katkaris alone.

In short, I suggest that our returns of Animists are *absolutely worthless*. They represent nothing, and are entirely a matter of chance. The vast decrease between 1891 and 1901 and the vast increase between 1901 and

Table 12.3 Comparison of the Number of Animists Returned in Certain Castes with the Strength of that Caste in the Presidency

Caste	*Number returned as Animists 1921*	*Strength of the caste*	
		1921	*1901*
Bajania	120	10,085	...
Bhil	148,809	786,726	...
Bhoi	7	64,131	...
Chambhar	13	282,324	...
Chamtha	2	...	190
Charan	836	31,537	...
Chodhra	23,462	43,277	...
Dhodia	202	108,966	...
Dubla and Talavia	130	132,539	...
Gamit	4,251	12,599	...
Gavli	11	38,967	...
Katkari	2	80,830	...
Kokna	24	71,077	...
Koli	435	1,617,044	...
Me	638	31,842	...
Menghwar	3,406	...	3,526[a]
Naikada	5,583	84,969	...
Nandivale	7	...	218
Phanse Paradhi	6	12,240[b]	...
Pingle Joshi	9	...	23,671[c]
Raval	266	51,707	...
Ravat	5	...	360
Trimali	9	...	2,126
Turi	6	...	3,195
Vaddar	10	98,940[d]	...
Vadi	17	...	734
Vaghri	96	86,114	...
Vaidu	4	...	1,103
Varli	3	177,391	...
Vitolia and Kotvalia	528	...	502

a The 1911 figure. The approximation of the number of Animist Menghwars to the total strength of the caste is due to the fact that classification in this case was done in the Abstraction Office.
b Including Pardhi, Shikari, Haranshikari, Advichinchar, and Chigarigar.
c Under the name Gidbidki or Pungle. The number seems impossibly high, and suggests that persons returning the occupational term Joshi instead of a true caste name were taken to this caste.
d Including Od.

1911 cannot be attributed to losses by and recovery from famine. Any such idea is completely disproved by the regional figures. The Bhils, who contribute most to the figures, are practically Hindus. I have therefore no hesitation in saying that Animism as a religion should he entirely abandoned, and that all those hitherto classed as Animists should be grouped with Hindus at the next Census, Hinduism being defined as including the religious or semi-religious beliefs of those jungle tribes who have not

definitely embraced Islam or Christianity. In saying this, I am of course to be taken as discussing the conditions of this Presidency only. There may be regions such as Chota Nagpur where the boundary between Hinduism and Animism is clear and definite.

The Bhils – are they Hindus or Animists?

(A contribution referred to in the above paper of Mr. Sedgwick by the Rev. Enok Hedberg, D. Litt.)

In trying to give a correct answer to this question another question presents itself to my mind. And it is, what is a Hindu? If I were to give a definition of that term I would say: 'Anyone who professes himself to be a Hindu and conforms to the main points in Hinduism is a Hindu'. If this definition is a correct one, as I believe it is, how does it work when applied to the Bhils. Let us see.

All Bhils, even the most wild and backward, with the exception of a small number which has turned Muhammedans or Christians, declare themselves to be Hindus. And as such they are accepted by native Christians, Muslims, and Hindus alike. In a tract, where there are Christian or Muhammedan converts from among the Bhils, those who stick to their ancestral religion are everywhere and by everyone called Hindu-Bhils. This is the case, to give only one instance, even among the very wild Bhils of the Akrani. And to tell them that they are not Hindus would be an insult.

As to their conformity to the main points in Hinduism, it is sufficient to mention that they (1) observe caste, (2) celebrate the Hindu festivals, and (3) worship Hindu gods and goddesses.

It is true that their caste feelings on the whole are not so strong as among the Hindus in general. But caste is there; and its spirit manifests itself strongly enough at certain occasions. The Mahars, Chamars, Mangs, Holars, and other low caste Hindus are looked down on by all respectable Bhils, to whatever tribe or class they may belong. They would never take food from their hands or accept them by marriage into their caste. Even to touch them is defiling.[6]

The religious festivals or holy days kept by the Bhils are the same as those kept by the Hindus – Holi, Dasara, and Diwali. Even the petty Hindu festivals are more and more being observed by them.

The Hindu pantheon of gods, goddesses, *avatars*, apotheosis, and so on, has been taken over by the Bhils. They bring them their sacrifices and worship them. Admittedly, they have their tribal or local deities too. But so have other Hindus all over India. A good deal of Animism and even Animatism is still practised among them. This is, however, more or less the case not only in the lower strata of Hinduism, but to a great extent among Buddhists, Jews and even Muslims, not to speak of such Christians as uneducated Copts and Russian farmers.

There may still in most cases be noted a difference between a common Bhil and an ordinary Hindu. But the difference is more of a racial or ethnological nature than a religious one, and is rapidly disappearing.

Finally, I have collected a good deal of Bhil Folklore which I hope to be able to publish someday. It will, it is believed, throw light on this question, and prove what has been contained in this note.

To conclude, the Bhils should in this respect be accorded the same rights as are given to other Indians and professors of other religions the whole world over – to be taken at their word in religious matters. They are as good Hindus as many other low class people of this country. When they profess themselves to be Hindus they ought to be classified as such.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, XII (4), January 1922: 389–402.
2 E. A. Gait, *Indian Census Report, 1911*, p. 129.
3 *A Primer of Hinduism*, Oxford, 1919.
4 No authority cited.
5 This is copied but misquoted by the Draft Monograph of the Ethnographic Survey. The passage may be corrected in the final work, that volume not being yet received.
6 This, unfortunately, is no proof. Mahomedans also regard the untouchable Hindu castes as defiling, and Hindus sometimes regard Foreign Christians as defiling, both instances being diametrically opposed to Mahomedan and Hindu religious tenets. L. J. S.

13 The superstition of concealing one's proper age as shown by the Indian Census Statistics

L. J. Sedgwick and Jivanji Jamshedji Modi

L. J. Sedgwick

Part I. Statistical

It has been decided between Dr Modi and myself that my part of the paper must be read first, because it presents those facts which he on his part will try to explain from the point of view of Anthropology. I, therefore, take the opportunity of mentioning how this paper originated. After hearing Dr Modi's paper on the superstition of concealing one's name, I suggested to him the possibility of following it up with another on the superstition of concealing one's age, and offered to supply some figures showing the extent to which age is concealed in this country. I drew his attention to the remarks of Pandit Harkishen Kaul in the Punjab Census Report of 1911. The Pandit had cited a passage from the *Hitopadesh,* giving a list of things that must be concealed, and in that list age finds a place. I suggested to Dr Modi that perhaps research might lead to other evidence of a magic or superstition basis for the concealment. Dr Modi accepted the suggestion, with the result that the Society will hear to-day. I now proceed to my part of the paper.[1]

The Age statistics in the Indian Census Tables are sorted and made up in 5-years groups, 0–5, 5–10, 10–15, and so on. But, since the Government Actuary requires for the preparation of his Life Tables the figures for individual years of age, the difficulty is got over as follows.

At every Census, the actual ages returned in one or more batches of 100,000 slips for males and 100,000 slips for females are counted and tabulated for each year of age. The standing order is to make up these batches of slips by taking those for 'Circles' (units for census administration) in regions where the natural distribution of the population by age periods is not likely to have been much disturbed by famine, epidemics, or other causes. In 1901, the Report gives no indication of the areas selected. In 1911, it is mentioned (para 142) that the Talukas of Indi (Bijapur), Nasik, Larkana, and Broach were selected. On the present occasion, to find regions which had not been disturbed by the

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factors mentioned was virtually impossible. I chose two tracts, one in Surat District, and one in Dharwar. In Surat, the slips of the Chikhli, Jalalpur, and Olpad Talukas were taken, the balance to be made up by adjacent circles of Bulsar. In Dharwar, Ranebennur, and Karajgi, the balance to be made up from Kod, the actual ages recorded are given in Table 13.1. And those for males in Surat are shown in the graph which follows. It was not worth while making out a graph for any of the other three batches, as the general appearance would have been the same. The hopeless inexactitude of the Indian age returns is well brought out by the graph[2], which if the ages had been correctly recorded would have exhibited a smooth curve falling away gradually from about 3,500 at age 0 to the base line at age 100, the divergences from an absolutely straight line caused by unequal death rates at different ages being only slight. It is obviously utterly impossible to smooth the curve actually obtained.

It would be interesting to make some attempt to ascertain whether the actual ages recorded from Census to Census give any indication of improvement in the accuracy of the return, whether clue to any change in the attitude of the Indian people towards the question of age or to the effects of increasing literacy. In the first five columns of the annexed table, the order of preference for particular terminal digits is shown – for this Presidency in 1901, 1911, and 1921, and for the means of the six major Provinces in the whole of India in 1911 (Census Report India, 1911, p. 156). The order of preference in 1911 varied slightly Province by Province; but in all Provinces the order of the first four was 0, 5, 2, 8; and 9 occupied, the last place. I occupied the last place but one in all Provinces except the U.P., where 7 took its place. The fact that 2 and 8 occupy such high positions is usually attributed to the Rupee currency, with its division into sixteenths [*i.e.*, into 16 Annas]. This view is liable to be exaggerated, because if the rupee system had so much influence, we should expect to find high frequencies in the returns of numbers which are multiples of a rupee. This is not the case – 32, 48, 64, and 80 showing no conspicuous selection. What would seem to be the case is that the enumerator estimates a man's age in tens. If he seems to be anywhere in the middle between any two tens, he puts the intermediate number ending with 5; but if he seems to be nearer some particular ten than the intermediate point above or below, he adds or deducts a round 2. If all ages were returned exactly correct to a year, the totals of ages ending with each of the digits to 9 would approximate to 10,000. The effect of incorrect returns is to cause concentration on particular digits. In considering whether the tendency to concentration is increasing or diminishing, the exact order of preference is less important. In the second part of the table, the effect of concentration is shown in this Presidency for the three Censuses, and for the means of the six major Provinces of India in 1911. In connection with the latter figures, it must be remembered that the concentration was kept down to some extent by the returns from Burma, where the age returns are considerably more accurate than in India proper. Besides entering the actual figures for each digit, I have grouped the figures in various ways. The grouping by four, four and two is the most important, owing to the constant

Table 13.1 Indices of Concentration

Errors of reporting age		
Country	*Year*	*Index of concentration*
Bombay Males	1901	309
" "	1911	354
" " (Surat)	1921	325
" " (Dharwar)	1921	314
USA	not stated	120
Belgium	1900	100
England and Wales	1901	100
Sweden	1900	101
German Empire	1900	102
France	1901	106
Canada	1881	110
Hungary	1900	133
Russian Empire	1897	182
Bulgaria	1905	245

position of the first four and the last two in the order of preference. After making allowance for the error introduced in the 1911 India means by the inclusion of Burma, it will be seen that the concentration in India as a whole.

It will be seen that the tendency to concentration shows emphatically no signs of diminishing. Whipple[3] mentions an 'Index of concentration' devised by the United States Census Bureau. This is obtained by summing the age returns between 23 and 62 years inclusive, and finding what percentage is borne by the sum of the returns at years ending with 5 or 0 to one-fifth of the total sum. Obviously, a percentage of 100 will indicate no concentration on the two digits mentioned, while 500 would be the maximum concentration, only attainable if no returns at all are recorded for any digits other than the two mentioned. I give below the Index of Concentration for this Presidency in the last three Censuses, and beside them some indices of other countries (from Whipple; Table 13.1).

It will be seen that the errors in India are much more pronounced than in the most backward European countries. The alleged westernization of India in the past three decades has had no effect on this particular phenomenon. And the character of the 'Changeless East' is once again well demonstrated.

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi

Part II. Anthropological

Mr. Sedgwick having explained the origin of this paper, and having exhibited the inexactitude of the Indian age returns, I now proceed to examine the causes, superstitious or otherwise, which induce people of the various classes to conceal their ages. In the Census Report of 1911 of Punjab referred to

above by Pandit Harkishan Kaul (Chap. V, Age, p. 197), we read: 'A certain number of people would not or could not tell their age. In such cases, the enumerator was requested to make his own estimate. Nevertheless, several omissions were found. No statistics compiled at an Indian Census are probably more removed from the actual facts than those of age'.

Causes of the hopeless inexactitude

The causes of the inexactitude referred to by Pandit Harkishan Kaul seem to be correct. We may divide the causes into two classes: (1) undeliberate mis-statements which is the result of illiteracy and consequent ignorance of one's proper age; (2) deliberate or intentional mis-statement. The latter may again be divided into those resulting from (a) superstition, (b) vanity, and (c) self-interest or some purpose.

1 Ignorance

I think that of the four causes, the first, namely, Ignorance of one's proper age is the principal cause. In a country like India, where the proportion of illiterate to the literate is very great, we have no reason to be surprised at this ignorance among the masses about their correct age. Among the Parsee community, the proportion of the illiterates to the literates is small, and I have observed, that there is the mentioned ignorance among these few illiterates. In my work as a Census Volunteer in 1901, I have found some ignorance in my own people. Again, my view as a Census Volunteer has been confirmed by my experience as the Secretary of the Parsee Panchayat. When the poor of my community apply to the Trustees of the Panchayat for various kinds of help, one of the particulars in our inquiry forms to be filled up by the applicants, is that of age, and I have occasionally found, that age is not correctly reported, owing to ignorance, and a little examination and cross-examination are required to determine the proper age of some illiterate persons. When pressed for a correct statement, they say 'અમારો ટપકો નથી', that is, 'We have no horoscopes'. If this is the case for the Parsee community among whom the proportion of the literates to the illiterates is high, it must be so in the case of a large part of those other sister communities among whom the proportion of the literates to illiterates is comparatively low. So, I think that a Census officer in India may generally take it, that in the Census forms of persons marked as illiterate, the age figures are mostly not correct, and that is the result more of ignorance than of any deliberate concealment.

2 Deliberate mis-statement

(A) OUT OF SUPERSTITION

Now, we come to the second cause of the incorrectness of the age statistics of the Census, namely, deliberate mis-statement. As mentioned earlier, the

mis-statement may be the result of (a) superstition, (b) vanity, or (c) self-interest.

We will first speak about concealment out of superstition, which is the proper subject of my part of the paper. In this case of concealment through superstition, there are cases of concealment in both directions, that is, under-stating the age or over-stating it. This superstition is held mostly by the literates. The illiterates as a class are innocent of this superstition, because mostly, they do not know their age. One kind of superstition or rather a kind of thought arising from a superstitious belief, leads one to overstate his age and another kind of superstition leads another to understate it. If a child is very healthy and robust for its age, the mother will try to pass it for an age greater than its true age. Suppose, a child of 3 or 4 is healthy, and therefore so well-grown up as to look to be a child of 5 or 6. Then, if one admires the child for that healthiness or growth at that age, the mother will like to over-state the age, and say that it is aged 5 or 6; so that the evil eye of the admirer may not be drawn to, or may be averted from, the child. If an admirer were to say, 'Ah, what a well-grown up body for a child of 3 or 4!' she would not like it. Such an admiration is believed to have bad influence on the health and growth of the child. It may fall ill and be reduced in looks or may even die. So, we occasionally see, even now, healthy children are marked with black spots on the temples of their heads. These black spots may diminish a little of the beauty or the healthy appearance of the child and thus may avert the evil influence of an evil eye. Again, that black spot may draw away the eye or attention of the observ to itself and prevent its being directed to, or stayed on, the face of the child.

As to the concealment of age among adults, there is a proverb among the Hindus of Gujarat saying: વરસ અને ગરથ કોઈને કેહવાં નહિ, that is, 'our age and wealth should not be told to anybody'. A Parsee friend at Bulsar, conversation with whom I have always found interesting, on account of his great knowledge of folklore, and thus explains the reason for this proverb; ઘણી ઉમર તથા દોલત કેહેતાં સામાં માણસનાં અદેખાઈ આવે ને કદુવા ચાહેત્તો નુકસાનીમાં આવી પડાય. એવા વેહેમની લીધે એ કેહવત ચાલે છે. That is, 'This proverb is prevalent on account of the superstition that if we tell our age and our wealth, the man opposite (to whom we tell these) may get jealous of us and curse us, and that may do us harm'.

The earlier-mentioned Gujarati proverb, 'વરસ અને ગરથ કોઈને કેહવાં નહિ', that is, 'not to tell one's age and wealth to anybody' reminds us of what is said in the *Hitopadesha* as pointed out by Pandit Harkishan Kaul. The old book of morals says: 'Age, wealth, theft in one's house, counsel, sexual intercourse, medicine, austerity, charity, and disgrace, these nine must be carefully concealed' (*Hitopadesha,* I. 143). The *varas* and *garath* (age and wealth) of the modern Gujarati proverb are the *ayurvittam* of the *Hitopadesha*.[4]

A friend at Navasari, in reply to my inquiry about the superstition in that part of the country, writes, 'હિંદુઓને ઉમ્મર પુછવી તે તેનું મોત પુછવા બરોબર છે', that is, 'To ask a Hindu about his age is equal to asking for his death'.

He then add: રખેને આયુશ તોકાય કરીને પેહેલાં તો ઉમ્મર પુછાતીજ નથી; અને જણાવવું પડે તો જરૂર જ પાંચ વર્ષ ઓછાં જણાવે....ઉમ્મર લાંબી કેહવાથી જાણે ઉમર વાના દહાડાની ગણત્રી થતી હોય તેમ માને છ, that is, 'First, one cannot ask another's age, lest he may be suspected of envying his age. (If it is asked) and if he has to say, he always announces it (age) to be less by about 5 years. They believe that to give one's (correct) age is, as it were, counting the days of one's death'.

Aversion against calculation or number

The cause of the superstition seems to be an aversion against any kind of calculation, or ascertainment of numbers or figures about one's self. The superstition is not only against calculating one's number of years or age, but against calculating in other respects also. An orthodox Parsee mother observing you counting her number of children would at once say, 'તારા પગ તરફ કાં નહિં જોતો', that is, 'Why dost thou not look to thy feet'. This is a frequent utterance. But at times she would say, 'તારા જોડાયા ખાસડાં તરફ કાંય નહી> જોતો?' that is, 'Instead of looking to and counting my children, why dost thou not look to thy shoes?' Looking down at the feet or at the shoes[5] is believed to have the effect of averting the evil of an evil eye. Counting or numbering, not only one's children but also other valuable possessions, would catch such a remark to be uttered. You must not count the number of one's cattle or horses or houses or his money. The counting of things by a man was believed to have been done with an evil eye or envy, and such evil eye or envy was believed to result in the decrease of the things numbered. So, if you count one's children or horses or houses or his years of age, you lead to the diminution of that number. Some of the children or horses or cattle may die. Houses may be destroyed or have to be sold off. In the case of one's age or number of years, they also may be lessened. The person may fall ill and die earlier.

Old Jewish objection against counting the number of population or against census

This superstition against numbering or counting seems to be confined not only to India but also to modern times. We find that it was prevalent among the ancient Hebrews, and they objected to a census being taken. They had as a rule a general superstitious belief against counting the number of population. We learn from Samuel (II Samuel XXIV), that when David ordered Joab to number the people, he was believed to have been influenced and tempted by Satan. Joab was ordered to travel for that purpose and to go from Dan to Beersheba and to count the number of people in the different tribes of Israel.[6] Joab tried to dissuade David but to no purpose. He said: 'The Lord made his people a hundred times so many more as they be; but my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why then doth my lord require this thing? Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel'?

(I Chronicles XXI 3). Joab had to obey. He took 9 months and 20 days to go from Dan to Beersheba and to count all the people. The result of this Census was that 'God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel' (Ibid 7).

David repented, but it was too late. He was asked to prefer any of these three punishments: (1) 3 years of famine; (2) defeat at the hands of the enemy and flight for 3 months; and (3) three days of pestilence. Anyone of these three had for its object the destruction or diminution of the number of the people, who were counted in all as 57,00,000. David preferred the last punishment, namely, the pestilence; and the result was, that within three days 70,000 people died. What is at the bottom of this story in the Bible is, 'Do not count. If you do count and the number is great, the joy of that will soon be upset by a disaster. The fact that the work of 'census' was taken to be an odious work by the ancient Hebrews accounts for the meaning of the word 'censure' which came from the same root. It accounts also for the odium attached to the word 'censor' who literally is a kin, one of census officer.

It is said that as late as 1753 A.C., when a Bill was introduced in the Parliament to regulate the work of Census, a member of the House of Commons objected, saying that 'his constituents looked on the proposal as ominous, and feared lest some public misfortune or an epidemical distemper should follow the numbering'.[7] Here, we see the old superstition against numbering. In the Gujarati saying, એ બીચારાનાં દહાડા ગણાઈ ચુક્યા, that is, 'This poor fellow's days are numbered or counted', and the corresponding English words, 'His days are numbered', seem to have at the bottom of this old superstition against counting or numbering things.

Counting the people among the Romans

Perhaps, it was to kill the odium attached to the work of census, to the work of counting the number of people, which was believed to be drawing God's curse, that the ancient Romans connected the work with a kind of religions function. They had among them a ceremony known as Lustration which was held every 5 years. It was the ceremony of a general scored bath a kind of *Snân* of the Hindus, the *Nân* of the Parsees. The city met for the holy purpose of a sacred ceremonial hath and was counted during the process. So, the efficacy of the ceremony killed, as it were, the odium or the curse of the process of counting.

The reason for concealment

The reason at the bottom of the concealment of numbers, whether of people, children, cattle, or of out of superstition, is what is generally known as, બુરીઅજર, that is, evil eye. The train of thought is as follows: If you are old, say 70, and look very healthy and robust for that old age, and if one asks you your age and you tell it correctly, you draw his evil eye on you. He

would think to himself, 'Oh how healthy and robust he looks at this old age!' That thought is the result of an evil eye, and so, in consequence, you will suffer; you will fall ill; so, such frequent questions will bring about illness and consequently an early death. કોઈની બત્રીસીએ નહી ચઢવું, is a Gujarati proverb, which is connected with the belief in an evil eye. *Batrisi* (lit., 32) is a word for the set of 32 teeth. So, the aforementioned proverb means, 'Not to rise to the sets of the 32 teeth of others', that is, not to be talked about by others. It is believed that, if one lets himself be talked about much by others for his health, rank, position, even for his charity and virtue, he courts, as it were, their evil eyes, or in our ordinary words, 'envy' upon him. To avoid or avert such an evil eye or envy, one must conceal a little the true state of affairs.

It is said of a Parsee Desai of Navasari that, from this point of view, he said: 'ગમે તો બત્રીસ ઘા કરજે પણ જગની બત્રીસીએ ના ચઢાવતો', that is, 'Give me, if you like, 32 wounds, but do not raise me to the set of 32 teeth of other people'. Another word which we often hear in connection with such a superstitious belief is તોકવું or તોકાવું (*tokavun* or *tokâvun*). It is, as it were, a particular or technical word in the sense of 'to envy or to be envied'. If the wealth of a man, who has recently got rich, is much talked about, and he loses his wealth, we hear, at times, people sympathising with his fate, and saying, બીચારાની દોલત ઘણી તોકાઈ, that is, the poor fellow's wealth was much talked about (lit., weighed, and envied). Thus, too much talk of one's good fortune or good health, strength or wealth, rank or position, or good old age are believed to draw other's evil eye and envy and to lead to diminution in all these. It is said of Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander, that one after another, he heard three good news about himself. He thought that if these three good tidings will be talked about much, that will draw some evil eye or envy on him. So, he prayed to God to be saved from this envy.

Evil eye

The evil eye, the belief in which leads to concealment, need not necessarily be present, that is, there need not always be present a person or persons to cast an evil eye. The evil eye is present, as it were, in the air. It exerts its influence, not only in the case of the concealment of age or wealth, but in various ways. The evil eye may be of malignant spirits hovering in the air. I remember that, in my days of childhood, when I went out with my mother or aunts on a picnic and we sat in the open air for our meals, my mother and aunts, before commencing eating, threw small pieces of bread round about, to avert the influence of evil eyes. They never liked a poor passer-by stopping on his way and looking at our meals. They would immediately give him a pice or so, or a piece of bread, and ask him to go away. For further safety, whether any poor person may be passing by or not, they threw pieces of bread, and so on, round about for the satisfaction of evil eyes hovering about. If they were to drink, say toddy or whisky and soda, they would dip their fingers in their glasses

and sprinkle the drops adhering to the fingers round about. The idea is that you are in a position to have good meals, but there are others round about who are not in a position to have these for themselves. So, they would cast an evil eye or an eye of envy on your good fortune. Therefore, do what you can to avert that evil eye. In the case of age, especially old age, the concealment of the correct age is one of the means to avert the evil eye from you. The influence of the evil eye is spoken among the Gujarati speaking people and, among them, among the Parsees, as નજર લાગવી, that is, to be struck with an (evil) eye. The Mahomedans speak of it as *chashm-i-bad* (evil eye). In the Bible, in St Mark (VII, 20–22), where there is a mention of things that enter a man from without and defile him, and of things, 'which cometh out of the man that defileth the man', an evil eye is mentioned as belonging to the latter class. We find that from the aforementioned idea of an 'evil eye' in the sense of 'envy', even the word 'eye' without the word 'evil' is used for envy. We read in I Samuel, XVIII, 9 'And Saul eyed David from that day and forward'. What is meant is, that he had an evil eye of envy. In the Proverbs (XXIII, 6), it is said: 'Eat not the bread of him that has an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats'.

(b) Concealment through vanity

A number of people, both male and female, understate their age through a kind of vanity. It is especially the case with females of all classes and creeds. Women generally desire to be considered younger than they are. Unmarried women have, in addition to this feminine weakness, the cause of self-interest, namely, that of a better demand in marriage. They wish to avoid being put in the class of old maids. It is generally considered uncourteous or unmannerly to ask a lady her age. The aforementioned seems to be the cause. She wishes to be considered younger, and so, by asking her age, you put her to the inconvenience of stating an untruth. In English law, it is enjoined that one giving an incorrect age in the census forms may be fined up to £5. It is said of a lady, that, when yielding to the mentioned feminine weakness, she gave incorrect age, she, as a penance or penalty for acting against her conscience, sent, through a public newspaper, of course anonymously, the fine of £5 and spent an additional sum of half a crown for an advertisement in the paper announcing the payment. It is said that, in England, in the Census of 1881, a certain number of women were enumerated as having the age of 25. In 1891, at the next census, one may naturally expect at least the return of the same number for the age of 25. But no, the number had much fallen, showing that the fashion or weakness of deliberately concealing the age among women had grown. Many women like to be considered of an age of or under 25, that being generally considered as the marriageable age.

(c) Concealment of age for self-interest: Case of Widowers

Besides concealment for vanity, there is, at times, concealment for self-interest, and that occurs in various directions. First, as we have just spoken of marriage, I will speak of concealment in the case of marriages by widowers.

In India, where there is a restriction of widow marriages among some classes, the tendency on the part of parents of young girls of a tender age, is at times, to over-state instead of under-state the age of their daughters. Widowers, being prohibited to marry widows, have to resort to young brides. In such cases, the tendency on both sides is to mis-state their ages. The widower has, to tempt the consent of the bride or her parent, to understate his age; and the bride's parents, to save themselves the stigma of giving or rather selling their young tender daughters to rich widowers, have to overstate her age. The earlier the widowers re-marry, the better is held to be their reputation as good husbands. I remember a late Mehtaji of my office asking for leave of absence to attend to his sick wife in a mofussil town. The wife died, and he extended his leave on her death for a few days more. Again, a few days after, he asked for a further extension to be married before he returned to duty. It is said that, at times, of course very rare, arrangements of another marriage are made at the very Masân kântha, that is, the burning grounds. In such a state of affairs, it is no wonder if there be some cases of hasty marriages after the death of one's wife, and, consequently, there be a tendency from the already mentioned causes to overstate or understate age on hath the sides. My own Parsee community has not been free from some cases of this kind. Such cases, though few and far between, were more heard about 40 or 50 years ago than now.

Marriages were arranged by match-makers, and love marriages were few. So, widowers, in order to secure younger women for their second marriages, concealed their age. I have even heard of stray cases having occurred in the last century, not only of concealment of age, but also of a kind of concealment of persons. The match-makers, when they brought about the matches, showed to the widowers and to the widows, their prospective wives or husbands from a distance. There were no regular occasions for the parties to meet, much less to converse. So, it is said that the intriguing match-makers, at times, showed wrong persons to the parties. They showed younger widowers to the widows intending second marriages, and older widows to the intending widowers.

Where such worldly motives led to a concealment of age, it is no wonder if such concealment occurred in our Indian Censuses. I will not dwell at length on other cases of concealment resorted to for self-interest. This concealment is practised for various reasons. Again, the concealment is in both directions. Some understate their age. Some overstate their age. One and the same person does both the things. At times they overstate their age, and at times they understate their age. It is to the interest of a person to

conceal his true age and understate it when he has to insure his life. It is to the interest of a student to over-state his age if there is a restriction of a certain age before which he cannot go in for his examination, or to understate it if there is a restriction of age after which he cannot be employed in some office or for some work wherein he seeks some kind of employment. A lady thinks it good for her general interest to conceal her age and understate it to appear as young, but the same lady, when seeking employment will like to overstate her age if there is a restriction of age under which no employment can be given.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, XII (3) November 1921: 369–85.
2 Not printed.
3 *Vital Statistics*, by G. C. Whipple, New York, 1919, p. 78.
4 This book was translated in the time of Noshirwan the Just (Chosroes I) into Pahlavi, and then it was translated into Arabic, and then into Persian. Its latest Persian form is that observed in the Persian *Anwâr-i-Sohili*, so named by its author Mulla Hussain after the name of his patron Amir Suhaili the generalissimo of Shah Sultan Husain of Khuran. *Vide* the Persian author's Preface in Wollaston's Translation of the *Anwâr-i-Sohili*. *Vide* "Calil a et Damna ou Fables de Bidpai en Arabe; precédées dun Memo ire sur l'origine de ce Livre, et surles diverses Traductions qui on été faites dans l' Orient" par M, Silvestre de Sacy (1816). *Vide* the Preface of *Hitopadesha* by Narayana, edited by Prof. P. Palvisa (1887).
5 Cf. the English custom of throwing old shoes upon a married couple. This seems to be intended to avert an evil eye from their present happy condition.
6 The Chronicles (I Chronicle XXI) also refers to this subject, but says that the journey was from Beersheba to Dan.
7 *Fortnightly Review* of 1905, vol. LXXVII, New series, p. 46.

14 Interpreting a Government House Reception from a cultural anthropology perspective

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi

Of the two main branches of Anthropology – the Physical and the Cultural – we belonging to Bombay are working mostly in the field of the second, the Cultural. In the study of this branch, our vast country presents to us many materials. Our modern culture is the heir of past ages. Edmond Burke has said, 'People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors'. Our modern culture has come down to us not only from the cultured ancients, like the Greeks and the Romans, the Babylonians and the Assyrians, the Indians and the Iranians, and such other civilized nations, but also from the preceding primitive people. Even the savages had their rude unsophisticated culture and they also have handed down their quota to the past ages. The cultures of the aforementioned ancient nations had an association with the crude culture of the primitive people. Evolution plays its part in Nature, not only on the physical side but also on the mental or intellectual side. Just as the whole physical world has evolved and is evolving from primitive conditions of the past, so the whole mental or intellectual world has evolved and is evolving from the past. Thus, there arises the question as to how far most of the customs and ceremonies, which are observed nowadays and which lead us to form our views about culture, had their first origin in the life of the primitive people of prehistoric times and in the life of the people of succeeding civilized times.[1,2]

The welfare of a country or nation depends on the condition of its three institutions: (1) the Church, (2) the State, and (3) the School, or, to speak in ordinary words, depends on (1) religion, (2) government, and (3) education. The last, namely, the School or Education, prepares the people for duties in connection with the Church or Religion and the State or Government, or to speak more broadly, for duties in Society. So, varying our phraseology, we may say that the welfare of a community, nation or country depends on the conditions of its Religion, Government, and Society.

Among the sub-divisions of Cultural Anthropology, religion, though placed last in the list, is not the least. Religion is variously defined by Divines and other scholars. For our purpose, this definition will do, that 'Religion is that which treats the relations of Man to his Maker and to the surrounding world'. In this sense, we have not to consider this religion or

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that religion, we have not to think of individual religions like Christianity or Mahomedanism, Brahmanism or Buddhism, Confucianism or Zoroastrianism, but religion in the broad sense of the word, the religion of all religions. They say a story of a scholar of England, that he once met, at Paris, M. Renan, the author of *Vie de Jesus Christ*, which was condemned by some as a heretic book, and one other French Philosopher. In the conversation that ensued, the French scholars said, that in France they had done away with religion. The English scholar coolly asked, whether they had kept anything or replaced anything in the place of religion which, they said, they had destroyed? 'Yes', they replied, we have only kept 'Les trois mots, le Dieu, l'ame et la responsibilité' (Three words – God, soul, and responsibility). Then, the Englishman said, that if they kept these three things, they kept religion.

In science, 'the most fundamental postulate is the Uniformity of Nature despite all appearances to the contrary'. In religion, this fundamental is, that 'Universal goodness lies at the heart of things despite all appearances to the contrary'. Now, taking Religion in the broad sense of the word, we find many a custom, ceremony, ritual, or symbol, common to Religion, State, and Society. So, the question is where have those common customs begun? Have they begun first in Religion and then passed into State or Society or vice versa? Our reply is, that generally it is the Church or Religion from which many a custom has passed into State and Society.

We can illustrate this view, to a certain extent, from what we see at a Government House Reception in Bombay. When you next go as a guest to the Government House Reception, stand in a corner of the reception room, watching the arrival of His Excellency the Governor and the presentation of guests, and the various functions accompanying these. You may then muse and ponder, meditate, and ruminate over the kaleidoscope that passes before you from an anthropological point of view. A Government House Reception – a Government House, you may understand, if you like, the palace of an Emperor or a King or the House of his honoured representative like the Governor – is, as it were, a typical *rendezvous*, where you see, in a focus, much of the culture of modern civilized society. You see from your corner, where you stand musing as a student of cultural anthropology, the following functions, one-by-one, and you ponder over them:

1. The Reception or Levée as a whole.
2. The Band playing and announcing the arrival of the Governor.
3. His Excellency, the Governor's entrance into the Hall, accompanied by his Courtiers or Officers.
4. Presentation of Arms.
5. His passage over a specially spread red carpet.
6. The presentation of the guests. When the guests pass, one-by-one, the following will draw your attention:

(a) Hand-shake.
(b) Their dress.
(c) Their distinguishing marks, if any.
(d) Their salutations.

We will now examine these different parts of the state ceremonial.

1 Reception or Levée

First of all, the reception held by the royalty, or by a representative of the royalty like the governor of a country or province, supplies an instance of the influence of Church and its ritual on state and society and on their ritual, that is, on the etiquette, the manners and the customs observed in state and society.

Our present Bombay Receptions have replaced what were known as Levées about two decades ago. They are generally held, like the Levées in the beginning of the season – mark the word season, which is always associated with the movement of the Sun – that is, some time after the return of the Governor to Bombay after an absence for some months spent at Mahableshwar and Poona. So, let us begin our subject with the question of Levée, as to what it is like.

There are various schools or theories about the origin of belief and custom, or, to speak in our ordinary language, of religion and religious customs or ceremonies. These schools have their following theories.

1. The Solar Theory.
2. The Meteorological Theory.
3. Spirit Theory.

The late Prof. Max Müller seemed to believe in the first theory, according to which in primitive men – men who lived in open air and who thus saw and experienced the influence of the sun very frequently – the thoughts of God, of the highest Power, were found from their observance of the sun. Now, the word *Levée* is associated with the rising sun. Formerly, levées were held in the morning after sunrise. Beeton, thus, speaks on the subject: 'Levée (French, lever to rise) properly denotes the time of rising, and is commonly applied to the visits which princes and other distinguished personages receive in the morning. It is specially applied in this country to the stated public occasions on which the sovereign receives visits from persons of rank or fortune. A levée differs from a drawing room only in that ladies are admitted to the latter but not to the former'.[3]

Now, just as the rising sun opens the day when thousands and thousands of people, especially in the East, bow with lowered heads, out of respect, to the Sun; so, the king or prince opened his Court-day appearing before his court in brilliant dress, when a number of his courtiers bowed to him. Here,

in our city, our Governor who was long absent from Bombay, who had, as it were, *set* in relation to Bombay, *rises* or re-appears in the beginning of the cold season and appears before his subjects, or to speak more properly, before the subjects of his king whose representative he is, and receives the salutation, the homage, the worship of the people. He appears, as it were, like the sun, and thousands of visitors or worshippers gather to greet or worship him.

One of our distinguished past Presidents, Mr R.E. Enthoven, had, for his Presidential Address delivered on 3 March 1911, taken up the subject of 'Campbell's Notes on the Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom'. In that interesting address, he has referred to the above anthropological view of the custom of holding annually a Levée. He says 'According to this school (*i.e.*, the solar theory school), the published record of the holding of the levee is clearly nothing more than one of the many sun myths that are so common in the religion and superstition of the East. Levée is derived from a French word *lever* (= to raise); whence *se lever* (= to rise). '*Lever du soleil*' means sunrise; and hence levée. The Governor's appearance at this function among the state dignitaries, therefore, typifies the rising of the sun. His gorgeous uniform represents the sun's brilliance'.[4]

2 The musical band

Standing in a corner of the Reception Hall, you expect the Luminary to appear on the horizon, that is, you expect His Excellency to appear shortly. There plays the band and you learn that he is coming. The band announces his approach. Compare with this item in this social or gubernatorial ritual what you see in a custom of our Eastern Courts – the custom of playing what is called the *naobat*. *Naobat* (نوبت) is a Persian word meaning time. Then, it has come to mean 'a musical band playing at stated times before the palace of a king or prince'.[5] The word has then come to mean 'a large state tent for giving audience'.[6]

The custom, as observed in Persia and in Indian Native States even now, is that a musical band, consisting of drum and other musical instruments, plays at sunrise and sunset a particular tune, thus announcing the rising and the setting of the great luminary. We know that illustrious persons, for example, Bacon and Newton, are spoken of as luminaries. So, in our Government House Reception, the Governor is the luminary, the sun, and his rising, that is, appearance among us, is announced by the band playing the *naobat*. Similarly, his setting, that is, his departure from amongst us, is announced by the *naobat* or the playing of the band.[7]

Thus, the musical band is associated with a kind of announcement. We know that now, on the happy occasions of marriages, musical bands play an important part in the merriments of the occasions. But, at first, the original object of the play of music at a marriage was an announcement of the auspicious event of the marriage to people round about.[8] The ringing of

church bells is something like the playing of music, and it announces the coming of the time of prayers and homage to the deity.

3 The Governor entering in procession with his staff

With the announcement made by the playing of the band, the Governor enters into the Reception Hall with his staff in a procession. Processions are an old institution. They play a prominent part in the religious, social, academic, and political life of a country. The Christian Church has magnificent and stately processions. The Roman Catholic Church has a special book, known as 'Processional', which speaks of religious processions. The Vendidad of the Parsees speaks of Ahura Mazda, of God himself, as proceeding to meet Yima Khshaêta Jamshed with his Anjuman of Yazatas or angels in a procession.[9] We have social processions like the marriage and funeral processions. The Academies and the Universities have their processions. So, the state also has its processions and the Governor's entry into his Reception Hall is in the form of a procession of this kind. He is the great luminary, the Sun in the procession. His consort, Her Excellency, is the Moon, and the officers of his staff are his satellites.[10]

4 Presentation of arms to the Governor

The presentation of some symbolic things at the entrance plays a prominent part in many functions. In India, when brides and bridegrooms enter into a house on special occasions, water, coconut, rice, and so on, are presented before them as symbols with one idea or another. They are passed over in a tray over their heads and then lowered and thrown away. All these are a kind of symbolic expression of good wishes for prosperity and for the removal of calamities, if any overtake the party.

Now, in cases like those of Governor's receptions, when the guards present arms, that is a symbolic expression of their readiness to do duty to avert any calamities or difficulties that may befall the recipients of the honour. Let us note here the signification of the word 'arms'. An 'arm' originally is 'the limb of the human body which extends from the shoulder to the hand' and then it has also come to mean a weapon of offence or defence'.[11] The arms of the body were the weapons with which the earliest primitive men fought. It was with their own bodily arms that they defended themselves and their near and dear ones. The arms (or weapons) made out of wood or such other materials were a later invention. Just as at a festive board, the use of forks with its finger-like prongs is a later form in the evolution of the process of eating, replacing fingers to a certain extent, so wooden or metal implements or arms are a later form in the evolution of the process of fighting. Now, what do the guards signify by presenting arms? They were holding up arms, and on the arrival of the Governor, they present their arms to signify, that their bodily arms and their whole bodies,

were, as it were, at the service of the Governor, and that they were always ready to defend him whenever and wherever required. The modern presentation of arms is something like the offer of the ancient Iranians to their kings or superiors to put on their sash or girdle. For example, we read of the Persians of Pars offering their services to the Sassanian king Ardeshir Babegân (Artaxerxes I) by saying that they would put on their sash and girdle[12] to serve him. Here, the guards presenting their arms say something similar, namely, that they are ready to defend the Governor, if required.

This symbolic presentation of arms may also admit of another explanation, like that of the officers presenting their swords before the Governor when they are presented to him. We will speak on this later.

5 The Governor passing over a special passage covered with red cloth or carpet

In such state gatherings, a special carpet is spread for the Governor to pass on. At times, the carpet or red Turkey cloth is spread over the place a short time before the arrival of the Governor, so that it may not be spoilt by the dirty feet of other guests. As being a luminary for the time being, he is the purest, the most cleanly, the holiest of all, so a pure arid clean passage must be provided for him. They say that in some holy churches of Rome, there were special entrances for His Holiness the Pope. That entrance was first opened occasionally for him to enter through. In one of the churches of Rome, which I had the pleasure of visiting, there were two entrances, one for the general entry and one for what we may call a 'private entry' or a sacred entry. The steps of the latter were called 'scala sancta' or sacred ladder. The worshipper who wanted to enter by that entrance had to ascend, not on their feet, but on their knees. Hâtim Tai, a holy personage of Mahomedanism, is said to have walked, not on ordinary unholy ground, but on silver and golden tablets or bricks which were provided for him. His followers placed before him these tablets and he stepped over them; and when he advanced over the front ones, the back ones were lifted up and placed in his front again. The Governor is, as it were, for the time being, a holy personage and has therefore a special carpet provided for him so that he may not place his holy steps on unholy ground.[13] This custom is referred to in an old Malayalam document passed in favour of the Christians on the Malabar Coast. Among several things of honour conferred on Thomas Cana (Tomman Kineir), one was 'the walking cloth'.[14] Mr T.K. Joseph thus speaks about this cloth in a footnote: 'Cloth spread on the way for walking along without touching the ground. Our bishops and bridegrooms still enjoy the privilege. (For its use in 1916–17 in Ceylon, see Annual Report, Archæological Survey of India, 1916–17, Part I, p. 25.) Lengths of white cloth were unrolled along the road for the elephant to walk over'. Brahmin bridegrooms are said to walk over such cloth even now in some parts of our country. Dr Sven Hedin thus speaks of a similar custom in Tibet: 'His

Holiness the Tashi Lama leaves the throne and descends the staircase on which a narrow strip of coloured carpet is laid, for the Tashi Lama may not touch the unclean earth with his holy feet' (Trans. *Himalaya* I, p. 355).

6 Presentation of guests

During the process of presentation of guests, several things draw our attention. The most important are as follows:

(a) The shaking of hands.
(b) The various dresses of the visitors.
(c) Their distinguishing marks.
(d) Their ways of salutations.

(a) The shake of hands

It is an honour to shake hands with the luminary. He imparts, by his condescension, something, be it pleasure or honour or good fortune, to the persons who shake hands with him. It has been thought from olden times, that the person of the King being sacred, a contact with his body brings good luck or advantage. That was the view, which was held in England up to the last century, when it was believed that scrofula, which was known as the 'King's Disease', could be cured by the touch of a king. Samuel Johnson was believed by his father to be so cured.[15]

Holy persons do not shake hands with everybody and anybody. They do not even touch everybody and anybody. They think themselves defiled by such touches of unholy or undesirable persons. We know of cases where people of faiths other than their own are held to be impure. Old Athens reconsecrated all its temples when the Persian army left Athens, taking it, that the touch or presence of those aliens had destroyed the sanctity of their temples. We hear of instances of olden times when some Indian dignitaries washed their hands after visits to them by foreigners. It is said of King Tehmasp of Persia that when Anthony Jenkinson visited his court as an ambassador of Queen Elizabeth, knowing that he was a Christian, he purified, not only himself but also all the premises of his palace, by sweeping sand over it, sand being considered as a purifying material like water.

Thus, the Governor, our sacred luminary, does not shake hands with everybody, but with those whom he invites as his guests after due inquiry and of whom he knows that they are clean in their character and respectability. God or the Deity is spoken of in India as Dast-gîr (دستگیر), that is, the holder of the hands of his worshippers. The holding of the hand is, as it were, a mark of favour, and an expression of willingness to help. Here, the great luminary, by his shake of hands, gives an expression to his favourable thoughts about his guests.

(b) Dress

The subject of dress is a fertile subject for inquiry from an anthropological point of view. Mr. W.M. Webb, in his interesting book entitled, *The Heritage of Dress*, gives us an interesting look into the question of the evolution of dress from its primitive state. What kind of dress did the primitive people put on? The Christian Bible tells us that the primaeval Man moved about naked. Then came the dress made of herbage, then that of the skin of wild and domesticated animals, and then that of cotton, wool, and silk cloth. But, even now, if you were to watch carefully the passers-by in the Government House Reception, you will find that in their modern up-to-date dress also there are relics of olden times, and that herbage and skins of wild and domesticated animals play an important part in dresses.

Laying aside the question of the materials of the dresses, the state and the fashions of the dresses of various people, passing before us, make us ponder and even smile a little. We speak of custom as being a great tyrant, but we find that fashion is a greater tyrant than custom. Again, when we ponder deeply, we find that our views of culture in dress also change often, if not as frequently as fashion. This makes us think of the various phases of culture. When we think of the primitive times, when our ancestors arrived at a period of time when cotton materials began to be used, we find that the primitive dress of our primitive ancestors was something like a mere *chaddar* without sleeves, or *paijamas*. Suppose you are naked in a room and one creeps in suddenly. Then what will you do? You will take up a *chaddar*, a sheet, or a blanket from your bed and will just cover your body for decency. Our modern dress has evolved in one way or another from that primitive condition and that *chaddar* or pieces of cloth like that play a prominent part in the dresses of many people.

Out of all the dresses that pass before us in kaleidoscopic view, the gowns of ladies and the gowns of clergymen draw our attention. Both wear big loose dresses. We find that gowns play an important part on many solemn occasions. Our university graduates and fellows are required to be dressed in gown. Members of Benches and Bars in our courts are required to have gowns. Our priests are required to have them. So, ladies also have gowns. The dresses of old Indian ladies are, though not exactly like gowns, loose dresses like gowns; and in all ages, a loose dress is held to be a dress of dignity, respect, and modesty.

Again, in many cases, you read nationalities from the mere looks of the dresses of visitors. Though some of the visitors are half-dressed in the new European fashion, their head dress points to their religions and castes. Some carry a particular kind of pieces of cloth across their shoulders over their Europeanized coats and trousers. These pieces of cloth symbolized respectability.

(c) Marks on foreheads

The sight of symbolic marks over the foreheads of a number of guests leads us to a number of fresh thoughts on the different religions or sub-divisions of religions and castes. Again, notice that in case of Indian ladies the mark is always round, but not so in the case of males. The marks on the foreheads of women symbolize the moon. Those on the foreheads of males are associated with a kind of sun-worship. At one time, about 50 years ago, even Parsee ladies put on such marks. I have referred to this subject at some length in my paper on Parsee marrtages.[16]

(d) Salutations

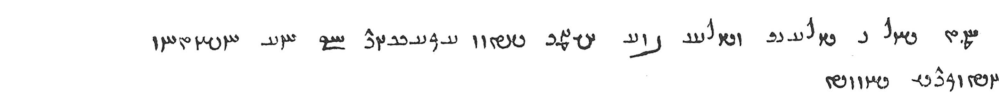
Again, watch the different ways of salutations. Europeans, and some Indians who have adopted European manners, simply nod their heads. Some guests raise their hands towards their heads. The Parsees have their particular way of saluting in this manner. Some Hindu guests join both their hands, as is done in worship, and thus perform their *darshan* of the great luminary before whom they pass. Military men have their peculiar way of salaaming. Some who carry swords present their swords before the Governor who touches the swords. Ladies perform what is called courtesy. All these different modes of salutation which we observe at a reception point to what Herbert Spencer calls 'self-surrender'. I have referred to this subject at some length in my paper on 'Tibetan Salutations and a Few Thoughts Suggested by Them', read before this Society.[17] So, I will not say more on this subject in this paper.

Notes

1 Reprinted from *JASB*, XIII (8), February 1927: 779–803.
2 This chapter is Part II of Jivanji Modi's address as President of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, delivered on 2 February 1927 – Editors. Editors have also changed the title of this paper: original title was 'Cultural Anthropology as Observed in a Government House Reception'.
3 Beeton's Science, Art and Literature. A Dictionary of Universal information, 2nd edition, Vol. II, p. 25.
4 Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. IX, No. 3, p. 195.
5 Steingass's Persian Dictionary.
6 Ibid. Abu Fazal says of Akbar: 'When His Majesty holds court they boat a large drum, the sounds of which are accompanied by Divine praise' (Blochmanu's Aini-i.—Akbari 1, p. 157.)
7 In our British military cantonments also, you see the ritual, especially that of the Band playing and announcing, the sunsets. I had the pleasure of seeing the ritual, in its full form, on 26th and 27th April 1925 at Gibraltar which is a great military fort of the old type. There, at sunset, a military band goes to the place of the Commander of the Fort to receive from him the key of the fort to close the

fort. Though now, owing to the increase of population the Fort is not closed after sunset, the ceremony is performed symbolically.

8 The Pahlavi Dînkard refers to this view. Dastur Peshutan's Vol. II, p. 87, Bk. III., Chap. 80, s. 15.



Amat dahûl-i Sûrâî va Sûrnâi barâ hâmē shatra âkâsend âigh hanâ aushutâan khavitôkdas yehvunet.

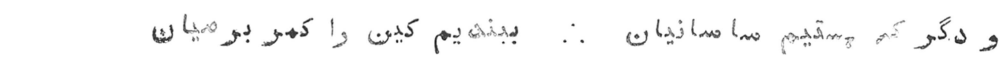
Translation:—When the drum of marriage (sûr. nuptial, p. سور) and trumpets inform the whole city that such (and such) persons are being married.

9 Vendidad II, 21.

10 For some further particulars about processions, *vide* my Paper on 'A Devil-driving Procession of the Tibetan Buddhists as seen at Darjeeling and a few Thoughts suggested by it', read on 24 June 1914 (*Journal of Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. X, No.3, pp. 209-28. *Vide* my Anthropological Papers, Part II, pp. 124-43).

11 Webster.

12 The Shah-nameh of Macan, Calcutta Ed. Vol. III, p. 1375.



13 In this connection, I am reminded of a Parsee custom in relation to their ritual of consecrated fires. Sacred consecrated fires are spoken of as Shah or Pâdshah, *i.e.*, a king. We read, in the Âtash Nyâish, 'âdarân shâh pirojgar', *i.e.*, 'the Victorious kingly fires'. Among what may be called the 'Parsee national toasts', one was 'Atash Behram pâdshâh ni salâmati', *i.e.*, 'The Safety of the Fire (Atash) Behram, the King'. The Fire, being taken as a King, even an âthornân, lit., a priest attending the sacred fire was, at one time, spoken of as 'pâdshâh' or king. So, the Sacred Fire, being held in reverence as a king, when it is removed from a place where it was consecrated to a temple where it is to be enthroned, it is carried in a procession and the route is marked by a number of boundary lines within which none other than the two officiating priests entered. These sacred circles, reserved for the king-like sacred fire, were somewhat similar to the red-turkey carpets reserved for the Governor to walk on. I have described the ritual at some length in my Paper, entitled the Consecration Ceremonies of the Parsees, read before this Society (Vol. XI, pp. 496–544). *Vide* my book '*The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*', pp. 224-26.

14 Indian Antiquary of September 1927, p. 666.

15 We read in Lord Macaulay's account of Johnson's life: 'He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year, he was taken up to London, inspected by the court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular were distorted by his malady' (Biographies by Lord Macaulay, p. 78). Boswell, in his life of Johnson, says: 'Young Johnson had the misfortune to be much afflicted with the scrofula or king's evil, which disfigured a countenance naturally well-formed, and hurt his

usual nerves so much, that he did not see at all with one of his eyes, though its appearance was a little different from that of the other…. His mother yielding to the superstitious notion, which it is wonderful to think prevailed so long in this country, as to the virtue of the regal touch, a notion which our king encouraged…. carried him to London, where he was actually touched by Queen Anne' (Vol. I, pp. 6, 7).

16 Journal of the Anthropological Society, Volume V. No. 4, p. 253.

17 Ibid Vol. X, No.3, pp. 165–78 (Vide my Anthropological Papers, Part II, 110-23).

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